

CALVIN ON THE LAW



by

Rev. Prof. Dr. Adv. Francis Nigel Lee

**Queensland Presbyterian Theological College
Brisbane, Australia**

"God is above the civil law but not lawless (*Deus legibus solutus sed non exlex*)....
He is Himself the Living Law (*Lex Vitalis*), and the Law Who enlivens (*Lex Animans*)."

-- Calvin's *Opera Omnia (Corpus Reformatorum)*, Brunswick 1863f ed.,
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(Barrister of the Supreme Court; Professor of Christian Ethics)

The great Genevan Protestant, Rev. Prof. Dr. Jean Cauvin (or John Calvin), was almost unquestionably the godliest and also the most erudite lawyer-theologian since the Apostle Paul. After receiving his M.A. degree — Calvin engaged in advanced legal studies.

He did so, first under Pierre Taisan d'Etoile — the greatest forensic mind in France. He then studied further — under the celebrated Italian jurist, Andrea Alciati.

In 1531, Calvin secured his Doctorate in Law. He next studied Hebrew with Francois Vatable, Greek with Pierre Danes, and Holy Scripture with Lefevre d'Etaples. Our very famous French Reformer then went on to complete his Ph.D. degree (in Philosophy) — on Seneca's *De Clementia*.

Here we would examine Calvin's views — regarding the 'Law of Nature' and the 'Moral Law' and the 'Judicial Law.' For God declares through Jeremiah (9:24) — 'I am the Lord Who shows lovingkindness, judgment and righteousness upon the Earth.'

Calvin on Natural Law

Calvin explains himself:¹ "Assuredly the attributes which it is most necessary for us to know, are these three. Lovingkindness, on which alone our entire safety depends. Judgment, which is daily exercised on the wicked and awaits them in a severer form even for eternal destruction. Righteousness, by which the faithful are preserved and most benignly cherished." Indeed, Dr. Calvin even grounds these triple juridical principles of lovingkindness, judgment and righteousness — in the attributes of God Triune Himself, as their Ultimate Source.

Now the great Genevan saw it as "evident that the Law of God which we call 'Moral' — is nothing else than the testimony of Natural Law and of that conscience which God has engraven on the minds of men.... The whole of this **equity** of which we now speak, is prescribed in it. Hence - it alone ought to be the aim, the rule, and the end of all laws."²

For this 'Moral Law of Nature' — argues John Calvin — proceeds "from the Source of rectitude Himself, and from the natural feelings implanted in us by Him." For "it flows from the Fountain of Nature itself, and is founded on the general principle of all laws."³

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It is because the righteous God created man as His own image, that all men everywhere had and still have any concept of righteousness.⁴ As Calvin comments:⁵ "Paul says that we [Christians] are transformed into the image of God by the Gospel.... According to him, spiritual regeneration is nothing else than the restoration of the same image. Col. 3:10 and Eph. 4:23f.... He made this image to consist in 'righteousness'.... He [God] appointed man...lord of the world.... Adam was at first created in the image of God, so that he might reflect as in a mirror the righteousness of God.... You take righteousness, in general, as uprightness."

Referring to "the creation of man," Calvin observes⁶ that "it would little avail us to know how we were created — if we remained ignorant of the corruption and degradation of our nature in consequence of the fall. Yet at present, we confine ourselves to a consideration of our nature in its original integrity.... We shall afterwards see...how far mankind now is from the purity originally conferred on Adam.... We have ideas of rectitude, justice, and honesty.... The image of God extends to everything in which the nature of man surpasses that of all other species of animals.... At the beginning, the image of God was manifested by light of intellect, rectitude of heart, and the soundness of every part."

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Explains Calvin:⁷ "Since man is by nature a social animal [alias a gregarious 'en-spirit-ed creature'], he is disposed from natural instinct to cherish and preserve society.... So, we see that the minds of all men have impressions of civil order and honesty. Hence it is that every individual understands how human societies must be regulated by laws -- and [every individual] also is able to comprehend the principles of these laws. Hence the universal agreement [in Calvin's day] with regard to such subjects — both among nations and individuals — the seeds of them being implanted in the breasts of all....

"The truth of this fact is not affected by the wars and dissensions which immediately arise.... Some, such as thieves and robbers, would invert the rules of justice.... Others (a vice of most frequent occurrence) deem **that** to be unjust, which is elsewhere regarded as just — and (contrarywise) hold **that** to be praiseworthy, which is elsewhere forbidden.... Such persons...quarrel with what is clearly reasonable.... Quarrels of this latter kind do not destroy the primary idea of justice. For while men dispute with each other as to the particular enactments — their ideas of **equity agree** in substance....

"Some principle of civil order, is impressed on all.... No man is devoid of the light of reason.... Its principle is **naturally** implanted in the human mind.... These proofs openly attest the fact of an universal reason and intelligence naturally implanted.... The Spirit of God is the only fountain of truth. We will be careful, as we would avoid offering insult to Him, not to reject or contemn truth, wherever it appears. In despising the **gifts**, we insult the **Giver**."

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Now Natural Law continues — in a somewhat sin-obscured way — even after man's fall into sin. This, of course, is only because the Lord God keeps on revealing it to all sinners everywhere — in spite of their ongoing depravity.

Writing about unregenerate Pagans, the Apostle Paul truly declares⁸ that "the wrath of God keeps on being revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of [those] men who keep on holding down the truth in unrighteousness.... For God has manifested...what is knowable about God to them. For His invisible things — being understood even from the creation of the world through that which has been made — keep on being perceived. Consequently, they [the Pagans] are inexcusable. Because, having known God, they did not glorify Him as God. Neither were they thankful."

Here, Calvin comments:⁹ "Although the structure of the world and the most splendid ordering of the elements ought to have induced man to glorify God -- yet there are none who discharge their duty.... Some interpreters distinguish between ungodliness and unrighteousness -- maintaining that ungodliness refers to the profanation of the worship of God, and unrighteousness to a want of justice to men.... To 'hold down' the truth, is to suppress or obscure it. Hence, they are accused of theft. 'In unrighteousness' is a Hebrew phrase, and means **unjustly**.

"Man was formed to be a spectator of the created world.... He was endowed with eyes for the purpose of his being led to God Himself, the Author of the world.... This clearly proves how much men gain from this demonstration of the existence of God — *viz.* an utter incapacity to bring any defence to prevent them from being justly accused before the judgment-seat of God.... No conception of God can be formed without including His eternity, power, wisdom, goodness, truth, righteousness, and mercy.... His justice is evident in His governing of the world, because He punishes the guilty and defends the innocent.... Those, therefore, who have formed a conception of God — ought to give Him the praise due to His eternity, wisdom, goodness, and justice."

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Paul next asserts¹⁰ that men have **knowingly** and **deliberately** turned away — and keep on turning away — from original righteousness. **Wilfully** they have fallen into idolatry, lesbianism, sodomy, murder and other capital crimes — all of which he says "are worthy of death."

Comments Dr. Calvin:¹¹ "It makes no difference that they were **not all** involved in such vicious corruption.... Although all men are not thieves, murderers or adulterers — yet there are none who are not to be found corrupted by some vice or another.... They had not pursued the knowledge of God with the attention which they ought to have displayed — but, on the contrary, had deliberately turned their thoughts away from God.... By a perverted choice, they had preferred their own vanities — to God. "Though every vice may not appear in each individual, yet all men are conscious of some wrong conduct, so that everyone can be accused of obvious depravity for his own part.... Men bound themselves — without reflection to those crimes which common sense ought to have despised.... **Unrighteousness** means the violation of human justice, when each does not receive his due.... **Wickedness**...means acts of

maliciousness or unrestrained licence.... **Maliciousness** is the depravity and perversity of mind which strives to do harm to our neighbour.... The word **strife** includes quarrels, fighting, and sedition."

The Apostle Paul consequently continues:¹² "Whenever the Gentiles [alias the Pagans], who do not have the Law [of Moses], **by nature** do the things contained in the Law — these [Gentiles], not having **The Law**, are a law **for themselves**. They show 'the work of **The Law**' written in their hearts — their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts meantime accusing or else excusing one another."

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Here, Calvin comments¹³ that "ignorance is offered in vain as an excuse by the Gentiles — since they declare by their own deeds that they do have some rule of righteousness. There is no nation so opposed to everything that is human, that it does not keep within the confines of **some** laws....

"All nations are disposed to make laws...which are implanted by nature in the hearts of men.... The Gentiles had the **natural light** of righteousness, which supplied the place of **The Law** by which the Jews are taught....

"All the Gentiles alike institute religious rites; make laws to punish adultery, theft, and murder; and commend good faith in commercial transactions and contracts. In this way, they demonstrate their acknowledgment that God is to be worshipped; that adultery, theft and murder are evils; and that honesty is to be esteemed.... There is, therefore, a certain natural knowledge of **The Law** which states that one action is good and worthy of being followed — while another is to be shunned with horror."

Calvin asks:¹⁴ "Can we deny that truth must have beamed on those ancient lawgivers who arranged civil order and discipline with so much **equity**? ... Let us not forget that there are most excellent blessings which the Divine Spirit dispenses to whom He will, for the common benefit of mankind.... One of the essential properties of our nature, is reason.... Some excel in acuteness, and some in judgment....

"In a **common nature**, the **grace of God** is specially **displayed**.... Each individual is brought under particular influences, according to his calling.... The Spirit of the Lord is said to have come upon those whom He called to govern.... Judges 6:34."

States Calvin:¹⁵ "If the Gentiles have the righteousness of **The Law** naturally engraven on their minds — we certainly cannot say they are altogether blind as to the Rule of Life! Nothing indeed is more **common** — than for man to be sufficiently instructed in a right course of conduct by Natural Law, of which the Apostle here speaks.... The end of Natural Law, therefore, is to render man inexcusable." 'Natural Law' -- says Calvin -- thus "may be not improperly defined: 'the judgment of **conscience** distinguishing sufficiently between **just** and **unjust**'.... By convicting men on their own testimony, [it keeps on] depriving them of all pretext for ignorance."

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Dr. Calvin further sees the Law of Nature — in universal or **widescale human practice**. St. Paul asks: "Does not even nature (*phusis*) teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonour to him; but that if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her?" I Cor. 11:5-14.

Calvin here comments that "bare-headedness is unbecoming in women. **Nature itself** holds it in horror.... A woman with her head shaved [bare], is a loathsome — indeed an **unnatural** — sight.... The woman is given her hair as a **natural** covering.... Her hair, being her **natural** covering..., is needed....

"Paul again sets **nature** before them [the Corinthians] as the teacher of what is proper.... He means by '**natural**' what was accepted by common consent..., certainly as far as the Greeks were concerned.... The Greeks did not consider it very manly to have long hair, branding those who had it as effeminate. Paul considered that their custom, accepted in his own day, was in conformity with **nature**." [Compare the further reference to I Cor. 11:13-14 in the discussion on "the light of **nature**" in the later Calvin-istic *Westminster Confession of Faith* 1:6°.]

The Need for Inscripturation

Yet Calvin also teaches that the **pre-fall** 'light of nature' and its 'Natural Law' are, **after sin**, clearly discerned **only** in the light of the infallible Holy Scriptures. "**Philosophers**," explains Calvin — when contrasting "nature" with "Scripture"¹⁶ — "can only tell us to live agreeably to nature." **Scripture**, however, derives its exhortations from God as the True Source. Mal. 1:6; Eph. 5:1; I Jh. 3:1,3; Eph. 5:26; Rom. 6:1-4; I Cor. 6:11; I Pet. 1:15,19; I Cor. 6:15; Jh. 15:3; Eph. 5:2-3; Col. 3:1-2; I Cor. 3:16; 6:17; II Cor. 6:16; I Th. 5:23....

Scripture, says Calvin, "not only enjoins us to regulate our lives with a view to God its Author -- to Whom it belongs. But, after showing us that we have degenerated from our True Origin — *viz.* the Law of our Creator — it adds that Christ, through Whom we have returned to favour with God, is set before us as a model — the image of which, our lives should express."

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Now Holy Scripture¹⁷ teaches that — after the Great Flood — God introduced human government and official punishments for the crimes of fallen man. "Surely, I will requite the blood of your lives! At the hand of every beast I will requite it — and at the hand of man. At the hand of every man's brother, I will requite the life of man. Whosoever sheds a man's blood, **by man** shall **his** blood be shed. For God made man in His image."

Comments Calvin:¹⁸ "God so highly estimates our life, that He will not suffer murder to go unavenged.... They are **deceived**, in my judgment, who think that a political law **simply for the punishment of homicides** is here intended. Truly, I do not deny that the punishment which the laws ordain and which the judges execute — are

founded on this divine sentence. But I say that the words are **more comprehensive**" than to include only murder, and in fact extend to **all "unjust acts."**

"God [indeed] sends **executioners**.... God so threatens and denounces vengeance against the **murderer** ---- that He even arms **the magistrate** with the **sword** for the **avenging** of slaughter, in order that the blood of men may not be shed with impunity.

"God declares that He is not rashly and for no purpose thus solicitous respecting human life. Men are indeed unworthy of God's care, if respect be had only to themselves. But since they bear the image of God engraven on them, He deems Himself violated in their person.... No one can be injurious to his brother, without wounding [or insulting] God Himself.... He again turns His discourse to Noah and his sons.... 'You see that I am intent upon cherishing and preserving mankind; do you therefore also attend to it!' He deters them from murder, and from unjust acts of violence."

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Of course, the above would **require a whole system of political government** — as well as of **graded law courts**.¹⁹ That is why God told Moses — through his father-in-law the priest Jethro — thus to delegate these functions.

Asked Jethro:²⁰ "Why are you sitting alone — and all the people standing near you, from morning to evening?" Moses replied: "Because the people are coming to me, in order to inquire from God. When they have a case, they come to me — and I judge between one and another.... I make known to them God's statutes and laws."

So Jethro advised Moses: "Provide from among all the people able men who fear God; men of truth who hate covetousness. Place such men over them — to be **rulers** of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And let **them** judge the people at all times.... Every great case they shall bring to **you**; but every small case, **they** shall judge!"

Here Calvin comments:²¹ "This is the object of political government.... God's tribunal should be erected on earth, wherein He may exercise the judge's office.... Judges and magistrates should not arrogate to themselves a power uncontrolled by any laws, nor allow themselves to decide anything arbitrarily or wantonly — nor, in a word, assume to themselves what belongs to God. Then and then only will magistrates acquit themselves properly — when they remember that they are the representatives of God. "'You shall choose [from the people], and take out the most worthy' — so that such an office [of judge] be not entrusted rashly to anyone that offers.... Among a free people..., the judges should not be chosen for their wealth or rank — but for their superiority in virtue.... Four qualifications must principally be regarded in the appointment of judges, *viz.*: ability in business; the fear of God; integrity; and the contempt of riches....

'Brave men' (*ansheey chaayil*)...designates strenuous and courageous persons.... [Moses] adds 'piety'.... 'Truth' is opposed not only to deception and gross falsehood — but to popularity-hunting, flattering promises, and other crooked arts which tend to corrupt justice.... 'Hatred of covetousness' is demanded — because nothing is more antagonistic to justice, than eagerness for gain.... Since snares are so constantly set

for judges by the offers of pecuniary advantage — they would not be duly fortified against this mode of corruption, unless they earnestly detested avarice."

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On a parallel passage, John Calvin comments further:²² "Those who were to preside in judgment, were not appointed only by the will of Moses — but **elected** by the **votes** of the **people**. And this is the most desirable kind of liberty....

"We should not be compelled to obey every person who may be put tyrannically over our heads.... **No one should rule, except he be approved of by us.**" Thus, only popularly elected governments should rule!

Hence "Moses recounts that he awaited the consent of the people, and that nothing was attempted which did not please them.... He does not here [in Deut. 1] mention the same virtues as in Exod. 18, but only distinguishes the judges by three qualifications.... They should be **wise**; and [have] **understanding**; and [be] **experienced**....

"They should possess acuteness of intellect and prudence, confirmed by experience and practice. For neither the greatest probity nor diligence would be sufficient for the office of ruler — apart from skill and sagacity...endued with sound judgment and discretion.... Thus, then ---- experience and acquaintance with business is required in judges; because **none** but the **practised** are **competent** for the management of business.

"As far as possible, judges should be restrained by fixed law — lest, being left free, they should be swayed this way or that by favour or ill will.... Wherever there is a sufficient capacity of intellect, **equity** and **rectitude** will prevail — unless [how sad!] respect to persons influences the judge.... It very often happens that those who are otherwise just and disposed to study what is equitable and right, are made to swerve through fear of the threats of the powerful — and dare not manfully encounter their ill will. Moses therefore requires magnanimity in judges — so that they may not hesitate to bring upon themselves the hatred of any, in their defence of a good cause.

"He says that they are to be afraid of no mortal man — because the judgment is God's.... How absurd it is, to turn from the right course — out of the fear of man. Because thus the majesty of God is prostituted and exposed to scorn.... This honour must be paid to God Whose representatives they are.... They should look upon all men as beneath them, and restrain the audacity of the wicked with such inflexible magnanimity that God alone may have the pre-eminence. The same is the object of Jehoshaphat's words: 'Take heed what you do! For you are not judging for man, but for the Lord!' II Chr. 19:6.

"If this were thoroughly impressed upon the minds both of magistrates and pastors, they would not vacillate so often.... Relying on God's aid, they would stand firmly against all the terrors by which they are so pitifully agitated. Therefore, let all those who are called to any public office, sustain themselves by this doctrine — that they are doing God's work, Who is well able to keep them safe from the violence as well

as the craftiness of the whole world. Yet at the same time we are taught by these words that all posts of command are sacred to God, so that whosoever are called to them should reverently and diligently serve God — and ever reflect that His is the dominion, whereof they are the ministers."

Lex Talionis and Theocracy

Now the Mosaic judges were to punish crime in terms of the 'law of restitution' alias the *lex talionis*: "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot," *etc.*²³ In terms of "the *lex talionis*," comments Calvin,²⁴ "a **just proportion** is to be observed....

"The amount of punishment is to be equally regulated — whether as to a tooth, or an eye, or life itself — so that the compensation should **correspond** with the injury done.... For the purpose of preventing all violence, a **compensation** is to be paid — in **proportion** to the injury.

"A 'delinquency' (*delictum*) differs from a 'crime'.... It was unlawful to covenant with murderers for the remission of their punishment. Still, the judges were permitted, on their hearing of the case, to mitigate it — if a man were excused by his **unconsciousness** or **inadvertency**. This then...permits the judges to distinguish between the **nature** of offences — viz. that if they discover a man not to be worthy of death, they should still punish his negligence by a pecuniary fine."²⁵ For **involuntary manslaughter**, like unintended culpable miscarriage, is **not** the capital crime of **premeditated murder**.²⁶

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God also made provision for **theocratic kings** to be appointed. They were to point His people to Christ their King. Thus, through Moses, God told the Israelites:²⁷ "When you have come to the land which the Lord your God is giving you, and when you shall take possession of it and dwell there..., you shall in every way appoint as king over you the one whom the Lord your God shall choose.... You may not appoint a stranger.... He shall not multiply horses for himself.... Nor shall he multiply wives for himself. Neither shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself.... He shall write a copy of this Law for himself...and he shall read therein all the days of his life — so that he may learn to fear the Lord his God to keep all the words of this Law."

Here Calvin comments:²⁸ "The power of kings is here put beneath that of God.... Kings themselves are consecrated unto obedience to Him — lest the people should ever turn to ungodliness.... It was not without a cause that a special law was enacted with respect to kings, because nothing is more likely — than that earthly pomps should draw men away from piety.... As long as the **judges** were in power, their different form of government separated the Jews from heathen nations. All the surrounding neighbours, were subject to **kings**.

"God always retained the pre-eminence, whilst He raised up **judges** from amongst the people. But when they began to choose **kings** for themselves, they were so mixed up with the Gentiles that it was easy for them to fall into other corruptions. For the very

similarity (of their governments) united them more closely. Therefore, it is expressly said, 'When you shall set a king over yourself.' God signifies that the example of the nations would be an evil snare to them, that they should desire to have a king.... Their rebellion is here indirectly condemned, when God foretells that they would wantonly shake off their yoke — as indeed actually took place when they rejected Samuel and tumultuously required a king.

"But the question arises, how these two things can be reconciled — that kings should reign over them from the lust or foolish desire of the people; and yet that the kingdom was the chief glory of the people, a special pledge of God's favour, and consequently of their welfare and full felicity? The prophecy of Jacob is well known, 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah — until Shiloh come.' Gen. 49:10. Whence it appears that a King was promised to the children of Abraham — as an inestimable blessing.... It was God's design, from the beginning to set up David — as a type of Christ.

"God maintains His own supremacy in the appointment of a king, and does not consign the matter to the people's own suffrages — that thus He may chastise their audacity in demanding a king in accordance with a hasty impulse. Secondly, He commands that he should be taken from the people themselves, and excludes foreigners — because, if they had been admitted, a door was opened to apostasy.... God would not suffer a king to be sought elsewhere but from the bosom of His Church — in order that he [the king] might cherish and maintain that pure worship which he had imbibed from his childhood."

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"But," continues Calvin, such a king "shall not multiply horses.' The royal power is here circumscribed within certain limits — lest it should exalt itself too much in reliance on the glory of its dignity.... We know how insatiable are the desires of kings, inasmuch as they imagine that all things are lawful to them. Therefore, although the royal dignity may be splendid, God would not have it to be the pretext of unrestrained power but restricts and limits it to legal bounds.... He should not collect for himself a multitude of horses.... God condemns an immoderate number of horses, from the consequences which might ensue.... It might **excite** the minds of the kings rashly to undertake expeditions against the Egyptians.... They should be **content** with their own boundaries....

"Polygamy at that time had generally prevailed, so that the very humblest of the people violated the marriage vow with impunity.... Therefore it was necessary that the kings should be bound with closer restrictions — lest by their example they should give greater countenance to incontinency.... Besides, the people would have been subjected to great expense on their account — since such is the ambition of women, that they would all have desired to receive royal treatment and would have even vied with each other in finery.... Kings were not to multiply wives to themselves, lest their heart should turn away from what was right — as was the case with Solomon.... From being too devoted to his wives and being deceived by the snares of women, he fell into idolatry.

"God does not in vain enjoin — that they should constantly persevere in their duty.... He forbids kings to heap up treasures — because it cannot be done without rapine and violent exactions.... At the same time — wealth encourages them audaciously to undertake unjust wars; incites them to gross dissipation; and at length hurries them forward to tyrannical excesses.... God would have kings beware, lest in their pursuit of riches they should exhaust the blood of the people — and lest they should lavish their ill-gotten money in superfluous expenses and be extravagant with what belongs to others.

"It would not be enough to correct their errors, unless kings were also instructed in the fear of God and properly taught their duty.... Therefore a system of discipline is added, whereby it was profitable for them to be grounded in the study of religion and justice.... They should take the Law...to be the rule of all their actions....

"In order that kings might be more assiduously attentive in reading it — God would have a copy[of His Law] peculiarly dedicated to their use...., that kings might know that they required greater wisdom and counsel for ruling the people than private persons.... It was as if God deposited this treasure with the king. He then enjoins that they should exercise themselves in the doctrine of the Law — through the whole course of their lives.

"The object of their reading, is subjoined. First of all, in general, that they may learn to fear God and keep His statutes.... Second, lest being lifted up with pride and vanity they should despise and oppress their brethren.... The word 'brethren' is used designedly, lest they should imagine that the law of brotherhood was abolished, because they were set over the whole people.... They should study to cherish **all**, as **members of themselves**."

Christ's Rule Predicted and Established

The Kingdom of Ancient Israel, then, would point forward to Christ's Kingdom — as Isaiah later predicted.²⁹ For, as Calvin³⁰ commented on that prediction: "Christ will be a King 'to order and establish His Kingdom with judgment and with righteousness'... **Justice** is the best guardian of **kingdoms** and **governments**.... The **Kingdom** of Christ will be the model of the best kind of **government**." Now that Christ's Kingdom has come, "God dwells in the Church.... He is there worshipped — and acknowledged as **Judge, Lawgiver, and King**."³¹

Almost between the Old and the New Testaments, Daniel too predicted this. Then, says Calvin,³² the worldly kingdoms would be "broken up by Christ according to this dream of King Nebuchadnezzar.... The dream was presented to King Nebuchadnezzar, so that he might understand all future events to the renovation of the world." Even Babylon's king was to extol Jehovah! Prayed Calvin:³² "May Almighty God grant...that we may raise our eyes upwards, and consider how much power You have conferred upon Your only-begotten Son! Grant also, that He may rule and govern us by the might of His Spirit...and compel the

whole world to promote our salvation...until at length we enjoy the fruit of the victory which You have promised."

Calvin comments further:³³ "As to the reign of Christ — He cannot be deprived of the Empire conferred upon Him. Nor can we who are His members lose the Kingdom of which He has made us partakers. Christ, therefore, both in Himself and His members, reigns without any danger of change — because He always remains safe and secure in His Own Person.... Christ's Kingdom should destroy all the earthly kingdoms of which Daniel had previously spoken.... Whatever is adverse to the only-begotten Son of God, must necessarily perish and utterly vanish away. A Prophet exhorts all the kings of the earth to kiss the Son (Ps. 2:12)" — before His wrath is kindled but a little.

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Hence, as John Calvin comments,³⁴ even King "Nebuchadnezzar — after God had often chastised him — yielded at length.... Without the slightest doubt, Daniel recited...to show the king...to confess the God of Israel to be the only God — and to bear witness to this among all people under his sway.... Daniel had no other object or purpose...than to show the fruit of conversion in King Nebuchadnezzar.... Without doubt, King Nebuchadnezzar bore witness to his repentance — when he celebrated the God of Israel among all people, and when he proclaimed a punishment to all who spoke reproachfully against God.

"Augustine cites this testimony...and shows how ashamed Christian princes ought to be of their slothfulness, if they are indulgent to heretics and blasphemers — and do not vindicate God's glory by lawful punishment. Since Nebuchadnezzar...promulgated this decree...it ought to be sufficient for men of moderate and quiet tastes to know how King Nebuchadnezzar's edict was praised by the approval of the Holy Spirit.... It follows that kings are bound to defend the worship of God, and to execute vengeance upon those who profanely despise it...and on those who endeavour...to adulterate the true doctrine by their errors....

"Without doubt, Nebuchadnezzar wished to excite his subjects to the attentive perusal of this edict and to the acknowledgment of its value — and thus to subject themselves to the true and only God.... Nebuchadnezzar confessed Israel's God to be Most High.... He celebrates indeed, with magnificence, the glory of the Supreme God. But this is not sufficient — without abolishing all superstitions and promoting that religion alone which is prescribed by the Word of God, and [without] causing His pure and perfect worship to flourish."

As Nebuchadnezzar himself recorded:³⁵ "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honour the King of heaven — all of Whose works are truth, and His ways judgment.... Those that walk in pride, He is able to abase."

Comments Calvin:³⁶ "Nebuchadnezzar here confesses God to be just and true in all His works without any exception — notwithstanding His Own severe chastisements. This confession is not feigned. For he necessarily utters what he says, from the lowest depths of his heart.... He does not attribute to God a tyranny free from all law.... He condemns himself of pride, directly afterwards. Hence, he does not

hesitate to expose his [own] disgrace before mankind — so that God may be glorified. And this is the true method of praising God."

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So different to Nebuchadnezzar were the later **ungodly** Caesars in the Pre-Constantinian Empire of **Ancient Rome**. Yet there too, Christ Himself nevertheless enjoined people to **give back** or to **return** alias "to **render** to Caesar — **those things which are Caesar's!**"³⁷

As Calvin here comments:³⁸ "Christ...lays down a clear distinction between spiritual and civil government — in order to inform us that outward subjection [even to pagan rulers] does not prevent us from having within us a conscience free in the sight of God. For Christ intended to refute the error of those who did not think that they would be the people of God — unless they were free from every yoke of human authority.... Christ declares that it is no violation of God's authority...if, in respect of outward government, the Jews obey the Romans."

It is, continues Calvin, as if Christ had told the Jews: "You are exceedingly afraid lest — if tribute be paid to the Romans — the honour of God may be infringed! But you ought rather to take care to yield to God that service which He demands from you — and, at the same time, to **render** [or to 'give back'] to men what is **their due**."

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This is why Jesus warned His followers to uphold law and order, **even during the pagan Roman occupation** of His own country of Judea. Said He: "Do not think I have come to demolish the Law.... I have not come to demolish, but to **finish constructing**.... Not one jot or a single point shall pass from the Law.... Whosoever then shall break one of the least of these Commandments and teach men so — shall be called 'the least' as regards the Kingdom of heaven....

"Whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of **judgment**.... Whoever shall say to his brother 'Raca!' [or 'you worthless lout!'], shall be in danger of **the Council**.... Be quick to reach agreement with your legal adversary [to whom you owe money]...., lest the adversary hands you over to **the judge** and the judge hands you over to **the peace officer** and you be thrown into **prison!** Truly, I tell you, you will no way get out from there — till you have **paid back!** the last cent.... If anybody wants to **sue you at law** and take away your coat — let him [thereafter] have your cloak too. And whoever **legally compels** you to go a mile — go two with him!"

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Here Calvin comments: "We must not imagine that the coming of Christ has freed us from the authority of the Law! For it is the Eternal Rule of a devout and holy life.... Christ here speaks expressly of the 'Commandments of Life' or the Ten Words, which all the children of God ought to take as the Rule of their life.... God, **restoring** the world by the hand of His Son, has completely established His Kingdom.... The 'Kingdom of heaven' means the **renovation** of the **Church** — or the **prosperous** condition of the Church such as was then **beginning** to appear, by the preaching of the Gospel....

"To meet all hatred, enmity, debates and acts of injustice, Christ reproves that obstinacy which is the source of these evils and enjoins His own people to cultivate moderation...so that, by such an **act of justice**, they may purchase for themselves peace and friendship.... It is scarcely possible but that **differences** will sometimes happen — so Christ points out the **remedy** by which they may immediately be settled.... It is usually advantageous to us to come to an **early agreement** with adversaries.... For Christ makes no allowance that others may free a **debtor** by satisfying for him — but He expressly **demands** from each person the **payment** of what he **owes**....

"Christ now glances at another kind of annoyance.... That is when **wicked men** torment us with **law-suits**. He commands us, even on such an occasion, to be so patient and submissive that when our 'coat' has been 'taken away' [by due process of law] — we shall be prepared [if necessary] to give up 'our cloak also.'

"None but a **fool** will stand upon the words so as to maintain that we must yield to our opponents what they demand **before** coming into a court of law.... Such compliance would more strongly **inflame** the minds of wicked men to robbery and extortion.... **Nothing was farther** from the design of Christ!

"What then is meant by 'giving the cloak to him' who endeavours, **on the ground of a legal claim**, to take away our coat? If a man, oppressed by an **unjust decision**, loses what is his own and yet is prepared...to part with the remainder — he deserves **not less** to be commended for patience than the man who allows himself to be twice robbed **before** coming into court....

"We conclude that Christians are not entirely prohibited from **engaging in law-suits**, provided they have a **just defence** to offer.... **They do not surrender their goods as a prey!** Yet they do not depart from **this** doctrine of Christ — which exhorts us to bear patiently 'the despoiling of our goods.' Heb. 10:34.... But as it is possible for a man to **defend a just cause** with a view to the **public advantage**, we have no right to condemn the thing [of litigation] in itself."

The Gradual Advance of Christian Law

Especially Christians, preferably by way of **non-malicious arbitration**, were required to set a good example — before the watching eyes of a litigious pagan world. Hence St. Paul urged Christians with legitimate grievances even against one another — to **appoint arbitrators from their own midst**, rather than to litigate against one another in the **then-pagan** law courts before **then-pagan** judges utilizing a **then-pagan** system of law.

As Paul reminded such Christians: **Dare** any of you, having a case against one another, go to law before the **unjust** — and **not** before the **saints**? Do you not know that **the saints shall judge [or rule] the world**? So, if **the world shall be ruled by you** — are **you** unworthy to **judge** the smallest cases? If then you have judgments

concerning cases pertaining to this life..., is there not a **wise** man among **you**, who shall be **able to judge** between his **brethren**?" I Cor. 6:1-5.

Here, Calvin comments: "If anyone has a dispute with a brother, it ought to be resolved before believing judges and not before unbelievers.... The Apostle does not prohibit Christians from consulting lawyers.... The only thing he finds fault with the Corinthians for, is their referring their disputes to the **judgment** of unbelievers — **as if** there were not **suitable judges** in the **Church**.... He tells them to **choose judges** from the Church — to **settle the cases** peacefully and fairly."

Calvin immediately goes on to deal with a different situation — where Christians have been wronged by Non-Christians. Here, he comments that "it is not out of order for Christians to pursue their rights with moderation — so long as no damage is done to love....

"**Paul does not disapprove of law-suits** on the ground that it is wrong in itself to uphold a good case by **having recourse to a magistrate**.... Since **retribution belongs to the magistrate** — by God's appointment — those who seek its aid, are not irresponsibly taking vengeance into their own hands, but are having recourse to God as avenger....

"The thing is not evil in itself, but is spoiled by abuse.... The impression may not be given, that God was wasting His time in **establishing law-courts** [Ex. 18 & Rom. 13].... The boldness of the wicked may be checked — by an unspoiled and genuine zeal [in godly Christians].... This could only be done if we were allowed to **subject them** [the wicked] to **legal punishments**."

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Chiefly by way of evangelisation, yet also to some extent in ways such as the above, ultimately even the Pagan Roman Empire would inevitably become christianised. This would be accomplished through the ongoing **witness** of the members of the earthly church of the Ascended Christ — equipped as they were and are with the power of His outpoured and indwelling Spirit.

As Daniel (7:9-27) had predicted: "Thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit.... I saw...the Son of man come with the clouds of heaven...[yet **not from** but] **to** the Ancient of days" — thus, not at the time of Christ's Final Coming but rather at and from the time of **His Ascension** into heaven. Then, "there was given Him [to the Son of man] dominion and glory and a Kingdom — so that **all people, nations and languages should serve Him**. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away."

As a result, continued Daniel, "the **saints** of the Most High shall take the Kingdom — and possess the Kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever!" True, the fourth kingdom [of Pagan Rome] and the later "stout horn" of the Antichrist Romish Papacy would still make "war against the **saints** [or earthly Christians] — and prevail...**until** the

Ancient of days came" to grant them relief. Cf. Dan. 12:6-11f and Rev. 13:1 to 14:5. Then, however, "**judgment**" or political rule would be "given to the **saints** of the Most High — when the **time** came for the saints to take possession of the kingdom" of Rome. Cf. II Th. 2:3-8 and Rev. 14:6 to 18:4f.

Daniel explained that "the fourth beast shall be the fourth **kingdom** upon the earth.... Out of this kingdom, ten kings shall arise" — viz. after the collapse of the Roman Empire during the fifth century A.D. "Then another [the Romish Papacy] shall rise **after them**, and he shall be diverse from the first...and shall speak great words against the Most High and shall wear out the saints of the Most High and **think to change times and laws**. And they shall be given into his hand — until a time and [two] times and the dividing [or half] of a time.

"But the **judgment** shall sit, and **they shall take away** his dominion.... And the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be **given to the people of the saints of the Most High** Whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom. And **all** dominions shall serve and **obey** Him."

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On this ultimate conquest by the Ascended Christ's earthly **saints** — their conquest of Pagan Rome and even of the subsequent Romish Papacy — Calvin comments on Daniel's predictions that "the subject treated, is the **first** coming of Christ. It ought not to be restricted to the thirty-three years of His sojourn in the world, but it embraces His **Ascension** and that preaching of the Gospel which ushered in His Kingdom.... Daniel appropriately relates how God was seated, when the **first** advent of Christ is depicted....

"After Daniel has narrated how he saw God on the throne of judgment...., he now adds the second part of the vision.... 'The Son of man appeared in the clouds.' Doubtless this is to be understood of Christ... It **afterwards** follows 'He came to the Ancient of days.'

"This ought to be explained of Christ's **Ascension**.... He then **commenced** His **reign**, as we see in numberless passages of Scripture.... He really appeared...'in the clouds'...when He ascended to heaven." Acts 1:8-11.

Thereafter — Calvin continues, commenting on Daniel's predictions about Christ — "He now arrives at the Ancient of days." This occurred **after** "He **ascends** to heaven....

"Christ truly ascended into heaven.... We ought, clearly, to weigh the **purpose** of His doing so.... Christ left the world and ascended to the Father — first, to subdue all powers to Himself...; next, to restrain the devil, and to protect and preserve the Church....

"The prophet [Daniel] adds '**power** was given to Him'.... We will **not** say it was bestowed with relation to His being [or essence] — of being called **God**. It was given

to Him as **Mediator** — as God manifest **in flesh**, and with respect to His **human nature**.... For this reason, therefore, 'all power, honour and kingdom' was given to Christ" — so "that all nations, people and tongues should serve Him'.... **The events** which the prophet here narrates, **are not yet complete**....

"This vision suits very well with many assertions of Christ — where He bears witness to the power given Him by the Father. Matt. 28:18.... He does **not** here [in Dan. 7:14] speak of the **last judgment** — but is only teaching us the object of **His Ascension** to heaven.... When the prophet says Christ's dominion is eternal, he doubtless signifies the constant endurance of His Monarchy — even to the end of the world....

"Judgment was given to the saints' — [even] at the **commencement** of the gospel era.... [But then,] domestic enemies arose.... [Now at **that** time,] the Kingdom of Christ never **flourished** in the world.... But God wished to propose this **solace** to His prophet [Daniel] — by showing him the **future** reputation of the Church and its **elevation** to some degree of honour, **after** emerging from obscurity."

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Calvin next explains Daniel's predictions regarding the Roman Empire — during the continuance of which Christ ascended into heaven. First, he explains the strength of Pagan Rome. But then, he goes on to describe how Christ's Empire gradually would demolish it.

Comments Calvin: "The fourth beast signifies 'a fourth kingdom...which shall differ from all the kingdoms' [before it].... The Roman Empire we know...to have been [much] more extensive and powerful than the other monarchies.... Miserably and cruelly, the Church has been harassed by many tyrants.... We shall find the Church to have been much more heavily afflicted after Christ's advent, and to have been opposed by the Caesars in open warfare.... The Caesars became more and more stirred up to carry on war against the elect, and to oppress the Church....

"It was God...Who delivered into the hands of that [Pagan Roman] king the saints...and the institutions of piety — allowing him to pour out promiscuously human blood; to violate every national right; and to ruin as far as possible all religion.... These calamities should come to an end.... [Yet] 'for a time and times and the division of a time'...license would be given to the tyrants and enemies of the Church to pervert all things, to despise God, and set aside all justice....

"[However,] he says also, 'judgment shall then sit.' That is, God shall again restore to order.... The world shall feel His Providence ruling over the earth and the human race.... The restoration is here called a 'sitting in judgment' — when the Roman Empire was blotted out....

"These two things, then, are mutually in accordance — namely **the slaying of the fourth beast**; and the **giving of the kingdom and authority to the people of the**

saints. This does **not** seem to have been accomplished **yet!**" Thus wrote Calvin, in 1561.

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Calvin thus summarizes Daniel seven. "Let us now return to the passage. Daniel first of all says, 'a kingdom and power and extensive dominion shall be given to the people of the holy ones.' This was partially fulfilled when the Gospel emerged from persecution.... Daniel or the angel does **not** predict here occurrences connected with the [**second**] advent of Christ as Judge of the world, but with the **first** preaching and promulgation of the Gospel and the celebration of the Name of Christ. But this does not prevent him from drawing a magnificent picture of Christ's reign, and embracing its final completion....

"When the preaching of the Gospel **commenced**, no one would have thought its **success** could have been so **great**.... In consequence of the intimate union between Christ and His Church the peculiar attribute of Christ Himself is often transferred to His body [the Church].... God's royal sceptre went forth from Jerusalem, and shone far and wide — while the Lord was extending His Hand and His Authority....

"**All nations shall come — all kings shall serve!** At that [previous] time, no king existed who was not professedly an enemy of true piety, and who did not desire the abolition of the very name of His Law. [Yet] the prophets enlarge thus, magnificently, on the **future** restoration of this Kingdom [Ps. 2:8-12; Isa. 2:2f; Zech. 9:9f; *etc.*]....

" '**All powers**'— says he [Daniel] — '**shall serve and obey Him!**' That is, no power shall so boast in its loftiness — as not **willingly** to become subject to the **Church**.... At present...they tread it most ignominiously under foot.... **Then**, they ['**all powers**'] shall be **subject** to it"-- namely to "the **Church**" alias the visible Kingdom of God on Earth.

Law before and after the Reformation

The above are the comments of Calvin on Dan. 7:9-27 — regarding the destruction of the Pagan Roman Empire by Christ's Spirit-empowered Church. However, that would be followed by the corruption of the Church by the Romish Papacy — which stepped into the shoes of the defunct Pagan Roman Empire.

Gradually, however, even the Papacy would ultimately be destroyed. That would and shall be achieved by the powerful and progressive Protestant preaching of the Word of God — and by the expansion of Protestant institutions, such as Biblical legal systems.

In his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (IV:7:25), Calvin further observes: "To some, we seem slanderous and petulant when we call the Roman Pontiff **Antichrist**. But...Paul says that Antichrist would sit in the temple of God. II Thess. 2:4. In

another passage, the Spirit...says that his reign would be with great swelling words of vanity. Dan. 7:25

"This calamity was neither to be introduced by one man, nor to terminate in one man.... II Thess. 2:3; Dan. 7:9. Moreover, when the mark by which he [Paul] distinguishes Antichrist is that he would rob God of His honour and take it to himself..., it is certain that the Roman Pontiff has impudently transferred to himself the most peculiar properties of God and Christ. There cannot be a doubt that he is the leader and standard-bearer of an impious and abominable **kingdom**."

St. Paul the Apostle himself deals with this in detail, in his own inspired discussion of Daniel's predictions — in II Thessalonians 2:2-8. There, Calvin gives us the following vital insights into the many important events which would **follow** the destruction of the Pagan Roman Empire — **before** the Second Advent (alias the 'Coming Again' of Christ in Final Judgment).

"The false prophets...who are refuted by Paul," comments Calvin, "were bidding men feel assured of His **speedy** advent.... The 'day of Christ' — Paul retorts — will **not** come until [after] the world has fallen into **apostasy** and the rule of Antichrist **has held sway in the Church**.... The word 'apostasy'...cannot be confined to a few individuals.... Paul, then, is predicting a **general defection** on the part of the **Visible Church**....

"We may at once conclude how **useful** this prediction of Paul's is. For it might have seemed that a building [the Christian Church] which...lay for so long in ruins, could not have been the work of God — had Paul not warned them **long before** that this would take place.... Paul, however, is not speaking of one individual — but of a kingdom that was to be seized by Satan for the purpose of setting up a seat of abomination in the midst of God's temple. This we see accomplished in Popery.... The sect of Mohammed [from 570f A.D. onward] was like a raging overflow which in its violence tore away about half of the Church. It remained for **Antichrist** to infect the part which was left."

Not until after 590 A.D. was the Bishop of Rome ever called the sole 'pope' or universal father of the church. According to Calvin (*Inst.* IV:7:4f), Bishop Gregory of Rome then repudiated that new title — when he himself said that anyone who accepted it, was the forerunner of Antichrist!

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Calvin comments further: "Anyone who has learned from Scripture what are the things that belong particularly to God and who on the other hand considers well what the Pope usurps for himself, will not have much difficulty in recognizing Antichrist.... Scripture declares that **God is the only Lawgiver**.... It represents Him also as the Author of all holy observances....

"There is not one of these things which the Pope [of Rome] does not claim to be his own prerogative! He **boasts** that it is his right to **bind** men's consciences with such **laws** as he pleases....

The 400 A.D. Chrysostom, continues Dr. Calvin, "explains why the state of the Roman Empire [then] delayed the revelation [or rather the manifestation] of Antichrist.... So Antichrist [held John Chrysostom] was about to seize for himself the **vacant rule** of the Roman Empire." For the Roman Empire successively fell to the northern hordes, from 410 A.D. onwards.

Prior to Chrysostom, adds Calvin himself, "the power of the Roman Empire prevented the rise of Antichrist.... Satan had not yet amassed such strength that Antichrist could openly oppress the Church.... The name 'Antichrist' does **not** [**says Calvin**] designate a **single individual**, but a **single kingdom** which extends throughout **many generations**....

"[Yet] the reign of Antichrist will be temporary.... He [the Apostle Paul] **had** predicted the **destruction** of the reign of Antichrist, and [Paul] **now** describes the **manner** of his destruction.

"He will be **annihilated by the Word of the Lord**.... Paul does **not** think that Christ will accomplish this **in a single moment**....

"Meantime, Christ will scatter the darkness in which Antichrist will reign, by the rays which He will emit.... This **victory** of the **Word** will therefore be seen in the world. For 'the Breath of His Mouth' [alias 'the Spirit of the Word of God'] means simply **His Word**, as in Isa. 11:4 — the passage to which Paul appears to be alluding....

"True and sound **doctrine**...is represented as being **sufficient** to end all ungodliness -- and as destined at all times to be **victorious** over all the devices of Satan. It 'true and[sound doctrine]' is also a commendation, when a little further on the **preaching** of this doctrine is referred to as Christ's coming to us!" II Th. 2:8 *cf.* 3:1.

The Law Courts in the Acts of the Apostles

Before the rise of Antichrist — and even today — whenever any unbelieving rulers asked or ask God's people to do that which is wrong, the latter had (and still have) no option but to refuse. Hence, when the Jewish Sanhedrin ordered the Apostles to speak no more in the Name of Jesus — the latter disregarded that prohibition. "Peter and John answered and said to them, 'You must judge whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken to you rather than to God. For we cannot but keep on speaking about the things which we saw and heard!'"³⁹

Comments Calvin:⁴⁰ "Let us remember to whom they make this answer. For this Council did undoubtedly represent the Church. Yet because they [the Members of the Sanhedrin] abuse their authority, the Apostles say they [the Members of the Sanhedrin] are not to be obeyed....

"They [Christ's Apostles] set against their [the Members of the Sanhedrin's] decrees — the authority of God. This would be inappropriate, were it not that those who in other respects were ordinary Pastors of the Church — were at the same time enemies of God. The Apostles further make clear that obedience offered to evil and unfaithful Pastors — even though they exercise lawful authority in the Church — is contrary to God.

"Whatever title then men may hold, they are to be listened to only on the condition that they do not lead us away from obeying God. So we must examine all their traditions by the rule of the Word of God. We must obey princes and others who are in authority — but only in so far as they do not deny to God His rightful authority as the Supreme King, Father and Lord.... Such limits are to be observed in civil government. They ought to be of still greater importance, in the spiritual government of the Church.

"It is discourteous and shows a [very] malicious obstinacy, to raise a commotion about unnecessary matters. But...the Gospel of Christ is now in question.... For this to be suppressed through the prohibitions of men, is a crime.... Whoever therefore bids them be silent, is seeking...to make the grace of God of no effect....

"Woe to us for our cowardice -- if such a godless prohibition should stop our mouths! Now let all men see what confession God requires of them lest — when they keep silence out of consideration for men — they hear a dreadful voice proceed out of the mouth of Christ condemning their faithlessness....

"Let not those who are called to the office of teaching, be terrified by any threats of men or by any form of authority. But let them freely execute that office which they know to have been laid upon them by God. 'Woe be unto me,' says Paul, 'if I preach not the Gospel — because the duty has been entrusted to me!' I Cor. 9:16. And we must set this Commandment of God not only against the tyrannous commands of men, but against every obstacle that Satan often sets up in order to break off or impede the course of the Gospel.... The preaching of the Gospel is pleasing to God, and therefore must not be suppressed ---- on any account!"

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After the Apostles therefore disobeyed the tyrannical edict of the Sanhedrin, they were again intimidated. Their enemies brought the Apostles "and set them before the Council. Then the High Priest asked them, saying: 'Did we not straitly command you that you should not teach in this name [of Jesus]? And behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us!' Then Peter and the other Apostles answered and said, 'We ought to obey God rather than men!'"⁴¹

Comments Calvin:⁴² "God sets men over us with power, in such a way that He keeps His own authority unimpaired. Therefore we must do the will of those who rule over us — to the extent that the authority of God is not violated. When the use of [such] power is legitimate, the comparison between God and man is inopportune.... God intends to be heard by means of men. Indeed, man is nothing else but an instrument

of God. If a magistrate is carrying out his function properly, then anyone setting him in contrast with God will be inverting things — seeing that the magistrate is not out of step with God. Rather, the opposite rule will then hold good — in order to obey God, we must submit to His ministers, just as happens in the case of parents and masters.

"But as soon as governors lead us away from obedience to God, seeing that they enter into conflict with God impiously and boldly, they must be put in their place — so that God and His authority may stand supreme.... God does not think men worthy of titles of honour, in order that they may obscure His own glory! Therefore if a father, who is not content with his own station, tries to take from God the highest honour as Father — then he is a man, and nothing else. If a king or a prince or a magistrate extols himself so much that he minimises the honour and authority of God — he is nothing but a man!"

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When Paul was on trial, the high priest there commanded those near him illegally to smite Paul on the mouth. Immediately Paul responded: "God shall smite you, you whitened wall! For, do you sit to judge me according to law — and yet command me to be smitten contrary to the law?"⁴³

Comments Dr. John Calvin:⁴⁴ "Extraordinary madness was raging.... The high priest was possessed by that violent impulse to order Paul to be struck for no reason.... "What disgraceful and horrible laxity there was.... When Ananias, the president of the Council, ought to have been a restraining influence on the others by his gravity — he forgot all moderation, and incites them to violence and cruelty.... Disorderly and uncivilized behaviour reigned.... Paul cannot pass over that insult in silence, without at least expostulating with the high priest in grave terms and threatening him with God's punishment.... Here, Paul appeals to God's judgment ---- so that the high priest may not pride himself in his tyranny.... He makes the Law his excuse for occupying the judge's bench — then proceeds contrary to the Law!"

A little later, when on trial before Festus, Paul declared:⁴⁵ "If I be an offender ---- or have committed anything worthy of death ---- I do not refuse to die. But, if none of these things be so of which these people accuse me — no man may hand me over to them! I appeal to Caesar!"

Here John Calvin rightly comments:⁴⁶ "Certainly Paul had no fear of litigating under an unbelieving judge. For [as] an appellant, [he] is raising a new action. Let us therefore realize that God Who has instituted courts of law, also allows His own the legitimate use of them. Therefore those interpreters are wrong who suppose that the Corinthians [I Cor. 6:1f] are absolutely condemned by Paul because they invoke the help of the magistrate for the defence of their right.... He is there reproofing an obvious fault ---- *viz.* that they could not put up with any injury...in their eagerness to go to law."

Governor Festus himself then wrote to King Agrippa that the accusers had cried out that Paul "ought not to live any longer." Yet extremely significantly, Festus then immediately added: "I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death."⁴⁷

Paul and the Law

St. Paul had confidently appealed to the court in Rome. For, as he himself wrote to the Roman Christians: "Let every person be subject to the higher authorities! For there is no authority [or power], but from God. The authorities that are, have been ordained by God. Therefore, whosoever keeps on resisting the authority — resists the ordinance of God. And they that resist — shall receive condemnation to themselves. For rulers are not a terror to **good** but to **evil** works."

However, what such works are truly good? Such good works and such evil works are quite **undefinable** — without reference to the **Ten Commandments** of the **Moral Law** (alias the rightly-understood **Law of nature** — alias the **Law of nature's God**).

Paul continues: "Do you then not desire be afraid of the authority? Practise that which is **good**, and you shall receive praise from it! For it is the minister of God toward you, for **good**. But if you do that which is **evil** — be afraid! For it does not wear the sword in vain. For it is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him who keeps on practising **evil**.

"Therefore, you must needs be subject — not only for the sake of wrath but also for that of conscience. For this very reason, you also pay tribute. For they are God's ministers, continually attending to this very thing.

"Therefore, give back to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour [is due]! **Do not owe anybody anything** — except to love one another!"⁴⁸

Here, Paul is discussing "the authority of the magistrates," comments Calvin.⁴⁹ "He calls them **higher powers...rather than supreme** (as if they possess the highest authority)... The reason why we ought to be subject to magistrates, is that they have been appointed by God's ordination..... To despise the providence of the One Who is the Author of civil government, is to wage war against Him.... He has appointed them for the just and lawful government of the world. Although dictatorships and unjust authorities are not ordained governments, yet the right of government is ordained by God for the well-being of mankind.

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Dr. Calvin goes on: "The usefulness of rulers is that the Lord has designed by this means to provide for the peace of the **good** -- and to restrain the waywardness of the **wicked**. In these two ways the safety of mankind is secured. Unless the fury of the wicked is opposed and the innocent protected from their wilfulness -- there will [ultimately] be universal destruction....

"We have no reason for fearing the magistrate, if we are **good**.... The very desire to shake off or remove this yoke from oneself, is tacit proof of an **evil** conscience that is plotting some mischief. Paul, however, is here speaking of the true and natural duty of the magistrate.... Although those who hold power often depart from this, we must still render them the obedience which is due to rulers.

"Rulers, however, never abuse their power by harassing the good and the innocent — without retaining in their despotic rule some semblance of just government. No tyranny, therefore, can exist — which does not in some respect assist in protecting human society. Paul has also noted here the two parts considered also by philosophers to constitute the well-ordered administration of a state -- *viz.*, the rewards given to the virtuous; and the punishments inflicted upon the wicked.

"Magistrates...are not to rule on their own account, but for the **public good**. Nor do they have unbridled power, but power that is restricted to the welfare of their subjects.... Since they have been chosen by God and do His business, they are answerable to Him. But the ministry which God has committed to them, has reference to their subjects. They have also therefore an obligation to them. Paul instructs individuals that it is by the divine kindness that they are defended by the sword of rulers -- against the injuries of the wicked.

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Calvin continues: "A second part of the function of magistrates, is their duty to repress by force the insolent behaviour of the wicked who do not willingly allow themselves to be governed by laws — and to inflict punishment on their offences, as God's judgment requires. Paul explicitly declares that magistrates are armed with the sword not just for empty show, but in order to **smite evildoers**.

"By **arming** the magistrate, the Lord has also committed to him the use of the **sword.... Whenever he punishes the guilty by death**, he is obeying God's **commands** — [just] by exercising His vengeance. Those, therefore, who consider that it is wrong to shed the blood of the guilty — are contending against God....

"Magistrates...are to be obeyed not only on the grounds of human necessity, but also in order that we may obey God.... We must voluntarily take upon ourselves the submission to which our conscience is bound by the Word of God. Therefore even if the magistrate were unarmed and it were lawful to provoke and despise him with impunity, we should no more attempt to do this than if we saw the threat of punishment hanging immediately over us....

"Paul takes the opportunity of mentioning **tributes** [or **taxes**], and he bases his reason for paying tribute on the office of the magistrates.... It is their responsibility to **defend** and preserve uninjured the peace of the **upright** — and to **resist** the impious attempts of the **wicked**. They cannot do this, unless they are assisted by force and strong protection.

"Tributes, therefore, are **paid by law** — to support **such** necessary expenses.... They should remember that all which they receive from the people, is public property — and not a means of satisfying private lust and luxury. We see the **uses** for which Paul appoints the tributes which are paid — *viz.*, that heads of state may be furnished with assistance, for the **defence** of their subjects."

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Similar is Paul's injunction to Titus⁵⁰ regarding the Christians of Crete. The Apostle told Titus to "remind to be subject of principalities and powers; to obey magistrates; to be ready to every good work; to speak evil of no man; [and] to be no brawlers."

Comments Calvin:⁵¹ "It is evident...that the Apostles had great difficulty in keeping the common people in subjection to the authority of magistrates and princes.... Paul now wishes to give a general admonition that they should calmly respect the order of civil government, obey the laws, and submit to the magistrates. For the subjection to princes and obedience to magistrates he requires — extends also to edicts and laws and other civil duties.

"What he immediately adds about being 'ready for every good work' may be applied to the same subject — as if he had said, 'All who do not refuse to live a good and honest life will willingly yield obedience to magistrates.' For since they have been appointed for the preservation of human life — he who desires their removal or shakes off their yoke is the enemy of equity and justice, and so devoid of all humanity.... He [Paul] is commending to us — kindness towards our neighbours in our whole life."

Paul also supplies an interesting piece of information right at the very end of his Epistle to Titus (3:13). "Bring **Zenas the lawyer** and Apollos on their journey diligently — so that nothing be wanting to them."

Calvin comments on these words of Paul: "It is uncertain whether [by 'Zenas the lawyer'] he means a man skilled in the civil law, or in the Law of Moses. But since we can infer from Paul's words that he was a poor man needing outside help, the probability is that he belonged to the same order as Apollos — that is, an interpreter of the Law of God.... Such people were more often in want, than those who conducted legal cases in court." Even in our own twentieth century, such is still often the case.

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Timothy was told by Paul⁵² that "the Law is good — if a man use it lawfully. Knowing this, that the Law is not made for a righteous man — but for the lawless and disobedient; for the ungodly and for sinners; for unholy and profane [persons]; for patricides [or those who are **murderers** of fathers] and murderers of mothers; for manslayers [or **homicides**]; for **whoremongers**; for them that defile themselves with mankind [either **homosexually** or **lesbianly**]; for menstealers [or **slavetraders** and **kidnappers**]; for **liars**; for **perjured persons** — and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine."

Comments Calvin:⁵³ "The Law is no enemy to **just** men.... Certain 'learned men'...argue that the Law has nothing to do with the sons of God who have been regenerated by His Spirit — since 'it was not for righteous men' that it was given. But the context...is taking for granted the common saying that '**good** laws spring from **bad** morals' — and holds that God's Law was given to restrain the licentiousness of the ungodly....

"The question arises whether there is any mortal who does not belong to the category of those who are restrained by the Law. My answer is that Paul here calls '**righteous**'

not those who are absolutely perfect — since no such men will be found — but those who **aim** at what is **good**.... He declares that his Gospel, far from contradicting the Law, is its best confirmation.... Those who draw back from the Gospel, do not hold to the heart of the Law... . The Gospel which he preaches, is the only Gospel of God — so that all the fables he has been rebuking, are at variance with both Law and Gospel."

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Paul then goes on to "exhort that...supplications, prayers, intercession and giving of thanks be made for all men — **for kings** and for all that are **in authority** — so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all **godliness** and **honesty**. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."⁵⁴

Here, John Calvin comments⁵⁵ that "God has appointed magistrates and princes for the preservation of mankind. However much they may fall short of the divine appointment, we must not on that account cease to cherish what belongs to God ---- nor to desire its preservation.

"That is why believers, in whatever country they live, should not only obey the laws and the behests of the magistrates — but should also in their prayers commend their welfare to God. Jeremiah [29:7] said to the Israelites, 'Pray for the peace of Babylon; for in their peace, you shall have peace!'

"This is the universal teaching of Scripture.... He [Paul] adds a further inducement, by showing how this will profit us ourselves — and by enumerating the advantages which a well-ordered government provides.

"The first is a **quiet life**. For magistrates are armed with the sword, to keep the peace. Unless they restrained the boldness of wicked men — the whole world would be full of robberies and murders. Thus, the right way of keeping peace — is that every man should be given what is his own; and the violence of the powerful should be curbed.

"The second advantage, is the preservation of **godliness**. This is when [also] magistrates undertake to promote religion....

"The third advantage is the care of **public gravity**. For the **benefit** of magistrates, is that they prevent men from abandoning themselves to **bestial impurity** or [licentiousness or] **shameful wantonness** — and preserve modesty and moderation.... If therefore we have any concern for public tranquillity or godliness or decency — let us remember our duty to care for those through whom such important benefits are obtained!

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"From this we conclude," explains Calvin,⁵⁵ "that fanatics who wish magistrates to be abolished, are devoid of all humanity — and promote only cruel barbarism. What a difference between Paul (who says that for the sake of preserving justice and decency and of promoting religion, we ought to pray for kings) — and those men who say that

not only kingly power but all government is opposed to religion! What Paul says, has the Holy Spirit as its Author — so the view of the fanatics must be from the devil.

"If the question is raised whether we ought to pray for [those] kings from whom we do not receive these advantages — my answer is, that we ought to pray that, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they may begin to grant us those blessings they have up till now failed to provide. Thus we should not only pray for those who are already worthy, but we should ask God to make wicked rulers **good**.... Magistrates are appointed by God for the protection of religion and of the public peace and decency.... We ought to [then] consider magistrates as the ordinary means which He has ordained in His providence — for bestowing those other blessings.

"On the other hand, magistrates ---- and all who hold office in the magistracy ---- are here reminded of **their duty**. It is not enough for them to restrain injustice by giving to each his own, and by maintaining peace — if they are not also zealous to promote religion and regulate morals by wholesome discipline. The exhortation of David that they should 'kiss the Son' (Ps. 2:12) — and Isaiah's word [49:23] that they should be nursing fathers to the Church — are very relevant. Thus, they have no cause to congratulate themselves — if they neglect to give their assistance in maintaining the worship of God....

"For this is **good** and acceptable'.... The command...is expedient.... It is pleasing to God.... When we know that this is God's will — that should be the best of all reasons for doing it. By '**good**' — he means what is right and lawful.... The will of God is the rule by which we must regulate all our duties."

The Progress of Christ's Law

Finally, the Apostle Peter assures us that by so doing, we will gradually — over the years — 'christianize' even pagan politics. He declares:⁵⁶ "Be subject to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake — whether it be to the King [alias Caesar] as supreme; or unto Governors, as [those] sent by him for vengeance on **evil-doers** and for praise to them that **do well**. For so is the will of God — that by **well-doing**, you should **put to silence** the ignorance of **foolish men**" alias **morally depraved** persons.

Here, Dr. John Calvin comments:⁵⁷ "Obedience towards magistrates is a part of honest behaviour.... By refusing [to submit to] the yoke of government, they [the Christians] would have given to the Gentiles no little occasion for reproaching them [*viz.* the cause of Christians].... All the magistrates were [then] Christ's **adversaries**.... They so abused their authority — that no vestige of God securing special reverence, was seen in them....

"[Yet] Peter reminds us that God, the Maker of the world, has not left the human race in a state of confusion.... He names 'Caesar' whose [Pagan Roman] Empire extended over all those countries mentioned at the beginning of the Epistle [I Pet. 1:1].... It is God Who girds kings with a sword; Who raises them on high; and Who transfers kingdoms as He pleases....

"Since God keeps the world in order by the ministry of magistrates, all those who detract from their authority are the enemies of mankind.... The **good** at least live under the care and protection of magistrates.... They are not exposed to the violence and injuries of the **ungodly**.... The wicked are not allowed to do what they like....

"Kings and other magistrates often abuse their power.... [Nevertheless,] however men may go astray -- the end fixed by God is unchanged.... God never allows His just order to be destroyed by the sin of men -- without some of its outlines remaining unobscured.... Some kind of government -- however deformed and corrupt it may be -- is still better and more beneficial than anarchy.

"The mouths of the foolish ought to be stopped. The phrase which he adopts, to **put to silence** the ignorance — though it may seem harsh on account of its novelty — does not, however, obscure the sense.... In depriving the unbelieving of understanding and reason, we conclude that a right understanding cannot exist without the knowledge of God. Therefore, however much the unbelieving may be satisfied with their own acuteness — and may even seem to others to be wise and prudent — yet the Spirit of God condemns them for their **folly** [alias their **moral depravity**].... He lays down the way in which the **evil-speaking** of the unbelieving is to be **restrained** — namely by **well-doing**" (alias the **good works** of Christians).

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The ascended Christ is now enthroned in heaven. From there, He has poured out the blessing of His Spirit — to empower earthly Christians now to promote His Kingdom — here on earth, as it is in heaven. Christ still works, and powerfully — also **through** the 'well-doing' alias the **good works** of His earthly saints (by their progressive keeping of the Decalogue with the indwelling power of His Holy Spirit).

Consequently, through the vigorous execution of Christ's Great Commission in its **full** scope, His Biblical Law will yet become enshrined in the constitutions of every nation on Earth. **For God's Law is the sceptre of King Jesus.** Ps. 2:8-12; 22:27-28; 72:11; Isa. 2:2-4; Mic. 4:1-4 & 5:2-4; Dan. 7:13f,18,22,25-27; Mt. 6:10f; 28:19; I Cor. 6:1-5; 15:24-28; Rev. 11:15 & 15:3f & 17:14f.

King Solomon had predicted of the Messiah:⁵⁸ "All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him." Here, Calvin comments:⁵⁹ that "the Kingdom of Christ...was to be extended from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof [hence from East to West]....

"The King chosen by God...will obtain so complete a **victory over all His enemies**, far and wide, that they shall come humbly to pay Him homage.... The **whole World** will be brought into subjection to the authority of Christ.... **The nations** will be convinced that nothing is more desirable — than to receive from Him **laws and ordinances.**"

Isaiah (2:2-4f) prophesied that **all nations** would flow into the Christian Church — when she would send forth **God's Law** in the latter days. Here, Calvin comments⁶⁰ that this "fullness of days began at the coming of Christ. It flows on in uninterrupted **progress**.... The Prophet here shows that the boundaries of His Kingdom will be

enlarged, so that He may rule over various nations.... Christ is not sent to the Jews only, so that He may reign over them [alone] — but so that He may **hold His sway over the whole World.**"

Micah predicted⁶¹ that "in the last days...**the Law** shall go forth from Zion" — that is, **from the Christian Church**. Here, Dr. John Calvin comments⁶² that "it was Christ Who introduced the renovation of the World.... **Nations shall come to God**. It is now easy to see...that **the whole World** should be subject to Him.... Not a few nations but many shall assemble to serve Him....

"Many nations would come to the temple of the Lord.... The Jews came to the temple not only to worship but also to be instructed in the Law of God.... But what does our Prophet say? **A Law shall go forth from Zion** — that is, it shall be proclaimed far and wide.... He will send forth His Voice to the extreme limits of the Earth.... **This sceptre** would be sent far abroad by God the Father — so that Christ might have under His rule all those nations which had previously been aliens."

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In His Great Commission, Jesus commands His Ministers of the Word to go forth into all the World and to preach the Gospel to every human being. For they are, before the end of history, yet to turn all nations into His disciples and to teach them to observe all things whatsoever He has ever commanded.⁶³

Here Dr. John Calvin comments:⁶⁴ "The nature of the apostolic function is clear from the command 'Go ye into all the World and preach the Gospel to every creature!' Mark 16:15. No fixed limits are given them, but the whole World is assigned **to be reduced under obedience to Christ** — so that, by spreading the Gospel as widely as they could, they might everywhere erect His Kingdom....

"By proclaiming the Gospel everywhere, they should bring **all nations** to the observance of the faith." The latter emphasis — the emphasis "**all nations**" — is that of John Calvin himself.

For the ascended Jesus Christ, through the Spirit-empowered good works of His earthly children, is even now trampling down His earthly enemies. The Saviour Himself will have **finished** subduing them — when "the kingdoms of this World have become that of our Lord and of His Christ. Then He shall keep on reigning for ever and ever."

Meantime: "Just and true are Your ways, You King of nations! Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your Name? Because You alone are holy. **For all nations shall come and worship** before You!"⁶⁵

Justification and Righteousness

Naturally, as far as **justification** before a sin-hating God is concerned, Christians are "not under law but under grace." Rom. 6:14f. Nevertheless, as Calvin here

comments, "the **Law is the rule of good living**, and has been given to govern men....

"If it is broken, all discipline at once falls to the ground, the restraints are shattered, and ultimately **no difference** or distinction **between good and evil** is left. But [then] our misconception here consists in our supposing that the righteousness which God approves in His law, is abolished — when the Law is abrogated.

"This **abrogation**, however, **does not** at all apply to the **precepts** which teach us the right way to live. For Christ **confirms** and sanctions **these**, and **does not abrogate them**. The proper part of the Law which is removed, is the **curse** [incurred because of transgressing the Law] — to which all men who are beyond the grace of Christ, are subject."

So men are to do **good works** — by endeavouring to keep God's Holy Law. Of course, as Calvin observes,⁶⁶ "men are **not justified by works**" — by their **own** works. Yet "we do not deny that the **observance** of the Law — is true righteousness."

Calvin explains further:⁶⁷ "**Righteousness** comprehends all the duties of **equity** — in rendering to every one his due. Next follows **godliness** — which separates us from the pollutions of the world and connects us with God in true holiness."

Here, Calvin connects 'righteousness' and 'godliness' not to the 'reason' of fallen man. He connects it specifically to a Christian's striving to live by God's Ten Commandments.

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"Indeed," Calvin insists,⁶⁸ "if we would test our reason by the Divine Law, which is a perfect standard of righteousness — we should find out how blind it [our reason] is, in many respects. It certainly **attains not** to the principal heads in the First Table — such as: trust in God; the ascription to Him of all praise in virtue and righteousness; the invocation of His name; and the true observance of His Day of Rest. Did ever any soul — **under the guidance of natural sense** [alias unaided reason] — imagine that these and the like constitutes legitimate worship of God?"

"As to the precepts of the Second Table, there is considerably more knowledge of them — inasmuch as they are more closely connected with the preservation of civil society. Even here, however, there is something defective [in Natural Law]. Every [ordinary] man of 'understanding' deems it most absurd to submit to [what is perceived to be] unjust and tyrannical domination — provided it can by any means be thrown off.... But the Lord [Jesus], condemning this too lofty spirit [in unregenerate mankind], prescribes to His people — **that** patience which [unregenerate] mankind deems infamous."

So, though imperfectly, Natural Law still operates — even after man has become totally (though not absolutely) depraved. Observes John Calvin:⁶⁹ "God...has been pleased...to manifest His perfections in the whole structure of the Universe, and

pleased daily to place Himself in our view — so that we cannot open our eyes, without being compelled to behold Him....

"None, however dull and illiterate, can plead ignorance as their excuse.... Ps. 104:2.... Heb. 11:3.... Ps. 19:1.... Rom. 1:20."

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Calvin continues:⁷⁰ "But herein appears the shameful ingratitude of man.... At this day..., the earth sustains on her bosom many monster minds — minds which are not afraid to employ the seed[s] of Deity imprinted in human nature as a means of suppressing the Name of God.... How few of us there are who, in lifting our eyes to the heavens or looking abroad on the various regions of the earth, ever think of the Creator.... How many who imagine that they [the seeds of Deity imprinted in human nature] are the casual results produced by the blind evolutions of the wheels of chance.... Hence the immense flood of error with which the whole World is overflowed."

Further:⁷¹ "Each nation had adopted a variety of fictions.... But [just as men] when aided by glasses begin to read distinctly — so Scripture, gathering together the impression of the Deity..., shows us the true God clearly.... It is necessary to apply to **Scripture** — in order to learn the sure marks which distinguish God as the Creator of the world from the whole herd of fictitious gods....

"How prone the human mind is, to lapse into forgetfulness of God! ... How readily inclined to every error..., corrupted by the presumptuous audacity of men! ... God, foreseeing the inefficacy of His impress imprinted on the fair form of the universe — has given us the assistance of **His Word**....

"We must go, I say, **to the Word** [Isa. 8:20 & II Tim. 3:15-17].... No daily responses are given from heaven, and the Scriptures are the only records in which [the true Lord] God has been pleased to consign His truth to perpetual remembrance.... The very things [now] contained in the Two Tables [of Ex. 20] are, in a manner, dictated to us by that internal law which...is...written and stamped on every heart." Gen. 2:9-18; Eccl. 7:29; Rom. 1:20f; 2:14-16; Eph. 4:24-29.

The Law's First Table

"The Ten Commandments of the Law" — explains Calvin⁷² — "which God **originally**[!] prescribed, is still in force.... But man, being immured in the darkness of error, is scarcely able by means of that 'Natural Law' to form any tolerable idea of the worship which is acceptable to God....

"Therefore, as a necessary remedy both for our dullness and our contumacy, the Lord has given us His **Written Law**. This, by its sure attestations, **removes the obscurity** of the '**Law of Nature**' — and also, by shaking off our lethargy, [it] makes a more lively and permanent impression on our minds."

To Calvin, "the Law is perpetual" — inasmuch as "the rule of just and pious living even now retains its force." This is so even after "we are delivered from the yoke of bondage [and] from the curse" of law-breaking — and even after "the coming of Christ has put an end to its ceremonies."⁷³ For "this is the peculiar blessing of the New Covenant — that the Law gets [re-]written on men's hearts."⁷⁴

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Having thus recognised the division of the Law into a First and a Second Table, Calvin gives the following classification of the various Mosaic Laws. He does so, under the ten heads of the Decalogue.

The First Commandment⁷⁵ requires the worship of the Triune Lord Jehovah — **alone**. Ex. 20:3 and Dt. 5:7. Here, Calvin gives a detailed discussion of Leviticus 18 to 19 and of Deuteronomy 6 *etc.* Thereafter, under the **Ceremonial Supplements of the First Commandment**,⁷⁶ he deals with: the Passover (Ex. 12); the sanctifying of the first born (Ex. 13); the payment of atonement tribute (Ex. 30); the Nazirite vow (Num. 6); the offerings of the first fruits (Dt. 26); the purification of women (Lev. 12); and also the confinement and purification of lepers (Dt. 24 and Lev. 14).

There, he also deals with: the pollutions arising from 'issues' or personal effluxes (Lev. 15); physical defects which exclude men from the tabernacle (Dt. 23); various general purification laws (Num. 19); and the disposal of waste matter (Dt. 23). Under the same head, he further discusses: prohibited mixtures (Dt. 22); clean and unclean foods (Lev. 20 and 22); accidentally polluted things (Dt. 14); mixed marriages (Dt. 21); and the various judicial supplements (Dt. 13 & 17 to 20, Ex. 22, and Num. 10).

Explains Calvin further:⁷⁷ "The purport of this Commandment is that the Lord will have Himself Alone to be exalted in His people.... The duties which we owe to God...seem to admit of being not improperly reduced to four heads." These heads are: adoration, trust, invocation, and thanksgiving.

In this regard, John Calvin also gives us the following definitions. "**Adoration**...[is] the veneration and worship which we render to Him when we do homage to His majesty.... **Trust** is secure resting in Him.... **Invocation** may be defined [as fleeing or] the betaking of ourselves to His promised aid..... **Thanksgiving** is the gratitude which ascribes to Him the praise for all our blessings.... It is **not enough** to refrain from **other** gods! We must, at the same time, devote ourselves wholly to **Him!**"

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The Second Commandment⁷⁸ requires that the true God be worshipped **in the correct way**. Ex. chs. 20 & 25 to 30 & 34; Num. ch. 8; Dt. chs. 4 & 12 to 16. Here, Calvin gives a detailed discussion: of priesthood laws (Ex. chs. 28 to 29; Lev. 6:22; Num. chs. 3 to 35; and Dt. chs. 17 & 31); of tithing obligations (Num. ch. 18 & Dt. ch. 18); and of oblations (Lev. ch. 24). He also discusses offerings (Ex. ch. 29 & Num. chs. 28 to 29) and the yearly atonement (Lev. chs. 1 to 7 & 16 & 22; Num. ch.

15, and Dt. ch. 23). Then, under the **Civil Supplements of the Second Commandment**,⁷⁹ he deals with the destruction of idolatrous edifices and practices. Ex. chs. 23 & 34; Dt. chs. 7, 17, 23 & 25.

As Calvin explains:⁸⁰ "This Commandment...curbs the licentious daring which would subject the incomprehensible God **to our senses** — or represent Him under any visible shape.... Every visible shape of Deity which man devises, is diametrically opposed to the Divine Nature."

This does not, of course, prohibit the manufacture or appreciation of religious artifacts **not purporting to represent** nor to suggest the Deity Himself. Yet it does prohibit crucifixes — alias crosses with a three-dimensional effigy of 'Christ'[?!] superimposed on them. Indeed, the prohibition applies against the religious use of even plain crosses without such effigies.

Observes Calvin in his 23rd & 123rd *Sermons on Deuteronomy* (4:15-18 & 21:22f): "It is not for us to **counterfeit** God.... The complaint that God makes, is this: 'Does wood or stone resemble Me? As for them, they be but dead and corruptible things. Does it not well appear, then — that dishonour and wrong is offered to My Being, whenever men go about...to represent Me under such shapes? ... Is it not apparent that men are worse than mad, when they will needs take upon them[selves] to shape out God's Being -- seeing that no shape can be made of their own souls [as images of God]; which are nothing, in comparison of Him?....

"God will not have any manner of image made of Him.... 'If you will needs make some puppet to represent Me — is it not as good as a defacing of My glory, and a spiting of Me to the uttermost of your power?' ... When we have shaped out a stone or a piece of wood — and made it a nose, ears and all the rest of man's limbs — yet it has no feeling as all.... There is no likeness between God and any of all the shapes that can be made to represent Him.... Seeing that even blind men knew this -- or rather that God did cast forth those words by their mouth — is it not a horrible condemnation to such as term themselves Christians, if they take not heed to it? ... He has told us that it is not lawful for us to have any image of Him to represent Him....

"God has forbidden two things. First, the making of any picture of Him — because it is a disguising and falsifying of His glory, and a turning of His truth into a lie. That is one point. The other is that no image may be worshipped. But now, do not the Papists worship images? ... They paint and portray 'Jesus Christ' Who (as we know) is not only man but also God manifested in the flesh.... Should we have portraitures and images whereby only the flesh may be represent? Is it not a wiping away of that which is chiefest in our Lord Jesus Christ, that is...His divine Majesty? Yes! And therefore, wheresoever a **crucifix** stands...in the Church -- it is all one as if the Devil had defaced the Son of God. You see, then, that the Papists are destitute of all excuse.... They abuse their puppets and pictures....

"It is not by the virtue of the wood [of crosses], that we be so blessed before God by means of our Lord Jesus Christ -- as the Papists brutishly bear men in hand. For

when they hear the '**cross**' spoken of -- they be tied to it with a devilish superstition. Yes, and with so brutish a superstition...that they should leave Jesus Christ and fall to worshipping of a piece of wood....

"But when the Scripture speaks of the curse which our Lord Jesus bare in His body to set us free withall -- it sets before us two things. First, that when we look upon the wood, we should take it as a token of the curse, and thereat conceive a terror in ourselves -- for the thing of itself is horrible. This much concerning the wood. And therefore, as for all the crosses which the Papists set up -- what betoken they else, but that they bring God's curse upon themselves? ... Look how many crosses there are in the Poppedom -- so many records are there that cry out for God's vengeance against those wretched unbelievers, which content not themselves with the amends that was made for them when our Lord Jesus Christ endured the curse in Himself which was due unto us!"

For the Lord God says (in Dt. 5:8f): "You shall not **make** for yourself **any** graven image or any likeness of anything that is in **Heaven** above or that is on **Earth** beneath.... You shall **not bow yourself down** to them, **nor serve them!**"

Here, Dr. Calvin comments: "Idolaters in vain endeavour to elude this...by their foolish cavils.... Amongst the Papists, that trifling distinction is commonly advanced that only *latreia* and not *douleia* is prohibited.... They make a childish endeavour at evasion, when they pay only the honour of *service* to pictures and statues....

"[However,] Moses first of all comprehends generally all the **forms and ceremonies of worship**. [He] then adds immediately afterwards the word '*aabad* -- which properly means 'to serve'....

"Unbelievers have never been carried away to such an extent of folly -- as to adore mere statues or pictures. They have always alleged the same pretext which now-a-days is rife in the mouths of the Papists -- *viz.* that not the image itself was actually worshipped, but that which it **represented**."

Commenting on Ex. 26:1f, Dr. John Calvin further adds: "Ridiculous it is of the Papists to infer...that churches would be empty and unsightly -- unless they are adorned with images." Indeed, commenting on Dt. 31:9, Dr. Calvin further adds: "In the Papacy, when they loudly bellow out the Scriptures in an unknown tongue [*viz.* Latin] -- they do but profane God's Name.

Also authorities in the Early Church Fathers -- and some even just prior to the Middle Ages -- clearly maintained that especially Christ's **Church** should never transgress His Second Commandment. Explains Calvin:⁸¹ "It was a Father [the 400 A.D. Epiphanius in his *Epistle to Jerome*] who said, 'It is a horrid abomination to see in Christian temples a painted image either of Christ or of any saint.'

"Nor was this pronounced by the voice of [just] a single individual. But **an Ecclesiastical Council** [the 305 A.D *7th Council of Elvira* at its canon 36] also decreed, 'Let nought that is worshipped, be depicted on walls!' [However,] very far

are they [the Renaissance-Age Romanist Church Leaders] from keeping within these boundaries — when they leave not a corner without images."

Calvin concludes: "Let Papists, then, if they have any sense of shame, henceforth desist.... It is well-known what kind of monsters they obtrude upon us as 'divine'.... What are the **pictures or statues** to which they append the names of 'saints' — but exhibitions of the most shameless luxury or obscenity? Were any one to dress himself after their model — he would deserve the pillory! Indeed, brothels exhibit their inmates more chastely and modestly dressed — than **churches** do images intended to represent virgins....

"Paul declares that by the true **preaching** of the Gospel, Christ is portrayed and in a manner crucified before our eyes. Gal. 3:1. Of what use, then, were the erection in churches of so many crosses of wood and stone, silver and gold, if this doctrine were faithfully and honestly preached — viz. Christ died that He might bear our curse upon the tree, that He might expiate our sins by the sacrifice of His body, wash them in His blood and, in short, reconcile us to God the Father? From this one doctrine, the people would learn more than from a thousand crosses of wood and stone!"

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Calvin adds:⁸² "Yet I am not so superstitious as to think that all visible representations of every kind are unlawful.... Sculpture and painting are gifts of God. What I insist for, is that both shall be used purely and lawfully.... We think it unlawful to give a visible shape to God — because God Himself has forbidden it.... Still more unlawful must it be, to worship such a representation **instead** of God — or to worship God **in** it.

"The only things therefore which ought to be painted or sculptured, are things which can be presented to the eye.... Visible representations are...historical, which give a [narrative] representation of events — and pictorial, which merely exhibit bodily shapes and figures. The former are of some use for instruction....

"The latter...are only fitted for amusement.... Yet it is certain that the latter are almost the only kind which have hitherto been exhibited in churches.... The exhibition was not the result of judicious selection, but of a foolish and inconsiderate longing."

"Let us here consider whether it is expedient that churches should contain representations of **any** kind — whether of events, **or** human forms.... Let us remember that for [some] five hundred years during which religion was in a more prosperous condition and a purer doctrine flourished — [the edifices of] Christian churches were completely free from visible representations.... It appears to me more unbecoming...to admit **any other** images than those living symbols which the Lord has consecrated by His Own Word: I mean Baptism and the Lord's Supper." See the Calvinistic *Heidelberg Catechism*, Q. & A. 97f.

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The Third Commandment requires reverence for God's **Name**, His **attributes**, and **all His works**. Ex. 20:7 and Dt. 5:11. Here, John Calvin⁸³ also deals with false swearing (Lev. ch. 19) — and vows (Dt. chs. 23 & Lev. ch. 27 & Num. ch. 30). In his **Political Supplements to the Third Commandment**,⁸⁴ Calvin deals with the punishment for blasphemy (Lev. ch. 24).

Explains Calvin:⁸⁵ "It is not sufficient to abstain [merely] from **perjury**.... Great sin is committed in the present day.... The Name of [the Lord] God is everywhere profaned — by introducing it, indiscriminately, in **frivolous** discourse.... The Commandment of the Lord, however, stands.... The penalty also stands.... Special vengeance will be executed on those who have taken the Name of God in vain." On Ex. 20:7, Calvin comments: "In order that God may procure for His Name its due reverence, He forbids its being taken in vain — especially in oaths.... Christ teaches that God's Name is comprehended in the **heavens**, the **earth**, the **temple**, the **altar** — Mt. 5:34 — because His glory is conspicuous in them.... God's Name then is taken in vain not only when any one abuses it by **perjury**, but [also] when it is lightly and disrespectfully adduced in proof of **frivolous** and trifling matters."

On Dt. 23:21, Calvin further comments: "The Papists would have all vows kept, without exception.... [However,] nothing can properly be vowed to God — except what we know to be pleasing to Him.... "To obey is better than sacrifice," I Sam. 15:22.... If a Jew had vowed that he would sacrifice a dog, it would have been sacrilege to pay that vow — since it was forbidden by God's Law." Gen. 8:20; Lev. 11:2f; Dt. 23:18; Isa. 65:4; 66:3; 66:17; Mal. 1:7f; Phil. 3:2; Rev. 22:15. "But what is done in the Papacy? Monks and nuns and priests bind themselves to perpetual celibacy!"

The Law of the Sabbath

The Fourth Commandment,⁸⁶ requires the sanctification — **of the Sabbath**. Ex. 20:8f & Dt. 5:12-15. Here, Calvin includes a discussion also of Lev. ch. 19 and Ex. ch. 31. Indeed, in his **Supplements to the Fourth Commandment**,⁸⁷ -- he also deals with the ceremonial septennials and jubilees. Ex. ch. 23; Lev. chs. 23 to 25; Deut. ch. 16.

Even in the garden of Eden — Calvin explains⁸⁸ — "first, God rested. Then He blessed this rest — so that in all ages it might be sacred among men.... God consecrated every seventh day — to **rest**.... This is...the common employment not of one age or people only, but of the whole human race.... It was commanded to men **from the beginning** — so that they might employ themselves in the worship of God. It is right that it should continue — **to the end of the world**."

On Ex. 20:8f Calvin comments⁸⁹ regarding **Christians**, that "we have an **equal necessity** for the **Sabbath** — with the ancient people [the Israelites].... The [first] hallowing of the Sabbath — was **prior** to the Law [Ex. 20].... What Moses had before narrated — that they were forbidden to gather the manna on the seventh day

[Ex. 16] — seems to have had its origin from a **well-known** and received **custom**." Ex. 5:5-17 cf. 7:25.

"It is not credible that the observance of the Sabbath was omitted, when God revealed the **rite of sacrifice** to the **holy patriarchs**." Gen. 2:1-3 cf. 3:15-21; 4:3f; 7:4-10f; 8:6-12; 8:20f; Job 1:2-5; 2:13; 42:8; Gen. 12:7-8; 18:18-19; 26:4-5; 29:27-28; 50:10.

"But what in the depravity of human nature was...almost obsolete with the race of Abraham — God **re-new-ed** in His Law." Ex. 20:8f cf. Dt. 5:12f.

Calvin states:⁹⁰ "Let us **not** think that the things which Moses says about the Sabbath-day, are **needless** for us" Christians today! Ps. 19:8-10 & Mt. 5:18. "The Apostle in the fourth [chapter] to the Hebrews applies the things that were spoken about the Sabbath-day — to the instruction of Christians and of the new Church.... **We must refrain** from our **own business** — which might hinder us from minding God's works.... If we spend the Lord's Day in making good cheer, in playing and gaming — is that a good honouring of God? No! Is it not a mockery? Yes, and a very unhallowing of His Name!

"**The shop-windows are shut in on the Lord's Day, and men do not [then] travel as they do on the other days**.... Let us see if...Christians charge themselves as they ought to do!... A great number think to have [Sunday] the Lord's Day most free to follow their own business — and reserve that day for the same purpose as though there were none other day for them to appoint, all the week long.... It seems to them, they have nothing else to do but to think upon their business and to cast up their accounts concerning this and that matter.... They make that an occasion of withdrawing themselves further off from God." Neh. 13:15-22; Isa. 56:2-7; 58:13-14; Jer. 17:19-27.

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Calvin goes on:⁹⁰ That day [the Sabbath]...was ordained to withdraw us from all earthly cares and affairs, so that we might give ourselves wholly to God. Furthermore, we must understand that **the Lord's Day was not appointed only for the hearing of Sermons** ---- but to the end that **we should apply the rest of the time to praying to God**....

"The Lord's Day, then, must serve us for a tower to mount up into; to view God's works afar off — as a time wherein we have nothing to let [or hinder] us or to keep us occupied, but that we may employ all our wits to consider the benefits and gracious gifts that He has bestowed upon us.... **If the Lord's Day be spent not only in games and pastimes** full of vanity, but also in things quite contrary to God...; if the holy order which God ordained to bring us to Him be broken after that fashion, so as men think they have not kept holy the Lord's day — **is it any wonder, if men [over-work themselves and/or] play the beasts [or act like draught-animals] all the week [there]after?**

"In respect of men's rawness, and by reason of their slothfulness, it is necessary to have one special day dedicated wholly thereunto. It is true that we be not bound

to...keep the same day that was appointed to the Jews. For that was Saturday.... The day was changed -- because Jesus Christ in His **resurrection** did set us free [on Easter Sunday].... That was the cause why the [Sabbath] **day was shifted** [from Saturday to Sunday]. But yet must we observe **the same order** of having **some day in the week** [as our day of rest]....

"Let us **retain still** the outward **order**, so far as is meet for us — that is...**forbearing our own affairs and worldly businesses**, so that we may intend wholly to the minding of God's works and occupying ourselves in the consideration of the good things that He has done for us!... When we have bestowed the Lord His Day in praising and magnifying God's Name, and in minding His works -- let us show all the week after, that we have profited in the same!...

"Now we have to mark what is said in Moses' text. 'Six days you shall labour' -- says the Lord.... **You have six days free and whole to do your business and affairs in. Seeing then that I deal so courteously with you, as to require but one day of seven – is it not too great an unthankfulness if you complain of that time as though it were misbestowed?....** Who should say you were so churlish and niggardly, as to grudge Me the seventh part of your time?

"I give you your whole life!... Why then should I not have one day of seven, in which every man shall cease from his own business -- **so that you shall not be entangled in any worldly care, but that you may have leisure to think upon Me?**"

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Commenting on Isa. 58:13, Calvin remarks: "Nothing can be more pleasing or acceptable to God, than the observation of the Sabbath and sincere worship.... Men do wrong if, laying aside the Commandments of God, they esteem highly those things which are of no value.... [The Lord] God so highly recommends in the whole Scripture the observation of the Sabbath.... Because Christ died and rose again..., we have a continual sabbath."

So too, commenting on Jer. 17:22f, Calvin further declares: "Isaiah, in the fifty-eighth chapter, teaches us with sufficient clearness what the design of the Sabbath is — even that the people should **cease from their own pleasure**. For it was to be a **day of rest** in which they were **truly to worship God** — and to leave off pursuing any of the lusts of their own flesh.

"Even heathen writers, whenever they speak of the Sabbath, mention it as the difference between the Jews and the rest of the world. It was, in short, a general profession of God's worship when they [the Jews] rested on the seventh day. [However,] when they [the seventh-century B.C. Judeans] now regarded it as nothing, by **carrying their burdens** and **violating their sacred rest** [Jer. 17] — it was doubtless nothing less than wantonly to cast away the yoke of God, as though they openly boasted that they despised whatever He had commanded. There was then, in the violation of the Sabbath, a **public** defection from the Law....

"To sanctify the Sabbath day is to make it different from the other days.... **They ought not** then to have **done their own concerns** on that day, as on other days. For it was a day consecrated to God.... In the observance of the Sabbath, therefore, is briefly included the whole of religion.... It was the same as though God said that He would by all means be gracious to them, if only they observed the Sabbath — that is, if they with a pure heart devoted themselves to His service."

Explains Calvin yet further:⁹¹ "There is no Commandment the observance of which the Almighty more strictly enforces.... You see the singular honour which it holds among all the precepts of the Law.... The Sabbath never shall be **completed** — before the arrival of the last day.... 'The Sabbath of the Lord your God, on it you shall not do any work: you, nor your son nor your daughter, nor your man-servant nor your maid-servant — so that your man-servant and your maid-servant may rest, as well as you!' Deut. 5:14...."

"The Early Christians substituted what we call the Lord's Day for the Sabbath." Lk. 4:16f; 23:56f; Mt. 28:1f; Mk. 16:1f,9f; Jh. 20:1,19,26; Acts 2:1; 20:6-7; I Cor. 16:1-2; Heb. 4:8f; 10:25; Rev. 1:10. We must diligently attend on our religious assemblies, and duly avail ourselves of those external aids which tend to promote the worship of God."

The Fifth and Sixth Commandments

We now look at the Second Table of the Moral Law. That deals not with man's direct duty to Almighty God (as in the First Table), but with his indirect duty to God through his direct duty to man as the very image of God.

First here in order, comes the **Fifth Commandment** and its pre-eminent promises. Eph. 6:2; Ex. 20:12b; Dt. 5:16. It asks for requires respect for all one's **human superiors** — whether parental, marital, educational, political, employmental, social or ecclesiastical. Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16; Eph. 6:1-9. Obviously, it also implies respect for one's ancestors (*pateres*) and for one's fatherland (*patria*) — for one's own kith and kin. Rom. 9:3-5; 10:1; 11:1. Clearly, it also requires the corresponding duties of all superiors toward their inferiors. Eph. 5:25 to 6:4 and Col. 3:19 to 4:1.

Calvin here discusses Lev. ch. 19. He then gives **Supplements**⁹² on the punishments for defying all of the various duly-constituted authorities. Ex. ch. 21; Deut. chs. 16, 21 & 22.

Explains Dr. John Calvin:⁹³ "We are ordered to obey our parents only in the Lord.... The submission yielded them should be a step in our ascent to the Supreme Parent.... Hence, if they transgress the Law — they deserve not to be regarded as parents, but as strangers attempting to seduce us from our obedience to our true Father. The same holds in the case of rulers, masters and superiors of every description."

This therefore applies also to our ecclesiastical superiors. Thus, if ever even a General Assembly of the Christian Church should require us to **transgress** God's

Word — such as by decreeing that even godly Ministers with conscientious objections must **themselves participate** in ordaining women as Elders or as Ministers of the Word and Sacraments *etc.* — we must refuse to do so.

Calvin too had to face that very issue. Against such practices, he quoted: I Cor. 3:5; 4:1f; 14:24-27; I Tim. 2:11-15; 3:1-5; 5:17 & Heb. 5:4. Citing precisely those very Scriptures, he wrote to the Ministers of Mompelgard:⁹⁴ "If the authorities try to establish the practice of baptism by women, this must be resisted — even unto blood!"

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Next, under the **Sixth Commandment**⁹⁵ against murder (Ex. 20:13 and Dt. 5:27), Calvin discusses Lev. ch. 19. Geneva's genius then gives the **Ceremonial Supplements of the Sixth Commandment**.⁹⁶ There, he deals with ritual atonement for manslaughter (Dt. ch. 21) — and the forbidden drinking of blood (Dt. ch. 12 and Lev. ch. 17).

Then, in his **Political Supplements of the Sixth Commandment**⁹⁷ — he deals with the different legal penalties for murder, manslaughter and wounding. Ex. ch. 21; Lev. ch. 24; Dt. ch. 17. He also deals with: injuries caused through negligence (Dt. ch. 22); kidnapping (Dt. ch. 24); the method of capital punishment (Deut. ch. 21); and corporal punishment (Dt. ch. 25). Indeed, he further deals with: personal responsibility (Dt. ch. 24); rules of warfare (Dt. ch. 20); oppression (Dt. ch. 23); humane treatment of animals (Dt. ch. 22 and Ex. ch. 23); and cities of refuge (Num. ch. 35).

Explains Dr. Calvin:⁹⁸ "Man is...the image of God.... We must hold the person of man sacred.... If you do not, according to your means and opportunity, study to defend his safety — by that inhumanity, you violate the Law." This is why **kidnapping** children — like permanently **enslaving** unwilling freemen — should be **capital crimes**. Gen. 9:5-6; Ex. 21:16; Dt. 24:7. Note that this prohibits **slave-trading** (Gen. 36:26f & Rev. 18:12f); but not the humane use of slave labour, wherever legal (Ex. 21:2-8 & Eph. 6:5-9).

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Very interesting is the Biblical remedy for **unreformable youthful thugs**. Deuteronomy 21:18f (like 13:6-13f & 20:13f *cf.* Lev. 20:9f) clearly, albeit obliquely, presupposes that full ethical responsibility (in matters such as adultery, cruelty and idolatry) starts only at **puberty**. Indeed, the passage prescribes **capital punishment** for hopelessly incorrigible juvenile delinquents — even when still in their 'teens.

It is dealing with the case of a "stubborn and rebellious son" ---- who has consistently and irresponsibly disobeyed the voice of his father or mother. He has often been chastened by them, but he has habitually ignored their teaching. Over the years, he has degenerated so much, that he is now both a drunkard and a glutton ---- a wine-swilling, work-shy lout; an incorrigible, riotous criminal; a lifethreateningly-violent adolescent; an accountable teenage monster.

At Deut. 21:18, the *King James Version* describe him as "stubborn and rebellious" --- and Calvin there describes him as "disobedient." At Deut. 21:20, Calvin says his own parents publically denounce him as "a rioter and a drunkard" ---- and the *King James* says they openly brand him as "a glutton" (especially sexually). Clearly, **this is no suckling or toddler** ---- but a person expected to behave like an adult and fully responsible for his own actions.

Not just his father alone, but both his stern yet now-powerless father and his loving and more-lenient mother both bring in an official complaint ---- and present their incorrigibly delinquent son to the City Elders. If the latter now arraign and then find him guilty of a capital crime ---- all of the mature male men of his city ('*ansheey 'iyro*), on behalf of the Lord and for the benefit of society as a whole, proceed to execute this capital criminal.

The fact that his executioners are called the "**men of his city**" ('*ansheey 'iyro*) ---- clearly implies the son himself had already become one of those "**men**" as one of the responsible **citi**-zens of "his" city. He was thus already a mature adult ---- who, as such, had brutally betrayed the obligations of his **citi**-zenship. For he had criminally contemned also the important civic responsibilities he had sworn to uphold ---- at his **teenage confirmation** (or *bar mitsvaah*). See: Gen. 14:14; 17:25; Prov. 22:6; Song 8:8; Luke 2:41-46f; I Cor. 13:11; 14:20; I Tim. 5:14-22; II Th. 3:10; I John 2:13f.

Thus, in Deut. 21:18f, we are not at all dealing with the antics of naughty children before they attain teenage. The passage in full does not relate to minors. It does not apply to those yet to reach puberty as the minimum age for possible admission, as adult members, to full communion with God's people (after full acceptance of their mature obligations). Indeed, also the *Talmud*⁹⁹ rightly says that this text implies the capital execution only of those incorrigibles who have reached puberty. In his 123rd *Sermon on Deuteronomy* (21:18f), Calvin clearly implies¹⁰⁰ that the rebellious son has already reached adolescence. For the genius of Geneva states that the passage applies "when children **grow past amendment** by their fathers and mothers. They must be rooted out, because their doing is against nature and is such an infection as provokes God's wrath upon the whole country [and city].... "Here is express mention made of 'stubbornness'.... Lo, here is a great extremity.... It is not possible for a father to deliver his son to death, until he has assayed all the remedies that can be.... Fathers and mothers must proceed in chastising their children, until they see them **utterly past hope of amendment**.... Their children fall into all excess.... They find by experience that their child is out of measure stubborn, and shows himself to be of so froward and ill-disposed nature that he cannot be reclaimed....

"When they see their children given [over] to lightness and unconstancy..., the father and the mother 'shall come to the gate' [of the city]; for that was the place of justice in olden times. So then they shall repair to the seat of justice, and there say: 'This son of ours is stubborn against us and froward; we have assayed to reform him, but cannot prevail with him; he is a rioter and a drunkard; and therefore we put him now into your hands!'

"God's will is, that upon this evidence -- the child shall be stoned to death.... It is [also] declared here further, that the father and the mother may not [ever] accuse their children judicially ---- unless they find them unreformable."

Here, however, the grown boy has become **both a rioter and a drunkard**. Says Calvin: "Under rioting and drunkenness, he meant to comprehend all looseness of life. If [also] riotousness be punished, what is to be done to other much more heinous things? What shall become of whoredom, theft, and perjury? ... If a child be a glutton or a drunkard in his youth [meaning his adolescence] ---- well, men will say they be **evil** touches....

"We see to what point children come by these means. If that riotousness be not reformed in them, but that they continue still in their stubbornness ---- at length, they must [finally] be delivered into the hand of the Justicer, and be put to death."

In his *Sermons on Ephesians* (6:1-4), John Calvin adds: "Whoever despised his father or mother or uttered any curse against them or did them any harm, was to be stoned. Lev. 20:9.... God will have them despatched out of the World. For they are monsters, and an infection to pollute the whole Earth....

"If the father and mother have once given their witness ---- 'Behold this child of ours is incorrigible' ---- immediately upon this, let him be stoned...and let the World be rid of such an infection! Deuteronomy 21:18-21."

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Especially in Num. 35:10-30f, a very clear distinction is drawn by the Lord God on the one between premeditated murder and on the other hand involuntary manslaughter (and their respectively different punishments). There, Calvin comments that "God appointed the cities of refuge not only to make distinction between the sins of malice and [sins of] error, but also lest **innocent blood** should rashly be shed.... He would have **murder** severely punished.

"But...it would have by no means been just that he who had not wilfully but **accidentally** killed his neighbour — should be hurried away to the **same** punishment to which **wilful murderers** were subjected.... He should escape [the death penalty] — who had killed another ignorantly and unintentionally." There, lesser penalties — including adequate compensation of the manslaughterer's surviving family — is instead indicated. Exodus 21:12-22; Num. 35:22-25; Dt. 19:4-5.

Yet, insists Calvin, "**no voluntary murders are to be pardoned**.... God condemns **to death** every kind of **murderer**... In crimes the **will** and not the result must be regarded.... [However,] when God commanded that murderers should suffer death — He required that they should be **condemned** by the **judges** — after **due trial**....

"**Wilful murderers**...He will not have spared — but yet, not given over to punishment unless convicted by **legal proofs**.... No one should be condemned, unless he be **lawfully convicted**.... One witness would be insufficient.... No capital cause was to be decided, except at the mouth of **two** or three witnesses.... In referring to the

condemnation of murderers, He takes occasion to state that two witnesses are required." Num. 35:30; Dt. 17:6f; 19:15f; Mt. 18:16f; Jh. 8:17f; II Cor. 13:1; I Tim. 5:19; Heb. 10:28.

Calvin concludes: "But whilst sure proof is required in...the punishment of guilt, so — when the murder **is proved** — God sternly requires and commands that it should not remain unpunished. He expressly *forbids* that the right of *refuge* should be *purchasable*."

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This is now an appropriate place to deal with **deliberate homicidal abortion**. That is of course sharply contrasted to **accidental miscarriage** which sometimes results even from culpable premature confinement — often with varying degrees of bodily harm to either the mother or her unborn child (or both).

Regarding the former — **deliberate homicidal abortion** — Calvin clearly teaches¹⁰¹ that it is "a **capital crime** to put an end to the foetus.... For the foetus, though enclosed in the womb of its mother, is already a human being (homo).... It is almost a **monstrous** crime to rob it of the **life** — which it has not yet begun to **enjoy**." Hence, deliberate abortion is nothing less than the capital crime of premeditated murder. Ex. 21:12,14-15,17,22-23.

Continues Calvin: "It seems more horrible to kill a man **in his own house**, than in a field — because a man's house is his place of most secure refuge." See Ex. 22:-2-7,26-31; Dt. 21:1f; 23:15,24; 24:6. "It surely ought to be deemed **more**[!] atrocious to destroy a foetus in the womb, before it has come **to light**. On these grounds, I am led to conclude **without hesitation** that the words 'if death should follow' [in Ex. 21:23] —[clearly] **must** be applied to the *foetus as well as* to the mother.

"If any mischief follow: then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" *etc.* Ex. 21:23-24. "Mischief" may very well result from any intentional termination of a pregnancy. That could then be **gross** mischief, such as death ("life for life"). Such could constitute either intended murder (as in intentional homicidal abortion), or unintended manslaughter (as might either culpably or non-culpably follow the intended emergency removal of the *foetus* in order to save his or her **life** and/or that of his or her ailing mother). It could alternatively be a **lesser** mischief -- such as the loss of an "eye" or a "hand" or a "foot" *etc.* Ex. 21:23f.

Either way, the "mischief" is committable not just against the mother, but also against her unborn child. Significantly, the (270 B.C.) Greek Septuagint translation at Ex. 21:23 refers the mischief to that committed specifically against the already 'shapen' **unborn child** — or *exeikonismenon*.

Note that Calvin here calls the unborn *foetus* not a piece of fresh meat nor even a septic appendix belonging to the mother alone — but "a man" (alias a **human being**). He calls the unborn child housed within his or her mother — "a **man in his house**." That little man, is indeed blind and does not [yet] have "light." Nevertheless, he or she does have **human life**, even though he or she might not yet have "begun to enjoy"

it. So he or she is certainly a **human being**. Consequently, to Calvin, to kill a blind **little** man in his own house — is even "more atrocious" than to murder a less defenceless **adult** blind man in his own home or wherever.

Calvin adds: "Besides, it would **by no means be reasonable** that a father should [be allowed to] **sell** for a set sum — the **life** of his **son or daughter**.... It would be a **crime punishable with death** not only when the **mother** died from the effects of the abortion — but also if the **infant** should be killed (whether he or she should die from the wound abortively, or soon after its birth)."

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On the other hand, an abortion might well be **accidental** — as where a pregnant woman **unintentionally miscarries**. Ex. 21:13,18,19,22f. In certain circumstances, however — even **accidental abortion** could still be **culpable** and **punishable**. Thus, a pregnant woman might miscarry as a result of receiving a blow **aimed** at her **husband** — where that **intentional** blow **accidentally** missed him, but hit **her** instead. Such a blow would, of course, often bring on a **culpably caused** premature confinement.

Comments Calvin:⁹⁹ "That premature confinement would **weaken** both the mother and her offspring. The husband is allowed to **demand** before the judges a money-payment, at their discretion, in compensation.... God's command is only that the money should be **paid before the judges**.... He thus appoints **them** to settle the amount as **arbitrators**....

"By the...*lex talionis*..., a just proportion is to be preventing all violence, a **compensation** is to be paid in **proportion** to the **injury**." The **amount** of punishment is to be equally **regulated**, whether as to a tooth or an eye.... For the purpose of preventing all violence, a **compensation** is to be paid — in **proportion** to the **injury**." Ex. 21:19,22,24,30-36.

Commandments Seven and Eight

The Seventh Commandment¹⁰² concerns sexual purity. Ex. 20:14 & Dt. 5:18. Here, after dealing with Lev. ch. 18, Calvin adds **Political Supplements**.¹⁰³ These relate to: homosexuality and bestiality (Lev. ch. 18 & Ex. ch. 22); prostitution (Lev. ch. 19 & Dt. ch. 23); adultery (Lev. ch. 20 & Deut. ch. 22); and seduction (Lev. ch. 19). He also discusses: marriage (Ex. ch. 21); dowries (Ex. ch. 22); and war brides (Dt. ch. 24). He further explains: trial by ordeal for suspected unfaithfulness (Num. ch. 5); virginity laws (Dt. ch. 22); divorce (Dt. ch. 23); and incest (Lev. ch. 18).

Then Calvin deals with the **Judicial or Political Supplements** to this Commandment. There,¹⁰⁴ he includes penalties for incest (Lev. ch. 20) and for breach of chaste conduct (Dt. ch. 25) — and also a requirement that clothing be modest (Dt. ch. 22).

More importantly, he also deals with the heinous crimes of adultery and rape – carefully distinguishing them from the lesser crimes of fornication and seduction. Together with Holy Scripture, Dr. John Calvin thus distinguishes between the capital crime of adultery (involving one or more married persons) and the non-capital offence of fornication (of two unmarried persons).

Commenting on Deut. 22:22, Calvin remarks:¹⁰⁵ "It appears how greatly **God abominates adultery**, since He pronounces **capital punishment** against it." **Before** his marriage, "if a man had broken faith with his [future] wife ---- by having connexion with a harlot ---- it was **not** a **capital** offence. But if any man, though a bachelor, had committed adultery with the **wife** of another ---- he was to **die**"

Explains Dr. Calvin: "By the **universal law** of the Gentiles, the punishment of **death** was **always** awarded to **adultery**. Thus it is all the baser and more shameful in Christians, [in that respect] not to imitate at least the Heathen!"

Both in Calvin's time and today, there are those who call themselves Christians whose view of sexual morality is grossly inferior to that of many Pagans. Indeed, the morals of many Antinomians are worse than those of many Atheists.

Those Christians who are reticent about advocating the proper punishment for adultery

---- explains Calvin ---- would, of course, not "abrogate God's Law without a pretext." So they "allege the example of Christ, Who dismissed the woman taken in adultery" ---- rather than demand her execution.

However, as John Calvin further states: "She ought to have been stoned" or collectively executed by society ---- yet not without first being found guilty, by due process of law.

However, the latter was not Christ's task then. For at that time, He did not occupy the office of a judge.

"In respect of that particular sin and the degree of guilt involved," continues Dr. Calvin, "here Christ is demanding perfect innocence from the witnesses ---- so that no man may take it upon him[self] to avenge a crime in another, unless he himself be pure and free from all guilt" in respect of that same crime.

"Those who deduce from this that adultery should not be punished by death must, on the same reasoning, admit that inheritances should not be divided ---- since Christ refused to arbitrate between two brothers [Luke 12:13-14]. Indeed, every crime would be exempt from the penalties of the Law ---- if the punishment of adultery is remitted. For the door will then be thrown open to any kind of treachery ---- and to poisoning, to murder, and to robbery.

"The popish theology is that in this passage [John chapter eight] Christ has brought in the 'law of grace' [*sic!*] ---- by which adulterers may be freed from punishment....

"What is this ---- but that they may pollute with unbridled lust nearly every marriage bed with impunity? This is the result of that diabolical celibacy, so that those who

are not allowed to have a lawful wife may fornicate indiscriminately. But let us hold that though Christ remits men's sins, He does not subvert the social order or abolish legal sentences and punishments."

As regards forcible rape, as distinct from the seduction of a consenting party, Dr. Calvin rightly sees it as a capital crime ---- just as serious as premeditated murder. See Genesis 24:57-58 & 34:2-27 cf. Deuteronomy 22:25-27.

Thus, always the aggressive raper ---- but certainly never the involuntary rapee ---- merits a mandatory death penalty. Monstrous is the recent view of certain **Quasi-Calvinists**, that a raped un-married woman, should feel obligated to marry her raper (provided he is unmarried) ---- just because she herself was not then married.

Even if the unmarried raper repents and wants to marry the unmarried girl he raped (and *vice-versa*) ---- the aggressive rape of an outraged woman requires the mandatory death penalty.

"If a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man force her and lie with her, then only the man who lay with her ---- **shall die.**" Deuteronomy 22:25.

Indeed, it seems that the same should be the case, even if the woman was never betrothed or engaged to another. In his 129th *Sermon on Deuteronomy 22:25-27*, Calvin therefore insists:¹⁰⁶

"God has decreed that he who meets with a betrothed maid and deflower her, **should die** without remission.... He who ravishes a maiden, is here likened to a thief.... The act, of itself, is beyond measure **outrageous and intolerable**.... God, to show the grievousness of the fault, says it is **a kind of open thievery and murder** ---- if a man meet with a maid and deflower her specifically by force. This is an **unpardonable offence.**"

Explains Calvin:¹⁰⁷ "Let no man long for celibacy.... If he has not the power of subduing his passion, let him understand that the Lord has made it **obligatory for him to marry**.... While He forbids fornication, He at the same time forbids us to lay snares for our neighbour's chastity — by lascivious attire, obscene gestures, and impure conversation."

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Clearly, this also condemns immodest dress in public — and, *a fortiori*, all pornography. Referring to Lev. 18:6, Calvin comments that "Paul...sets before our eyes the law of nature.... He teaches that it is shameful and indecorous for women to appear in public without veils...; and finally adds, that nature itself does not permit it. I Cor. 11:14." Compare too I Tim. 2:8-9 and I Pet. 3:3-5.

Commenting on I Tim. 2:9f, Calvin says of Paul: "It was his intention to correct a fault to which women are almost always prone.... The fault is, excessive concern and

eagerness about dress.... Luxury and extravagance come from a desire to make a display, which can spring only from vanity or wantonness....

It is difficult to lay down a certain permissible limit. Magistrates may indeed make laws by which extravagant desires may to a certain extent be restrained.... Any fashion in clothes which is inconsistent with modesty and moderation, should be disapproved....

"In the same way, all men should keep within the limits of moderation. Whatever is opposed to that, cannot be defended.... The dress of an honourable and godly woman, ought to be different from that of a harlot. These are marks of distinction that Paul here lays down.... Godliness should prove itself by good works. It should also be visible, in chaste and becoming clothes."

Calvin's further comment, on I Pet. 3:3, is most instructive. Women, the Reformer says there, "are to adorn themselves sparingly and modestly.... It may be now asked whether the Apostle [Peter] is completely condemning the use of gold in adorning the body.... It would be an immoderate strictness simply to forbid neatness and elegance in clothing. If the material is said to be too sumptuous — the Lord has created it! And we know that skill in art has proceeded — from Him....

"Two things are to be regarded in clothing — usefulness and decency.... What decency requires, is moderation and modesty.... If a woman goes about with her hair wantonly curled and braided...her vanity cannot be excused.... Excessive elegance and superfluous display...arise from a corrupted mind."

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Also, on Dt. 25:11f, Calvin comments that "this Law...shows how very pleasing to God is modesty — whilst, on the other hand, He abominates indecency. For if in the heat of a quarrel...it was a crime...for a woman to take hold of the private parts of a man who was not her husband — much less would God have her lasciviousness pardoned if a woman were impelled by lust to do anything of the sort.... Judges, in punishing obscenity, were bound to argue from the less to the greater."

Dt. 22:12 concerns fringes to cover the four quarters of one's garments. Here, Dr. Calvin comments: "This also was a part of or accessory to chastity — to have regard to modesty in dress.... A door was thus opened to many improprieties — if the upper garments were not closed.... Many, as if by accident, would have abused this — if it had been allowed — as an incentive to licentiousness.... It is abundantly clear that not only were adulteries condemned, but whatever is repugnant to purity and chastity....

"Garments are not in themselves of so much importance. But as it is disgraceful for men to become effeminate and also for women to affect manliness in their dress and gestures, propriety and modesty are prescribed.... Therefore, decency in the fashion of the clothes is an excellent preservative of modesty."

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The Eighth Commandment¹⁰⁸ defends private property. Ex. 20:15 and Dt. 5:19. Hereunder Dr. Calvin opposes theft, fraud and oppression (Lev. ch. 19 & Dt. ch. 24) — especially at the expense of resident aliens (Ex. ch. 22 & Lev. ch. 19) and widows and orphans (Dt. ch. 10). Similarly, he here also condemns: deceitful weights and measures (Lev. ch. 19 & Dt. ch. 19); cruel pledge arrangements (Ex. ch. 22 & Dt. ch. 14); and usury or exorbitant rates of interest (Ex. ch. 22). He further castigates: the non-return of lost property (Ex. ch. 23 & Dt. ch. 22); the neglecting of restitution (Num. ch. 5); bribery (ch. Ex. 23); and injustice (Ex. ch. 23).

Still under the Eighth Commandment, Dr. Calvin further discusses: release from debts (Dt. ch. 15); slavery laws (Ex. ch. 21 & Lev. ch. 25 and Dt. ch. 15); and distress sales of future crops (Lev. ch. 25). He then goes on to deal with: care of trees (Dt. ch. 20); marriage property and inheritance provisions (Dt. 21); wartime production (Dt. ch. 20); and Levirate property (Dt. ch. 25).

John Calvin also discusses the Political Supplements¹⁰⁹ to the Eighth Commandment. There, he successively deals with: penalties for theft (Ex. ch. 22 & Lev. ch. 22); the remedy for property damage caused through negligence (Ex. ch. 21); and gleanings laws (Lev. ch. 19 & Dt. ch. 23).

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Explains Calvin:¹¹⁰ "We must render to every man his due.... The Commandment forbids us to long after other men's goods — and accordingly requires every man to exert himself honestly in preserving his own. For we must consider that what each individual possesses has not fallen to him by chance — but by the distribution of the Sovereign Lord of all.... None can pervert his [own] means to bad purposes — without committing a fraud on a divine dispensation.

"There are very many kinds of theft. One consists of **violence** — as when a man's goods are forcibly plundered and carried off; another, in **malicious imposture** — as when they are fraudulently intercepted; a third, in the more **hidden craft** which takes possession of them — with a semblance of justice; and a fourth, in **sycophancy** — which wiles them away under the pretence of donation.... All the arts by which we obtain possession of the goods and money of our neighbours, instead of sincere affection ---- substituting an eagerness to deceive or injure them in any way ---- are to be regarded as thefts....

"Nor is the violation of this Commandment confined to money or merchandise or lands — but extends to every kind of right. For we defraud our neighbours to their hurt — if we decline any of the duties which we are bound to perform towards them. If an agent or an indolent steward wastes the substance of his employer, or does not give due heed to the management of his property; if he unjustly squanders or luxuriously wastes the means intrusted to him; if a servant holds his master in derision, divulges his secrets, or in any way is treacherous to his life or his goods; if, on the other hand, a master cruelly torments his household — he is guilty of theft before God. Since every one who, in the exercise of his calling, performs not what he owes to others — keeps back or makes away with what does not belong to him.

"Let each of us consider how far he is bound in duty to others — and in good faith pay what we owe!... Let the people pay all due honour to their rulers; submit patiently to their authority; obey their laws and orders; and decline nothing which they can bear, without sacrificing the favour of God!

"Let rulers again take due charge of their people; preserve the public peace; protect the good, curb the bad, and conduct themselves throughout — as those who must render an account of their office to God the Judge of all!... Let every one, I say, thus consider what in his own place he owes to his neighbours — and pay what he owes!

"Moreover, we must always have a reference to the Lawgiver! Indeed, so we are all to remember that the Law requiring us to promote and defend the interest and convenience of our fellow-men, applies equally to our minds and our hands!"

The Ninth and Tenth Commandments

Under **the Ninth Commandment**,¹¹¹ true reporting is required. Ex. 20:16 and Dt. 5:10. Here Calvin, after discussing Ex. ch. 23 and Lev. ch. 19 in his **Supplement to the Ninth Commandment**,¹¹² deals with the procedure and penalty for perjury (Dt. 19:16-21).

Explains Dr. John Calvin:¹¹³ "By evil-speaking, we understand not the rebuke which is administered with a view to correcting, nor accusation or judicial decision by which evil is sought to be remedied...; but the odious [accusation or re]crimination which springs from a malicious and petulant love of slander.... The Commandment extends so far as to include that scurrilous affected urbanity instinct with invective, by which the failings of others under an appearance of sportiveness are bitterly assailed.... Some are wont to do, who court the praise of wit; though it should call forth a blush or inflict a bitter pang....

"If we turn our eye to the Lawgiver Whose just authority extends over the ears and the mind as well as the tongue, we cannot fail to perceive that eagerness to listen to slander and an unbecoming proneness to censorious judgment are here forbidden.... As just interpreters of the words and actions of other men — let us candidly maintain the honour due to them by our judgment, our ear, and our tongue!"

Calvin comments on Ex. 20:16 that "if the **indulgence** of evil-speaking, violates charity — it is opposed to the Law of God.... We must also go further — and not be suspicious or too curious in observing the defects of others."

Further, on Lev. 19:16f, Calvin states that "many under the pretext of conscientiousness, are not only rigid censors of others — but also burst out into the open proclamation of their defects. Moses seeks to prevent this preposterous zeal.... Those who labour under this disease of **carping and vituperating**, are wont to object that sins are nourished by silence.... But Moses points out...that they should bring back wanderers, into the way, by private rebukes — and not by publishing their offences....

"We are commanded to rebuke the wandering, and not to regard our brethren as enemies. A similar course is prescribed by Christ. 'If your brother shall trespass against you — go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone! Mt. 18:15.'" Then, if he heeds you — you have won back your brother. Thus Jesus, in Mt. 18:15b — where *ekerdeesas* means: 'you have gained; you have profited; you have won over.'

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Last, Calvin discusses **the Tenth Commandment**¹¹⁴ against covetousness. Ex. 20:17 and Dt. 5:21. Then he deals with "**the Sum of the Law**"¹¹⁵ (in terms of Lev. ch. 19 and Dt. ch. 10). Finally, he explains the "**Sanctions of the Law** contained in the **Promises and Threats**"¹¹⁶ (of Lev. chs. 18 & 26, and Dt. chs. 4 & 7 and 11 to 12 and 27 to 30).

According to Dr. John Calvin, "this Commandment extends also to those [other Divine Commandments] that have preceded it.... Whilst He enumerates oxen and asses and all other things as well as their wives and servants, it is clear that His precept is directed to the same things but in a different way — *viz.* in order to restrain all **ungodly desires**....

"On the other hand, it must be remembered that although it was God's design by the whole Law to arouse men's feelings to sincere obedience of it, yet such is their hypocrisy and indifference that it was necessary to stimulate them more sharply and to press them more closely — lest they should seek for **subterfuges**.... Hence Paul gathers from this Commandment that the whole 'Law is spiritual.' Rom. 7:7 and 7:14. Because God, by His condemnation of lust, sufficiently showed that He not only imposed obedience on our hands and feet but also put restraint upon our minds — lest they should desire to do what is unlawful."

Calvin further explains:¹¹⁷ "The purpose is...that no thought be permitted to insinuate itself into our minds and influence them — with a noxious concupiscence tending to our neighbour's loss.... In so far therefore as the mind is devoid of charity — it must be under the influence of concupiscence. God therefore commands a strong and ardent affection — an affection not to be impeded by any portion, however minute, of concupiscence. He requires a mind so admirably arranged — as not to be prompted in the slightest degree contrary to the Law of Love.

"Such, then, is **the Second Table of the Law**.... It were vain to inculcate the various duties taught in this Table, without placing your instructions on the fear and reverence to God — as their proper foundation.... The sum of the whole Commandment therefore is that whatever each individual possesses — [should] remain entire and secure not only from injury or the wish to injure, but also from the slightest feeling of covetousness which can spring to mind.... Our mind must be completely filled with **love to God** — and then **this love must forthwith flow out toward our neighbour**.

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"Our Saviour having shown in the parable of the Samaritan (Luke 10:36) that the term neighbour comprehends the remotest stranger, there is no reason for limiting the precept of love to our own connections. I deny not that the closer[!] the relation, the more frequently our offices of love should be. For the condition of humanity requires that there be more duties in common between those who are more nearly connected by the ties of relationship or friendship or neighbourhood. And this is done without offence to God — by Whose providence we are in a manner impelled to do it [Gal. 6:10 & I Tim. 5:8].

"But I say that the whole human race, without exception, is to be embraced with one feeling of charity.... Let a man be what he may, he is still to be loved — because God is loved.... Do we not meet in every page...of the Law...with commands which, in the strictest terms, require us to love our enemies? ... Prov. 35:21; Exod. 23:4."

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"Let this then," recommends John Calvin,¹¹⁸ "be our method of showing good-will and kindness — considering that, in regard to everything which God has bestowed upon us and by which we can aid our neighbour, we are His stewards and are bound to give account of our stewardship.... The only right mode of administration, is that which is regulated by love. In this way, we shall...unite the study of our neighbour's advantage — with a regard to our own....

"This is the Law for daily administering every gift which we receive from God. He of old applied that Law, to the minutest expressions of His Own kindness. He commanded the first-fruits to be offered to Him — as an attestation by the people that it was impious to reap any advantage from goods not previously consecrated to Him. Exod. 22:29; 23:19.

"The Lord enjoins us to do good to all, without exception — though the greater part, if estimated by their own merit, are most untrustworthy of it.... We are not to look to what men in themselves deserve — but to attend to the image of God, which exists in all, and to which we owe all honour and love. But in those who are of the household of faith [Gal. 6:10], the same rule is to be more[!] carefully observed — inasmuch as that image is renewed and restored in them by the Spirit of Christ.

"Therefore, whoever be the man that is presented to you as needing your assistance — you have no ground for declining to give it to him.... If he not only merits no good, but has provoked you by injury and mischief — still, this is no good reason why you should not embrace him in love....

"Love those that hate us! Render good for evil and blessing for cursing, remembering that we are not to reflect on the wickedness of men but look to the image of God in them — an image which, covering and obliterating their faults, should [still] by its beauty and dignity allure us to love and embrace them!

"We do not insult a diseased member [or body-part] — when the rest of the body labours for its recovery.... A communication of offices between members is not regarded as at all gratuitous, but rather as the payment of that which — being due by

the law of nature — it were monstrous to deny.... Every one should rather consider that, however great he is — he owes himself to his neighbours.... The only limit to his beneficence ---- is the failure of his means."

Mosaic Law and Abrogation

We now summarize Calvin's principal¹¹⁹ contribution to the analysis of the Moral Law **in the light of the Mosaic legislation**. Under the First Commandment — he refers to Lev. 29:2; Dt. 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; *etc.*¹²⁰ Under the Second Commandment, he refers to Dt. 4:15, *etc.*¹²¹ Under the Third Commandment, he refers to Ex. 22:11 & Lev. 29:12 *etc.*¹²² Under the Fourth Commandment — he refers to Ex. 23:12; 31:13-17; Num. 13:22; Dt. 5:14; *etc.* Indeed, he even adds: "Who can deny that both [Ex. 23:12 and Dt. 5:14] are equally applicable to us as to the Jews?"¹²³

Under the Fifth Commandment, he refers to Ex. 21:17; Lev. 20:9; Dt. 21:18; *etc.*¹²⁴ Under the Sixth Commandment, he refers to Ex. 21:17; Lev. 20:9; Dt. 21:18; *etc.*¹²⁵ Under the Seventh Commandment, he refers to Lev. 18:6; Num. 25:9 (*cf.* I Cor. 10:8); Dt. 22:5,12; *etc.*¹²⁶ Under the Eighth Commandment (*cf.* I Tim. 5:18), he refers to Ex. 22:25; Lev. 29:9ff,33,35; 24:33; 25:42; Dt. 15:1,13; 23:24; 24:10,14; 19:14; 15:4; *etc.*¹²⁷ Under the Ninth Commandment, he refers to Ex. 23:1,7; Lev. 29:16-17; *etc.*¹²⁸ And under the Tenth Commandment, he refers to Dt. 5:21 (*cf.* Rom. 7:7,13,14 and Jas. 1:14-19 & 2:8-12 & 4:1-12) *etc.*¹²⁹

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Of course, an imperfect sinner — no matter how much he might succeed in keeping these Ten Commandments — can never adequately *justify* himself, in the eyes of the sinless Sovereign. As Calvin explains:¹³⁰ "Moses delivers the precepts of the Law under a heavy sanction.... The Prophets strongly urge and threaten transgressors, though they at the same time confess that men are wise only when an understanding heart is given them.... It is the proper work of God to circumcise the heart, and to change it from stone into flesh ---- to write His Law on their inward parts ---- in short, to renew souls so as to give efficacy to doctrine."

Calvin further declares:¹³¹ "The office and use of the Moral Law...seems to me to consist of three parts.... First, by exhibiting the righteousness of God...it admonishes everyone of his own unrighteousness..., in order that man who is blind and intoxicated with self-love may be brought at once to know and to confess his weakness.... The second office of the Law is...to curb those who, unless forced, have no regard for rectitude and justice.... They thoroughly detest the Law itself, and execrate the Lawgiver....

"Nevertheless, this forced and extorted righteousness is necessary for the good of society — its peace being secured by a provision but for which all things would be thrown into tumult and confusion.... This office seems to be especially in the view of the Apostle.... He says 'that the Law is not made for a righteous man but for the lawless and disobedient — for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane,

for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for perjured persons'.... I Tim. 1:9f.

"The Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.' Gal. 3:24.... Those therefore whom He has destined to the inheritance of His Kingdom — if He does not immediately regenerate — He through the works of the Law preserves in fear, against the time of His visitation.... The third use of the Law (being also the principal use and more closely connected with its proper end) has respect to believers in whose hearts the Spirit of God already flourishes and reigns....

"The Law is written and engraven on their hearts by the finger of God.... It is the best instrument for enabling them daily to learn with greater truth and certainty what that will of the Lord is which they aspire to follow....

"Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which you shall command your children to observe to do — all the words of this Law! For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life!' Dt. 32:46f.... It contains a perfect pattern of righteousness.... It must be impious to discard it.

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Calvin continues:¹²⁷ "In regard to believers, the Law has the force of exhortation — not to bind their consciences with a curse, but by urging them from time to time to shake off sluggishness.... Many, when they would express this exemption from the curse, say that in regard to believers...the Moral Law is abrogated. Not that the things which it enjoins are no longer rightly to be observed, but only that it is not to believers what it formerly was. In other words, that it does not — by terrifying and confounding their consciences — condemn and destroy.

"It is certainly true that Paul shows in clear terms that there is such an abrogation of the Law.... That the same was preached by our Lord, appears from this — He would not have refuted the opinion of His destroying the Law, if it [that incorrect opinion regarding Christ's teachings] had not been prevalent among the Jews.... But lest we should stumble against the same stone — let us distinguish accurately between what has been abrogated in the Law, and what still remains in force.

"When the Lord declares that He came not to destroy the Law but to fulfil (Matth. 5:17) — that until heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or tittle shall remain unfulfilled — He shows that His advent was not to derogate in any degree from the observance of the Law.... Therefore the doctrine of the Law has not been infringed by Christ, but remains — so that by teaching, admonishing, rebuking and correcting, it may fit and prepare us for every good work."

Calvin continues:¹³² "To our weakness, indeed everything — even to the minutest tittle of the Law — is arduous and difficult. It is His to give what He orders — and to order what He wills. That Christians are under the Law of Grace, means not that they are to wander unrestrained without the Law — but that they are engrafted into Christ by Whose Grace they are freed from the curse of the Law, and by Whose Spirit they have the Law written in their hearts....

"All sin is mortal.... It is rebellion against the will of God and necessarily provokes His anger.... It is a violation of the Law, against every violation of which without exception the judgment of God has been pronounced. The faults of the saints are indeed venial; not, however, in their own nature — but because, through the mercy of God, they obtain pardon."

The Moral Law's Perfection

Because the Law of God is altogether perfect (Pss. 19:7f & 111:7), it is positively evil for especially Christ's Church to attempt the enactment of her own additional 'Ecclesiastical Constitutions' — wherever they might be at variance with the Decalogue. Indeed, the "enacting of laws" by the Church, observes Calvin,¹³³ "often constitutes" — but "as many deadly snares to miserable souls." For such 'Ecclesiastical Constitutions' often clearly "adulterate the worship of God, and rob God Himself (Who is the only Lawgiver) of His right."

Now wherever such "human laws...are imposed for the purpose of forming a religious obligation," explains Calvin,¹³⁴ "we say that the restraint thus laid on the conscience is unlawful." Compare again Calvin's advice to the Pastors of Mompelgard that any injunction by the authorities "to establish the practice of baptism by women...must be resisted — even unto blood!"¹³⁵

Here, Romanism retorts that "if we must obey princes not only from fear of punishment but 'for conscience sake' [Rom. 13:5] — it seems to follow that the laws of

princes have dominion over the conscience. If this is true, [however] -- the same thing must [also] be affirmed of ecclesiastical laws!"

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Replies Dr. John Calvin:¹³¹ "I answer that the first thing to be done here, is to distinguish between the genus and the species. For though individual laws [still] do not reach the conscience, yet we are bound by the general command of God — which enjoins us to submit to magistrates....

"This is the point on which Paul's discussion turns — *viz.* that [all] magistrates are to be honoured, because they are ordained by God (Rom. 13:1). Meanwhile, he does not at all teach that the laws enacted by them reach to the internal government of the soul.... Very different, however, is the case of those which prescribe a new form of worshipping God — and introduce necessity into things that are free. Such, however, are what in the present day are called 'Ecclesiastical Constitutions' by the Papacy."

"The whole question depends on this," explains Calvin.¹³⁶ "God being the only Lawgiver — it is unlawful for men to assume that honour to themselves." Yet that is precisely what the Romanists do — with their 'Ecclesiastical Constitutions.' For "when vindicating the transgression of the Divine Law with trivial satisfactions —

they visit [even] the minutest violation of one of their decrees with no lighter punishment than imprisonment, exile, fire or sword.... They would sooner see the whole Law of God subverted — than one iota of what they call 'the Precepts of the Church' infringed.

"There is a grievous delinquency in this.... One contemns, judges, and casts off his neighbour — for trivial matters.... But now — as if this were a small evil — those 'frivolous elements of this world' as Paul terms them in his Epistle to the Galatians (Gal. 4:9), are deemed of more value than the heavenly oracles of God! He who is all but acquitted for adultery — is judged in meat.... He to whom whoredom is permitted — is forbidden to marry!"

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Three further observations now need to be made about John Calvin and the Decalogue. Firstly, he emphasises its **spirituality**. That does not mean the "de-material-isation" or "de-concrete-tisation" or "in-visibil-isation" of the Law. It rather means man's **internal motivation** to keep the Ten Commandments — **outwardly too**. As Calvin states: "In the Law, human life is instructed not merely in outward decency — but in inward spiritual righteousness."¹³⁷

Second, Calvin understands that the Decalogue needs to be interpreted by **positivization** and **synecdoche**. For "there is always more in the requirements and prohibitions of the Law than is expressed in words."¹³⁸

Third, the interpretation of the Moral Law also needs **contrarization**. For "if this pleases God, its opposite displeases; if that displeases, its opposition pleases."¹³⁴

Now "let us observe," explains Calvin,¹³⁹ "that in man — government is twofold. The one spiritual — by which the conscience is trained to piety and divine worship; the other civil — by which the individual is instructed in those duties which, as men and citizens, we are bound to perform."

The latter, "temporal jurisdiction..., relates to matters of the present life." Such relate "not only to food and clothing — but to the enacting of laws which require a man to live among his fellows purely, honourably, and modestly....

"We will not erroneously transfer the doctrine of the gospel concerning spiritual liberty to civil order — as if in regard to external government Christians were less subject to human laws because their consciences are unbound before God.... Paul commands us to obey the magistrate 'not only for wrath but also for conscience sake.' Rom. 13:1-5.... Whence it follows that civil laws also bind the conscience.... We ought to abstain from everything that produces offence — but with a free conscience.... The Law, while binding the external act, leaves the conscience unbound."

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Furthermore, "the office of the magistrates," observes Calvin,¹⁴⁰ "extends to both Tables of the Law.... No one has discussed the office of magistrates, the making of laws, and public welfare — without beginning at religion and divine worship.... Those laws are preposterous which neglect God's right — and provide only for men."

Now "the Moral Law," states Dr. John Calvin,¹⁴¹ is "contained under two heads.... The one...simply enjoins us to worship God with pure faith and piety.... The other [enjoins us] to embrace men with sincere affection.... The Moral Law...is the true and eternal rule of righteousness prescribed to the men of all nations and of all times who would frame their life agreeably to the will of God."

God's Commandments were already "exceedingly broad" — even in their Old Testament applicability to human life. Ps. 119:96. But when Christ Himself came to earth at His incarnation — He would, in His Own practice, "**magnify** the Law." Isa. 42:21 *cf.* Matt. 5:17-39f. Indeed, He would also **export** that Law to the very ends of the Earth. For all of the nations were and are **waiting** precisely for this. Isa. 42:4 *cf.* Rev. 15:4.

Toward the end of his *Institutes*, Calvin rejects the modern framing of commonwealth laws solely according to the Mosaic system pure and simple. Yet there, he is clearly repudiating legalistic fanaticism alone. For there, Dr. Calvin is distinctly approving¹⁴² precisely those situations where commonwealth laws have been framed according to "the common law of nations." Indeed, that 'Common Law' — alias the 'Law of Nations' itself — roots in the Law of Nature, alias God's Moral Law.

Calvin is **not** there rejecting the careful application of Moses' teaching, suitably updated. It is true that Calvin in the very next paragraph states¹⁴³ that "each nation has been left at liberty to enact the laws which it judges to be beneficial" to it. But then, Calvin himself **immediately** adds: "Still, these are always to be tested by the rule of charity — so that while they vary in form, they must proceed on the same principle."

Note **again** — emphases ours — especially the latter words: "they **must** proceed on the **same** principle." We repeat: "they must proceed" precisely "on the same principle."

What is Equity?

Indeed, Calvin there clearly states¹³⁹ that those "judicial laws...delivered certain forms of equity and justice." Furthermore, he adds that it was and is the "Law of God which we call Moral" — the Decalogue itself — which constitutes "this equity" in the judicials.

"The judicial law" of the ancient Israelites, Calvin explains,¹³⁹ was "given them as a kind of polity" or political constitution — containing "certain forms of equity." And the judicial form, "though it looked only to the best method of preserving that charity

[or love] which is enjoined by the eternal Law of God ---- was still something distinct from the precept of [equity or] love itself."

Consequently, Calvin insists,¹³⁹ even "when these judicial arrangements are removed — the duties and precepts of charity...still remain perpetual." The "precepts" and the general "equity" — within the judicial laws of Israel — are therefore perpetual. Thus Calvin on "equity."¹³⁹ This general equity is still required; yes, it is still required. Thus also the *Westminster Confession*.¹⁴⁴

Careful note, explains Calvin,¹⁴⁵ should therefore be taken of "two things connected with all laws — viz. the enactment of the law, and the equity on which the [same] enactment is founded and rests.... The Law of God which we call 'Moral' is nothing else than the testimony of Natural Law and of that conscience, which God has engraven on the minds of men. The whole of this equity of which we now speak, is prescribed in it [viz. God's Moral Law alias His Ten Commandments]. Hence, it [this equity] alone — ought to be the aim, the rule, and the end of all laws."

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Here are some examples. Calvin's comment on Dt. 13:5f is most instructive as regards the civil use of the Law of God. Says he:¹⁴⁶ "In a well-constituted polity [or political commonwealth], profane men are by no means to be tolerated — by whom religion is subverted.... God commands the false prophets to be put to death — who pluck up the foundations of religion, and are the authors and leaders of rebellion....

"God might, indeed, do without the assistance of the sword in defending religion — but such is not His will. And what wonder, if God should command magistrates to be the avengers of His glory — when He neither wills nor suffers [alias permits] that thefts, fornications, and drunkenness should be exempt from punishment....

Capital punishment shall be decreed against adulterers.... It is [then] superfluous to contend by argument, when God has once pronounced what is His will. For we must needs abide by His inviolable decree.

"But it is questioned [by some, as to] whether the Law ---- pertains to the Kingdom of Christ.... But when human judges consecrate their work to the promotion of Christ's Kingdom — I deny that on this account its nature is changed.... He did not impose on Himself...that He should never bring kings under His subjection.... Magistrates at first exercised tyranny against the Church — because the time had not yet come when they should 'kiss the Son' of God." Ps. 2:2,10,12.

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At first — at the beginning of the Christian era — when Jesus was born — the time had not yet come when judges and kings would begin to 'kiss the Son.' However, that time did come — at least in principle — when the Ascended Christ sat down as the Son of man on the throne of the universe. Dan. 7:13-14. And that time shall come

— also in practice — when all nations **will submit** to King Jesus and His Great Commission. See: Dan. 7:23-27 and Rev. 15:4.

For even at the beginning of the Christian era, explains John Calvin,¹⁴² the [then pagan] magistrates were required to start "laying aside their violence" — and to "become the nursing fathers of the Church which they had assailed, according to Isaiah's prophecy which undoubtedly refers to the coming of Christ. Isa. 49:6,23. Nor was it without cause that Paul, when he enjoins prayers to be made for kings and other worldly rulers, added the reason — that under them 'we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.' I Tim. 2:2."

So "judgment must be passed according to the Law of God.... [Yet] this severity must not be extended to particular errors — but [only when and] where impiety breaks forth even into rebellion.... Zeal will err in hastily drawing the sword, unless a lawful examination shall previously have been instituted."

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Calvin also discusses the principle of **money-lending** — as set out in Ex. 22:25. There, he comments:¹⁴⁷ "The judicial law, however, which God prescribed to His ancient people — is only so far abrogated as that which charity dictates should remain."

He also discusses the status of **conscriptees during warfare**. Dt. 20:5. Here, Calvin comments:¹⁴⁸ "We have said that the lazy and timid were sent home, so that the Israelites might learn that none were to be pressed beyond their ability.... This also depends upon that rule of '**equity**' — which dictates that we should abstain from all unjust oppression."

Here, the French reads that "this is a part of that common **equity** to which the Eighth Commandment has reference."¹⁴⁹ Compare too the "general equity" **required** by the *Westminster Confession*.¹⁵⁰

* * * * *

Today, humanistic lawyers and wayward theologians often suggest that criminals should be **'hospitalised' rather than punished**. Interestingly, even in Dr. Calvin's day, there were similar libertines. They, he declares,¹⁵¹ "will have it that crimes ought not to be punished in their authors — because they are not committed without the dispensation of God."

However, Calvin here replies: "I concede more — that thieves and murderers and other evil-doers are instruments of Divine Providence, being employed by the Lord Himself to execute the judgments which He has resolved to inflict. But I deny that this forms any excuse for their misdeeds...."

"They cannot exculpate themselves. For their own conscience condemns them.... The matter and guilt of wickedness — belongs to the wicked man. Why should it be thought that God contracts any impurity — in using it at pleasure, as His instrument?"

In dealing with the Seventh Commandment of the Decalogue, Calvin also discusses the Old Testament judicial laws against **incest**. These, he rightly regards as practically indispensable for both church and society — also today. I Cor. 5:1-13 most certainly presupposes rules akin to the Levitical laws. For nowhere in the Bible is incest clearly defined — except in Lev. 18 and 20.

As Dr. Calvin importantly remarks:¹⁵² "The [Ancient] Roman laws accord with the rule prescribed by God — as if their authors had learnt from Moses what was decorous and agreeable to nature." Indeed, under divine inspiration, Moses in turn had derived these same principles from the Spirit-given laws of nature — and nature's God.

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As Calvin further explains: "Whatever is prescribed here [in Lev. 18:6], is deduced from 'the Source of rectitude' Himself — and from the natural feelings implanted by Him in us.... It flows from 'the Fountain of nature' Himself — and is founded on the general principle of all laws, which is perpetual and inviolable.... I do not see that under the pretext of its being a political law — French: 'under the pretext that the Law of Moses has ceased'¹⁵³ — the purity of [the law of] nature can be abolished. From whence arises the distinction between the Statutes of God — and the abuses of the Gentiles.

"Hence, just and reasonable men will acknowledge that even amongst heathen nations, this Law was accounted indissoluble — as if implanted and engraved on the hearts of men [Rom. 2:14-16]. On this ground Paul, more severely to reprove the incest of a step-son with his father's wife, says that such an occurrence is not so much as named [even] among the Gentiles.' I Cor. 5:1.

"If it be objected, that such marriages are **not prohibited** to us in the **New Testament** — I reply that the marriage of a father with his daughter is not forbidden [there]/.... But shall it therefore be lawful for those who are near of kin, to form promiscuous connexions?"

No! It was already prohibited in the Old Testament. And there is **no** New Testament rescission thereof. So this law against incest continues to operate — throughout all of Post-Calvary history too.

This is why Calvin also wrote¹⁵⁴ "that an offspring is partly procreated by the seed of the mother. According to the common custom of nations, mothers are deemed progenitors.... With this, the Divine Law agrees — which could [thus] have had no ground to forbid the marriage of the uncle with the niece, if there was no consanguinity between them." See Lev. 18:12f & 20:21f *etc.*

The Moral Law, the Law of Nations, and the Law of Nature — thus all stand together. Properly interpreted — all re-inforce one another, in a triune manner.

Different penalties for different societies?

Moreover, while dealing with the Eighth Commandment of the Decalogue, the Genius of Geneva makes a most important comment on the judicial laws concerning desirable rates of **interest**. In that regard,¹⁵⁵ Calvin declares that as to whether it "be lawful to receive usury upon loans — the **Law of Equity** will better prescribe."

Consequently, the Calvin-istic *Westminster Assembly* in the next century — concerned precisely with **equity** — condemned¹⁵⁶ in-iquit-ous [alias in-equit-able] "extortion" and "usury" (alias exorbitant rates of interest). Indeed, it rejected them as **Decalogical** alias

Moral Law transgressions of the Eighth Commandment of the Lord's Law of Nature. Compare too: Mt. 23:35 with Ezk. 22:12 & Ps. 15:5.

"The Law of God," explains Calvin,¹⁵⁷ "forbids to steal. The punishment appointed for **theft** in the civil polity of the Jews may be seen in Exodus 22. Very ancient laws of other nations punished theft by exacting the double of what was stolen... Subsequent laws made a distinction between theft manifest — and not manifest. Other laws went the length of punishing with exile, or with branding; while others made the punishment ---- capital.

"Among the Jews," continues Calvin,¹⁵³ "the punishment of the **false witness** was to 'do unto him as he had thought to have done with his brother.' Deut. 19:19. In some lands, the punishment is infamy; in others, hanging; in others, crucifixion. All laws alike avenge murder with blood; but the kinds of death are different.

In some countries, **adultery** was punished more severely; in others, more leniently. Yet we see that amidst this diversity, they all tend to the same end. For they all with one mouth declare against those crimes which are condemned by **the eternal Law of God.**"

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There are, of course, differences in the kinds and intensities of punishments inflicted — differences between one country and another. There are also, says Calvin,¹⁵³ differences with "regard to time and place and the condition of the people" concerned.

Yet, all societies on earth punish their members for transgressing the Moral Law of Nature (as each country understands it).

Very significantly, Calvin **never** defends the imposition of punishments **less lenient** than those prescribed to the Ancient Israelites. Yet, in certain countries and ages ---- he does defend the imposition of even more severe punishments.

As he explains:¹⁵³ "There may be a country which, if murder were not visited with fearful punishments, would instantly become a prey to robbery and slaughter. There may be an age requiring that the severity of punishments should be increased.

"If the state is in troubled condition, those things from which disturbances usually arise — must be corrected by new edicts. In time of war, civilization would disappear amid the noise of arms — were not men overawed by an unwonted severity of punishment. In sterility [alias unfruitful times], in pestilence, were not stricter

discipline employed — all things would grow worse. One nation might be more prone to a particular vice, were it not most severely repressed.

"How malignant it were, and invidious of the public good, to be offended at this diversity — which is admirably adapted to retain the observance of the Divine Law! The [stupid] allegation that insult is offered to the Law of God enacted by Moses — where it [*viz.* the kind and severity of the penalty] is abrogated and where other new laws are 'preferred' to it — is most absurd. Others are not 'preferred' [as such] — when they are more approved (not absolutely), but from regard to time and place and the condition of the people — or when those things are abrogated which were never enacted for us.

"The Lord did not deliver it by the hand of Moses to be promulgated in all countries and to be everywhere enforced. But, having taken the Jewish nation under His special care, patronage and guardianship — He was pleased to be specially its Legislator. And, as behooved a wise Legislator — He had special regard to it, in enacting Laws."

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In other words, those modern(ist) theologians who cite the above passages to attempt to lessen the penalties for Biblical crimes — are twisting Calvin. For these passages do not prescribe less than the death penalty for modern instances of capital crimes like murder and kidnapping and rape *etc.*

To the contrary. These passages in Calvin clearly urge that in perilous places and times, "the severity of punishments should be increased." There should then be "severity of punishments" — and "stricter discipline" should then be "employed." For, Calvin insists, "a particular vice" should then be "most severely repressed" *etc.*

Thus, at certain times and among certain pagan or paganized or paganizing peoples — penalties more severe than the Mosaic Law may well be appropriate. As long as those pagan conditions last, not just multiple restitution but even death itself — might well be the most appropriate punishment even for crimes like non-fatal robbery and grand theft and attempted treason *etc.*

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Of course, the punishment should always fit the crime. Indeed, even the very method of the penalty should be rational. Yet this is not always the case in many Islamic lands.

Saudi Arabia, for instance, orders thieves' hands cut off; drunkards flogged; and rapists publically beheaded. Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates recently joined Saudi Arabia in spearheading "Islamic banking." This eliminates interest on loans to strangers — as levied by the Ancient Israelites according to the Old Testament, and as accordingly also charged in modern communities of both Christians and Jews. See too Mt. 25:16-27 & 21:33-43 and Lk. 19:12-23f.

Egypt, predominantly Moslem, saw ten Ex-Moslems arrested in the year 1986 — for "despising Islam" by converting to Christianity. And the Pakistan National Assembly in Islamabad in the same year accepted a law prescribing the death penalty for what it calls the 'wrongful' use of the name of Mohammad.¹⁵⁸ Since then, dire capital punishments wished by the Ayatollah Khomeini (and others) upon the Moslem Salman Rushdie for circulating his *Satanic Verses* anent Mohammad — have rightly shocked the West.

One can certainly commend these modern Islamic societies for defying the pressures of international humanism and its insipid values. Yet most of the harsh penalties stated in the previous paragraphs — and especially the methods whereby they are carried out — are nevertheless excessive. Fortunately, there are still some modern lands — especially those much influenced by the Bible — whose various national codes prescribe the same balanced penalties for breaking God's Moral Law, as are found in the Mosaic legislation.

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There would indeed be great merit today in constitutionally enacting legislative penalties more agreeable with those expressed in the judicial laws of Ancient Israel.¹⁵⁹ Thus, in that regard, 'Exhibit A' should be — the mandatory death penalty^{17f} for all professional homicidal abortionists.^{97f} How much better that would be — 'according to the rules of the common law'¹⁶⁰ — than the 'cruel and unusual punishments'¹⁶¹ currently being meted out by those mass-murderers to the millions of unborn babies criminally being aborted throughout the world today!

So, as Calvin explains, the enforcement of the Mosaic Law and its penalties — was by far "the best method of preserving that charity which is enjoined by the eternal Law of God."¹⁶² Indeed, the latter will inevitably yet become generally acclaimed — both nationally and internationally — precisely in order to curb today's increasing breakdown of law and order.

Sundry serious crimes

Let us again hear Dr. John Calvin at this point:¹⁶³ "It appears how greatly God abominates **adultery**, since He pronounces capital punishment against it." Before his marriage, "if a man had broken faith with his [future] wife by having connexion with a harlot — it was not a capital offence. But if any man, though a bachelor, had committed adultery with the wife of another — he was to **die**....

"By the universal law of the Gentiles, the punishment of death was **always** awarded to adultery. Therefore it is all the baser and more shameful in Christians [in that respect] — not to imitate at least the heathen! Adultery is punished no less severely by the [pagan] Julian Law, than by that of God." Yet some of "those who boast themselves of the Christian name, are so tender and remiss that they visit this execrable offence with a very light reproof!"

Those Christians who are reticent about advocating the proper punishment for adultery — explains Calvin¹⁵⁹ — would, of course, not "abrogate God's Law without a pretext." So they "allege the example of Christ — Who dismissed the woman taken in adultery."

However, as Calvin further states:¹⁵⁹ "She ought to have been stoned" or collectively executed by society — yet not without first being found guilty, by due process of law. However, the latter was not Christ's task. For at that time, He did not occupy the office of a judge.

Explains Calvin:¹⁵⁹ "If we consider what the office was which the Father delegated to His only-begotten Son, we shall not be surprised that He was content with the limits of His vocation — and did not discharge the duties of a judge [during that time of His first advent]. But those who have been invested with the sword for the correction of crime, have [here] absurdly imitated His example.... Thus their relaxation of the [death] penalty has flowed from gross ignorance."

It seems the Pharisees had maliciously omitted to bring the woman taken in adultery — before the judges. Instead, they had wrongfully dragged her — before the non-judge Jesus. As Calvin explains,¹⁶⁴ they did this — simply "to lay a trap for Christ.... Their intention was to force Christ to give up His office of preaching grace — so that He might seem fickle and unsteady...."

"They say plainly [and rightly] that adulteresses are condemned by Moses.... 'But Jesus cast down His eyes.'" Then He said: 'he that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her!'

Observes Calvin: "He said this, according to the custom of the Law. For God [indeed] commanded that [first] the witnesses should put malefactors and evildoers to death — with their own hands.... Dt. 17:7.

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"In respect of that particular sin and the degree of guilt involved, continues Calvin in his condemnation of **false witness**,¹⁶⁰ "here Christ is demanding perfect innocence from the witnesses — so that no man may take it upon him to avenge a crime in another, unless he himself be pure and free from all guilt.... Whoever accuses another ---- should impose on himself a law of innocence [as regards that **same** type of crime]. Otherwise, we are not attacking wicked deeds — but are against men's persons...."

"This is not an absolute and simple prohibition in which Christ forbids sinners to do their duty in correcting the sins of others.... He only reproves hypocrites — who gently flatter themselves and their own vices, but who are excessively severe and even savage judges of others. None, then, must let his own sins stop him correcting the sins of [himself and of] others and even punishing them when necessary, so long as he hates both in himself and in others what is to be condemned.... Every man should begin by interrogating his own conscience and be both witness and judge

against himself ---- before he comes to others. In this way, we shall wage war on sins — without hating men....

"It is not related that Christ simply absolved the woman — but [it is related] that He let her go free. And this is not surprising — for He did not wish to undertake anything that did not belong to His office.... Those who deduce from this that adultery should not be punished by death must, on the same reasoning, admit that inheritances should not be divided — since Christ refused to arbitrate between two brothers [Lk. 12:13-14].

"Indeed, every crime would be exempt from the penalties of the law — if the punishment of adultery is remitted. For the door will then be thrown open to any kind of treachery — and to poisoning, murder and robbery.

"Moreover, when an adulteress brings an illegitimate child into a family, she not only steals the family name — but robs the legitimate issue of the right of inheritance, and transfers it to strangers.... Yet the Popish theology is that in this passage Christ has brought in the 'law of grace' — by which adulterers may be freed from punishment....

"What is this — but that they may pollute with unbridled lust nearly every marriage bed with impunity? This is the result of that diabolical celibacy, so that those who are not allowed to have a lawful wife may fornicate indiscriminately. But let us hold that -

--- although Christ remits men's sins — He does not subvert the social order or abolish legal sentences and punishments."

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Now in 1559, the mature Calvin — with Chandieu — wrote the *French Confession* alias the *Confessio Gallicana*. There, he declares that "God put the sword in the hand of the State ---- to resist sins not only against the Second but also against the First Table of the Law."¹⁶⁵

Thus, inside the city of Geneva itself, Calvin certainly encouraged the imposition of the Biblical punishments — against witchcraft, murder, adultery and incest. Regarding witchcraft, it should always be remembered that witches were very often also adulterers and poisoners. Frequently, they were even ritual murderers.

In Ex. 22:18, Calvin comments,¹⁶⁶ God "denounces **capital punishment upon witches**." The passage Dt. 18:10-12 condemns the sins of divination, astrology, casting spells, witchcrafts, working with charms, conducting seances, wizardry, and necromancy. Precisely in terms of this, says Calvin,¹⁶⁷ "Paul admonishes believers to seek diligently to avoid the sins which provoke God's wrath against the disobedient. Eph. 5:6."

In his *Letter to Farel* of April 1545, Calvin explains¹⁶⁸ why he himself had favoured the execution — even after their repentance — of two Genevan witches who had poisoned people with their potions. "René's...wife admitted that she poisoned

eighteen people, and he himself about four or five. At his capital punishment, the power of the Lord was wonderfully revealed.... Both of them died joyfully — in very great assurance of faith, and with clear evidence of repentance."

Calvin's *Sermons on Deuteronomy*¹⁶⁹ re-inforce this. There, on Dt. 13:5's death penalty for **false prophecy**, he states: "Let us not think that this Law is a special law for the Jews! But let us understand that God intended to deliver us a general rule — to which we must tie ourselves!"

In his sermon on Dt. 17:2-6, Calvin favours the death penalty for apostasy. In his sermon on Dt. 17:12, he prescribes quite the same for those who refuse the decision of a judicial tribunal. Indeed, in his sermon on Dt. 19:16-21, he requires the same penalty for 'capital perjury' — for such perjury as wilfully attempts to invoke the death penalty against an innocent accused.

Even rogues, however, were entitled to a fair trial. Significantly, Calvin offered to lend even his arch-enemy — the accused seditious heretic Michael Servetus — some valuable books for the preparation of his own legal defence.¹⁷⁰

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Striking too is the teaching in Calvin's sermon on Dt. 22:6-7, anent **cruelty to mothers**. That passage provides: "If a bird's nest chances to be before you on the road, in any tree or on the ground — whether there be young ones or eggs, and the dam [or mother bird] sitting upon the young or upon the eggs — you shall not take the dam together with the young! But, while you take the young, you shall certainly let the dam go — so that it may go well with you, and so that you may prolong your own days!"

Explains Calvin: "If a man find a bird's nest, he may take the young ones. But he must let the dam go when she broods her eggs or her young ones. Why does God not say rather that if a man see a mother nursing her child, he shall not trouble her but rather succour her and help her — and certainly beware that he not touch her?"

"For that would hurt the infant, which is a thoughtless innocent soul. Why does God not speak in that manner? What was the need to go on to say that a man should let a bird alone, when she broods her young?"

"By this, He meant to express the better how greatly He abhors all cruelty. For if He cannot bear with it when it extends but to the little birds — [how] shall a man escape unpunished, when he falls to hurting the image of God Himself; that is to say, when he offers wrong to another human being?"

"As I said before: God does not stand upon the birds, to put any great perfection in them. But He meant to teach us — by an argument from the lesser to the greater — after what manner we ought to behave ourselves towards our neighbours.... If a man disquiet a nurse or a mother in doing her duty towards her child — surely, it is double cruelty!"

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As regards **rape**, Calvin rightly sees it as a capital crime — just as serious as grand robbery and premeditated murder. Gen. 24:57-58 & 34:2-27 *cf.* Dt. 22:25-27. Thus, always the aggressive raper — but certainly never the involuntary rapee — merits the mandatory death penalty. Monstrous is the modern view that a raped (or an unwillingly sex-forced) un-married woman, should feel obligated to marry her raper (provided he is unmarried) — just because she herself was not then married!

Even if the unmarried raper repents and wants to marry the girl he raped — and *vice-versa* — this should never be done. For, unlike voluntary pre-marital sexual intercourse by mutual consent even as a result of seduction (Ex. 22:16f), aggressive rape requires the mandatory death penalty . "If a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man force her and lie with her, then only the man who lay with her — **shall die.**" Dt. 22:25.

In his sermon on Dt. 22:25-27, Calvin insists: "He who ravishes a maid, is here likened to a thief.... The act, of itself, is beyond measure outrageous and intolerable.... God, to show the grievousness of the fault, says it is a kind of open thievery and murder — if a man meet with a maid and deflower her specifically by force. This is an unpardonable offence."

While adultery and rape were capital crimes, fornication and seduction were not. Says Calvin:¹⁷¹ "If a man find a maid without forcing [her], and she yield herself — he shall be quit by giving money for the marriage of the maid, and by taking her to wife." In that case, by previously yielding — they had both already given 'implicit consent' to such a subsequent marriage. Dt. 22:28-29 (*cf.* Gen. 24:57-58; I Cor. 6:16-18; 7:2-5; I Th. 4:3-8).

Both should themselves feel that they are — by the Law of Nature — obligated to marry one another. Indeed, the man should — usually — be compelled to marry the maid he deflowered. Yet, he may only be allowed to marry her at all — if her father is willing for that non-raping seducer to marry his young daughter. Ex. 22:16-17.

As Calvin explains:¹⁷² "He who has corrupted a girl, should be compelled to marry her — and also to give her a dowry from his own property.... But, if the marriage should not please her father — the penalty imposed on her seducer, is that he should assign her a wedding portion."

Law and citizens' compacts

It should be noted that Calvin was able to influence the 'City Fathers' of Geneva to get her residents to **compact** and subscribe to God's Decalogue as a condition of their citizenship there. The 'City Fathers' became agreeable to this — precisely when the majority of the residents themselves had similarly become willing.

Professor Harold Berman of Atlanta's Emory University Law School has addressed this matter. He points out, in his famous book *Law and Revolution*, that Dr. Calvin

and his associates were able — in the latter phase of his own residence in Geneva — to require her citizens resolutely to promise that they would live by God's Decalogue, also in their public lives.

"Calvin," explains Harold Berman,¹⁷³ asked "the entire people of Geneva to accept the *Confession of Faith* and to take an oath to obey the **Ten Commandments** — as well as to swear loyalty to the city. People were summoned in groups by the police, to participate in the covenant."

Indeed, also New York's Union Theological Seminary Rev. Prof. Dr. J.T. MacNeill has noted this — in his landmark book *The History and Character of Calvinism*.¹⁷⁴ There, he too observes that Calvin got the City Fathers to continue "requiring the acceptance of his own *Confession*" — by the citizens of Geneva.

As MacNeill explains, Calvin regarded "its rejection [as] a violation of the resolution of the people to live in accordance with Scripture. On pressure from him and Farel, the Little Council — in March, April and May 1557 — made repeated efforts to obtain the assent of all citizens. At the end of July, there was a gathering in St. Pierre at which groups of people — summoned by the police — gave their adherence."

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Calvin particularly urges suitably-qualified **Christians to seek public office**. He says¹⁷⁵ that Christians should "form our manners" by "civil justice." For he insists that they should "cherish common peace and tranquillity." Indeed, "civil government" is so necessary — holds Calvin — that "it is perfect barbarism to think of exterminating it."

For it is altogether essential: "that the public quiet be not disturbed; that every man's property be kept secure; that men may carry on innocent commerce with each other." Explains Dr. John Calvin: "I approve of civil order...to prevent the true religion, which is contained in the Law of God, from being with impunity openly isolated and polluted by public blasphemy.

"With regard to the function of magistrates, the Lord has...declared that He approves and is pleased with it.... Ex. 22:8-9; Ps. 82:1,6; Jh. 10:34-35; Dt. 1:16-17; II Chr. 19:6-7; Prov. 8:15.... Those who bear the office of magistrate, are called 'gods'.... It is thereby intimated that they have a commission from God [Rom. 13:1-4 *cf.* Prov. 8:15-16].... They are invested with divine authority ---- and, in fact, represent the Person of God as Whose substitutes they in a manner act.

"This is...the interpretation of Christ.... 'Scripture,' says He, 'called them gods to whom the Word of God came'.... Business was committed to them by God — to serve Him in their office and (as Moses and Jehoshaphat said to the judges whom they were appointing over each of the cities of Judah) to exercise judgment not for man but for God.... Supreme power on earth is lodged in kings and other governors...by Divine Providence and the holy decree of Him to Whom it has seemed

good so to govern the affairs of men. Since He is present, He also presides — in enacting laws and exercising judicial equity."

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Calvin continues:¹⁷¹ "Paul also...is speaking of Senates of grave men ---- which...he calls *Kuberneseis* [or] 'Governments.' I Cor. 12:28." Not just ecclesiastical governments but also "civil power has the same end in view.... He is recommending every kind of just government.... He says that there is no power, but from God; that the powers that be, were ordained by God; and that rulers, the ministers of God, are not a terror to good works — but to the evil." Rom. 13:1-3.

"To this," explains Calvin, "we may add the examples of saints" or sanctified men. "Some of them held the office of kings — such as David, Josiah, and Hezekiah. Others were governors — such as Joseph and Daniel. Others were civil magistrates among a free people — such as Moses, Joshua, and the Judges.... Civil authority is, in the sight of God, not only sacred and lawful — but the most sacred and by far the most honourable of all stations in mortal life.

"David says: 'Be wise now therefore, O you kings.... Kiss the Son!'" Ps. 2:10-12. "He does not order them to lay aside their authority...but to make the power with which they are invested subject to Christ — so that He may rule overall. In like manner, when Isaiah predicts of the Church 'kings shall be your nursing-fathers and their queens your nursing-mothers' (Isa. 49:23) — he did not bid them abdicate their authority. He rather gives them the honourable appellation of patrons of the pious worshippers of God."

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Calvin concludes:¹⁷¹ "What zeal for integrity...ought to sway those who know that they have been appointed ministers of Divine Justice.... They are vicegerents [and indeed also viceregents] of God. It behoves them to...exhibit a kind of image of Divine Providence, guardianship, goodness, benevolence, and justice.... Moses and Jehoshaphat would urge their judges to the discharge of duty [Dt. 1:16 & II Chr. 19:6-7 *etc*].... For if they sin in any respect — not only is injury done to the men whom they wickedly torment; but they also insult God Himself Whose sacred tribunals they pollute.... They are not engaged in profane occupations unbecoming a servant of God — but [they are really engaged] in a most sacred Office.... They are the ambassadors of God."

In the early centuries of our Christian era, explains Dr. Calvin,¹⁷⁶ "magistrates were still strangers to our profession of religion." Yet even then, they nevertheless had — "the right of the sword to punish or restrain"; the "power to co-erce"; the ability to put into "prison" and also to impose "other punishments which the magistrate is wont to inflict....

Does anyone get intoxicated? In a well-ordered society, his punishment will be [at least] imprisonment. Has he committed whoredom? The punishment will be

similar — or rather, more severe. Thus, satisfaction will be given — to the laws, the magistrates, and the external tribunal."

Later, however — "when emperors and magistrates began to assume the Christian name — spiritual jurisdiction [by the Mediaeval Church herself as regards her own Members] was not forthwith abolished, but was only so arranged as not in any respect to impair civil jurisdiction or be confounded with it.... This spiritual power be altogether distinct from the power of the sword....

"Holy bishops did not exercise their power by fire, imprisonment or other civil penalties — but (as behooved them) employed the Word of God only...; keeping back from the Communion of the Lord's Supper those who cannot be admitted without profaning this high ordinance.... This power...belonged to the Consistory of Elders."

The antinomian Anabaptists

According to John Calvin,¹⁷⁷ not just those who reject ecclesiastical authority should be rebuked. *A fortiori*, also "those who inveigh against this sacred ministry" of political government — as do the anarchistic **Anabaptists** — "speak evil of dignities" (*cf.* Jude 8). Furthermore, they "would not even have God to reign over them. I Sam. 8:7."

Dr. Calvin has nothing but opposition toward the political views of such Anabaptists. "Fanatics," he explains,¹⁷⁸ "insist and vociferate that...we [who are Christians] are dead by Christ to the elements of this world.... [The Anabaptists say] it is unworthy of us and far beneath our dignity to be occupied with those 'profane' and 'impure' cares which relate to matter 'alien' to a Christian man. To what end, they say, are laws — without courts and tribunals? But what [say they] has a Christian man to do with courts? Nay, [they add,] if it is unlawful to kill — what have we to do with laws and courts?"

'Much!' ---- Calvin would reply. Especially in his *Treatise Against the Anabaptists*,¹⁷⁹ he spells out the importance of Christian involvement in politics. There, he rightly objects that "if this calling to fulfil the office of...temporal power is repugnant to the vocation of believers [as the Anabaptists alleged it was] — then how is it that the judges in the Old Testament...made use of it?" Indeed, why was it then also made use of "especially by good kings (like David, Hezekiah and Josiah) — and even a few prophets (like Daniel)?"

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Calvin then answers¹⁷⁵ his own question. "The Holy Spirit testifies on behalf of the judges that God raised them up to deliver His people. Above all, this is true of Moses.... With regard to a faithful man walking in good conscience and being whole before God in both his vocation and in all his works — there exists a plain and complete guideline for it in the Law of Moses. To that we simply need to cling — if we want to follow the right path. Thus, whoever adds to or takes anything from it — exceeds the limits."

Continues Calvin: "We worship the same God that the fathers of old did.... It follows that we should not deny ourselves the vocation of civil justice — nor drive it outside the Christian Church.... It is written that kings will come to worship and pay homage to Him [Jesus Christ]. It is not said that they will abdicate their positions in order to become Christians — but rather, being appointed with royal dignity, they will be subject to Jesus Christ as to their Sovereign Lord.

"Following this, David — exhorting them [both his very own judges and also all foreign kings] to do their duty — does not command them to throw down their diadems or their sceptres." Instead, he exhorts them "solely to kiss the Son — that is to say, to pay homage to Him ---- in order to be subject to Him in His domination over others. Ps. 2:10-12. Without a doubt, he is speaking of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus.

"Shepherds and plowmen," Calvin goes on, "manual laborers and all similar workers, ought to consider their calling holy — and let nothing obstruct them with respect to Christian perfection.... Princes [too, similarly,] are ministers of God.... The sword has been put in their hand by God, in order to protect the good and punish the wicked. Rom. 13:1f. The office of princes...had become rejected and accursed — inasmuch as they [had] all persecuted the Gospel."

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However, asks Calvin:¹⁷⁵ "If God will, to lead princes to the knowledge of truth — by what authority do **Anabaptists** repulse them? ... They say that the 'ban' has replaced the temporal sword in the Christian Church. So much so, that in place of punishing a crime by death as was formerly done — today we must punish the delinquent, by depriving him of the fellowship of believers....

"I ask them: How do they excuse Jesus Christ for what He has done? For He did not observe their rule [cf. Mt. 5:22-26].... To mete out corporal punishments, was not His task. But He leaves these — to those to whose authority it belongs, and to whom the charge has been commissioned — according to what He says in another text: 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's!' Mt. 22:21.

"Thus," continues Calvin, "let kings keep within their limits — and let spiritual pastors similarly be content to perform their office, without usurping what doesn't pertain to them.... Our Lord Jesus will approve both.... Paul granted Christians superiority and rule over their serfs ---- who were at that time like slaves. Paul did not command them to surrender this right ---- but only to use it moderately (Eph. 6:9 & Col. 4:1), treating their serfs with affection and humanity."

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Dr. John Calvin goes on:¹⁷⁵ "I thus put in opposition to the Anabaptists — Moses, David, Hezekiah, Josiah, Joseph, Daniel, and all the kings and judges of Israel.... See if they [the Anabaptists] can support their cause — by asking whether these kings were banished from the Kingdom of God, for having had charge of the sword in this

world? ... Isaiah certainly contradicts them — promising that earthly kings will serve in the heavenly and spiritual Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Isa. 60:3.

"Saint Paul also says the same, exhorting us to offer prayers for those who hold positions of authority — in order that we might lead a peaceful life under them, in the fear of God and in holiness. I Tim. 2:2. Therein, he shows that the chief end of magistrates is not to maintain the peace of their subjects according to the flesh — but rather to ensure that God is served and honoured in their countries, and that each person leads a good and honest life."

Calvin then concludes: "Thus we see with respect to this matter how false and perverse the Anabaptist allegations are, by which they condemn the vocation of magistrates which God has so highly approved.... For they make war against God, in wanting to revile what He has exalted. And we could not imagine a better way of trying to ruin the world and ushering in brigandage everywhere — than in seeking to abolish the civil government or the power of the sword. Which indeed is thrown down, if it is not lawful for a Christian man to exercise it."

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Dr. John Calvin further states¹⁸⁰ that "some Anabaptists in the present age mistake some indescribable sort of frenzied excess for the regeneration of the Spirit — holding that the children of God...need give themselves no anxiety about curbing the lust of the flesh; that they have the Spirit for their guide; and, under His agency, never err.... [To all those Anabaptists,] there will be no difference, then, between — whoredom and chastity; sincerity and craft; truth and falsehood; justice and robbery. 'Away with vain fear!' — they say — 'the Spirit will not bid you do anything that is wrong, provided you sincerely and boldly leave yourself to His agency!'"

"What kind of 'spirit' do they belch forth? We [Calvinists] acknowledge one Christ, and His one [Holy] Spirit — Whom the prophets foretold, and [Whom] the Gospel proclaims as actually manifested. But [from these Anabaptists] we hear nothing of this kind — respecting Him. That Spirit [of the Living God] ---- is not the patron of murder, adultery, drunkenness, pride, contention, avarice, and fraud.... He is not a spirit of giddiness, rushing rashly and precipitately, without regard to right and wrong — but full of wisdom and understanding, by which He can duly distinguish between justice and injustice. He instigates not to lawless and unrestrained licentiousness, but — discriminating between lawful and unlawful — teaches temperance and moderation.

"To Christians, the Spirit of the Lord is not a turbulent phantom which they themselves have produced — by dreaming.... They religiously seek the knowledge of Him — from Scripture.

"There, two things are taught concerning Him: first, that He is given to us for [earthly] sanctification, so that He may purge us from all iniquity and defilement and bring us to the obedience of divine righteousness...; secondly, that though purged by His [earthly] sanctification, we are still beset by many vices and much weakness — so long as we are enclosed in...the body."

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The 1559 *French Confession* of Calvin (and Chandieu) summarises¹⁸¹ all of the above beautifully. It states that "God wishes to rule the world through laws and governments. Ex. 18:20-21; Mbt. 17:24-25; Rom. 13:1-7. For this purpose, He has ordained Kingdoms, Republics, and all other forms of Government.... He has put the sword into the hand of Government, to restrain sins against not only the Second but also against the First Table of the Law of God....

"When it [the earthly Government] erects duties, taxes, and other imposts — its laws and ordinances are to be obeyed. The yoke of obedience is to be borne cheerfully, even when the Government is unbelieving (Mt. 17:24) — as long as God's Independent Kingdom remains unharmed. Acts 4:17-19. Therefore, we reject those who reject Government, and who desire [communistic] 'community and confusion of property' — and who want to overthrow the ordinances of law."

Calvin's admonitions to his own King Francis

To the persecuting Roman Catholic king, Francis of France — Calvin's birthplace — the Reformer sent a *Prefatory Address* to his own *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. In that address, Calvin repudiates the wicked lie that reformatory Calvinists were revolutionary Anabaptists.

Indeed, Calvin reminds Francis of the necessity of upholding the Common Law adage 'innocent till proven guilty' — and also of the great importance of 'due process of law.'

As the Hebrew ruler Nicodemus rightly objected to the Pharisees: "Does our law judge anybody — before it hears him, and learns what he is doing?" Jh. 7:51 *cf.* Dt. 1:17 & 19:15.

Thus, Dr. Calvin complains¹⁸² to King Francis about unsubstantiated accusations. Such the former's opponents had levelled against Calvin and his fellow Calvinist Reformers.

Said Calvin: "I am aware how — in order to render our cause as hateful to your Majesty as possible — they have filled your ears and mind with atrocious insinuations. But you will be pleased...to reflect that neither in word nor deed could there be any innocence — were it sufficient merely to accuse.

"This doctrine of which I am endeavouring to give your Majesty an account, has [indeed] been condemned by the suffrages of all the estates" — alias by the 'majority vote' of all of the various classes which then had the franchise. "This doctrine...was [indeed] long ago stabbed again and again — by [un-im-]partial sentences of courts of law.... When anyone — with a view to inciting prejudice — observes that this doctrine [of ours]...has been condemned..., he undoubtedly says nothing more than that it has sometimes violently been oppressed by the power and faction of adversaries."

Indeed, such a prejudiced incitement unintentionally demonstrates that the Calvinist doctrine has "sometimes been...fraudulently and insidiously overwhelmed by lies, cavils and calumny." However, "while a cause is unheard — it is violence to pass sanguinary sentences against it. It is a fraud to charge it, contrary to its deserts, with seditions and mischief."

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Calvin continues:¹⁷⁸ "Justice then, most invincible Sovereign, entitles me to demand that you will undertake a thorough investigation of this cause." For it "has hitherto been tossed about in any kind of way, and handled in the most irregular manner, without any order of law — and with passionate heart rather than judicial gravity.... Meanwhile, no man comes forth to offer his protection against such furies....

"Your duty, most serene Prince, is not to shut either your ears or mind against a case involving such mighty interests as these — how the glory of God is to be maintained on the earth inviolate; how the truth of God is to preserve its dignity; how the Kingdom of Christ is to continue among us, compact and secure. The cause is worthy of your ear; worthy of your investigation; worthy of your throne.

"The characteristic of a true sovereign — is to acknowledge that, in the administration of his kingdom, he is a minister of God. He who does not make his reign subservient to the Divine Glory, acts the part not of a king but a robber. He, moreover, deceives himself who anticipates long prosperity to any kingdom which is not ruled by the sceptre of God — that is, by His Divine Word. For the Heavenly Oracle is infallible. It has declared that 'where there is no vision, the people perish.' Prov. 29:18."

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Yet, even without the franchise and without receiving justice from the unimpartial law courts of the day — the Calvinists were still certain to triumph, in the end. For, as Calvin exulted: "Our doctrine must stand sublime above all the glory of the world and invincible by all its power.... It is not ours, but that of the living God and His Anointed — Whom the Father has appointed King, so that He may rule from sea to sea and from the rivers even to the ends of the earth...according to the magnificent predictions of the prophets respecting His Kingdom. Dan. 2:34; Isa. 11:4; Ps. 2:9."

Meanwhile, Calvin knew that Calvinism would — in the short term — be disadvantaged by both Anabaptists and Catabaptists. Both were revolutionary. For the Anabaptists rejected all infant baptisms (and often even all mundane governments). The Catabaptists rejected all baptisms performed in the Romish Church (and often also rejected much of all previous church history).

Thus, John Calvin observes:¹⁸³ "It is one of the characteristics of the Divine Word that, whenever it appears, Satan ceases to slumber and sleep.... He has turned to snares, exciting dissensions and disputes...by means of his Catabaptists and other portentous miscreants — so that he might thus observe and at length [endeavour to] extinguish the truth."

Therefore Calvin finally told his monarch King Francis that it was not the exiled French Calvinists "who disseminate errors or stir up tumults — but they who resist the mighty power of God.... Our [Calvinism's] God is not the Author of division, but of peace.... The Son of God, Who came to destroy the works of the devil, is not the minister of sin. We too, are undeservedly charged with desires of a kind for which we have never given even the smallest suspicion.... Now, when exiled from home, we nevertheless cease not to pray — for all prosperity to your person and kingdom....

"But if any under pretext of the Gospel excite tumults..., there are [available] laws and legal punishments by which they may be punished up to the measure of their deserts.... Most illustrious king! May the Lord, the King of kings — establish your throne in righteousness, and your sceptre in equity!"

Calvin's letters to other European monarchs

Very illuminating are Calvin's attempts to encourage many of the important political leaders in Europe to implement the Law of God — each in his or her own land. Calvin often wrote to royal rulers — such as the Protestant Princess Renee of Ferrara in Italy, and the Christian Reformed Queen of Navarre in the Pyrenees. In addition, he dedicated many of his *Bible Commentaries* to influential political leaders.

Thus, Calvin dedicated his Commentaries on 1st and 2nd Timothy to the Lord Protector of England — uncle to the young King Edward VI. He dedicated his Commentaries on Paul's Minor Epistles, to the Duke of Wurtemberg. His work on Hosea he dedicated to King Gustav of Sweden. The first edition of his volume on the first part of the book of Acts, he presented to the King of Denmark; and the second edition he presented to the Prince of Lithuania. He dedicated his Commentary on Hebrews to the King of Poland. That on the Catholic Epistles, he dedicated to King Edward VI of England. To Edward he also dedicated the first edition of his commentary on Isaiah — and the second edition to his sister, the later Queen Elizabeth I.

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The husband of that godly Calvinist, the Queen of the Basques — the backslidden and romanizing King of Navarre (then between Spain and France) — Calvin sternly rebuked in 1561. Challenged Calvin:¹⁸⁴ "If any man in a poor and humble condition appears to consent to having the Name of God blasphemed, religion disgraced, and the poor church trodden under foot — he cannot avoid condemning himself of not having the Word of truth in his mouth. What then shall we say of you, Sire — raised to such dignity, honour and authority — if...you were called to give an account to Him from Whom you hold all?

"We entreat you henceforth to bear yourself more manfully, in making an upright and pure profession of true Christianity.... Nothing can be more reasonable than...to serve Him to Whom all is due.... Even if every door should be shut against you, Sire — still it is your duty in this circumstance to apply to yourself what David says:

God enables His children to leap over the highest walls.... Strive that God be glorified — by resisting openly all superstition and idolatry!"

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To the famous King Gustav of Sweden, who had in 1523 abolished Popery there and had embraced the Lutheran Reformation, Calvin dedicated his *Commentary on Hosea*. "Most valiant king," writes the Swiss Reformer,¹⁸⁵ whoever "knows your prudence and **equity** in managing public affairs, your moral habits, your whole character and virtues — will not wonder that I have resolved to dedicate to you this work.... God tried you in a wonderful manner, before He raised you to the throne for the purpose...of setting forth to our age as well as to posterity an illustrious example of a steady perseverance in a right course."

"It was given you from above...that, having set the kingdom in order, you might publicly and privately enjoy a cheerful tranquillity.... All venerate your authority, and show their esteem by love as well as by commendations.... Your eldest son, Heric..., is not only of a generous disposition, but also adorned with mature virtues.... Hardly anyone more fit...could the people have chosen for themselves.... He has made so much progress in the liberal sciences, that he occupies a high station among the learned.... He is not tired with diligent application to them.... He has consecrated in his palace a sanctuary...also to celestial philosophy [alias theology].... These Commentaries [of Calvin]...he will find to have been written according to the rule of true religion, and will perceive to be calculated of some small help to himself."

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To the Lutheran King Christian of Denmark, Calvin dedicated the first edition of his *Commentary on Acts* [I]. He writes as follows:¹⁸⁶ "Most Excellent King! When, long ago, according to the Law's regulation the sacred trumpets sounded for the Jews as they went forth to battle — I understand that it was done not only that the people might not dare to undertake any war or carry on those that they started without the auspices of God, but also so that forgetfulness of God (which is especially fatal at that time) might not steal upon minds terrorised by the clash of arms." John Calvin then urged the King of Denmark to do likewise.

The second edition, Calvin dedicated to the Prince of Lithuania. There, the Reformer recalls¹⁸⁷ the recent time "when the power of the whole World was in opposition — and all the men who had control of affairs then, were in arms to crush the Gospel. [Yet then,] a few men — obscure, unarmed and contemptible — relying on the support of the truth and the Spirit alone, laboured so strenuously in spreading the faith of Christ...until at last they emerged victors."

"Accordingly, there is no excuse for [the wretched sluggishness of] Christian Princes — distinguished as they are by a certain authority.... God has provided them with the sword — for the defence of the Kingdom of His Son.... Most illustrious Prince, again I must ask you...to yield yourself completely to the sovereignty of Christ, in

accordance with the auspicious beginnings you made before — and to be...a standard-bearer in advancing the Kingdom of Christ among so many noblemen!"

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Calvin dedicated his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* — to "the most mighty and serene Prince Sigismund Augustus, by the Grace of God King of Poland" and "Grand Duke of Lithuania, Russia, and Prussia." There, Calvin writes¹⁸⁸ that the fame of that Polish king's "piety alone...reached to almost all who are zealous for the true doctrine of Christ."

Calvin adds: "You are already concerned for the restoration of the Kingdom of Christ, and to many who live under your sovereignty to take it up. You have a kingdom which is extensive and renowned, and which contains many glories. But its happiness will only have a firm foundation, if it takes Christ as its supreme Governor — to be defended by His faith and protection.... What would be less becoming to kings — than to show themselves ungrateful to the Son of God, by Whom they have been raised to the highest point of honour?"

Continues Calvin: "The fact that you recognize, your Majesty, that for Christ to take full possession of His Kingdom there must needs be a complete purge of all superstitions — is a mark of your singular wisdom.... You undertake and attempt — what you thus judge to be really necessary for this end.... You are divinely chosen to be the image of another Hezekiah or Josiah — soon to restore in the kingdom of Poland the purer teaching of the Gospel which has been spoiled throughout the whole world by the craft of Satan....

"It was through the clemency and gentleness of King Sigismund of happy memory — your Majesty's father — that...he kept his hands pure.... Some of your excellent princes are not only readily admitting Christ.... I see also that [the great Polish Reformer] John à Lasco...has carried the torch to other nations also.... [In Christ,] we have a Leader so invincible, that the more battles He fights — the more triumphs and victories He gains."

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Five years later, in 1554, Calvin again writes to the King of Poland. This time, the great Reformer challengingly declares¹⁸⁹ that godly "kings, according to the precept of David [in Ps. 2:10-12], kiss the Prince and Chief of all kingdoms — while they listen to Him speaking by the mouth of those whom He has appointed to teach.... Remember then, most excellent king, a light has been divinely kindled up for the whole of Poland which cannot be kept hidden any longer — without your incurring serious blame!

"Let this therefore be your first care, your principal study — to assembly the powers subject to you, called from the shameful dispersion of popery unto the obedience of Christ.... The battle that is to be fought here, is for the glory of God in the Kingdom of Christ — for the purity of religious worship, for the salvation of the human race.... When God asserts that it is His own work to restore His ruined Church of which He is

the only Founder — we may conclude with certainty that He will by no means desert us in the moment of need."

One year later, John Calvin again writes to the Polish king:¹⁹⁰ "Your Majesty perfectly comprehends the import of that heavenly edict by which all kings are commanded to embrace the Son of God.... In Poland, true religion has already begun to dawn on the darkness of popery — since many pious and wise men, having cast aside impious superstitions, voluntarily aspire after the pure worship of God....

"I, whom the King of kings has appointed a preacher of His Gospel and a minister of His Church, call upon your Majesty, in His Name, to make this work above all others your especial care.... Poland, up to this time defiled by the corruptions of popery and a polluted and perverted worship of God, has gone astray after human devices.... Ought kings then to loiter, whom God has set on high for this very purpose — that from their elevation, they might send forth their light to all people?

"Your Majesty has far less difficulty to struggle with, than of old the pious princes Hezekiah and Josiah.... You should bestir every member, to proceed in so excellent a work — and especially since things now seem ripe for action! For if the opportunity offered by God is neglected — you may afterwards have to stand in vain before a door that is closed."

Calvin's admonitions to England's rulers

Yet of all nations on the face of the earth, the Frenchman Calvin regarded Britain as probably the most crucial. Consider the following strenuous attempts he repeatedly made to win that strategic land — all the way back to Biblical Christianity.

Dr. Calvin addresses an important epistle¹⁹¹ "to the most illustrious and truly Christian Prince, the Lord Edward Duke of Somerset, Earl of Hertford, Protector of England & Ireland, Tutor to the King" (the young Edward VI). In that epistle — appropriately, in the light of I Tim. 2:1-4! — Calvin dedicates to Somerset his *Commentary on Paul's First Epistle to Timothy*.

There, Calvin assures Somerset that "the Gospel is as profitable to the public welfare of a kingdom as it is befitting for a prince. The prosperity of kingdoms can be assured, and those who guard them found faithful, only when He on Whom they were founded and by Whom they are preserved — the Son of God Himself — rules over them. Thus, there is no way that you could more firmly establish the kingdom of England than by banishing idols and setting up there the true worship of God. For it was necessary to restore the genuine doctrine of godliness, which had been so long crushed and oppressed by the sacrilegious tyranny of the Roman antichrist. To restore it, is indeed to place Christ on His throne."

Calvin continues: "It has pleased God to make me one of those by whose toil and labour He is today restoring to the World the purer doctrine of the Gospel.... Paul advises his beloved Timothy...not to yield in face of any difficulty, [but] to overcome

all crises by his courage.... May the Lord, in Whose hands are the ends of the Earth, long uphold the safety and prosperity of England, adorn its excellent king with the royal spirit, bestow on him an ample share of every blessing, and grant you good progress in your noble career — that through you His Name may widely be more and more glorified!"

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Four months later, in October 1548, Calvin again reminds Somerset, in a letter:¹⁹² "God has endowed you with singular prudence.... You deem me to be a servant of His Son Whom you desire above all else to obey.... I have no other end in view, save only that in following out yet more and more what you have begun, you may advance His honour — until you have established His Kingdom in as great perfection as is to be looked for in the World.... Call to mind what the sacred history relates of good King Hezekiah. II Chr. 32.... Isaiah has said (Isa. 2:4) that when Jesus Christ shall rule in the midst of us by His doctrine — the swords shall be turned into ploughshares and spears into pruning-hooks."

Indeed, in 1550, Calvin adds in yet another letter to Somerset:¹⁹³ "Your duty is to strive to the uttermost and with all your energy — so that so holy a work as that which

He has begun by you, may be carried forward.... That promise can never fail — "Those who honour Me, I will render honourable!"

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Also in 1550, Dr. Calvin dedicated the first edition of his *Commentary on Isaiah* to the young King Edward VI of England himself. There, Calvin urges¹⁹⁴ that "most illustrious king" to "select for imitation" the example of the godly King Hezekiah. That — Calvin assures Edward — "you show that you are already sufficiently willing to do....

"God has raised you up and endowed you with such excellent abilities and dispositions for defending the cause of godliness.... Your piety especially is...highly applauded.... I expressly call upon you, most excellent King..., charging you to proceed to the utmost of your ability and power, in carrying forward the restoration of the Church which has been so successfully begun in your kingdom.... To you the Lord has not only given adoption, but has likewise assigned a distinguished place among His sons."

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The next year (January 1551) Calvin dedicated his *Commentary on the Petrine Epistles* to Edward. After there castigating "the Roman Antichrist,"¹⁹⁵ Calvin reminds the English Monarch: "As interpreters of Scripture according to their ability supply weapons to fight against Antichrist..., it is a duty which belongs to your Majesty to vindicate from unworthy calumnies the true and genuine interpretation of Scripture — so that true religion may flourish....

"God commanded by Moses, that as soon as a king was appointed over his people, he was to take care to have a copy of the Law written out for himself [Dt. 17:18f].... In order that kings might know that they themselves need this remarkable doctrine, and that it is their special duty to defend and maintain it — the Lord assigns to His Law a sacred habitation in their palaces."

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The same month, Calvin also writes to Edward:¹⁹⁶ "Holding me to be among the number of those who are zealous for the advancement of the Kingdom of the Son of God, you have not disdained to read what I did...present to your Majesty [*viz.* his commentaries on Isaiah and on the Petrine Epistles].... I shall not hesitate to pray and beseech you, in the Name of Him to Whom you ascribe all authority and power, to take courage in following out what you have so well and happily begun, as well in your own person as in the state of your kingdom — namely, the consecration of all to God and to our Blessed Saviour....

"It would be very difficult to purge in a day — such an abyss of superstition as there is in the papacy.... We see how, in the time of the good King Josiah — who had the special testimony of the Holy Spirit — that he [ap]proved himself a prince excellent in faith, in zeal, and in all godliness. Nevertheless, the prophet Zephaniah shows that there was still some remainder of bygone superstitions...even in the city of Jerusalem.... Let me entreat you then, Sire, to reach forward to the mark which is set before you in the example of this godly king!"

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Calvin writes his last letter to Edward¹⁹⁷ in 1552: "It is indeed a great thing to be a king — and yet more, over such a country [as England]. Nevertheless, I have no doubt that you reckon it beyond comparison better to be a Christian!

"It is therefore an invaluable privilege that [the Lord] God has vouchsafed you, Sire, to be a **Christian king** — to serve as His lieutenant in ordering and maintaining the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in England.... You ought to be stirred up to employ all your energies to His honour and service; [*you*] setting to your subjects an example of homage to this great King [Jesus Christ] — to Whom your Majesty is not ashamed to submit yourself with all humility and reverence beneath the spiritual sceptre of His Gospel."

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Finally, after the death of Edward and during the reign of his royal sister, John Calvin dedicated the second edition of his *Commentary on Isaiah* to Elizabeth I of England (alias 'Good Queen Bess'). First, he reminds that monarch¹⁹⁸ that her "brother King Edward...greatly excelled the men of his age" *etc.*

However, Calvin also assures Elizabeth herself: "Your own name...is regarded by all good men with not less esteem and satisfaction.... God has given you large and abundant" assurances — "by confirming you to the image of His Son."

Calvin then forthrightly challenged Elizabeth: "**Acknowledge** your obligation to your **Protector and Redeemer**..., by a sacred regard to duty! ... This duty you ought to discharge..., **by removing the filth of popery**.... This will be the crowning proof of your gratitude to God.... May the Lord guide you, most illustrious Queen, by the Spirit of wisdom; uphold you with invincible courage; [and] protect and enrich your Highness with every kind of blessing!"

Law and good government

Calvin does not neglect to make valuable observations not only about good government, but also about the best kind of government. He declares:¹⁹⁹ "If you fix your eyes not on one State merely, but look around the World — or at least direct your view to regions widely separated from each other — you will perceive that Divine Providence has not, without good cause, arranged that different countries should be governed by different forms of polity.... The will of God is sufficient reason....

"If you compare the different States with each other, without regard to circumstances — it is not easy to determine which of these has the advantage.... There are three kinds of civil government, namely: Monarchy, which is the domination of one only — whether he be called King, or Duke, or otherwise." Secondly, there is "Aristocracy — which is a government composed of the chiefs and people of note." Thirdly, there is "Democracy — which is a popular government in which each of the people has power.

"Monarchy is prone to tyranny. In an Aristocracy, again, the tendency is not less to the faction of a few. While in 'Popular Ascendancy' [alias Democracy], there is the strongest tendency to sedition."

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Calvin had previously suffered under the absolutistic Romish monarchy of France. He was now living in relative peace, inside the Christian Republic of Switzerland. So it is not surprising that he — just like the Swiss Ulrich Zwingli before him — favoured government by *hoi aristoi* alias 'the best' citizens. These were those qualified under the selective franchise of a 'Representative Republic' — such as Christian Switzerland then was.

Observes Calvin the great Genevan:¹⁹⁵ "The form which greatly surpasses the others, is 'Aristocracy' — either pure, or modified by popular government. It very rarely happens that kings so rule themselves as never to dissent from what is just and right.... Owing, therefore, to the vices or defects of men — it is safer and more tolerable when several bear rule." Cf. Prov. 11:14 & 15:22 & 24:6. In that way, "they may thus mutually assist, instruct and admonish each other." Cf. Prov. 27:17. Then, "should anyone be disposed to go too far — the others are censors and masters to curb his excess." Cf. Mt. 20:20-27 & Acts 1:13-26.

"This has already been proved by experience, and confirmed also by the authority of the Lord Himself.... He established an 'Aristocracy' bordering on 'Popular Government' among the Israelites, keeping them under that as the best form." Dt. 1:12-16; Acts 6:3-6; 14:23.

"There is no kind of government happier, than where liberty is framed with becoming moderation — and duly constituted so as to be durable.... I deem those very happy who are permitted to enjoy that form.... They do nothing at variance with their duty, when they strenuously and constantly labour to preserve and maintain it."

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Calvin continues:¹⁹⁵ "Even magistrates ought to do their utmost to prevent that liberty, of which they have been appointed guardians, from being impaired.... If in this they are sluggish or little careful, they are perfidious traitors to their office and their country...."

"It has pleased Him to appoint Kings over Kingdoms, and Senates over Free States. Whatever be the form which He has appointed in the places in which we live — our duty is to obey and submit."

Significantly, Dr. Calvin's Geneva had earlier been a 'Romish Democracy' (under a ducal figurehead) — from the fourteenth century onward. After winning its full independence from the Romish Duke of Savoy, Geneva too had joined the 'Swiss Confederation' in 1531. It then nominally accepted the Reformed Religion in 1535; became a Republic in 1536; and ended up practically a Representative Theocracy (from 1555 onward).

Dr. John Calvin warmly supported the Genevan Government during the last period of his residency in that city-state — from 1541 onward. Indeed, he became a citizen of that Christian Republic in 1559 — five years before his death in 1564. He died two years after some of his French Reformed brethren had established settlements in Florida and the Carolinas — and others of them had received a patent from King Henry IV of France, giving French Calvinists sovereignty from Philadelphia to Montreal.²⁰⁰

The Australian Presbyterians Dixon and Jamieson have made shrewd observations in their book *John Calvin and the Modern World*. Say they:²⁰¹ "No 'democracy' is worth having, that is not also in a very real sense an aristocracy — government, that is, by the best...., tempered by popular government.

"The Presbyterian Church might be described as an aristocracy of this latter type. Every member of it, is ideally an aristocrat, and respected and educated as such — one of God's elect.... The government is aristocratic, in being entrusted to men specially selected and trained, who — elected by the people — are ordained by those already in office and have a Divine authority over the people.

"France failed generally to become Calvin-istic. Had France listened, as she ought, to her 'inspired' son [John Calvin] — she would have become beyond all question the

foremost nation in Europe, and there would have been no dreadful [French] Revolution of 1789."

The duties of public office

Calvin clearly outlines²⁰² the duties of public office. "The duty of magistrates...extends to both Tables of the Law..., beginning with religion and divine worship.... No polity can be established successfully, unless piety be its first care.... In Scripture, holy kings are especially praised for restoring the worship of God when corrupted or overthrown; or for taking care that religion flourished under them in purity and safety.... Judg. 21:25.

"In regard to the Second Table of the Law, Jeremiah addresses rulers. 'This is what the Lord says: You must execute judgment and righteousness, and deliver those despoiled from the hand of the oppressor.... Do no wrong; do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow; neither shed innocent blood!' Jer. 22:3. To the same effect is the exhortation in the Psalm [72:3-4]: 'Defend the poor and fatherless! Do justice to the afflicted and needy! Deliver the poor and needy; rid them from the hand of the wicked!'

"Moses also declared to the princes whom he had substituted for himself: 'Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother and the stranger that is with him! You shall not respect persons in judgment; but you shall hear the small, as well as the great! You shall not be afraid of the face of man! For God's is the judgment.' Dt. 1:16.

Continues John Calvin: "I say nothing of such passages as these: 'He [the king] shall not multiply horses for himself.... Neither shall he multiply wives for himself. Neither shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. He shall, for himself — write a copy of this Law.... He shall read it all the days of his life — so that he may learn to fear the Lord his God.... His heart shall not be lifted up above his brethren.' Dt. 17:16-20."

God Himself declares: "Whosoever secretly slanders his neighbour, I will cut off." Ps. 101:4f. John Calvin here rightly observes that God often so cuts off — through godly magistrates. However, "rulers cannot do this — unless they protect the good against the injuries of the bad, and give aid and protection to the oppressed. They are armed with power — to curb manifest evil-doers and criminals.... All public matters depend on reward and punishment.... Where these are wanting, the whole discipline of States totters and falls to pieces....

"The prophet...enjoins kings and other rulers to execute 'judgment and righteousness.' Jer. 21:12; 22:3. It is righteousness (justice) to take charge of the innocent — to defend and avenge them, and set them free. It is judgment to withstand the audacity of the wicked — to repress their violence, and punish their faults.

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"But here," continues Dr. Calvin,²⁰³ "a difficult...question arises. If all Christians are forbidden to kill, and the prophet (Isa. 11:9 & 65:25) predicts concerning the holy mountain of the Lord, that is the Church, 'They shall not hurt or destroy' — how can magistrates be at once pious and yet shedders of blood? But if we understand that the magistrate, in inflicting punishment, acts not of himself but executes the very judgments of God — we shall be disencumbered of every doubt.

"The Law of the Lord forbids to kill [or murder]. But that murder may not go unpunished — the Lawgiver Himself puts the sword into the hands of His ministers [the magistrates], so that they may employ it against all murderers. It does not belong to the pious [non-magisterial citizen] to afflict and hurt. But [for the godly or even ungodly magistrate] to avenge the afflictions of the pious, at the command of God — is neither to afflict nor to hurt....

"In this respect, they [the magistrates] are not subject to the Common Law[!] by which — although the Lord ties the hands of all men [who are not magistrates] — still He ties not His justice, which He exercises by the hands of magistrates. Just as when a prince forbids all his subjects to beat or hurt anyone — he nevertheless does not prohibit his officers from executing the justice which he has specially committed to them.

"'He does not bear the sword in vain,' says Paul [of the magistrate]. 'For he is a minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath on him that does evil.' Rom. 13:4. Therefore, if princes and other rulers know that nothing will be more acceptable to God than their obedience — let them give themselves to their service, if they are desirous to improve their piety, justice and integrity to God. This was the feeling of Moses when, recognising himself as destined to deliver his people by the power of the Law, he laid violent hands on the Egyptian — and afterwards took vengeance on the people for [their] sacrilege, by slaying three thousand of them in one day. Ex. 2:12f; 32:26; I Kgs. 21:5; Ps. 45:8; 101:8.

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"This was the feeling of David also," explains John Calvin,¹⁹⁹ "when towards the end of his life he ordered his son Solomon to put Joab and Shimei to death. Hence also, in an enumeration of the virtues of a king ---- one is to cut off the wicked from the Earth and banish all workers of iniquity from the city of God. To the same effect is the praise which is bestowed on Solomon. 'You love righteousness, and hate wickedness.'

"Solomon says: 'It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness'.... 'A king that sits on the throne of judgment, scatters away all evil'.... 'A wise king scatters the wicked, and brings the wheel over him'.... 'Take away wicked men from before the king — and his throne shall be established in righteousness'.... 'He that justifies the wicked and he that condemns the just — even they both are an abomination to the Lord'.... 'He that says to the wicked, You are righteous! — him shall the people curse; nations shall abhor him.' Prov. 16:12; 17:14-15; 20:26-28; 24:24; 25:4-5.

"Now if it is true justice in them [the magistrates] to pursue the guilty and impious with drawn sword — [then for them] to sheathe the sword and keep their hands pure from blood while nefarious men wade through murder and slaughter, so far from redounding to the praise of their goodness and justice, would be to incur the guilt of the greatest impiety. Provided always they [the magistrates] eschew reckless and cruel asperity."

Further:²⁰⁴ "It is sometimes necessary for Kings and States to take up arms, in order to execute public vengeance.... Power has been given them — to maintain the tranquillity of their subjects; repress the seditious movement of the turbulent; assist those who are violently oppressed.... Can they use it more opportunely — than in repressing the fury of him who disturbs both the ease of individuals and the common tranquillity of all? ... They must repress the attempts of all alike, by whose criminal conduct the discipline of the laws is impaired.

"If they justly punish those robbers whose injuries [to others] have been afflicted only on a few — will they allow the whole country to be robbed and devastated with impunity?" Ps. 144:1f; Dan. 11:14f; Lk. 3:14. "Natural equity and duty therefore demand that princes be armed not only to repress private crimes by judicial inflictions

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--- but to defend the subjects committed to their guardianship, whenever they are hostilely assailed."

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This certainly implies, continues Dr. Calvin,²⁰⁵ that even "war is lawful for Christians.... When the soldiers asked counsel..., it was said (Luke 3:14), 'Concuss [or bludgeon] no one; do injury [or unrighteousness] to no one; be contented with your pay!' Those whom he [John the Baptizer] orders to be contented with their pay, he certainly does not forbid to serve" as soldiers. Of course, "all other means must be tried — before having recourse to arms....

"Taxes and imposts are the legitimate revenues of princes.... Thus we see that David, Hezekiah, Josiah, Jehoshaphat and other holy kings — Joseph also and Daniel, in proportion to the office which they sustained — without offending piety, expended liberally of the public funds.... Princes, however, must remember...that their revenues are not so much private chests, as treasures of the whole people — this Paul testifies (Rom. 13:6) — which they cannot without manifest injustice squander or dilapidate....

"They should also consider that their levies and contributions and other kinds of taxes are merely subsidies of the public necessity, and that it is tyrannical rapacity to harass the poor people with them — without cause.... Nor is this doctrine superfluous to private individuals. They may not rashly and petulantly stigmatize the expenditure of princes — [even] though it should exceed the ordinary limits."

Also:²⁰⁶ "In States the thing next in importance to the magistrates, is laws — the strongest sinews of government.... Without these, the office of magistrate cannot exist.... The law is a dumb magistrate; the magistrate, a living law.... Any Commonwealth is rightly framed which...is ruled by the 'Common Law'(!) of Nations.... **The Moral Law**...is the true and eternal rule of righteousness prescribed to the men of all nations and of all times.... As Constitutions have some [particular] circumstances on which they partly depend, there is nothing to prevent their diversity — provided they all alike aim at equity as their end."

The right to resist tyranny

Dr. John Calvin also describes the duty and right to resist tyranny. His basic position is reformatory, and therefore anti-revolutionary. He explains²⁰⁷ that "the first duty of subjects towards their rulers, is to entertain the most honourable views of their office, recognizing it as a delegated jurisdiction from God." I Pet. 2:17; Prov. 24:21; Rom. 13:5. "A second consequence is that we must with ready minds prove our obedience to them, whether in complying with edicts or in paying tribute." Rom. 13:1-8; Tit. 3:1; I Pet. 2:13; I Tim. 2:1-2.

"The natural feeling of the human mind has always been not less to assail tyrants with hatred and execration, than to look up to just kings with love and veneration.... The Word of God...will lead us further and will make us subject not only to the authority of those princes who honestly and faithfully perform their duty toward us, but [to] all princes — by whatsoever means they have so become.... Those indeed who rule for the public good, are true exemplars and specimens of His beneficence; while those who domineer unjustly and tyrannically, are raised up by Him to punish the people for their iniquity. Still, all alike possess that sacred majesty with which He has invested lawful power.... Job 34:30; Isa. 3:4; 10:5; Dt. 28:29."

"Divine Providence...is so often set before us in Scripture..., distributing kingdoms and setting up as kings whomsoever He pleases." Dan. 2:21,37-38; 4:17,25; 5:18-19; Jer. 27:5-8,12; 29:7; I Sam. 24:6-11. "Piety we owe to the utmost — to all our rulers, be their characters what they may.... By the will of the Lord, they sustain a character on which He has impressed and engraven inviolable majesty.

"But rulers, you will say, owe mutual duties to those under them. This I have already confessed. But if from this you conclude that obedience is to be returned to none but just governors — you reason absurdly.... If, in short, we are persecuted for righteousness' sake by an impious and sacrilegious prince — let us first call up to remembrance our faults, which doubtless the Lord is chastening by such scourges.... It belongs not to us to curb these evils."

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Continues Calvin: "All that remains for us, is to implore the help of the Lord in Whose hands are the hearts of kings and inclinations of kingdoms. Dan. 9:7; Prov. 21:1; Ps. 82:1; 2:10; Isa. 10:1.... Before His face, shall fall and be crushed all kings and judges of the earth who have not kissed His Anointed; who have enacted unjust

laws to oppress the poor in judgment; and do violence to the cause of the humble, to make widows a prey and plunder the fatherless.

"At one time, He raises up manifest avengers from among His Own servants, and gives them His command to punish accursed tyranny and deliver His people.... Thus, He rescued His people Israel from the tyranny of Pharaoh by Moses; from the violence of Chusa King of Syria by Othniel; and from other bondage by other Kings and Judges.... Deliverers being brought forward by the lawful call of God to perform such deeds — when they took up arms against kings, [they] did not at all violate that majesty with which kings are invested by divine appointment."

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Calvin concludes:²⁰⁸ "Let princes hear and be afraid; but let us at the same time guard most carefully against spurning or violating the venerable and majestic authority of rulers — an authority which God has sanctioned by the surest edicts, although those invested with it should be the most unworthy.... Although the Lord takes vengeance on unbridled dominations, let us not therefore suppose that that vengeance is committed to us to whom no command has been given but to obey and suffer!

"I speak only of private men. For when popular magistrates have been appointed to curb the tyranny of kings [*cf.* Rom. 13:1]..., if they connive at kings when they [the kings] tyrannize..., I affirm that their [the magistrates'] dissimulation is not free from nefarious perfidy." Thus, not the private citizens but indeed the lesser magistrates are to check both the aggrandizement and the tyranny of one or more of their own number (or even of their superiors).

"We are subject to the men who rule over us; but subject only in the Lord. If they command anything against Him, let us not pay the least regard to it." Dan. 6:22; Hos. 5:11; Acts 5:29. "We were redeemed by Christ at the great price which our redemption cost Him [I Cor. 7:23] ---- in order that we might not yield a slavish obedience to the depraved wishes of men. Far less should we do homage to their impiety!"

Calvin's conclusion: 'Thy Kingdom come!'

Jesus taught His disciples to pray to God the Father daily: "Thy Kingdom come! Thy will be done!"²⁰⁹

Calvin here explains²¹⁰ that "the reign of God, is God guiding and governing His Own by His Holy Spirit — in order to manifest in all their works the riches of His goodness...and, on the contrary, ruining and confounding the reprobate who are unwilling to be subject to His domination....

"We pray, therefore, that God's reign may come — that is to say, that the Lord may from day to day multiply the number of His faithful believers...and that He may continually spread on them more largely the affluence of His graces.... Similarly, we ask that from day to day He may through new growths spread His light and

enlighten His truth, so that Satan and the lies and the darkness of his reign may be dissipated and abolished....

"Thy will be done... By this petition, we ask that...also on Earth He may rule and guide everything according to His good will.... We ask that He not only make vain...those desires of ours that are contrary to His will ---- but even more that He may create in us new spirits and new hearts..., so that no movement of greed may arise in us, but only a pure consent to His will."

Calvin explains further:²¹¹ "The Word of God is like His royal sceptre. We are here enjoined to pray that He would subdue all minds and hearts to voluntary obedience.... God therefore sets up His Kingdom, by humbling the whole World.... We should desire this to be done every day, in order that God may gather churches to Himself from all quarters of the World, may extend and increase their numbers, may enrich them with His gifts..., [and] beat down all the enemies of our doctrine and religion....

"There is good ground for the precept which enjoins daily progress. For human affairs are never so prosperous, as when the impurities of vice are purged away and integrity flourishes in full vigour.... He protects His people, guides them aright by the agency of His Spirit, and confirms them in perseverance.... On the other, hand, He frustrates the impious conspiracies of His enemies, dissipates their wiles and frauds, prevents their malice, and curbs their petulance — until at length He consumes Antichrist 'with the Spirit of His mouth' [II Th. 2:8].... God will be King in the World.... All shall subject themselves to His will!"

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The Calvin-istic *Westminster Larger Catechism* succinctly summarises the above. "In the second petition (which is 'Thy Kingdom come!') — it says of the Lord's Prayer:²¹² "we pray that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be destroyed; the Gospel propagated throughout the World, the Jews called, the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; [and] the Church..., purged from corruption [and also] countenanced and maintained by the civil magistrate....

"We pray that [the Lord] God would by His Spirit take away from ourselves and others all blindness, weakness, indisposedness and perverseness of heart; and by His grace make us able and willing to know, do and submit to His will in all things. Ps. 119:1,8,35f.... We pray that God would so over-rule the world and all in it...that our sanctification and salvation may be perfect; Satan trodden under our feet; and we [may then be] fully freed from sin, temptation and all evil — for ever!"

- 1..... *Institutes of the Christian Religion* I:10:2.
- 2..... *Ib.* IV:20:16.
- 3..... Calvin's *Comment.* on Lev. 18:6, in his *Harmony of the Pentateuch*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1968f, III, p 100.
- 4..... Jh. 17:5,25; Gen. 1:26f; 9:5; Eccl. 7:29; Eph. 4:24; Rom. 2:14f.
- 5..... *Comm.* on Gen. 1:26 & Eph. 4:24.
- 6..... *Inst.* I:15:1-4.
- 7..... *Ib.* II:2:13-15.
- 8..... Rom. 1:18-21.
- 9..... *Comm.* Rom. 1:18-21.
- 10..... Rom. 1:21,23d,28f,32.
- 11..... *Comm.* on Rom. 1:26-29.
- 12..... Rom. 2:14-15.
- 13..... *Comm.* Rom. 2:14-15.
- 14..... *Inst.* II:2:15-17.
- 15..... *Ib.* II:2:22.
- 16..... *Ib.* III:6:3.
- 17..... Gen. 9:5-6.
- 18..... *Comm.* on Gen. 9:5-7.
- 19..... Dt. 1:13-17; 16:18-19; 17:5-9; 19:4-18; 21:2-22; I Chr. 17:7-13; 19:5-11.
- 20..... Ex. 18:14-22.
- 21..... *Comm.* Ex. 18:15-21.
- 22..... *Comm.* Dt. 1:13-17.
- 23..... Ex. 21:24; Lev. 24:17f; Dt. 19:21.
- 24..... *Comm.* on Ex. 21:22f.
- 25..... *Comm.* on Ex. 21:28f.
- 26..... See at n 97f below.
- 27..... Dt. 17:14f.
- 28..... *Comm.* on Dt. 17:14f.
- 29..... Isa. 9:7.
- 30..... *Comm.* on Isa. 9:7.
- 31..... *Comm.* on Isa. 33:22.
- 32..... *Comm.* on Dan. 2:31f.
- 33..... *Comm.* on Dan. 2:44f.
- 34..... *Comm.* on Dan. 4:1f.
- 35..... Dan. 4:37.
- 36..... *Comm.* on Dan. 4:37f.
- 37..... Mt. 22:21.
- 38..... *Comm.* on Mt. 22:21.
- 39..... Acts 4:18f.
- 40..... *Comm.* on Acts 4:18f.
- 41..... Acts 5:27f.
- 42..... *Comm.* on Acts 5:29.
- 43..... Acts 23:1-3, comp. Mt. 23:27 & Dt. 25:1-2.
- 44..... *Comm.* on Acts 23:1-5.
- 45..... Acts 25:11, comp. Lk. 22:41.
- 46..... *Comm.* on Acts 25:11.
- 47..... Acts 25:24f, *cf.* nn 45f above.
- 48..... Rom. 13:1-7.
- 49..... *Comm.* on Rom. 13:1-7.
- 50..... Tit. 1:5,12 & 3:1-2.
- 51..... *Comm.* on Tit. 3:1-2.
- 52..... I Tim. 1:8-10.

- 53..... *Comm.* on I Tim. 1:8-10.
54..... I Tim. 2:1-3.
55..... *Comm.* on I Tim. 2:2-3.
56..... I Pet. 2:13-15.
57..... *Comm.* on I Pet. 2:13-15.
58..... Ps. 72:11.
59..... *Comm.* on Ps. 72:11.
60..... *Comm.* on Isa. 2:2-4.
61..... Mic. 4:1-4.
62..... *Comm.* on Mic. 4:1-2.
63..... Mt. 28:19 & Mk. 16:15f.
64..... *Inst.* IV:3:4 & *Comm.* on Mt. 28:19 (in *Harm. Gosp.*, III p 383).
65..... Dan. 7:13-14 & 7:26-27 with I Cor. 15: 22-28 comp. Rev. 11:15 & 15:3f, *Basileus toon ethnoon* (Aleph^{ca} APQ, 046, 051, min., Me., Arm., Aeth., And., Areth., Cypr., Amb., Pr.).
66..... *Comm.* on Rom. 13:8.
67..... *Ib.* III:7:3.
68..... *Ib.* II:2:24.
69..... *Ib.* I:5:1.
70..... *Ib.* I:5:4,11f.
71..... *Ib.* I:5:12; 6:1-3; 7:1 & II:8:1.
72..... *Ib.* II:8:1.
73..... *Harm. Pent.*, I, p 411f.
74..... *Ib.* p 414.
75..... *Ib.* p 417f.
76..... *Ib.* p 454f.
77..... *Inst.* II:8:16.
78..... *Harm. Pent.* II p 115f.
79..... *Ib.* p 386f.
80..... *Inst.* II:8:17.
81..... *Preface to King Francis*, para. 236 (at front of Calvin's *Inst.*), and *Inst.* I:11:7.
82..... *Inst.* I:11:12f.
83..... *Harm. Pent.* II p 408f.
84..... *Ib.* p 431f.
85..... *Inst.* II:8:25.
86..... *Harm. Pent.* II p. 432f.
87..... *Ib.* p. 445f.
88..... *Comm.* on Gen. 2:1-3.
89..... *Harm. Pent.* II p. 437.
90..... *Sermons on Deuteronomy*, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1987, pp. 202a15f, 204a20f, 204b1f, 205a25f, 206a50f, 206b55f, 207a5f.
91..... *Inst.* II:8:29f.
92..... *Harm. Pent.* III pp 5f.
93..... *Inst.* II:8:38.
94..... Cited in *Corpus Reformatorum* X:625. See too n 135f below.
95..... *Ib.* p 20f.
96..... *Ib.* p 25f & next n.
97..... *Ib.* p 33f.
98..... *Inst.* II:8:40.
99..... *M. Sam.* 8:1.
100..... *Op. cit.*, pp. 754a65, 756b10-50, 757a15f, 757a33f, 757a30f, 758a5f, 758a57-65.
101..... *Harm. Pent.* III p 41f.
102..... *Ib.* p 68f.
103..... *Ib.* p 71f.
104..... *Ib.* p 106f.
105..... *Harm. Pent.* III p. 77f.

- 106..... *Serm. Deut.*, pp. 791a55f & 791b60f and 792a5f.
- 107..... *Inst.* II:8:43f.
- 108..... *Ib.* p 110f.
- 109..... *Ib.* p 140f.
- 110..... *Inst.* II:8:45f.
- 111..... *Harm. Pent.* III p 179f.
- 112..... *Ib.* p 185f.
- 113..... *Inst.* II:8:48.
- 114..... *Harm. Pent.* III p 186f.
- 115..... *Ib.* p 190f.
- 116..... *Ib.* p 201f.
- 117..... *Inst.* II 8:49f.
- 118..... *Inst.* III:7:5f.
- 119..... Calvin's full contribution to the analysis of the Moral Law still awaits collation from his *Institutes*, his *Commentaries*, his *Catechism*, his *Sermons on Deuteronomy*, his *Tracts and Treatises*, his *Church Ordinances*, and his other writings elsewhere in his *Opera Omnia*.
- 120..... *Inst.* II:8:14.
- 121..... *Ib.* II:8:17.
- 122..... *Ib.* II:8:24f.
- 123..... *Ib.* II:8:29-32.
- 124..... *Harm. Pent.* II pp 25f & 33f.
- 125..... *Inst.* II:8:36.
- 126..... *Harm. Pent.* II pp 71f & 106f.
- 127..... *Ib.* pp 110f & 140f.
- 128..... *Inst.* II:8:47; *Comm. Lev.* 19:17.
- 129..... *Harm. Pent.* III p 182f.
- 130..... *Inst.* II:8:4.
- 131..... *Ib.* II:7:6,10,13.
- 132..... *Ib.* II:8:57f.
- 133..... *Ib.* IV:10:1.
- 134..... *Ib.* IV:10:5.
- 135..... *Cf.* at n 94 above.
- 136..... *Inst.* IV:10:8f.
- 137..... *Ib.* II:8:6f.
- 138..... *Ib.* II:8:8a.
- 139..... *Ib.* III:19:15f.
- 140..... *Inst.* IV:20:9.
- 141..... *Ib.* IV:20:15.
- 142..... *Ib.* IV:20:14 ("There are some who deny that any commonwealth is rightly framed which neglects the law of Moses, and is ruled by the common law of nations.") Note that Calvin is here defending the laws of "any commonwealth" which is indeed "ruled by the common law of nations" — even if it is not ruled by the specifics of the Mosaic judicials. Calvin is here defending such commonwealth laws as are "ruled by the common law of nations" — against fanatics who reject those laws simply because such a commonwealth thus far "neglects the law of Moses" as to all the specifics in those judicials.
- 143..... *Ib.* IV:20:15.
- 144..... *West. Conf.* 19:4g.
- 145..... *Inst.* IV:20:16.
- 146..... *Harm. Pent.* II pp 75f.
- 147..... *Ib.* III p 128.
- 148..... *Ib.* III p 176f.
- 149..... "*Et cela est de l'equité commune, à laquelle se rapporte le Huitieme Commandement.*"
- 150..... *West. Conf.* 19:4g!
- 151..... *Inst.* I:17:5.
- 152..... *Comm. on Lev.* 18:6 (in *Harm. Pent.* III pp 99).

- 153..... *Id.*: "Sous couverture que la Loy de Moyse a cessé."
- 154..... *Inst.* II:13:3.
- 155..... Comm. on Ex. 22:25 (in *Harm. Pent.* III p 132).
- 156..... *West. Larg Cat.* 142kl compare *West. Conf.* 19:4g.
- 157..... *Inst.* IV:20:16.
- 158..... Thus *Reformed Ecumenical Synod Newsletter* for August 5, 1986.
- 159..... *Inst.* IV:20:16.
- 160..... *Cf.* 1791 U.S. *Constitution: Bill of Rights*, Art. VII.
- 161..... *Ib.* Art. VIII.
- 162..... *Inst.* IV:20:15.
- 163..... Comm. on Deut. 22:22, in *Harm Pent.* III p 77f.
- 164..... *Comm.* on Jh. 8:3f.
- 165..... Ch. 39.
- 166..... *Harm. Pent.* II p 90.
- 167..... *Ib.* I p 431.
- 168..... Cited in Schipper's *John Calvin*, Kok, Kampen, 1959, p 92.
- 169..... *Op. cit.* (esp. the 89th, 103rd, 104th, 115th & 123rd Sermons).
- 170..... *Cf.* Dixon and Jamieson: *John Calvin and the Modern World*, Presbyterian Board of Religious Education, Melbourne, n.d., *op. cit.*, p 13.
- 171..... 129th Serm on Deut., in *op. cit.* (22:28f), p. 792b12-15.
- 172..... *Comm.* on Ex. 22:16f, in *Harm Pent.* III pp 83f.
- 173..... *Op. cit.*, Harvard U.P., Cambridge Ma., 1983, p 564, n 27.
- 174..... Oxford U.P., New York, 1973 rep., p 142.
- 175..... *Inst.* IV:20:2-6.
- 176..... *Ib.* IV:11:3f.
- 177..... *Ib.* IV:20:7.
- 178..... *Ib.* IV:20:2.
- 179..... Grand Rapids: Baker, 1982 rep., ch 3, pp 76f.
- 180..... *Inst.* III:3:14.
- 181..... Arts. 39-40.
- 182..... *Inst.*, Beveridge ed., Jas. Clarke, London, 1957, I, pp 4f.
- 183..... *Ib.* p 17f.
- 184..... In *Sel. Works of John Calvin*, VII pp 249f.
- 185..... Calvin: *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1948f, I pp xixf.
- 186..... Calvin: *The Acts of the Apostles 1 - 13*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1948f, I pp 9f.
- 187..... *Ib.* pp 4f.
- 188..... Calvin: *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1948f, pp ix f.
- 189..... In *Sel. Works of John Calvin*, VI pp 100f.
- 190..... In *Ib.*, VI pp 245f.
- 191..... Calvin: *The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, and the Epistles to Timothy, Titus and Philemon*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1948f, pp 181f.
- 192..... In *Sel. Works of John Calvin*, V pp 182f.
- 193..... In *Ib.* V pp 260f.
- 194..... Calvin: *Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1948f, I, pp xixf.
- 195..... Calvin: *Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews and the First and Second Epistles of St. Peter*, pp 219f.
- 196..... In *Sel. Works of John Calvin*, V pp 300f.
- 197..... *Ib.* V p 355.
- 198..... Calvin: *Commentary on...Isaiah*, I, pp xv f.
- 199..... *Inst.* IV:20:8.
- 200..... Thus J. Heron: *A Short History of Puritanism*, Clark, Edinburgh, 1908, p 195.
- 201..... Dixon & Jamieson: *op. cit.*, pp 28 & 19f.

- 202..... *Inst.* IV:20:9.
203..... *Ib.* IV:20:10.
204..... *Ib.* IV:20:11.
205..... *Ib.* IV:20:12-13.
206..... *Ib.* IV:20:14-15.
207..... *Ib.* IV:20:22-30.
208..... *Ib.* IV:20:31-32.
209..... Mt. 6:10f.
210..... *Instruction in Faith* (1537), Lutterworth, London, 1949, pp 61f.
211..... *Inst.* III:20:42f.
212..... *West. Larg. Cat.* 191-95.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Francis Nigel Lee was born in 1934 in the Westmorland County of Cumbria (in Great Britain). He is the great-grandson of a fiery preacher whose family disintegrated when he backslid. Though Lee's father was an Atheist, he married a Roman Catholic who raised her son in that faith.

At the onset of the Second World War, Lee's father was appointed by the Royal Navy as Chief Radar Officer (South Atlantic). So the family then moved to South Africa. There, Lee became a Calvinist; had the great joy of leading both of his parents to Christ; and then became a Minister of God's Word & Sacraments in the Dutch Reformed Church of Natal.

Emigrating to the U.S.A., Lee attended the very first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America; transferred his ministerial credentials to that denomination; and pastored Congregations in Mississippi and Florida. He was also: Professor of Philosophy at Shelton College in New Jersey; Visiting Lecturer at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Ms.; Staley Distinguished Visiting Lecturer at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis; Research Scholar-in-Residence at the Christian Studies Center in Memphis; and Academic Dean of Graham Bible College in Bristol, Tennessee. He was then the only person in the World serving on the Executives of both the British Lord's Day Observance Society and the Lord's Day Alliance of the United States.

Preacher, Theologian, Lawyer, Educationist, Historian, Philosopher and Author, Lee has produced more than 330 publications (including many books) -- and also a multitude of long unpublished manuscripts. Apart from an honorary LL.D., he has twenty-one earned degrees -- including eleven earned doctorates for dissertations* in Education, Law, Literature, Philosophy and Theology.

Lee rises early; reads God's Word in ten languages; then walks a couple of miles before breakfast. He has been round the World seven times; has visited one hundred and ten countries (several repeatedly); and also every Continent (except Antarctica). He is in demand as a Promoter of Doctoral Students in Australia, England, Germany, South Africa and the United States. He has lectured and/or preached in all of those countries, as well as in Brazil, Scotland, Korea, Japan, Namibia, New Zealand, and Zambia.

A diehard predestinarian, Lee now lives in Australia -- where he is Head of the Department and Professor of Systematic Theology and Caldwell-Morrow Lecturer in Church History at the Queensland Presbyterian Theological College. He retires in 2000.

His wife Nellie is in fulltime Christian Service as a godly Homemaker. Their elder daughter Johanna has completed her M.A.; and teaches English, German and Modern

History in Brisbane at the Parkridge High School. Their younger daughter Annamarie (B.A. & Dip. Lib. Sc.), whom Dr. Lee baptized as a baby in 1970, was until 1998 Secretary/Librarian at the Queensland Presbyterian Theological College, Brisbane, Australia. After completing her Dip. Ed., she became a Teacher and the Librarian at Lockhart River Primary School in Northern Queensland.

- * Th.D.: *The Covenantal Sabbath*
- Ph.D.: *Communist Eschatology*
- D.Min.: *Daily Family Worship*
- D.Ed.: *Catechism Before Communion!*
- S.T.D.: *Rebaptism Impossible!*
- D.R.E.: *Baby Belief Before Baptism!*
- D.Jur.: *Women Ministers & Australian Litigation*
- D.Litt.: *Holinshed on the Ancient British Isles*
- D.C.L.: *The Roots and Fruits of the Common Law*
- D.Hum.: *Tiny Human Life -- Abortion and IVF*
- D.Phil.: *Miracles -- What and When and Why?*