Introduction

The premise of this book is that John Calvin's political theology should be an important source of guidance for Christians as they participate in the politics of contemporary pluralistic liberal democracies. In contrast to the common portrayal of Calvin as a revolutionary or socio-political transformationalist (a portrayal which helps explain the popular caricature of Calvin as a theocratic tyrant), my thesis is that, much more than is typically appreciated by scholars, Calvin's conception of Christian political engagement was an expression of his two kingdoms doctrine, by which the reformer distinguished the eternal kingdom of Christ from Christ's lordship over the temporal (i.e., secular) affairs of this life. This in turn led the Genevan reformer to articulate a much sharper distinction between church and political society than did the papacy or the other magisterial reformers, even as he avoided the Anabaptist rejection of politics. It led him to conceive of politics not as a means of transforming society into the kingdom of God according to the dictates of Christian scripture, but as an endeavor to secure temporal order and civil righteousness in accord with reason, natural law, and the virtues of charity and prudence. While Calvin argued that both kingdoms are Christ's, he insisted that the two should never be confused. The ultimate nature of the eternal kingdom brooks no compromise with evil, but the penultimate character of secular politics calls for forms of virtue and justice appropriate for sinful human beings in a fallen world.

Interpreted on its own terms, this political theological perspective is as relevant to Christians in twenty-first-century liberal democracies as it was to those who lived in sixteenth-century Protestant city-states. It offers us the theological resources to reject the ideal of Christendom, in which all citizens are expected to worship and live as Christians, on the one hand, and to affirm the value of political liberalism and principled Christian participation in pluralistic democratic societies, on the other.

Calvin argued that the kingdom of Christ is a fundamentally spiritual (or eschatological) reality, one that inaugurates the restoration of the entire creation through the

regeneration of human beings by Christ's word and Spirit. The location where this restoration has begun is the church, and Calvin sharply distinguished the church, as such, from the temporal and political affairs of life. To be sure, these are not two hermetically sealed realms. On the contrary, for Calvin, the righteousness of Christ's kingdom places its demands on every area of life. But in contrast to that kingdom and its righteousness, Calvin argued, the political affairs of this age will pass away. Temporal civil institutions cannot establish true piety, justice, charity, or peace, let alone save human beings from sin. Calvin thus sharply differentiated a "twofold government in man": one government that has the power to restore humans to spiritual righteousness, true virtue, and eternal life, and one that can only establish outward, civil, and temporal versions of the same. He placed substantive restrictions on the spiritual authority and prerogatives of the church's pastors, limiting them to the ministry of Christ's word and sacraments, while correspondingly binding the powers and intentions of political rulers in accord with their temporal limits.

Calvin thus condemned the persecution of non-Christians, such as Muslims and Jews, and he maintained that it is unjust to punish heretics or apostates in societies with religious diversity. He denied the assumption (of Aristotle and Christian theologians alike) that it should be the goal of magistrates to make people pious or just, hazarding his career on a decisive distinction between civil punishment and spiritual discipline. He rejected the claim that Christian societies must conform to the Old Testament's civil law, favoring the rigorous use of reason, experience, and the laws of nations, in addition to scripture, as sources of political wisdom. He endorsed something like republicanism (or aristocratic democracy), and he insisted that the power of government is limited by God's law, supporting legal and constitutional structures designed to hold magistrates accountable for their actions. He constantly invoked the language of rights (i.e., *ius*), especially with reference to the poor and the vulnerable, and he encouraged the Protestant tendency to locate the responsibilities of the Christian life in secular vocations such as trade, government, and family.

To be sure, Calvin was no liberal. He did not ground political authority in a social contract; he placed God's law above subjective human rights; and he denied that rights to freedom of speech, association, or religion are absolute. Nor did he draw the lines between church and civil government in ways that can be simply transferred to contemporary democracies. Calvin lived, thought, and wrote five centuries ago, when the differentiated complexities of modern society were only beginning to emerge. Like the pagan philosopher Plato and the Christian theologian Augustine, he assumed that government is obligated to make the truth, the honor of God, and the care of religion its chief concern. In (very) rare cases, he supported the death penalty for individuals judged by all Christendom to be

heretical teachers. His political views explicitly presupposed the existence and legitimacy of Christendom, with all of its practical similarities to Old Testament Israel.[1]

Thus it may seem ironic to find in Calvin the resources for the abandonment of Christendom in favor of a commitment to secular political liberalism. But in my view Calvin's political theological orientation nevertheless makes his work relevant to contemporary Christians. Calvin had no dog in the fight over liberal democracy, so to speak; he wrote neither as the critic nor the apologist of any particular form of government. Yet his political theology accurately captures commitments central to the Christian faith and thoroughly conducive toward thoughtful Christian participation in twenty-first-century liberal democratic societies.

In this book, therefore, I presuppose a conceptual distinction between Calvin's practical politics and his political theology. By the term *practical politics*, I refer to Calvin's political actions and commitments, such as his support for the capital punishment of Servetus. By *political theology*, I mean Calvin's theological and ethical account of human life and society, with its consequent implications for the nature of the church, civil government, and other social institutions. My premise is that the value of Calvin's thought does not lie in his practical politics, which reflect the unique context of a time and place far different from our own (with a vastly different "social imaginary"![2]), but in the degree to which it offers Christians a coherent model for thinking about the implications of the gospel for Christian political engagement. Context is crucial for a clear understanding of Calvin's work, and for that reason I take his practical politics seriously. But my primary interest is in Calvin's theology, including its useful set of distinctions between the church and politics, Israel and contemporary political societies, natural law and the Torah, the spiritual use of the law and its civil use, and true righteousness and civil righteousness.[3]

In fact, I believe that most of Calvin's practical political judgments were not derived from his theology. Rather, they were Calvin's best efforts at interpreting the

[1] See John T. McNeill, "Calvin and Civil Government," *Readings in Calvin's Theology* (ed. Donald McKim; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 274. Cf. Susan Schreiner, "Calvin's Use of Natural Law," *A Preserving Grace: Protestants, Catholics and Natural Law* (ed. Michael Cromartie; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 61.

[2] Charles Taylor defines our social imaginary as "the way that we collectively imagine, even pre-theoretically, our social life in the contemporary Western world." See Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 146.

[3] As the French scholar Marc Chenevière put it so well, "the politico-religious thought of Calvin does not concern us, Protestants of the twentieth century, except in so far as it rests on a Biblical foundation . . . It is Calvin's fidelity to Scripture that gives so much value to his teaching; it is this that *a priori* inspires our confidence in him." Marc Chenevière, "Did Calvin Advocate Theocracy?" *Evangelical Quarterly* 9 (1937): 160–168, 161.

practical implications of natural law for his own time and place based on reason, the laws of nations, and pagan political philosophy. This reflected Calvin's political theological method, which spurned the simplistic drawing of political conclusions from biblical exegesis in favor of careful reasoning about natural law. But what it means is that Calvin's political theology should be distinguished from his own attempts at such careful reasoning. Calvin himself distinguished between the authority of arguments drawn from natural reason (which could be challenged and rejected) and the authority of scripture (which, if interpreted correctly, could not be rejected). To embrace his political theology and method, therefore, is not necessarily to accept his illiberal conclusions. On the contrary, informed by different interpretations of reason, the laws of nations, and philosophy, we might readily find in Calvin's political theology substantial reasons for Christians to embrace liberal democracy.

By the term *liberal democracy*, I refer to constitutional systems of democratic or representative government designed to protect basic human and civil rights, including rights to life, speech, association, property, religion, and political participation, in accord with the rule of law under a system of checks and balances that includes the separation of church and state.[4] I suggest that Calvin's theology offers helpful guidance for Christians wrestling with how they should participate in liberal politics both *in good faith* to their non-Christian neighbors and in *faithfulness* to their Lord.

Such a perspective, I believe, is much needed in a time when prominent Christian pastors and theologians, not to mention liberal philosophers, are questioning the compatibility of orthodox Christianity with political liberalism. That so many Christians are questioning this compatibility in increasingly pluralistic societies, where fewer and fewer citizens hold to traditional Christian moral commitments, is unsurprising. Yet it is ironic, given the traditional tendency of Protestants to claim credit for the emergence of modern democracy. As Timothy P. Jackson maintains, while Christianity may not have invented political liberalism, political liberalism is certainly Christianity's stepchild. If the child has gone

[4] By liberal democracy, I therefore do *not* mean a comprehensive philosophical worldview such as that articulated by John Rawls in *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971) or traced by Robert P. Kraynak to Immanuel Kant in *Christian Faith and Modern Democracy: God and Politics in the Fallen World* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001). I refer to a constitutional and practical liberalism that might be rooted in various comprehensive doctrines, such as that described by John Rawls in his later work, especially "The Idea of Public Reason Revisited," a 1997 essay printed in John Rawls, *Political Liberalism: Expanded Edition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 440–490, and such as that defended more thoroughly and consistently by Jeffrey Stout in his *Democracy and Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

prodigal in certain respects, Christians should be about the business of reforming rather than abandoning it.[5]

Take, for instance, the widespread dismay among some Christians at the state's retreat from the defense of traditional sexual morality over the past half century (a retreat that culminated in the Supreme Court's declaration in 2015 that same-sex marriage is a fundamental right). This is a phenomenon that bears fascinating similarities to the way in which many Christians experienced the state's abandonment of the care of religion in preceding centuries. As happily as most Christians accept the separation of church and state today, the church's disestablishment was bitterly resisted by many Christians in the eighteenth century. Calvin himself believed that government should punish heresy and sexual immorality alike.

From that perspective it might seem that Calvin has little to say to modern Christians other than to further their disillusionment with liberal politics. But such is not the case, for Calvin understood that, in the real world, magistrates must often tolerate both heresy and sexual immorality. The civil law, he maintained, cannot establish spiritual righteousness. It must tolerate sin due to the hardness of human hearts, and sometimes it must even regulate sinful practices so as to mitigate their most destructive consequences. Thus while liberal societies appropriately fall under criticism for a host of moral failings with respect to fostering community, promoting virtue, protecting life, defending the rights of the poor, caring for the environment, and more, these failings should not come as a surprise, let alone discourage Christians from political involvement. Civil government is not the kingdom of Christ, Calvin would remind us, nor should we try to make it so. The state does not lose its legitimacy when it fails to meet the highest moral standards of the law of God (even though it does nullify its authority at the point that it requires its citizens to violate justice or piety).

The implications for the political involvement of the church are significant. The church is called prophetically to preach the righteousness of God, but that does not mean the church has the authority to dictate the way in which the laws of the state should reflect that righteousness. Unlike Judaism or Islam, as John Locke pointed out, Christianity recognizes no political or legal system as demanded by divine law; it offers no blueprint for a Christian state.[6] Theologians have tried to bridge the gap between the divine word and its political implications through what

[5] Timothy P. Jackson, "The Return of the Prodigal? Liberal Theory and Religious Pluralism," in *Religion in Contemporary Liberalism* (ed. Paul J. Weitman; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), 182–217.

[6] John Locke, "A Letter Concerning Toleration," in *Two Treatises of Government and a Letter Concerning Toleration* (ed. Ian Shapiro; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 238–239. Cf. Kraynak, *Christian Faith and Modern Democracy*.

John Bennett called "middle axioms."[7] But Calvin's two kingdoms theology warns against any overextension of the church's authority in the cause of politics, clearly differentiating the law of God from the human law of the state and the ministerial authority of the church from the magisterial authority of civil government. To be sure, divine and civil law may never be entirely separated, let alone opposed to one another. Calvin agreed that a civil law that violates God's law is no law at all. But this does not make it an easy task, a simple process of translation, to determine how the laws of the state should best accomplish the purposes of piety and justice in any given context. Christians are called to exercise political judgment in service to their neighbors according to the virtues of love and prudence (which is to say, practical wisdom that seeks to achieve the purposes of love, not self-serving pragmatism).

If Calvin called sixteenth-century Christians to thoughtfully navigate between the Scylla and the Charybdis of political dogmatism and moral relativism, such a task remains all the more daunting in a twenty-first century characterized by multiple forms of pluralism. In addition to the religious pluralism that Calvin could have imagined, contemporary Christians experience the pluralism that arises from the ever-increasing differentiation of society and its institutions into multiple spheres of life, each with its own purpose, rationality, and moral logic.[8] Long gone are the days when the clergy could dictate the will of God for the minutiae of ethical questions that arise in fields as diverse as economics, agriculture, industry, information technology, medicine, law, science, education, art, sports, and many more, let alone the complex policy questions that arise with respect to each of these fields. Christians might be tempted to ignore the moral nuance required to skillfully negotiate such a plurality of spheres, but the gospel calls us to practice wisdom and discernment in a spirit of charity, humility, and reasonableness, not to lord it over one another as the Gentiles do. Calvin's two kingdoms theology grounds the need for moral nuance in a healthy respect for general revelation, and it grounds the need for political compromise in a recognition of human sin and of the multifaceted nature of God's law (natural and biblical; moral, ceremonial, and civil; theological, civil, and spiritual, etc.). It calls Christians not only to appreciate the enormous complexities associated with virtually any matter of public policy, but also to exercise a healthy skepticism toward politicians, pastors, or denominations that claim to proclaim the authoritative will of God for such matters.[9]

[7] John Bennett, *Christian Ethics and Social Policy* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), 76–85.
[8] Steven M. Tipton, "Social Differentiation and Moral Pluralism," *Meaning and Modernity: Religion, Polity, and Self* (ed. Richard Madsen, et al.; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 15–40.
[9] Paul Ramsey, *Who Speaks for the Church?* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967), 148–157.

On the other hand, what of the argument offered by the growing number of Christian theologians who are tapping into disillusionment with the modern liberal state by taking up what has come to be called the neo-Anabaptist critique?[10] If neither America nor political liberalism are particularly Christian, so the argument runs, we would do well to return to the example of the early church, which had the good fortune of recognizing that it inhabited a pagan world. In hindsight it appears that the church took a seriously wrong turn with Constantine and Christendom, allying the church with the state, and it is long past overdue for Christian political theology to repent of that turn. The true expression of the kingdom of God and its socio-political ethic, the neo-Anabaptists point out, is the church. The only faithful way to involve ourselves with politics, then, is to center politics in the true community of virtue that is the church, to make our political objectives explicitly Christian, and to abandon any sort of political logic that presupposes liberal neutrality or public reason. Christians should not, in any case, be complicit in the state's violence. Faithful witness, rather than the stewardship of American culture, should be our goal.

There is much that is true in the neo-Anabaptist critique, I believe, especially with respect to its critique of Christendom. Still, I am not prepared to dismiss well over a thousand years of the Christian tradition's teaching regarding the legitimacy of coercive government and the importance of faithful Christian participation in it, let alone to give up on political liberalism. Christians cannot afford to reject liberal politics if we are to take seriously the command to love and serve our neighbors. If such disengagement is attractive to Christians disoriented by the religious, cultural, political, and legal changes of the past few decades, there is a desperate need to reground Christian political convictions in the church's rich theological tradition, while reevaluating the implications of that tradition (as well as its missteps) in light of the passing of Christendom. We will not be in good shape if our theology apes that of Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, or Calvin, but neither will we be better off if we disregard them.

There are prominent criticisms of liberalism that are firmly embedded in church tradition, including those associated with communitarians like Alasdair MacIntyre, advocates of "radical orthodoxy" like John Milbank, and liberation theologians like

[10] Here I have in mind especially the prominent works of John Howard Yoder, including *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), *For the Nations: Essays Public and Evangelical* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), and *The War of the Lamb: The Ethics of Nonviolence and Peacemaking* (ed. Glen Stassen et al.; Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2009); and Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), and *The Hauerwas Reader* (ed. John Berkman and Michael Cartwright; Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); and Daniel M. Bell, Jr., *Just War as Christian Discipleship: Recentering the Tradition in the Church Rather than the State* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2009).

Gustavo Gutierrez.[11] These theologians, while avoiding the neo-Anabaptist turn to pacifism, offer just as vigorous a critique of the modern liberal state in favor of what they regard as a more faithful (or orthodox) Christian political ethos. In comparison to a comprehensive Christian political vision that provides a foundation for a true community of virtue, such writers argue, the institutions of liberalism – including the constitutional state, free market capitalism, the separation of church and state, and the language of human and civil rights – are impoverished and corrosive. These criticisms also have their merits, but I think they sorely underestimate the extent to which Christian moral commitments are embedded in political liberalism. Though liberalism is certainly no utopia, it may well be, to echo Winston Churchill, the best political system human beings have yet devised. Too often Christians dwell on what is wrong with the liberal state rather than what is good about it. They fail to wrestle adequately with how Christians can be constructively engaged in service to our neighbors in the political society in which we actually live.

Furthermore, while these criticisms of liberalism are often insightful, all too often they assume the hegemonic normativity of Christianity for politics and hence require the abandonment of pluralistic liberalism as a matter of principle. All too often they write as if the kingdom of God should be expected to take substantive socio-political expression in this age. Their over-realized eschatology inevitably forces us to choose between withdrawing from worldly politics or seeking the establishment of an illiberal theocracy (albeit one that purports to be gentle and gracious in its use of force).

A major reason why it is worthwhile to return to Calvin's two kingdoms theology, then, is because it enables us to recover the traditional Christian conviction that civil government is ordained by God as a temporal institution charged with restraining evil for the common good, while nevertheless providing us with the resources for a substantive Christian critique of the ideal of Christendom. To put it another way, there is a need for a "realist" response to the over-realized eschatology of so much contemporary Christian ethics, one that teaches us how to participate faithfully in the politics of a pluralistic society rather than to withdraw from it or require that it be Christian. As a powerful critic of both the social gospel and pacifism, Reinhold Niebuhr has long been the face of Christian realism.[12] But Niebuhr's theology is too

[11] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (3rd ed.; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007); John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006); Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1973), 150. A more nuanced view, but one that is nevertheless sharply critical of liberalism, can be found in William T. Cavanaugh, *Migrations of the Holy: God, State, and the Political Meaning of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011).

[12] See especially Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932); *The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation* (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941–1943).

often only tenuously rooted in Christian scripture, his critics unable to escape the sense that a virtuous pragmatism plays a greater role in his ethics than does scriptural teaching regarding the love and justice of Christ.[13] There is a need, therefore, for a form of Christian realism more deeply rooted in Christian theology, scripture, and tradition. Recognizing this need, ethicists such as Paul Ramsey and Timothy P. Jackson have attempted to ground a realist approach in the theological virtue of love. Others, including Nicholas Wolterstorff and Eric Gregory, seek resources for an affirmation of political liberalism in the theological tradition of the church.[14]

This book is not constructive in the sense that these works are. I focus almost entirely on describing Calvin's theology in its own context and on its own terms, postponing my own critical and constructive proposals until the conclusion. My goal, however, is to recover Calvin as a relevant voice for contemporary Christian political theology. Calvin's two kingdoms theology offers contemporary Christians a rigorously orthodox and scriptural foundation for Christian realism, even as it embraces some of the central concerns of neo-Anabaptism regarding the importance of the church as the only truly restorative community of virtue. Here Ernst Troeltsch has insightfully identified Calvin's genius as his synthesis of the Anabaptist "sect-type" of Christian social engagement, in which the church is a distinct community of the faithful, with the medieval "church-type," in which

[13] See, for example, the critique in Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (New York: HarperOne, 1996), 215–225. Calvin is neither a realist nor a pragmatist in this Niebuhrian sense. For instance, while Niebuhr would argue that in an emergency Christians must sometimes act unjustly, getting their hands dirty, so to speak, Calvin insists that Christians must act justly regardless of the consequences. Likewise, while Niebuhr argues that love is a personal virtue inappropriate for the complexities of life in "immoral society," Calvin declares the law of charity to be the rule for politics.

[14] Jackson prefers the term "prophetic liberalism" because it stresses the positive function of Christian love. See Timothy P. Jackson, *Political Agape: Christian Love and Liberal Democracy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015). I maintain the term "realism" both because it is relevant to societies liberal and illiberal alike, and because it properly accentuates the limits of temporal politics. Cf. Paul Ramsey, *Basic Christian Ethics* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993); Timothy P. Jackson, *The Priority of Love: Christian Charity and Social Justice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Eric Gregory, *Politics and the Order of Love: An Augustinian Ethic of Democratic Citizenship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Nicholas Wolterstorff, "The Wounds of God: Calvin's Theology of Social Injustice," *Reformed Journal* 37.6 (June 1987): 14–22; *Justice: Rights and Wrongs* (Princeton; Princeton University Press, 2008); *Justice in Love* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011); *The Mighty and the Almighty: An Essay in Political Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Oliver O'Donovan takes a somewhat more critical yet ultimately constructive approach, seeking to ground Christian political participation in liberal democracies in classic Christian understandings of justice, authority, and judgment. Oliver O'Donovan. *The Desire of the Nations: Rediscovering the Roots of Political Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); *The Ways of Judgment* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005); *Resurrection and Moral Order: An Outline for Evangelical Ethics* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994).

the church remains committed to seeking and serving the social good of all persons.[15] It offers the theological basis for the model that Martin Marty, Robert Bellah, and Steven M. Tipton call a "public church," a church that conceives of its mission in relation to the restoration of all things, not simply in relation to the deliverance of the elect who are "only passing through."[16] Thus Calvin's political theology provides the foundation for a form of Christian realism in which the motive and guide for Christian political participation is always the gospel of Christ, but in which neither the gospel nor the kingdom of God are confused with what politics can accomplish.[17]

INTERPRETING CALVIN

The vast scholarship on Calvin has spawned numerous interpretations of the reformer's social-political thought and legacy. I would suggest that these interpretations can be grouped as five general types:

1) Calvin as a catalyst for modernity
2) Calvin as a socio-political transformationalist
3) Calvin as a dialectical theologian
4) Calvin as a political actor
5) Calvin as a pastor and teacher of scripture

I present these as types, but in reality they overlap to one degree or another, and the work of many scholars could readily be assigned to multiple types. Each offers helpful insight into Calvin's thought and legacy, but some of these interpretations also contain serious problems. Let me briefly consider each in turn.

[15] Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (trans. Olive Wyon; 2 vols.; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992 [1912]), 2:579, 593, 597, 602, 623, 627.

[16] Robert N. Bellah, et al., *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), especially 243–248; Robert N. Bellah, et al., *The Good Society* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), especially 179–219; Martin Marty, *The Public Church: Mainline-Evangelical-Catholic* (New York: Crossroad, 1981); and Steven M. Tipton, *Public Pulpits: Methodists and Mainline Churches in the Moral Argument of Public Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), especially 399–442.

[17] As Schreiner puts it, Calvin believed Christians must "take responsibility for that world" of which they are a part while holding "an unrelenting realism" about the effects of sin. Such realism seeks to "distinguish carefully between the spiritual and civil realms and to take seriously the fallen nature of the latter." Susan E. Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory: Nature and the Natural Order in the Thought of John Calvin* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1995), 84–85. Cf. Schreiner, "Calvin's Use of Natural Law," 74. On Calvin as a realist in the tradition of Augustine, see Derek S. Jeffreys, "'It's a Miracle of God That There Is Any Common Weal among Us': Unfaithfulness and Disorder in John Calvin's Political Thought," *The Review of Politics* 62 (2000): 107–129, 125–126.