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978-1-107-17143-5 — Calvin's Political Theology and the Public Engagement of the Church

Matthew J. Tuininga

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CALVIN'S POLITICAL THEOLOGY AND THE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OF THE CHURCH

This book explores a little-appreciated dimension of John Calvin's political thought, his two kingdoms theology, as a model for constructive, Christian participation in liberal society. Widely misunderstood as a proto-political culture warrior, due in part to his often misinterpreted role in controversies over predestination and the heretic Servetus, Calvin articulated a thoughtful approach to public life rooted in his understanding of the gospel and its teaching concerning the kingdom of God. He staked his ministry in Geneva on his commitment to keeping the church distinct from the state, abandoning simplistic approaches that placed one above the other, and rejecting the temptations of sectarianism or separatism. This revealing analysis of Calvin's vision offers timely guidance for Christians seeking a mode of faithful, respectful public engagement in democratic, pluralistic communities today.

Matthew J. Tuininga holds a Ph.D. in Religion, Ethics and Society from Emory University and is Assistant Professor of Moral Theology at Calvin Theological Seminary. He formerly taught politics and core studies at Oglethorpe University in Atlanta, Georgia, and he has also taught at Emory University and at Sewanee, the University of the South. He previously worked as a congressional aide in Washington D.C. and as a counterterrorism intelligence analyst for the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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CHRIST'S TWO KINGDOMS

MATTHEW J. TUININGA

Calvin Theological Seminary



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Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

To my parents, Cal and Ellen Tuininga, to whom I owe so much.

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>page</i> viii
<i>Note on Citations of Calvin's Works</i>	xi
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xiv
Introduction	1
1 Two Swords, Two Powers, or Two Kingdoms: Spiritual and Political Authority in Early Modern Europe	23
2 Calvin, Geneva, and the French Reformed Churches	61
3 The Kingdom of Christ	92
4 Two Kingdoms	140
5 Christ's Spiritual Government	182
6 Christ's Political Government: Early Formulations	228
7 Covenant and Law	255
8 The Magistrate's Care of Religion	280
9 Law, Democracy, and Resistance to Tyranny	321
Conclusion: Calvin's Two Kingdoms and Liberal Democracy	355
<i>Index</i>	379

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Acknowledgments

ix

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Note on Citations of Calvin's Works

Calvin wrote his scholarly works in Latin, but he ordinarily published a French translation as well. He gave his academic lectures in Latin, while he preached his sermons in French. The majority of these primary sources can be found in the *Ioannis Calvini Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia, Corpus Reformationum* (volumes 29–87; eds. Johann Wilhelm Baum, August Eduard Cunitz, and Eduard Reuss; 1863–1900), hereafter *Calvini Opera* or CO, while the rest of the sources I used can be found in the *Supplementa Calviniana: Sermons Inédits* (eds. Hanns Rückert et al.; Neukirchen: 1936–2006), hereafter SC, or at the Post-Reformation Digital Library (www.prdl.org/). Nearly all of Calvin's works, including most of his sermons, have been translated and published in English. In such cases I have used the English translations while checking key terminology and wording against the original Latin or French. Occasionally I have altered the translation or wording, either for stylistic or substantive clarity. Thus when referring to Calvin's writings, I have used the following method:

- When citing Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, I usually cite parenthetically according to book, chapter, and paragraph from the 1559 edition, a form of citation that works for both English translations and the original Latin. When I cite the 1536 edition, however, I cite according to chapter, subchapter, and paragraph. Both these forms of citation work for both the English translations and the original Latin. The English translations I have used are:
 - *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. 1559 Edition. Edited by John T. McNeill et al. Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1960.
 - *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. 1536 Edition. Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975.
- When citing Calvin's occasional writings, I directly cite the English translation, along with the Latin or French original.

- When citing Calvin's letters, I provide the receiver and date of the letter, along with the original source. The English translations I have used come from:
 - *Selected Works of John Calvin: Tracts and Letters*. 7 Volumes. Edited by Henry Beveridge and Jules Bonnet. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983.
- When citing Calvin's commentaries and sermons, I provide the passage on which Calvin is commenting, along with the date and the original source. With the commentaries, this is always a citation from the *Calvini Opera*, except in the case of the 1540 commentary on Romans, in which case I have used T. H. L. Parker's *Iohannis Calvini Commentarius in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), which shows the variants between the 1540 and 1557 editions. The English translations I have used are as follows:
 - *Calvin's Commentaries*. 22 volumes. Translated by John King et al. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.
 - *John Calvin's Sermons on 2 Samuel: Chapter 1–13*. Translated by Douglas Kelly. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1992.
 - *John Calvin's Sermons on Ephesians*. Revision of the translation by Arthur Golding. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1973.
 - *John Calvin's Sermons on Galatians*. Translated by Arthur Golding. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1997.
 - *John Calvin's Sermons on Genesis: Chapters 1:1–11:4*. Translated by Rob Roy McGregor. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2009.
 - *John Calvin's Sermons on the Acts of the Apostles: Chapters 1–7*. Translated by Rob Roy McGregor. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2008.
 - *John Calvin's Sermons on the Beatitudes*. Taken from the *Gospel Harmony*. Delivered in Geneva in 1560. Translated by Robert White. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2006.
 - *John Calvin's Sermons on the Ten Commandments*. Translated by Benjamin W. Farley. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980.
 - *Men, Women, and Order in the Church: Three Sermons* (Sermons on 1 Corinthians). Translated by Seth Skolnitsky. Dallas, TX: Presbyterian Heritage Publications.
 - *Sermons from Job*. Translated by Leroy Nixon. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952.
 - *Sermons on Deuteronomy*. Translated by Arthur Golding. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1987.
 - *Sermons on Jeremiah*. Translated by Blair Reynolds. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1990.
 - *Sermons on the Book of Micah*. Translated by Benjamin Wirt Farley. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2003.
 - *Sermons on the Epistles to Timothy and Titus*. Translated by Arthur Golding. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1983.

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Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

Note on Citations of Calvin's Works

xiii

- *Sermons on the Saving Work of Christ*. Translated by Leroy Nixon. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950.
- *Songs of the Nativity: Selected Sermons on Luke 1 and 2*. Translated by Robert White. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2008.
- *The Gospel According to Isaiah: Seven Sermons on Isaiah 53 Concerning the Passion and Death of Christ*. Translated by Leroy Nixon. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953.

An excellent and thorough guide to Calvin's works is Wulfert De Greef's *The Writings of John Calvin, Expanded Edition: An Introductory Guide* (trans. Lyle D. Bierma; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008).

Abbreviations

- CO *Ioannis Calvini Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia, Corpus Reformationum*
 (volumes 29–87; ed. Johann Wilhelm Baum, August Eduard Cunitz, and
 Eduard Reuss; 1863–1900).
- LW *Luther's Works* (55 volumes; eds. Jaroslav Pelikan, et al.; St. Louis:
 Concordia Publishing House, 1955–).
- SC *Supplementa Calviniana: Sermons Inédits* (ed. Hanns Rückert et al.;
 Neukirchen: 1936–2006).