

# John Calvin's Political Theology for the Church in Our Time

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In John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, he writes that "no one ought to doubt that civil authority is a calling, not only holy and lawful before God, but also the most sacred and by far the most honorable of all callings in the whole life of mortal men."<sup>1</sup>

One of the great opportunities the PCA has is to send ordained teaching elders with Ministry to State to serve as ministers and missionaries to those who Calvin also calls "vicars of God."<sup>2</sup> As ministers and missionaries to those who serve in government, one of our objectives is to "maintain a biblical conscience" and to "provide encouragement and support in the development of a Biblical world and life view for those in government."

In other words, we want to help shape the hearts and minds of those who hold public office and profess faith in Christ so that they will faithfully glorify and enjoy him in their personal and public lives. Thus, we pray and work toward helping our elected officials believe and think through the implications of knowing Christ and his word to all areas of life, including in their role as civil authorities.

But we also have the opportunity to help the church in developing a thoughtful and robust political theology. As ministers, no doubt you've read and taught on topics like marriage, parenting, money, the integration of faith and work, injustice, sex and sexuality, the poor, ethnic and racial issues. But political theology – by which I mean how our theology relates to our thinking and living as political beings – is often left out of the mix unless we're preaching on Romans 13, or Titus 3, 1 Peter 2, or something of that nature.

However, the past few years have not only been seasons of especially intense political division in the church and the world, but the whole coronavirus experience has caused the church to consider her relationship to civil authority in ways that, for most of us, are unprecedented. In addition, many of us are facing pastoral issues on the frontlines in which there is considerable overlap between the doctrinal and the political. For instance, issues related to sexuality and gender are certainly theological issues, but they almost always have political manifestations. So when we speak to these matters, those who hear will likely have various degrees of political considerations infused into their understanding.

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<sup>1</sup> John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed, John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 4.20.4.

<sup>2</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.6.

I think Calvin helps us here because of his profound influence upon Reformed political thought for nearly 500 years. Now I should say at the outset that my aim is not to offer a comprehensive summary of all of Calvin's political thought. If I did that, you would leave here feeling like you were drinking water out of a firehose. What I want to do is focus upon just a few aspects of his thought that I think are particularly salient for the church in our time; especially helpful with regard to how we lead and shepherd our particular congregations.

Before we even dig into the particulars of Calvin's political theology, I think the most important thing to remember is the relationship he has in view between God and man and the obligations people have toward one another. Our relationship to God and others is to be shaped by piety, which he defines as which he defines as "*reverence joined with love of God which the knowledge of his benefits induces.*"<sup>3</sup> Calvin holds that piety is a matter of "*not of the tongue but of life. It is not apprehended by the understanding and memory alone, as other disciplines are, but it is received only when it possesses the whole soul, and finds a seat and resting place in the inmost affection of the heart.*"<sup>4</sup> For Calvin, piety is "*spiritual, where the inner feeling of the mind is unfeignedly dedicated to God for the cultivation of holiness and righteousness.*"<sup>5</sup>

John McNeill suggests that the sum of Calvin's theology is "*piety described at length.*"<sup>6</sup> Thus, when Calvin states at the beginning of his *Institutes* that "*nearly all the wisdom we possess... consists in two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves,*" we should understand that to mean that the fruit of true knowledge is true piety. And conversely, where there is no true knowledge, there is no true piety.

And piety, of course, has implications for all of life. Arenas such as the family, the neighborhood, education, culture, business, politics, etc. are realms of duty in which people are to both honor God and love their neighbor. To be struck with the awe of God compels the Christian to participate, with Christ-like distinctiveness, into the common affairs of mankind. His rebuke of the Anabaptists - who held that the church and civil government were so widely separated that Christians ought to have no participation in it at all - reinforce this position.

So, for us as followers of Christ, as pastors, as shepherds of the flock of God, it is incumbent that our people understand that their relationship to civil authority as a vital avenue through which they are to exercise godliness. For instance, Calvin insists that "*it is of no slight importance to us to know how lovingly God has provided in this respect (i.e. ordaining civil authority) for mankind, that greater zeal for piety may flourish in us to attest our gratefulness.*"<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Institutes*, 3.2.14.

<sup>4</sup> *Institutes*, 3.6.4. Book 3, chapters 6-10 of the *Institutes* contain Calvin's famous discourse on Christian piety, which has been published on its own as the *Golden Booklet of the True Christian Life*.

<sup>5</sup> *Institutes*, 3.6.5.

<sup>6</sup> John T. McNeill (ed.) *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Translated and indexed by Ford Lewis Battles, (Philadelphia: Westminster 1960), Li f. (introduction).

<sup>7</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.1.

In light of Calvin's concern for piety and with the assumption that how the Christian relates to government is one of the arenas in which the rubber meets the road in our Christian discipleship, let me offer several brief observations about Calvin's political theology and offer some practical thoughts for you and the churches you serve.

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## 1. There is one Kingdom of God, with God's lordship being exercised in two spheres: the spiritual and the temporal.

All of life falls under the lordship of Christ and is subject to his law, but this is to be understood in the eschatological context of the already/not yet. This Pauline dualism is eschatological in character; one which distinguishes between the present age and the age to come, creation corrupted and creation restored, the kingdom already established and the kingdom not yet consummated. This is consistent with Paul's discourses on the integration of the body and soul, the outward and inward man, the flesh and the spirit and is at odds with the gnostic neo-Platonic dualism which sharply distinguished between the body and soul.

Calvin explains his understanding of the two kingdoms as follows in ICR 3.19.15, a section on "Christian Freedom:

Let us first consider that there is a twofold government in man (*duplex esse in homine regimen*): *one aspect is spiritual*, whereby the conscience is instructed in piety and in reverencing God; *the second is political*, whereby man is educated for the duties of humanity and citizenship that must be maintained among men. These are usually called the "*spiritual*" and the "*temporal*" jurisdiction (not improper terms) by which is meant that the former sort of government pertains to the *life of the soul*, while the latter has to do with the *concerns of the present life*—not only with food and clothing but with laying down laws whereby a man may live his life among other men holily, honorably, and temperately. For the former resides in the *inner mind*, while the latter regulates only *outward behavior*. The one we may call the *spiritual kingdom*, the other, the *political kingdom*. Now these two, as we have divided them, must always be *examined separately*; and while one is being considered, we must call away and turn aside the mind from thinking about the other. There are in man, so to speak, *two worlds*, over which *different kings* and *different laws* have authority.<sup>8</sup>

While "Christ's spiritual kingdom and the civil jurisdiction are things completely distinct,"<sup>9</sup> they are "not at variance."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *Institutes*, 3.19.15.

<sup>9</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.1.

<sup>10</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.2.

Civil power, then, derives its authority from Christ, representing his righteousness, and is tasked with promoting the justice, the maintenance of life, and the common good. But the temporal/political government is a kingdom of power – pertaining to the establishment of civil justice, outward morality, and Christian freedom – with natural law as its standard and the sword as its weapon.<sup>11</sup> With this in view, “every nation is left free to make such laws as it foresees to be profitable for itself. Yet these must be in conformity to that perpetual rule of love.” It is granted the power of the sword.

Ecclesiastical power derives its authority from Christ and is a kingdom of grace – pertaining to eternal life and residing in the soul – with special revelation as its standard and the means of grace as its weapons. Calvin understood the church to be the fundamental institution through which Christ’s spiritual government is expressed. This power is executed through the ministry of congregationally elected church officers, is spiritual only, shaped by the Scriptures alone, permitted to bind consciences to nothing other than God’s word, endowed with the spiritual authority to discipline her members, and enabled to order the church’s collective life with biblically consistent church laws and constitutions with the ultimate objectives of forming Christian piety in her members and pursuing the glory of God. The Holy Spirit works through the preaching of the word as the means by which Christ’s spiritual kingdom is realized. True Christian piety then, becomes characteristic of the elect as God uses the Scriptures to compel them live – however imperfectly – in a fashion consistent with the holiness of God. It is granted the power of the keys.

## **2. Like Luther, Calvin employed the two-kingdoms language, but his application of the doctrine was somewhat different.**

Luther’s twofold rule of God held that the kingdom of the world is governed by God through Law, while the church is governed by the Gospel. Within the Lutheran tradition, the political/temporal realm had far more independence from Christianity than it has historically had in the Reformed world and has assumed a far more passive posture toward the state than there has been historically in the Reformed tradition.

Like Calvin, Luther taught that Christians as citizens of both kingdoms must submit to the state. But Luther’s sharp law/gospel separation and his view that the state had little spiritual obligation permitted almost no room for rebellion against civil government; a view that was dominant in medieval political theology. Luther also held that the church has an exclusively spiritual role and is not to try to improve society. That sounds a little like the 19<sup>th</sup> century Southern Presbyterian understanding of the spirituality of the church, doesn’t it? We’re going to get to that in just a minute.

But suffice it to say that Calvin’s position was somewhat different in this regard. For instance, he sought to protect the church from state interference. In fact, the main, presenting issue that caused Calvin to be expelled from Geneva in 1538 was his fierce insistence that the church – not the

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<sup>11</sup> J.V. Fesko, “Creation and Humanity,” in *John Calvin: For a New Reformation*, ed. Derek W.H. Thomas and John W. Tweeddale (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2019), 255-266.

magistrate – had the authority to discipline her members. Luther and Melanchthon, on the other hand, believed that matters of discipline and church order were the tasks of the civil realm.

- But Calvin also believed that the state had the responsibility to “to cherish and protect the outward worship of God and to defend sound doctrine and piety and the position of the church,” preventing “idolatry, sacrilege against God’s name, blasphemies against his truth, and other public offenses against religion from arising and spreading among the people,” in order that “a public manifestation of religion may exist among Christians.”<sup>12</sup>
- When the Apostle Paul urges the church to pray for governing authorities in 1 Timothy 2:1-2 – particularly that they would enable the church to live godly lives – Calvin writes in his commentary that magistrates are “to promote religion, to maintain the worship of God, and to take care that sacred ordinances be observed with due reverence.”<sup>13</sup>
- In his commentary on Daniel 4:1-3, Calvin states that government is to “defend the worship of God, and to execute vengeance upon those who profanely despise it.”<sup>14</sup>
- And reflecting on the assertion that Calvin was chiefly interested in the cultivation of godliness in the church, he remarks that “no government can be happily established unless piety is the first concern.”<sup>15</sup>
- Since civil authority is “the protector and guardian of the laws”<sup>16</sup> it is not to overlook the fact that God “should be purely worshipped according to the prescription of his law,” something Calvin believes to be of “far greater importance” than merely addressing “earthly controversies.”<sup>17</sup>

So with Calvin, the state has obligations to the church – not in the papal sense where the church held magisterial authority over temporal matters – but in the sense that it was to, at the very least, have a bias toward the church. He was convinced that distinctively Christian concerns have an important role in the public square, and that the government is obligated to further Christian virtues.

### **3. Calvin’s view of natural law compels the state to govern in ways consistent with the “general equity” of the Ten Commandments.**

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<sup>12</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.2-3.

<sup>13</sup> *Comm.*, 1 Tim. 2:2.

<sup>14</sup> *Comm.*, Dan. 4:1-3.

<sup>15</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.9.

<sup>16</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.3.

<sup>17</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.9.

John McNeill rightly contends that Calvin “identifies natural law with equity...in the popular sense of common justice.”<sup>18</sup> For instance, Calvin states that the

law of God which we call the moral law is nothing else than a testimony of natural law and of that conscience which God has engraved upon the minds of men. Consequentially, the entire scheme of this equity (*aequitas*) of which we are now speaking has been prescribed in it. Hence, this equity alone must be the goal and tulle and limit of all laws.<sup>19</sup>

Calvin “defined natural law very precisely by identifying it with the decalogue or moral law” which, while specially enumerated in Scripture, is revealed in general revelation “with equity” to all mankind.<sup>20</sup> For instance, in Romans 2:14, where the Apostle Paul speaks of the Gentiles who naturally do what the law requires despite not having the law, Calvin writes that since

all nations, of themselves and without a monitor, are disposed to make laws for themselves, it is beyond all question evident that they have some notions of justice and rectitude, which the Greeks call preconceptions, **προληψεις**, and which are implanted by nature in the hearts of men. They have then a law, though they are without law: for though they have not a written law, they are yet by no means wholly destitute of the knowledge of what is right and just; as they could not otherwise distinguish between vice and virtue; the first of which they restrain by punishment, and the latter they commend, and manifest their approbation of it by honouring it with rewards. He sets nature in opposition to a written law, meaning that the Gentiles had the natural light of righteousness, which supplied the place of that law by which the Jews were instructed, so that they were a law to themselves.<sup>21</sup>

It is Calvin’s sense that “in man’s perverted and degenerate nature some sparks (of the ability to judge between good and evil) still gleam” in that there is “implanted in human nature some sort of desire to search out the truth to which man would not at all aspire if he had not already savored it. Human understanding then possesses some power of perception, since it is by nature captivated by love of truth.”<sup>22</sup>

This understanding of natural law should also be considered in light of Calvin’s view that the Old Testament ceremonial and judicial laws had been fulfilled in Christ and are no longer binding in the New Testament economy. Certainly, both types of law “pertain to morals”; the ceremonial to “the doctrine of piety” and the judicial laws “from that precept of love.”

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<sup>18</sup> John T. McNeill, “Calvin and Civil Government,” in *Readings in Calvin’s Theology*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 267.

<sup>19</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.16.

<sup>20</sup> R. Scott Clark, “Calvin on the *Lex Naturalis*,” *Stulos Theological Journal* 6.1-2 (May-Nov. 1998): 3.

<sup>21</sup> *Comm.*, Rom. 2:4.

<sup>22</sup> *Institutes*, 2.2.12. John T. McNeill rightly adds that “Calvin has no notion of modern secular interpretations of natural law. It is part of the divine endowment of the natural man, impaired indeed, but not obliterated by sin, evident in common concepts of justice and in the inner voice of conscience.” John T. McNeill, “Calvin and Civil Government,” 268.

However, the moral law, “which simply commands us to worship God with pure faith and piety” and “to embrace men with sincere affection,” is what remains requisite.<sup>23</sup> Because this is this case, “every nation is left free to make such laws as it foresees to be profitable for itself. Yet these must be in conformity to that perpetual rule of love.”<sup>24</sup> It is on this basis, then, that Calvin rejects Theonomy, Reconstructionism, and other forms of Theocracy, which understand the civil law to be a subset of the moral law and, thus, still binding.

Calvin, then, maintains his distinction between the spiritual and temporal/political kingdoms and while affirming that government ought to privilege the church and the law of God. Although he clearly views unregenerate men to be greatly corrupted – something which natural law displays – he nonetheless considers it to serve the positive function of preventing individuals and nations from descending into anarchy and moral chaos.

Calvin notes, for instance, that while the eighth commandment forbids theft, other nations, although they did not have the law of God, still punished it in some form as they applied God’s natural law into positive law.<sup>25</sup> The diversity of forms of government, punishments for injustice, and rewards for public good is less important to Calvin than the fact that, imbedded upon the souls of mankind, a certain measure of light exists which compels them to have some regard for the moral law of God through the use of coercive legal force. Secular governments, regardless of form, are legitimate because God has providentially established them all and each are, to some degree, ruled by natural law as their standard.<sup>26</sup>

#### **4. Calvin’s position promotes a biblical justification for civil disobedience and political engagement that Luther’s view does not.**

We’ve talked a little bit about this already, but Calvin absolutely affirms the biblical mandate that Christians are to both honor and submit to the governing authorities. Even ungodly and unjust rulers were viewed as chastisement for the nation and/or the church’s sin. Christians are not to rebel, but to consider their own sins, and plea for mercy.

However, when he comments on Romans 13 – and when he insists, as Paul does in that passage, that we submit to governing authority – he also makes clear that government’s authority is derived from God, not intrinsic. And when the government compels us to do that which God prohibits or prohibits us from doing that which God commands, then we must engage in civil disobedience. And

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<sup>23</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.15.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.16.

<sup>26</sup> Calvin points his readers to Jeremiah 27 as evidence that God has established even unjust and wicked rulers to positions of governing authority, noting that “we see how much obedience the Lord willed to be paid to that abominable and cruel tyrant (King Nebuchadnezzar) for no other reason than that he possessed kingship.” *Institutes*, 4.20.27.

that's of course what we see when the Sanhedrin prohibited Peter and others from preaching the gospel and Peter replied that "we are to obey God and not men."

Now this also plays into political resistance. While there are no circumstances in which Calvin allows for the individual Christians ("private individuals") to resist the authority of magistrates regardless of their wickedness, his doctrine of the "lesser magistrates" allows for the resistance of despotic rulers. In the *Institutes*, he makes reference to ancient examples from Sparta, Rome, and Athens who were elected by popular vote and who served as a "check" or "balance" upon monarchical absolutism and tyranny.<sup>27</sup>

Our American system of federalism, separation of powers, and constitutionalism, for instance, lends itself to this kind of justified resistance. Such a structure mitigates against a top-down, hierarchical, and supreme command which cannot be resisted or kept in check.

- Within the executive branch, there are "lesser magistrates" who are charged not only with obeying their superiors, but with faithfully executing the law and, if necessary, resisting the unlawful commands of their superiors.
- Within the legislative branch, there is a government "of the people" who are tasked with making laws; the process of which is so monumental, that full-scale tyrannical laws are unlikely to be passed.
- Within the judicial branch, both lesser magistrates and ordinary citizens can appeal for relief from unjust, unlawful, and unconstitutional orders.

So, when a church or individual Christian faces such injustice or unconstitutional governing overreach, s/he is much more likely to have to consider whether or not there is legal recourse to resist it than s/he is to have to consider whether or not s/he has a duty to do so.<sup>28</sup>

Now when you think of what we experienced during the pandemic with the requirement of mask-wearing, limits on the number of people who could gather, etc. there were many churches who defied those requirements because they believed them to either be unconstitutional or believed they were being prohibited from doing something (i.e. gathering in person or limiting gathering size) that God commanded. But to resist because you believe something to be illegal or unconstitutional paves the way for anarchy. Individuals do not have the right to make that determination. If "the rule of law" means that every citizen/church could make up his or her own mind about what the law meant, or which laws were valid, there would soon be neither rule nor law.

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<sup>27</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.31.

<sup>28</sup> Bradford Littlejohn, "<https://Ca.thegospelcoalition.org/Article/Resisting-the-Powers-That-Be-How-Protestants-Developed-a-Resistance-Theory/>," n.d.

The way to do this is to appeal to the courts. And often, the way to get there is to resist, then be either arrested or fined, which subsequently forces the issue into the courts. This is something we saw during the Civil Rights era. And when we appeal to those “lesser magistrates” (i.e. the courts), we are to submit ourselves to their decisions (cf. Deuteronomy 17:11-12).

Unless, of course, we are truly commanded to do that which God prohibits or prohibited from doing what God commands. Then “we must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

So we must consider 1.) the difference between an unjust law and a law that commands us to do injustice (i.e. abortion permissible in USA vs. abortion commanded in China), 2.) that we must always refrain from doing what God prohibits, but sometimes we can't do what God requires (i.e. worshipping together in the middle of a hurricane/blizzard, etc.), and 3.) consider whether or not a prohibition is lacks nefarious intent, is reasonable, and was adopted as a matter of last resort.

#### **5. Calvin's position affirms the Reformed doctrine of the Spirituality of the Church without encouraging the nefarious ways in which that doctrine has sometimes been applied.**

What do we mean when we talk about two-kingdoms/jurisdictions/powers; one spiritual (i.e. the church) and one temporal (i.e. the state)?

When we talk about the spirituality of the church, what we mean is that the Holy Spirit, through the ministry of the word and sacraments (and, by implication, discipline), breaks into this present age to redeem and sanctify his people, who are he says that the church is “not earthly or carnal and hence subject to corruption (as temporal institutions such as the state are), but spiritual” and because of that “lifts us up even to eternal life” (2.25.4).

Later, Calvin says that “spiritual government, indeed, is already initiating in us upon earth certain beginnings of a Heavenly Kingdom, and in this mortal and fleeting life affords a certain forecast of an immortal and uncorruptible blessedness.”<sup>29</sup> (4.20.2). The spiritual kingdom “resides in the soul or inner man and pertains to eternal life” and the temporal/political kingdom “pertains only to the establishment of civil justice and outward morality.”<sup>30</sup> (4.20.1).

Listen to how James Henley Thornwell defines the spirituality of the church. He says:

(The Church) has no commission to construct society afresh...to change the forms of its political constitutions... The problems, which the anomalies of our fallen state are continually forcing on philanthropy, the Church has no right to solve. She must leave them to the Providence of God, and to human wisdom sanctified and guided by the spiritual influences which it is her glory to foster and to cherish. The Church...has a

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<sup>29</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.2

<sup>30</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.1

fixed and unalterable Constitution; and that Constitution is the Word of God...She can announce what it teaches, enjoin what it commands, prohibit what it condemns...Beyond the Bible she can never go, and apart from the Bible she can never speak.<sup>31</sup>

Now Thornwell's assertion is 100 percent consistent with what Calvin says about the church's spirituality! Calvin says that "Christ's spiritual kingdom and the civil jurisdiction are things completely distinct."<sup>32</sup> Thornwell and Dabney and the Southern Presbyterian Church didn't invent the doctrine of the Spirituality of the Church to preserve the *status quo*, particularly regarding slavery. That doctrine was developed at least 200 years before it was used to defend slavery and before later Southern Presbyterians used it to defend Jim Crow laws.

So Thornwell simply affirms what every officer in the PCA affirms today: that the church's power is ministerial and declarative, not magisterial and legislative. We can only bind consciences to the Scriptures alone since the Scriptures are our only rule of faith and practice. We can't compel and coerce people to affirm our own opinions; particularly to our political opinions. And we certainly do not want the mission of the church to be confused with the mission of the state, or to synthesize the mission of the church with the partisan interests of the Republican or Democratic parties.

But the difficulty here is that the political and the spiritual so often overlap. And while, as Calvin says, the spiritual and temporal jurisdictions of Christ's Kingly rule are things "completely distinct" they are nonetheless both under Christ's Kingly rule. And at the very least, that means that while there may be a rightful separation (and I prefer to call it a distinction) between the church and the state, there is no rightful separation between the state and God.

The church, then, is to serve as the conscience of the state. Thus, Charles Hodge would say that "the Bible gives us no rule for deciding the litigated questions about public improvements, a national bank, or a protective tariff or state rights. But it does give us rules pronouncing about slave-laws, the slave-trade (i.e. manstealing), obedience to magistrates, treason, rebellion, and revolution."<sup>33</sup>

The doctrine, as construed throughout most of the Reformed tradition, does not mean that pastors and churches can never speak to issues that some might label as "political" or "social justice." In fact, it provides the basis for speaking prophetically about these issues (because they *are* spiritual) and allows us to apply the word to the particular issues facing believers in the world. Yet at the same time, it compels us to remember that our weapons are not fundamentally political (i.e. the sword), but spiritual (i.e. the word, sacraments, and prayer). We dare not let the desired fruit of the means of grace to become the means of grace, to pronouncing too exactly and too confidently upon matters not explicitly stated in Scripture and that demand a great deal of prudential judgment (i.e. think of the issues surrounding immigration).

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<sup>31</sup> James Henley Thornwell, "Relation of the Church to Slavery," in *Collected Writings of James Henley Thornwell*, ed. B. M. Palmer and J. B. Adger, 4 vols. (reprint, Carlisle: Banner of Truth, 1974), 4:382-4, as quoted in Thompson, *Spirituality of the Church*, 25.

<sup>32</sup> *Institutes*, 4.20.1.

<sup>33</sup> Charles Hodge, "The General Assembly," *The Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review for the Year 1864* (1864) 36:3.

**Conclusion:** The mission of the church is to make disciples, to baptize, and to teach Christ's disciples to obey all that he has commanded them. We make use of the means of grace to accomplish these ends. And in doing so, we remember Calvin's – and Scripture's aim – that, as citizens of Christ's spiritual and temporal kingdoms, he would "*possess the whole soul, and find a seat and resting place in the inmost affection of the heart.*"