"Subtle Sacramentarian" or Son? John Calvin's Relationship to Martin Luther

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In October of 1545, Heinrich von Wolfenbüttel (1489–1568), the Romanist Duke of Braunschweig-Lüneberg-Wolfenbüttel, in the process of attempting to recover lands taken from him by the Protestant Schmalkald League (in 1542), was taken captive along with his sons. The Lutheran territories of Hesse and Saxony in were placed in great danger of invasion by Romanist forces.1 In response, the Reformed pastor-theologian John Calvin (1509–64) was so disturbed by this threat to his Lutheran brothers that he asked for and received permission from the city fathers of Geneva to hold a special prayer service on their behalf.2 In one of only two sermons from the years prior to 1549 to be transcribed, he expressed concern that Lord's name should not be blasphemed (Ps 115:2–3).3 He justified the prayer service for the besieged Lutherans on the basis of the spiritual union between the Genevan church and the German Lutherans. He invoked Ephesians 4:1-6, reminding the assembled "there is only one God, one Redeemer, only one true doctrine, one faith, one baptism." He invoked 1 Corinthians 12:26, "If one member suffers, we must all have compassion." For Calvin there was

"no question" of a single member. For Calvin, an attack on the Lutherans in Hesse and Saxony was an attack on the Reformed in Geneva. They were, after all, members of the same church, though scattered and separated from each other by distance and language. They owed it to their brothers to intercede with God on their behalf.

This relatively obscure episode four years into Calvin's second tenure in Geneva illustrates his fraternal feelings toward the Lutherans generally and his filial attitude toward Luther in particular. Calvin's strong affirmation of Genevan unity with the Lutherans of Hesse and Saxony might surprise both confessional Lutherans and some confessional Reformed Christians today. After all, we live after centuries of what B. A. Gerrish calls "confessional mistrust."[4] Adherents of both traditions also suffer from considerable ignorance of each other, for which both sides share responsibility.

Nevertheless, the relationship between Calvin and Luther remains significant for understanding the Reformation and our relations to one another in its wake.[5] It was a disproportionate relationship because Luther's influence on Calvin was considerable but Luther and Calvin never met, they never corresponded, and it is likely that Luther had only a passing acquaintance with Calvin's person and work. Luther mentioned Calvin and extended greetings to him in an October 14, 1539 letter to Martin Bucer (1491–1551),[6] in which he mentioned that he had read Calvin's reply to Sadoleto written from Basle, in March (and published in September), on behalf of the Genevan church, in defense of the Reformation.[7]

In the Lutheran reception of Calvin he is connected to Zwingli. For example, in his introduction to volume 38 of *Luther's Works,* Helmut Lehman wrote, "Calvin some years later modified Zwingli's eucharistic doctrine, teaching that by the action of the Holy Spirit the soul of the believer is lifted into heaven in the Holy Communion and is thus spiritually nourished by Christ's body and blood there."[8] Lehman's summary of Calvin's eucharistic theology is fair enough but his assumption that Calvin's view was a modification of Zwingli's assumes a genealogy that never, in Calvin's mind or experience, existed. Those accounts of Calvin emerging from confessional Lutheran quarters face a significant challenge posed by their confessional standards. In the *Epitome* of the *Formula of Concord* (1577) they confess that Calvin is a "subtle sacramentarian" or a "cunning sacramentarian" as distinct from the Zürichers, who are "crass" or "crude" sacramentarians.[9]

This is a hole from which Calvin will not likely be able to extricate himself whatever the evidence may say.[10] One exception to this approach is Paul Althaus' note, "[u]nder no circumstances therefore may one interpret the position of the Decalog in Luther's catechism as meaning that it has a place only before 'justification.' And it is equally incorrect to assert that the position of the Decalog in the *Heidelberg Catechism*—after 'Redemption' and under 'Gratitude'—is specifically Reformed rather than Lutheran. It is well known that the order of the chief parts of the *Heidelberg Catechism* occurs in a Lutheran catechism as early as 1547."[11]

Among the Reformed, it has been common since the 18th century to attribute to Zwingli the beginnings of the Reformed Church. The Göttingen historian Johann Lorenz von Mosheim (1694–1755) declared in his *Institutiones historiae ecclesiasticae* (1726), "the founder of the Reformed Church was Ulric Zwingli."[12] As late as 2008, J. Wayne Baker called Zwingli, "the founder of Reformed Protestantism."[13]

The earlier accounts, however, were more nuanced. For example, Francis Turretin (1623–87) asked, "Where was our Church before Luther and Zwingli and by what means is it preserved?"[14] In his answer to the question he identified both Zwingli *and* Luther as sources of the Reformed church. In the 1840s, however, Alexander Schweizer (1808–88), argued that there was in Lutheranism and in Reformed theology shared "central dogmas," (*Central dogmen*) but in particular the Lutheran central dogma was justification and the Reformed was said to be predestination.[15]

Not everyone in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, was buying this narrative. B. B. Warfield rejected it forcefully.[16]

> But it is misleading to find the formative principle of either type of Protestantism in its difference from the other; they have infinitely more in common than in distinction. And certainly nothing could be more misleading than to represent them (as is often done) as owing their differences to their more pure embodiment respectively of the principle of predestination and that of justification by faith. The doctrine of predestination is not the formative principle of Calvinism, the root from which it springs.

Despite the criticisms leveled against the Central Dogma methodology by Warfield and later by Richard Muller it has continued to find adherents who,

despite formally disavowing it, nevertheless seek to retain a version of it. In 1987 Charles Partee suggested that "union with Christ" is the organizing principle of Calvin's theology.[17] Indeed, the turn to union with Christ as an organizing principle in Calvin's theology has become so pervasive that Thomas L. Wenger has described it as "The New Perspective on Calvin."[18] In 2012, Richard Muller and J. V. Fesko offered a helpful way forward in the discussion (*pace* Charles Partee *et al.*) by reading Calvin in the context of the broader Reformed tradition.[19]

The old juxtaposition of Luther and Calvin still appears among some writers. In 1984, Edward A. Dowey juxtaposed Luther's view of the law with Calvin's appreciation of the third use of the law.[20] In 2001, Peter Lillback spoke of an "inescapable tension" in Luther's distinction between law and gospel, which Calvin's covenant theology was supposed to resolve.[21]

There remains strong support for Warfield's basic thesis, however. Alexander Ganoczy has argued at length that Luther was major influence on Calvin's theology and showed several examples where Calvin followed Luther quite closely.[22] David Steinmetz wrote, "[a]mong the non-Lutheran theologians of the sixteenth century, none was more reluctant to disagree with Martin Luther or more eager to find common ground with than John Calvin."[23] Marcus Johnson argues that Calvin learned his doctrine of union with Christ from Luther.[24] Machiel A. van den Berg has noted Luther's influence on Nicholas Cop's rectoral address on All Saints Day, 1533 and Calvin's likely contribution to that address.[25] Like Gerrish's 1982 essay on Luther and Calvin on the theology of the cross, Herman Selderhuis looks at Calvin's debt to Luther's *theologia crucis* in Calvin's theology of the Psalms.[26] R. Ward Holder notes Calvin's high estimation of Luther.[27] The present author has argued for an intentional and substantial agreement by Calvin with Luther on the distinction between law and gospel, noting that despite some terminological differences, Calvin was deeply indebted to Luther on this point.[28] Finally and most recently, Robert Kolb (Lutheran) and Carl Trueman (Reformed) thoughtfully survey the similarities and differences between the traditions.[29]

This essay will argue that, in his own mind, Calvin identified strongly with Luther, was profoundly influenced by him, and dissented from him only reluctantly and then primarily in correspondence. Failure to account properly for Luther's influence upon Calvin has led some contemporary scholars to misunderstand and mischaracterize Calvin's theology, piety, and practice.

Luther As Calvin's Spiritual Father

There are good reasons to doubt the narrative proposed by Mosheim and continued by so many other modern authors. It is most likely that Zwingli was himself led to his Reformation breakthrough by reading Luther but whatever the facts in that case, we may be certain that Calvin was much more deeply influenced by Luther than by Zwingli, whom he held in suspicion for a number of years. In a letter from May 19, 1539 to André Zébédée, Pastor of Orbais,[30] Calvin described Zwingli's view of the Supper as "false and pernicious" (*falsa et perniciosa*). He did said even though others were applauding Zwingli, he "did not hesitate to oppose him" (*impugnare non dubitavi*) and criticized Johannes Oecolampadius (1482–1531) for attempting to soften it so as to make it more palatable.[31] He was confident that had Luther understood that the Reformed were teaching that in the supper, believers receive "a participation in the body and blood of the Lord" he would be moved to consent or the Reformed must leave him behind.[32] Indeed, the only explicit references to Zwingli in the Battles edition of the *Institutes* are in the footnotes supplied by the editor.[33] Calvin spoke of Zwingli infrequently and continued to criticize his view of the Supper late into his ministry.[34] In short, the origins of the Reformed wing of the Reformation may hardly be laid cleanly at Zwingli's feet.

However wrongheaded the Central Dogma method was (and remains), there is a sense in which Schweizer was correct. Calvin (and his Reformed successors) accepted Luther's Reformation breakthroughs achieved between 1513–21 (and beyond).[35] He heartily adopted Luther's recovery of the Augustinian view of sin and sovereign grace (*sola gratia*), the doctrine of imputation, *sola fide*, the distinction between law and gospel, and Luther's recovery of Scripture as the sole magisterial authority in the Christian faith and life (*sola Scriptura*). As both Gerrish and Selderhuis have noted, Calvin received Luther's distinction, announced in the 1518 Heidelberg Disputation, between the *theologia gloriae* and the *theologia crucis*.[36] Further, as Steinmetz and others have observed, the same Calvin who criticized others freely, was loathe to criticize Luther's theology publicly even when they obviously disagreed strongly. When he did criticize his spiritual father, it was most often in private and in reference to what he regarded as Luther's intemperate rhetoric against the "sacramentarians" (the Reformed in and

associated with Zürich). Calvin was so devoted to Luther he described him as "a distinguished apostle of Christ" and himself as a "Lutheran."[37] In 1538 He wrote to Bucer "nothing is more to be wished than that Luther should embrace us with our confession."[38]

Above we considered Luther's brief remarks about Calvin. The latter's response to that letter tells us perhaps more about his attitude toward Luther than Luther's letter does about his attitude toward Calvin.[39] Writing to Farel on November 20, 1539 he positively rejoiced in Luther's assessment of him. "Consider the ingenuity of Luther!"[40] He boasted that Philip had written that Calvin had gained "great favor with Luther and Pomeranus."[41] He lamented those who so "easily" (*facile*) sought reasons "pertinaciously" to create division between the two over the eucharist (*de eucharistia*).[42] Some had sought to "exasperate" Luther over criticisms that Calvin had made of Luther but Luther was reportedly having none of it.[43] Calvin told Bucer that Luther had reportedly said, "I hope that in future [Calvin] will think better of us but it is right to bring [a report] of our good disposition toward him."[44] Calvin confessed that he was "touched" (*fractus*) by Luther's moderation.[45] His identification with Luther and the Lutherans was such that, despite whatever misgivings he might have had, he signed 1540 (revised) Augsburg Confession.[46]

In his 1543 *Supplex exhortatio* Calvin responded to Bucer's request to defend the Reformation to Charles V. There he identified the two principal causes of the Reformation: "that God should be worshiped properly" (*rite*) and "that men should know whence salvation is to be sought."[47] Just above this summary of the Reformation, however, Calvin had already declared to Charles, "God raised up Luther and others in the beginning [of the Reformation]."[48] It was Luther *et al*. "who carried the torch for us toward re-discovering the way of salvation, who founded our ministry, who instituted our churches."[49] When Calvin wrote "founded our ministry" and "instituted our churches" he was in the the second year of his second period of ministry in Geneva. He could hardly have identified the Genevan congregations and the Reformed church more closely with Luther than he did.

Nowhere was Calvin's identification with Luther clearer than in his Latin letter of January 21, 1545 to Luther in which he expressed great admiration for Luther as not only the "most excellent pastor of the Christian church" but also "my father" (*patri mihi*) "much to be respected" (*plurimum observando*).[50] He

closed the brief letter with identical expressions, "my ever respected father" (*pater mihi semper observande*). In the body of the letter, he begged Luther for help with the Nicodemites, those who Frenchmen who had been brought from the "darkness of the papacy to the healing of faith" (*tenebris papatus ad fidei sanitatem*) but who nevertheless had changed nothing in their external profession of faith (*nihil tamen de confessione mutare*) and who continue to "pollute" (*polluere*) themselves by attending the "papist sacrileges" (*sacrilegiis papistarum* i.e., the Roman mass). Like Nicodemus, they come to Jesus late at night so as not to risk being found out. They were, Calvin wrote, "to a degree hanging in suspense (*suspensi quodammodo haesitant*) and desiring Luther's judgment (*iudicium*), which they rightly revere (*merito reverentur*). Thus, Calvin asked Luther to read and to endorse a couple of his smaller treatises in hopes that his authority might persuade some of the Nicodemites to leave Rome altogether and unite themselves to the evangelical churches.[51]

When Calvin wrote this letter he was just thirty-four. Luther, however, was sixty-two, in ill health, and had just over a year to live. Further, he was in the midst of yet another fight with Swiss Reformed, whom he had come to hate. It was an inopportune time to receive this overture from Calvin, who had sent the letter by courier to Philip Melanchthon (1497–1560),[52] Luther's cagey and pragmatic advisor. Melanchthon pocketed it and Luther never saw it.[53]

A *Protege*: Calvin's Fundamental Debt To Luther

Long ago Gerrish noted the absence of quotations from Luther in Calvin's *Institutes*.[54] Those who have focused on them to the exclusion of his other treatises, commentaries, and sermons and who are not well-read in Luther tend to mistake the absence of references to Luther for a lack of dependence or influence. In fact Calvin did not make explicit reference to other sixteenth-century theologians, e.g., Zwingi, Bucer, Melanchthon, Oecolampadius, Bullinger, Viret, Farel, or Beza. Yet we know that he was influenced by some of these writers and close friends with others. There simply is no relationship between Calvin's silence about Luther in the *Institutes* and his theological debt to him. So, we must look beneath the surface, to the substance and structure of Calvin's theology. Traditionally the formal cause of the Reformation has been said to have been the doctrine of *sola scriptura*, i.e.,

that Scripture is *the* sole, magisterial authority for the Christian faith and the Christian life. This was the essence of Luther's stand at the Diet of Worms in April, 1521. Luther's conscience had become captive to the Word of God. We may be certain that this was what he intended since about a month before he appeared before the Emperor at Worms he wrote,

> This is my answer to those also who accuse me of rejecting all the holy teachers of the church. I do not reject them. But everyone, indeed, knows that at times they have erred, as men will; therefore, I am ready to trust them only when they give me evidence for their opinions from Scripture, which has never erred. This St. Paul bids me to do in I Thess. 5:21, where he says, "Test everything; hold fast what is good." St. Augustine writes to St. Jerome to the same effect, "I have learned to do only those books that are called the holy Scriptures the honor of believing firmly that none of their writers has ever erred. All others I so read as not to hold what they say to be the truth unless they prove it to me by holy Scripture or clear reason."[55]

Luther did not reject the tradition of the church but he did, as Heiko Oberman argued, reverse the Roman order of authority.[56] The authority of church and tradition is subordinate to the Scriptures.

> Holy Scripture must necessarily be clearer, simpler, and more reliable than any other writings. Especially since all teachers verify their own statements through the Scriptures as clearer and more reliable writings, and desire their own writings to be confirmed and explained by them. But nobody can ever substantiate an obscure saying by one that is more obscure; therefore, necessity forces us to run to the Bible with the writings of all teachers, and to obtain there a verdict and judgment upon them. Scripture alone is the true lord and master of all writings and doctrine on earth. If that is not granted, what is Scripture good for? The more we reject it, the more we become satisfied with men's books and human teachers.[57]

In light of this and many other places in Luther we may question Oberman's judgment that Calvin and Luther had different relations to the principle of *sola scriptura*, that Calvin's (and von Bodenstein's) legal training caused them to test church teaching by "Scripture and Scripture alone." Further, he argued, "[t]his does not, however, apply to Martin Luther, at least not in

this form. The exclusive authority the Holy Scriptures was not a part of his Reformation discovery—a fact that gave rise to tensions in the sixteenth century and has caused misunderstanding to this present day."[58]

Calvin certainly thought he was following Luther on *sola scriptura*. To be sure, neither Luther nor Calvin were biblicists. They did not imagine that they were the first to read Scripture nor did either think it proper to attempt to read Scripture in insolation from the church. Both were creedal and churchly theologians. Luther wrote creedal documents, e.g., the Large and Small catechisms (1529).[59] He heartily endorsed Melanchthon's work in the *Augsburg Confession* (1530).[60] Both confessed the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. Calvin wrote two catechisms for use in Geneva and participated in the drafting of the French Confession of 1559.[61] Both devoutly sought to be biblical in their theology, piety, and practice but neither was a biblicist.[62] They were confessional pastors and theologians.

Behind their shared doctrine of *sola scriptura* was a shared distinction between *theologia crucis et gloriae*, which Luther announced in his 1518 Heidelberg Disputation. In thesis 19 he declared, "He is not worthy to be called a theologian who looks upon the 'invisible things of God' (Rom 1:20) as though they were clearly 'perceptible in those things which have actually happened' (1 Cor 1:21-25)."[63] The first question for Luther was who is to be considered a theologian of the cross. The second question was whether the Christian looks to grace (Christ) or to nature (law) for salvation. Luther, as Calvin, believed in natural revelation and natural law. Indeed, he identified the substance of the natural law with the Decalogue.[64] Saving knowledge, however, is found in Christ alone, in Scripture alone. This is the import of thesis 20: "But he is worthy of being called a theologian who looks upon the visible things or backside of God seen through the passions and the cross."[65] He was, of course, alluding to Exodus 33:23 in the Vulgate, "Then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen."[66] For Luther, the it is the theologian of the cross (and not the medieval realists) who know what a thing really is.[67]

Calvin's frequently appealed to Luther's doctrine of the hiddenness of God to those who are wise by nature and his surprising self-revelation in Christ, on the cross. In (1559) *Institutes* 1.5.8 he wrote about God's hiddenness in darkness to the foolishness and made the same use of 1 Corinthians as Luther had done in 1518.[68] His account of the hiddenness of God's providence echoes Luther's language in *De servo arbitrio* (1525).

> For since Moses proclaims that the will of God is to be sought not far off in the clouds or in abysses, because it has been set forth familiarly in the law..., it follows that he has another hidden will which may be compared to a deep abyss; concerning which Paul also says: "O depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and how inscrutable his ways! 'For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?'" And it is, indeed, true that in the law and the gospel are comprehended mysteries which tower far above the reach of our senses.[69]

The tension that he established in book 1, he resolved in book 2, in Christ, whom he called the "mirror" of our election. "But if we are elect in Christ, we will not discover the certainty of our election in ourselves nor even in God the Father if we imagine him stripped (*nudum*), without the Son. For Christ is the mirror in which we may, without fraud, contemplate our election."[70] These passages and many others like it might just as well have been written by Luther.

Luther's profound influence on Calvin expressed itself in the way that Calvin structured his theology. For example, the first edition of his *Institutes* (1536) had what we might call a Lutheran structure.[71] It has essentially two parts: law and gospel. As Ganoczy observed, "[ev]ven the outline of the *Institutes* reveals Luther's influence. Just as Luther's *Small Catechism* treats Christian doctrine in the order of law, faith, prayer, and sacraments, the first four chapters of Calvin's compendium are entitled "Law," Faith," "Prayer," and "The Sacraments."[72] Ganoczy notes the verbal parallels between Luther and Calvin in their expositions of what Calvin numbered the nine commandments. It seems almost certain that either he Luther's Small Catechism before him or else he had committed it to memory. Either way, the Luther's influence is palpable across wide swaths of Calvin's theology.[73] Further, it is not as if Luther (and Lutheran) influence dissipated in the following years. Richard Muller argues that the 1539 *Institutes* marked the turning point in their development. It was Melanchthon's commentary on Romans (and perhaps Calvin's own sermons on Romans) that caused him to re-structure the *Institutes*.[74] Nevertheless, the law/gospel structure of 1536 is still present in the editions from 1539–54.[75] One finds an expanded prolegomena in chapters 1–2. Chapter 3 begins essentially the same discussion of law as found in the 1536 edition. The discussion of vows in chapter 4 functions

as something of an appendix to chapter 3. Chapter 5 begins his discussion of faith, i.e., free salvation by *sola gratia*, *sola fide* and that is followed (in chapter 6) by his exposition of the Apostles' Creed, which is gospel, not law. In short, the development of the Institutes from 1539 through 1554 did not alter or overturn this fundamental Lutheran structural commitment to distinguishing law and gospel.

The structural revisions in the final Latin edition (1559) may be analyzed in a variety of ways. *Prima facie*, the 1559 *Institutes* have a creedal structure: God the Father (book 1), God the Son (book 2), and God the Holy Spirit (books 3–4).[76] Still, the older Lutheran substructure is discernible. Book 1, "On the Knowledge of God the Creator,"[77] expanded the earlier arguments but remained essentially law. In book 2, "On the Knowledge of God the Redeemer, In Christ, Who Is First Revealed to Us Under the Law and Then Under the Gospel,"[78] the discussion had become more redemptive-historical and arguably more covenantal in character but the fundamental distinction is still present. Christ is the Savior for sinners. Book 3, "On the Means of Perceiving the Grace of Christ: The Fruit Which Comes For from It Unto Us and Who and the Effects Which Follow It,"[79] was an explanation of the application of the gospel by the Holy Spirit and of the Christian life lived in union with Christ, in light of the gospel. Book 4, "On the External Means or Aids by which God Invites Us Into the Society of Christians in which He Retains Us,"[80] located the mysterious work of the Spirit in the visible church and identified it chiefly with the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments.

For Luther, the distinction between law and gospel was one of the hallmarks of the Reformation. Making this "certain distinction between the law and the gospel, between commands and promises, is the highest art in Christendom."[81] For Luther, whoever fails at this is pagan or a Jew but not a Christian. Though one might not know it from some Calvin scholarship, Calvin agreed heartily with Luther on this point. We might fill the entire essay with quotations from Calvin, who sometimes spoke in terms of law and gospel and sometimes in terms of grace and works, nevertheless making substantially the same point as Luther. He was so insistent upon this distinction for the same reasons the Reformed theologian J. H. Alsted (1588–1638) would later follow Luther by saying, "the article of justification is the article of the standing of the church.[82] For Calvin there is a "principal axis" (*praecipuum*

cardinem) of the Christian religion: the doctrine of justification.[83] The editor of the *Opera selecta* notes that this language is drawn from the *Apology for the Augsburg Confession* and Melanchthon's 1535 *Loci communes*.[84]

So, like Luther, in *Institutes* 3.11.17 Calvin explained the importance of making the distinction between law and gospel:

> Do you see how he makes this the distinction (discrimen) between law and gospel: that the former attributes righteousness to works, the latter bestows free righteousness apart from the help of works? [Romans 10:9] is an important passage, and one that can extricate us from many difficulties if we understand that that righteousness which is given us through the gospel has been freed of all conditions of the law.[85]

This was Calvin's approach throughout his Protestant ministry from the early 1530s until his death in 1564. For example, the language he used in against Rome in his *Acts of the Council of Trent with the Antidote* (1547).

> For the words of Paul always hold true, that the difference between the law and the gospel lies in this, that the latter does not like the former promise life under the condition of works, but by faith. What can be clearer than the antithesis — "The righteousness of the law is like this: The man who does these things shall live by them." But the righteousness which is of faith speaks thus: "Whoever believes," etc. (Romans 10:5). To the same effect is this other passage, "If the inheritance were of the law, faith would be made void and the promise abolished. Therefore it is of faith that in respect of grace the promise might be sure to every one who believes" (Romans 4:14).[86]

In his 1546 commentary on 2 Corinthians 3:6–7 Calvin made this same distinction pointedly.[87] Here we must disagree with Lillback who contrasts Luther's law-gospel hermeneutic" with Calvin's alleged "Letter-Spirit distinction."[88] He writes of a "hermeneutical divide" on this issue between Luther and Calvin.[89] Did Calvin propose a "Letter-Spirit" distinction in his 1546 commentary on 2 Corinthians?

Addressing the clause, "*Non litterae, sed Spiritus*" Calvin wrote, "He now pursues a comparison between Law and Gospel."[90] We should not overlook the obvious. To begin explain what Paul means by "Letter" and "Spirit" the

first category Calvin invoked was "Law and Gospel." Is it plausible to think that Calvin, who had structured his *Institutio* along the lines established by Luther's distinction and Melanchthon's 1521 *Loci Communes*, who would articulate the distinction in 1547 against Trent, who would express and appeal to the distinction repeatedly in his *Institutio*, was here articulating a principle *in opposition* to Luther's? If so, he was uncharacteristically unclear since no reader in the second half of the 1540s would expect Calvin to use Luther's language to articulate a radically different approach.

It is true sometimes when Calvin wrote "law and gospel," he was writing about the history of redemption and sometimes about law and gospel as distinct principles. Here, however, he used the expression in both senses, "At any rate, there is now doubt that by 'letter' he understands the Old Testament and by 'Spirit' nominally the gospel."[91] He criticized Origen's understanding of letter as the superficial sense of the text and spirit as the figurative sense of the text. He explained that the embedded in the contrast between letter and Spirit is a contrast between Moses and Christ as in John 1:17. The question was not whether grace was active under Moses but rather that of office. For Calvin, the same saving grace operating under the New Covenant was active under Moses but Jeremiah's (Jer 31:31–34) and Paul's contrast between Moses and Christ "suffices" (*sufficit*) to show that grace "was not a proper benefit of the Law."[92] Moses' peculiar office was to have "handed over a doctrine of life" with added "warnings and promises."[93] Its ministry is death-dealing.[94] By contrast, "the preaching of the Gospel, because it is living, therefore its ministry is life-giving."[95] Calvin was arguing that Paul's *historical* contrast between Moses and the New Covenant contained within it a *theological* contrast between two distinct principles: that of salvation on the basis of personal obedience to the law and that of salvation *sola gratia*, *sola fide*.

He recognized that there are layers of nuance to be added to his explanation, e.g., the distinction is not made "*simpliciter*,"[96] because the external preaching of the gospel is not always "Spirit," i.e., not good news to all. Not all who hear the good news are elect. Not all who hear are regenerated by the Spirit.[97] When, however, law and gospel are compared "the nature of the law is literally said to be to teach men such that it reaches no farther than the ear. The nature of the gospel, however, is to teach spiritually because it is the instrument of the grace of Christ."[98] Again, Calvin here distinguished *theologically* between law

and gospel as two distinct principles, with two distinct offices.

We may be confident this is what Calvin was arguing because he said so under his explanation of vs.7: "The Gospel therefore is a holy and inviolable covenant, because it was struck by the Spirit of God as the surety. Hence it follows that the Law was a ministry of condemnation and death."[99] Like his successors who followed him, Calvin was beginning to cast redemptive history in covenantal terms, not so as to overturn Luther, but to elaborate on his basic insight and to establish it. This is the very same doctrine that Zacharias Ursinus (1534–83) articulated in his *Summa theologiae* Q. 36, where he correlated the law to the prelapsarian covenant of works and the gospel to the postlapsarian covenant of grace.[100]

Calvin's approach to the doctrine of justification was indistinguishable from Luther's and intentionally so. Luther's 1545 recollection, in the preface to his Latin works, is perhaps the most famous account of his breakthrough on justification, when he realized that it was not "active justice," i.e., by grace and cooperation with grace or by progressive sanctification that we stand before God but on the basis "passive justification," i.e., the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us received through apprehending faith.

> There I began to understand that the righteousness of God is that by which the righteous lives by a gift of God, namely by faith. And this is the meaning: the righteousness of God is revealed by the gospel, namely, the passive righteousness with which merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written, "He who through faith is righteous shall live." Here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself through open gates. There a totally other face of the entire Scripture showed itself to me. Thereupon I ran through the Scriptures from memory. I also found in other terms an analogy, as, the work of God, that is, what God does in us, the power of God, with which he makes us strong, the wisdom of God, with which he makes us wise, the strength of God, the salvation of God, the glory of God.[101]

Calvin followed Luther step for step on justification so that in his 1548 commentary on Galatians 5:6, he wrote, "Therefore when you turn to the case of justification, beware lest you admit any mention of love or of works, but hold fast tenaciously to the exclusive particle."[102] That exclusive particle, of course, was *sola*. The contrast he was making was with the Roman doctrine

of *fides formata caritate*.[103] For Calvin, as for Luther, faith justifies the sinner not because it sanctifies but because it apprehends Christ's righteousness.

His account of justification in his 1540 commentary on Romans chapter 4 confirms his debt to Luther. The exposition of the chapter returned repeatedly to the agreed Protestant understanding of justification and salvation by grace alone, through faith alone.[104] In the 1559 *Institutio*, his account of justification was substantially Luther's. He began 3.11.1 by again distinguishing between the sinner's state of condemnation under the curse of the law (*Lege maledictis*) and "one sole help of recovering salvation, by faith."[105] Salvation entails a *duplex gratia*: justification *sola gratia*, *sola fide* and renovation in the image of God (sanctification) as a fruit (*fructus*).[106] His definition of justification was Luther's: "One is said to be justified with God who is reckoned just in the judgment of God, who is accepted on account of [Christ's] righteousness."[107]

Luther's account of election and reprobation was deeply influential among the Reformed, Calvin included.[108] At the Colloquy of Montbéliard (1580), between the Lutheran and Reformed, when the topic turned to predestination (election and reprobation), Theodore Beza (1519–1605) argued at length from Luther's *De servo* (1525) that the Reformed held Luther's view in contradistinction to Jakob Andrae *et al*.[109] Beza's view in 1580 was no different from the view he had articulated in the 1550s when he defended Calvin against his critics, e.g., Jerome Bolsec.[110] Calvin's treatment both in his *Institutio* and in his earlier *Defensio...doctrinae de servitute...humani aribitrii* (1543) echoed Luther.[111] Indeed, the title of the latter work not only echoed Luther's *De servo* but Calvin wrote it to defend Luther's doctrine of predestination, which Albert Pigghe (c. 1490–1542), a Roman theologian had criticized the year previous.[112] The nature and structure of the *Institutes* differs from Luther's point-by-point refutation of Erasmus but the substantial similarity between Calvin and Luther on the hiddenness of God's decree, on its revelation in Christ, and on the comfort that unconditional election gives to the believer should not be missed.[113]

Even when Calvin disagreed with Luther substantively, as he arguably did on baptism and the Lord's Supper, he rarely mentioned it. It is difficult to find Calvin criticizing Luther's doctrine of baptism. To be sure, there are ambiguities in Luther's doctrine of baptism that were flattened in Lutheran orthodoxy.[114] It is unclear to me whether, in his *Small Catechism* (1529) Luther taught baptismal regeneration. Calvin was clear, however, in his

rejection of baptismal regeneration in the second (1545) *Genevan Catechism*.[115] If one compares Luther's *Small Catechism* (taken on its own terms and not as interpreted in the much later *Book of Concord*) with the *Genevan Catechism*, there are differences but they are not vast. Lutheran orthodoxy may be correct that, for Luther, the Gospel is so identified with the sacrament that it necessarily gives what it signifies, i.e., new life but just where Luther might have made that teaching explicit he seemed to draw back. Yet Calvin was comfortable saying that in baptism "we are clothed with Jesus Christ and receive his Spirit, provided that we do not make ourselves unworthy of the promises given to us in it."[116] This is just as strong as anything Luther taught in his *Small Catechism*. Yet, Calvin was perhaps more explicit about the role of faith in apprehending Christ and his benefits, that upon regeneration and faith, baptism seals what faith has received.[117] Even where Calvin did disagree with Luther, e.g., on the Supper (more on this below) he was at pains to say that he wanted what Luther wanted, namely to say that, in the Supper, believers are fed with the body and blood of Christ. Obviously, he disagreed with Luther regarding *how* that happens and why but he was with him on the *what*.[118]

A Protestant: Calvin's Dissent From Luther

In his January 12, 1538 letter to Bucer, almost as soon as Calvin expressed his heartfelt desire that Luther should accept the Reformed and their confession (see above) as fundamentally with Luther, he expressed perplexity about Luther. "What I should think about Luther I do not know. I am quite persuaded of his piety."[119] His explained to Bucer that he believed what he was reading and hearing from mutual friends, that Luther's "constancy is mixed with stubbornness."[120] He excoriated his spiritual father's partisan "appetite for victory" over the Swiss Reformed as distinct from "coalescing sincerely in agreement around the pure truth of God."[121]

In his letter to Farel on October 10, 1544 it takes little sensitivity to perceive the degree to which Calvin was frustrated with what he perceived to be Luther's overheated rhetoric toward and impatience with the Zürichers. He could not see what the Swiss had said that had so "inflamed" (*inflammatus*) Luther.[122] Considering the fruitfulness of a potential trip to Zürich, which Farel was urging upon him in order to try to pacify the two sides, Calvin had

concluded that the trip would produce little since the problem lay not with Zürich but with Luther.[123] He wondered to Farel what concessions would have to be extorted (*extorquebitur*) from the Swiss to pacify Luther.[124]

In a letter in November 1544, Calvin expressed to Heinrich Bullinger (1504–75) his sympathy at the "atrocious invective" (*atroci invectiva*) with which Luther had "broken out" (*prorupisse*) against "us all" (*in nos omnes*).[125] Despite the injustice of the things that were being said against Bullinger, Calvin begged him to remain silent against Luther because of "how great a man Luther is and how excellent his talents, his fortitude and constancy of intellect (*animi*), his readiness, the extent of the efficacy of his teaching toward overthrowing the reign of the Antichrist [i.e., the Papacy] while simultaneously zealously spreading the doctrine of salvation."[126] Remember, Calvin wrote this letter (and others like it) *before* writing his January 1545 letter to Luther. Apparently Calvin was much concerned Luther's about wrath. In the same month, he mentioned it again, perhaps after Melanchthon pocketed his letter to Luther, writing that it was not a good time "for consulting Luther because his spirit had barely settled from the fervor of contention."[127] In June he wrote to Melanchthon to complain at some length about Luther's intemperance and even of Luther's tyranny and pleading with Philipp to speak to Luther about it for the sake of the Reformation. Referring to Luther as "your Pericles" (a reference to Luther's "unchallenged ascendency"—to use Margaret Howatson's description of Pericles' power and influence.[128] "How intemperately is your Pericles carried away in his fulminating, especially when his case is no better [than that of the Zürichers]. And what is accomplished by means of such commotion, lest the whole world judge him to be mad? Certainly I venerate him from the heart (*ex animo*), but by this he is greatly shamed."[129]

Sometimes the issue for Calvin was not Luther as much as the way Luther was regarded by some of his followers.[130] Indeed, writing to Bullinger in January 1549, presumably in connection to the drafting of the *Consensus Tigurinus* (The Zürich Agreement), which was published in May 1549 he declared, "If you love a free profession of the truth, there never was in my spirit a desire to change what I wrote. If there are others who flatter Luther, I am not among their number."[131] It is true that Calvin had been criticizing Luther's vehemence against the Zürichers but the tone of his 1545 letter to Luther might be fairly characterized as fawning. The tenor of his criticism of

Luther's tone was one but that of his public interaction with Luther another. To Martin Sidemann, in March 1555, he expressed frustration and compared the vehemence of Luther's followers (e.g., Joachom Westphal) unfavorably with Luther's own heated rhetoric. "Would that Luther were still living. For however much always his vehemence was excessive in the case of the Sacramentarian incident (*actio*), it is nothing compared to their intemperance or madness." [132] "If they persist," he wrote, as "implacable" (*implacibiles*) they will drive all the those with restraint (*modestos*) to side with Calvin and company.[133] The reality was, as he saw it, that the Lutheran *epigoni* "offer themselves with clamoring as Luther's genuine disciples but they have none of his virtues."[134]

He also dissented from Luther's method of biblical exposition. Specifically, he criticized him for not paying sufficient attention to the grammar and to the redemptive-historical context of the text at hand, for rushing too quickly to the theology of the text.[135] This criticism reveals perhaps a sub-structural difference between Luther and Calvin. Both were pre-modern, i.e., that made pre-modern assumptions about the nature of things (given) and about the source of authority (extrinsic) but Luther was a trained medieval theologian.[136] Calvin was a trained humanist.[137] As such he was *relatively* more interested in the original context of a passage, its place in redemptive history, and in the intent of the human author its original intent and Luther was *relatively* more interested in what the medievals would have called the doctrinal sense of the biblical text.

Calvin was also jealous to defend his liberty to dissent from Luther when interpreting Scripture. To Francis Burkhard (February 27, 1555), Secretary to the Elector Saxony,[138] he defended his right as an interpreter to disagree with Luther. "Now another charge against me remains, that I do not everywhere subscribe the interpretations of Luther. If it is no longer permitted for each interpreter to bring forward his view, how far into servitude have we fallen? Wherefore, if it is not permitted to dissent anywhere from the opinion of Luther, you would suppose the office of interpreter to be absurd and ridiculous."[139]

He did genuinely disagree with Luther over the implications of what the Reformed numbered as the second commandment, particularly over what, in his response to Sadoleto, he called, the "rule of worship."[140] He criticized Bucer for defending "Luther's ceremonies."[141] For Calvin, Luther organized worship services on a different (and false) principle, namely

whatever is not forbidden is permitted. For Calvin, the rule is that the church may do in worship only what is commanded. Nevertheless, despite his passionate commitment to pure worship, he was not willing to separate from Luther over it.[142]

The two greatest areas of disagreement were closely related: Christology and the Lord's Supper. In an undated letter to Bucer he complained, as he asked rhetorically, "What is that adorable Sacrament of Luther, unless it is an idol in the temple of God?"[143]The larger context of the letter suggests that the topic under consideration was the nature of the presence of Christ in the Supper and behind that the question of the ubiquity of Christ's humanity. Calvin chastised Bucer for overlooking Brenz' view that at the moment of the incarnation Christ's humanity became ubiquitous.[144] He remonstrated with Bucer for soft-pedaling the Reformed conviction that Christ's true humanity is at the right hand of the Father (and not ubiquitous).

Calvin had already carved out some distance between his view of the Supper (and thus his Christology) and Luther's in his 1541 *Traicté de la Saincte Cene*.[145] There he mentioned the failure of the two sides to reach an understanding but he simultaneously criticized Luther's language about the Supper (namely his complete identification of the bread with the body of Christ) and excused it to some degree.[146]

Thus, in his dispute with Joachim Westphal (1510–74), whom W. Robert Godfrey characterizes as a "hyper-Lutheran,"[147] Calvin had two great tasks: first to justify his claim to being Luther's faithful theological son while dissenting from the developing Lutheran orthodoxy and second to vindicate his doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Calvin's cooperation with Bullinger and Zürich in the 1549 *Consensus Tigurinus* was, to Westphal and Tilemann Hesshusen (1527–88), the unforgivable sin.[148] The *Consensus* doomed Calvin to status of sacramentarian in the eyes of Lutheran orthodoxy. In his *Second Defense* (1556) he wrote:

> For when I began to emerge from the darkness of the papacy, after receiving a slight taste of sound doctrine, I read in Luther that, according to Oecolampadius and Zwingli there remains nothing in the sacraments but beyond bare and empty figures. Thus, I confess, I was so alienated from their books that I long abstained from reading them.[149]

Here we have both a confirmation of Luther's early influence on Calvin and an implicit complaint that Luther had, to some degree, mislead him about two Reformed writers. Against Hesshusen Calvin aligned himself with Melanchthon as a fellow student of Luther in distinction from Hesshusen who merely and stupidly aped Luther.[150]

Conclusion

Calvin wrote response after response to the likes of Westphal *et al*. because he valued genuine ecumenicity and communion and believed sincerely that he was not a pretender, a "subtle sacramentarian" but Luther's loyal, theological son. Luther's influence on Calvin was architectonic. It shaped the questions Calvin asked, the categories he adopted, and the conclusions he reached. It was not necessary for Calvin to quote Luther endlessly because he saw himself preaching the same gospel, doing the same work, to the same ends. In this respect, then the Lutheran orthodox picture of Calvin as Zwinglian is unfounded. Calvin read Zwingli late in life and though, under Bullinger's influence, he may have come to read him more sympathetically than Luther had (who, after all agreed on fourteen of the fifteen points with Zwingli at Marburg), he never identified with Zwingli nor did Zwingli shape his thought. Melanchthon and Bucer may be said to have had a strong influence on Calvin. Indeed Melanchthon's influence on Calvin remains relatively under explored but neither of them had the fundamental influence on him that Luther did. Those interpreters of Calvin, whether from confessional Lutheranism or from confessional Reformed circles, who fail to grasp the breadth and depth of Calvin's debt to Luther will continue to misunderstand his theology, piety, and practice.

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1 The historical account relies on Wulfert De Greef, *The Writings of John Calvin, Expanded Edition. An Introductory Guide* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 93-94 and upon B. A. Gerrish, *The Old Protestantism and the New: Essays on the Reformation Heritage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 29.

2 See *Opera Calvini* (hereafter CO) 32.240–41 in C. G. Bretschneider, ed., *Corpus Reformatorum* (Halle: C. A Schwetschke et Filium, 1834), 60.240–41.

3 So DeGreef, ibid., 93.

4 Gerrish, ibid., 28. For an account of the role that hostility toward Calvin played in the formation of the confessional Lutheran self-identity in the USA see R. Scott Clark, "Calvin: a Negative Boundary Marker in the Self-identity of American Lutherans 1871–1934," In *Sober, Strict, and Scriptural: Collective Memories of*

John Calvin, 1800–2000 (ed. Herman Paul Johan de Niet, and Bart Wallet; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 245–66.

5 Gerrish, ibid., surveys the European and Anglo-American literature to 1982. This essay will address the literature since that time that speaks to the relations between Luther and Calvin.

6 Martin Luther, *Luthers Werke Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimar: H. H. Böhlau, 1883–), Br 8, 569. Hereafter, *WA*; Martin Luther, *Luther's Works* (St Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1958), 50.190. Hereafter, *LW*.

7 *CO* 5.385–416. See also Sadoleto's letter and Calvin's reply in John Calvin, *Tracts Relating to the Reformation*, 3 vols. (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1844), 1.1–69. All the other references to Calvin in the *LW* are supplied by the editors.

LW 38.11.

9 In sixteenth-century rhetoric, a "sacramentarian" was essentially one who held the putative Zwinglian view of the Lord's Supper, that it is merely a memorial of Lord and not actually a Supper wherein one is fed by Christ's body and blood. The Calvinists, however, professed to eat the "true" (Calvin) and "proper and natural" (Belgic Confession art. 35) body and blood of Christ by faith, through the mysterious operation of the Holy Spirit. See Theodore G. Tappert, ed., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Philadelphia: Mühlenberg Press, 1959), 482. In the more recent translation, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy Wengert, *The Book of Concord. The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 504, the Zwinglians are denominated "crude sacramentarians" and the Calvinists as "cunning sacramentarians."

10 See also Clark, "Negative Boundary Marker."

11 Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther* (trans. Robert C. Schultz; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 272–73, n. 125.

12 Johann Lorenz von Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History* (rev. edition, trans. James Murdock; ed. J. S. Reid; London and Belfast: 1848), 659.

13 *New Westminster Dictionary of Church History* (ed. Robert Benedetto and James O. Duke; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), s.v., "Zwingli, Huldrych."

14 "Ubinam Ecclesia nostra fuerit ante Lutheram et Zuingliam, et quibus mediis sit conservata?" Francis Turretin, *Institutio theologiae elencticae…*, 3 vols. (Geneva, 1687–90), 18.10.1

15 See Alexander Schweizer, Die Protestantischen Centraldogmen…., 2 vols. (Zürich: (Orell und Füssli, 1856), 1.5–47, 356–73; idem, Die Glaubenslehre der Evangelisch-Reformirten Kirche…, 2 vols. (Zürich: Orell und Füssli, 1844–47), 1.40–59, 65–79. See Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy*, 2nd ed., 4 vols., (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 1.62, 124–32.

16 B. B. Warfield, *Calvin and Calvinism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1931), 356–58.

17 Charles Partee, "Calvin's Central Dogma Again." *Sixteenth Century Journal* 18 (1987): 191–99.

18 Thomas L. Wenger, "The New Perspective on Calvin: Responding to Recent Calvin Interpretations" *JETS* 50 (2007): 311–28.

19 Richard A. Muller, *Calvin and the Reformed Tradition on the Work of Christ and the Order of Salvation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 202–43; J. V. Fesko, *Beyond Calvin: Union With Christ in Early Modern Reformed Theology (1517–1700)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012).

20 Edward A. Dowey, "Law in Luther and Calvin" *Theology Today* 41 (1984): 146–53.

21 Peter A. Lillback, *The Binding of God: Calvin's Role in the Development of Covenant Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 71.

22 Alexandre Ganoczy, *The Young Calvin* (trans. David Foxgrover and Wade Provo; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1987), 137–45.

23 David C. Steinmetz, Steinmetz, *Calvin in Context* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 172.

24 Marcus Johnson, "Luther and Calvin on Union with Christ," *Fides et Historia* 39 (2007): 59–77.

25 Machiel A. van den Berg, *Friends of Calvin* (trans., Reinder Bruinsma; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 22–24.

26 See B. A. Gerrish, "'To the Unknown,' Luther and Calvin on the Hiddenness of God," in *The Old Protestantism and the New: Essays on the Reformation Heritage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); Herman J. Selderhuis, *Calvin's Theology of the Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 39–42, 52–53, 101.

27 R. Ward Holder, ed. *Calvin and Luther: the Continuing Relationship* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2013), 7.

28 R. Scott Clark, "Law and Gospel in Early Reformed Orthodoxy," In *Church and School in Early Modern Protestantism: Studies in Honor of Richard A. Muller on the Maturation of the Theological Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 307–20. See also the survey of the secondary literature in *ibid*., 309–11.

29 Robert Kolb and Carl R. Trueman, *Between Wittenberg and Geneva: Lutheran and Reformed Theology in Conversation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017).

30 See *CO* 9.52. Zébédée would later become a violent critic of Calvin, siding with Bolsec against Calvin in 1554. See Michael W. Bruening, *Calvinism's First Battleground: Conflict and Reform in the Pays De Vaud, 1528–1559* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2005), 218. Bruce Gordon describes Zébédée as an "ardent Zwinglian." See *Calvin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 170.

31 *CO* 10.346. See also Jules Bonnet ed., *Letters of John Calvin*, trans. D. Constable and M. R. Gilchrist, 4 vols. (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication , 1858), 4.402–04 (hereafter, Calvin, *Letters*).

32 *CO* 10.345. "de corporis et sanguinis Domini participatione, quam fideles in coena recipiunt"

33 This absence, of course, as noted below, is not conclusive but the apparatus in the Battles edition of the *Institutes* may tend to create a false impression of the theological relationship between Zwingli and Calvin.

34 *Institutes* 4.17.5 arguably refers to and rejects Zwingli's view of the Supper. In his 1561 sermons on 1 Samuel he explicitly rejected the idea that the Lord's Supper is a "mere sign." See *Supplementa Calviniana*, 1.137.5-8; Heiko A. Oberman, "The '*Extra*' Dimension in the Theology of Calvin," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 21 (1970): 50.

35 For an account of Luther's theological development see R. Scott Clark, "*Iustitia Imputata*: Alien Or Proper to Luther's Doctrine of Justification?" *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 65 (2007): 269–310.

36 See e.g., *WA* 1.354.

37 *CO* 6.250. John Calvin, *The Bondage and Liberation of the Will. A Defence of the Orthodox Doctrine of Human Choice Against Pighius* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 28.

38 *CO* 10.137. "Si potest Lutherus cum nostra confessione nos amplecti, nihil est quod libentius velim."

39 *CO* 10.429–32.

40 *CO* 10.432. "Cogita Lutheri ingenuitatem."

41 *CO* 10.432. "Philippus autem ita scribebat: Lutherus et Pomerahus Calvinum et Sturmium iusserunt salutari. Calvinus magnam gratiam iniit."

42 Ibid., "Facile erit statuere quid causae habeant qui tam pertinaciter ab eo dissident."

43 *CO* 10.432.

44 *CO* 10.432. "Spero quidem ipsum olim de nobis melius sensurum, sed aequum est a bono ingenio nos aliquid ferre."

45 *CO* 10.432.

46 It has long been an article of faith among confessional Lutherans that Calvin signed the *Augustana Invariata*, i.e., the original text 1530 of the Augsburg. E.g., see Charles Porterfield Krauth, *The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology* (Philadelphia, 1875), 180, 756. The *Invariata* confesses in art. 10 that in the Supper Christ is "truly present" (vere adsint) whereas Melanchthon had revised the article 10 in the *Variata* (1540) to read "truly exhibited" (vere exhibeantur). See Philip Schaff, ed. *The Creeds of Christendom* (3 vols.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983), 3. It is historically unlikely, however, that Calvin would have had access to the *Invariata*. The *Variata* functioned for decades as the *de facto* text of the *Augustana*. The Lutheran conviction that Calvin must have signed the *Invariata*, rather than signaling Calvin's unity with Luther, instead serves only to reinforce their conviction that he is a "subtle sacramentarian," i.e., a Zwinglian who pretends to be closer to Luther than he really is.

47 *CO* 6.459. "ut rite colatur Deus, ut unde salus sibi petenda sit, noverint hominess." For more on the first of these two causes see Clark, "Calvin's Principle of Worship."

48 *CO* 6.459. "...Deus initio Lutherum et alios excitavit…".

49 *CO* 6.459. "qui nobis facem ad reperiendam salutis viam praetulerunt, et quorum ministerio fundatae sunt et institutae nostrae ecclesiae…".

50 *CO* 12.6–8. See also Jules Bonnet ed., *Letters of John Calvin* (trans. D. Constable and M. R. Gilchrist, 4 vols.; Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication , 1858), 1.440–42. *Pace* Holder, Calvin wrote in 1545, not 1542. See Holder, ed., *Calvin and Luther*, 7.

51 E.g., *Petit traicté, monstrant que c'est que doit faire un home fidèle...entre les papistes...Comment...Iésus Christ es la fin de la loy…* translated as *A Short Treatise Setting Forth What the Faithful Man Must Do When He is Among the Papists and Knows the Truth of the Gospel* (1543) in John Calvin, *Come Out From Among Them: Anti-nicodemite Writings of John Calvin* (trans. Seth Skolnitsky; Dallas: Protestant Heritage Press, 2001), 45–95. For background on the Nicodemite crisis see Carlos M. N. Eire, *War Against the Idols: the Reformation of Worship From Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 234–75.

52 Calvin attached a remarkably blunt letter (CO 12.9–12) to Melanchthon—evidently it trusted Melanchthon implicitly not to show the cover letter to Luther—in which he expressed worry about Luther's temper and

commits the disposition of his letter to Luther Melanchthon's care and judgment.

53 Gordon, *Calvin*, 169–70.

54 Gerrish, *The Old Protestantism and The New*, 27.

55 *LW* 32.10.

56 Heiko A. Oberman, *The Dawn of the Reformation: Essays in Late Medieval and Early Reformation Thought* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), 283–85. See also R. Scott Clark, *Recovering the Reformed Tradition: Our Theology, Piety, and Practice* (Philipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2008), 8–17; Michael S. Horton, "Reformed and Always Reforming" in *Always Reformed: Essays in Honor of W. Robert Godfrey* (ed. R. Scott Clark and Joel E. Kim; Escondido: Westminster Seminary California), 116–34.

57 *LW*, 32.11–12.

58 Heiko Oberman, *Luther: Man Between God and the Devil* (trans. Eileen Walliser-Schwarzbart; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 223.

59 See e.g., Schaff, *Creeds*, 3.74-92; Tappert, *Book of Concord*, 358–460.

60 Schaff, *Creeds*, 3.3–73.

61 *Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries in English translation* (ed. James T. Dennison, 4 vol.; Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2008–14), 1.353–392, 1.467–519; Schaff, *Creeds*, 3.356–82.

62 For the sense in which I am using this term see Clark, *Recovering*, 19–25.

63 *WA* 1.354. "19. *Non ille digne Theologus dicitur, qui invisibilia Dei per ea, quea facta sunt, intellecta conspicit.*"

64 See R. Scott Clark, "Calvin and the *Lex Naturalis*," *Stulos Theological Journal* 6 (1998): 10–12.

65 *WA* 1.354. "20. Sed qui visibilia et posteriora Dei per passiones et crucem conspecta intelligit."

66 Robert Webber, ed. *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1969)."*tollamque manum meam et videbis posteriora mea faciem autem meam videre non poteris.*"

67 *WA* 1.354., "21. Theologus gloriae dicit malum bonum et bonum malum, Theologus [22] crucis dicit id quod res est."

68 OS 3.52.323.53.2–5. "Nihilo magis aut potentia, aut sapientia in tenebris latent…. Sapientia vero ipsa manifeste excellit dum optima unamquanque rem opportunitate dispensat: quamlibet mundi perspicaciam confundit, deprehendit astutos in astutia sua: nihil denique non optima ratione attemperat." See also *Institutio* 1.17.1.

69 *Institutes*, 1.17.2.

70 *OS* 4.415.30–416.3. "Quod si in eo sumus electi, non in nobis ipsis reperiemus electionis nostrae certitudinem: ac ne in Deo quidem Patre, si nudum illum absque Filio imaginamur. Christus ergo speculum est in quo electionem nostram contemplari convenit, et sine fraude licet."

71 See Joannis Calvini, *Opera selecta* (ed. P. Barth; Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1926-62), 1.20 (hereafter *OS*); John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (trans. Ford Lewis Battles; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986).

72 Ganoczy, *The Young Calvin*, 137.

73 Ganoczy traces out these connections. See *ibid*., 138–45.

74 Richard A. Muller, *The Unaccomodated Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 125–27.

75 CO 1.279–1152.

76 On this see R. Scott Clark, *Caspar Olevian and the Substance of the Covenant of Grace* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2008), 77–91.

77 *OS* 3. 31; *Institutio* 1.1.1.

78 *OS* 3.228; *Institutio* 2.1.1.

79 *OS* 4.1; *Institutio*, 3.1.1.

80 *OS* 5.1; *Institutio* 4.1.1.

81 WA, 36:9, lines 9, 28–29. See also Martin Luther, "The Distinction Between the Law and the Gospel: A Sermon By Martin Luther January 1, 1532," *Concordia Journal* 18 (1992): 153–63; Clark, "Law and Gospel in Early Reformed Orthodoxy," 307–08.

82 J. H. Alsted, *Theologia scholastica didactica* (Hanover, 1618), 711. "…articulus iustificationis dicitur articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae."

83 *OS* 4.182.15; *Institutio* 3.11.1.

84 Ibid., n. 7.

85 *Institutes* 3.11.17 modified from John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (trans. Ford Lewis Battles; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960). See also *Institutes* 2.5.12; 2.7.3, 7, 14; 2.9.4; 2.11.7, 9; 3.11. 12,13, 14, 17, 18, 19; 3.14.10; 3.15.1; 3.17.1; 3.18.19; 3.19.1, 2, 4; 4.13.6, 13.

[86] Translation revised from John Calvin, *Tracts*, 3.156; *CO* 7.480. "Stat enim semper illud Pauli, in eo differre a lege evangelium, quia non sub conditione operum, sicut illa, sed ex fide vitam promittat. Quid enim illa antithesi clarius: Legis iustitia talis est: qui fecerit haec, vivet in ipsis: at quae ex fide est iustitia, sic habet: qui crediderit, ete. (Rom. 10, 5). Eodem et alter ille locus spectat: Si ex lege esset haereditas, exinanita esset fides, et abolita promissio. Ergo ex fide est, ut secundum gratiam firma sit promissio omni credenti (Rom. 4, 14)."

[87] Jean Calvin, *Jean, Commentarii in Secundam Pauli Epistolam ad Corinthios*, ed. Helmut Feld (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1994), 53.6–58.30.

[88] Lillback, *Binding*, 154. See ibid., 70–80, 153–55, 186–89, 192–93, 207.

[89] Lillback, ibid., 125.

[90] *In secundum ad corinthios*, 53.14.

[91] *Ibid*., 54.7–9. "Caeterum non dubium est, quin per litteram Vetus testamentum intelligat, sicuti Euangelium Spiritus nomine."

[92] *Ibid*., 55.7–8. "...quod non fuerit proprium Legis beneficium."

[93] *Ibid*., 55.9. "quum vitae doctrinam tradidisset, additis minis et promissionibus."

[94] *Ibid*., 55.10. "quia per se mortua sit praedicatio...".

[95] *Ibid*., 55.11–12. "Euangelium ver Spiritum, quia vivax sit, imo vivificum eius ministerium."

[96] *Ibid*., 55.13.

[97] *Ibid*., 55.20–34.

[98] *Ibid*., 55.14–17. "Sed ubi ad collationem utriusque venitur, vere et congruenter dicitur Legis naturam esse literaliter docere homines, ita ut ultra aures non peneret; Euangelii autem nanturam esse spiritualiter docere, quia gratiae Christia sit instrumentum."

[99] *Ibid*., 57.40–42. "Euangelium ergo foedus est sanctum et inviolabile, qui percussum Spiritu Dei sponsore. Hinc quoque sequitur Legem ministerium fuisse damnationis et mortis."

[100] Zacharias Ursinus, *Catechesis, summa theologiae…* in *D. Zachariae ursini...opera theologica*, ed. Q. Reuter, 3 vols. (Heidelberg, 1612), 1.14. See the English translation in Lyle D. Bierma, Charles D. Gunnoe, Karin Y. Maag, and Paul W. Fields eds., *An Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism: Sources, History, and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 168–69.

[101] *LW* 34.337. For more on this see Clark, *Iustitia Imputata*, 291–306.

[102] Jean Calvin, Commentarii in Pauli epistolas ad Galatas, ad Ephesios, ad Philippenses, ad Colossenses, ed. Helmut Feld (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1992), 120.11–13. "Ergo quum versaris in causa iustificationis, cave ullum charitatis vel operum mentionem admittas, sed mordcus retine particulam exclusivam."

[103] See *ibid*., 119.18–121.6.

[104] Ioannis Calvni, *Commentarius in epistolam pauli ad romanos*. Ed. T. H. L. Parker *et al*. *Opera Omnia* Series II, *Opera Exegetica*, vol. XIII (Geneva: Librarie Droz, 1999), 79–100.

[105] *OS* 4.181.35–182.1. *Institutio* 3.11.1.

[106] On this theme in Calvin see Cornelis P. Venema, *Accepted and Renewed in Christ: The "Twofold Grace of God" and the Interpretation of Calvin's Theology* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007). See also Clark, *Caspar Olevian and the Substance of the Covenant*, idem, "The Benefits of Christ: Double Justification in Protestant Theology Before the Westminster Assembly," Anthony T. Selvaggio, ed., *The Faith Once Delivered: Celebrating the Legacy of Reformed Systematic Theology and the Westminster Assembly*. Essays in Honor of Dr. Wayne Spear. (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2007), 107–34.

[107] *OS* 4.182.24–27. "Iustificari coram Deo dicitur, qui iudicio Dei et censetur iustus, et acceptus est ob suam iustitiam."

[108] For Luther's *De servo arbitrio* see *WA* 18.600–787; *LW* 33.

[109] See Jill Raitt, *The Colloquy of Montbéliard: Religion and Politics in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 207–10.

[110] See Richard Muller, "The Use and Abuse of a Document: Beza's *Tabula Praedestinationis*, the Bolsec Controversy, and the Origins of Reformed Orthodoxy" in *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment* (ed. Carl R. Trueman and R. Scott Clark; Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1999), 33–61.

[111] *CO* 6.225–405. *Defensio sanae et orthodoxae doctrinae de servitute et liberatione humani arbitrii adversus calumnias alberti pighii campensis* (Geneva, 1543); John Calvin, *The Bondage and Liberation of the Will* (trans. G. I. Davies; ed. A. N. S. Lane; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996).

[112] Wulfert De Greef, *The Writings of John Calvin, Expanded Edition. An Introductory Guide* (trans. Lyle D. Bierma; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 144–46.

[113] *OS* 4.410–32. *Institutio* 3.24.1–17.

114 Tappert, ed., *The Book of Concord*, 349.

115 *Reformed Confessions*, 1.513. See Questions 327–30. See also his explicit renunciation of it in *Institutio* 4.15.10.

116 Ibid., Q. 331.

117 *Ibid*., 327.

118 See e.g., his 1541 *Traicté de la Saincte Cene* and his discussion of the Supper in *Institutio* 4.17.1–11.

119 *CO* 10.138. "Quid de Luthero cogitem nescio, quanquamde eius pietate optime sim persuasus." *Letters*, 4.384.

120 *CO* 10.138. "eius constantiae nonnihil pertinaciae admixtum."

121 *CO* 10.138. "victoriae...appetit...". "nunquam poterit sincera in puram Dei veritatem concordia coalescere."

122 *CO* 11.755.

123 *CO* 11.755. "Non enim iam ab ipsis est periculum, sed a Luthero."

124 *CO* 11.755. "Mitigandus ille foret. An hoc extorquebitur a Tigurinis ut suppliciter Lutherum deprecentur Caveri multo ante oportuit ne camarinam moverent."

125 *CO* 11.774.

126 *CO* 11.774. "Sed haec cupio vobis in mentem venire: primum quantus sit vir Lutherus, et quantis dotibus excellat, quanta animi fortitudine et constantia, quanta dexteritate, quanta doctrinae efficacia hactenus ad profligandum Antichristi regnum et simul propagandam salutis doctrinam incubuerit."

127 *CO* 12.26. "tempus consulendi Lutheri esse adhuc alienum, quia animus vixdum bene a contentionis fervore resedisset."

128 M. C. Howatson, ed. *The Oxford Companion to Classical Literature* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), s.v., "Pericles."

129 *CO* 12.99. "Vester autem Pericles quanta intemperie ad Mminandum rapitur? praesertim quum eius causa nihilo sit melior. Et quid in hunc modum tumultuando proficit, nisi ut totus mundus eum furere iudicet? Me certe, qui eum ex animo veneror, vehementer ipsius pudet.

130 On Luther's status among confessional Lutherans in the period see Robert Kolb, *Martin Luther as Prophet, Teacher, and Hero: Images of the Reformer, 1520–1620* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999).

131 *CO* 13.165. "Si liberam veritatis professionem amas, nunquam mihi in animo fuit quae scripsi ad hominum gratiam inflectere. Si qui Luthero vel aliis blanditi sunt, non sum ex eorum numero."

132 *CO* 15.501. "Utinam hodie viveret Lutherus. Quamvis enim semper modum excesserit eius vehementia in causae sacramentariae actione, nihil tamen ad horum intemperiem ac vesaniam."

133 *CO* 15.502.

134 *CO* 15.502. "scilicet quum nullam prorsus teneant ex Lutheri virtutibus, clamitando se venditant pro genuinis eius discipulis."

135 *CO* 11.36. "Lutherus non adeo anxius de verborum proprietate aut historiae circumstantia satis habet fructiferam aliquam doctrinam elicere."

136 See David V. Bagchi, "*Sic et Non*: Luther and Scholasticism" in *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1999), 3–15.

137 See e.g., Q. Breen, *John Calvin: A Study in French Humanism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1931); Clark, *Caspar Olevian and the Substance of the Covenant*, 39–58.

138 So Steinmetz, *Calvin in Context*, 99.

139 *CO* 15.454. "Restat iam alterum crimen, quod nonubique Lutheri interpretationibus subscribam. Verum si iam cuique interpreti non licebit de singulis scripturae locis quod sentit in medium proferre, quorsum servitutis recidimus ? Imo, si mihi usquam a Lutheri sententia discedere non licuit, munus interpretandi suscipere absurdum fuit ac ridiculum. Hoc modo videndum erat, an cupide accersam diversos sensus, an proterve exagitem, an odiose perstringam, an contumeliose insecter.'

140 *CO* 5.392. "Denique, modis omnibus assuefacimus, ut una colendi Dei regula contenti, quam ex illius ore habent, commentitios omnes cultus valere iubeant."

141 *CO* 10.341. "Quod Bucerus porro defendit Lutheri caeremonias…".

142 *CO* 10.341. "Tantum non patitur, ut ob externas illas observatiunculas a Luthero disiungamur. Nec sane iustas esse puto dissidii causas." On Calvin's rule of worship see R. Scott Clark, "Calvin's Principle of Worship," in *Tributes to John Calvin: a Celebration of His Quincentenary* (ed. David Hall; Philipsburg: P&R, 2010), 247–69.

143 John Calvin, *Ioannis calvini epistolae et responsa* (Amsterdam: Schipper, 1671), 49b. "Quorsum enim illud Lutheri adorabile Sacramentum, nisi ut idolum in templo Dei erigatur?" D. Constable, the English translator of volume 2 of the Bonnet edition of Calvin's letters, suggests a February, 1549 date for the letter. *Letters*, 2.220. If this date is correct, and some of Calvin's comments support this hypothesis, then Bucer received

this letter while he was in Cambridge.

144 On Christological controversy between the Reformed and the Lutherans, including an account the Christology of Brenz and Chemnitz, see Clark, *Caspar Olevian and the Substance of the Covenant*, 104–36.

145 *Traicté de la Saincte Cene de Nostre Seigneur et Seul Saveur Iesus Christ*.

146 CO 5.458. "Quand Luther commença à enseigner, il traictoit en telle sorte la matiere de la Cene, que touchant la presence corporelle de Christ, il sembloit advis qu'il la laissast telle que le monde la concevoit pour lors. Car en condamnant la transsubstantiation, il disoit le pain estre le corps de Christ, d'autant qu'il estoit uny avec. Oultre plus, il adioustoit des similitudes, lesquelles estoient un peu dures et rudes. Mais il le faisoit comme par contrainte, pource qu'il ne povoit autrement explicquer son intention. Car il est difficile de donner à entendre une chose si haulte, sinon en usant de quelque improprieté."

147 W. Robert Godfrey, *John Calvin: Pilgrim and Pastor* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2009), 100.

148 For background to this controversy, see DeGreef, 178–81.

149 *CO* 9.52. "Quum enim a tenebris papatus emergere incipiens, tenui sanae doctrinae gustu concepto, legerem apud Lutherum, nihil in sacramentis ab Oecolampadio et Zvinglio reliquum fieri praeter nudas et inanes figuras, ita me ab ipsorum libris alienatum fuisse fateor, ut diu a lectione abstinuerim."

150 *CO* 9.461–517. E.g., 465–67.