Calvinus Oecumenicus: Calvin's Vision of the Unity and Catholicity of the Church

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My title is taken from the monumental study of this theme by the Dutch historian Willem Nijenhuis, viz., *Calvinus Oecumenicus*, which could be translated either "The Ecumenical Calvin" or "Calvin, the Ecumenist." The Swiss historian, Gottfried Locher, has written a monograph about Calvin's ecumenical concerns and efforts with a similar title: *Calvin Anwalt der Okumene* (Calvin, agent/advocate of ecumenicity). Earlier the *doyen* of American Calvin scholars, John T. McNeill, held up Calvin as the model of irenic catholicity, the reformer who worked harder than anyone else to achieve some type of unity among the scattered and divided churches.

For those who are knowledgeable about Calvin such claims will come as no surprise. But to those unfamiliar with the aims and activities of the Genevan reformer, this portrayal of Calvin as the great advocate of unity and ecumenicity may come as a shock. For this runs completely counter to the Calvin of myth and caricature, the Calvin who is considered the dictator of Geneva, the one who enforced petty discipline and whose intolerance resulted in the execution of Servetus. Are we talking about the same Calvin?

It should be noted at the outset that Calvin's quest was not for unity at any price. He could be genial and tolerant when dealing with people of different views as well as fierce and adamant with those who attacked him on key issues. Although he could never be accused of a soft and sentimental ecumenism which was willing to compromise on fundamental issues, his list of non-negotiable doctrines is surprisingly small.

The High Churchman

Before examining Calvin's specific ecumenical outlook and activity, it is important to note briefly his view of the church. For although unity must begin with individuals and local groups, the goal must be the cooperation or unity of larger, ecclesiastical bodies.

It might appear to be a corollary that the lower one's view of the church, the more open one will be to cooperative efforts, if not church union. Those who are committed to little feel they have little to lose in a union. People who are indifferent about doctrine can afford to be tolerant, for there is little at stake in a compromise.

There are striking exceptions, however, and Calvin is one of them. His commitment to the unity of the church was not despite his high view of the
church but precisely because of it! None of Calvin's contemporaries, including Archbishop Cranmer of the Church of England, had a higher view of the church. The opening section of Book IV of the *Institutes*, for example, has these striking lines:

I shall start, then, with the church, into whose bosom God is pleased to gather his sons, not only that they may be nourished by her help and ministry as long as they are infants and children, but also that they may be guided by her motherly care until they mature and at last reach the goal of faith. "For what God has joined together, it is not lawful to put asunder" [Mark 10:9p.], so that, for those to whom he is Father the church may also be Mother.

The last phrase is virtually a quotation from Cyprian, bishop of Carthage in the third century, and the churchman of his time. His aversion to Rome notwithstanding, Calvin has no compunction about repeating this classic phrase which speaks of the church in the loftiest possible terms. Accordingly, R. N. Carew Hunt states boldly, "For all his abhorrence of Rome, he was after his manner as good a churchman as any pope. Nor does he take refuge in an invisible church made up of the elect. He acknowledges such a church, but when he comments on the phrase in the Apostles' Creed--"I believe [in] the church"--he affirms that this refers both to the visible church and to all God's elect, including the saints in glory.

It is this church in which "we have been united with all other members under Christ our head" which is also catholic or universal, "because there could not be two or three churches unless Christ be torn asunder [cf. 1 Cor. 1:13]--which cannot happen!"

But all the elect are so united in Christ [cf. Eph. 1:22-23] that as they are dependent on one Head, they also grow together into one body, being joined and knit together [cf. Eph. 4:16] as are the limbs of a body [Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 10:17; 12:12, 27]. They are made truly one since they live together in one faith, hope, and love, and in the same Spirit of God. For they have been called not only into the same inheritance of eternal life but also to participate in one God and Christ [Eph. 5:30].

This, in short, is Calvin's vision of the one holy catholic church from which we separate ourselves to our own peril. For "it is always disastrous to leave the church." Not only that, but "separation from the church is the denial of God and Christ."
The Unity and Catholicity of the Church

We have already seen that Calvin's high view of the church is based on the presupposition that her unity is based on a unity within the one Christ. Because the various members of the holy catholic church are one in Christ they are therefore one with each other. In his famous letter to Cardinal Sadolet he affirms with passion his convictions concerning both the unity and the catholicity of the church.

Now if you can bear to receive a truer definition of the church than your own, say in the future that it is the society of all the saints which, spread over all the world and existing in all ages, yet bound together by the doctrine and the one Spirit of Christ, cultivates and observes unity of faith and brotherly concord. With this church we deny that we have any disagreement. Rather, as we revere her as our mother, so we desire to remain in her bosom.¹²

Speaking of the ministry, the gifts God has given to his church, and the presence of the Spirit in the church, Calvin says:

Thus the renewal of the saints is accomplished; thus the body of Christ is built up [Eph. 4:12]; thus "we grow up in every way into him who is the Head" [Eph. 4:15] and grow together among ourselves; thus are we all brought into the unity of Christ, if prophecy flourishes among us, if we do not refuse the doctrine administered to us.¹³

(emphasis mine)

However, as biblical scholars have pointed out, Christian unity is both a gift and a task. The above quotations from Calvin have spoken of the reality of our unity in Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, the title of the first chapter, Book IV, of the Institutes, where Calvin begins his discussion of the church, shows that he knows that true unity in Christ is something for which we must be constantly striving. The title reads: "The True Church with Which as Mother of All the Godly We Must Keep Unity."¹⁴

Calvin is painfully aware of the divided body of Christ,¹⁵ not only between the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches, but also within Protestantism. Ultimately, disunity becomes a problem for individual congregations which are microcosms of the church at large. Here too, in the strongest terms, he declares that
we cannot obtain eternal life without living in mutual harmony in this world. For God invites all with His one voice, so that they may be united in the same agreement of faith [fidei consensu], and study to help one another. If only this thought were implanted in our minds, that there is set before us this law [legem] that the children of God can no more disagree among themselves than the Kingdom of heaven can be divided, how much more carefully we should cultivate brotherly kindness! How much we should hate all quarrels, if we duly reflected that all who separate from their brethren, estrange themselves from the Kingdom of God!16

Here Calvin speaks of the "Kingdom of heaven" and the "Kingdom of God," but in a context which shows these terms are synonyms for the church. Calvin's view of the church is such that even when he refers to the church in a local situation, it is generally the one holy catholic church which he has in mind. To the unity of this church and its catholicity Calvin gave his life. This understanding of the church is expressed concisely in his Geneva Catechism where in response to the question, "What is meant by the word catholic or universal?" he replies:

It is meant to signify, that as there is only one Head of the faithful, so they must all be united in one body, so that there are not several churches but one only, which is extended throughout the whole world.17

Calvin's Abhorrence of Schism

In view of the statements cited above, one might wonder how Calvin justified his own departure from the Roman church. On an existential level the answer is simple. Had Calvin remained in his homeland and continued his attempts to reform the church from within, he would have literally lost his head or would have been burned at the stake—a fate experienced by several of his reform-minded friends. From that standpoint, Calvin could say with Luther that he didn't leave the Roman church; the church forced him out.18

On a theological level, however, the problem is more complex. On the one hand, there is no more "atrocious crime" than disloyalty to the church.19 "For the Lord esteems the communion of his church so highly that he counts as a traitor and apostate from Christianity anyone who arrogantly leaves any Christian society [Calvin's favorite way of defining the church, i.e., as a societas], provided it cherishes the true ministry of Word and sacraments." 20
On the other hand, Calvin radically questioned the right of the Roman church to claim to be a church in view of its infidelity to the gospel. Note the condition in the above quotation: "provided it cherishes the true ministry of Word and sacraments." (emphasis mine) On both counts Calvin was convinced that the Roman church of his time was egregiously in error. It is noteworthy that he does not quibble about the many minor deviations and abuses. Calvin is no purist. He concedes that "some fault may creep into the administration of either doctrine or sacraments, but this ought not to estrange us from communion with the church."\(^{927}\)

Along with the Lutherans, who had earlier designated two marks (*notae*) of the church in their Augsburg Confession (Article 7), Calvin acknowledges that there is a church wherever "we see the Word of God purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to Christ's institution."\(^{922}\) Again, Calvin shows surprising liberality, for he adds that such a definition holds to the extent "that we must not reject it [Rome] so long as it retains them, even if it otherwise swarms with many faults."\(^{923}\)

The issue, for Calvin, was much more profound than some doctrinal deviations and moral lapses. Those he could countenance, even though he might detest them. The one, fundamental, non-negotiable point was the doctrine of Christ, and there, he was convinced, the Church of Rome was fatally in error. Accordingly, he would not concede that he was guilty of schism when he left Rome. Instead, he insisted that Rome was guilty of heresy and schism from the true church by its rejection of God's Word and above all by its rejection of Christ. For "the fundamental doctrine, which it is criminal [*nefas*] to overthrow, is that we cleave to Christ, for he is the only foundation [*unicum fundamentum*] of the church."\(^{924}\)

The papists, Calvin maintains, "choose to have a half Christ and a mangled Christ and so none at all and are therefore removed from Christ."\(^{925}\) Precisely wherein the Roman church has "mangled Christ" is spelled out in the *Institutes*, Book IV, chapter two: the denial that Christ is the sole mediator, the corruption of the mass which has become a form of idolatry, the adoration of the virgin, and the appeal to saints to intercede for sinners.\(^{926}\) In these and other ways the glory of Christ is hopelessly compromised.

Calvin came to the painful conclusion that he had to choose between Christ and Rome.\(^{927}\) It was necessary to withdraw from Rome that he "might come to Christ."\(^{928}\) Hence Calvin protests vigorously that he is not the schismatic; rather, it is Rome which has departed from the true church! In a letter he cries out defiantly, "May the angels of God bear witness as to who are the schismatics!"\(^{929}\) In view of the many ways in which Rome had corrupted and deformed the church beyond recognition, Calvin concludes: "In withdrawing from deadly participation in so many misdeeds, there is accordingly no danger that we be snatched away from the church of Christ."\(^{930}\)
Yet, despite his trenchant criticisms of the Roman Church, Calvin did not write it off completely. In some ways he was more charitable than Luther, who was accustomed to call the Roman church "the whore of Babylon" and "the church of the Antichrist." For despite all her lapses and aberrations, Calvin sees remnants or vestiges of the church within the Roman church. He distinguishes, for example, between the papacy and vicious members of the hierarchy whom he likens to wolves, and faithful priests and leaders like Cardinal Sadolet whom he obviously respects.

We indeed, Sadolet, do not deny that those churches over which you preside are churches of Christ; but we maintain that the Roman pontiff, with all the herd of pseudo-bishops who have seized the pastor's office, are savage wolves, whose only interest has hitherto been to scatter and trample upon the kingdom of Christ, filling it with devastation and ruin.

A few lines later Calvin observes that "little now stands between her [the Roman church] and destruction," but he will still concede (later in the Institutes) that "we do not deprive the papists of those traces of the church which the Lord willed should among them survive the destruction." But he quickly notes that this is due more to God's gracious providence and covenant faithfulness than to the virtues of the Roman church's leadership! Just as often happens "when buildings are pulled down the foundations and ruins remain, so [God] did not allow his church either to be destroyed to the very foundations by Antichrist or to be leveled to the ground, even though to punish the ungratefulness of men who had despised his word he let it undergo frightful shaking and shattering, but even after this very destruction willed that a half-demolished building remain."

Calvin remains ambivalent about the Roman Catholic church. Although, given the spirit of the times, he can be surprisingly charitable, he is basically pessimistic about the Roman church as a whole, especially the papacy and those he opprobriously dubs "papists." On the one hand, he will allow "that we by no means deny that the churches under his [the pope's] tyranny remain churches." On the other hand, he points out that in these churches "Christ lies hidden, half buried, the gospel overthrown, piety scattered, the worship of God nearly wiped out. In them, briefly, everything is so confused that there we see the face of Babylon rather than that of the Holy City of God."

Despite such a negative assessment, the Roman Catholic Calvin scholar, Alexandre Ganoczy, takes comfort in the fact that in Calvin's various discussions of the Church of Rome he rarely, if ever, opposes a true church to a totally false church. Even where he compares a corrupt church (Rome) to the ideal church, he compares two states of the church, not two churches. Unlike
Luther, he avoids speaking of the Roman Catholic church as a false church. 40

Calvin, however, not only did not view himself as schismatic; he also constantly inveighed against schism in the strongest terms. There may be hypocrisy, moral lapses, and scandals within a church, but as long as the two marks of the church are "sufficiently delineated" (sufficienter descriptam), we are not justified in separating from that church. 41 A case in point is the church in Corinth, which was guilty of all of the above. Yet the Apostle Paul addresses them as saints! Calvin regards this as highly significant. In his commentary on 1 Corinthians 1:2 he admonishes his readers:

Despite the fact that somehow or other many vices and various corruptions of teaching and manners had crept in [the Corinthian church], some marks (signa) of the true church were nevertheless still apparent. We should give close attention to this verse, however, lest we should expect in the world a church without spot or wrinkle, or immediately withhold this title from any gathering whatever, in which everything does not satisfy our standards. For it is a dangerous thing to think there is no church where perfect purity is lacking. The point is that anyone who is obsessed by that idea must cut himself from everybody else, and appear to himself to be the only saint in the world, or he must set up a sect of his own along with other hypocrites. 42

In the Institutes there are similar sharp admonitions apparently directed to three groups: the Cathari (the name by which Calvin evidently refers to the Novatians [ca. 250], who considered themselves "the pure ones"; the Donatists of the fourth century, who were theological rigorists; and especially the Anabaptists of his own time. 43 Of such people—and they are still with us—Calvin writes sarcastically that they are so "imbued with a false conviction of their own perfect sanctity, as if they had already become a sort of airy spirits, [that they] spurned association with all men in whom they discern any remnant of human nature." Calvin reminded such "holier than thou" purists of the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt. 13:47-58). 44 As Wilhelm Niese tartly observes in commenting on this section, "What is at issue is the living reality of Christ, not the formation of a circle of pious men." 45

Calvin's entire ministry in Geneva is a testimony that he was concerned about the purity of the church. Thus, he is ever mindful of Ephesians 5:25-27: "... Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, in order to make her holy... so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind—yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish" (NRSV). But, he adds, we must "examine in what holiness it [the
church] excels, lest, if we are not willing to admit a church unless it be perfect in every respect, we leave no church at all.\textsuperscript{46}

According to Calvin's understanding of Ephesians 5:25-27, the sanctification of the church is a process; its holiness is "not yet complete. The church is holy, then, in the sense that it is daily advancing and is not yet perfect: it makes progress from day to day but has not yet reached its goal of holiness . . . .\textsuperscript{47} In this world there is no pure, flawless church and hence one must have very solid grounds for leaving it.

Positively, what is required in order to maintain the unity of the church is a spirit of kindness, gentleness, and moderation.\textsuperscript{48} Above all, we must keep in mind God's generosity mediated to us in Jesus Christ and be willing to forgive even as we have been forgiven.\textsuperscript{49} Here Calvin sees significance in the fact that in the Apostles' Creed, the article on the forgiveness of sins follows immediately after that on the church, "because the Lord has promised his mercy solely in the communion of saints. Forgiveness of sins, then, is for us the first entry into the church and Kingdom of God."\textsuperscript{50} It is also the basis for the continuing life of the church. The Lord commands his people daily to pray: "Forgive us our debts" (emphasis mine), and then promises them pardon. In the same way, Christians must "emulate his kindness" and thereby maintain the peace and unity of the church.\textsuperscript{51}

**Involvement in Unity Efforts**

Calvin was no ivory-tower theologian. In fact, he always regarded himself as primarily a pastor and churchman. When one examines the myriad activities in which he was involved, it is impossible to comprehend how this frail, sickly man could preach (sometimes almost daily), teach, counsel, found schools, hospitals and welfare agencies, provide leadership for a city, and carry on an amazing correspondence with troubled souls, clergy, theologians, princes, and potentates all over western Europe.\textsuperscript{52} In addition, insofar as his health and time permitted, he was an indefatigable promoter of unity within the Protestant ranks. He did not simply sit on the sidelines and offer counsel and advice; he was active and involved in all sorts of unity efforts, including early attempts at reunion with the Roman Catholic church.\textsuperscript{53}

In 1540 and 1541, Roman Catholics and Protestants met at Worms, Hagenau, and Regensburg in order to effect some kind of reconciliation. These conferences were promoted by the emperor Charles V whose primary goal was a united and peaceful Germany. Apparently because of distrust concerning the whole venture, two of the leading reformers, Luther and Bullinger, Zwingli's successor in Zurich, were not there. Calvin participated but played a minor role, apparently deferring to Bucer, his older friend and colleague in Strasbourg, and Melanchthon, who was the principal Lutheran representative.
Various letters of Calvin reveal that much as he respected Bucer and Melanchthon, he was at times concerned about the "ambiguous formulas" which they devised in order to reach some kind of agreement. (Both had reputations for being too willing to compromise.) The whole experience may have been a little disillusioning for the young Calvin—he was barely 30—for all three conferences ended in failure. The cause of their failure, according to one historian, "lay not in the influence of this or that personality, but in the nature of the business itself, in the effort to unite irreconcilable opposites."

Calvin's own attitude comes out clearly in an introduction to the Acts of the Conference of Regensburg (here referred to as Ratisbon):

There are many holy persons in all nations, true lovers of the truth of God and desirous of the advancement of his kingdom. They wait from day to day for the time when the Lord will be pleased to set his church in order again, and have their ears open listening continuously for news that some overture has been made for putting the church in a better state. But there are also many weak people throughout the world, who dare not decide what path they must follow until there is a reformation brought about by the combined authority of those to whom God has given the rule and government of Christendom. I thought therefore that it would be a useful task, and one profitable for all Christians, to set in order the sum of what has lately been treated of amongst all the States of the Empire at the conference of Ratisbon, touching differences in Religion. My purpose is that the former may have reason to be comforted and to rejoice in our Lord, seeing that the truth of the gospel, though assailed by the devil, has not been suppressed and vanquished, but rather set forward; and that the latter may realise, from the proceedings which took place there, that it is time wasted to rely upon men, as they will easily see; and that they may accept the light of God when it is offered to them, without looking this way and that to see which way the wind is blowing.

Later Calvin was to be completely disillusioned about any possible rapprochement with Rome. By the time of the Council of Trent (1545-1563), he viewed the papacy as incorrigible. He counterattacked its various charges with a variety of tracts and treatises, the most significant being "Acts of the Council of Trent with the Antidote," which appeared in November, 1547. Even here, however, it is noteworthy that a contemporary Roman Catholic scholar, Kilian
McDonnell, concludes that "Calvin's polemic is essentially pastoral in tone. . . . He frequently attacked Rome on a doctrinal level--it had lost its soul, doctrinal purity--but his polemics as a whole proceed from an existential situation." In other words, despite his antipathy to the "papists" and his irritation with their attacks against Protestants, Calvin did not resort to continual anti-Roman polemics. He had more important and more constructive things to do.

In particular, he constantly sought to unify the scattered Protestant forces which were in danger of even further fragmentation. His initial efforts were local, for the various Swiss Protestant churches tended to operate independently of each other and not infrequently experienced tensions among themselves. Calvin's role was frequently that of a mediator, sometimes between factions, often between hostile personalities. In the case of the former, during his first stay in Geneva, he mediated in a dispute that took place in Bern, and in 1538 wrote to Bullinger, now the undisputed leader of the German speaking Swiss Protestant churches, about the possibility of a public synod in order to foster "mutual agreement" among them (inter nos concordia).

Nothing came of the proposal at that time, for Calvin soon found himself in Strasbourg. Shortly after his return to Geneva in 1541, the old feud between Zurich and Wittenberg concerning the Lord's Supper heated up. It was no longer Zwingli (who had been killed in 1535), but his successor, Bullinger, who now represented the German Swiss approach. Zwingli's symbolic view of the Supper had been modified, but not enough for Luther who viciously attacked the Swiss reformers in a "Short Confession of the Lord's Supper" (1544). When Bullinger and his friends replied in kind, it fell to Calvin to mediate in this nasty affair. He was between a rock and a hard place, for he felt closer to Luther than to the Zurichers in regard to the Lord's Supper, but felt more kinship overall with his Swiss German compatriots than many of the Lutherans, Melanchthon being a notable exception.

Calvin even considered making a trip to Wittenberg to visit Luther, whom he had never met, but the distance--a twenty-days journey--and his poor health militated against that. He was, moreover, advised that Luther was in no mood to meet anyone from Switzerland, not even Calvin for whom he reportedly had a high regard. The feeling was mutual, for Calvin refused to attack Luther, despite some of his intemperate outbursts which Calvin might have taken personally.

Earlier Calvin had given concrete evidence of his good will toward the Lutherans by indicating his agreement with the amended (Variata) version of the Augsburg Confession (1540) for which Melanchthon was largely responsible. Unfortunately, after Luther's death in 1546, right-wing Lutherans, who had become an increasing source of embarrassment to Luther during the latter years of his life, took control of the Lutheran party. They harassed Melanchthon, who soon had little influence, and eventually some of them--particularly
Hesshus and Westphal—turned on Calvin with scurrilous attacks on his view of the Lord's Supper.\textsuperscript{60} Thus, despite various attempts at mediation on the part of both Melanchthon and Calvin, the Swiss Reformed and German Lutherans grew farther apart. Not until the second half of the twentieth century has some of this antagonism and suspicion been overcome.\textsuperscript{61}

In the meantime, Calvin was expending considerable energy toward bringing about greater unity between the French Swiss, represented by Geneva, and the German Swiss, represented by Zurich. Fortunately, Calvin and Bullinger had established a relationship that enabled them to work at their differences amiably. The stumbling block was their respective interpretations of the sacraments, particularly the Lord's Supper. As early as 1538 Calvin wrote to Bullinger,

\begin{quote}
Oh, if only a pure and sincere agreement could be reached among us at last! What then would prevent the assembling of a public synod, where individuals might propose whatever they think best for the churches? A way might be found out of going to work by common deliberation, and, if need be, that the cities and princes also should assist in this understanding by mutual exhortation and counsel, and also confirm what is done by their authority. But in such great perplexity, the Lord is rather to be inquired of, that he himself may open up the way.\textsuperscript{62}
\end{quote}

This dream reached fruition approximately ten years later when all of the Swiss Reformed churches subscribed to the \textit{Concensus Tigurinus} (also called the Zurich Concensus) in 1549. This was no small accomplishment, given not only the substantial differences between Calvin and the followers of Zwingli on the Lord's Supper, but also the centuries-old feuds and jealousies between several of the Swiss towns and families. In fact, the Bernese, who had always resented the Genevans, gave only verbal assent to the \textit{Concensus}.

It is generally felt that Calvin conceded more than Bullinger, although the extreme Zwinglian view that the sacraments were bare signs was rejected. Calvin hoped thereby that the \textit{Concensus} would commend itself to the German Lutherans and to others who were understandably confused as to what the Swiss really believed. Many responses were favorable: from Bucer and a'Lasco, now in England, and from some of the leaders in the Palatinate (Heidelberg) which were more open to Reformed views. The German Lutherans as a whole, however, were now in the control of the hard-line confessionalist wing (Luther having died three years earlier) and they reacted very negatively. In succeeding years the situation worsened as far as this Lutheran faction was concerned, for beginning in 1552 Joachim Westphal wrote a series of tracts denouncing the
sacramental views of not only Calvin but also Bullinger, a'Lasco, Peter Martyr, and that of the Concensus. Even so, the Concensus Tigurinus was a notable achievement, for now there were "two Protestantisms" on the continent instead of three.63

In the meantime, Calvin was active for the cause of unity on many other fronts, largely through correspondence. Often his role was that of a mediator who tried to clear up misunderstandings among reformers, e.g., Bullinger and Bucer.64 On other occasions he corresponded with the moderate followers of Luther in the hope of rallying them to the cause of Protestant unity. An examination of his voluminous correspondence65 also shows that he was not bashful about appealing for support to regional princes, kings and queens. This list includes Edward VI, king of England, the Duke of Somerset, the king of Poland, both the king and the queen of Navarre, and lesser political figures who were advisors to royalty.66 Calvin also dedicated the first edition of the Institutes to King Francis of France with the hope of getting a hearing for his persecuted countrymen in France. Although these ventures were rarely successful, he never gave up nor lost his zeal for a more united Protestantism.

A fascinating example of how irenic Calvin could be toward people of difficult manner or differing opinion is his life-long friendship with the Lutheran leader, Melanchthon, the great waffler of the sixteenth century. Despite their differences on such key doctrines as predestination and the believer's role in salvation—and Melanchthon's willingness at times to compromise on basic issues for the sake of peace—Calvin always stood by his friend. After Luther's death, he became one of his few supporters.67

Calvin was also notably more tolerant than his compatriots in other realms. He was, for example, willing to accept bishops, provided their role was primarily administrative and pastoral, without the exercise of "lordship" (dominium) over their colleagues. "For the Holy Spirit willed men to beware of dreaming of a principality or lordship as far as the government of the church is concerned."68 Calvin preferred his own system with the parity of elders, but he allowed that in certain cases episcopacy might be expedient. In his commentary on Numbers (3:5) he writes:

Distinction of a political kind is not to be rejected, for common sense itself dictates it in order to remove confusion. But whatever has this end in view will be so arranged as neither to obscure the glory of Christ nor to minister to ambition or tyranny, nor to hinder all ministers from cultivating a mutual brotherliness among themselves with equal rights and liberties.69

Such a bishop was Archbishop Cranmer in England whom Calvin greatly respected and regarded as a friend even though they never met. Calvin had long
had an interest in the English church, although he was not pleased with the partial reformation initiated by Henry VIII. In addition to Cranmer, he also carried on a lengthy correspondence with the Protector Somerset about the best way to reform the Church of England.

His best known letter is his response to Archbishop Cranmer's proposal for an ecumenical gathering of key reformers, including Bullinger and Melanchthon, to be held in the Lambeth Palace. The purpose was to compose a creed or confession acceptable to all Protestant churches. Although the proposal came to nothing because of the death of Edward VI and the martyrdom of Cranmer himself, Calvin's famous reply to Cranmer is moving:

I wish indeed it could be brought about that men of learning and authority from the different Churches might meet somewhere and, after thoroughly discussing the different articles of faith, should, by a unanimous decision, hand down to posterity some certain rule of faith. ... As to myself, if I should be thought of any use, I would not, if need be, object to cross ten seas for such a purpose. If the assisting of England were alone concerned, that would be motive enough for me. Much more, therefore, am I of opinion that I ought to grudge no labour or trouble, seeing that the object in view is an agreement among the learned, to be drawn up by the weight of their authority according to Scripture, in order to unite widely severed Churches.\textsuperscript{70}

It might appear that the ecumenical efforts of Calvin--and kindred spirits like Bucer, Melanchthon, and Cranmer--produced little fruit. Yet, in the judgment of many reformation scholars, Calvin saved Europe for the Reformation. Karl Holl, the great Lutheran historian of a past generation, pays this tribute to Calvin's contribution:

Far more than the German reformers Calvin lived for the common interests of Protestantism. ... His involvement in the whole movement takes place in an age where the question was whether the Reformation would be able to maintain its international position. ... One must count it extremely fortunate (\textit{ein hohes Gluck}) for Protestantism that Calvin entered the scene at this time. His intervention meant above all two things: decisiveness and organization. Thereby he saved the Reformation from extinction.\textsuperscript{71}
The Criteria for Unity

I indicated at the outset that for all of Calvin's openness, flexibility, and irenic spirit toward ecumenism, he was no sentimentalist interested in unity at any price. For him the bottom line was the truth of the gospel and, more particularly, the glory of Christ. In regard to "ceremonies" or adiaphora, Calvin was more lenient than most of his Protestant colleagues. He never permitted his disapproval of certain practices pertaining to the Lord's Supper and other liturgical rites to be a stumbling block to unity. 72

In fact, Calvin's list of essential or fundamental doctrines is surprisingly slim. Although he is speaking illustratively, it still may surprise many to learn that the doctrines which "are so necessary to know that they should be certain and unquestioned by all men as the proper principles of religion" are only these: "God is one; Christ is God and the Son of God; our salvation rests in God's mercy; and the like [et similia]." 73 The inevitable question is, What kinds of doctrines does Calvin have in mind with the phrase, "and the like"? We have no answer beyond his "Second Defence of the Faith concerning the Sacraments in Answer to Joachim Westphal," which contains a similar but considerably fuller list of what he calls "leading articles" of the Christian faith:

In regard to the one God and his true and legitimate worship, the corruption of human nature, free salvation, the mode of obtaining justification, the office and power of Christ, repentance and its exercises, faith which, relying on the promises of the gospel, gives us assurance of salvation, prayer to God, and other leading articles, the same doctrine is preached by both. We call on one God the Father, trusting to the same Mediator; the same Spirit of adoption is the earnest of our future inheritance. Christ has reconciled us all by the same sacrifice. In that righteousness which he has purchased for us, our minds are at peace, and we glory in the same head. It is strange if Christ, whom we preach as our peace, and who, removing the ground of disagreement, appeased to us our Father in heaven, do not also cause us mutually to cultivate brotherly peace on earth. 74

Even in this list of apparently fundamental doctrines, we have nothing novel or peculiarly Calvinian. He was clearly trying to establish a basis for agreement which would include the essential doctrines of the historic faith.
without excluding anyone unnecessarily. As Otto Weber points out, by his appeal to the consensus of the ancient church concerning basic doctrines and by his flexibility in regard to what must be believed, Calvin was more "catholic" than the Lutherans—or Roman Catholics!\(^{25}\)

In general, however, Calvin's basis for unity was the Word or the truth, which for him were basically identical. His writings abound with statements like: 'The church does not exist "where God's Word is not found."' The "Word" in this case is the voice of the Lord of the church: "Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice [John 18:37]."\(^ {76}\) He concludes one discussion in a similar fashion: "To sum up, since the church is Christ's Kingdom, and he reigns by his Word alone, will it not be clear to any man that those are lying words [cf. Jer. 7:4] by which the Kingdom of Christ is imagined to exist apart from his scepter (that is, his most holy Word)?"\(^ {77}\)

However precious and desirable unity may be, it must never be achieved at the expense of truth. Such a unity would produce a chimera, not a church. For "there is no church unless it is obedient to the Word of God and is guided by it."\(^ {78}\) In his "Reply to Sadolet," he expresses himself even more forcefully: "My conscience told me how strong the zeal was for the unity of thy church, provided thy truth were made the bond of concord."\(^ {79}\) (emphasis mine) Thus, unlike many contemporary American attempts at church union, Calvin began with doctrine, "the truth." Church structures or polity, if discussed at all, were secondary.

Another illustration of this approach is the secondary function of Calvin's two catechisms. Because their primary purpose was the instruction of children in Geneva, they were originally written in French. Both the 1537 and 1541 catechisms, however, later came out in a Latin edition in order to have a relatively simple doctrinal statement to share with other churches for the purpose of building up mutual trust and understanding.

In the preface to his first catechism (Latin edition, 1538) he writes: "Because we know it befits us especially that all churches embrace one another in mutual love, there is no better way to attain this than for all parties to work out an agreement and testify to it in the Lord. For there is no closer bond than this to keep minds in harmony."\(^ {80}\)

In his second catechism, the so-called Geneva Catechism (Latin edition, 1545), Calvin writes in a similar vein in his introductory Letter to the Reader: "In this confused and divided state of Christendom, I judge it useful to have public testimonies by which churches that agree in doctrine, though widely separated in space, may mutually recognize each other." In doing this, he maintains that he is only reviving an ancient practice when "bishops once used to send synodal letters across the sea."\(^ {81}\)

In the last analysis, however, Calvin's great concern was neither abstract truth nor some list of doctrines, but the unreserved recognition of the Lord of the church, Jesus Christ himself. For "the fundamental doctrine, which it is
forbidden to overthrow, is that we might learn [discamus] Christ. For Christ is the one and only foundation [unicum fundamentum] of the Church. Of the Roman Church he says that because they rested their confidence of salvation in Christ, "they had a ministry that was not wholly corrupt. . . . Hence wherever the worship of God is unimpaired, and that fundamental teaching, of which I have spoken, persists, there, we may without difficulty decide, the Church exists." Unfortunately, in the Roman church as a whole Calvin found only half a Christ, and hence had to leave that church in order to "find Christ." In short, where the glory of Christ is unimpaired, there we have a church. And his glory shines most brightly when he is recognized as the Lord of the church and the only mediator between God and humanity. "Where the lordship of Christ is actualized, there is the church." Such are Calvin's criteria for true unity.

One other important dimension needs to be added, however. Calvin acknowledged that one could be right in arguing one's position but wrong in the way it was pursued. If one does not speak the truth in love (Gal. 5:6), one has not really spoken the truth at all, for the communion of the church "is held together by two bonds, agreement in sound doctrine and brotherly love." He then commends Augustine's distinction between heretics and schismatics: "heretics corrupt the sincerity of the faith with false dogmas; but schismatics, while sometimes even of the same faith [i.e., believe the same things], break the bond of fellowship."

Calvin may be thinking here of an accusation by the Anabaptists which he encountered as a young man. In the preface of his second publication, Psychopannychia, written while still in France, he responds to the Anabaptists' complaint that their rejection by other Christians reveals a lack of love and destroys Christian unity:

This is my response to them: first, we acknowledge no unity except in Christ; and no charity except that of which Christ himself is the bond. Therefore, let this be the chief means of maintaining love, that the faith remains sacred and whole among us.

Twenty-five years later, in the final edition of the Institutes, Calvin was to make the same point, only this time in response to Roman Catholic critics. After pointing to the two bonds which must be held together, viz., sound doctrine and brotherly love, he adds that "it must also be noted that this conjunction of love so depends upon unity of faith that it ought to be its beginning, end, and, in fine, its sole rule."

Thus, for Calvin, the bottom line in ecumenical efforts is oneness in faith, especially concerning the person of Christ. But he insists that we always remember that other dimension: love. This, he observes in his reflections on Philippians 2:1ff., is the point of the Apostle Paul's famous exhortation to
humility based on the example of Christ. "The sum is this," concludes Calvin, that Christians "be united in thought and will. For he places agreement in doctrine and mutual love." Then, commenting on the apostle's injunction to "be of one mind," Calvin adds: "Hence the beginning of love is harmony of outlook; but that is not sufficient, unless men's hearts are at the same time joined together in love."\footnote{190}

Although the argument is circular, it is no vicious circle! Truth and love must be united. Truth without love can be vicious; but love without truth can be vapid. As Ganoczy finely summarizes Calvin's position, 

There certainly is no unity without love. But love in turn is not authentic if it is not founded upon Christ and a faith that is completely established in him. The Anabaptists, therefore, are wrong in demanding a love that would bargain away doctrinal integrity.\footnote{91}

**Conclusion**

What does Calvin teach us today concerning Christian unity?\footnote{92} In terms of principles, much; in terms of concrete application, relatively little. The latter is true because Calvin's situation was very different from ours. His country did not have many different denominations. There were the Roman Catholics, the Reformed, and a few Anabaptists, the latter not taken very seriously. Calvin was instrumental in uniting the two factions within the Reformed camp, but he did not seek a great European Protestant church. His goal was recognition and affirmation of each other's confessions and cooperation wherever possible, whether with the Lutheran Church in Germany, the Anglican Church in England, or the various Protestant churches in the Lowlands, Poland, Hungary, and elsewhere. For Calvin, unity did not necessarily mean union.\footnote{93}

But that should in no way lessen our zeal for greater unity whenever possible. Clearly, Calvin would not have settled for mere "spiritual" union. All his exhortations about unity refer to the visible, not the invisible church. Moreover, he would probably be more open and tolerant than many contemporary church leaders. As John T. McNeill notes, "His passion for ecumenical unity induced an ecclesiastical tolerance that was unusual in his day and is still distasteful to many who profess themselves Christians."\footnote{94}

On the other hand, Calvin would probably be scandalized by certain modern approaches to church union in which recognitions of the headship of Christ in the church is largely a formality. As the Roman Catholic theologian, Kilian McDonnell, puts it, "Calvin, like many reformation figures, thought that there was [in the Roman Church] too much church and too little Christ,"\footnote{95} an appropriate warning for church bureaucrats of every age!

In any case, it is clear that there were also limits to Calvin's tolerance.
Peace in the church was a pearl of great price, but not peace at any price. "Peace" is certainly a pleasing word," Calvin notes in one of his commentaries, "but cursed is the peace that is obtained at so great a cost that there is lost to us the doctrine of Christ, by which alone we grow together into a godly and holy unity."96

At the same time, Calvin would not countenance a petty denomination­alism or narrow confessionalism. Here G. S. M. Walker is on target:

It has been said [by O. Noordmans] that "because of its very origin Calvinism is an ecumenical movement." Whereas Lutherans and Anglicans drew together into national churches, the followers of Calvin formed an international alliance, reaching out into many lands from the small city of Geneva, and occupying a central position in their churchmanship. Indeed, it is in­accurate to speak of Calvinism at all because, through his efforts for unity, Calvin secured something greater than a merely personal following. He aimed with considerable success at establishing a Reformed but Catholic church.97

But Calvin himself should have the last word. It comes from the conclusion to his famous letter to Cardinal Sadolet:

The Lord grant, Sadolet, that you and all your party may at length perceive that the only true bond of ecclesiastical unity consists in this: that Christ the Lord, who has reconciled us to God the Father, gather us out of our present dispersion into the fellowship of his body, so that through his one Word and Spirit, we may join together with one heart and one soul.98

ENDNOTES

1 As the subtitle indicates, this study is based primarily on Calvin's correspondence: Calvijn en de eenheid der kerk in het licht van zijn briefwisseling ('S­Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959). Cf. his essay, "Der okumensche Calvin: Calvin, Luther, and das Luthertum," Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift 34/3 (1980), 191ff.

3. In his comprehensive study, which has not been superseded, *Unitive Protestantism. A Study in Our Religious Resources* (New York: Abingdon, 1930), 68ff., 178ff.

4. *Institutes* IV.1.1, 1012. I am using the Library of Christian Classics (LCC) edition, ed. John T. McNeill and trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960). Later, in graphic language, Calvin amplifies "how useful, how necessary it is, that we should know her [the church, our mother]. For there is no other way to enter into life unless this mother conceive us in her womb, give us birth, nourish us at her breast, and lastly, unless she keep us under her care and guidance until, putting off mortal flesh, we become like the angels [Matt. 22:30]. Our weakness does not allow us to be dismissed from her school until we have been her pupils all our lives," IV.1.4, 1016.

5. Augustine repeats this phrase in several of his writings. See note 3 in the LCC edition of the *Institutes*, 1012.


7. *Institutes* IV.1.2, 1013. "Just as we must believe, therefore, that the former church, invisible to us, is visible to the eyes of God alone, so we are commanded to revere and keep communion with the latter, which is called 'church' in respect to men" (IV.1.7, 1022). Thus, despite his distinction between the invisible and visible church--made first by Augustine--it is the visible church which is the object of his attention in Book IV of the *Institutes*. As Eric Jay notes, "Calvin integrates the concepts of the invisible church and the visible in a way which Luther never succeeded in achieving, The Church. Its Changing Image Through Twenty Centuries* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1980), 170.

8. Ibid., 1014. Note: The brackets here and elsewhere are often not in the original text but have been added by the translator. Cf. the answer to Question 54 of the Heidelberg Catechism concerning the holy catholic church: "I believe that from the beginning to the end of the world, and from among the whole human race, the Son of God, by his Spirit and his Word, gathers, protects, and preserves for himself, in the unity of the true faith, a congregation chosen for eternal life . . . ." (emphasis mine)

9. Ibid.


11. *Institutes* IV.1.10, 1024.

13. Institutes IV.3.2, 1055. According to Francois Wendel, that is what St. Augustine was already saying in The City of God, where he affirmed that "all who are animated by the love of God constitute one religious and social community," Calvin (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 295. Wendel also cites passages from Bucer, Calvin's Strasbourg colleague and mentor, to the same effect.

14. Title of IV.1.1, 1011.


18. "I forebear to mention that they have expelled us with anathemas and curses. . . . Since, therefore, it is clear that we have been cast out, and we are ready to show that this happened for Christ's sake, surely the case ought to be investigated before any decision is made about us, one way or the other," Institutes IV.2.6, 1048. Jean Cadier, the French Calvin scholar, argues that Calvin, being a second generation reformer, aligned himself with a movement which had already broken with the church. Therefore, according to Cadier, "Calvin's position vis-a-vis Rome was quite distinctly a position of separation," Calvin and the Union of the Churches," John Calvin, ed. G. E. Duffield, Courtenay Studies in Theology 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), 118. However, Calvin's own testimony, just cited, indicates that he felt that he was "cast out" of the church by the Roman hierarchy. As Cadier points out later in his essay, "Calvin wanted the reformation of the church, her renewal, and not a deep division. He wanted a purified church, not a new church," 119. Also, Alexandre Ganoczy, the leading Roman Catholic Calvin scholar, notes that "the young Calvin looked with an evil eye upon any attempt, even by evangelicals, to form separate ecclesial communities," The Young Calvin (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987), 271.


21. Institutes IV.1.12, 1025.

22. Institutes IV.1.9, 1023. In contrast to the Lutherans, however, in reference to pure preaching of the Word, Calvin adds: "and heard." Later he adds: "and reverently heard," IV.1.10, 1024. A church does not exist without an appropriate response to the preaching of the Word!

23. Institutes IV.1.12, 1025.


26. See especially Institutes IV.2.2, 4, 6-9.

27. "Nobody ever condemned schism from the true church more vigorously than Calvin; and nobody ever felt logically and emotionally more certainty in rejecting the obedience of Rome," Mc Neill, op. cit., 180.

28. Institutes IV.2.6, 1048.

29. Quoted in Ganoczy, op. cit., 279.

30. Institutes IV.2.2, 1042.

31. Ganoczy, in his thorough study of this subject points out that in Calvin's dedicatory epistle to King Francis in the first edition of the Institutes, "In only one place does he [Calvin] use the expression 'the church of the Antichrist' to stigmatize those who in the name of the church' introduced communion in one kind; Calvin opposes them to the 'apostolic church.' But even here the context shows that he intended to compare two states, the one corrupt, the other ideal, of the same Catholic Church," op. cit., 273. However, see the LCC edition of the Institutes IV.2.12, 1052 and note 16.

32. G. S. M. Walker points out that all her flaws notwithstanding, the Roman church "always intends to be Christ's body, whereas the Anabaptists reject the very possibility of a church as Calvin understands it," "Calvin and the Church," in Readings in Calvin's Theology, op. cit., 216.
"Reply to Sadolet," op. cit., 241. "When we categorically deny to the papists the title of the church, we do not for this reason impugn the existence of churches among them," Institutes IV.2.12, 1052. "That Calvin concedes the existence of individual churches also with the Roman Church (Papiskirche) is also very important for his concept of the church," Otto Weber, "Die Einheit der Kirche bei Calvin," in Calvin Studien 1959, ed. Jurgen Moltmann (Neukirchen: Neukirchen Kreis Moers, 1960), 136.

34. Institutes IV.2.11, 1051.

35. Ibid., 1052.


37. Institutes IV.2.17, 1052.

38. Ibid., 1053.


40. Ganoczy, op. cit., 287. As Gottfried Locher points out, for Calvin and the other reformers it was "the papacy as an institution" which they regarded as the antichrist, Calvin Anwalt der Okumene, op. cit., 24.

41. Institutes IV.1.13, 1027-8.

42. Torrance edition, op. cit., 17.

43. The editors of the LCC edition of the Institutes, in relation to Calvin's reference in IV.1.13 to these three groups, note that, "Though especially directed against the Anabaptists, this section is a vigorous rebuke to the sectarian claim of superiority in all its forms," 1027, note 24.

44. Institutes IV.1.13, 1027-8


46. Institutes, IV.1.17, 1031.
47. Ibid.

48. Ibid., IV.1.13, 1027.

49. Ibid., IV.1.21, 1035.

50. Ibid., IV.1.20, 1034.

51. Ibid., IV.1.21, 1034-5.

52. I have attempted to describe briefly the multifaceted character of Calvin's activities in an earlier essay, "The Catholic Character of Calvin's Life and Work," The Reformed Review, 19/2 (Dec., 1965), 13-19.

53. "The question of the unity of the church . . . became for Calvin the midpoint (Mittelpunkt) of his thought and activity. For him this was not a theoretical question but one of extremely practical urgency," O. Weber, "Die Einheit," op. cit., 131.


55. Quoted in Cadier, op. cit., 122.


58. His union efforts did not, however, extend to the Anabaptists and other sectarians whom Calvin along with the other major reformers regarded as "beyond the pale." But at least he didn't drown them as Zwingli had done earlier in Zurich! See his treatise, "Against the Sect of the Anabaptists" (1544) in which he refutes seven of their teachings. Cf. Mc Neill, The History and Character of Calvinism (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1954), 207.


60. This story is told in greater detail with supporting evidence by Mc Neill, Unitive Protestantism, op. cit., 185-195. Cf. the account by John H. Kromminga,

62. In addition to Lutheran-Reformed dialogue which has been taking place in North America for more than a decade, two significant Lutheran-Reformed conferences have been held in Germany in recent years with some positive results. See *Protestant Agreement on the Lord’s Supper* by Eugene M. Skibbe (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1968), which contains the Arnoldshain Theses (1962); and *The Leuenberg Agreement and Lutheran-Reformed Relationships*, ed. William G. Rusch and Daniel F. Martensen (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1989). The meeting in Leuenberg, Germany took place in September, 1971.

62. Quoted in Parker, op. cit., 114.

63. Variations of this statement are found in various discussions of this theme. Mc Neill, *Unitive Protestantism*, op. cit., 198, attributes it originally to Emile Doumergue, the great French Calvin scholar.


65. Two volumes of his correspondence, edited by Jules Bonnet, are available in English but are out of print. Cf. the handy little paperback edition, *Letters of John Calvin*, together with a brief life of Calvin, published by the Banner of Truth Trust (Edinburgh and Carlisle, Pa., 1980).

66. "Such letters to those in high places should not be seen as an uncalled-for interference. Rather he is writing in the succession of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, who, himself but an abbot, told kings and popes their duty without mincing his words but with the perfect courtesy of humility," T. H. L. Parker, op. cit., 116.


68. *Institutes* IV.4.2, 4, 1072 (cf. 1069).


For more specific examples see McNeill, op. cit., 185, and Kromminga, op. cit., 157f., 161.

Institutes, IV.1.12, 1026. The editors of the LCC edition of the Institutes note that "The distinction of fundamental and nonfundamental articles of belief is woven into Calvin's thought, though not definitively treated by him." They go on to point out that the notion of fundamental articles formed the core of various liberal projects of union in the seventeenth century . . . , 1026-7, note 21.


"Die Einheit der Kirche," op. cit., 141.

Institutes IV.2.4, 1046. Calvin then quotes John 10:14, 10:27, and 10:4-5.

Ibid.

Commentary on Micah 2:2.

In Calvin: Theological Treatises, op. cit., 250.

John Calvin: Catechism (1538), trans. and annotated by Ford Lewis Battles (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1972), i, ii, cf. iii.

In Calvin: Theological Treatises, op. cit., 89.


Commentary on 1 Corinthians 1:2, op. cit., 18.

Institutes IV.2.6, 1048, cited earlier. "The heart of the matter for him [Calvin] . . . is whether they should have a half Christ or the fullness of Christ--whether they should worship and follow the Christ of the Scriptures alone, basing their whole life as a church and individuals upon him, or whether they should build only partly on Christ and partly also on some other foundation," T. H. L. Parker, op. cit., 109.

Kilian McDonnell, op. cit., summarizing Calvin's position. Cf. Calvin's Commentary on Jeremiah 33:17: "This is the mark of the true church . . .: where
the lordship and priesthood of Christ is earnestly recognized; but where Christ is not recognized as king and priest, there is nothing else but chaos."

84 Institutes IV.2.5, 1046f.
87 Ibid., 1047.
88 Calvini Opera 5, 171-2. I am indebted to Ganoczy, op. cit., 271, for this reference.
89 Commentary on Philippians 2:2, Torrance edition, 245.
90 Commentary on Philippians 2:2, Torrance edition, 245.
91 Ganoczy, op. cit., 271.
92 John Kromminga asks the same question at the conclusion of his essay on "Calvin and Ecumenicity," op. cit. 165, and balances off a series of "On the one hand," and, "But on the other hand." I would concede that "there are limits to the appeal which can be made to him" (149), but still feel some modest proposals can be made.
93 "This unity [which Calvin sought] is a fellowship (gemeenschap) given in Christ. It is the point of departure for Calvin's ecumenical activities," Nijenhuis, Calvinus Oecumenicus, op. cit., 278. He "played for high stakes," says McNeill. "Had his ardent hopes been fulfilled, Protestantism would have taken the outlines of a church ecumenical and conciliar . . .," op. cit. 219.
94 History and Character of Calvinism, op. cit., 229.
96 Commentary on Acts 15:2, Torrance ed., 27.
97 "Calvin and the Church," op. cit., 229.
98 "Reply to Sadolet," op. cit., 256.