



Calvin's Company of Pastors: Pastoral Care and the Emerging Reformed Church, 1536-1609 (Oxford Studies in Historical Theology)

By Scott M. Manetsch

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In *Calvin's Company of Pastors*, Scott Manetsch examines the pastoral theology and practical ministry activities of Geneva's reformed ministers from the time of Calvin's arrival in Geneva until the beginning of the seventeenth century. During these seven decades, more than 130 men were enrolled in Geneva's Venerable Company of Pastors (as it was called), including notable reformed leaders such as Pierre Viret, Theodore Beza, Simon Goulart, Lambert Daneau, and Jean Diodati. Aside from these better-known epigones, Geneva's pastors from this period remain hidden from view, cloaked in Calvin's long shadow, even though they played a strategic role in preserving and reshaping Calvin's pastoral legacy.

Making extensive use of archival materials, published sermons, catechisms, prayer books, personal correspondence, and theological writings, Manetsch offers an engaging and vivid portrait of pastoral life in sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Geneva, exploring the manner in which Geneva's ministers conceived of their pastoral office and performed their daily responsibilities of preaching, public worship, moral discipline, catechesis, administering the sacraments, and pastoral care. Manetsch demonstrates that Calvin and his colleagues were much more than ivory tower theologians or "quasi-agents of the state," concerned primarily with dispensing theological information to their congregations or enforcing magisterial authority. Rather, they saw themselves as spiritual shepherds of Christ's Church, and this self-understanding shaped to a significant degree their daily work as pastors and preachers.

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Review

"Manetsch's impressive utilization of such a wide range of sources allows the reader access to a complex and more complete picture of the interplay between theological ideas and pastoral practices in Reformation-era Geneva."

--*Church History*

"Considering the depth of research, breadth of topics and engaging style of writing, it would be hard to improve upon Manetsch's book. It is an impressive example of scholarship that should be emulated by future historians."

--*The Master's Seminary Journal*

"Full of fresh scholarship (including analysis of records never examined closely), *Calvin's Company of Pastors* is a fascinating read." --*The Gospel Coalition*

"This is a quite superb book. It is not only outstanding as a well-written piece of original historical research. It is also most informative concerning the reasons why Reformed and Presbyterian churches came to think about the ministry in the ways they do. Buy it."

--*Reformation21*

"In this rich and illuminating book, Scott Manetsch introduces readers to the fascinating cast of characters who served as Geneva's ministers from 1536-1609. By carefully combining social history with historical theology, Manetsch probes the connection between pastoral theology and concrete practice among these ministers, presenting a marvelous portrait of Genevan pastoral life in Calvin's day and afterward. Lucidly written, this book is a treasure for exploring pastoral identity in the Reformation context."--J. Todd Billings, Associate Professor of Reformed Theology, Western Theological Seminary

"*Calvin's Company of Pastors* is an engaging and exhilarating synthesis of the prodigious research conducted in the Genevan archives for the past fifty years. Manetsch artfully describes everyday church life in the wake of the Reformation but does so through the eyes of three generations of pastors. We thereby learn through details both amusing and poignant just what it was like to accept a call to the pastorate, even as we discover ways in which Calvin did and did not shape the later course of the Genevan church. The book is a compelling introduction to Calvin and his memorable successors as well as a significant contribution to the history of pastoral theology."--John L. Thompson, author of *Reading the Bible with the Dead: What You Can Learn from the History of Exegesis that You Can't Learn from Exegesis Alone*

"Scott Manetsch joins an innovative group in broadening our perspective on the Swiss Reformation, looking beyond Calvin to see how the Reformer's spiritual heirs and followers sustained and modified his legacy in Geneva and surrounding villages. All who are interested in Calvin and Reformed studies will want to absorb the riveting information gathered here concerning the Genevan ministers' class background, education, economic status, marital choices, weekly work assignments, living conditions, hardships, disciplinary fervor, and vulnerability."--Susan Karant-Nunn, Regents' Professor of History and Director of the Division for Late Medieval and Reformation Studies, University of Arizona

About the Author

Scott M. Manetsch is Professor of Church History and the History of Christian Thought at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

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