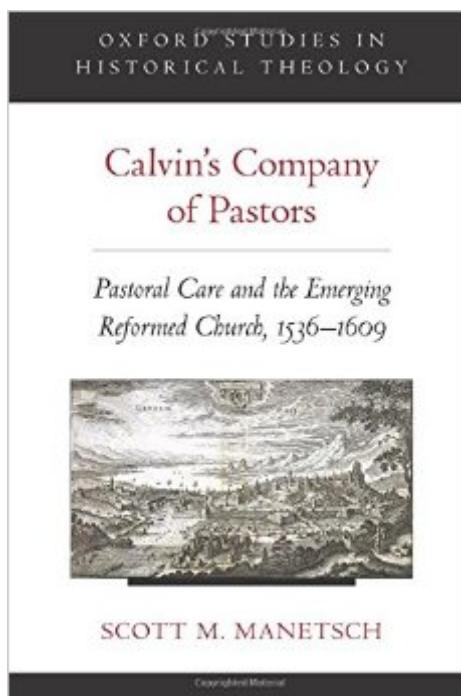


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Calvin's Company Of Pastors: Pastoral Care And The Emerging Reformed Church, 1536–1609 (Oxford Studies In Historical Theology)



Synopsis

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.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If human problems (and therefore, ecclesial problems) are cyclical, than author Scott Manetsch has done a good service for modern pastors in culling together the thoughts, practice and relationships within Calvin's Company of Pastors in Geneva, following his return from exile. A great resource for pastors looking for precedence in practice and a swift read for anyone interested in history.

Wonderfully researched with much detailed information on the functioning, relationships, family life and ministries of the men who made up the company of pastors in the years covered. Gives a realistic picture of these men and the challenges they faced and also the complexities of ministry within the sacral perspective of the times. It is honest in presenting mistakes and faults without falling prey to the modern spirit of historical cynicism because it also highlights the sincere concern evident in the leaders of the Genevan congregations to honor God in his church and to promote the truth of the gospel. The book also contributes helpful information and perspective concerning the tendency in some modern scholarship to pit Calvin against Beza or Calvin against the Calvinists by showing the general continuity between Calvin and the generation of pastors in Geneva immediately following him while at the same time not denying but showing subtle shifts in emphasis or continued development that did occur with respect to certain doctrinal and practical points. I highly recommend the book as well written, enjoyable to read, well researched, highly informative and as a vital and scholarly resource in the study of reformation history and also a helpful contribution in the area of pastoral theology. Jeffery Smith
Emmanuel Baptist Church
Coconut Creek
FL

This is an exceptional overview of the early church in Geneva. Calvin and his contemporaries had thrown out the sacerdotal accretions of the Roman church. But with what should they be replaced? This was largely but not totally an investigation of Scripture. But there were pastoral considerations as well, plus interactions with universities, governments, and more. This is the story of why the Reformed churches are configured the way they are, and why they worship as they do.

This is a book every pastor and minister needs to read. Calvin's thoughts and ideas that flow together in company of other ministers (in this book) go far beyond the normal ministerial get-togethers of today's ministerial crowd. It is not an easy read, but when you are done, you realize the depth of your calling and the depths of confidants in the ministry.

I was so blessed to have read this wonderfully researched and well written work... Surprising to know that the reformed era was very much like our own times.... Petty competition among clergy, woeful ignorance of Scripture among their poplulas and also the difficulties in administering church discipline.... The city pastor's having a comfortable lifestyle which motivated many countryside pastor's to abandon the country side for city.... Also how the minister's handled their poverty and difficulties....Seriously apart from the history, read it for your own edification....

It gives a picture of the early Reformers that is not found in most Church History books and courses.

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