

De Jure Divino Presbyterianism

By Benjamin Shaw

INTRODUCTION

The following quote more than adequately expresses current evangelical views about church government. The Baptist New Testament scholar G. E. Ladd said, “It appears likely that there was no normative pattern of church government in the apostolic age, and that the organizational structure of the church is no essential element in the theology of the church.”¹ Such an assertion would have stunned the Presbyterian divines who made up a majority of the clergy called by Parliament to produce a confession and catechism for the church in the 1640s. They would have argued (and did argue) not only that there was a normative pattern of church government in the apostolic age, but that this pattern of church government was an essential element in the theology of the church, inasmuch as this church government was demanded by the Word of God. Yet the arguments put forth by the Presbyterian divines and their successors were little noted and they were not long remembered by the church at large. The result is that most evangelicals would find Ladd’s assertion to be entirely unobjectionable.

For the most part, the arguments in favor of Presbyterianism as the Scripture-mandated form of church government are found in dusty books, long forgotten on theological library shelves. Few are those who search for those works, for the sense is that the arguments constitute special pleading on the part of the authors. After all, much of the church has practiced an episcopal form of church government for many centuries. Other churches have preferred either a congregational form of government, with all the authority in the local church resting in the body of the church itself, or an independent form of government, where the authority in the church rests with a plurality of elders, but with each congregation a separate and distinct entity unto itself. It is

only *de jure divino* Presbyterianism (DJDP) that argues that the church is both presbyterial and connectional. By presbyterial I mean that rule in the church is in the hands of elders elected from among the congregations. By connectional, I mean that the local church is not considered a distinct and separate entity, but rather is organically connected to other congregations, and that elder rule applies not only at the congregational level, but at rising levels of church courts that exist to provide authoritative guidance for all the connected churches.

It is not my purpose here to lay out the arguments for DJDP, but it will help the reader to have a more exact understanding of Presbyterianism (partly in terms of how the advocates of DJDP understood it, and partly in terms of how Presbyterianism is currently practiced) before we move to consider the use of the Old Testament in the defense of DJDP. DJDP holds that only one form of church government is taught in the Scriptures, and that that form is Presbyterianism. This Presbyterianism teaches that the authority in local churches rests with a body of elders elected from among the congregation. This body is usually identified as a session or a classis. Local churches are connected to one another in a presbytery, which is made up of representative elders from each of the churches, and it is the work of the presbytery to decide matters that come to it from the local churches. Above the presbytery, the organization of different Presbyterian bodies differs somewhat. Some Presbyterian bodies, being of sufficient size, have super-presbyteries called synods, which are made up of representative elders from the presbyteries, and which deal authoritatively with issues coming up to them from

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1. Cited in *Upon This Rock: the Baptist Understanding of the Church* ed. Jason J. Duesing, et al. (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2010), 154.

the presbyteries. In some Presbyterian bodies, the synod is the top court in the rising bodies of church courts. In others, the synod is below the general assembly. In modern terms the general assembly is the top court for most denominations practicing a Presbyterian system of government. It is made up of elders elected from the synods (or presbyteries in the case of denominations without synods). These general assemblies thus deal with issues arising from the next lower level of court, and act as the final authority in that church body. The difference between the general assembly and a convention, such as the Southern Baptist Convention, is that the pronouncements of the latter have only advisory power to the churches, whereas the pronouncements of general assemblies (and the lower courts as well) have authoritative power with the lower courts and with the churches.

It is this “rule by elders” form of church government, with a graded series of courts, that the Presbyterian theologians at the Westminster Assembly argued for. They argued this position in opposition to the Independents, who were arguing that church authority resides only in the elders of the local church, and that there is no fundamental connection of authority among distinct congregations. They also argued this view against the Erasmians, who argued that the authority of the church is derived from that of the civil government.

Two things must be noted before we begin to look at the DJDP. The first is that most of the detailed development of Presbyterian polity comes from the theologians’ use of New Testament texts. Second, there are a number of assumptions about the Bible, and about the issue at hand that were held by the DJDP theologians that may or may not be held by modern exegetes.

Since most of the details of Presbyterian government are drawn from a variety of New Testament texts, it is not surprising that their use of Old Testament texts connects mainly to principles. Therefore, they refer to, and rely on, a relatively small number of Old Testament texts. But these Old Testament texts are foundational for the DJDP argument. Thus it is important to recognize that the defenders of DJDP began with certain assumptions about the Old Testament and its relationship to the New Testament. They also were drawing on a history of Protestant exegesis of these texts. In that way, the citation of a text in defense of a point brings with

it the tradition of Protestant, especially Reformed, exegesis on the passage.

PRINCIPLE 1: THE FUNDAMENTAL UNITY OF ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH

One of the principal assumptions made by DJDP is the following: “Giving a pattern of Church government to Moses, and the Church officers of the Old Testament, ... can we imagine he has not as carefully left a pattern of Church government to his Apostles and the Church officers of the New Testament, ...”² There are two assumptions alluded to here as being necessary as a foundation for further argument. The first is the obvious one: If Christ provided a clear pattern for the government of the church in the Old Testament, doesn’t it make sense that he would provide a clear pattern for the government of the church in the New Testament period? Ladd might not have been willing to grant that, but it is a question that is more than rhetorical.

The second assumption that is implicit here is that Israel is the church in the Old Testament period. That was a standard view, certainly among Reformed theologians in the seventeenth century. In the modern evangelical context, such an idea is often referred to as “supersessionism” or “replacement theology.” Such an identification of the view comes from those who hold that Israel and the church are distinct entities. They see the seventeenth century Reformed view as indicating that the church “supersedes” or “replaces” Israel. But this way of identifying the view fundamentally fails to understand the view. For the seventeenth century Reformed (and their successors), the church neither supersedes nor replaces Israel. Israel is the church of God in the Old Testament. When the transition from the old administration of the church (Israel) to the new administration of the church takes place, the church simply moves from being focused in the nation of Israel to being a worldwide phenomenon, in which the dividing wall between Jew and Gentile is broken down (Ephesians 2:14–15).

Now it may seem that the idea that Israel was the church in the Old Testament period is merely an assumption on the part of seventeenth century Reformed theologians, adopted from their theological context. However, according to the nineteenth century Scottish theologian Douglas Bannerman, this is not the case.³ Rather, it is an exegetical conclusion, drawn from a wide-ranging investigation of the Scriptures. That is, a determination regarding the relationship of Israel and the church is drawn from a study of the whole of the Bible, not just from the Old Testament, nor solely from

2. David W. Hall, ed. *Jus Divinum Regiminis Ecclesiastici: or The Divine Right of Church-Government* (1646; Dallas: Naphtali Press, 1995), 52.

3. *The Scripture Doctrine of the Church, Historically and Exegetically Considered* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1887), 1–2.

the New Testament. This is illustrated by the initial consideration of Revelation 17:14. In this verse those with the Lamb are identified as "called, and chosen, and faithful." The older writers identified these called, chosen, and faithful ones as the church.⁴ Having identified the church as "the called, chosen, and faithful," they search the Scriptures in order to further identify the church. They note that Abraham is the first one in the Scriptures to whom these three terms are applied (Neh. 9:7–8; Heb 11:8). Since New Testament believers are identified as Abraham's seed (Gal. 3:29), it would seem to follow that, as Abraham is the father of the faithful (Rom. 4:11), the church goes back at least as far as Abraham. Thus, the nation of Israel, which is made up of descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, is by inference the church in the Old Testament period.

This view, rather than being called supersessionism or replacement theology, might better be identified as continuationism. The church continues from the Old Testament to the New Testament, with the differentiation consisting in the manner in which the church is visibly identified, and in the manner of the administration of the church itself. So, for example, the *Westminster Confession of Faith* (WCF) identifies the visible church as having been under the law confined to one nation, but under the gospel consisting of "all those throughout the world that profess the true religion" (25.2). The difference in administration is summarized in WCF 7.5–6 in the following manner: "under the law it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other types and ordinances delivered to the Jews, all foreshadowing Christ to come." Under the gospel, the ordinances are "the preaching of the Word, and the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper."

If, then, the church of the New Testament is the continuation of the church from the Old Testament, the inference that Christ would provide a polity for the church in the New Testament as he did for the church in the Old Testament seems a not unlikely inference. As such, it would be expected that the details of this administration would be set forth primarily in the New Testament. However, the New Testament has as its foundation the Old Testament, and so it is also likely that some principles of church polity that would be applicable to the New Testament church would be laid out in the Old Testament.

Another way of putting this is that the Old Testament, just as much as the New Testament, is directed to the church for its use. The Old Testament was not merely for the use of Israel, nor did it merely point to

the coming Messiah, nor was it simply a collection of ancient Israelite literature that may or may not have significance for the modern age. Instead, it is part of the book of the church. As the Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF) puts it, "The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture" (1.6). This view of the Scriptures, which was not exclusive to the Westminster theologians, produces a very different sort of reading of the Old Testament than is commonly found today. This will be illustrated by the succeeding discussion.

PRINCIPLE 2: THE FUNDAMENTAL AUTHORITY OF CHRIST OVER THE CHURCH

DJDP draws on a number of Old Testament passages to establish this point. It might seem to be an obvious point, one that any Christian would quickly assent to, even without being directed to the Scriptures to support the idea. However, as we see much in our day, the Word of God (which is the Word of Christ) is often given short shrift when it comes up against our idols. It was the same in seventeenth-century England. The king was the head of the church. The church in England had practiced an episcopal polity for generations. It was a new thing to argue that Christ had not mandated that episcopal polity for the church. Thus the Divines thought it necessary to establish at the beginning that Christ is indeed the Head of the church, and that he orders its structure and function. Perhaps the first passage in priority is Isaiah 9:6. While a well-known, and no doubt much-beloved passage, the significance of this verse for the question of church polity is not commonly recognized. The government mentioned here is not merely the world-wide authority that God exercises as part of the display of his sovereignty. Nor is it referring only to the eschatological reign of Christ, a view expressed, for example, by Gary Smith who says, "Such strong statements imply that Isaiah is talking about the final eschatological ruler. Second, this ruler will reign on the throne of David and reestablish his kingdom. This pledge certifies beyond the shadow of a doubt that the text refers to the ultimate fulfillment of the Davidic covenant through a 'messianic' figure."⁵ The seventeenth

4. See, for example, *The 1599 Geneva Bible* (White Hall, WV: Tolle Lege Press, 2006), which identifies the Lamb and those on his side as "Christ and his church."

5. Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 1–39*, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2007), 242.

century theologians held that this was a reference to Christ's current reign over the church. Matthew Poole, for example, refers the government mentioned here as "of Israel, or of God's people, to whom he is given."⁶ Poole sees this government as especially the government of Christ over his people, not simply the general rule of God over all things. Calvin puts it this way,

Not only will God bring back the people from captivity, but he will place Christ on his royal throne. . . . Thus he affirms that the kindness of God will not be temporary. For it includes the whole of that intermediate period during which the church was preserved till the coming of Christ.⁷

As with Poole, the particular consideration of Christ's government is, for Calvin, directed primarily to the good of the church. Since it is for the good of the church, then Christ exercises his dominion over the church according to his appointed ways.

Another passage from Isaiah that is commonly quoted is 33:22. Of this passage Calvin says,

The prophet now explains the manner in which God dwells in the Church. It is, that he is there worshipped and acknowledged as *Judge, Lawgiver, and King*; for they who obey God and yield subjection to him as their *King*, shall know by experience that he is the guardian of their salvation; . . . Hence, also, we ought to observe what is the true church of God. It is that which acknowledges God to be a "Lawgiver: and "King" (Calvin, *Isaiah*, 3:39).

The seventeenth century scholars understood this passage to refer particularly to Christ, the King and Head of the church. Hence, the church is to look to him as its lawgiver and king.

There are several other passages that also come under consideration in the establishment of this point. The most significant are Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:23; 37:24; and Hosea 3:5. On Jeremiah 30:9, the *Geneva Bible* comments, "That is, Messiah which should come of the stock of David according to the flesh and should be a true pastor." The mention of pastor makes it clear that the annotator sees this verse as referring particularly to Christ's authority over his church, and his pastoral exercise of that authority. Ezekiel 34:23 and 37:24 are closely related passages. Both speak of David as the

new shepherd that God will set up over his people. The second passage also mentions the kingly role of this David. That the prophet is not referring to a resurrected David, but to the Messiah is to be affirmed. Matthew Poole, for example, says, "It is the Son of David, who was also his Lord, that is here intended. My servant: the Messiah, in his mediatory office, is God's servant and our Saviour." What is of particular note is something that Poole says in his commentary on the same verse.

They shall also walk, & c.: it is both declaratory of duty, predictive of the event, and promissory of ability and assistance to keep the holy commandments of God. Christ's kingdom is that which by law and precept commandeth righteousness, and which by grace and power strengthens its subjects to this, and so the event is sure, and freest grace makes holiest lives (Poole, 2:776).

Poole and others have seen this passage, and other passages already referenced as teaching that the kingdom of God is the church (see, for example, WCF 25.2), and that Christ has full authority over this kingdom. His subjects are to walk in his judgments and observe his statutes.

PRINCIPLE 3: THE EXERCISE OF LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH IS IN STEWARDSHIP TO CHRIST

On this point, perhaps the central passage is Isaiah 22:22 (cited here from the *Geneva Bible*): "And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder: so he shall open, and no man shall shut: and he shall shut, and no man shall open." The argument from this verse is not that it is a verse about the Messiah, but rather that it sets out the significance of the term "keys."

"Hence, as *Key* is used metonymically in the Old Testament for stewardly power and government, so in the New Testament *kleis* ("Key") is always used metonymically or metaphorically to denote *power*, and that about Ecclesiasticals or Spiritual [matter]s" (Hall, *Divine Right*, 173).

Thus, those who hold the power of the keys, hold them as stewards of Christ. In some sense, this is really a corollary of the second principle stated above. If indeed Christ is the fundamental authority over the church, then those who are to exercise power in the church hold and exercise that power at the will and behest of Christ. Who those stewards of Christ's power in the church are is to be determined on other grounds. The argument for leadership by elders is largely based on New Testament

6. Matthew Poole, *A Commentary on the Holy Bible*, 3 vols. (1685; repr. The Banner of Truth Trust, 1962; repr. 1975) 2:347.

7. John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah*, Calvin's Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 1:306.

texts, and inferences drawn from them. These are not out of concern here.

PRINCIPLE 4: CHURCH AUTHORITY IS EXERCISED IN A SERIES OF GRADED COURTS

In essence, the episcopal system of church government shares this view. Roman Catholicism has, in effect, a graded series of three courts, embodied in particular persons. At the lowest level is the priest. At the next level is the bishop. At the top is the pope. As summarized above, Presbyterianism has generally three to four levels of church courts: the session (or consistory), the presbytery (or classis), the synod and/or the general assembly. Rather than being embodied in individual persons, however, it is embodied in groups of elders.

The question, of course, is where this principle of graded courts comes from. One passage that is commonly used here is Exekiel 18:19–26. This is the passage where Jethro gives Moses advice about how to deal with the questions and issues raised by the people. There are two principles that DJDP derives from this passage. The first is that Moses is to look for men of established character. That is, they are already displaying the characteristics of elders. Second, the men are appointed to increasing levels of authority, from rulers over tens to rulers over thousands. The implication is clear that easy cases are decided at the lowest level, while harder cases move up in level until they reach a level where a satisfactory solution is proposed.

A second passage that is used often is Deuteronomy 17:8–12. The main point here is that if a matter is too difficult to decide at a local level, then recourse is to be had at the place where the Lord chooses to set his name. There the priest is to be consulted, and his ruling, which is to be according to the Law, shall stand.

The same principle is illustrated in 2 Chronicles 19:8–11. This is the passage where Jehoshaphat established priests, Levites, and heads of the fathers’ houses for judgment in Israel. In this, Jehoshaphat is drawing on the principle laid out by Jethro.

This principle of graded courts is thus established by Old Testament pronouncement and example. As with other elements of the Presbyterian system, it is worked out more thoroughly by DJDP with extensive reference to New Testament passages.

CONCLUDING SUMMARY

Making use of the Old Testament, the DJDP authors developed an understanding of a Presbyterian approach to

church government that served as a foundation for their analysis of relevant New Testament texts. This understanding involves a holistic approach to the Scriptures that is not commonly found in modern treatments. Partly this is due to the influence of Enlightenment assumptions about the meaning of the Bible in its immediate historical context. Partly it is due to a shift in focus in the use of the Bible. For the theologians and pastors who developed DJDP, the Bible was pre-eminently the book of the church. For the modern biblical scholar or theologian, the Bible is also to a significant degree a book for the academy. This modern two-fold character of the Bible is bound to affect how the modern scholar, even the evangelical scholar, views and uses the Bible, particularly with regard to such topics as the polity of the church.

Given this modern situation, Ladd’s assertion to the effect that the Bible tells us nothing significant about the polity of the church is understandable. It also shows us that we have perhaps lost something of value along the path from the seventeenth century development of DJDP to Ladd’s contemporary lack of concern. ■

In Brief: Defining Divine Right

Of the nature of a jus divinum, or a divine right in general

Now touching this *jus divinum* of Church-Government, two things are yet more particularly to be opened and proved for the more satisfactory clearing thereof unto sober minds, to unprejudiced and unpre-engaged judgments, viz.: 1. What the nature of a *jus divinum* is, and how many ways a thing may be said to be *jure divino*, and *that by warrant of Scripture*. 2. *What the nature of the Government of the Church under the New Testament is, which is vouched by the Scripture to be jure divino.*

For the first, viz. What the nature of a *jus divinum*, or a divine right is, consider both *what jus divinum* is in general, and how many ways a thing may be said by Scripture warrant to be *jure divino*, or of divine right *in particular*.

Jus is a Latin word, which we sometimes render “Law”; as, *Jus naturale*, the “Law of nature”; *Jus Gentium*, the “Law of Nations,” etc. Sometimes we render it, “Right, just, or due,” viz., according unto some law (*Jus idem est quod justum, aequum*, etc. Calvin, *Lex Jurid. in verb* “Jus;” Suarez, *Tractatus de legibus*, I, ch. 2) Different Etymologies are given of it by learned men, chiefly these two:

1. *Jus* is derived a *jubendo*, from commanding; and the thing commanded, *jussum*, seems notably to speak as much, if we cut the word in two, *jus-sum*. And in this sense it is, that *Jus* is so often used for a “Law, Precept, or Command” (*Nam*

Lex in jussione, seu imperio positaeſt), as Suarez rightly notes. *The nature of a Law conſiſts in commanding.* Agreeable to this ſenſe is the Hebrew word *hok*, which ſignifies (Mercer on verb in *Pagn. Lex. Hebr.* [Santi Pagnino, Jean Mercer, *Thesaurus Linguae Sanctae, ſive Lexicon Hebraicum*]) *Jus, Statutum, Lex, etc.* (Right, Statute, Law), or that which is *juſt to be received by virtue of ſome Statute Law.* And it differs from *miſphat Jus, Judicium, etc.* (Right, Judgement), in that the former word is moſt commonly applied to *Rules and Rites Eccleſiaſtical*, this latter word to *Political* for moſt part (as Mercer in *Pagn.* notes).

2. *Jus* by ſome is derived a *Juſtitia, Right*, from *Righteouſneſs, Juſtice, etc.* — *Jus* being the firſt ſyllable of the word. To this Etymology inclines Iſiodore (*Etymol.*, ch. 3, *Jus dictum eſt, quia juſtum eſt*), and Auguſtine conſents hereto (on *Psalm 145. Sub. fin., Jus & injuria contraria ſunt: jus enim eſt quod juſtum eſt*). Thomas alſo conceives (Aquinas, 2, Q. 57, art. I, 2.), that this is the firſt reaſon and ſignification of the word *Jus*, and concludes: *Jus non eſſe legem, ſed potius eſſe id, quod lege praſcribitur ſeu meſuratur, i.e. Jus, Right is not the Law itſelf, but rather that which is preſcribed or meſured by the Law.* (Answerable hereunto is the Greek word *nomos*, Law; ſo called from *rendering or diſtributing* to every perſon what is “juſt, meet, equal.”) According to this ſenſe, *Jus, Right*, implies a kind of due, equity or power in or to any thing. There is *jus in re*, and *ad rem*; as the father has *right in* his inheritance, the heir (though under age) has *right to* his inheritance. Which of theſe two Etymologies is trueſt, will be hard to determine; in our preſent caſe of *jus divinum* we may make uſe of both.

Divinum, in Greek is *theion, Divine*. This term in Scripture: 1. Sometimes notes the *divine eſſence*, or God-head itſelf, to *theion heinai homioi* (“that the God head is like to” — *Acts 17:29*). 2. Sometimes it ſignifies certain *divine endowments*, whether gracious or glorious, communicated to us from God, and in ſome ſenſe comparing us unto God: “You ſhould become partakers of the divine nature” (2 *Peter 1:4*). 3. Sometimes it points out a *divine warrant* or authority from God, engraven or inſtamped upon anything, whereby it is exalted above all human or created authority and power. And thus, all Scripture is *theopneustos* (divinely-breathed, or inſpired-of-God; hence is the divine authority of Scripture aſſerted — 2 *Timothy 3:16-17*). And in this laſt ſenſe eſpecially this *jus divinum*, or *divine right*, is here ſpoken of in reference to Church-Government, as it ſignifies a divine warrant and authority from God himſelf, engraven upon that Church-Government and Discipline (hereafter to be handled), and revealed to us in his holy Scriptures, theſe infallible and perfect Oracles. So that *Jus divinum, divine Right* (according to this interpretation of the terms) is that which is either *juſtum, juſt, meet, and equal*; or *jussum, commanded, enjoined* by any divine warrant or authority. And generally, a thing may be ſaid to be *jure divino*, which is any way *divinitus juſtum, divinely*

juſt, equal, etc.; or, *divinitus jussum, divinely commanded* by any Law of God, or by that which is equivalent to a divine Law. And whatſoever matters in Church-Government can be proved by Scripture to have this ſtamp of divine warrant and authority ſet upon them, they may properly be ſaid to be *jure divino*, and by the will and appointment of *Jeſus Chriſt*, to whom God has delegated all power and authority for government of his Church (*Mt. 28:18-20*; *Is. 9:6*; *Jn 5:22*; *Eph. 1:22*).

In this ſenſe, if Church-government, or any part of it is found to be *jure divino* conſequently: 1. It is above and con-tradiſtinct from all human power and created authority in the world whatſoever. *Jus divinum* is the higheſt and beſt Tenure, whereby the Church can hold of Chriſt any Doctrines, Worſhip, or Government. Only God can ſtamp ſuch a *jus divinum* upon any of theſe things, whereby Conſcience ſhall be obliged. All human inventions herein, whether deviſed of our own hearts, or derived as Traditions from others, are incompatible and inconfiſtent herewith; vain in themſelves, and to all that uſe them, and condemned of God. (See 1 *Kings 12:32-33*; *Is. 29:4*; *Mt. 15:6-9*).

2. It is beyond all juſt, human or created power, to aboliſh or oppoſe the ſame, or the due execution thereof in the Church of Chriſt. For, what is *jure divino* is held of God, and not of man; and to oppoſe that, were to fight againſt God. The ſupreme Magiſtrates in ſuch caſes ſhould be *Nurſe-fathers* (*Is. 49:23*), not *Stepfathers* to the Church — their power being *cumulative and perfective*, not *privative and destructive* unto her. For ſhe both had and exerciſed a power in Church-government, long before there was any Chriſtian Magiſtrate in the world. And it cannot be proved that Chriſt ever reſumed that power from his Church, or translated it to the Political Magiſtrate when he became Chriſtian.

3. It is ſo obligatory unto all Churches in the whole Chriſtian world that they ought uniformly to ſubmit themſelves unto it in all the Subſtantials of it ſo far as is poſſible. For a *Jus divinum* is equally obligatory to one Church as well as to another. And it is ſo obligatory to all perſons, ſtates and degrees, that none ought to be exempted from that Church-government which is *jure divino*, nor to be *tolerated* in another Church-government, which is but *jure humano*; nor ought any Chriſtian to ſeek after, or content himſelf with any ſuch Exemption or *Toleration*. For in ſo doing, inventions of men are [would be] preferred before the ordinances of God; our own wiſdom, will, authority [would be] before the wiſdom, will, authority of Chriſt. And we ſhould in effect ſay, “We will not have this man to reign over us” (*Lk. 19:27*); “Let us break their bands aſunder, and caſt their cords away from us” (*Ps. 2:3*).

Jus Divinum regiminis Eccleſiaſtici; or, the Divine Right of Church-Government, ed. David W. Hall (Naphtali Preſs, 1995), ch. 2, 5-8. (Ed. We have made ſome revisions and corrections to the text). ■