

Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion (in Henry Beveridge's translation of 1845)

*This extract is drawn from the last page of the **Institutes**.*

There exist several English translations of the Institutes, the first being published in London as early as 1561. Some are based in the 1560 Latin text others on the 1561 French version. An English translation of this latter version has recently been published in 2009.

But in that obedience which we hold to be due to the commands of rulers, we must always make the exception, nay, must be particularly careful that it is not incompatible with obedience to Him to whose will the wishes of all kings should be subject, to whose decrees their commands must yield, to whose majesty their sceptres must bow. And, indeed, how preposterous were it, in pleasing men, to incur the offence of Him for whose sake you obey men! The Lord, therefore, is King of kings. When he opens his sacred mouth, he alone is to be heard, instead of all and above all. We are subject to the men who rule over us, but subject only in the Lord. If they command any thing against Him, let us not pay the least regard to it, nor be moved by all the dignity which they possess as magistrates - a dignity to which, no injury is done when it is subordinated to the special and truly supreme power of God.

From the *Institutes* book IV, chap. 20 § 32.