

to the Genevan council in an attempt to regain it for Rome. The Council and the Genevan syndics (the regulatory powers) were concerned and without an adequate answer. In time, Calvin knowing of the situation, prepared a defense of the Genevan reform which is contained in his essay REPLY TO SADOLETO. This, along with his tract on the reforming of the church, is the clearest single voice in the enunciation of the reformation position on the church. The Geneva move was not schismatic, he urged, because it continued the true body that Christ had begun. The current ecclesiastical power neither observed the sacraments nor the Gospel and so had lost the right to be called a "church." The Genevan reform and similar moves were necessary if the church were to survive and fulfill the purposes assigned it by the Lord. Calvin's arguments settled the issue and in time came to be something of the public apologetic position. With this successful expression of interest, and with the control of the Genevan council passing into the hands of persons who felt more like Calvin did, the city asked him to return. On his part there was great reluctance but Farel informed him that to fail to do so was inviting the curse of God on his labors...and thus Calvin returned not happily, but determined and there he would put in the rest of his laboring years.

Returning to Geneva in 1541, Calvin found himself something of a popular hero. There was still opposition to his ministry and this would actually increase until 1555 but he had the support of the government and probably the majority of the people. The opposition largely grew from his efforts to have Geneva a "totally Christian city"--a goal of his ministry. In the areas where he defined Christian position, not all agreed and conflicts of interest did arise.

But this must be remembered: in all the time he ministered at Geneva, Calvin had no temporal powers. He did not even so much as become a citizen, although an act was undertaken by the Council to this end in 1559. He was, however, an active spiritual leader and in this role he gave advice on all manner of things. But he was not the mayor, sheriff, or an elective person at all. No doubt his word carried a lot of weight wherever it was given due to the respect of his person and learning, but he was not the civil authority that some occasionally suggest.

When the earlier challenges were survived, Calvin became more authoritative by virtue of the