Jehan Cauvin (John Calvin) (1509-1564)

French (Humanist Lawyer, Minister and Reformer)

**Theological Arguments:**

Sum of human wisdom consists of knowledge of God and ourselves  
Knowledge of God can only be obtained through scripture  
Images of God lead to idolatry (Iconoclasm)  
Original sin means humanity needs redemption from Christ  
Faith -> repentance -> remission -> regeneration  
Justification by faith alone  
God has chosen to actively save some people (predestination)  
Christ is the head of the universal Church

**Reformation of Society as well as Church**

Goal: safeguard the rights and freedoms of ordinary people  
Favored a combination of democracy and aristocracy  
Separation of Powers due to strong force of sin  
If rulers rise up against God, they must be put down  
Allowed modest interest rates on loans  
Everyone must work – it is a means of expressing gratitude to God

*John Calvin* by Hans Holbein   
(c. 1556)

Married Idelette Stoerder de Bure, widowed mother (1540)

*Portrait d’Idelette de Bure* by Xavier Wuerth (1909)

Second Helvetic Confession (1562)

Written by Heinrich Bullinger as a personal statement of faith

Used in by Frederick III, Elector of the Palatinate as a defense against heresy

Adopted by the Swiss Cantons in 1566, later by Reformed churches in Hungary, France and Poland

More than half about how to live as a Christian

Strong statements supporting infant baptism and rejecting re-baptism

Support for Predestination

Predestination

Augustine of Hippo

God chose from eternity who would come into the Kingdom of God to replace fallen angels and fill up the ranks of the heavenly choir

Only those God chose could turn away from their sins to God, because God would grant them grace

Calvinian

Predestination is a comfort for those who are wracked with worry of their eternal salvation

You don’t have to do anything to earn salvation – it comes from God alone

If God has chosen you, you cannot resist God’s grace

God has a plan for everything in creation

Calvinist

*All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation; and, accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or death.*

*~John Calvin,* Institutes of Christian Religion*, Book III, Chapter 21*

Double predestination – God has chosen some for salvation and some for damnation

Presbyterian Controversy

Seen by other denominations as defining doctrine of Presbyterians

Tension between concept of calling/election and human responsibility