JOHN OWEN

John Owen (1616-1683) was one of the most prodigious, productive, and persuasive theological minds of his time. He lived at the height of England’s Puritan Revolution — through civil wars, the Regicide, Interregnum, the Restoration, and Puritan persecution that followed (roughly 1640s-1680s). Through it all, he was a major player in the hotly contested ecclesiastical debates and religious politics. For Owen, these realms and pursuits intersected with what Scripture calls the kingdom of Christ. Though the kingdom is a spiritual realm — Christ ruling in the souls of his elect — it was to be manifested nationally, ecclesiastically, and eschatologically. This, then, is a theological and contextual study of Owen on the kingdom of Christ, focusing on these three interrelated realms: the settling of the kingdom in ecclesiastical politics, the keys of the kingdom in local church government, and the coming of the kingdom in an age of “latter-day glory.” On these points, Owen not only departed from the Magisterial Reformers, but at times departed from his own previously held convictions. He was Reformed and reforming.

REFORMED AND REFORMING: JOHN OWEN ON THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST

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