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AN INFORMED FAITH

the POSITION PAPERS *of* R.J. RUSHDOONY

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CONTENTS OF VOLUME I

Foreword xiii

Culture

1 Our World Today 3
2 The Cultural Conflict 7
3 The Lost Center 9
4 The Cultivation and Promotion of Impotence 13
5 Curzonization 18
6 The New Racism 21
7 The Communion of Saints 25
8 Communion and Communications 30
9 On Giving to the Rich, the Middle Class, and the Lower Class 35
10 The Ultimate Pornography 40
11 The Dying Enlightenment 45
12 The Myth of Socialization 49
13 The Eschatology of Death 52
14 The Love of Death 58
15 Reality, Faith, and Architecture 63
16 Inheritance, Barbarism, and Dominion 67
17 The Old Order 71

Reconstruction

18 "First the Blade" 77
19 The Wheat and the Tares 82

20 Revolution or Regeneration 85
21 Great and False Expectations 89
22 The Menace of the Future? 92
23 Sufficient unto the Day 95

Dominion

24 Antinomianism Versus Dominion 99
25 World Salvation Versus World Domination 105
26 Religious Liberty and Dominion 109
27 False Religions 114
28 The Roots of Environmentalism 119
29 The Future Is the Lord's 123

The Christian Life

30 Faith and Understanding 129
31 The Use and Abuse of Worship and Prayer 132
32 Against Much Praying 136
33 Perfection 141
34 The Heresy of Unconditional Love 145
35 The Heresy of Love 148
36 Absolutizing the Relative 152
37 Holiness Versus Perfectionism 156
38 Maturity 161
39 Hypocritical Guilt 164
40 The Sins of the Fathers 167

The Family

41 The Family 171
42 The Family 175
43 The Attack Against the Family 177
44 Social Planning and the Family 182
45 The Definition of Man 185
46 The Failure of Men 190
47 The Place of Women 195
48 The Paradise of Women 201

Economics & Capitalism

49 The Doctrine of Debt 207
50 The Love of Money 211
51 Karma, Debt, and the Sabbath 214
52 Man and the State 220
53 The Trouble with Social Security 223
54 The Militarization of Life 229
55 Ownership 233
56 The Decapitalization of Mankind 237
57 Wealth 240
58 Wealth, Responsibility, and Cowardice 246
59 Wealth and Heirship 249
60 Wealth and the City 255
61 Wealth and the State 261

History

62 Our Doxology 269
63 The Pagan Critiques of Christianity 273
64 The Failure of Church History 276
65 Latitudinarianism 279
66 The Dark Ages 283
67 Wealth, Time, and History 287
68 Social Amnesia 293
69 Living in the Past 296

Education

70 Aristotle Versus Christ 303
71 Education and Decadence 305
72 Education as a Panacea 309
73 The Restoration of Education 313

Conflict

74 Conflict with the State 317
75 In the Name of Jesus Christ, or in the Name of Caesar? 323
76 Conflict Versus Harmony 329

FOREWORD

by Martin Selbrede

To write a position paper is to take upon one's shoulders a major responsibility. Position papers are intended to speak with authority to the matter at hand. People will even study their opponents' position papers to better mark the issues that divide various schools of thought.

Not every position paper, however, functions as a manifesto, articulating ideas that embody moral force. And fewer yet are conceived as marking out cultural territory to be claimed for the Kingdom of God. Position papers of that kind represent tent pegs driven deep into the world of mankind's rebellion against its Creator. They establish a beachhead. Whether it's a deeply rooted beachhead that will stand the test of time, or a poorly built edifice that's quickly swept aside by more able opposition, depends on the breadth and depth of its workmanship.

Position papers that treat their subject matter in a superficial way, that lack depth, provide poor anchors upon which to build cultural foundations. That depth relates not just to doing what is popularly called "a deep dive" into the subject matter. Many writers can "go deep" without discriminating between important and unimportant elements in their analysis.

Depth for depth's sake is actually not true depth. Depth means *tracing what's important* back into the core foundations of a matter, to mark out how ideas, concepts, and conflicts appear on the stage of history and why they progress as they do. In short, to do justice to a matter requires understanding its history and the presuppositions that undergird it.

A position paper with true depth will "pop the hood" to explore the otherwise hidden or undisclosed roots of its subject. A position paper conceived as an embodiment of St. Paul's marching orders to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:4–5) must dig deep

to ferret out non-Christian foundations that afflict our understanding. Humanism being the air we breathe by default, it is crucial that a position paper stand upon the Word of God so unapologetically that the pretense of common ground disappears entirely.

Beyond this, a single position paper must also exhibit breadth of scholarship. If all things cohere in Christ, then all things are ultimately related to one another. To omit to make these connections is to give humanistic frameworks free rein to integrate all of human learning and experience for us. We are under obligation to bear witness to the overarching governance and providence of God.

If we fail to connect all topics, subjects, and disciplines together under Him, then the mind of man is the source of order in our world. This means that to do justice to a topic, one must also do justice to all related topics. One must be both specialist and generalist to fully declare Christ's lordship over any disputed territory. Because we live in a world where sovereignty over every square inch is in dispute, lesser measures will be left in the dust. Very strong medicine is what we desperately need to avoid healing the wound of God's people slightly (Jer. 6:14; 8:11). Any position paper that allows us to "halt between two opinions" (1 Kings 18:21) has not done its job: in fact, it has failed to justify its existence because it sets us adrift from the law and testimony into the darkness (Isa. 8:20).

The Chalcedon Position Papers of R. J. Rushdoony

The writings of Dr. R. J. Rushdoony (1916–2001) have taken many forms: Bible commentaries on both Old Testament and New Testament books, a systematic theology, and books on dozens of topics of contemporary import. Unique among his writings are the position papers he began to publish in 1965. Now gathered into three volumes with full indices, they represent an extraordinary legacy being passed on to future generations of faithful men and women.

Each individual position paper by Dr. Rushdoony occupies a square on the cultural and intellectual chessboard our world is built upon. He chose which squares to stake out for Christ with deliberation, always mindful of Christ's claims on everything and everyone. His goal was to keep driving a tent peg into every single square of the chessboard until God saw fit to give him rest from worldly labor. The process of crafting these position papers (which amounted to weaponized payloads targeting the specifics of humanism's fraudulent dominion) dovetailed with an already congested personal schedule. Yet, as prolific an author as Dr. Rushdoony

was, he regarded himself as slothful compared to the Puritans who paved the way centuries earlier in terms of exhaustive scholarship.

When Dr. Rushdoony sensed an area where Christian scholarship had left a vacuum or (worse yet) the ominous wreckage of earlier misfires at establishing godly dominion, he deployed his encyclopedic learning to reverse the situation and do so decisively. The now-overused image of the sons of Issachar ("that had understanding of the times and what Israel ought to do," I Chron. 12:32) applied with full justice to Dr. Rushdoony, founder of the Chalcedon Foundation. More significantly, Dr. Rushdoony had understanding of our times because he had understanding of earlier pivotal epochs and their influence on the present *and* because he steadfastly viewed all reality through the lens of its Creator and Lawgiver.

The process of driving these tent pegs continued under the radar until Dr. Rushdoony's work at Chalcedon became influential enough to attract humanistic opposition. By that time, dozens of critical squares on the chessboard had already been claimed for Christ, with more territory being gained with the advent of each new position paper.

Christians who were strengthened and equipped by these position papers became additional boots on the ground in asserting the crown rights of the King of kings, because no humanistic challenge could stand against the bulwarks painstakingly raised by Dr. Rushdoony. Scoffers could only malign from a distance. Those that dared go toe-to-toe with Dr. Rushdoony (like Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox in the Leeper homeschooling trial) were handed their hats.

While Dr. Rushdoony's individual position papers had both depth and breadth, the spreading network of position papers added *extension* to the picture. Christians who had despaired of seeing any serious challenge to the hegemony of humanism, and were thus cowed into a pietistic corner because no successful alternatives were available, discovered that the Goliath of humanism did have a David to deal with. With his pen, Dr. Rushdoony had reversed the process of humanism crowding Christianity out of all fields. Each new position paper dislodged the enemy from one position after another *for those who read and applied the lessons in those papers*. It was a slow-motion rout with both the speed and force of a glacier.

These position papers, in their own way, embody one important application of Isaiah 58:12, which speaks of raising the foundations of many generations. Since the advent of Darwinism, Christianity has had its intellectual feet continually knocked out from under it, offering no broad-based countermeasures as humanism gained ascendancy. The line of thought running from John Calvin to Abraham Kuyper to Cornelius

Van Til to Rousas John Rushdoony provided an alternative both credible and Biblical, one sufficiently developed to actually turn the flank of the opposition. By rebuilding the *foundations*, Christians once again had solid ground upon which to mount the challenge to man in rebellion against God. It became ever more difficult for naysayers to argue that the Bible doesn't speak broadly to all men on all matters. The position papers of Dr. Rushdoony expose this lie on every single page.

Humanists certainly resent having their intellectual and cultural foundations shattered and new Biblical foundations being poured over the resulting ruins. This is to be expected. The bigger surprise is how many Christians share the humanists' revulsion at seeing every thought being taken captive to Christ. Opposition to the work of Dr. Rushdoony has united humanists and those Christians committed to protecting secularism at all cost. These strange bedfellows do indeed share certain values with one another, but when they face the content of these position papers they confront a serious problem: they can't fight something with nothing.

This kind of situation plagued a theologian of an earlier generation, Dr. Benjamin Breckenridge Warfield (1851–1921). It was said of this noted polemicist that the only way to deal with so strong a protagonist was to ignore him. We seem to see the same cowardice in the case of Dr. Rushdoony as well. If you can't ignore him, then discredit him (preferably with faulty secondhand sources, because primary sources will fall short of the goal). The intent behind the reviling of this author has always been to prevent Christians from gaining traction using the Biblical foundations he has laid *by making them fearful of the judgment of men*. Because this strategy worked effectively in Christ's time, it remains in the toolkit of those wary of His Kingdom and its expression in time and history.

But these position papers *are* primary source documents. Being foundational in their nature and conception, they equip the reader *to continue building the Kingdom along the Biblical lines they've laid out for us*. They articulate the battle lines and what, precisely, is at stake. Considered in their entirety, they provide a systematic network of manifestos spread over every major aspect of reality. They teach us that *nothing* is beyond the scope of Christ's Kingship here and now, and they do this by providing a living example of this truth. In that capacity, these position papers slay the myth of neutrality on their every page. In so doing, they give us reason to fight the spiritual battles before us on every conceivable battlefield.

From Position to Progress

There's nothing more wonderful or deadly than laurels. Sitting on one's laurels is the dangerous downside of achieving mighty things for God. Perhaps even worse is for those who follow to sit on the laurels of their predecessors.

And so we come to the unfortunate implication of the term *position paper*. It denotes taking a position on something: *a static position*. The thought is to hold ground, rather than to conquer additional territory.

In the case of the Scriptures, there is certainly a time and place to hold fast to certain things, to protect a precious deposit, to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. But in other matters, returning the same talent that you were originally dealt will count as wicked slothfulness in our Master's sight. Foundations are not to remain unimproved foundations forever. In Haggai 1:9 the people of God failed to build upon the previously laid foundation, so those exposed timbers eventually rotted and became unbuildable — making of God's house a "house that is waste." Once foundations are laid, *the rest of the building must go up*.

The powerful legacy in these volumes drops a burden into the lap of each and every reader: now that you know this, how will you build? Will you extend the foundation by applying the Word to areas not yet covered, driving more tent pegs into the chessboard? Or will you choose a foundational area to build up vertically, driving the process closer to the day the capstone can be slid into place?

For these position papers serve not only as *manifestos* (writ large with moral imperatives) but even more profoundly as *blueprints*. The notion of a blueprint should not be taken literally in this instance, but in the deeper sense of *pointing out the direction for future progress*. By articulating the shape of the foundation, the shape of what is built on top of that foundation can then be intuited. It is in this sense that these position papers act as blueprints, for they point the way that leads to the capstone.

By the same token, the subjects not covered by these position papers serve as blueprints for extending the foundation where it hasn't yet been properly built. In our present surveillance-ridden age we keep hearing the phrase *If you see something, say something*. These position papers send a more legitimate message to the reader who studies them: *If you see a hole, fill the hole*. If the hole is in the field you yourself work in, even better: reconstruct what you know best, and in so doing cast your crown at Christ's feet. You'll leave more conquered territory for the next generation to build upon.

Each new tent peg (stake) in the cultural chessboard follows the growth

pattern of Isaiah 54:2: "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes." When extending the foundations of Christian dominion over every area of life and thought, the message must always match Isaiah's cry: Spare not. Don't hold back. Nothing must be left in the darkness.

But not all readers will be inclined to "go horizontal" and widen the foundation further. Some will be inspired to "go vertical" and build upon the foundations laid out in the position papers found in these three volumes of *An Informed Faith*. They desire to race against each other, out of mutual zeal for God, to hasten the placing of the capstone. Like Dr. Rushdoony before them, they're willing to be stepping stones to that goal, which may still be many generations in the future. But they operate in confidence that the capstone will be brought forth "with shoutings crying Grace, grace unto it" (Zech. 4:7). And all will know that the capstone stands atop a building built upon the foundations faithfully laid in writings such as these seminal papers by Dr. R. J. Rushdoony.

To be sure, there is only one chief cornerstone, and there is only one foundation laid, which is Christ. Not a single position paper in these collections is infallible or canonical. Nobody has ever urged otherwise about the works of Rousas John Rushdoony. So if we ask how well his writings compare against Scripture, the answer must be *no contest* in favor of Scripture. But if we instead ask how well these writings reflect the truths of Scripture and their real world application, we must answer *better than virtually anything written in the last hundred years.*

If you then ask, which tool of sanctified Christian scholarship provides the best foundation for challenging humanism and retaking ground for Christ, the answer is letter simple: you're holding that tool in your hand.

Christians with an informed faith will build on rock rather than on sand. In an era where so many Christians are building on sand and undermining the Lordship of Christ, we must assert that the only foundations that won't be overthrown are those rooted in Him and His Kingdom. We read in Ezekiel 13:10–16 that God's people were seduced to trust in a wall that was painted to cover up its weakness, provoking God to blow it away. This is no time to whitewash and conceal the weaknesses in our faith and understanding, which inevitably will lead to "confusion of face" (Dan. 9:8) as Dr. Rushdoony observed. Rather, it is time to raise the foundations of many generations (Isa. 58:12), starting with you, and starting right here.

CULTURE

1

OUR WORLD TODAY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 79, October 1986

Recently, I was in an eastern state as an expert witness in a freedom of speech and freedom of religion trial. Two street preachers were on trial and had been arrested and imprisoned earlier. The judge in this case, unlike so many, was courteous and conducted the trial with dignity; however, he readily admitted hearsay evidence against the two preachers. The city brought to the trial a zeal which would have been more appropriate for a case involving rape or murder. I left at the end of the first day, having given my testimony, but the memory of the case remains, together with a sharp awareness of this country's degeneracy. Pastors and Christian school leaders, as well as children, are regularly on trial. Widows and orphans, whom the Lord regards as the test of a people's faith, are systematically robbed by inheritance taxes, and most people, in and out of the church, do not care and are indifferent to the evils of our times.

The other morning I was awakened by a very vivid and horrifying dream. In my dream, I was back at the courtroom (where *in fact* no local pastor came to give open support, being fearful of the hostility or disfavor of the city fathers). In my dream, three mildly friendly men unrelated to the trial offered to drive me to the airport. There was an oppressive darkness in the air and in the minds of men. All had left faith and morality behind, and the world was Christless. We stopped at an intersection; a nearly naked black girl of about twelve years ran crying to the automobile, asking for help. I demanded that she be taken in. Just then, a van, going in the opposite direction, pulled alongside of us; the two men in the cab, one black, one white, demanded the girl's return. They mistook my refusal's reason, and offered to sell her, adding that they could supply any age or color, any sex, for any purpose. I demanded that the driver gun the motor and leave, and we escaped the slave-wagon. I asked the frightened

girl her name, and she had none, only "girl." The three men told me the girl was my "problem"; they wanted no part of "stolen property." I realized I was in a slave world without Christ and without Scripture, the law-word of God. Then I woke up with the recognition that the world I live in and the world of my dream are not very far apart.

The next day, *The Wall Street Journal* (August 7, 1986, p. 24) gave confirmation to my dream in an article by Bruce S. Ledwitz, "The Questions Rehnquist Hasn't Had to Answer." The author called attention to the ironic fact that prominent conservatives and clergymen had strongly supported Justice William Rehnquist for chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Rehnquist follows strictly in the legal footsteps of Holmes. He denies the relevancy to law of personal moral judgments, because they are "subjective" and supposedly cannot be proved.

Legal positivism governs our courts increasingly and is separating religion and morality from law. The same legal cynicism that led to Marxism and to National Socialism is now increasingly commonplace in American law.

My dream was very logical. A world not under God's law is soon a world in which only tyranny prevails. Moral order is replaced by statist order, and man ceases to be a person before the law. We should remember that John Dewey, the father of modern statist education, was skeptical about personal consciousness and conscience. For him the reality was the statist community.

Bruce S. Ledwitz called attention to the churchmen and conservatives who supported Rehnquist's nomination as chief justice by President Ronald Reagan. These men won the battle, but they continue to lose the war because the basic issue is obscured. What we face is more than a political battle, and more than an intellectual struggle. It is a conflict of faiths, and, by supporting men like Rehnquist, we are aiding and abetting our own destruction. The conservatives have won many victories in recent years which have only advanced the cause of their opponents.

A key problem of our time is the failure of men to see what is at stake. A spiritual blindness marks our age. In 1924, Eileen Power wrote an interesting study entitled *Medieval People*. In 1938, she wrote an essay, later included in the 1963 (tenth ed.) printing, entitled "The Precursors," which begins with a survey of "Rome in Decline." Towards the end of her essay, she commented, "The fact is that the Romans were blinded to what was happening to them by the very perfection of the material culture which they had created. All around them was solidity and comfort, a material existence which was the very antithesis of barbarism." They might have problems, but for the Romans it was unthinkable that barbarism could replace civilization. As Eileen Power grimly noted, "Their roads grew better

as their statesmanship grew worse and central heating triumphed as civilization fell."

Central to Roman irresponsibility and blindness, according to Professor Power, was their educational system. It was irrelevant to their problems, she noted, "and it would be difficult to imagine an education more entirely out of touch with contemporary life." The Romans were guilty of "the fatal illusion that tomorrow would be as yesterday."

Rome was full of cultured Rehnquists who were busily making Rome and its ways irrelevant to reality. Its liberals were building up statist power and destroying society. Its conservatives had impotent criticism, of which Petronius Arbiter gives us an example, in the complaint, "And it is my conviction that the schools are responsible for the gross foolishness of our young men, because, in them, they see or hear nothing at all of the affairs of everyday life." True enough, but neither Petronius Arbiter nor any of his fellow satirists could offer Rome the faith and morality needed to revitalize their world. The Romans were practical men of the variety Disraeli described in the nineteenth century, when he observed, "Practical men are men who practice the blunders of their predecessors."

Professor Ledwitz said of Rehnquist, "In a 1976 article, Justice Rehnquist formally set forth the ideas he has implicitly championed throughout his judicial career. In the article, he formally endorsed Justice Holmes' call for 'skepticism' about moral values." From coast to coast, our press snarls with rage at those who try to apply religious and moral standards to man and society. The "good" is increasingly defined by what the state does, because no God and law above the state is recognized and the state is viewed as a god walking on earth.

Phil Donahue used a Soviet propagandist on his television show, and the man, Vladimir Posner, saw the United States as "bad" because it has unemployment, poverty, and homeless peoples, whereas the Soviet Union, he said, had none. Bayard Rustin, in criticizing Donahue and Posner, called attention to the fact that his black grandparents were slaves and had full employment, food, and housing, and it was not a good order for them. Remove God and His law from society and you have the moral confusion demonstrated by Posner and his friends.

Roman civilization, said Eileen Power, lost the power to reproduce itself. She gave no clear answer to this problem, but, as Christians, we can supply one. If you believe nothing, what can you transmit to your children? If you have no faith, can you give your heirs anything but cynicism as a way of life? If good and evil are myths, then how can we call life itself good? The increasing incidence of suicide among state-school children is the logical conclusion of an educational system stripped of Christianity.

Modern man has no solid grounds for condemning slavery, tyranny, child abuse, sexual abuse, or anything else. Fifteen years ago, some of the avant-garde leaders of the new amorality were insisting that all things between consenting adults should be legal. Now the limitation of consent is disappearing as some groups agitate for the freedom to molest children. As Dostoyevsky observed more than a century ago, if there is no God, then all things are possible.

But there is a God, the Lord God of Scripture, and He lives, and He is a consuming fire to His enemies (Heb. 12:29). All things are not possible, because God reigns. There is therefore causality and judgment in history, and God's law governs all things.

Can men make this the kind of world I dreamed about? Yes, and they are doing so. But as the sabbath song, Psalm 92, declares in verses 7–8, "When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed forever: But thou, Lord, art most high for evermore." Men's Towers of Babel are always confounded and destroyed. The judges and rulers of this world will in time take notice, because none can escape the righteous Judge of all creation.

2

THE CULTURAL CONFLICT

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 228, September 1998

DURING most eras of Christian civilization, people have seen their age as the peak of history and of culture, and with some measure of truth. However cruel and brutal an era may seem in retrospect, its basic direction and impetus have been usually promising. Its sins can be real: the Victorian era was addicted on the one hand to pornography *sub rosa*, and a worship of things classical (Greco-Roman) on the other, but its better side showed remarkable growth in Biblical studies, Christian culture, and a concern for the common man.

A significant shift came with the twentieth century. Previously, three concerns governed a culture — the church, the family, and education — and while this latter at one time meant the university, it came in time to mean education on all levels and spheres.

With the twentieth century, a new emphasis unknown since the fall of Rome came into focus, *entertainment*, and it was accompanied by another, also echoing Rome, *statist charity or welfare*. Some of us have memories of the kerosene-lamp era, before electricity reached the countryside. When the sun set, it was not long before everyone had supper and went to bed. Summers had longer days and longer work hours; entertainment had no such commanding place in everyday life. Radio and films first began to command men's days, and by 1960, some 120 million tickets to films were sold weekly in the United States. This was little compared to the rise soon thereafter of television, with an average of four hours daily of viewing time per person.

The implications of this were enormous. It created a different kind of person. In 1998, it seems strange to recall that in the 'teens and even into the 1920s a word often used was *edification*. As a child, it early caught my eye. To *edify* meant to build, construct, or improve, especially

morally and religiously, and reading, preaching, teaching, and drama were all expected to *edify* people.

Very quickly, however, we went *from edification to entertainment*. Perhaps the revivalists led the way. Preaching at one time had stressed solid exposition, growth in the knowledge of Scripture; it came quickly to mean entertainment, albeit with a goal in mind. The revivalist very early affected church preaching by cheapening its contents to stress ear-catching entertainment and emotional results.

In other areas, entertainment per se had dramatic results. Earlier humor had often been political, but not ugly. In early film fare, as witness the Laurel and Hardy films, and Jack Benny on radio and in film, one poked fun at himself. After the World War II shift, men like Don Rickles made ugly jokes at others, often audience members. The world had changed greatly.

The older culture, by stressing family, church, and education, called thereby for growth and improvement. The cult of entertainment had no improvement in mind: it became increasingly sadistic. Today Don Rickles is a somewhat mild figure compared to modern comedians and film directors. Entertainment directed against others becomes in time sadistic, and then drops all pretense at humor to stress sadism. It thereby becomes pathological even to view it.

It is not enough to condemn this return to the culture of Rome, nor to avoid it. We must restore the older Christian priorities of family, church or faith, and education in a Christian sense.

We are seeing a major revival in all these fields, and a recent Minneapolis conference spent time in railing against all such efforts. But the best reform begins on the grassroots level, and it attacks the evil closest to home.

Phariseeism, self-righteousness, marks the new culture. It demands sexual freedom, abortion, and feminism, i.e., freedom from responsibility to others in every sphere. It resents any call to moral accountability in any Biblical sense. It is the culture of death. We must separate ourselves from it by affirming the culture of life, Christianity.

3

THE LOST CENTER

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 152, June 1992

Some years ago, John S. White, in *Renaissance Cavalier* (1959), pointed out that, when man lost his sense of God as the center, and this world as the focal point of the great work of the Creator-Redeemer, man lost an important ingredient of his freedom. When God is the center and all in all, man could be independent of man, because God was his center and the source of man's law and status. With a man-centered faith, man now needed man and society "as a resonance box." White said that before this, "The invisible eyes of God hovered above him. (Now) Universal Man needs society in order to display his virtues. His realm is only of this world" (pp. 8–9).

God being denied as the center, man greedily took God's place. Galileo, Copernicus, and Darwin were welcomed, each in turn, not because of scientific evidence, but because they dethroned God in favor of man and his "autonomous" reason.

By 1920, William Butler Yeats, in his poem "The Second Coming," wrote,

> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.

The "new" revelation was not to be of Christ as the center, but of something radically different; after twenty centuries of Christianity,

> And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
> Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

Meanwhile, "the new man" was no longer the regenerate man in Christ but the intellectual and the artist. Of the intellectual as "the new man," Friedrich Heer wrote that, "he called everything in the world into

question except his own ego, which he interrogated incessantly for the answer to his problems. He was the self-proclaimed heir both of prophets and priests" (*The Intellectual History of Europe*, pp. 202–203). Intellectuals and artists united in giving expression to the new view of man as the center in a new art form, the opera. It is impossible from this distance to appreciate how grand the grand opera of the Enlightenment and Romantic eras was: vast cost, long hours, spectacular settings, and more. Opera gave expression to man's view of himself as heroic and godlike.

The courts of kings became staged opera. Louis XIV set the standard. On February 15, 1715, Louis XIV received an embassy from Persia. He played the role of Apollo, and the Sun King, to the hilt. Earlier, ca. 1680, when Versailles was being built, with up to 36,000 workers plus the army, the death toll was enormous. Every night, wagons carried off the dead workers killed in the accidents of rushed construction. An old woman whose son was killed, in her grief called Louis XIV a tyrant and was flogged in public. Shortly thereafter, a man of sixty complained about the death of his son. He was condemned to be a galley slave and die soon, chained to his oar, but first he had his tongue cut off. This was the medieval and early modern penalty in France for blasphemy. Now it was blasphemy to criticize Louis XIV (Diana de Marly, *Louis XIV and Versailles* [1987], pp. 33–34). Versailles, an unending operatic stage, saw Louis XIV receive the Persian embassy in a dazzling coat of black embroidered with diamonds, worth 12,500,000 (gold) livres. The coat was so heavy that he had to be helped to the throne by his two illegitimate sons, Maine and Toulouse, who were themselves ablaze with diamonds and other stones (ibid., pp. 125–126). The ceremonies of the courts of Europe, small and great, were all imitation opera, and Versailles was imitated by country gentlemen as well as the nobility.

But this is not all. Since man was now the center of the universal stage, all began to imitate kings and courts, and the theater and opera set tempo for one area of life after another. According to Jean Starobinski, in *The Invention of Liberty*, one set of operatic figures replaced another, and "[i]t seems likely that (at the French Revolution) the Revolutionary mob felt itself involved in a large-scale theatrical performance and that the more ardent Revolutionaries saw themselves as actors playing heroic roles" (p. 106).

In my student day, students who were "intellectuals" read with religious fanaticism two stupid books, John Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World* (1919), and Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940); the first was supposedly history, the second, a novel. Both were very bad opera; and bad opera now rules politics, the academic community, television evangelists, and more.

According to Starobinski, by the Baroque period, "The idea of an infinite universe had triumphed." As a result, "All parts were equivalent." (This meant that a knave was as good as the best of men, and a fool's opinions as good as those of the best scholar. It meant a total equality of all men, ideas, religions, and art forms.)

As Starobinski pointed out, every person, every individual mind, could "organize" the whole universe "from his own point of view, justifying his own private interests, while acknowledging the interests of others" (p. 115). (This means purely personal values, with every man as his own god. The values of the cannibal are as valid as those of the saint. Our state schools tell children that values are personal choices and creations. The world has become a stage in which every man writes and acts out his own scenario or opera!)

Louis XIV, the great example of modern man, could afford to indulge his fantasies as few others have been able so to do. He spent an hour and a half daily in getting dressed, with help (Marly, p. 38). The truth was what he chose it to be. When Marechal Vauban pleaded for a fairer taxation system, calling attention to the suffering of the poor peasantry, he was dismissed from the court, in spite of a lifetime of faithful service (ibid., p. 103). After suffering military defeats, Louis XIV said, "God seems to have forgotten all I have done for him" (Nancy Mitford, *The Sun King* [1966], p. 114).

Louis XIV was able to indulge the self-centered nature of fallen man as have few others. The word revolved around him: hence he saw himself as the Sun-King. Even more, he was to himself "an imperial idol," and "All Europe was expected to bend the Knee before King Sun" (Marly, pp. 71, 83). He was able to indulge himself as every spoiled child or criminal mind dreams of doing.

Because the modern age denies God as the center, and because man has become the central actor on his own stage, equal validity is given to all things that move in terms of man as the center. God and His law-word are seen as something evil and antihumanistic. This has led to a characteristic of the modern age, which is a revival of paganism. Sensualism and intellectualism have gone hand in hand. The intellectuals of the early church, the medieval era, and the Reformation, were men for whom God was the obvious priority. This perspective was summed up by the Westminster Shorter Catechism: "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever." But the modern intellectual has an affinity for moral depravity. He is a champion of abortion, adultery, homosexuality, euthanasia, and more. Freedom for him means a mind and a life separated from God and His law. In Starobinski's telling words, "As Kant was to

say, the men of the Enlightenment were no longer willing to obey arbitrary external laws; they wanted personal autonomy to recognize only such laws as they perceived within themselves" (Starobinsky, p. 12).

We are now in the last days of this humanistic culture. It has, unhappily, captured vast areas of the church. God's law-word is despised, and churchmen "recognize only such laws as they perceive within themselves," and they call this the leading of the Holy Spirit.

But "be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). God's harvest time of judgment has begun, and men, churches, and nations will be judged. They have lost, they have abandoned the only true center, the triune God, and they cannot escape the judgment that is overtaking the world.

4

THE CULTIVATION AND PROMOTION OF IMPOTENCE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 84, March 1987

In her study, *The Knight in History* (1984), Frances Gies tells us of the growth of irrelevance in knighthood. Originally, the knight was an important and key figure in feudal society. However, after 1050, knights began to stress their status rather than function, and "what had been a rank became a hereditary caste" (p. 26). In time, their lives and their tournaments became "an adjunct of theatrical productions and partook of their character" (p. 200). The same thing in time became true of royalty: it became a matter of blood and theater. Earlier, a ruler like William the Conqueror was a bastard whose mother was emphatically not royalty; later, such a king was ruled out. It was not ability that counted but blood. Royal "courts" ceased to be a place of justice and became social centers where dress prevailed in importance over character and ability.

What had happened was that men preferred the façade to reality. The centers of power became centers of fashion and theater, not of justice and government; and before long, they lost their power. When fashion and theatricals become more important to those in power than justice and social advancement, then the end is not far away.

To prefer fashion and theater to justice means that the ruling powers have lost their hold on reality. They seek admiration and envy, not results and progress. But this is not all. Art is divorced from Christianity to become a substitute for religion, and the power elite becomes linked to an art elite which is similarly out of touch with reality. Each serves to exalt the other as they go blindly into destruction. Such a direction is not limited to heads of states. It is also true of the world of commerce. Otto Scott has often commented on a revealing aspect of the life of corporations. Their founders are true entrepreneurs, men of ability, vision,

and foresight. As innovators, they build a great industrial empire out of little or nothing other than their dedication and ingenuity. Such men vary in character, and their biographies reveal sometimes very real flaws, but they were builders. But there is another fact about them: often they were short and unprepossessing in their appearance. Many had character traits which today would lead to their immediate rejection by any personnel department. If they appeared today, looking for jobs with firms they established, they would be rejected! It was rare for any of these innovators to have a college degree. Today, the firms they founded take college men only, and only those over six feet, in many cases! The result is cloning an image of an advertising agency's fashion plate. Is it any wonder that the corporations are having problems?

The same problem exists in the church. Administration is often given priority over pastoral and preaching concerns. "Ministerial relations" committees handle placements in many church bodies, and these committees are more often concerned about loyalty to the church than loyalty to Christ and Scripture. Such a superficial churchmanship leads to a theatrical view of reality. Ecumenical meetings by failing churches pronounce all kinds of judgment on things they know little about. There is more concern with public relations and a good press than there is with reality.

In the world of the theater, life and death are both make believe, not reality. Reality is no longer real to some people. Theodore Shank, in his study of the *American Alternative Theater* (1982), which he found pleasing on the whole, cited one leading figure in the theater who declared, "Life, revolution, and theater are the words for the same thing: an unconditional NO to the present society." But to equate revolution and theater with life is to have lost a hold on reality! Shanks said, of the Living Theater group, "life is theater, and theater is their life." Such a view means that a hold on reality is lost. It should not surprise us, then, that one performer has insisted, "Acting is not make believe but living exquisitely in the moment."

This is the avant-garde theater today, and this, too, is much of our world; it feels that only when one is on stage, only when one is a part of a "living theater," is life real. (One man seriously told me once that to be truly alive one had to live in New York City!) Is it any wonder today that more and more of our "news" and politics is dominated by press conferences, public hearings, and television coverage than by actions and accomplishments?

On stage, life and death are make-believe, not real. So too are births, accomplishments, and victories. When men move from reality to theater, they sentence themselves to impotence.

For the living dead, there are virtues in impotence. It means none of the pains, expenses, and heartbreaks of family life, of birth and death, and the partings of ways. Impotence eliminates many of the cares and problems which are basic to life.

Our age obviously loves impotence and death. It favors homosexuality, abortion, euthanasia, and more. It will not face up to the growing epidemic of AIDS, and it continues to live in its fantasy world. The presbyter Salvian, describing the fall of Trier in the last days of the Roman Empire, tells us that men did not defend the city because they were too interested in the games at the arena. After the rape, looting, and burning of Trier, the survivors petitioned the emperor to rebuild their arena so that the games could go on and their morale improved! Salvian said of Rome, "it is dying, but continues to laugh." So, too, this modern age: it is dying but continues to laugh.

Impotence today is cultivated on all sides. A few years ago, at its inception, I joined a national group ostensibly dedicated to studying and implementing matters of national policy. Its members were to be Christians and conservatives. Very quickly, in only a few years, it has become theater. It is more interested in providing a forum for "big names" than in serious study. Its meetings are now expensive social events. One might say that, instead of being a training ground for war horses, it has become the gathering place to produce geldings and mules! Impotence is cultivated, and ineffectuality is the order of the day. Men must love impotence, because they spend so much money to produce it!

In 1947, in *The Abolition of Man*, C. S. Lewis began with a telling chapter on "Men Without Chests," i.e., on education as planned sterility. At the end of the chapter, he said, "In a sort of ghastly simplicity we remove the organ and demand the function. We make men without chests and expect of them virtue and enterprise. We laugh at honor and are shocked to find traitors in our midst. We castrate and bid the geldings be fruitful" (p. 16). This is true not only of education but of every area of life and thought. The culture and promotion of impotence is central to our contemporary culture.

Biblical faith is vital and demanding. It requires that we die in Christ and become a new creation in Him. It requires our total surrender. We must become Christ's creation and creatures.

The world prefers a surface religion. It was surface religion which destroyed the medieval church long before the Reformation. Margaret Wade Labarge, in her study of *Henry V* (1975), wrote of the fact that Henry took his religious duties seriously. However, with most people, religion had become conventional. "Conventional religious practice required no

individual initiative and did not necessarily imply any personal commitment. A look at the hierarchy of the day provides still another impression of decent formalism" (p. 95). Before the immoralism of recent years, we too had our era of "decent formalism." It has given way to indecent immoralism and rebellion!

I have had calls from time to time from troubled pastors, all with a common problem. People visit their church to see "what's happening." They want a church where they can be spectators to much action, but they do not want to be part of *the work*. One pastor reported that one visiting couple said that they wanted a church "where things happen and miracles take place"! They did not ask for an opportunity to serve. They wanted to be spectators. This is an easy route to damnation.

Given the modern perspective, when Paul was converted on the road to Damascus, instead of asking, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6), Paul instead should have asked, "Lord, what's in it for me?"

Returning again to Henry V, Labarge's comment is of interest when she says of medieval kingship that it was associated with justice. "Justice was the prime virtue of a medieval king" (p. 187). Not all medieval kings were just, but enough of them were, and the concern for the realities of rule, not theatricals, governed them. Even ungodly kings were able to retain power, because they did not lose touch with reality.

Monarchy disappeared when it became theater, when it lost touch with reality. Ludwig of Bavaria, Richard Wagner's friend and patron, was such a ruler. He was far more beneficent than many a predecessor, but his idea of a kingship was so unrealistic and so theatrical that it proved suicidal for the future of the crown. Wagner himself took Germany and much of the Western world into a land of fantasy and irrelevance. Wagner adopted the current anthropological doctrine of myth as a higher reality and thus a higher realm of truth.

The same evil doctrine is widely prevalent today, especially in seminaries, both Catholic and Protestant. A myth is said to be a higher form of religious truth and is not to be confused with falsehood. By "seeing" the mythological character of the Bible, we supposedly have a firmer grip on truth and reality!

How much trust can we place in a mythological bridge across a canyon? Such men may insist that these "myths" embody a higher reality, but in so speaking, they declare themselves to be, at the very least, fools, if not knaves.

Such professors turn Christianity from the truth of God into a lie called myth. They insist that theater in the form of myth is reality, and that, by implication, reality is unreal.

We live in an age when men believe that "life is theater and theater is their life." They insist that "acting is not make-believe, but living exquisitely in the moment." This is insanity and a flight from reality. But that flight from reality is all around us. Press conferences replace action, and public relations govern the world of "living theater." The curtain always comes down on the stage; the play-acting comes to an end. But life goes on; it does not end with us, nor with our children, and we cannot ring down the curtain on neat and invented endings made for an imaginary, theatrical world without birth or death.

The world of the "living theater" is not for us. We are told, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities" (Rev. 18:4–5).

The impotent have no future. The cultivation and promotion of impotence is the calling of the humanists. Our Lord is the Lord of life.

5

CURZONIZATION

Position Paper No. 204, September 1996

More than sixty years ago, as a young man, I was very much interested in the British leader, George Curzon, a member of Parliament, Viceroy of India, Lord Privy Seal, and later foreign secretary, First Baron and First Marquess Curzon of Kedleston. Curzon (1859–1925) worshipped power, authority, and ritual. As a result, he thought highly of Turkey and of autocracies which stressed symbols. He saw it a duty to impress natives and common peoples with the trappings of power. The Delhi Durbar, monuments to the unknown soldier, and other symbolic events and cenotaphs showed Curzon's hand. Much of the ceremony common now to state functions shows the influence of Curzon. It has been called Curzonization.

David Cannadine, in *Aspects of Aristocracy* (1994), observed, "For him, great ceremonials were 'pages of history,' 'chapters in the ritual of the state'" (p. 83). Cannadine devotes a very long chapter to Winston Churchill, an example of this. Of Churchill, Cannadine observes, "He showed no respect for religious belief or spiritual values, and his conversation was often Rabelaisian" (p. 149). But Churchill could not turn every speech and act into a momentous ritual and symbol. His lust for greatness he made into an imperial ritual and act. He saw Britain's rise to power as the work of a small segment of Britain, an aristocracy that had propelled a people into greatness. Churchill had no idea what the common people were like and imagined them still to be small cottagers. He had been attracted to Sir Oswald Mosley, Mussolini, and Fascism.

But Churchill was not alone in this. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, with less ability, also saw life as a stage whereon aristocrats managed things in the name of the people.

In World War II, Britain and the United States were led by men

indifferent to Christianity, while Germany, the Soviet Union, and Italy were led by men (Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini) opposed to it.

There was a logic to all this. Lord Curzon was a man who substituted forms and symbols for substance and reality. St. Paul early faced this issue. With him, and with the New Testament, *definition* now became a matter of inner reality, not external form. Paul insisted, in Romans 2:28–29, that the true Jew is one who is a Jew inwardly, from the heart, not merely by circumcision. It is hard at this distance to recognize the religious revolution this created because the Greco-Roman world was content with external definitions. Mohammed expressed the counter-revolution to Paul and Christianity by declaring that he is a true Muslim who is one *outwardly*. Curzon and the twentieth century are in line with Mohammed, and the political leaders now admired represent this externalism and hypocrisy.

About thirty years ago, I was told of a group of intellectual and cultural leaders that it was radically tolerant of any kind of immoral behavior performed discreetly but radically intolerant of any moral standards on any grounds. This describes rather well the culture of our day. Many of the televised ceremonies of our day, awards celebrations, political non-events made momentous, academic ceremonies, ecclesiastical professionals, and more, are best described as the results of Curzonization.

Critics saw in Lord Curzon an "insufferable sense of superiority: not for him the sordid policy of self-effacement" (p. 78). Much of the supposedly ancient imperial pomp of Britain has its origin in the Curzon era. Oxford, too, felt the effect of Curzonization when he became Chancellor.

But that is not all. Curzonization now appears even in middle-class weddings, performed with much pomp and more expense, followed by receptions at greater costs and pretentiousness. Simplicity and economy are somehow in bad taste! Curzon's premise was, impress the peasants and natives. But what about God? More than once, God through the prophets expressed contempt for the solemn assemblies of a hypocritical people. He saw these as a form of rebellion. He declared that, in all these pretentious forms, the faithful city had become a harlot.

Lord Curzon restored at great expense some magnificent mansions: Kedleston, Derbyshire; Bodiam Castle, Sussex; Montacute House, Somerset; and Tattershall Castle, Lincolnshire; two of these were bequeathed to the National Trust. He was an earnest and dedicated servant of the monarchy and empire. But he was also a prime example of the new temper of men and nations. After Darwin, men turned from a moral and a religious imperative to a man-centered one. Their concern ceased to be pleasing God but became instead impressing men.

In the colonial era, the imperative to children was pleasing God and their parents as duty to Him. By the late 1950s, college and university students were telling me that the governing force on campus was peer pressure, pleasing one's classmates and meeting with their approval. Since then, the power of peer pressure has grown. Nothing is more calculated to make a people easily controlled than peer pressure, a modern term for an old fact, the fear of man. The fear of man is a condition of tyranny, and only the fear of God can counteract it and prevail.

6

THE NEW RACISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 14, July 1980

Racism is a relatively new fact on the world scene. In earlier eras, not race but religion was the basis of discrimination. Although religious history has been marred by ugly violence against other religious groups, and the history of the Christian church is no exception to this, there is a notable fact which is often forgotten. Missionary faiths, and supremely Christianity, normally seek to win other groups, not oppress them, and this missionary impulse has also provided, in many eras, a favorable cause for a friendly approach.

In the modern era, as Christianity's influence receded and science began to govern together with humanism, biology came to predominate over theology. The differences between men were seen increasingly as biological and racial rather than religious. The earlier physical anthropologists made very precise and detailed physical studies of all peoples in order to establish the physical differences between races.

The theory of evolution fueled this developing scientific racism and added still another important factor. Many theories began to hold to multiple origins for the human race. Whereas in Scripture all men are descendents of Adam, in evolutionary thought all men are possibly descendents of very differing evolutionary sources. Common descent in Adam meant a common creation, nature, and responsibility under God. The idea of multiple origins proved divisive. The human race was no longer the human race! It was a collection of possibly human races, a very different doctrine.

It is important to recognize that racism was in origin a scientific doctrine. Whenever a scientific doctrine is discarded, as witness the idea of the acquired inheritance of environmental influences, the old scientific doctrine, as it lingers on in popular thought, is blamed on religion or

popular superstition! The origins of racism are in very highly respectable scientific theorists. The fact that men like Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855–1927), a British admiral's son and son-in-law of Richard Wagner, took this scientific literature to develop what became the foundation of Nazi thought does not eliminate its scientific origins.

The defeat of the Nazis did not end racism. Instead, it has again become respectable and widespread. We must remember that studies of Hitler's Germany indicate that his support came from liberals, democrats, socialists, and the intellectual community. Scholars like Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn have ably exposed the myth of a conservative or rightist origin for Hitler's support. The fact of Hitler's antipathy to Christianity helped enlist support for him.

The new racism is widespread and common to many peoples and to every continent. It has now become a part also of the religious vocabulary of many churchmen. Thus, in almost every seminary today, pompous professors rail against a missions program which would export "the white mentality" and European modes of thought. What is the white mentality, and what is the European mode of thought, as against the human, common to all men? If it is specifically white and European, it must be common to the pre-Christian European as a racial factor. The pre-Christian Saxons, for example, practiced human sacrifice and more. Much more could be said about pre-Christian Europeans, but I have no desire to be flooded with angry letters (which I will discard without answer). No race born of Adam has a good history: this is the Biblical fact, and the historical fact.

The Western mind, common to Europe and the Americas, is a product not of race but of culture, religious culture. Elements of it, none too good, go back to the barbarian peoples of Europe. Other aspects are from Greek philosophy, again none too good. (The Greeks described all non-Greeks as barbarians on cultural, not racist, grounds. They gave brilliant and inventive slaves a Greek name and status.) The Western mind and culture, in all its advances, is a product of Biblical religion. It is a religious, not a racial, product.

A generation ago, a pope with humane intentions said, "Spiritually, we are all Semites." Despite his humane intentions, he was wrong. Arabs are Semites, but we are not Arabic in our faith and culture. He would have been equally wrong had he said Hebrews or Jews. The culture of the West is not the property of any race or people in its origin. It is Biblical. True, much sin is present in Western culture. True, such sin needs to be condemned. But the mind of the West bears the imprint of the Bible. It is not understandable on any other terms.

Today, however, men speak of the white mentality, the Asiatic soul, and the African mind. Some educators are insistent on the need to recognize and give status in the schools to what they call "black English."

Implicit in all of this is a racist view of man. Races are seen as the sources of varying kinds of logic and reason. To deny the validity of the concept of a white mind, an African mind, or an Asiatic mind is seen as reactionary, imperialistic, and evil.

The mentality of a people, however, is not a product of race but of religion, and the culture of that religion. The key factor is always religion. There is a hidden but insane pride among those who oppose exporting the white mentality. Although such men would never dare say it explicitly or even think it, what they are saying implicitly is that other races are not up to comprehending the white mentality. (One brilliant black student told me, with wry humor, that he could always count on a high grade for minimum work from a white liberal professor. The man would regard him as inferior, but would never have the courage to admit as much, and would accordingly give him a good grade!) All talk of differing mentalities has a patronizing perspective; it also says that race, not sin, is the problem of other peoples and their cultures.

Because of the new racism, we now have a growing body of religious literature aimed at the seminary student, pastor, and missionary, which talks about *contextualization*. Supposedly, the only way to communicate the gospel to other races is by giving priority to the context over Biblical faith and confessional statements. The impetus for contextualization has come from the Theological Education Fund, set up in 1957 by the Rockefeller Foundation. Contextualization calls also for an emphasis on the struggle for justice in terms of "liberation theology" (a form of Marxism) and existentialistic responses to the historical moment in the Third World. Contextualization places a heavy emphasis on human need rather than on God's infallible Word. Its mission is thus contemporary and social, not theological and supernatural. Contextualists of all theological stripes shift their language from that of Scripture to the jargon spawned by the Theological Education Fund.

Closely related to this in the area of Bible translations is the dynamic equivalence theory, now common to most Bible societies and translation groups. This doctrine, of which Eugene A. Nida is an exponent, "translates" the Bible into a culture and its ideas. This can mean giving an historical account a psychoanalytic or mythological meaning. Instead of reshaping the culture, the Bible is "translated" into the culture. (Such a doctrine makes the culture in effect the unerring word, not the Bible. The culture thus corrects or amends the Bible, not the Bible, culture.) As

Jakob van Bruggen, in *The Future of the Bible*, points out, "the dynamic equivalence translation theory owes its influence and effect to the blending of modern theological prejudices regarding the Bible with data borrowed from communication theory, cultural anthropology, and modern sociology rather than to insights from linguistics" (Thomas Nelson Inc., 1978, p. 151).

The implications of this new racism are far-reaching. Instead of working to change a people, we have a static and racist view of a people and their culture. It is the Bible and the mission which must change, not the people! We must teach a "black English" if any at all, and a black, brown, or yellow Christianity, if any at all. It takes only a brief excursion into "liberation theology," contextualization, and like doctrines to realize that it is not Christianity at all which is taught, but a counterfeit. Relevance is sought, not to the Lord and His Word, but to fallen man and his racial heritage. Such is not the gospel; it is the new racism.

The new racism passes, however, for vital, relevant Christianity. It is widely promoted by seminaries and missionary organizations. It encourages races, like individuals, to trumpet the existentialist (and hippie) slogan, "I want to be me!" The historical goal is racial realization! Providentially, the early missionaries to Europe, coming from North Africa, Asia Minor, and the Mediterranean world generally, had no such regard for the European mind. They regarded it as unregenerate and in need of being broken and redeemed. All the plagues and evils of "the European mind" are products of the fallen man and the relics of barbarian cultures, not of Christ and His Word. All that is good in "the European mind" is a result of Christian culture, not of race.

The words of Paul are a sharp rebuke to all who want men to glory in their blood, race, or history: "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. 4:7).

7

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 89, August 1987

Otto Scott has wisely observed that, to understand the United States, we must recognize that it is a nation of "minority" groups; it has no majority groups, unless we divide it into "whites" and "blacks." Such a division assumes a unity and harmony in such groups which is nonsense. Northern Ireland is almost all "white," but that does not make for unity!

Is the United States a WASP — white Anglo-Saxon Protestant — country, as some have insisted? Those of English descent number only 14 percent of the population, and the next most numerous group of Americans are Germans, 13 percent; Germans may be equal to or surpass the English, since many have Anglicized their names, i.e., Mueller into Miller, Schmidt into Smith, and so on. Moreover, these groups are not united in action, outlook, faith, or politics. Germans number many Catholics, and also many Lutherans, in their midst. The Irish are, in the United States, more Presbyterian than Catholic, and so on.

In the United States, all are members of one or more minority groups, but, in law and the media, the myth of a persecuting majority exists.

A Welshman, John Morgan, after a few years stay, wittily and wisely noted a common fact about Americans. From the first Englishmen, to at least the Vietnamese, each new group believed this was a great country, until the next group of immigrants arrived to "spoil" America!

In the 1920s and 1930s, ethnic jokes were common on radio and usually enjoyed by the ethnic group in question. In the 1930s, my family was in our home town, a Swedish farm town, when a new comedian gained popularity with his ethnic humor and simulated accent, "Ole Olson." He was the endless delight of the Swedish community. In those days, ethnic humor, if not malicious, was relished. Jewish friends had an endless stock of Jewish jokes; Scots loved Scottish jokes, and so on. The difference

between affectionate and malicious humor has been lost. Humor today is too often an ugly put-down.

But "racism" and "prejudice" are today the major sins in the eyes of many people. At the least, this is humanism and a theological error.

On April 3, 1987, *The Wall Street Journal* had a front-page story on campus "racism" at American universities. It showed clearly the illusions of our time. Some real incidents were cited, but a subheading told part of the story: "A Junior at MIT: 'I'm Alone.'" As a university student during the Depression, I was not alone because I had no time to be. Most students held one or more jobs to pay their way through school. A major problem for some was getting enough to eat. A social life was a peripheral fact. I am sure, of course, that many black and white students today are lonely, but can you abolish loneliness and create friends by law?

Today, however, the media is full of people who are constantly on the lookout for instances of the great modern sin, prejudice. The cases become sometimes very ludicrous.

On Thursday, April 9, 1987, the Stockton *Record* in California carried a major story on pages 1 and 10, with a large photograph of an indignant Hindu spokesman. The story carried the author's byline, Christopher Woodword. The problem? At St. Mary's High School, the principal, the Reverend John Fallon, uses a large bulletin board in front of the school to advertise school events. If there are no announcements, he throws in witty comments with a moral content. In April, he had a sentence on the board designed to ridicule bigotry and prejudice: "Sacred Cows Make Great Hamburgers." Innocent? Clever? Well, not to the Stockton Hindus! It was a slur, they held, against them and their religion! (Will they picket meat-market beef sales next?) They held that the sign was offensive to their belief that "all life is sacred, especially the cow." A "spokesman" declared, "I don't go putting up a sign saying white people make good hot dogs."

Father Fallon was naturally distressed, and he promised to have the one-liner removed. But the "horror" of this crisis did not end there. Father Fallon had gotten the sentence out of a calendar put out by a Jewish group dedicated to combatting persecution, the Anti-Defamation League! The question of the moment is this: will the Hindu "spokesman" now demand of the Jews whether they would like a sign saying something invidious about the Jews?

Are we uniting society with all this nonsense, or are we dividing it? Many people who long wanted and even worked for an end to bigotry are now hesitant about close relations with self-styled minorities: they find them often too touchy for more than casual contacts.

But this is not all. Within each group, hypersensitivity is begetting an increasing isolation on all sides. I often hear remarks which, in a variety of ways, say the same thing: close fellowship is increasingly a problem because everyone is so "touchy" and easily provoked. A people with an exaggerated sense of personal rights are not capable of sound relationships with others.

A deserted island was once seen as a terrible place to live. Now, for some people it is an ideal setting! If only such an island could be stocked with certain things, and people barred, it would be a paradise for many.

Fifty years ago one of John Donne's best known lines was widely used: "No man is an island." Donne also said, "The greatest misery of sickness is solitude," and, "Solitude is a torment which is not threatened in hell itself." "In heaven," said Donne, "there are orders; of angels and armies of martyrs and in that house many mansions; in earth, families, cities, churches, colleges, all plural things; and lest either of these should not be company enough alone, there is an association of both, a communion of saints which makes the militant and triumphant church one parish; so that Christ was not out of his diocese when he was in our flesh."

Donne was speaking of the communion of saints. The antithesis of communion is solitariness, isolation. While Donne held solitude to be a torment not even threatened in hell, we must say that hell is self-chosen isolation from God and man, a realm in which every man is his own god, law, and universe (Gen. 3:5). All the Biblical images of hell stress its meaninglessness and isolation.

The communion of saints is not a natural fact. In a fallen world with sinful man, communion is a divine grace, act, and gift, a sacrament which celebrates fellowship with God in Christ, and with other men.

The goal of humanistic civil government is community. Among the names given to the envisioned world order of humanism and socialism are the "Great Society" and the "Great Community." The goal is to attain a world order in which all men are brothers and all live together in peace and prosperity.

This "Great Community" is to be brought about by social and political revolution. Laws, or "works of law," education, and coercion are to bring in liberty, fraternity, and equality. Economic controls are to be used to equalize society and enhance fraternity.

There is thus a vast difference between the "Great Community" and the communion of saints. The communion of saints is an article of faith, affirmed in the Apostles' Creed; it is God's act, His sovereign grace, which makes us members of that communion. Our obedience then to God's law-word enables us to further that communion.

If men seek community humanistically and by acts of state, they destroy true community. They establish rather a "community" of evil, a unity only in hatred against Christianity. We should not be surprised that humanistic efforts to attain community become anti-Christian. It is held that Christianity, by its insistence on Christ alone as the truth and the Savior, is discriminatory and hence must be controlled or destroyed.

This becomes, then, an insistence on a community which denies absolute truth and is beyond good and evil. Marxism is thus both more logical and more consistent than other forms of humanism because it denies all meaning which transcends man.

Humanism enthrones the ultimate bigotry and prejudice: it is against truth because it is anti-God, and, because it is anti-God, it is of necessity anti-man, because man is created in God's image. Hence, the goal of humanism is to create a new man and efface the image of God. In every sphere, mental, sexual, political, economic, and more, man is to be remade.

Recently, the *Capsule* for January–March 1987 (Cameron, MO), quoted Jeremy Rifkin as follows: "We no longer feel ourselves to be guests in someone else's home and therefore obliged to make our behavior conform with a set of preexisting cosmic rules. It is our creation now. We make the rules. We establish the parameters of reality. We create the world, and because we do, we no longer feel beholden to outside forces. We no longer have to justify our behavior, for we are now the architects of the universe. We are responsible to nothing outside ourselves, for we are the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever."

This statement is simply an expansion of Genesis 3:5, "ye shall be as God, knowing (or, determining for yourself) good and evil" in every sphere — law, sex, society, everywhere. This is original sin, fallen man's desire to be his own god. Now, however, it is not called sin: it is humanism, it is the means to true community, it is man's revolution of freedom against God.

The goal of the humanistic "Great Community" is the brotherhood, the fraternity, of all men. But how can you open your mouth in such a social order? After all, words are divisive; words define, delimit, and separate. The best way to get ahead, more than one person in politics, business, unions, and other groups have told me, is to keep your mouth shut and your eyes half-closed. After all, look where five little words got Father Fallon and the Anti-Defamation League! "Sacred Cows Make Good Hamburger" — this is religious and racial bigotry, something for the front pages of a daily paper!

Must we now be careful at a chicken dinner about expressing a

preference for dark meat, or white meat, or any meat all! There is now a well-funded lobby, with many film and television stars as its champions, defending animal rights. After all, why should animals not have the same legal right not to be eaten as do you and I? If this sounds outrageous, remember that it is costing cattlemen and farmers money to fight this movement!

The end is not yet. Some scientists, in India and elsewhere, are telling us that trees and vegetables feel pain when harvested! Are we in for a vegetables' rights movement? (The fruits already have a movement going.) One fool claims that the air is highly nutritious and provides sufficient food! He heads up a Breatharian movement of one.

Is that the direction of our society, millions of movements of one? But is that possible? After all, with so many people schizophrenic, how can any such a person organize himself into a movement of one?

A society, according to one political scientist of some years back, is a power structure. He was simply summing up a truism of his profession. More recently, a classical scholar, studying ancient Greece, used this same premise and added, "Power structures are rooted in brute strength" (Eva C. Keuls). Certainly, history gives abundant evidence of this fact.

Because of this premise, social reformers logically assume that no "Great Community" is attainable except by creating a power structure and using brute strength, unremitting social pressure, and coercion. This is what our politics is all about.

The Biblical premise is radically different: "I believe . . . in the communion of saints." To believe in that communion is an act of grace, sovereign grace. It is of the Lord, not of us. He who made us remakes us into His people and community. He then requires us to live by His law, to live as "members one of another" (Eph. 4:25), and to remember that "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke 12:48). We who have received the gift of Christ's atoning grace have received more than the world itself. Much is required of us.

8

COMMUNION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 41, July 1983

We are not accustomed to associating *communion* and *communications* with one another. For us, communion is a sacrament or an ordinance of the church, whereas "communications" refers to the media, to the exchange of ideas between peoples, to telephones, radio, television, and the like. The fact remains that the two words have a common root in the Latin and are closely related. *Communication* comes from *communicatio*, making common, an imparting, sometimes a consulting of the hearers. *Communion* comes from the Latin *communio*, a community, mutual participation, or fellowship. Interestingly, *communio* or *conmunio*, depending on the context, can also mean to fortify, make sure, strengthen, or secure. One can perhaps say that communion and communication thus are not only a means of sharing, but also a fortifying and strengthening of all those who are involved.

It is common, in our day, for men to speak of the communications gap. This gap exists in various quarters. The generation gap is one example, the inability of the old and the young to communicate in certain segments of our world. The gap exists also between the rulers and the ruled in almost every country; the high and the mighty, it is said, do not "speak the same language" as the rest of us, because their power places them on a different level of communication. In one area of life after another, the communication gap exists. Men may live and work close together and yet be worlds apart in their essential lives.

The simple fact is that there can be no communication where there is no communion. Proximity and a common background are not the answers. Husband and wife, and parent and children, can coexist in the same house and have no communication of any significant sort. In one such family, a member remarked once to me that occasional efforts at

intimacy were painful, because they called attention to the very serious gaps and differences between them; living without communication was easier.

As a result, a fact of modern life is man's readiness to live in isolation from close fellowship with others, because such a life of community means problems and also responsibilities. Many church members are ready to give for missions afar off rather than minister to needs close by. There are "valid" reasons for this: all people are born sinners and, even when converted, are far from perfected in grace. As a result, close contacts with people are close contacts with sin. Of course, we all find our own sins to be lovable ones, and the sins of others are for us intolerable! Hence, a retreat from community becomes very appealing to modern man.

At the same time, this retreat exacts penalties. Man was made by God to have community with God and with man. To retreat from community is thus to retreat from life as God ordained it. We have the paradox, thus, of men avoiding community while complaining of the communications gap.

Meanwhile, modern education, because it is humanistic, has lost the capacity to further or to create community. By teaching the radical ultimacy of man, the humanistic school isolates the individual from God and society. The statist school, normally a great instrument for communication and community, has been highly destructive thereof.

An historic communications function of the school has now broken down: *communication with the past*. The student who reads Shakespeare, Milton, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Augustine, Anselm, Fielding, and others enters into communication with the past and is challenged, informed, enriched, or stimulated by it. Communication with the past is an essential part of the schooling of man, not only in the formal school, but also in the family, the church, and the community. Family life should link the past to the present and the future. Where parents leave the care and the teaching of children to others, a vital link is broken. Similarly, the church's faith has deep roots into the past, and is the "Faith of our Fathers, living still." It cannot live if the past is untaught and ignored. That basic past is the Bible and its history, and it is alone the church's future. If the Bible is simply mined for salvation purposes (and salvation by such people is rather fire and life insurance from the J. C. Agency), then most of the Bible is ignored. At the same time, the language of the basic translations of the Western world (the King James Version in English) is a language which also opens the doors to our past. Children brought up on the King James Version can read the literature of the past with an ease

other children lack. The "community" of our day has lost its sense of the value of historic celebration of a nation's past; this is in part due to the modern state's evil ways, and to men's shrinking from the old loyalties.

The various modern art forms have also often ceased to be means of communication. Expression rather than communication is their motif, and the expression is too often contempt, hatred, envy, and rage. As a result, art, historically one of the great means of communication, is ceasing to communicate. "Successful" and critically approved art is now elitist and increasingly restricted in its audience. To communicate easily and widely, i.e., to be readily understandable, is regarded as philistinism and bad art. Thus, modern art, by its very criteria, excludes the basic purpose and function of art, to communicate. A new school of art drops its style and changes rapidly as soon as it becomes popular, because such a dawning awareness of community is anathema to the artists. Basic to avant-garde art is a hostility to all real communication with the greater part of the people. Nicanor Parra's *Anti-Poems* (1960) tells the story in its title. Instead of communicating, modern art has become exclusive and esoteric, which is another way of saying that it has ceased to be art. In fact, the esoteric and exclusive character of modern art is a denial of the very meaning of art. Marcel Duchamp was an "artist" who accepted and promoted this denial.

We have a communications problem and a decline of art because we have a decline in communion, and we have a decline in communion as a relationship because we have a decline in the centrality of communion as a sacrament. At the heart of the church's life is the celebration of communion, the celebration of the great and central fact of history, the atonement by Jesus Christ. Man, created by God for communion with Him, and to work under God as His vicegerent over the earth, rebelled against God and sought to be his own god, establishing and determining his own laws and his own ideas of good and evil (Gen. 3:5). Man's fall meant a broken communion with God; it meant instead that man's communion was now with sin and death, and with himself in preference to God. This fallen man sought to create his own form of communion by means of a humanistic world order, a Tower of Babel, but the verdict of God and the requirement of his own fallen nature bring that hope to confusion and destruction. Throughout history to the present, men have tried to build their Towers of Babel, with consistently drastic consequences. Virtually all modern nations are Babels, and they have thus an anciently ordained predictable future. Fallen man has a communications gap, with God, with other men, and with himself. There is no solution to his problem apart from Jesus Christ.

The Lord, by His atonement, reestablishes us into communion with the triune God. We have peace with God through Christ, and we therefore have the principle of peace with other men and with ourselves in Christ our Lord.

As man grows in grace, he moves from the world of sin and death, and the isolation thereof, into the world of communion. Hell is the consummation of isolation, of every man as his own god and universe, living in total separation from all other men. Heaven, on the other hand, is the consummation of communion and community, of life in peace and perfect communion with God, man, nature, and ourselves.

The rite of communion thus celebrates a future perfection, and it is a feeding for the present task of developing that community here and now. Communion thus is, when it is truly communion, a triumphant present and future fact. It declares that we are *one body* in Christ. This means that we seek to be governed, not by our will, but by His. The kingdom we are members of and serve is not of this world but of the Lord: it is the Kingdom of God.

We are therefore summoned in communion to die to ourselves, to our old man, and to live in Christ, "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another" (Eph. 4:24–25). We move from the law of our fallen being into the law of God, now written in all our being by His grace.

Communion thus celebrates the fact of the growth of new life and new power, the purpose of which is to bring all things into captivity to Christ and their new creation in Him. The goal is summed up in the heavenly proclamation: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). To partake faithfully of the Lord's Table is thus to partake of life, growth, power, and victory. It means that we become a part of the great army of God, and our purpose is the conquest of all things for Christ our King. All peoples, cultures, spheres of life and thought, and time must be brought under His dominion.

It means also that communion ends the communications problem. St. Paul says, "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). All things were created by the Lord's fiat word (John 1:3), and all things were made to hear and obey that sovereign law-word. God's word therefore is the word that penetrates to the heart of every man. It is the only word that can get under the skin and into the blood and the bones of unregenerate men. It is the word of power, and the Holy Spirit works with it always.

We are plainly told that, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Ps. 127:1). Apart from Him, there is no communion, community, or communication. The foundations of our political and economic orders must thus be in His law-word. Education apart from Him ceases to communicate anything but sin and death, and our statist education today gives abundant evidences of the devastation wrought by humanism.

In a society without communion, sin and death are the governing factors in every area of life, including the family, the arts, and the sciences. All too many scientists today treat man as an experimental animal; being governed by sin and death, they can produce little else. Abortion and homosexuality are fitting symbols for twentieth-century man, and for the century of world wars, drugs, and suicide. Having lost communion, men lose the ability to communicate, and, finally, the will to live. Suicides, both personal and cultural, give evidence of the failure and *the refusal* to communicate with God and man; they are, simply, the rejection of life because the Lord of life is first of all rejected. (I do not here include the "suicides" of persons given mind-deranging drugs by prescription: these come closer to murder.)

The modern age is dying because it has no communion. It has abandoned faith in the Lord who alone is Life and the source of life, and it has chosen death (Prov. 8:36) rather than life. For us, the living, it is thus most urgently a time for communion, growth, and reconstruction.

> This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. (Ps. 118:24)

9

ON GIVING TO THE RICH, THE MIDDLE CLASS, AND THE LOWER CLASS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 32, July 1982

The idea explicit in our title is hardly a popular one. In an age which propagates and exploits class conflict, it is clearly not popular to speak of giving to anyone. The popular reaction will be something like this: what do the rich need, that we should give them? The middle class is self-righteous, smug, and censorious: what does it deserve but contempt? As for the lower class, what should those lazy good-for-nothings get? They are already milking us for handouts, welfare, or grossly higher wages! So runs the popular reaction.

This should not surprise us. The modern Darwinian worldview rests on the concept of a lawless nature, the struggle for survival, and conflict in all areas. Class conflict, as Karl Marx saw, is a necessary development of such a faith. Hence, all areas of human life view all others with suspicion. The conflict-of-interests view of society pits classes against one another and makes for the politics of confrontation. The origins of this view go back to Hegel, to his view of life as conflict leading to synthesis, and then conflict afresh leading to another brief synthesis.

In *The Secret Six*, Otto J. Scott has shown how this view led to war in 1860. (It was first termed "a civil war" by a Virginian.) In the North, the abolitionists worked not for peaceful solutions, but for confrontation, war, and devastation as the answer. In the South, where only a very small minority owned slaves, and the majority hated slavery, extremists also worked for confrontation and conflict. In 1858, these extremists sought to reopen the slave trade, make very cheap slaves available in great numbers, and thereby include non-slave-owning citizens in their cause. In both the North and the South, extremists who believed in the social value of conflict set the temper of political discourse and overwhelmed the uninvolved peoples.

There is a second factor in the conflict-of-interests faith. Not only does it create social warfare but it also creates inner, psychological warfare. As a result, modern man is, more so than men of other eras, at war with himself. Not only does he hate other social classes, but he is consumed with self-hate.

As a result, most heirs of wealth have problems with themselves. The world of Darwin rather than Romans 8:28 governs their psychology. They see themselves as guilty because they are rich, and all too often use their wealth to try to atone for their affluence. They will be suspicious of others and given to hating themselves.

The middle class is no better off. All too many younger members of it can only speak of their parents with venom. For them, the ultimate and unforgivable sin is to be content with a good suburban home, a good income, and good friends, and virtue is equated with feeling guilty and miserable about the plight of man.

The lower class is no different. It sees those above it as in conspiracy against the poor, and poverty is somehow a creation of others, of society, of the system, or something else, in short. For example, one "inner city" young man delighted in throwing paper towels on restroom floors to mess up things, and in throwing candy wrappers, cigarette butts, and the like on the neatly manicured lawns of the well-to-do to express his hatred of their concern for cleanliness. In all three classes, class hatred and self-hatred go hand in hand.

Why, then, talk about giving to all three classes as a duty? Why bring up a subject which is apparently so remotely possible of attainment?

One of the great evils of humanism and the modern age is its equation of things as they are with norms. The Kinsey studies of human sexuality marked the social triumph of this faith. For Kinsey, whatever occurred in nature was hence natural and therefore normal. This meant that child molestation and homosexuality were normal and simply a variation in normal human behavior. Lamar and Corinne Strickland, of the Strickland Christian School, tell of a well-to-do mother who transferred her superior daughter to a depraved state school situation because the child supposedly needed to learn to live with reality. What the mother was in effect saying was that the Lord God is not real but that drugs, illicit sex, and humanism are real.

To live with reality is to live with the God of Scripture and His law-word. Any other way of life is living with illusions and with evil. God declares, "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me" (Isa. 45:5). To try to live without Him, or in contempt of Him and His law, is to invoke His judgment. Because we are God's creation

and servants, we have a total obligation to obey Him, and to meet His requirements towards one another. We have a commandment of love towards one another, which means keeping the law, which is love in action (Rom. 13:8).

What can we give to the rich? Like men of all estates, they need to know and obey the Lord. With respect to their persons, it will not do for us to set ourselves up as judges over men, and to judge them as a class. Every class has its own characteristics; the sins of others are always more offensive to us than our own sins, which to us are "understandable" and even lovable sins. The rich are not ipso facto knaves. They are often able, useful, and very capable men. Many of them are active in Christian Reconstruction in their own ways. They are carrying on, quietly and often anonymously, effective work among minority groups, the poor, and the unsaved. Like all of us, they need respect, understanding, and appreciation, not for their checkbooks but for themselves as persons. Like the rest of us, the rich need friends, not parasites. The rich need a sense of mission, not a "bite" on them. They need respect and help when they have a sense of mission, not attempts to get on "the gravy train." Above all else, the rich need from us the love God requires us to show to all men. To see them as targets of class conflict and hatred is to sin against both God and man.

The middle class is often the target of hatred because of the widely fomented hostility towards "the Protestant work ethic," now in the United States the common property of Catholics and Protestants. It is an ironic fact that wealth, great or small, earned in sports or entertainment, is seen as legitimate, but if earned in industry or business, is somehow illegitimate! Because nineteenth-century radicals associated Christianity with the middle class, much of the hatred of the middle class is still in part a hatred of Christianity, even though the association is no longer valid. The middle class includes most of our modern population. Efforts to destroy it are thus equivalent to efforts to destroy our social order, not to remake it. To despise the middle class is to despise work and thrift, and most of the people of our time. The middle class needs to be respected and appreciated, not only as an economic and socially stabilizing force historically, but also as people who, like all others, are created in God's image. We are to love all men, and God exempts none from His commandment of love. We are to love them by loving His law and keeping it, and by being true neighbors one to another (Lev. 19:18).

The lower class is not exempt from the law of love. Some may lack the opportunity to better themselves and have the ability to do so. Others may simply have less than mediocre abilities and goals, and to be so does

not make any man an object of contempt. The Bible makes sin the line of division, not class, social, or economic status. However much modern man may prattle on about social and economic "justice" for the poor, he is more comfortable around a homosexual with social status than a poor man with none. The line of division is now social and economic status and education, not faith; sin is not objectionable, but a low status is. One reason why so many today are full of verbal and political concerns for the poor is to mask their personal aversion for them. There is no social or economic cut-off line for either sin or God's grace, nor can there be such for our love and friendship.

In brief, the graces and virtues that God requires of us are to be manifested towards all men. The line of demarcation is sin, and sin is to be dealt with only in terms of God's law-word, with His judgment applied, and also His salvation proferred. No man is our possession, and therefore no man is ours to judge in terms of our human distinctions. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1). Therefore, the world and all men can only be viewed, judged, governed, and received in terms of God's Word and will, not our own.

This brings us to a cardinal sin of the modern age. Humanism and evolution posit an original nothingness, a primeval chaos. Out of this impersonal void, the cosmos evolved. Consciousness and personality are latecomers in a "universe" of supposedly billions of years in age, and both are likely in time to disappear, in terms of this view.

This means that material forces, mindless and lawless, govern the life of man, not a personal God. Ultimacy is thus impersonal, not personal; mindless, not mindful. The intellectual and scientific attitude calls for dealing with reality, therefore, in abstract terms. Thus, sociology deals with impersonal trends, social forces, and the like, not with God and man in a totally personal universe. "Capital" deals with a labor force, not persons, and unions negotiate with "management" and "capital," not persons. Each depersonalizes the other and then wonders why there is no communication, or why a credibility gap exists. (If a man refuses to treat me like a person, how much credibility will he have with me? If someone tries merely to use me, however correct his outward demeanor, I will soon resent him.) We have depersonalized one another, and we do not understand why others have no liking for us. We like an impersonal world, because it enables us to avoid *personal* responsibilities for others, and we wonder why "alienation," conflict, and social warfare prevail. We reduce persons to members of classes, and we wonder why there is class conflict. Do any of us, except the self-conscious revolutionary, think of

ourselves as essentially a member of a class rather than a person? For that matter, does God pigeonhole us as members of a particular class, or by income, social status, or race?

We must see ourselves and one another as God sees us, not as our contemporary world does. The Lord God sees us as creatures made in His image (Gen. 1:26–28), and we dare not view ourselves and our fellow men any differently. Because God is no respecter of persons, we cannot respect persons in our judgment either; we must view them in terms of His law-word (Deut. 1:17), and His criterion is Himself and His law. Even then, God is patient, and, up to a point, sends His rain and sun to the just and the unjust (Matt. 5:45; see also Deut. 28:12, 23–24).

The extent of our departure from the Lord is seen in the extent to which we allow human distinctions, however real, to be our determining premise in judgment, rather than God Himself. What social classes are now giving one to another is hatred and warfare. In judging one another, they are insisting on playing God and in setting up their own criteria as a new law for man.

The modern age makes much of "the common good" and "the general welfare." We forget that these terms go back into medieval law and practice. Their meaning at times was defective and Hellenic; at other times, it was Biblical. A common statement was, in Wycliffe's words, "every common good is better than any private one." The great line of demarcation has been the meaning of "every common good." It has had two meanings. *First*, it has often meant and now commonly means the humanistic, statist general welfare as defined by man. In this tradition, the rulers, philosopher-kings, or elitist planners of the state define the common good and thus play god. The state then becomes a god walking on earth. We are suffering greatly today from this false, deadly, and heretical view of "the common good." In effect, it means the common tyranny.

The *second* meaning of "the common good" is that common moral law and requirement made by God for all men. The common good then is the Kingdom of God, and the reign of God's justice in the lives of all men. It means the grace of God in the life of man, applied in all our relationships, so that we manifest the Holy Spirit in human action. The common good in this sense rests on common prayer, on common faith, and on a common life in Christ. We will then be "members one of another" (Eph. 4:25), and not of a social class.

10

THE ULTIMATE PORNOGRAPHY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 46, January 1984

In these days, some people who are normally the most asleep to the world around them are actually stirring and showing signs of life and even of indignation! I am referring to parents of children in state schools. Normally unaware of the radical subversion of their children by humanism, these parents are in growing numbers being shocked out of their indifference by the kind of "literature" assigned to their children.

Meanwhile, films and television give us a fare which, when not repulsive, is too stupid and painfully bad to watch. The film and television audience has been decreasing in recent years with good reason. Too much of even the "culture" fare is insulting in its implications and rests on a contempt for man.

A recent "educational" television film was about wild horses. About forty years ago, I lived in wild-horse country. In their natural state, these wild horses were runty, diseased, and, with occasional exceptions, poor specimens of their kind. At that time, they were often rounded up to be sold for dog food. In recent years, special national range areas have enabled the breed to improve. To cut down on the surplus and to prevent a destruction of the range, many of the excess horses have been corralled to be sold as riding horses. The result? Indignation by our sentimentalists over the horses' "loss of freedom." It does not occur to these people that these are "welfare" horses, not truly wild but protected and cared for. At the same time, these sentimentalists, who would never allow the killing of excess horses and have blocked efforts to kill off California's very prolific population of wild burros, are pro-abortion where human beings are concerned. Neither the millions of Marxist victims of slave labor camps nor the growing millions of unborn babies slaughtered annually distress or disturb them. This is pornography indeed.

At the same time, a preserve is being established in Southern California to protect the California condor, an "endangered" bird. Now, this condor is plentiful in Mexico and Latin America. The condor is a vulture. Its future in the United States is a bleak one, not because of the "press of population," but because the conditions in the United States are unfavorable to its diet. After all, how many dead bodies do Americans leave lying about, of animals or men, for vultures to feed on? Even a dog hit by an automobile is quickly removed and buried in most cases. What do they plan to feed the condors? The 1.5 million aborted fetuses each year? After all, more concern is expressed in some circles for the condors than for unborn babies. Is this not a form of ultimate pornography?

Pornographic films, books, and magazines, however bad they are, represent only the superficial and surface manifestation of a deep-seated cancer. We have today a radical inversion of values and a studied hatred of Biblical faith, law, and norms, because the triune God of Scripture is seen as the ultimate enemy. The more alien something is to the Word of God, the more highly it is prized. One recent "educational" television film, in approaching a "primitive" tribal people, declared that the people and their culture should be taken "at absolute face value." This is the way every such "primitive" group is approached. No such absoluteness, of course, is ever ascribed to Scripture, to Christianity, or to the life of an unborn child! The unborn child is seen as merely a part of the woman's body, *her property*, which, as someone has pointed out, is exactly how slaves were once viewed, as *property*.

The ultimate pornography is very simply described in Proverbs 8:36, "But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death." The hatred of life and the love of death is the ultimate pornography. Every particular form of pornography is simply an exemplification of this fact.

In Genesis 6:5 we are told of the world before the Flood, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Pornography is the triumph of this evil imagination; it sees people, not as they really are, but in terms of an imagination which uses people to serve a man-god. Sexual pornography makes all the world the slave of the pornographic imagination; women, for example, only exist to please the would-be god and to coo in delight at the "privilege."

This pornographic evil imagination is not limited to the sexual sphere. An even more popular area is the politico-economic realm. One of the most influential and evil works of pornography ever produced was Plato's *Republic*, which reduced the great mass of humanity to the status of tools

for the philosopher-kings. The respect accorded to Plato is evidence of the diseased character of the academy.

Igor Shafarevich, the Soviet Russian mathematician, has described socialism as the organized love of death. The socialist ideal is equality in death. It calls for the destruction of hierarchy, of private property, of religion, of the family, and, finally, of life itself (in Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *From Under the Rubble*). Its governing force is hatred, the attempt to be god, and the savage hostility to all that is of the true and living God. The socialist imagination refuses to recognize either God's existence or man's existence apart from its own power and control. Just as the pornographic tales of the Marquis de Sade created impossible people who could not exist in life, so too the socialist imagination calls for the creation of a like people. When people refused to conform to de Sade's imagination, he sought to force them to do so; the socialist imagination also uses coercion also to bend living men into its evil mold.

This is, of course, the appeal of abortion. In the early days of its civil legalization, many avant-garde women, single as well as married, became pregnant in order to have an abortion. It provided good table talk, the ability to boast of, in effect, playing god over human life. We fail to understand abortion unless we see this aspect as central to it.

Bernard N. Nathanson, M.D., a former abortionist, reports in *Aborting America* (1979), on the pleasure expressed by one administrator at the number of abortions performed.

If the pro-abortionists were logical, they would speak of the supposed need for abortions with regrets and dismay as a sorry fact and "necessity." In reality, they speak of it as a right and a freedom. A freedom to kill? They are not honest enough to say so, but this is their motivation, the love of death, for others and for themselves.

According to Scripture, the unforgivable sin is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost (Matt. 12:31–32). This has been seen as the inversion of the moral order to the point where a man makes evil his good, and God's good his evil. All forms of pornography flirt with, advocate, or wholeheartedly embrace this inversion. This is why any involvement with this inversion of the moral order is so deadly dangerous.

In my study of *The Politics of Pornography* (1974),[1] I called attention to the fact that the new sexual pornography is radically different from the older forms. The earlier forms of sexual pornography were self-consciously written as "dirty books"; they were playing with sin and crime and knew it. The new pornography is written as the new health, the new

1. Reprinted in 2005 under the title *Noble Savages: Exposing the Worldview of Pornographers and Their War Against Christian Civilization.*—editor

freedom, as a witness to the truly good life. It presents us, therefore, with an inversion of the moral order lacking in the older works. It exemplifies the sin against the Holy Ghost in its motivation.

Dr. Lewis A. Tambs, of Arizona State University, in writing on "World War II — The Final Phase" (in *Christian Statesman*, November–December 1983 [Beaver Falls, PA]; ed., Ray Joseph, a Chalcedon friend), cites 1946 to 1975 as the first stage, containment. The second stage, detente, 1960 to 1979, has been succeeded by the third stage, double encirclement, 1964–1985. This is "the Tartarian tactics of choke-point control and tribute collection." The goal is not to destroy but to control, work, and exploit, to make the West, and especially the United States, a satellite or slave state. The Soviet Union, while professing to work for the freedom of man, has become history's greatest slave state, together with Red China. Both talk of liberation while working for total enslavement. Those who love death see slavery as a major step in the right direction.

Because the whole world outside of Christ loves death rather than Christ, who is life (John 14:6), every man outside of Christ is at heart an ally of the forces of enslavement and death. As a result, the parties of the right and left in the "free" world are ready and willing to serve the needs of Marxist states. Foreign-aid programs do more for Marxism around the world than domestic programs do for the citizenry.

What, then, is our hope? Apart from Christ, there is no hope. The redeeming power of Jesus Christ alone can save men. The law-word of God alone gives the guidelines for freedom and prosperity.

Men and states, however, prefer their own fiat word and law to God's, because, in rebelling against God, they rebel against life. They are dedicated priests of death.

To love Christ is to love life. Life is full of the unexpected (including guests) and the untidy. Too many people want showcase living in showcase houses, where everything is hostile to life and to children. To be truly against abortion means to love life and children, and children mean dirty diapers, messy rooms, toys strewn about, noise, and more. These are all things alien to the prim, prissy, and proper pro-abortionists. They prefer houses as neat and trim as a cemetery. (This primness has in my lifetime reached the cemeteries! Upright headstones are banned in the newer ones in favor of ground-level markers in order to give a neat, easily maintained death-park. The desire of many today is the legend, "Untouched by human hands." All too many people want a life untouched by other human beings. This is the love of death; it is pornography.)

The love of Christ is the love of life. It is the love which motivated Lester Roloff and motivates Mother Teresa. It is the love of children and

family in Christ, the love of children's growth, and the love of their joy and laughter. It is the love of a man and a woman which creates a family in Christ, and which erects therein a realm of dominion under God.

There is a fundamental disorderliness about life because the present is not the final order. My library, where I am writing this, is a very disorderly place, with books piled here and there, stacks of papers, manuscripts, letters and more, because *work is in progress*. To bring my library of 30,000 books to a final order is to walk out of it and die! The passionate purpose of my life and all that I have is God's final order, and the subordination of all things to that realm. It is pornography for me to impose an order of my imagination or desire on that purpose, or to supplant it.

Where sexual pornography, abortion, socialism, and more are involved, I do not seek to impose *personal* standards on others, because what is at stake is not a personal preference but God's law, God's order, *life* itself. Neither I nor any other man has the right to say, "My will be done." God's will alone is right.

Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). His working and power through the Holy Spirit is an overwhelming flood of grace, authority, and regenerating power which overturns and shatters the things which are so that only those things which are unshakable may remain (Heb. 12:27). Against this force, the death-sayers are helpless. Therefore, choose life and live. It is our calling to reconstruct all things in terms of God's sovereign law-word, to bring all men, nations, and every sphere of life and thought into captivity to Christ our King, into freedom from sin and death and captivity to life and justice. Our King shall in due time make even the cemetery dead alive in Him!

11

THE DYING ENLIGHTENMENT

Position Paper No. 141, August 1991

ABOUT a year ago, a man told me of his very great bewilderment over events in Southeast Asia. He had worked in that area most of his long life, and he knew it well in the colonial era especially. Now, there were women prime ministers in one country after another, and it baffled him. Women in such places of power went against the cultures of those countries. He himself had no concern whatsoever over who ruled, whether a queen, or a woman as prime minister, but how could this happen in Southeast Asia?

It was a good question, and a very important one. To understand the answer, we must note at the beginning that there is a vast gap between the rulers and the ruled in these countries. Many of the rulers, bureaucrats, and top military men have had a Western education. Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, and other such universities are familiar places to them. They reflect the world of the Enlightenment, of rationalism, of feminism, and more. They are in some respects closer to the leaders of Europe and the United States than to their own people. They are an elite group controlling politics, education, and almost all the superimposed structures of life. They represent the culture of the Enlightenment.

Now, when Christianity entered the Roman Empire, it reached people of all classes, the slaves and the wealthy, the ignorant and the philosophers. Christianity's threat to Rome was precisely this catholicity or universality of appeal. Had it been merely a slave religion, it would have been easily controlled. Charles Norris Cochrane, in *Christianity and Classical Culture*, shows how Christian philosophers challenged and defeated their pagan counterparts.

The same was not true of the Enlightenment. It was self-consciously an elitist movement. Various scholars, notably Louis L. Bredvold in *The*

Brave New World of the Enlightenment (1961), have documented its nature and beliefs. The three great expressions of Enlightenment philosophy have been the French Revolution, Hegel and Darwin and the mythology of evolution, and the Russian revolution and its worldwide impact. *First*, Enlightenment philosophy rejected history and the past in favor of reason. The past, especially religion, must be wiped out. Whether in politics or in education, a studied ruthlessness was insisted on; the French Revolution decreed a new calendar, and a new "year one." Christ's birth was to be replaced by the birth of the Revolution.

Second, institutions and customs inherited from the past had to give way to reason and science. Wisdom now rested with the Enlightenment elite. Religion, marriage, and the family had to be supplanted by the state. The state was seen as man's vehicle of salvation.

Third, the Christian doctrine of man as a sinner was dropped. Man's nature was neutral, if not good. Education can remake man into a "true" man and it can perfect society, it was held. This meant statist intervention into every field. It also meant that Christianity is the great enemy, although all religions are treated with disdain.

Fourth, the rule of society must be in the hands of the "enlightened" ones, the elite. These are the new philosopher-kings, scientists, educators, politicians, and bureaucrats. As a result, power in most states has quietly been shifted to a nonelected elite created by the state to govern men and to rule them by regulations rather than by law.

Fifth, basic to this faith is that man and society must be humanistic, not Christian. Step by step, education has been made a humanistic establishment of religion and anti-Christian.

Sixth, science must replace religion as the source of judgment and authority. Religious meaning is replaced by scientific methodology; truth gives way to pragmatism.

Seventh, Biblical view of sin and punishment are replaced with psychotherapy. The cure of souls becomes a scientific rather than a religious concern.

Eighth, conscription came in with the French Revolution. The professional army is replaced with a state-created army and a hold on all youth.

Ninth, foreign policy is given priority over domestic or internal affairs, because a one-world order is the goal. Hitler spoke of a "new world order"; so, too, do Gorbachev and George Bush. The goal of politics has a world scope, not a local one.

Tenth, the new god is man, or humanity, and the goal is "to be truly human," which means to be stripped of all religions and moral standards and faith.

Eleventh, the world's economic problem is seen as one of distribution, not production.

Twelfth, power is centralized in the state.

Thirteenth, reality is seen as basically impersonal, thus ruling out the God of Scripture.

Fourteenth, the new established church becomes the state school.

Fifteenth, there is an increasing control over private property and a virtual confiscation.

(All this I discussed in *This Independent Republic*, 1964.)

In 1887, a German professor of law, Rudolf Sohm, in his *Outlines of Church History*, gave a brief summary of the meaning of the Enlightenment. He used the older name, "The Illumination." The goal of "The Illumination" was this: "A natural law, a natural State, and a natural religion shone as the great ideals on the intellectual horizon, and carried away the world of the eighteenth century in a movement of passionate endeavor. These battles prepared the way for the rise of modern humanity" (p. 195). According to Sohm, "The great practical results of the Illumination were the destruction of the Jesuit Order, the foundation of the omnipotent authority of the state, and the idea of Toleration" (p. 197). This Enlightenment idea of toleration applied to religion, because it was believed to be not worth fighting about. Intolerance was transferred to politics: it has meant the Reign of Terror, slave labor camps, and an increasing media attack on all who have no use for the world of the Enlightenment.

The United States has a curious part in all of this. It is a nation of immigrants. In my home town, in only a very small number of homes was English the native tongue. Most spoke Swedish, some Danish, Portuguese, Armenian, and Italian. Whether they came here with college and university education, as my parents did, or without it, the Enlightenment world was foreign to them — as it is to most of the peoples of Southeast Asia.

The Enlightenment rules on the top, especially in politics, education, and the sciences; and a people, bewildered and restless, exist all around them. They resent the direction of things. It is no wonder that in the United States, close to 40 percent of all children are in Christian or home schools. This is a major revolution against the world of the Enlightenment, and it will not go away.

In some countries, as in Mexico, the gap between the Enlightenment leaders and the resentful people is a growing and potentially explosive one.

Law is the foundation of society, and the nature of the law depends on the religion it expresses, because law is religious. It is a religious and moral judgment concerning good and evil, right and wrong.

Sohm, in discussing the origin of law, said that the eighteenth century

shifted it from God to man. It was a *social contract*, a deliberate and conscious choice made by free men whereby they passed from a state of nature into a political and legal state. Later, scholars based law on the national instinct, or on folk wisdom. Law was thus a natural development, not a revealed decree (pp. 216–217).

This emphasis on the natural origins of law denied all ultimate meaning and morality. It meant that law could be what the state decreed it to be, and this is the fundamental aspect of modern law. It is also the basic ingredient of totalitarianism. There is, then, no appeal against the finality of law decreed by the omnipotent state.

We are now in what may well be history's major crisis. The world of the Enlightenment controls our politics, state schools, entertainment, and media. It is now becoming aggressively intolerant in more countries than one. It should not surprise us that the Enlightenment elite such as Gorbachev and Bush should draw together against the Baltic captive states, Georgia, Armenia, and other such peoples. They want more centralized power for their Enlightenment faith to triumph in a "new world order." The growing decentralizing forces are a witness to their blindness.

The modern school and the media stress self-realization as the goal for man. The countless enclaves of non-Enlightenment culture in the United States and abroad stress family unity and mutual help. In the United States, church and family are still, in spite of all statist assaults, the greatest welfare agencies, caring for their own. The church and the family are recapturing education from the state. Two differing cultures are clearly at war. The state commands vast powers today, but, like dying Rome, it is increasingly at war with its own people. The world of the Enlightenment is dying, bitterly, painfully, and vengefully, but it is dying all the same.

> Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchmen waketh but in vain. (Ps. 127:1)

12

THE MYTH OF SOCIALIZATION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 144, October 1991

The sense of community once marked the United States, and from one area to another, a variety of cultures and communities existed. As immigrant people, we settled close to our kind, and I can remember how from county to county, and town to town, there was a distinctive character, a dominant Christian group, and a strong sense of community. I can recall, in some areas, where as many as six generations — a long time in the United States — had lived in the same house, or the same farm

However, James Patterson and Peter Kim, in *The Day America Told the Truth* (1991), describe in one chapter, "The End of the Hometown in America: The End of Community." People have lost respect for private property; they are no longer charitable; they want to be left alone; and their relationship to their children is not good.

Meanwhile, we have a militant statist effort to compel socialization in the schools, and the workplace, and in neighborhoods. Its failure is very conspicuous.

One of the major arguments against Christian schools and home schools is that the children are deprived of the necessary socialization which is seen as basic to modern education.

The words *society* and *community* have closely related meanings: something is closely shared and held, and this has, during most of history, been a common faith. The word *communion* tells it all: it refers to the central sacrament of the Christian faith. In the preconquest era, the English form of the Apostles' Creed read, where we now say, "the communion of saints," "of the saints the society." The enduring basis of community has not been race nor nationality, but religious faith, communion in Christ for Christians.

The primary society of Christendom has been the Christian family. It

has been a community of faith. Its stress has been above all, *first* and foremost, communion with God in Christ. The foundation of community is seen as supernatural and sacramental. No naturalistic, statist demand for community can replace its Christian and sacramental basis. Of course, the statist and humanistic hostility to the family has been anti-Christian to the core. Church and family must go, and certainly the Christian and home schools, to make way for the state as the "true community." George Bernard Shaw wrote, in *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*, "unless Woman repudiates her womanliness, her duty to her husband, to her children, to society, to the law, and to everyone but herself, she cannot emancipate herself" (cited by James C. Neely, M.D., *Gender: The Myth of Equality* [1981], p. 141). Radical individualism has been promoted among men, women, and children to destroy the Christian family and community.

Second, in the Christian family which is truly under God, the basic socialization is with adults, parents, grandparents, and relatives. In our humanistic and statist model of public or statist schools, the socialization stressed is with other children. But maturity must be the goal, and in the family-community, the child is prepared for adulthood and maturity by the centrality of the family. Adolescence is a modern phenomenon, and it has occurred only as civilizations decay and collapse. A dying culture promotes rebellion among its youth, whereas once it meant, in stable and godly societies, the happy entrance to maturity. The rite of confirmation, once common to most churches, meant confirmation in the faith by affirming for oneself the baptismal vows made by one's parents; it meant entrance into maturity and adulthood; and it meant that one was confirmed to change the world. Having been made a new creation by Jesus Christ, the persons confirmed were now introduced to the mature task of bringing about the Kingdom of God in their lives, calling, and community.

Where socialization with other children is the primary stress, the result is not maturity but an emphasis on perpetual childhood. Maturity as a goal is replaced with childhood as a goal. Instead of the faith governing the person, then peer pressure does. Some have held, and with good reason, that today the two governing forces among people are peer pressure on the one hand, and an anarchistic individualism on the other; neither manifests maturity.

Third, this emphasis is destructive of the family. It shifts authority from the family to either the group or the individual. Another factor has contributed to the destruction of the family: welfarism. It shifts it from the family to the state. It is not at all surprising that so many welfare families are fatherless. The man's authority and headship are nullified, and he abandons the family and his manhood.

Fourth, socialization then works outward and downward. The pattern is not only set for the child by forces outside the family, but also by the school. With the family's influence undermined, moral authority is replaced by immoral authority. Socialization then takes place with the worst elements in the school or area. The state school, with its emphasis on socialization with the peer group, also undermines its own influence. Its teachers are the object of disrespect and violence. The Christian and home school are attacked for lacking socialization, but what is meant by that is simply that the evil state-prescribed socialization is avoided. Fellowship with godly children and with godly parents and family members is somehow detested by these statists.

Fifth, in demanding socialization through public or statist education, these humanists are insisting that true socialization must be beyond good and evil, without any moral consideration. "The real world" for these educators is an amoral and godless world in which all Biblical considerations are invalid. The only values tolerated or taught are autonomous, self-created values. In other words, socialization for them means and begins with the tempter's program, every man as his own god, knowing or determining for himself what is good and evil (Gen. 3:5). This type of education turns schooling into an agency of man's fall and a perpetuator thereof.

Sixth, where peer pressure prevails, as it does in godless schooling, the moral and intellectual excellence is resented. The stress on peer equality means that superiority is out of step with the rest of the people. Basketball coach Al McGuire once observed, "I think the world is run by C students." It is indeed, and the situation grows worse daily. Cornelius Van Til spoke of the direction of all anti-Christian thinking as "integration downward into the void." Before long, we will feel that rule by C students is wonderful, as the D students take over. Unless we re-Christianize society, the disintegration will continue. Already, Patterson and Kim have found that among the sleaziest occupations, in the minds of most Americans, are drug dealing, organized crime bosses, TV evangelists, prostitutes, local politicians, and congressmen.

The humanistic attempts to effect socialization have left us a deeply divided people. In the name of socialization, we have hate-mongering against Christians and their schools. We have a "society" of conflict, and morality is now equated in some circles with hating Christians, businessmen, parents, employers, the military, the police, and so on and on. These people equate morality with hating various groups and persons!

The liberal myth of socialization is an evil myth. It is time to counterattack and to see it as the evil that it is.

13

THE ESCHATOLOGY OF DEATH

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 4, June 1979

The dying have no future, and they know it. They speak of, and limit their vision to, the present and its sufferings. The future of the dying is a very limited one, and, usually, they do not go beyond a few days or more than a month in their thinking. Theirs is the eschatology of death, and men without faith have no other eschatology. Death and the certainty of death blots out all other considerations or else governs them all.

The same is true of cultures. Death comes upon them rapidly when the faith of the culture collapses or wanes. The confidence which once enabled them as a small minority to dominate their world melts away, and they cannot set their own house in order nor control it. Dying cultures block out tomorrow, having no confidence in their ability to cope with growth and the problems of growth. Dying Greece and dying Rome both saw themselves as overpopulated and as overwhelmed with peoples and problems, and so too does our modern, dying statist humanism feel. It talks desperately about zero population growth and zero economic growth, because behind such thinking is a zero future, an intellectual and religious bankruptcy.

The father of modern humanistic economics, Lord Keynes, when asked about the consequences of his economic theories "in the long run," answered simply, "In the long run, we are all dead." The growing disaster of Keynesian economics — and a world practicing it — should not surprise us. It was born without a future, and it was a product of an age which, like the dying, lived for the moment and with no thought of the future.

The dying live for the moment because they have no future. Converted into a formal philosophy, the name of such a state of anticipated death is

existentialism. For the existentialist philosopher, Jean-Paul Sartre, man is a futile passion who wills to be a god but is faced only with the certainty of death.

In one area after another, the eschatology of death governs our world. Yesterday, a letter came from a young man in Alaska which read in part as follows:

> I'm a surveyor, but I'm not registered by the state because I haven't passed a test, but I can't take the test because I haven't worked for a registered surveyor for eight years . . . At this time . . . there is no chance of employment [with] a registered land surveyor. I have to turn down work, because I can't sign for it. I have an education in land surveying and I feel that I could pass the test . . . The registered land surveyors have legislated themselves a monopoly.

Alaska may call itself the last frontier, or a new frontier, but it was born dead, with an eschatology of death. Like dying New York City, it strangles itself with its own ungodly laws.

This situation is not unusual but commonplace. In some cities and states, no young man can qualify to be a plumber, or a carpenter, or in various other callings, unless his father is an important person in the union. The dying legislate against the future.

This eschatology of death is common to all ages and classes. The old are very prone to damning the younger generations, but one of the menaces of our time is the growing demands on public funds by the aging. With the decline in the birth rate, the United States may face a crisis in not too many years when each gainfully employed person will be supporting two persons on Social Security, and other forms of aid. Such a situation will not occur only because disaster will first overtake any society which works itself into such a predicament.

The younger generations are no better, of course. They seek statist solutions for all problems: totalitarianism in the economic sphere (and therefore in the political as well), and total permissiveness in the moral sphere. This is irresponsibility, and irresponsibility is an urgent invitation to disaster and death.

Not surprisingly, humanistic education is dominated by the eschatology of death. It creates a demand for instant results and instant gratification. It teaches children to play at being a state senate, or a congress, and to legislate feelings, as though "good" wishes can determine reality. The child matures physically but remains a child, demanding instant results and gratification, utopia now without either work or faith. Education for permanent childhood means a society of incompetents, of all ages, whose politics becomes a demand politics. Because a demand politics produces

disasters, the politicians who feed or gratify this demand are readily and angrily made the scapegoats for a graceless and irresponsible citizenry.

In *Speech and Reality* (1970), Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy wrote of the social dangers and evils confronting modern civilization. These are, he said, *first*, anarchy. In anarchy, people and classes "do not care to come to an agreement." Instead of ties uniting men, there are now divisions only, with each pursuing his own interest. *Second*, decadence is a very great evil. Decadence is manifested at a critical point: parents do not have "the stamina of converting the next generation to their own aims and ends. Decadence is the disease of liberalism today." The consequence is the barbarization of the younger generation. Since they are not made heirs of the past and its faith, they become the barbarians of the present. (The modern family, like the modern school, is a school for barbarians.) "The only energy that can fight this evil is faith. Faith, properly speaking, never is a belief in things of the past, but of the future. Lack of faith is a synonym for decadence," Rosenstock-Huessy held.

Third in his list of evils is revolution, which is a consequence of anarchy and decadence. The old and the past are liquidated or eliminated as meaningless and irrelevant, which indeed they have made themselves to be, by their lack of faith and their destructive education of the young. *Fourth* in the list of evils is war. War is a sign of impotence. A system or philosophy of life which has no power to convert becomes imperialistic. For the zeal and faith of peaceful missionary work, it substitutes brutal terror. A failing faith resorts to war, because it lacks the contagion of faith and conviction and can only force men into its own system. War is the resort of those who lack true power and are declining.

In brief, Rosenstock-Huessy said, anarchy is a crisis created by a lack of unity and community. Decadence is the collapse of faith. Revolution means a lack of respect, indeed, a contempt, for the past and present. War is an indication of a loss of power and a resort to force to perpetuate or advance a system.

All of these things are aspects of the eschatology of death. But there is still another aspect. Because the modern taboo is death, people are prissy and hesitant about the plain facts of dying. It is often assumed, out of fear, that most deaths are costly, long, and lingering, which in most cases is not true. Death often comes quickly. It is also assumed that death comes to a bland man, again not true. It comes to Christians and to unbelievers, and with many shades of difference. Death among some of the ungodly who die a lingering death unleashes a radical hatred of the living. One man, a life-long reprobate and adulterer, abandoned his wife as "too old" and moved in with a younger widow, whom he enriched to

a degree. When terminally ill, he was ordered out by his mistress, and only his wife would have him. Instead of gratitude, he daily showered her and their children with hatred, profanity, and abuse, hating them for their faith and health, "wasted" on them, he would shout, because they "didn't know how to live." This is an aspect of the eschatology of death, its hatred for life and the living, and its will to destroy them. At the heart of this is what Wisdom long ago declared: "But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death" (Prov. 8:36).

We are surrounded today by dying men whose eschatology is death and whose politics, religion, economics, education, and daily lives manifest what Samuel Warner has called "the urge to mass destruction." Of this world system, Revelation 18:4 declares, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." In spite of this, all too many professing Christians not only refuse to separate themselves but are insistent on the morality of sending their children to humanistic state schools, an act of anarchy.

We have described the nature of the dying. What about the dead? The dead cannot wage war nor revolution, nor manifest hatred. The dead have their place, and they remain within it. No corpse can outgrow its coffin, nor conquer an inch of ground beyond that which it occupies. The dead stay in their coffins.

All too often the church is like a coffin. Instead of being a training ground and an armory for the army of the Lord, it is a repository for the dead. The people within have not the life and power to occupy any other ground, to establish Christian schools, to conquer in the realm of politics and economics, to "occupy" in Christ's name even one area of life and thought and to bring it into "captivity" to Jesus Christ (Luke 19:13; 2 Cor. 10:5). Where Christianity is confined to the church, it is dead, and it is only a corpse claiming that name but having none of the life nor the power thereof (2 Tim. 3:5).

Christianity cannot be caged into a church and confined there like a zoo animal. "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). Power commands; it exercises dominion, and it reaches out "to every creature" (Mark 16:15) with the good news of Christ's redemption and lordship. It works to bring all things under the dominion of Christ, who is "King of kings, and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16). Jesus began and ended His ministry "preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God" (Mark 1:14–15). That Kingdom begins with our redemption through His atonement and continues with our exercise of dominion with knowledge, righteousness, and holiness over every area of life and thought.

Coffin churches have no such gospel. Instead, they summon the living dead to enter the safety of their particular casket, far removed from the problems and battles of life. They encourage their people to gush about the peace within the coffin and to embellish the coffin with their time and effort. Coffin churches have no ministry to a dying world.

When our Lord declared, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18), He did not limit that total power which He as King of Creation exercises to the narrow confines of man's soul. Christ's "all power" is over all things in heaven and in earth in their every aspect, and over every atom, moment, and possibility in all of creation. He is the Lord, lord over all. To limit His lordship and power to the church is as absurd as limiting the sun to shining over Europe, or selected portions thereof. Even less than we can limit the sun to one continent or one country can we limit Christ the King to one sphere or institution. To do so is a denial of His deity and is practical atheism.

Because "all power" is His, the Lord of Creation sends His elect messengers out to "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:19–20). All nations are to be summoned to bow before their king, both as individuals and in every aspect of their lives, civil, ecclesiastical, educational, familial, vocational, and all things else. An eschatology of life and victory allows us to exempt nothing from Christ's dominion and lordship.

A sickly term in Reformed theological circles refers to God's "well-meant offer of the gospel"; the image of God it invokes is a false one. God's Word is never a "well-meant offer" but always the command word, the word of power which redeems and regenerates, or reprobates. To be "well-meant" smacks of impotence and failure, and it speaks of men whose powers are frail, fallible, sinful, and dying. It belongs to eschatologies of death. God's Word is the command word, the word of power, the word of life and death because it is the omnipotent word. Only of Him can it be truly said, "The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up" (1 Sam. 2:6). Apart from the Lord, man has no future. In every area of life and thought, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Ps. 127:1).

Education in its essence is always the transmission of the basic faith and values of a culture to its young. Education is thus in essence always a religious concern.

In many cultures, the basic values have been nonverbal and nonliterary, so that education, then, has not been concerned with literacy but

with other skills. A few cultures only have been concerned with literacy and with Biblical faith and culture in particular, because of the insistence on the knowledge of the Scriptures. Modern humanism (as against classical humanism) underrates verbal and literary skills.

Thus, not only is education a totally religious subject, but the curriculum, its contents, and its methods are all religious, in that they reflect the faith and values of a culture.

To allow our children to be in humanistic schools is to be unequally yoked and to serve two masters.

14

THE LOVE OF DEATH

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 35, December 1982

One of the most telling sentences in Scripture is Proverbs 8:36: "But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death." This means that the love of death marks every person and culture which is in sin against God: they are suicidal. This fact, stated so clearly by Solomon, has not lacked confirmation over the generations. In this century, Sigmund Freud, on non-Biblical grounds, held that the will-to-death is the basic and governing fact in the lives of all men, and he accordingly had dim hopes for the future of civilization.

The Bible tells us that there is an inseparable link between sin and death. Sin separates from God, the creator and giver of life: it is rebellion against God's law and government. The consequence of this separation from the source of all life is death, and all sin means a love of and addiction to death. Jesus Christ says, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:25–26). To accept Christ's atonement and His lordship means that we separate ourselves from sin and death to life and righteousness or justice, and eternal life begins at once for us, so that the power of death is broken (1 Cor. 15:55–57)

Meanwhile, all around us, the world is marked by a will to and a love of death. Every day the world economic scene shows more clearly this will to death. Inflation is the planned destruction of money and of the economy.

In recent years, some people have acted as though one relatively mildly destructive habit was newly found to be harmful, i.e., smoking tobacco. But people knew that more than a generation ago, when Dr. Pearl's studies were released. Before Dr. Pearl's day, even the erring schoolboys

knew it and called cigarettes "coffin nails"! It was definitely not a lack of knowledge. The same is true in the economic sphere. Very clearly, when Keynes was asked about the consequences of his economics, he said, "In the long run, we are all dead." Suicidal men demand suicidal economics, and the same kind of politics.

President Reagan's campaign speeches spelled out the consequences of deficit financing, unsound money, financing and aiding world Marxism, and more — all things he is presently doing and defending. The politics of death prevails in Washington, D.C., and all the world capitols. The dying do not plan for tomorrow or next year, and the politics of death thinks only in terms of today.

George Orwell, in *1984*, depicted clearly the consequences of the politics of death. However, not being a man of Biblical faith, he failed to see the roots thereof. Modern man has denied the triune God and has insisted that the universe is a product of chance and accident. Instead of a cosmic and total meaning, his universe is one of absolute meaninglessness. If the only rationality in the universe is in the mind of man, and if the mind of man, since Freud, is simply the irrational product of man's unconscious, then meaninglessness is absolute and total. Then to hunger for truth and meaning is a sign of foolishness and irrationality. Greco-Roman paganism saw this cosmic emptiness as grounds for hedonism: "Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." The greatest celebration and most loved event of the Roman Empire was the "circus," with its gladiators battling to death, Christians thrown to the lions, and death in various other ways made into a spectator sport. The cry of the gladiators on entering the arena, "Hail, Caesar! We who are about to die salute you!," epitomized the spirit of Rome. Death was a game, and all courted it in their own way, and glorified it in the arena. As the Lord declares, "All they that hate me love death."

Statist education is increasingly education for death, national death. Jonathan Kozol, in *Prisoners of Silence*, and the *U.S. News and World Report*, May 17, 1982, pp. 53–56, "Ahead: A Nation of Illiterates?" document the sorry plight of the United States. The economy is requiring more and more educated and skilled workers, and the state schools are producing illiterates who cannot hold such jobs. The illiterate and near-illiterate (or, functionally illiterate) number between 57 and 63 million. This illiteracy (and joblessness) constitutes "a form of social dynamite." The situation grows worse annually, and the attacks on Christian schools for providing an alternative and superior education grows more intense. To criticize the state schools is in many circles the mark of fascism, superstition, religious bigotry, and more! The lovers of death resent the

possibility of life and a future for any segment of the republic.

On every side, the death wish is with us, organized into intense campaigns and movements: Zero Population Growth, Zero Economic Growth, and so on. Note the passion with which the anti-nuclear-weapons movement exaggerates the potential of such weapons and its readiness to believe in the total destruction of the world (and to relish a film depicting it), while at the same time pursuing policies of disarmament which will invite war.

Within the church, it is amazing to see the passion with which men defend eschatologies of death. History, such men insist, cannot end in the Lord's victory and the rule of the saints from pole to pole, but only in defeat. Things will only go from bad to worse, such men declare, until the end of the world. Somehow, they see it as unspiritual and un-Christian to believe in an eschatology of victory. Instead of a joyful and triumphant faith, such men manifest a sour and retreatist faith.

The love of death is very clear in the abortionist movement. Its advocates are suicidal in a number of ways. While I have no way of verifying this, a few persons familiar with abortion "clinics" tell me that there is a high rate of the use of narcotics and an overuse of alcohol among staff members.

It is important to note that the Ten Commandments, in the word or law concerning life, reads, "Thou shalt not kill." Some translate it as "murder," but there is another Hebrew word, as in Psalm 10:8 for murder, *harag*, to smite or kill with deadly intent. In Exodus 20:13, the word is *ratsach*, from a root, to dash in pieces, kill, to put to death; this word *can* mean murder also, but it is somewhat more general. The meaning of "Thou shalt not kill" is that all killing is forbidden except where permitted by God's Word, i.e., in the execution of lawfully condemned men, in self-defense in defensive warfare, in eliminating those animals and pests which hinder farming, ranching, etc., in killing for food, and the like. In other words, all life is created by God, and the taking of any life must be subject to God's law-word. Because we are not our own, but are God's creation and property, we cannot take our own lives, because we are God's possession.

One of the marks of a sound faith is a love of life and the godly use thereof, whereas a suicidal and a destructive use of our lives and of the lives of other men and creatures manifests an alien foundation.

Suicide is thus normally a religious fact. This qualification, "normally," is necessary these days, because many medically administered drugs have deadly side effects, and, when more than one is taken, produce deadly and frightening results.

Many religions have taken a favorable view of suicide and have even exalted it as the path of honor and dignity. In some cultures, when the king died, wives and retainers competed for the privilege of being buried alive with their monarch. H. J. Rose, in his survey of suicide among non-Christian religions (Hasting's *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 12, p. 23), held "Probably the chief, if not the only, reason for this (religious opposition to suicide) among primitive races is simply the dread of the ghost. The self-destroyer must have been greatly wronged or troubled in some way, or he would not have acted as he did, therefore his ghost will be an unusually troublesome and revengeful spirit." However, the fact is that in these cultures all the spirits of the dead are feared as hostile. Life is seen as a realm of hostilities and suspicion, and death may even aggravate that fact. Hence, such religions manifest a fear of life as such, and they see no escape even in death from the cosmic hostilities. The cosmos is a realm of the wars of the gods, men, and spirits.

Not too long ago, I wrote Position Paper no. 25, "The Trouble with Social Security." It was reprinted in various newsletters and magazines, and the reprints brought in some interesting mail. At present, Social Security is both morally and economically bankrupt. Arelo Sederberg commented recently, "With the graying of America, one of the ticking time bombs in the money war is the Social Security system which could make the troubles of Chrysler or International Harvester seem like child's play" (Arelo Sederberg, "Moneyline," *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, August 31, 1982, p. A-8). The system is economically unsound, but with retired persons accounting for about 20 percent of all voters, nothing constructive is being done. It is easy to see why. The people who wrote to me were elderly persons on Social Security; facts meant nothing to them. They saw any "tampering" with Social Security as "un-Christian." Social security has pushed France into an economic sickness and socialism, and, if the present trend continues here, will lead to an American debacle as well. No one is ready to discuss either the economic issues or the moral ones. Any and every refusal to face the fullness of reality, however, is suicidal.

The love of death is a cultural and personal fact. Where men do not have true atonement, they seek self-atonement, which means sadomasochistic activities. The result is that the culture is death-oriented rather than life-oriented. However, there is no honesty in this orientation. Typical of this fact was a young man, an artist with wasted abilities, who liked nothing more than to rant against the churches and Christians for their supposed lack of any love or enjoyment of life. He refused to see his own death wish and love of death, as evidenced in his part in the sex revolution, drug culture, and his living in flagrant contempt of common

sense. He was dead before thirty, and, to the last, insisted that he was a champion of life and freedom.

On the other hand, the love of God is the love of life. Obedience to God is obedience to the laws of life. To seek to live without law, God's law, is to seek death. The dead in a graveyard are integrated with the natural world. Those who are alive in the triune God exercise dominion over that world in terms of God's law-word. They do not conform either to the culture of this world or to "natural" impulses, because, having been created in the image of God, it is to God's image they must conform themselves. The image of God, in its narrow sense, is defined thus by the Westminster Shorter Catechism, A. 10: "God created man male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures" (Gen. 1:26–28; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). In its broader sense, the image of God includes more: His revelation in Scripture is a manifestation of His image, knowledge, righteousness (or, justice), holiness, dominion, glory, law, grace, judgment, and more.

Thus, to conform ourselves to God's image rather than to the tempter's plan to be our own god (Gen. 3:5), means to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4). There is no true life by bread alone, but rather by God's sovereign grace through Christ, and faithfulness then to His Word. Jesus Christ is declared to be "the Word of life" (1 John 1:1). It is He who shows us "the path of life" (Ps. 16:11), and this is set forth in the totality of His Word. We cannot claim to love life and neglect the Lord and giver of life, and His Word which sets forth the way of life.

The path of life, and the love of life, means a God-ordained way in every area of life and thought. The essence of the modern perspective is that man claims to be autonomous and to seek his freedom from the triune God. All too many churchmen profess an adherence to the Lord of life while affirming an autonomous way in most things. This is antinomianism; it is also the love of death.

> Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. (Prov. 8:32–35)

15

REALITY, FAITH, AND ARCHITECTURE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 116, December 1989

WHAT a man truly believes will affect every area of his life and thought. Whatever his outward profession of faith, his life will reveal what governs his heart.

Outside of Christ, the motive in the lives of men is the will to be one's own god, to determine what constitutes good and evil, law and morality, and all things else. The more power a man has, the more openly his life will reveal his heart, his basic faith. Kings and rulers over the centuries have, like master criminals, been more free in expressing their motivating faith than most men, simply because their power gives them the freedom to be themselves.

Over the centuries, architecture has been especially revelatory of men and cultures because architecture gives solid expression to a lifestyle. Not surprisingly, some have seen architecture as the central art and as the most important one in understanding an era's ideas and hopes.

Two key architectural areas of expression from antiquity to the present have been temples (places where the gods dwell, houses of worship, places for sacrifices, etc.) and palaces (residence of kings, emperors, rulers of various sorts, parliaments, "people's palaces" or bureaucratic centers, and so on). The palace is an imitation temple, the house where divine rulers dwell, or where the voice of the people as the voice of God comes into focus. The modern temple thus is a state building. All over the world, state buildings are now the "marble palaces" and temples of modern man, who sees salvation as political action.

It is of interest that in the earliest church buildings of the Christian era the construction was of stone; the sanctuary was a throne room of Christ the King, and the congregation stood when the King's Word, the Bible, was read. Christians saw the Kingdom of God as the only true empire,

and thus they challenged Rome's claim to sovereignty.

As humanism began to develop in the late medieval era, the construction of churches and cathedrals began to be rivaled by the residences of kings, lords, bankers (the Medici), and other men of power. The doctrine of the divine right of kings had its architectural expression in magnificent palaces, most notably Versailles, which was built not for comfort but as an expression of power and divine right. Portraits of Louis XIV echoed the representations of Zeus, head of the Greek pantheon of gods; and lesser gods of France, the nobility, constituted the court.

Grandeur in architecture became the evidence of success and social ascent. Chairs at the dining table became so ornate and ponderous that they were an effort for a man to move. Rooms could be drafty and very, very cold, but the impression of divine grandeur, unlimited wealth and power, and overwhelming majesty were more important in these temples of godlike men.

It is hard at this distance to sense the Puritan hostility to all these pretensions. While the Puritans themselves did not abandon expensive and attractive clothing, others, like the Quakers and the other Anabaptists (the Mennonites, the Amish, etc.), insisted on plainness and simplicity as a religious matter.

In the American colonies, this new perspective found its freest expression. As some grew wealthy, larger homes became more common, but their premise was a different one than had previously governed Europeans. We can call it a difference between imagination and reality. The palace standard catered to man's imagination of himself as a god, a lord over his domains, a man who could be lord over all he surveyed. The reality standard saw a house as a tool for living, not an eternal monument. Both wood and stone were readily available in the colonies, but men routinely chose wood. Houses were built, not to dominate their setting, but to fit into it. As a result, the house and street were located, as were barns and all outbuildings, so that they might best utilize the prevailing winds and the arc of the sun. A good house leaks air; an airtight house is not a healthy place to live! When best placed, a house's air supply will be twice replaced in a day without any draft or discomfort and with great health advantages. Fireplaces were similarly designed to avoid problems due to winds. The roof was slanted steepest toward the winter winds, and the rooms most used faced the south.

Especially in New England and the middle Atlantic colonies, the engineering of houses became a remarkable American science and art. Eric Sloane, in his various delightful books, has given us a detailed picture of the many accomplishments of that era.

Palaces were not the objective. The devout Puritan temper created a type of housing to be a tool for living, to circulate fresh air in the summer and to conserve heat in the winter. Because the family was seen as God's basic social unit, the house was also designed to be a home, not a palace.

The English word "home" comes from an ancient Teutonic word which may mean "to lie down." In the colonial world, it developed two very different meanings. Outside of the American colonies, "home" meant, of generations, England, and "going home" meant returning to England. In the American colonies other than Canada, it quickly came to mean one's house and family, and it carried a meaning of serenity and peace. It was an American who much later wrote "Home, Sweet Home." Now damned by modern Americans as sentimental, it tellingly contrasted the American home to palaces.

The song is now in disfavor because Americans have abandoned the home idea for a miniature palace. Furniture-advertisement pictures, showroom windows, and interior decorators now set the standard. The goal is a miniature palace for the masses, and a small house of 1,500 square feet is often designed to convey a sense of grandeur. People want to make "the right impression."

The house has ceased to express the faith and family history of its dwellers. It is usually stripped of all religious items. Family pictures, portraits of parents and grandparents, and family mementos are not there. The American house is only occasionally a home; it is an impersonal atmosphere.

Some years ago, a prominent ex-prostitute, ex-madam, Polly Adler, wrote her memoirs, entitled *A House Is Not a Home*. Well, a brothel indeed can be in a house, but it is not a home. Similarly, a family can live in a house which is not a home, when its center is not the Christian faith but a standard of living.

Houses now have a poor sense of reality because their owners lack one. Because living is now associated with neither faith, family, nor work, the focus of the house is on pleasure; the family wants to "live," i.e., experience the maximum pleasures of living it can afford, and hence the house is built to cater to the pleasure principle.

Eric Sloane said, "the early American home and farm were one in much more than a casual commentary on colonial life. It was the pioneer's creed and a basic American belief until a century ago" (*American Yesterday*, p. 39). Moreover, "The average home of a century ago had twice as many extra rooms (most of which are now obsolete and forgotten) as are in the complete house of today. The smoke rooms, food cellar, borning room, milk room, chapel room, keeping room, summer kitchen,

wash room, and corn room are just a few of the rooms that were as standard to an old house as a coat closet is to a modern one" (p. 47). Because of their size, these houses have tended to disappear. Ironically, in the surviving ones, the chapel room becomes a large closet! The chapel room was usually located near the front door.

By the latter part of the 1800s, the reality standard which had governed the American outlook was gone. A pomposity of manner and style had replaced it. The gift for simplicity which had marked colonial and early America had given way, first, to ornateness, and then to the pseudo-simplicity in this century of Frank Lloyd Wright and others.

Architecture is a reflection of faith and life, and, given the instability and inconstancy of the modern mood, the architectural goal has too often been novelty and impression, "making a statement."

When men profess Christ but live outside of Christ, there is then no sphere of life or thought which they can govern because they cannot govern themselves. Living in terms of "the pleasure principle," to use Freud's terms, means disregarding "the reality principle." If pleasure is our goal, we are saying that we are little gods who must be pleased; the world is out of joint if we are not "happy." If we live in terms of Jesus Christ as Lord, then whether we are rich or poor, happy or unhappy, fulfilled or unfulfilled, is of no consequence. The question is, are we faithful to Him, and serving Him?

16

INHERITANCE, BARBARISM, AND DOMINION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 121, May 1990

In terms of Biblical law, inheritance is a means of blessing godly and responsible children. If there were several heirs, the one who was the main heir received a double portion, the care of his parents, and headship over the others. The parents had a duty to separate themselves from ungodly sons, and, if needed, to participate in their legal condemnation (Deut. 21:15–21). If no son were worthy, a daughter could inherit all (Num. 27:5–11). Inheritance was not necessarily by blood, but by faith.

Sin leads to the disinheritance of men and nations, and the purpose of inheritance is to further godly dominion.

The meaning of inheritance has changed dramatically in the modern age, especially in this century and dramatically since World War II. At one time, the substance of an inheritance was land and a house, furnishings, and a family Bible. I can remember more than sixty years ago when one couple looked forward to the privilege of inheriting a battered old family rocker which had been brought to California about a decade after the Gold Rush of 1849; I can recall the happiness of others at inheriting a family Bible.

Now, inheritance is mainly in the form of money, or paper assets such as stocks and bonds. An inflationary era tends to reduce values to paper and to create a society which is rootless and prone to change.

One consequence has been a contempt for the values and treasures of the family's past. In the 1950s, I saw a beautiful handmade kitchen table with chairs, made of poplar wood, sell at a high price. It had been built by a skilled craftsman who settled in a Western area in the mid-1800s, where no other tree existed. The fourth generation heir had no use for it; at that time, the dealer commented on this lack of appreciation by an heir. Such

incidents are now commonplace. Most heirs want only money, not family heirlooms, treasures, or Bibles. The past means nothing to them, nor does the future. However much education they have, they are barbarians.

The modern barbarian may be a university graduate, a scientist, or an artist, a person of prominence or wealth, but he is someone with neither respect for the past nor roots in it, nor any concern for the future. If he receives an inheritance, he wants to liquidate it, to turn it into cash, even as he liquidates the religious and cultural inheritance of the past. What so-called artists like Marcel Duchamp did to the past, the modern heirs do to the family's past.

A common street sign of my childhood is now rare, and, in many areas, never seen — one of the very common signs over businesses and professional offices: "A. C. Johnson and Son," "C. N. Schaeffer and Sons," "Emory Williams and Son," and so on. A business or trade was proudly handed down to the next generation. Then, however, fathers began to say in bewilderment that their sons felt almost duty-bound to rebel and to seek work elsewhere, work of less satisfying character and of lesser freedom. There was a rebellion under way against the ancient forms of inheritance. Family treasures that a father and mother had once proudly inherited were regarded by their children with amused condescension. Family portraits, once part of the parlor, were now junked, as were photograph albums of old pictures. In effect, the heirs were too often saying, give us cash, not junk.

About the same time, too, the care of the older generation was being transferred from the family to Social Security and Medicare. The older folks were living too long, some held, and euthanasia advocates began to speak out.

The return to barbarism was under way.

The ancient barbarians moved steadily, looting, raping, and killing as they went. What they could not carry with them, they burned or destroyed. They despised the stability of the peoples they victimized, people who loved work and who remained rooted to family, work, and place. For the barbarian, the stable family and society were there to be victimized.

In time, the barbarian premise became the primary article of faith, in a sophisticated fashion, of the Enlightenment. Denis Diderot, in the *Encyclopédie*, made what T. C. W. Blanning described as the "unequivocal demand" of Enlightenment thinkers all over Europe: "Everything must be examined, everything must be shaken up, without exception and without circumspection" (*Joseph II and Enlightened Despotism*, p. 3). This view demanded a disrespect for the past, for the family, and for the church. Destruction became a mark of intelligence and enlightenment.

It was no wonder, then, that the Enlightenment led to the age of revolution and the systematic destruction of the past. We must not forget that the Enlightenment and the men of reason despised both the Gothic cathedrals that faith had built, and the Alps which God had made; they were both violations of rational premises.

The French Revolution was the great open inauguration of the age of revolution, and it introduced in secular fashion what the Enlightenment had longed for and worked to create, the modern state, dedicated to anti-Christianity, antifamily in nature, and erosive of heritage and tradition. The modern state began to destroy the past by means of state control of education and by taxation aimed at the destruction of the family and inheritance. *The modern state is institutionalized revolution.*

Given this fact, the inheritance and property taxes — and other related taxes — should not surprise us. Their purpose is in large part the dissolution of the past and present. This purpose requires that wealth, once largely land-based, trade-based, and skill-based, be converted into cash. The state's schools teach a disrespect for the family, tradition, and the older forms of inheritance; the school graduates want cash as their inheritance, not the things once prized.

The results are sometimes insane. Heirs will at times sell valuable antiques which have been in their family for some time in order to buy other antiques which will not tie them to their past. The Enlightenment heritage leaves them unwilling to be grateful; history for them begins with themselves. They do not want grandparents and parents to complicate their lives; let them die quickly and let their cash make life easier for their heirs.

The purpose of Scripture's laws of inheritance is godly dominion. Hence, we see Ishmael passed over in favor of Isaac; Esau, in favor of Jacob; Jacob's older sons, in favor of Judah; and so on. The heir had to have not only faith but a character which was dominion oriented, beginning with dominion over oneself.

The Lord God does not want self-indulgent heirs. Again and again in history, He dispossesses men and nations who do not respect their God-given heritage and who assume that the past and its inheritance is there for their pleasure rather than as a stewardship to the future.

Thus far, the twentieth century has seen a steady return to barbarism. What the twenty-first century will show remains to be seen. As I have traveled back and forth across the United States since World War II, I have seen town houses, farms, and ranches, some in the same family since the area was settled, change hands. Some farms, six and nine generations in the family, have been lost because a debt-free place was run into

debt, or because the heirs wanted a modern, urban life. Rootless people love a rootless life. The past is there to be used, not respected. They may be, and often are, charming, able, and likable, but they are rootless, and they are barbarians.

It was forty-some years ago when a boy, perhaps thirteen or fourteen years of age, watched a wedding party come out of a church and asked me what they were doing, and why was a marriage ceremony performed, and why was it important? At least he wanted to know, if only in curiosity! But he was a young barbarian, with no idea of the importance of the family, its religious meaning, nor its legal protection. Today, millions like him regard a wedding as a time to show off, get gifts, and have fun. The meaning of the family in God's sight is lost to them. They live pragmatically; things are valuable to them only if they can be used advantageously, not in terms of God and the family. Behind the tinkle of the glasses celebrating the wedding can be heard, if one listens, the footsteps of judgment on this age.

17

THE OLD ORDER

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 237
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Writing in 1896, in *The School of Plato*, F. W. Bussell, an Oxford scholar, held that "we are about to inaugurate a regimen of severest coercion" (p. 70). At that time, the twentieth century, soon to begin, was to most the dawn of freedom and science. The world was seeing the decline of tyrannies, the rise of science, dramatic inventions, and the spread of freedom. Bussell, however, saw the end of laissez-faire and the rise of statist controls.

But the future was grimmer than the learned Bussell foresaw. In 1900, Europe and America governed most of the world; the only other power was Japan. Much of the world was either a colony of Europe or to some degree controlled by it. Only one basically non-European empire remained, Ottoman Turkey, known as "the sick man of Europe." (At that time, Turkish power in Central Europe was very extensive.) The European imperial powers were all expected to become more "democratic." Kings ruled much of Europe still, but they were sharing their powers increasingly with the people. To read the bound volumes of periodicals of 1899 or 1900 is to see a great confidence in the future of man under freer rule and an advancing science, technology, and capitalism.

Laurence Lafore, in *The End of Glory: An Interpretation of the Origins of World War II* (1970), saw World War I as an earthquake that cracked the once successful power of the old order. The events that followed were no less shattering, and they provided "graveyards" for the old order.

The old economies were faltering. The unquestioned world leadership of the white man gave way to a very different order. The world supremacy

of the Atlantic community gave way to the Pacific, and the center of the world's economy shifted to the U.S. West Coast, led by California and Alaska, to Japan, Korea, Taiwan, China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, etc. The European Community, an effort to counteract this Pacific trend, and perhaps especially to meet the competition of Japan and the United States, tended to create new problems thereby.

It was a radically different world. The major American universities were beset by demands for preferential treatment for American black students, while Asian students were, without any preferential treatment, outdoing all other groups. The old racial myths were giving way to new realities.

Meanwhile, some Americans who spent time in Europe saw much of it as so paganized that a basic Christian missionary movement was needed there. A Christian pastor from Africa told me that America's black ghettos were terrifying places and perhaps a growing African church might soon send missionaries to the inner city jungles.

What had happened? The West, having forsaken God, was being forsaken by God. While white American students played (and/or demonstrated) their way through colleges and universities, Asian students were supported by family and relatives and rewarded for doing well. The work ethic had left too many Americans.

I asked one man, close to the academic scene, to describe American youth. He answered in one word, "Lawless." When I asked if that meant no regard for God's law, he laughed. No, he meant no regard for any law, parental, academic, or otherwise. Basically, they were self-indulgent; the Asians were "unfair" competition; after all, "we're only young once," and college should be a happy interlude. They were, clearly, a part of the suicide of the old order.

The story does not end here, however. A growing number of Christians and homeschoolers are dedicated students and are a nucleus for re-Christianization. A network of Christian action and leadership now unites Christians of various races and continents. The Christian future which is emerging is postmodern and deeply rooted. The old political divisions are by-passed, and Christian priorities now govern. The vision now is not American or European but Christian.

One advantage is the intense hostility the Christians community increasingly faces, at least in the United States. Slowly but surely it is compelling Christians to recognize that compromise is suicidal, and that only an unequivocal and consistent Christian faith can stand in a time of testing. Thanks should be offered for the intense hatred expressed by the

anti-Christians. It is waking up many to the fact that friendship with the world is enmity to God. We find that many refuse to associate with us lest they be tarred with the same hostility, which is both sad and amusing. There is no escape from testing, and to avoid commitment leads to judgment. Actually, this is a glorious time to be alive because it is a time of battle over the most fundamental issues, not necessarily an easy time, but a good time. Where do you stand? A dying world cannot be a good place to settle in! A century of death for the old order can lead to victory.

RECONSTRUCTION

18

"FIRST THE BLADE"

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 88, July 1987

One of the very important and much neglected verses of Scripture is Mark 4:28: "For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." Our Lord tells us (Mark 4:26–29) that the Kingdom of God, as it develops in history, has a necessary growth and development. No more than we can plant grain and then expect the harvest at once, can we expect quick or immediate results in the growth of God's Kingdom. If we plant grain, we must cultivate it, often water it, tend to the field, and, only after much labor, reap a harvest. To expect otherwise is stupidity and foolishness, whether in farming or in the work of the Kingdom. In fact, our Lord describes quick growth as false (Matt. 13:5–6, 20–21).

The expectations of most people nowadays run contrary to our Lord's words. They demand immediate results, and then wonder why their harvests never come.

Within the church, this demand for immediate and spectacular results is commonplace. We need to remember that in church history, sometimes the most successful preachers over the centuries have been heretics and compromisers. Carl E. Braaten has rightly observed, "John Tetzel was surely a popular preacher. He told people what they wanted to hear and sold people what they wanted to get. He was a preacher of indulgences, and lots of peoples swarmed to hear him and bought what he had to offer" (*Currents in Theology and Mission* 14, no. 2 [April 1987]: pp. 111–112). Today, even the *Catholic Encyclopedia* speaks of Tetzel's "unwarranted theological views."

However, we need not go back to Tetzel. Today, preachers of all sorts, and laymen too, believe in and demand of God instant results: sow the seed and stand back while the harvest pops up at once! As a result, such

men often do better at growing weeds than grain.

This mentality is common in all circles, modernist and fundamentalist, socialist and conservative. During the 1930s, I recall spending a futile dinner hour trying to persuade a fellow student out of quitting his university training. A passionate and devout leftist, he was convinced that, very shortly, the forces of international fascism would conquer the world. It was therefore necessary to go underground with the party of world revolution and work for world liberation. He was totally convinced that, once the forces of world fascism were broken, peace and plenty would flourish from pole to pole and from sea to shining sea. I believe that on that occasion I first made serious use of Mark 4:28, but it was futile.

In the 1960s, great numbers of students all over the world fell victim to the same wild delusion. They believed that, with a little action, the full ear of corn could be reaped at once. One group held that only the reactionaries prevented the immediate dawn of an automated, work-free, and war-free world. When a reporter asked one girl in the group how a work-free world could produce food, she answered with haughty contempt, "Food *is*!" The student movement commanded superior minds academically, but it lacked any sense of historical development and growth. God can produce instantaneous results; He created all things out of nothing. But the Kingdom of God in history moves, our Lord tells us, in a different way, even as "the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear" (Mark 4:28).

In the past ten years, I have been involved in many court trials defending the freedom of the church, the Christian school, home schools, and families. It regularly amazes and appalls me that so many Christians, before they have fought a court case or voted (so many still do not vote), are ready to give up hope or to think of extreme measures and flight. (In this, they resemble the students of the 1960s.) Only yesterday, I talked with a fine veteran of Vietnam whose pastor sees no alternative to total obedience to the state except revolution; since he opposes revolution, he insists on total obedience as the Christian duty. He overlooks the vast realm in between, i.e., voting, pressure on legislatures, the education of Bible believers (of whom 50 percent do not vote), and so on.

It is important to recognize that this inability to see the necessity of growth is a modern failing, and also to see its source. The church fathers by and large tended to neglect Mark 4:28; but Calvin noted that the parable has as its purpose to make us diligent and patient, "because the fruit of . . . labour does not immediately appear."

It was the Enlightenment and Romanticism which produced the new mentality. According to Scripture, man's problem is himself: he is a

sinner. His original sin is his desire for autonomy, to be his own god and law, determining good and evil for himself (Gen. 3:5). However, there is nothing man wants less to face than the fact that, whatever other problems he has, he, his own nature, is his main problem. In fact, man rejects radically and totally the idea that God's indictment of him is correct. He may approve of the motto, "In God we trust," but he lives in terms of the premise, "In myself I trust."

The more man develops in his sin, in his evil will-to-be-god, the more he believes that his own fiat word can make reality. If statist man says, "Let there be prosperity," there should be prosperity. If he says, "Let poverty, hatred, and oppression be abolished," these things should disappear.

But, the more he pursues this course as god and creator, the more the evils around him increase. As James tells us, "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" (James 4:1). Men create evils and then blame God, their environment, and other men for them.

How many politicians are ready to say, "We, the people, are responsible for the mess we are in. We want something for nothing. We want to eat our cake and have it too. We have despised God's laws concerning debt, and much, much more, and we deserve the judgment God is bringing upon us."

Man himself is the primary problem, and man insists that the blame must be laid on someone or something else. As a result, his problem is compounded.

The Enlightenment and Romanticism deny the Biblical answer. According to the Enlightenment, man's reason is the solution to the problem, whereas Romanticism locates the answer in man's will. In either case, man is the answer, not the problem.

Such thinking placed the modern age (in Europe, after ca. 1660 especially) in radical disagreement with orthodox Christianity. The modern era exalts man and his needs, and it is at total war against the faith that declares man to be a sinner. The epitome of a God-centered faith is the Westminster Shorter Catechism's opening statement, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever."

The logic of such man-centered thinking in the Enlightenment and Romanticism led to revolution. John Locke, after Aristotle, insisted that man's mind and being is a moral blank, neutral to good and evil. The premise of modern education is Locke's assumption: education then becomes the conditioning of the morally blank child.

But what about adults who are no longer morally blank but have been conditioned into an evil outlook by Christianity, family, and capitalism?

(This, for modern thinkers, is the great trinity of evil, Christianity, the family, and capitalism.) How are these peoples and cultures who have been conditioned by evil going to be changed? How can they be dealt with?

Revolution is held to provide the answer. Revolution is seen as personal and cultural shock therapy. We should not be surprised that psychiatrists turned for a time to electroshock therapy: it is a form of psychological revolution. All old patterns are supposedly destroyed in order to clear the mind of past beliefs and habits; then the new, revolutionary changes can be instilled. Such a "therapy" has proven to be a dramatic failure; the moral nature of the man remains. It is not that which comes from outside which pollutes and warps a man, but that which comes from within.

Political revolutions rest on the simple-minded belief in shock therapy. The French and Russian revolutions, and the Spanish and other revolutions, have all believed that destruction will free man from the chains of bondage, but all these revolutions have only enslaved man all the more. The more modern the revolution, the more destructive and vicious it becomes. The Russian Revolution murdered priests wholesale, worked to destroy the family, and confiscated property. The murder of priests became even more savage and intense in the Spanish Revolution.

The belief has been that the murder of man's past is his liberation into a glorious future. The results have been hell on earth, but the revolutionists never blame themselves for it. It is rather the lingering mentality of the past which is to blame. Gorbachev, to "reform" the Soviet Union, has intensified the war against Christianity.

Modern man refuses to be earthbound. The proud American boast after the first space flight showed an astronaut as a newly born baby, and his umbilical cord tying him to earth being cut. Man now was supposedly transcending the earth to enter into a "space age" of freedom. With this new, godlike status, man, some held, would guide his own evolution, clone himself, and overcome space, time, and death.

Is it any wonder that evil churchmen have neglected Mark 4:28? Our Lord is very clear: the pattern of the Kingdom of God is like that of the earth which bringeth forth fruit of itself. There is an order and a progression from the seed, to the first green shoot to emerge, to the cultivated growth, and finally the harvest. Both time and work are essential.

I still recall my pity and revulsion for a prominent American pastor who, after World War II, wanted people to spend their time praying for a speedy Second Coming of Christ. He was arrogantly contemptuous of all Kingdom building as wasteful of time and money. He agreed with another prominent preacher who dismissed all efforts at Christian

Kingdom action as "polishing brass on a sinking ship." Such men do not preach on Mark 4:28.

I recall also, sadly, a very fine man, a very wealthy man, who called me to see him not too long before his death. His family and the firm's director were now fully in charge of all his wealth. About seven years earlier, I had suggested to him that, if he had as his intention turning America around to a better direction, starting Christian schools across the country would do it. He rejected my answer sharply. Now, near death, he called me in to say that if he had spent the millions he did on Christian schools instead of in seeking a "quick victory," the country would indeed be different.

That man was the antithesis of everything revolutionary. He had funded generously a number of anticommunist causes. He loved deeply the more simple America he had known in his youth. He loved the one-room schoolhouse of his Midwestern youth, and the country church with its kindly, neighborly believers in the old-time religion. He was a simple, honest, hard-working, old-fashioned American Christian.

At the same time, although he did not know it, and would have been outraged at the suggestion, he was a revolutionist. However much old-fashioned, he had something in common with all revolutionaries, namely, the hunger for and the belief in a "quick victory."

Millions of American conservatives demonstrated, shortly after Reagan's election in 1980, that they, too, were believers in the myth of victory by revolution. They acted as though the millennium had arrived with Reagan's victory! Conservative political action groups saw an alarming decline in monetary contributions. Reagan was elected, the war was over, and the troops were leaving to resume life as usual in their now peaceable kingdom.

The mentality of instant results is all around us. It is the mentality of the modern age, and of revolution. It is the belief that the problem is not ourselves but something outside of us which an election, revolution, money, education, or some other like measure can alter tomorrow. Meanwhile, we ourselves see no need for change where we are concerned! We can maintain our modern lifestyle and make God happy with a few dollars tossed into an offering plate.

But God says to us, as His prophet Nathan said to King David, a better man than all of us, "Thou art the man" (2 Sam. 12:7). The turnaround begins with us. Then, we work in terms of God's order on earth for His Kingdom: "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

19

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 154, August 1992

One of the most important and influential of the parables of our Lord is about the wheat and the tares. It is a very simple parable, and our Lord Himself gives its explanation (Matt. 13:24–30, 36–43). All the same, at two points people have had problems with its meaning. *First*, does it apply to the end of the world or not? (v. 39). The word translated as *world* is literally *aion*, or age. This means that the fulfillment of this parable is continuous in history. In age after ages, tares are in the Kingdom, and God Himself deals with this problem at the end of an era, a time of judgment. This means that there are a number of such uprootings in history, culminating in the Last Judgment. The parable applies to our time. The age of humanistic statism is nearing its grim end, and God will bring about a great cleansing.

Second, what is the field? Our Lord identifies it in verse 24 as "the kingdom of heaven," God's absolute and total realm. In verse 38 the field is called "the world," the *kosmos*. Since the earth is the Lord's (Ps. 24:1) and the entire creation is His handiwork, the field is inclusive of all things — the church, the earth, and all creation.

Two kinds of *seeds* are involved. The sower of *the good seed*, *the children of the Kingdom*, is Jesus Christ. The *tares* are the *children of the wicked*, sown by the devil. As early as in the days of the early church, Jude, our Lord's brother, tells us that the ungodly had crept into the church (Jude 4).

Otto, Bishop of Freising, in *The Two Cities: A Chronicle of Universal History to the Year 1146* A.D., said of the City of God, and the evil city of man, that the two had but one history, the church; the church was so fully mixed a scene that there was a radical confusion of what was Christ's and what was Satan's. The church was no longer the representative of the

City of God. "I seem to myself to have composed a history not of two cities but virtually of one only, which I call the church" (prologue to the fifth book). Bishop Otto saw the Tower of Babel as the true forerunner of the apostate church!

Again and again, the tares have been sown within the church, and, in age after age, our Lord has cleansed His Temple. But this has not been a futile cycle; with each time of cleansing and reformation, advances have been made. We are therefore the heirs of the ages, heirs of the cleansing and the reforms which the Lord of the church has made through His servants.

When, however, men exalt the church and equate it with Christ, we had better beware. The church is the servant of the Lord, not the Lord Himself. In our time, we see heresies and immoralities abound within the church: modernism, indifferentism, child molestation, a hostility to sound doctrine, antinomianism, and so on and on. The church boasts of its past glories because its present life is an empty one.

Recently, two days in a row, I heard from persons subjected to harsh discipline because they had called attention to evils committed by those in authority. Although in the right, a fact none challenged because they wanted silence on the issues, they were accused of having murder in their hearts. Therefore, they had to repent and seek forgiveness in terms of Matthew 5:22! No attention was paid to our Lord's plain condition: the anger had to be "without cause." The twisting of Scripture to justify evil is a serious offense. To use civil law to do evil is very wrong. How much more so if we use God's law-word to cover our evil actions and intentions?

How does the church come to so evil a position? Our Lord gives us the answer: "while men slept." Where Christ's law-word is concerned, the church is too often asleep. What men want of the church is an insurance policy guaranteeing heaven; having that, they want to be able to forget the fine print in their "insurance policy."

Why is there this recurring fact of reformation and an evil infestation? The coming of Christ's Kingdom is a process of growth, sifting, and judgment. The issues of history are not resolved in a generation, nor in an age.

In more than one parable of Matthew 13, the fact is clear that there are times of harvest. At the end of a growing season, harvesttime comes. So, too, at the end of an age, there is a harvesting. History has many growing seasons; we live in one, and we have a duty to the Lord in terms of it.

A very important aspect of this parable is the fact that the Lord forbids His servants from going after the tares, i.e., to uproot them. Repeatedly

over the centuries, commentators have made clear that these words (vv. 18–30) do not forbid church discipline. What our Lord requires elsewhere is not invalidated by these words. What is meant, then? The harvest is at the end of the age; it cannot be brought about prematurely. All too often over the centuries churchmen have sinned by seeing their time as the end time, and they act on that assumption, thereby neutralizing Christian faith and action. We are *required* to do our vineyard work and to leave the harvesting to the Lord. It is His world, not ours; it is His church, not ours, and we had better remember this. The old saying states the matter well: the duties are ours; the results are in the hands of the Lord. Leave it there.

Meanwhile, remember, the church is not a new Garden of Eden! It is full of tares. You cannot do your duty to the Lord if you fail to recognize this fact.

Remember, too, that the good seed grows. Growth, or sanctification, is much neglected in our time. We live in an era of indecision within the church, an unwillingness to act and to grow. The church is suffering from a very serious cause of constipation: no movement! Too many church members, instead of being "*more* than conquerors" (Rom. 8:37), are less than men. They are a sluggish army in retreat and too dull to know what is happening. "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph. 5:14). We are in a war, and we cannot escape it by hiding in the church: *it is there*.

20

REVOLUTION OR REGENERATION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 105, January 1989

ALTHOUGH the word *salvation* is usually restricted to theological discussions, it is all the same a concern of all men, i.e., how to solve problems and make society a healthy and harmonious order. A variety of solutions, or plans of salvation, have been offered: philosopher-kings, economic doctrines, sexual arrangements, and more. One of the most popular salvation doctrines of the twentieth century has been education, mass education as the means of social salvation. This hope is still with us, but is fading steadily.

Basically, the difference between all these plans of salvation and Christianity is this: these non-Christian hopes represent a belief that the problem is not in man but in something outside of him, in his environment, family, heredity, schooling, or some like external factor. Thus, to change man, you first change the world around him. The most logical and thorough-going expression of this faith is revolution. It is held that the transformation of man must begin with the radical transformation of his social order. Then man will himself be changed. Liberation theology is the application of this faith within the church: change the world, it is held, and then man can become a Christian. This is the same faith set forth by the tempter to Jesus in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1–11).

Biblical faith holds the contrary view. For Christianity, man must be changed by the sovereign grace of God through Jesus Christ. Then the changed man can change the world. Salvation cannot come to man nor to society apart from Christ's atonement and His regenerating power. The dynamics of society are from God to man to the world.

In recent years, there has been a growth within the church of revolutionary ideas. The power of God unto salvation has been abandoned in favor of the power of revolutionary action unto salvation. We have

already cited liberation theology as a proponent of this anti-Christian doctrine.

Another common application of the revolutionary premise is the tax revolt, that concept so much loved by Karl Marx, who understood its meaning. The excuse is the godlessness of the state. But Jesus Christ and Paul lived under men like Tiberius and Nero; they lived in a time of unjust taxation, abortion, homosexuality, and more. Neither our Lord nor St. Paul counseled a tax revolt. Rather, as against the tax revolts of their day, they counseled tax-paying (Luke 20:19–26; Rom. 13:7). Not revolution but regeneration is the Christian hope for man and society.

In 1988, another revolutionary ploy became the methodology of many churchmen, the demonstrations at abortion clinics designed to violate the laws of picketing and protest and ensure arrest for impeding access. It is questionable whether or not these demonstrations saved the lives of any unborn babies: the women seeking abortions simply went elsewhere. Even more, the demonstrators set a precedent in violating civil laws of various sorts. What is to prevent pro-abortion people from blocking access to churches, or even entering them to disrupt services? If we allow lawless protest to one side, we justify it for all.

No scriptural justification is offered by these demonstrators. The closest thing to a text to justify them is Acts 5:29, the answer of Peter and the other apostles, "We ought to obey God rather than men." What does this mean, however? There is no civil government anywhere which does not disobey God at some points, and, for that matter, there are no perfect churches either. The best of churches fall short of perfect obedience. Are we then justified in obeying only when we believe God's Word is faithfully observed? Then are those around us or under us entitled to rebel against our authority whenever they feel we fall short of or neglect God's Word? Nothing in Scripture gives warrant to that. David's respect for Saul, despite Saul's sin, gives us another model.

Where freedom of God's Word in the church, its schools, its families, and its members is denied, then we must obey God, not the state. We do not disobey to save our money or even our lives, but we do where God's Word and its proclamation is at stake.

The moral anarchy which revolutionists advocate is being brought into the church by some men. Not surprisingly, they impugn the Christian character of those who criticize them, men such as Dr. Stanley, and Rev. Joseph Morecraft III.

To believe in the efficacy of violence to change society means to abandon peaceful means. Not surprisingly, peaceful, legal action is being neglected. A pro-abortion justice on the U.S. Supreme Court has said that,

in a new case, abortion would lose. Such a case would require much funding and highly competent legal help. The money to do this is being spent in sending people from one end of the country to the other to take part in demonstrations, to bail them out of jail, and so on.

The methodology of such demonstrations has been borrowed from non-Christian and revolutionary sources. From one end of the Bible to the other, no warrant can be found for this methodology. To use ungodly means is a way of saying that God's grace and power are insufficient resources for Christian action. It means abandoning Christ for the methods of His enemies.

Such methodology can be effective, but not for the triumph of grace. When the leaders of the people wanted to force Pilate's unwilling hand, they assembled a mob to demonstrate before Pilate and to shout down all protest, screaming, "Crucify him" (Mark 15:13).

There is a long history of injustice at the hands of mobs. There is no Christian calling to create mobs and to violate laws to achieve a purpose.

The sad fact is that, once we adopt a position, the logic of that faith carries us forward. Thus, I am finding that those who approve of demonstrations, and of the violation of the properties of abortion clinics, find it easy to justify violence against the property (bombing) and against the persons who are abortionists (which means murdering them).

The power to punish murders is a civil power, not an ecclesiastical nor a personal one. Just as we must believe that the spheres of the church and of the family should not be violated by the state, so we should avoid trespassing on the state's sphere. The early church faced many evils in the civil sphere: abortion, slavery, and more. Paul spoke against a revolutionary move against slavery but counseled the use of lawful means (1 Cor. 7:20–23). The early church took a strong stand against abortion and disciplined severely all who were guilty of it. It organized its deacons to rescue abandoned babies (who had not been successfully aborted earlier), and it took strong stands without ever suggesting violence.

Humanism gives priority to man and to the will of man over God and His law-word. If we place saving babies above obedience to God, we wind up doing neither the born nor the unborn any good, and we separate ourselves from God.

It is amazing how many people on all sides of issues are so prone to violence as their first and last resorts. They believe, when they see a serious problem, in taking to the streets, getting their guns, fighting the establishment, and so on and on, without even using the many peaceable means which are at hand. For them, violence is not a last resort when all other means have been exhausted, but a first resort. Instead of providing

answers, resorts to violence mean the death of a civilization. The use of violence, whether by Christians or by non-Christians, is a way of saying that voting and the law courts mean nothing, or, that faith and the power of God are irrelevant to the problems of our time.

The resort to revolution or to revolutionary tactics is thus a confession of no faith; it means the death of a civilization because its people are dead in their sins and trespasses. They may use the name of the Lord, but they have bypassed Him for "direct action." In doing so, they have forgotten that since day one of creation, all the power and the direct action are only truly in God's hands. By assuming that everything depends on their action, they have denied God and His regenerating power.

And they have forgotten our Lord's requirement: "*Ye must be born again*" (John 3:7). Regeneration, not revolution, is God's way.

21

GREAT AND FALSE EXPECTATIONS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 155, November 1992

One of the problems men have had for countless generations is their refusal to believe that history can continue much beyond their time. This end-of-the-world mentality has marked pagans and churchmen alike. Men have believed again and again that evil has so infected their world that the end must come. In science fiction, earthlings seek some distant planet for a fresh start. In the days of Rome, men like Horace (65–8 B.C.) saw no future in Rome. Horace's solution was to sail westward in the Atlantic in search of a new and *unfallen* world, where all was innocence and perfection. (Rome lasted for centuries after Horace.) Petronius Arbiter (ca. A.D. 27–66) wrote harshly about the bad education of his day, the disrespect for the past, and the prevailing immorality, but he looked to a cult for hope, and his views were shallow. Men seemed to believe that, by satirizing evil and folly, men would be better.

With the coming of Christianity, these false expectations gained a new dimension. Although our Lord stated very plainly that knowledge of the end is unknown by men (Matt. 24:36), men over the centuries have speculated endlessly on precisely the day and the hour of His coming again. The results of these great and false expectations have been evil. Christian duties are paralyzed and short-circuited. Problems are not dealt with. One pastor told someone whose spouse was very plainly evil not to be concerned about it because the Rapture was due almost any day now!

This mentality has in the modern age deeply infected the humanists. Many Frenchmen in 1789 believed that a new and better age had arrived. In that year, even the British House of Commons proposed to the lords "a day of thanksgiving for the French Revolution." The Revolution had apparently rendered the doctrine of original sin invalid. Man's intelligence was ushering in a naturalistic millennium. Rousseau had held that

man had once lived in a state of natural, primitive grace. The purpose of the French Revolution was to restore man into that grace. As Norman Hampson wrote in *Prelude to Terror* (1988), "The prospect of universal peace was one of the reasons why 1789 seemed to so many people the Year 1 of a new and better world." There was a general "conviction that the millennium had already begun" (p. 126). The goal was to make all men "free and equal," because, "How can a free man be wicked?" All evil was the product of oppression. Abolish oppression, and all men will be good (p. 35). The goal of politics was to create the humanistic millennium as visualized by Rousseau. "Politics was a matter of putting *vertu* on the statute books" (p. 187).

This is why Robespierre, as Otto Scott pointed out in *Robespierre: The Voice of Virtue* (1974), as the head of the state, saw himself as virtue's voice, and all who disagreed with him were evil. This, too, is why the Jacobins held, "All is permitted those who act in the Revolutionary direction" (p. 205).

All revolutionary leaders since then, whether in Cuba or Russia, have been self-assured and confident that they are the voice of virtue. Worse yet, all modern politics is infected with Rousseau's doctrine that the state and its leaders exist to establish and incarnate the order of virtue. The self-righteousness of our political candidates rests in this belief. They, rather than revolutionary leaders, are, they believe, the true voice of reason and virtue on earth.

As Hampson pointed out, the Rousseauists identified politics with morals (*Prelude to Terror*, p. 42). The Biblical identification of morality with religion, with God and His law-word, was denied. Morality was now an aspect of political order. Religion was now limited to purely spiritual concerns and with the hereafter. This world and its moral order were now the province of the state. In due time, given this premise, both Marxist and democratic countries began teaching a new morality, a situational one usually, in the state's schools. The church's protest has been scarcely more than a whisper. Reason, science, and politics have supplanted the church as the voices of morality, and the schools are their instruments.

It should not surprise us that, within a generation after the French Revolution, two new doctrines began to spread through the church. One was Anglo-Israelism, which in its extreme forms identified salvation with race. The other was dispensational premillennialism.

Wherever there was a separation of Biblical law from morality *and* civil law (or civil moral order) with immediate millennial expectations, there a civil and moral barrenness prevailed. Christianity went from being the shaping power of society, to become an unessential thing on the

sidelines, either awaiting an end in which things went from bad to worse, or, expecting a rapture which made societal concerns irrelevant.

Whether in humanism or within the church, great false expectations have devastated the Western world in the past two centuries and have left it crippled and ineffectual.

At the same time, by mining the Bible for "spiritual nuggets" instead of seeing it as the law-word of God, the church has allowed Rousseau's doctrine of a conflict society to prevail. As a result, every area of life has been turned into a civil war: the war of sexes, capital versus labor, the farm versus the city, parents versus children, and so on and on. Given the premise of a metaphysical conflict in all the world, there can be no escaping conflict except by death. As a result, killing one's enemies, whether political or personal, has increased. Our world's false expectations can sometimes be murderous in their consequences. Rousseau's philosophy was indeed a "prelude to terror."

We are living thus in an era where, apart from the usual problems of life, we face the great man-created evils of false doctrines and man-created conflicts. Neither contemporary politics, science, nor education can solve a problem they have created and are aggravating.

Only a return to a truly Biblical faith can give us a good future. Our present superficial churchianity has no future because it is not in submission to the whole Word of God. People who believe that they can "choose Jesus," in the face of His plain statement in John 15:16, choose also to decide what kind of Jesus they choose. The result is a sentimental concoction, not the living and omnipotent Lord. It is this sovereign Lord of whom the Father declares, "hear ye him" (Matt. 17:5).

22

THE MENACE OF THE FUTURE?

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 166, August 1993

JOHN Ferguson, in *The Religions of the Roman Empire* (1970, 1985), titles one chapter, "The Menace of the Future." The title is an apt one. Imperial Rome very early lost its nerve, and it lost hope. It turned to a variety of foolish alternatives to reform in order to try to gain an occult knowledge of the future: oracles, omens, magic, haruspicy, witchcraft, and so on and on. Romans did not want true reform, only some occult formula to change their future without changing themselves.

Their "great men" were a part of the problem. Ferguson wrote of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius that he has been "overpraised." He was a weak man. As a Stoic, he was indifferent to wealth, and he left Rome bankrupt. In one area after another, his Stoicism was an evasion of harsh realities.

The truth is that Romans wanted no clear statement of their condition nor of their needs. In their own way, they were existentialists: their motto had long been, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." They were good at expressing noble thoughts while cheering for death in the Roman arena. The "noblest" Romans were far better at dying than living.

It should not surprise us, therefore, that they saw the future as menace. While Ferguson's comments on Christianity are not acceptable always to Christians, his analysis of the weakness and failure of Rome is very good.

When men see the future as a menace, they have no good future. There were those in the early church who saw menace and decline in the future, but the basic Christian perspective was one of hope and the expectation of victory.

Today, we face a like situation. The humanists, who once saw the future as inevitable progress, now view the idea of progress as a "myth." Deconstructionism has become not only an ugly form of literary analysis

but a corrosive approach to life, faith, and hope. Abortion is a fitting symbol of the twentieth century: the most innocent form of human life is subjected to murder, whereas capital punishment for even particularly vicious murderers is protested. Lesbians and sodomites are honored, as in Rome, and the godly are despised.

Superficially, we can see menace in the future. We see a world in the hands of evil men who honor the evil and the perverted. We face the likelihood of a depression in the economy tied to an inflation in the money supply, perhaps of a massive kind. We will see an increase in diseases and epidemics, and more natural disasters.

But these are not menaces, however grim they be, but signs of our deliverance. The existing order is being shaken and shattered so that our Lord's eternal order may alone remain (Heb. 12:26–29). These things are evidences of God's rule. We, too, will be shaken in the process, because there is much in all of us that needs to be separated from our lives. We are plainly told that "our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29), and we had better expect His fire to do His work in our lives and plans.

Ferguson, in commenting on the Roman philosophers and moralists, very aptly notes, "But the fact that for them virtue lay in a disposition of the soul, and not in action, combined with the general attitude of resignation to make them far less revolutionary than some of their professions might seem to imply" (p. 194). It is easy to be noble and moral in words, but it is another matter to live morally, nobly, and actively in good works.

The common antinomianism of the churches makes clear why they are impotent. For the churches to command the nation's majority in the United States and be impotent on the national scene tells us that James is right: faith without works is dead (James 2:20, 26). Our Lord tells us that salt that has lost its savor "is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13).

The future is indeed a menace to the ungodly and the unbelieving. Moreover, it is a time of severe testing for the godly. This does not mean that it is other than good *because God ordains it*. The future comes to us from His omnipotent hands.

No worse future can be imagined than for things to continue as they now are, with the ungodly in power and tightening their control over all things. The present order must be shattered or we and our children's children have no future.

The Lord is our future, and His will, not ours, shall be done. The Lord is our future, and His Kingdom shall prevail.

If we see the future as a menace, we leave God out of the picture, and we place ourselves in the position of the standard and test as to whether

or not the future is good. Job said, "Though he slay me, yet I will trust him" (Job 13:15). Can we say that?

God's goal is His Kingdom, in time and in eternity. The end of history will not come until "all" Christ's enemies are put "under his feet," until He "shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor. 15:24–25).

With this faith, the future is not a menace: it is the hope of His triumph and coming.

23

SUFFICIENT UNTO THE DAY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 226, July 1998

All my life, I have heard countless people document the evil in the world around them, and the greater evils coming soon. How much of this is morally tenable, and how much is evil?

Certainly we need to be prepared for coming problems. Clearly the humanistic statist world order around us is beginning to collapse, but will documenting all the world's evils make man moral? Do we not fall prey, if we document evil, to the liberal-left illusion that salvation is by knowledge rather than by Jesus Christ?

Our Lord warns us not to be anxious about the morrow. All the thinking in the world will not add an inch nor a cubit to our stature (Matt. 6:27). "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matt. 6:34). We have enough problems today, and the best solution for tomorrow's evils is to meet today's with grace, faith, and in faithfulness to God's law. There is a vast difference between forethought and anxiety.

I have known people whose entire lives have been so dominated by a future that they believe is possible (i.e., a Marxist takeover, the "Rapture," a world depression, etc.) that they have neither enjoyed life nor dealt with present-day problems. This is hardly a moral solution, nor is it a godly one. God is not a loser: His enemies are! To profess faith in God and to doubt His victory is a contradiction. It is also morally wrong to attempt to "correct" evil by evil means. If Scripture is right, the world will not be saved by lawless coercion, knowledge, or anything other than regeneration. Regeneration, not revolution, conversion, not coercion, is the Christian way.

There are those, however, who believe that the solution to evil is coercion. They maintain that, because abortion is evil, killing abortionists is legitimate. If they are right, then our Lord and His apostles were wrong,

because, living in the great era of abortion other than our own, they did nothing about abortions in the Roman Empire. Their answer to this and other fearful evils and mass murders was not counter-murders, but the gospel. How can these people account for the silence of the New Testament on their "gospel" of counter-murders?

The source of evil is the heart of man, as our Lord said (Matt. 15:19). The restraint of evil men is the task of the state; the conversion of evil men is the task of the church and of Christian society. Too often in our time, the response to evils such as abortion is either indifference or violence, neither of which is godly. There are enough evils already at work in the world without ostensible Christians adding to them.

Our Lord's requirements, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," is a summons to us, *first*, not to add to the day's evil by committing further offenses in His name; *second*, it requires of us positive action to promote the work of redemption and to replace humanistic ordinances with the law of God.

Can we be amazed at the growing evils all around us when we look at the professing church? Vast segments of it are in the hands of modernists, whose gospel is humanism, and whose savior is the state. On top of that, many who profess to be faithful Christians have replaced the gospel and regeneration with a plan of coercion.

Where is your hope and mine? Is it to do nothing and thereby supposedly avoid sin, or is it not rather to move ahead with the proclamation of salvation through Jesus Christ? If we do not proclaim the saving power of Christ, we will then implicitly or explicitly support the saving power of coercion. The restraining power of the state against evil quickly erodes where the church and Christian community fail to emphasize and further the redeeming power of Jesus Christ. Take your choice: what is the godly plan of action?

DOMINION

24

ANTINOMIANISM VERSUS DOMINION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 9, January 1980

A contemporary historian raises the question with respect to the early church, "Why were the Christians persecuted?" The Romans pretended that the Christians were refusing to obey minor and trifling rules and regulations out of perversity and rebelliousness. The real issue, Gilles Quispel points out, "was an implicit recognition of the divinity of the state."

Our Lord did not allow the church to forget this fact. In His letter to the church in Pergamos (Rev. 2:12–17), our Lord reminds the church in Pergamos that they dwelled "even where Satan's seat is . . . where Satan dwelleth." These are strong words; they come, moreover, from Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity. Pergamos was a center of emperor worship, of state worship. The Roman state was seen as the divine order; peace on earth meant the prevalence of Roman law and power. "The good life" meant the state-controlled life, a life governed from cradle to grave by the Roman state. Law was not seen as given by God but given by Rome.

Jesus Christ says, to the church in Pergamos, "These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges." For us today, the point of this statement is easily missed: our Lord refers to the Roman sword and declares that He, not Rome, carries true authority. The two-edged sword of Rome was a symbol of Roman power and authority, but Jesus Christ calls Pergamos, the center of Roman power in Asia, "Satan's seat . . . where Satan dwelleth," and declares that true power and authority are in His hands. Rome, or Satan, has a sword in its hands, and is able to kill, but Christ can slay man, empire, Rome, and Satan with the sword or power in His hand.

Our Lord therefore condemns all who hold to "the doctrine of Balaam," the false prophet who taught compromise and led Israel into

idolatry and fornication. To be a Balaam is to be one who obeys Caesar rather than Jesus Christ.

About the time of our Lord's birth, Rome's cynicism began to triumph. The old religions of Rome gave way to the open deification of the state and the emperor. Its plan of salvation became statist power. In 9 B.C., Augustus Caesar dedicated the altar of peace (*ara pacis*) on the Field of Mars, the god of war. The only peace Rome could imagine or secure was by military force, by means of the subjugation of the peoples at home and abroad. This "peace" meant the suppression and death of all who resisted Rome's power. Roman salvation thus came to mean submission to the "divine" coercion of Rome. Rome forced the imperial cult on all the empire, and even on its allies. Roman salvation came to mean obliteration by Roman power.

In this situation, real resistance came from only one source, the Christians. The Christians were prepared, and believed in terms of Scripture, that they were required to be obedient to all human authorities *in the Lord*, i.e., in terms of His law-word and His prior authority. Thus, parents, masters, authorities, and rulers were to be obeyed and honored in their discharge of their God-given duties.

What if the state ceases to be God's ministry of justice? What if it becomes a terror to good works, rather than to the evil? (Rom. 13:1–5). Their obedience had to be "for conscience sake" (Rom. 13:5), i.e., in obedience to God, because of His Word, for "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). As a result, Christians who are faithful to Scripture have been throughout history the greatest source of principled obedience and principled disobedience, because they act in terms of faithfulness to God in both. Christians move in the certain faith that God's Word is true when it declares, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). This is not merely a hope or a general promise, but God's law-word. We can count on it. If we render a false obedience, or a false word in anything, we shall inescapably reap a harvest of judgment. Rome reaped such a harvest, as will the nations of our time also, unless they repent. World history is world judgment from the world king, Jesus Christ.

In our day, as humanism more and more governs the nations of the world, the nations seek increasingly to play god. Now, it is the prerogative of God, and of God alone, to have all things under His jurisdiction. In the Bible, throughout the history of Israel, church and state were kept separate but together under God. Both church and state must serve the Lord, but each in its place, one as the ministry of grace, and the other as the ministry of justice. For either to claim powers and jurisdiction

beyond its sphere is a sin. All things must be under the Lord, not under the church nor the state. Many of the evils of history have had their origin in the attempt of church and state to play god over man.

The modern state is dedicated to this goal, to be god walking on earth. A god has total jurisdiction and grants bounties, gratuities, or grace to those under his sway. The state increasingly claims that every area is under its jurisdiction, and any freedom that the church, Christian school, family, college, press, or other agency may possess is dependent on a revocable act of grace by the state. Thus, in 1957, the California State Supreme Court held:

> It is fundamental that the payment of taxes has been and is a uniform if not a universal demand of government, and that there is an obligation on the part of the owner of property to pay a tax legally assessed. An exemption from taxation is the exception and the unusual. To provide for it under the laws of this state requires constitutional or constitutionally authorized statutory authority. It is a bounty of gratuity on the part of the sovereign and when once granted may be withdrawn. *It may be granted with or without conditions but where reasonable conditions are imposed they must be complied with.*
>
> A church organization is in no different position initially than any other owner of property with reference to its obligations to assist in the support of government by the payment of taxes. Church organizations, however, throughout the history of state, have been made special beneficiaries by way of exemptions. . .

The state not only claims total jurisdiction, but it often demands unquestioning obedience. In a case in Georgia, a state official, in dealing with a church which stood in terms of its God-given freedom as well as the plain wording of state law, cited Romans 13:1–5 as his "justification." Pastor John Weaver reminded the state officer of Acts 5:29, and cited the following examples of obedience to God rather than man from Scripture:

> 1. The midwives refused to obey Pharaoh (Exod. 1:15–22; 2:1–10). Would it have been better for the midwives to have murdered and thus obeyed Pharaoh, or disobey Pharaoh and obey God?
>
> 2. Rahab refused to obey the king's order and would not deliver up the spies (Josh. 2; Heb. 11:31). God commends Rahab for her "disobedience" and lists her in the hall of the faithful (Heb. 11).
>
> 3. Daniel refused to obey the king's order and God blessed him greatly (Dan. 1).
>
> 4. The three Hebrew children refused to obey the king's command and were thrown into a fiery furnace (Dan. 3).
>
> 5. The apostles refused to obey "the law" that forbade them from

preaching the gospel and were persecuted, beaten, imprisoned, and killed (Acts 4–6).

In recent years, all too many churchmen have stressed total obedience to the state, while pursuing a radical antinomianism or lawlessness in relation to God and His law. It is not surprising, therefore, that humanism has taken over the reins of power. Antinomianism in effect says of the Lord, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14), while saying to the state, "It is our principle and religious faith that we obey your law rather than God's."

Man in all his being, because he is God's creation, is a law-creature. His life runs on required patterns of food and sleep, work and rest, and his being requires an ordered, patterned life, a law-life. Death is beyond law and structure; the life of a creature is inseparable from it. The only question with respect to the relationship of man to the law is, what law will man live under and obey? Fallen man has chosen humanistic law. Every non-Christian state will have some form of humanistic law.

Humanism believes in salvation by man, and by man's works and laws. Is there a problem? The answer of humanism is another law, another bureaucratic agency, psychiatry, humanistic reforms, and the like. All involve one or another form of censorship, an external coercion and control, as the means of educating, changing, and/or brainwashing men. But censorship in all its forms does not work, because it cannot change man's heart. For example, in early America, virtually no laws existed with respect to pornography; the laws have come with the rise of pornography. The earlier absence of legislation did not create pornography any more than the more recent laws have been able to suppress it. The answer to the problem is regeneration and sanctification, not humanistic legislation.

The more we rely on statist legislation to "remedy" a problem, the more power we give to the state, and the less we trust in God's saving power and His sanctifying laws. When we trust the state, we become dependent upon legislative, bureaucratic, or judicial grace, rather than on the grace of God.

Gaines Post, in *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought: Public Law and the State, 1100–1322* (1964), showed that expressions such as public or common utility, welfare, emergency, necessity, and "necessity knows no law," as well as reasons of state or public welfare, had their origin in Roman law. Their use was to justify extraordinary power and authority. This was in opposition to another belief which held that "[t]he State itself had no rights *sui generis*," that the state itself is under law. Similar developments took place in private law to justify necessity, such as using

hunger to justify theft. The use of the necessity argument gave private man and the state both a priority over God's law and a freedom from restraint. The limited exemption given by necessity to private man has been steadily replaced by the necessities of the state. The argument from necessity was to its core humanistic; it held that man's necessity, as viewed by man, and the state's necessity, as viewed by the state, overrule all law and all other jurisdictions. The U.S. *Federal Register* gives us volumes of "necessary" powers for state-determined emergencies.

This should not surprise us. When men see as the "necessary" answer to a problem statist law and coercion rather than God's saving power and sanctifying law, the state will be the ministry of continuing necessity and emergencies, world without end.

Both church and state, and man in his every sphere, must be bound, however, by the necessity of God's total Word. The Word of God has ceased to be the necessary and compelling law-word of God for most churchmen. Our emergencies are not seen as *sins*, the remedy for which is God's grace and law, but as *needs*, and the state becomes the purveyor of statist bounty and grace to man in his need. Because we have a non-Biblical view of sin, we have a non-Biblical and statist view of grace.

We are all of necessity nomians, advocates of law, and antinomians, anti-law. The only question is, whose law do we advocate, and whose law do we oppose? All too many today live by the state's law and grace, and shall perish from it, instead of looking to the Lord and His grace and law.

Grace and law are inseparable. Our salvation in Christ is an act of law: it is Christ's satisfaction by His atonement of the law and justice of the triune God. As our substitute and representative man, as head of the new humanity, Jesus Christ pays our death penalty from the law. He frees us from the *penalty* of the law, from the law as an indictment and death sentence, to free us to a way of holiness, the very law of God now written on our hearts and an aspect of our new nature.

As fallen men, we sought salvation by our works. We believed that man, as his own god, could determine, in his private, social, and statist life, good and evil, or establish law, for himself. This was our depravity, and our original sin, our sin in Adam and as members of his humanity or race.

In Jesus Christ, we know by grace that we have been freed from that hostility to the Lord and His law, from antinomianism in relationship to God. We are now antinomians with respect to Satan's program (Gen. 3:5), and every church or state which seeks to promote and develop Adam's rebellion against God. The early church, knowing that grace, refused to submit to Caesar's licensure, regulation, taxation, or control.

They grounded their resistance on obedience to God: "We ought to obey God rather than men." For them, Caesar was an antinomian, in rebellion against Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords. They prayed for Caesar, sought to convert him, obeyed him wherever God's Word permitted, but they rendered obedience "for conscience sake" only, in terms of God's Word, never in violation of God's Word and sovereignty.

The same issue is with us today. The modern state can no more defy Christ the King and survive than could Rome, and the same is true of the church.

Howard Ahmanson has aptly called the 1980s "The Dominion Decade," because of the rising interest in Christian dominion and reconstruction. Christ the King always has dominion. Let us exercise dominion under Him and in Him, to His praise and glory.

25

WORLD SALVATION VERSUS WORLD DOMINATION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 99, July 1988

An error common to many intelligent men is to assume that what they regard as outmoded is therefore obsolete and irrelevant to all other men. Liberals and humanists generally are very prone to this. Thus, they regard nationalism as a relic of past years, but, for better or worse, it is very much with us. All over the world, as in France among the Bretons, in Spain with the Basques, and elsewhere, nationalism is a powerful force. Both Wilson and Lenin assumed in World War I that internationalism was mankind's future, and their thinking has only created chaos and warfare. Again, people who have forsaken Christianity assume that, because God is dead for them, He is really dead, and that all men will soon attain their own humanistic "wisdom." Such illusions lead to major conflicts in history.

One of the most powerful and least known racial-nationalistic movements of the past century has been Pan-Turanism, or Pan-Turkism. It began in what is now the Soviet republic of Azerbaijan in the late years of the nineteenth century, among the Azeri Turks of that country. It was intensely anti-Armenian and also anti-Islamic. It dreamed of a Pan-Turan empire from Turkey to the borders of China. The Turkic people in 1920 numbered 40 million to 50 million; they may be twice that number now, no small power. Early in the twentieth century, the Azeris moved against the Armenians; they attacked them for their Christian faith, and, significantly, for "the *oppression* of the Turkish *proletariat* by the Armenian *capitalists*."

Very early, the Pan-Turanists allied themselves to Lenin and the Bolsheviks, and their power enabled Lenin to triumph. Lenin then liquidated the Pan-Turanist leaders, but about fifteen Soviet republics were created to be small Turkeys, and two provinces of Armenia, Karabagh and

Zangezur, 90 percent Armenian in population, were given to Azerbaijan. This helped to keep the Pan-Turanists in line.

Since that time, two major forces have developed as a threat to the Soviet Empire. Pan-Turanism is alive and strong, especially in the area of its birth, Azerbaijan, and hence the murders of Armenians, and the renewed pressure. For Moscow, this is a major threat: it dare not attack so numerous a people, but to tolerate attacks on the Armenians is to invite attacks next against Russians. The other major force is Pan-Islamism among the more conservative elements in Soviet Asia. The Pan-Turanists, like many Turks in Turkey, have dropped Muslim names for ancient Turkish names. The Pan-Turans detest Arabs, Iranians, and Islam generally.

The Pan-Turanists agree with much in Marxism, especially the worst in Soviet tyranny. Zarevand, in *United and Independent Turania* (1926, 1971), pointed out, "*The Turk, a pragmatic type, thinks, not in terms of World Salvation, but of World Domination*" (p. 48). This attitude leads to a contempt for Christianity and an affinity to Marxism. As Zarevand noted, "The Turks do not fear God, but that is because they like to play '*God of Fear*' themselves. One of their favorite boasts is: '*Biz dunyayi yilder-mishiz*' (We have terrorized the world)" (p. 62).

All the same, Pan-Turanism is essentially an anti-Russian movement; most of the Turanian peoples are under the Soviet regime. They are waiting for the day when they can kill the Russians, the Armenians, and all non-Turkish peoples and establish the Turanian state.

At the same time, the fact remains that, although most Turks in Turkey and Asia were Muslims, their leadership was rejected by Islam. The Ottoman sultans had made themselves the caliphate of Islam, but this was rejected by many groups, i.e., the Moroccans, the Afghans, the Arabs, the Sayyids, the Wahabis, the Durzis, and others. This has not been forgotten. Moreover, the Turks have never believed in equality before the law: no non-Turkish group could have the same status as a Turk.

Pan-Turanism, whose symbols are the horse-tail standard and the she-wolf, claims the "right" to possess all lands wherever Turks or Turanians have set foot *at any time*. This means the Middle East, much of Europe, Siberia, and more.

All this is important to any understanding of what is happening in 1988 in Azerbaijan. Without understanding the Turanian nationalism and its hostility especially to Christianity, there can be no comprehension of the problem in the province of Karabagh. To assume that this is a local conflict, limited to two peoples within a single area, is to miss its significance entirely. The problem is radically racial and religious, centuries old, and it threatens not merely the life of the Soviet Union but

many other peoples. It is not a problem which will be resolved by a series of conferences within the Soviet Empire, by the use of troops, or by the presence of more KGB agents.

Men cannot solve racial problems if they deny that racism exists; outlawing racism simply drives the problem underground. Men cannot solve religious conflicts when they fail to recognize the centrality of faith and its governing force.

Even more, men cannot resolve any problem when they refuse to see man as a fallen creature whose actions are governed by his depravity, not by his professed ideals.

Remember, the Turkish contempt for "world salvation" is because they believe in "world domination," in terrorizing the world. However, the world cannot confront this evil faith because it shares it. Lenin shared it with the leaders of Pan-Turanism, and the Soviet Union continues to apply it.

In the liberal West, world domination is also the goal, despite the façade of democracy and massive foreign aid. The purpose of these liberal strategies is still a world order dominated and controlled by humanism.

Is it any wonder that the West cannot confront or deal with either Pan-Turanism or Marxism? Is it any wonder that minority and majority groups all over the world are ruthlessly victimized by the champions of world domination?

It is significant that godly man in Genesis 1:26–28 is called to exercise *dominion* (not domination) over the earth, *not other men*, to develop all things in terms of God's law-word and to make this earth into God's realm and domain. Fallen man does not seek dominion, which begins with his salvation and his ability to rule himself, but, rather, the goal of fallen man is *domination*, to control other people.

In Ephesians 5:21–33, a husband's godly dominion over his wife is compared to Christ's ministry and the sacrifice of His life to redeem the church. It is declared to be love: "He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church." This is not domination, yet all too many husbands who call themselves Christian still insist on replacing dominion with domination.

It should not surprise us, therefore, that Christians cannot cope with an evil world given to terror and to domination. Neither should it surprise us that too often the most successful clergymen are those who exercise not dominion but domination, because this is what the world respects.

The ways of the Turko-Tatar world are all too close to the ways of all nations, men, and groups. World domination is the goal. Pan-Turanism

glorifies Genghis Khan and his conquests; its ideal is that of their great Khan, to bring "*the entire world under Mongol-Tatar domination*" (Zarevand, p. 28). People with more sophisticated versions of the same dream will not be able to counteract such movements. If, on top of that, they believe in the goodness of man, themselves especially, they will see every step towards world domination as a step towards world liberation. This was the view of the French minister of public instruction, Jules Ferry (1879–1881). In a speech on July 10, 1870, Ferry said that humanity would be truly emancipated "when humanity appears to us, no longer as a fallen race, stricken with Original Sin . . . but as an endless procession striding on toward the light; then, we feel ourselves part of the great Being which cannot perish, Humanity, continually redeemed, developing, improving; then we have won our liberty, for we are free from the fear of death" (John McManners, *Church and State in France, 1870–1914* [1972], p. 49).

Whether we call it Pan-Turanism, Marxism, Humanism, or any other name, such beliefs in world domination really mean world death. They shall not prevail. The ruler of all nations is the Lord of life, Jesus Christ.

26

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND DOMINION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 64, July 1985

When the Supreme Court, in early June 1985, ruled against prayer in the "public" schools, even if it were silent prayer, there was much jubilation in humanistic circles and some dismay in church responses. Prayer in state schools dedicated to humanism and anti-Christianity was in itself no great advantage. Prayer in these schools for illiteracy and paganism would be inappropriate, as would be mandatory prayers in houses of prostitution. How can there be a blessing on the systematic neglect of the triune God? If faith without works is dead (James 2:14–26), so too is prayer without works. We cannot ask God to bless what is against His will, nor us if we are where we ought not to be.

Some very important issues were raised, however, by the Supreme Court's decision. Implicit in the Court's perspective and decision was what the Stockton *Record* in California made explicit in an editorial on June 6, 1985, "School Prayer Ruling Sound" (p. 12): "The Know-Nothings are at it already, calling the latest Supreme Court ruling on prayer in the schools 'an act of war against this nation's heritage.' The ruling, quite to the contrary, is an affirmation of this nation's religious heritage. That heritage was *religion is a private, personal matter* and that government can neither promote nor proscribe its practice."

It is emphatically true that the U.S. Constitution held "that government can neither promote or proscribe" religious practice on the federal level. In recent years, this has been extended to the states. The premise of this perspective is that God's Kingdom cannot be controlled by the state. The early church fought for this, as did the medieval church and the modern church. Limits were thereby placed on the power and jurisdiction of the state, limits which the courts now treat as nonexistent. If the church enjoys any immunities, it is viewed as a state grant and subject to statist change and control.

The central evil of the modern view is that "religion is a private, personal matter." This is a revolutionary idea, a product of the modern era and of revolutionary ideologies. Basic to the Western world has been the premise that, because the God of the Scriptures is the living God, the maker of heaven and earth and all things therein, any attempt to establish man and society apart from Him and His law is suicidal. Because the triune God is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6), any attempt to establish anything apart from Him is a lie and a deadly venture (Ps. 127:1; Prov. 8:36). In terms of this, the free exercise of religion is a necessity in order that the wellsprings of human life be nourished, personally and socially.

To say that "religion is a private, personal matter" is to say that it is irrelevant. You and I may enjoy crossword puzzles, but such things are not public concerns, merely private ones.

On the contrary, however, the faith of a people is the most public of all concerns. In a very real sense, the life of the people depends upon its faith. What the state is, as well as its strength and virtue, depends upon the faith and character of the people, and the integrity of the church's witness. The state can be no stronger than its people and their faith. Our problem in the modern world is that nations confuse strength with armament and with controls over the people.

When the state limits the scope and freedom of Christianity, it limits its own strength and paves the way for its destruction. It is not an accident that the de-Christianization of schools and state since World War II have been followed by a great increase in crime, drug use, illegitimacy, sexual crimes, perversions, pornography, and more.

In this process, it must be noted, the churches have had a great part. By their growing modernism, their socialist gospel, and their faith in statist salvation, they have become gravediggers for both church and state.

Religion is both a public and a private concern. To restrict it to a personal matter is to deny its truth and to deny Christianity religious liberty. If "religion is a private, personal matter," then religious liberty has a very narrow scope; the area of religious freedom then, as attorney William Bently Ball has noted, is the distance between our two ears. If "religion is a private, personal matter," then it has *no legitimate place on the public scene*. It should then be barred, as the courts have progressively done, from the schools, the state, and all public agencies.

Of course, what is not barred is the new established religion, humanism. It is the new public faith, and its articles of faith are routinely affirmed by public figures as a public duty. The obscurantists deny that humanism exists or dominates; this does not say much for their honesty.

The Stockton *Record* went on to say, "It is a misreading of the Supreme Court's 1962 decision on organized prayer in public schools and its ruling this week to suggest the court has banned prayer in public schools. It has only prohibited government involvement in a private matter. Anyone can silently pray any time, any place and for any reason; government cannot suggest such prayer or ban it."

Again, this limits religious freedom to a purely private and personal realm. Such editorial writers are silent when Christian homeschool parents, and Christian schools, are on trial. Court-ordered testing has repeatedly demonstrated the far greater scholastic achievements of such students, but the courts show no regard for their religious freedom. Do such people really believe in religious freedom for Christians? The past decade has seen the persecution and at times imprisonment of pastors and parents. The press, which heralded this recent Supreme Court decision, has usually been silent in these other cases. Is this not hypocrisy? And how long will the state respect freedom of the press when it destroys freedom of religion? The press, by approving the court's growing fascism, is preparing the way for its own destruction.

The Stockton *Record* quoted Justice John Paul Stevens (our John Paul III?) as insisting, in the majority opinion of the Court, that school prayer violates the "established principle that the government must pursue a course of complete neutrality toward religion." The state can have such a neutrality only after the Court can negate gravity and float in space as it renders its godlike decisions! The state rests on law; all law is enacted morality and represents as such a religious foundation and a religious faith about good and evil, right and wrong. Neutral laws cannot exist. Laws against murder rest on the premise that man is created in God's image and must live by God's law.

Peter J. Ferrara, in *The Wall Street Journal* ("Reading Between the Lines of the School-Prayer Decision," June 11, 1985, p. 32), said: "The fact that a moment of silence is inherently neutral between prayer and other forms of meditation or contemplation should have been sufficient for the court to uphold the Alabama law. The majority's suggestion that students would somehow be bullied into praying by the history of the Alabama statute or the expressed hope by some legislators that students would use the time to pray, surpasses fantasy. Moreover, in straining so mightily to hold the statute unconstitutional, the court communicated a message to the public of hostility to religion."

In this century, we have seen a massive persecution of various religions (Buddhists in Tibet, Jews in the Soviet Union, Muslims in Albania, Bahá'ís in Iran), but most of all of Christianity. The Marxist states have,

since World War I, slaughtered millions; Turkey massacred Christian Armenians and Greeks; Africa has seen countless massacres in recent years, as has southeast Asia; Cuba has persecuted Christians, as have many other states. The Christian victims number into many tens of millions. The world press has been largely silent on these matters, and increasingly so.

In fact, many editorial writers act and write on the premise that Christians are persecuting them when they protest such treatment! This should not surprise us: a bully with a bad conscience hates and resents his victims because he knows their presence is an indictment of him. I was told of a schoolyard bully who loved to pick on and mercilessly pummel boys smaller than himself. Then, as he started to leave, he would turn on his victim, or a bystander, saying, "You don't like it, do you?" and, whatever the answer, beat up on them at once. Not even an unspoken dissent is tolerable to a bully. The bully press has a very loud voice, and it knows that its enemies have a very small one.

The new definition of religious liberty is tailor-made to destroy Christianity. By reducing its freedom to "a private, personal" realm, it is doing what the Soviet Union has done. This kind of "religious freedom" exists in the Soviet Union. Practically, it means that parents cannot speak about their faith to their children. In some states of the United States, parents can be jailed for educating their own children, i.e., by applying their Christian faith to education. In the Soviet Union, husband and wife are often silent about their faith one to another; in a time of trouble, such knowledge can be used against them.

As the Soviet Union defines religious liberty, i.e., as a private personal matter, it can and does boast of its record of religious freedom. What faith men hold between their two ears, they are free to hold!

But Christianity cannot be so restricted. It governs our lives, our marriages, our children, our homes, our schools, our churches, our civil governments, our vocation, the arts, the sciences, and all things else. It governs them by governing us and making us instruments of God's law and order. It makes us dominion men so that God's Kingdom is manifested in and through us.

To do this, Christian faith transforms old institutions into new ones and creates new agencies for the new life. It can only do this if our faith is for us a personal and a public concern, the way of life for man and for society. If Christianity does not do this, it perishes.

This is what our Lord means when He says, "I am come to send fire on the earth" (Luke 12:49). What He gives is not a purely private and personal matter: it is a transforming power which will destroy what needs

destruction, renovate what needs renovation, and build what needs to be built and established.

The Lord declares, "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). Where men prefer their ways to God's justice, they will resent and wage war against God's remaking of all things. Because they see themselves as their own gods, and man as his own source of law (Gen. 3:5), they want no part of the faith. They will seek to suppress and destroy it without being honest enough to say so.

This should not surprise us. It is logical on the part of unbelievers. It has been this way all through history.

The important question is this: what will those who call themselves Christians do about this? Will they be silent, "mummified" churchmen, as General William Booth described them, or will they be the Lord's dominion men?

27

FALSE RELIGIONS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 69, December 1985

The writer, Michael Hamburger, in his poems (*Weather and Season*, 1963), declares at one point, surveying the seeming meaninglessness as well as the evils in the world, "Amid such omens how dare we live?" In another poem, he says, "How mind abhors a circle. Let there be laws." Countless other writers in varying ways give witness to the need for a governing religious faith to provide meaning to life.

The critical problem is, which religion? Fallen man, left to himself, recognizes the need for order and meaning; he knows that a religion, a faith for living, is a necessity. Because of his fallen nature, however, man creates religions in his own image, in terms of his revolt against God and his desire to redefine justice in terms of his own will. As a result, the world is full of false religions.

Apart from the supernatural grace of God, man cannot know true religion; he will only reproduce and refine the false religion of the Fall, his desire to be his own god, knowing or determining good and evil, right and wrong, and establishing all law for himself (Gen. 3:5).

The problem is further complicated by the fact that, as converted men, we often carry unconverted areas of thinking into our lives in Christ. The theme song of many seems to be, "Partially converted, Lord, I am Thine. Heal and make me, partially Thine." Too many want all that Christ can give together with all that they want. False religions are served by this fact. We cannot say, "Thy will be done, O Lord, except when I want mine." (In many churches, too, it can be said that every heart is converted, but very few pocketbooks are. Ask any pastor.)

In brief, people want religion and they want salvation on their terms. We can view religion as our life-support system, or as the way to glorify God and to serve and enjoy Him forever.

Prominent among the false religions of history is *politics*. Now, civil government is a Biblical concern and an area of ministry. Paul declares that all rulers are primarily and essentially "ministers" or "deacons" of God (Rom. 13:4). Civil government is a ministry of justice and an important area of Christian service.

The problem arises when men see the state as the way to social salvation. The messianic state then begins to claim jurisdiction over every area of life and thought as the legitimate lawmaker and savior thereof. The modern state everywhere seeks this totalitarian (and humanistic) goal, and the result is an accelerating tyranny. In church and state cases, I am increasingly hearing judges insist that no religious freedom is at stake, merely a question of compliance or noncompliance with an act of the state, a regulation, or a law. The premise of the state as justice is also increasingly prominent. The state has at times been just, but history gives more evidences of statist injustice.

Liberals and radicals see the answer to current inequities as more power to the state, and this solution is powerfully furthered by most of the media. The statist solution is seen as morally correct, so that all who challenge the growth of statist power are somehow insensitive and morally wrong. In the minds of many, a link is being forged between true morality and the increasing powers of the state.

Is the alternative the solution? Was Jefferson right in declaring that the best government is the least government? Given the growing and oppressive powers of the state, it is tempting to think so. Without all the oppressive regulating and taxing agencies, how much easier our lives would be! Or would they? I once lived for some years in an area of very minimal state-policing powers, and the results were fearful. The more sinful man is, the more dangerous he is, with statism or without statism. Statism is a false religion which sees the state as god walking on earth. But to see a limited state as the answer is to forget that sin comes essentially from man, not primarily from the state! The old proverb is true: you can't make a good omelette with bad eggs. Whether you have a big omelette or a small omelette, a power state or a very limited state, bad eggs are bad eggs, and bad men are bad men. It is false religion to believe that a rearrangement of the state apparatus will give us better men.

This is definitely not to say that it is irrelevant what kind of civil government we should have. It would be morally wrong, too, for us to say that civil government is not an area of Christian concern and calling. Rather, just as our place is under God and His law, so too is the place of civil government. Politics is not the means to salvation but an area where the godly can exercise dominion under God.

Another false religion of our time is economics. There are all too many who believe in economic solutions to the world's problems. This is not to deny that many of our problems are in the sphere of economics. However, no more than the fact that a man has troubles with his job means that the job is at fault, do problems in the economic sphere necessarily have an economic cause.

All too many intellectuals of the modern era have held and believed that socialism or communism is the solution to man's economic problems. The fact that every socialist state is a disaster does not trouble these people. In their view, if men would only try their brand of socialism, all would be well. In our time, economics is an area of particularly fanatical beliefs and believers.

There is here also an alternative, the free market. Very clearly, history does give us a remarkable account of the social advances brought in by the free market; it is one of history's more remarkable stories. Given the results, why have men turned against the free market? Is it possible (perish the thought!) that *man* can be illogical? (One is tempted to say, the better our mind, the greater our capacities to be illogical! Can any equal intellectuals in bad logic? Ability magnifies all our errors.)

But men have again and again destroyed the free market and all its beneficent products. This should not surprise us. A free market requires free men, and the lovers of slavery demolish every threat of freedom. Economics cannot be free if men do not cherish and value freedom.

For me, an unforgettable recollection from the early 1960s is the lecture by an economist to a university audience on freedom. This scholar's book on liberty is still in print. He was shocked when the first question raised by a student was this: "What's so important about freedom?" The student regarded freedom as of minimal value, and almost all the students agreed.

Let us assume for the sake of argument that most men are not hypocrites when they profess to want freedom. Freedom, like religion, is more than a matter of verbal profession; it is a characteristic of our lives. Freedom does not stand alone; it goes hand in hand with other things such as responsibility, the courage to face risks, and more. The riskless life is a slave life, and the welfare state is a slave state. A slave people will create a slave state, and no free market will be other than destroyed by them.

Thus, economics, like politics, can become a false religion if we believe that economic arrangements can create the good society. Here, as in every other sphere, there is a right and a wrong *economically*, but the success of good economics depends on good men.

Christians as free men in Christ have a calling in economics, but it is

an area for dominion, not a means to salvation. A good society begins with men in a good relationship to Jesus Christ who then in terms of the Lord exercise dominion in every sphere. To neglect economics is deadly dangerous; to expect from it what only God can supply is a sin.

Moreover, we can add that the *church* is no more the exclusive sphere of religion than are politics and economics. The primary locale of religion is in the life of man. Our life and our faith must be inseparable and united. Our faith must be more than what we believe; it must also be what we live.

Neither politics nor economics have given us nor can give us world peace. Bad eggs never make good omelettes, and at the heart of our world's problems is the fallen heart of man.

Another false religion is modern *education*. Here, too, we encounter amazing fanaticism. Many hold that the solution to the world's problems is education. Are there sexual problems among youth? Education has the answer, we are told, and the result is sex education. (Really now, the subject of sex deserves better than what statist schools are doing with it! This is no laughing matter, say the experts, so they are turning it into a crying matter!) Is crime increasing? We need to spend more money on education, and then we can solve the problem. Education has for many become the great way of salvation for man and society.

Going back to basic education is surely good, but not of itself. Phonics will again teach children to read, but is a barbarian who reads any the less a barbarian? Knowledge is clearly good, but has knowledge made our professors any better than the rest of the population? Do professors have a lower percentage of moral and mental problems than do farmers?

We cannot neglect education, and the works of a liberal, Jonathan Kozol, have given us a telling report and analysis on how bad our schools really are. But education per se is not a way of salvation; it is a marvelous tool for faith and living when governed by a sound premise, but it can be and commonly is a false religion.

Certainly for Horace Mann and his associates it was a religion, and a messianic one. Mann expected public schools to create a better man and a better world. He was confident, with all the confidence of those early New England Unitarians, that his kind of school would eliminate crime, and, in time, save the world. We live in the shambles of the world created by the Horace Manns of the past two centuries, and it is not a very pleasant prospect. Clearly, education has often been and still is a false religion.

There are so many kinds of false religions — more than we can take the space to discuss — but we should mention art. Many are convinced that art will civilize and elevate man, and, in many cities, the arts have

become the new religion for many prominent women. How eagerly they work "to make the world a better place to live in" with their sponsorship of the arts. I once heard a woman speak of the ghetto classes in painting and dancing she and others were sponsoring; she was sure it would create better children and bring culture to the ghetto. Well, some children were no doubt entertained, and perhaps an occasional child found a calling, but cultural activities become false religions when we seek to transform society through them.

False religions all expect more of man than man can ever give; they are men at work, and their works manifest their limitations and their sin.

The meaning of true religion comes out clearly in the last question and answer of the Heidelberg Catechism: "What is the meaning of the word 'Amen'? Amen means: So shall it truly and surely be, for my prayer is much more certainly heard of God than I feel in my heart that I desire these things of Him." How intensely we sometimes desire and pray for certain things! Yet we are told that God's hearing our prayers, and His concern for us, far, far exceeds any desires on our part. Jesus Christ is God's assurance of that fact. In true religion, more power and wisdom are always at work in us and around us than we can ever fathom or imagine.

28

THE ROOTS OF ENVIRONMENTALISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 118, February 1990

Environmentalism has become a religion for many, and world salvation is seen as dependent on the environmentalist's gospel. Salvation by means of man's control of the environment is an increasingly militant faith held by many. It is, moreover, a very anti-Christian faith.

Biblical laws give us regulations concerning sanitation, the care of Sabbaths of the land, the protection of trees, and more, and a remarkable record of reclamation and conservation marks church history. Desert areas of Europe were made productive, dikes were built, and amazing acts of changing the face of the continent performed by the medieval monks and their successors. The environmentalists, however, see Christian man as the destroyer and so-called primitive man as the preserver. They choose to ignore the fact that tribesmen regularly burned vast tracts of forests and lands to drive animals towards them for an easy kill.

The roots of environmentalism are in the fall of man. Adam and Eve both pleaded not guilty to their sin on the grounds that someone in their environment made them do it. Adam, for example, blamed both Eve and God: "The *woman* whom *thou* gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat" (Gen. 3:12). Men and women ever since have been ready to blame one another, or God, or their environment, for their sins. One of the most common of all statements that I have heard from sinners in counseling sessions is this: "Well, that's the way God made me; my wife (or, my husband) will have to take me as I am." I cannot believe that God will take lightly the habit of many in making Him the scapegoat for their sins.

Essential to this perspective is, *first* of all, a refusal to be responsible. Someone else is to blame, ultimately God. The Bible depicts man as made in the image of God, and created to be a responsible creature, although

a *sinner* because of the Fall. Environmentalism views man as a *victim*, a product of his environment, except where it chooses to blame man, as we shall see.

Second, this refusal to be responsible means a refusal to acknowledge guilt. The premise is, "I am not guilty." My parents, my environment, my heredity, my race, i.e., something in my world is responsible for my sin. Someone or something above, below, or around me is guilty. I am a product of their influences. Clarence Darrow, in defending the murderers Richard Loeb and Nathan Leopold for the murder of Robert Franks, said, "They killed him because they were made that way. Hence, they were not to blame for it." He added, "Is Dickey Loeb to blame because out of the infinite forces that conspired to form him, the infinite forces that were at work producing him ages before he was born, that because out of these infinite combinations he was born without it (i.e., without 'emotional feeling')? If he is, then there should be a new definition of justice . . . Is he to blame that his machine is imperfect?" Darrow was actually eliminating any possible definition of justice by denying human responsibility. (*The Plea of Clarence Darrow, August 22nd, 23rd and 25th, 1924, in Defense of Richard Loeb and Nathan Leopold, Jr. on Trial for Murder* [Chicago, IL, 1924], p. 55). Darrow insisted on an environmental and hereditarian causality which totally eliminated personal responsibility. Darrow actually questioned whether man has a mind; everything depends "on infinite chances" (ibid., p. 67). It was all due to "some sort of chemical alchemy" (ibid.) Such thinking has had a powerful influence on the Western world. Man is simply a reflux product, not a responsible being.

This leaves open a question. Where in this vast chain of causes is blame to be fixed? Who is guilty? This led, *third*, to affixing blame on God, the Creator, on civilization, meaning Christian civilization by Rousseau and his followers, and in blaming in each case "the old order." In France, Russia, and elsewhere, God and the old order were to blame. For many now, the "old order" is capitalism: therefore, whatever the ills of nature or society, capitalism is to blame. The definition of the "victim" is now limited to a segment of humanity who, because of their membership in the "old order," are somehow responsible for all evils. In the new demonology, they are the total cause of all the world's problems, and the rest of humanity are their innocent victims.

This means, *fourth*, that environmentalism has close links with Phariseeism, with an elitist mentality which sees itself as the self-chosen arbiter of all society. The environmentalists speak as the voice of truth and as the hope of the world. They believe that man can destroy the world — other

men, that is — and only they can save it. There is an amazing arrogance in the environmentalist belief that man is capable of destroying the earth. It is an assumption that humanistic man is the new god, with vast capabilities of creation and destruction.

Then, *fifth*, environmentalism has close links with many ungodly thinkers. The ties to Rousseau are very great, but we must not forget Albert Schweitzer and his pantheism. Schweitzer's doctrine of reverence for life placed equal value on an earthworm as on a man's life. For him, killing deadly bacteria to save a dying man was an unhappy compromise. Many environmentalists are ready to sacrifice other men to "save" the environment. The goal in their thinking is a new world Eden which is virtually free of people. For them, the restoration of purity means the restoration of nature to an imagined prehuman estate, with themselves as the caretakers. Babies can be aborted, but rattlesnakes cannot by killed. Like Marx and Lenin, these people are utopians. Lenin believed that revolution would free mankind for an era of unlimited prosperity: he had no program for "liberated" Russia. The Soviet structure he borrowed hastily from an American socialist, Daniel de Leon.

Sixth, the environmentalists share with the socialists a static view of wealth: there is so much wealth in the world, and no more, and the capitalists control it. Seize that wealth, and all men will be free and prosperous. They fail to understand that wealth requires intelligent work and thrift, and a development of the earth's natural resources. The entire planet is a gigantic mass of natural wealth, and we have barely scratched its resources. Just as in the last days of Rome, when many believed that the earth's resources were exhausted, so, too, many now make the same assumption. We are rather approaching the dawn of resource development and wealth, not its end.

The static view of wealth is applied to strange areas. For about a century and a half, some Americans have calculated and predicted the death of all American forests. The fallacy in their calculations has been a failure to reckon trees as a renewable resource. Trees are cut down, and other trees grow and take their place. The alarmist predictions of several generations have proven false, but this does not trouble these people. Fanatical in their humanistic faith, they are determined to compel all men by law into their particular religious beliefs. Their excuse is that the future of man requires it.

Of course, all persecutors have reasons which they find very compelling. Their necessities, however, are somewhat unrelated to reality.

Can man do damage to his portion of the earth? Of course he can, and men have done it, over and over again in history. At the same time,

other men have reclaimed such areas. The sad fact is that where farming and foresting are concerned, these people, the environmentalists, can only chronicle the negative aspects of the scene. Nothing is said about the great advances in knowledge and practice.

Environmentalism is a religious faith, and it is a false religion. The Biblical requirement is that we recognize that the earth is the Lord's, the fullness thereof, and all things therein (Ps. 24:1–2), and it must be governed by His law-word. It is our calling to subdue the earth and to develop it as God's stewards. We are accountable to Him for it, as for all things else. There is a vast world of difference between environmentalism and godly stewardship, and we had better recognize it.

29

THE FUTURE IS THE LORD'S

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 18, December 1980

Peter F. Drucker, in *Managing in Turbulent Times* (Harper & Row, 1980), calls attention to some very significant facts about the Soviet Union. He believes that only a bold man will predict that the Soviet Union will still be in existence by the year 2000. European Russia has the world's lowest birthrate, whereas Asiatic Russia has a very high one and will have a population predominance.

Other sources have added to this forecast. Asiatic Russia is predominantly Muslim, and, very soon, the Soviet Union will be the world's major Muslim power. There will be internal problems by 1985, as the army faces the consequences of the low birthrate among European Russians. The draftees will begin to be more and more Islamic; getting them to obey European officers will be a problem.

Alexandre A. Bennigsen and S. Enders Wimbush, in *Muslim National Communism in the Soviet Union: A Revolutionary Strategy for the Colonial World* (University of Chicago Press, 1979), trace the history of Muslim communism. From the days of Lenin, the Muslim communists were nationalists and strongly (in most cases) Islamic. They saw Marxism as a means of dealing "a death blow to Europe." Many religious leaders among the Muslims agreed with this. The end of European supremacy could be effected by means of Marxism, and the Muslim nations freed to pursue their course. "A significant number of Muslim leaders did lend their support to the revolutionary forces during the Civil War" (p. 31). These nationalistic Muslim communists were suppressed by Lenin and his successors, but their population increase, and the decline of the European Russian birthrate, have revived new currents of Muslim hope for the overthrow of Europe, including Soviet Russia. An often-heard warning from Asiatic Soviet Muslims to Russians in the streets of

Central Asia is, "Wait until the Chinese come. They will show you!" The Russian leadership of the Soviet Union is aging and approaching senility. Population trends are destroying the Russian character of the Soviet Union and giving it a Turkic and Muslim character. After World War I, Turkey strongly promoted Pan-Turanian ideas, i.e., a union of all the Turkic peoples to create a great world power. This is an alternate theme to a pan-Islamic power. The Armenian massacres were an aspect of this Pan-Turanian dream.

Add to this factor within the Soviet Union an external factor, the rise of Muslim nationalism and Marxism outside of the Soviet Union, in Asia, the Near East, and North Africa, and you have all the ingredients for social turbulence, war, and revolution.

There is, however, a grim nemesis to Muslim hopes in the very nature of their faith. Bennigsen and Wimbush mention in passing "the 'past-centered awareness' which is common to most Muslims (in contrast to Christian awareness which projects a 'Golden Age' in the future" pp. 98–99). Iran is good evidence of this fact. The revolutionists in Iran dream of a golden age, in the mythical Islam of Ali, a time long-gone and more a product of imagination than reality. Moreover, their concern has been more with "the sins of the Shah" than with current and pressing problems. This past-bound nature of Muslim faith and thought gives it a proneness to hope and denunciation where work and action are needed.

But this is not all. Not only is Islam past bound, but, we must add, paralyzed because its concept of power and progress is a bureaucrat's dream. Islam sees unity and government from the top down. Mohammed was strongly drawn to the Biblical doctrine of the Kingdom of God, of God's rule over the world, and this is what Islam purports to be. However, from the beginning this kingdom was seen as coming by imposition from above, by military conquest, centralized rule, and concentrated authority. The result was a caliph, or powerful Muslim rulers, who concentrated all power in their hands. In Turkey, Baghdad, Iran, and elsewhere, it meant autocratic rule. Whereas in the Christian world, the revolutionary direction of history was to challenge centralized power in church and state, and to base the faith in the heart of man, the Islamic tendency was and is to equate strength with centralized power.

The triumph of Christian theological development, as it appeared in the West, was to formulate the creed into an intensely personal form, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, etc." Whether recited with two or three, or with thousands, each believer in the Western tradition says, "I believe." It is personal. This is in line with Scripture, where the first required confession began with the personal pronoun: "A Syrian ready to

perish was *my* father," or "*My* father was a wandering Aramean" (Deut. 26:5). This confession concluded, "And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O LORD, hast given me" (Deut. 26:10). The emphasis is particular and personal in Scripture.

"Progress" in paganism, and in Islam, was spasmodic and superficial; it depended on a superior ruler, and it usually ended with his death. It had no roots in the life of the people. The Muslim revolution thus has no future because it is too past-bound, and too authoritarian.

Having said this, however, it is necessary to add that our world today is reproducing this same evil. The answers of statism are sterile and rootless, seeking to remake man from the top down. Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy spoke of John Dewey and his philosophy as the Chinafication of America, i.e., as the reproduction of all the evils of old China and its radical relativism. We can similarly speak of the growing centralization and bureaucratization of the Western nations as a reproduction of the narrow and decadent world of old Turkey, of the harem world and the intriguing eunuchs who ran the empire.

To command the future and to exercise dominion in the Lord's name, it is urgently necessary for Christians to recognize the essential nature of Christian self-government to freedom, the function of the tithe in godly reconstruction, and the necessity for the Christian dominion man to take back government from the state.

Marxism has no future, nor does Islam. Similarly, humanistic statism is declining and perishing. The Marxist Muslims are right in seeing its days as numbered. The Christian must separate himself from humanistic statism, its schools and ways. The summons is, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4). The future is the Lord's, and only ours in Him.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

30

FAITH AND UNDERSTANDING

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 221, February 1998

St. Anselm is one of the great but neglected men in the history of philosophy. Anselm (1033–1109), born of a noble family in Aosta, Lombardy, made his mark in the culture of monasteries, and later became archbishop of Canterbury. In his day, the monasteries, long central to thinking, were shortly to give way to the universities, and the result was also seen in a shift in presuppositions, to an Aristotelian foundation. Thus the work of a great theologian and philosopher did not receive the attention it deserved. Anselm was profoundly Pauline in his theology, and he has been called the last of the church fathers, and "the second Augustine."

In various areas, notably the doctrine of the atonement, he is the key orthodox theologian. In philosophy, his premise was, *credo ut intelligam*, I believe in order that I might understand.

As against this, Abelard, an Aristotelian, sought to understand in order to believe. Whereas for Anselm faith precedes understanding, for Abelard (1079–1142) understanding must precede faith; rationalism must establish what we can believe. For Abelard, all things must be brought to the bar of reason for verification, whereas Anselm began with the Christian faith; for him a basic faith, premise, or presupposition must undergird all reason. For Abelard, because of his rationalism, free will was basic because reason gave to man a sovereign autonomy of judgment. Every teaching of the church should be doubted until its truth is ascertained.

But Abelard had begun with faith, although he did not quite say so. Abelard's faith was in rationalism rather than in God and His enscriptured Word. Now, Abelard held that he could prove the dogmas of the church by means of rationalism, but, in so doing, he shifted the center of authority from God to man's rationality. Anselm was the more profound

philosopher and reasoner; but, by opposing rationalism, he came to be viewed by some as simply a confuser of issues. For rationalism, knowledge is obtained by reason, which has a higher authority than sense perception and especially more than revelation. The empiricist will use rationalistic means to accompany his sense perception; like the rationalist, he is independent of external authority, God in particular.

For Anselm, no more than a blind man can see the light, can a man without faith know God. Anselm was not always consistent in his presuppositionalism, but his basic premise bore fruit later in John Calvin, and in his followers. In the United States, Cornelius Van Til has been the great figure in this presuppositionalist school of thought.

For presuppositonalists, no more than the Bible tries to "prove" God does the theologian or philosopher try to do so. God is the foundation of all reasoning and proof. The scientist Harold Clayton Urey (b. 1893), a chemist, once noted, "Not one of the existing theories about the origin of the world does work without the presupposition of a miracle." The evolutionist must presuppose, with the rationalist, billions and trillions of miracles.

Dmitri Kessel and Henri Peyre, in *Splendors of Christendom* (1961) — a book given to me by my associate, Andrew Sandlin — carry this quotation from the American writer, Allen Tate: "Man is a creature that in the long run has got to believe in order to know, and to know in order to do." Tate's comment echoes Anselm, Calvin, and the Puritans. It is commonplace to characterize the culture of the United States as pragmatism. This is a truncated observation. The Puritan theology echoed Anselm and Calvin. It gave faith the priority, and its intense practicality came from its abandonment on the popular level of all rationalism in favor of action. Paul, in Romans 2:13 declares, "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified" (see also James 1:23–27; 2:20–26). The basic premise of Christian Reconstruction is this emphasis on faith with works, "to know in order to do," in Tate's words.

The sterility of rationalism is that its goal is debate and more debate, contentiousness as a way of life. It produces monumental works of reasoning, and little more. Men cannot be reasoned into heaven, although they can be put to sleep.

Rationalism shifts the center from God and His law-word, His summons to believe and obey, to man as rationalist, sitting in judgment upon God and man. The arrogance of rationalism is its assumption that man the philosopher can sit in judgment over God and man, and all things else. We cannot be Christian on our terms, only on God's terms. Our

conversion is not the result of a bargain with God, but rather our total submission on His terms only. Man is a creature, God's creature, and he must use his reason to think God's thoughts after Him, not to attempt to establish what God has already ordained, not to seek to provide independent premises for knowledge.

For Calvin, man's conscience has a noetic function; it is an aspect of God's witness in man's being whereby man, even in his depravity, knows the judgment of God. Sin and conscience both have their noetic effect; they shape man's knowledge and his relationship to God. Rationalism creates an artificial man, one in whose being neither sin nor conscience have any part. *Such a man does not exist.*

31

THE USE AND ABUSE OF WORSHIP AND PRAYER

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 127, November 1990

An historic distinction in law, dealing with the responsibility of man for accidents, is rapidly disappearing. Traditionally, the law has recognized two categories of catastrophe beyond the control of man: "acts of God," defined as natural disasters, and "inevitable accidents," disruptions caused by other forces beyond the power of any human to foresee or overcome with ordinary prudence.

The loss of these distinctions has been very obvious in some recent accidental oil spills; men and corporations have been held to be criminally liable for accidental events. In one case, metal tanks opened up; the liability was not ascribed to the steel company, or the tank builder, but to the oil company because it had more money. In any case, accidental events and acts of God are disappearing from law, being replaced by a belief that some man or company must be guilty in all such cases. This should not surprise us. If God is remote to us, or no longer believed in, then no acts of God are real to us anywhere. All we have are acts of men.

This was one of the deadliest aspects of paganism, this belief in exclusive human responsibility. For this reason, for example, doctors in antiquity, in Greece and elsewhere, were usually slaves. If the patient died, the doctor died.

There were remnants of this belief among the Indians in my missionary days. The peyote medicine men were adept at avoiding responsibility. When they saw that a patient was going to die, they took strong exception to any comment by a family member, got them into passionate argument, and then told them to take the patient to the white man's hospital if they did not trust him. The patient then died in the hospital, the peyote

medicine man was vindicated, and the white doctor had another black mark on his record!

This paganism is reviving all around us. We see it with attitudes concerning oil spills, floods, medical practice, politics, and more. We also see it with respect to prayer.

True prayer acknowledges the sovereignty and omnipotence of God. Its heart is: Thy will be done (Luke 22:42). It does not put its confidence in nagging God, techniques in prayer, prayer chains and large numbers imploring the Lord, but in God's grace and mercy. Prayer cannot be a substitute for obedience and action but must be their companion. When Joshua prayed earnestly after the defeat at Ai, God ordered him to get up and correct the evil in Israel (Josh. 7:10–11).

We must beware, in talking about "the power of prayer," of this dangerous habit of transferring power from God to our praying. The efficacy of prayer rests not in our praying but in God; He can give us our request or deny it in His sovereign wisdom. The focus of prayer must always be on the acts of God, never on our act of praying, or how many we enlist in passionate prayer. To pray assuming that the power to gain, change, or alter things depends on our prayer, or how we pray, and how many unite with us in prayer, is to transfer the center from God to man. We then look, not to the act of God, but to the acts of men.

When men claim too much power, they also at the same time tend to deny their responsibility. This should not surprise us. When Adam sought to be his own god, he at the same time denied his responsibility for his actions (Gen. 3:4ff.). Then, too, we over-rate Satan. As Flip Wilson used to say, "The devil made me do it!" We are sinful enough to sin on our own without any help from the devil! John Donne astutely wrote on our habit of "tempting Satan to tempt us."

One of the clear reasons for the powerlessness of many churches and believers comes from this habit of overrating what prayer, man, and the church can do and underrating God. One of the blasphemous things common in some circles is what amounts to bragging about how God answers their prayers, as though it is their merit, or their prayer know-how, that brought the answers rather than the grace and mercy of God. In some communities, special prayer groups are regarded as super-pipelines to God: to get results, call their number. This is painfully sad. "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps. 34:18). These qualifications we can all meet and be near to God.

But men love their forms, their pipelines! Their way of access means, they believe, power with God. This is true of worship as well as prayer. I

recall some years ago the strong disagreement in some areas between the old German Reformed churches and those of Dutch origin. The Germans, who came early to the Western states, lived on isolated farms where roads were few; going to church was a major trek, and hence services were held once each Sunday; the Dutch, coming later to better roads, worshipped twice each Lord's Day, and each found fault with the other. In the South, one Baptist group of churches, deep in the woods in early America, came together once a month for a day of worship, and they still maintain this custom (with family worship at home the other Sundays). Many like examples can be cited of variations in worship, in forms of worship, times, numbers of services, etc. Too many churches attach efficacy to their form rather than to the Lord they worship. "Our" form becomes a means of clobbering others, and loyalty to forms remains when doctrine and faith are eroded. I can still remember the righteous indignation of a woman, about thirty-seven years ago, on being invited by a neighbor to a Presbyterian church. She made it very, very clear that she had no use for Christianity, for preachers and priests, for churches ("a racket") and for church people. "Besides," she added in conclusion, "I'm an Episcopalian."

Neither worship nor prayer can command God. They are, rather, our necessary response to His salvation and His continuing grace and mercy. Because God "is most holy in all his counsels, in all his works, and in all his commands," it follows that "to him is due from angels and men, and every other creature, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience, he is pleased to require of them" (Westminster Confession of Faith, chap. 2.2). Angels, who need nothing, still worship God (Rev. 5:12–14). The essence of true worship is seen in the first commandment: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exod. 20:3). Least of all can we make ourselves those "other gods."

"Prayer is to be made for things lawful" and can be made in any place and at any time where it is done "in spirit and in truth." Prayer, with thanksgiving, being one special part of religious worship, is by God required of all men (Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2; 1 Tim. 2:1); and, that it may be accepted, is to be made in the name of the Son (John 14:13–14; 1 Pet. 2:5), by the help of the Spirit (Rom. 8:26; Eph. 6:18), according to His will (1 John 5:14), with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance (Gen. 18:27; Ps. 47:7; Eph. 6:18; Heb. 12:28; James 5:16; etc.); and, if vocal, in a known tongue (1 Cor. 14:14). So declares the Westminster Confession of Faith in Chapter 21.

Worship and prayer must be both God-centered. To shift the focus to man and his forms is to stress the acts of man rather than the acts of God.

Now, in sound law as in good theology there is emphatically a place

for both the acts of God and the acts of man. We cannot eliminate either one. We are responsible creatures. The acts of man are important in God's sight. Adam's act in revolting against God has continuing effects all around us. Our problem today is that God's sovereignty and priority are overlooked in all spheres, beginning with worship and prayer. The forms of our worship and prayer are important and valid only if their focus is God-centered, and only if they are faithful to His requirements as established in His law-word. Nothing we are, or do, or establish can be the norm or the center. The power center is not man, nor our prayer, nor our churches, although God can and does use all these things and more.

The prophet Amos reminded Israel that, however much He had used them, they were no different in His eyes than the Ethiopians, the Philistines, and the Syrians (Amos 9:7), and He could tomorrow use any one of them. He can tomorrow set us and our nations aside for a people we do not know. We cannot control God; He controls us. We dare not therefore be arrogant in prayer or worship.

32

AGAINST MUCH PRAYING

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 91, November 1987

One of the familiar and very much neglected comments by our Lord has to do with prayer. We are commanded to pray, and to pray quietly, without ostentation, and "in secret," i.e., not to publicize our praying. "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Matt. 6:7). Note that repetitions are *not* forbidden, but vain repetitions are. The widow in our Lord's parable was much given to intense repetition ("Avenge me of mine adversary"), but it was not *vain* repetition but rather a repeated and passionate prayer for justice (Luke 18:1–8). He condemns "much speaking" or praying which has as its purpose a desire to impress God.

This is especially a great temptation in our time. We live in what some call the democratic age; even tyrannies function in the name of the people. They hold mock elections in which everyone must vote, even though all candidates run unopposed, as in the Soviet Union. The people must all favor what has been predetermined for them. Even the Soviet Communist Party leaders, who know that the elections are a formality, go through the sanctimonious ritual of voting. It is a religious duty for the people to express their common will!

Given this mentality, now, more than ever, people are impressed by numbers. More than a few organizations add thousands of worthless names to their mailing lists because prospective donors are influenced by numbers!

In the years just after World War II, a very fine Christian layman began a small organization to stem the modernism then arising in his church. The "fellowship" was remarkably effective in its early years. Then some members agitated for an increased membership. The founder insisted on a maximum of fifty members; most insisted on thousands in order to make an impact. Those favoring a large membership won out,

and, before long, the association was a model of impotence. Its stance had been compromised, its publication became moderate and conventional, and it was incapable of decisiveness.

The demand for numerical strength continues unabated, despite a world filled with examples of failures. Even worse, this mind-set has infected prayer. The assumption is that, if we can get one million people, or even 10,000, praying zealously for something, God will give it to us! The assumption is that God is guided, not by His knowledge and wisdom, but by our nagging.

The results are tragically evil. Devout Protestants, who view the medieval endowments for continuous prayers by monks and nuns with horror, now create "prayer towers" where for twenty-four hours daily, a number of people are gathered to pray for all prayer requests. One evangelist on television has said that as many as 35,000 people have tried to call his "800" number in a single hour.

Somehow, people believe that God will hear them more readily if 500 or 5,000 people are praying for them. Whatever happened to the priesthood of all believers? Must a professional praying-person pray for us before God hears us?

A good many years ago, a sick man asked me to pray for him. I knew the man well, and that he was afraid of death and admitted it. I told him to do his own praying, and to begin by confessing his very serious sins. He refused. He wanted healing, not communion with God.

Today, however, certain electronic ministries stress strongly their prayer ministries for people. They invite people to call in, and they speak of the large number of people manning telephones (or should I say, womanning telephones?) to hear our prayer request and to pray for us.

One young pastor recently was left feeling very uncomfortable when someone demanded to know whether or not the church had a prayer ministry! Perhaps, very soon, we may have churches with blinking neon signs advertising twenty-four-hour prayer ministries with no waiting!

Now, St. Paul tells us that "we are members one of another" (Eph. 4:25). We pray for our family members, our friends, and our fellow church members out of love and concern. Here at Chalcedon, we thank God for our supporters; we have come to know many of you and pray for you when we know of your problems. But do we have a department of prayer, or a formal prayer ministry? No. Much speaking carries no weight with God.

Moreover, all too often, prayer ministries concern themselves with personal wants, not the Kingdom of God. How many of those prayer-ministry or prayer-tower groups are concerned about persecuted Christians

in the Soviet's power, or with American parents persecuted in the courts for homeschooling, or for sending their children to a Christian school?

Even more, how many concern themselves with God's Kingdom and justice? Yet our Lord tells us, in Matthew 6:33, "seek ye *first* the kingdom of God, and His righteousness," or justice. Are not unending "gimme" prayers insulting to God? Do they not become more insulting when we line up great numbers of people to nag God?

Our Lord gives us His model of prayer in Matthew 6:9–13, declaring, "After this manner therefore pray ye." We are to begin by hallowing His name. Our paramount request must be, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

God wants His Kingdom to rule and reign as fully on earth as in heaven, and we have a duty to pray for this, and to work for it. He has given us the laws of His Kingdom, and we must obey and apply them.

As we are faithful, so He, too, is faithful. He will give us our daily bread, and He forgives our debts "as we forgive our debtors." Prayer has as its companion obedience and action. The focus of prayer is wrong if it is our needs primarily rather than God's Kingdom.

If we pray essentially for ourselves rather than God's Kingdom, it will not make our prayer more effective to have 500 people unite with us in saying that "my will must be done."

In 2 Chronicles 7:14, God declares to Solomon, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." The priority in prayer is clearly not our wants but God's will.

Let us look again at our Lord's words in Matthew 6:7, "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do." Clearly, our Lord is warning us against the pagan forms of prayer. E. N. Fallaize, in James Hastings's *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, defined "primitive" prayer in these words: "In its simplest and most primitive form prayer is the expression of a desire, cast in the form of a request, to influence some force or power conceived as supernatural" (vol. 10, p. 154). The word "influence" tells us all. This is "heathen" or pagan prayer, a belief that God can be influenced. This is not Christian prayer: we enter into communion with God through Christ in order to find our place in His will and Kingdom and to receive His blessings.

Too commonly, the fostering of mass prayers is to compel God's attention and to influence Him by numbers. This is paganism.

Our Lord identifies another aspect of "heathen" prayer: "vain repetition." The pagan's "vain repetition" was associated with magic. Certain

repeated incantations could influence and command the spirits or gods. The "heathen" prayers our Lord refers to were really more spells, magical formulae, than prayers. They were seen as magical words of power, and they would have more power if certain persons repeated them for us, shamans, medicine men, and the like. In some instances, these spells had to be repeated at various hours of the day to be effective, and this is what our Lord also meant by "vain repetition."

The goal of such pagan "vain repetition" was to control a supernatural power by exercising and commanding a greater power. In 1 Kings 18, we have a classic example of pagan "prayer." The priests of Baal sought to control the powers over earth by numbers, by shouting "vain repetitions," and by mutilating themselves. Perhaps at the same time as this was happening at Mount Carmel, all the priests of Baal at the various sanctuaries may have been using "vain repetitions" to help the priests at Mount Carmel! Against all this, as James notes, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). Elijah's concern was God's Kingdom and God's justice.

It is worthy of note that paganism usually has had a specialized "praying" class. To have influence with or control over the forces of nature or the spirits, an expert technician had to be used.

Among some American Indians, for example, communion with the spirits was an elitist fact, reserved to the limited number of members of a secret society. Such a power made them sometimes feared because of the damage it was believed they could do, using the spirits.

More "advanced" religions in antiquity had rituals and prayers which often are quite remarkable. They seem at times close to a Biblical emphasis. They stress penitence, a strong moral sense, and a desire for communion with the gods. There is, however, a significant difference between all such pagan rituals and prayers, and Scripture.

The stress in these "advanced" pagan religions is on self-reformation and self-commendation. The "worshipper" presents himself as one who has repented and reformed himself, and he then proceeds, with "vain repetitions," to nag the god or gods for acceptance and for his petitions. The stress is on the human initiative, the self-reformation, and the self-qualification. The man says, I am here, O god, ready to receive. How can you refuse me, and why do you? In Egyptian religion, the worshipper presented himself to the gods after death with a litany of self-praise and with a recital of all his virtues.

This was the "heathen" model against which our Lord warns us. It was present all around Him, and it is all around us today, and sometimes in us. This is why the Lord's Prayer is so important for us to use: it

teaches us the true perspective in prayer. We dare not use the Lord's name in pagan prayers.

The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is Biblical. It rests on the premise that believers are members of God's covenant and family and therefore in faithfulness to their Lord and in communion with Him. Prayer or communion is thus a common privilege of all Christians, and of all who seek God's face in repentance and faith.

33

PERFECTION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 134, April 1991

Words change their meanings, sometimes with unhappy results. It tells us something about the fact of man's fall that words usually deteriorate in their meaning.

One problem word, a problem because of the misunderstandings associated with it, is *perfect*, and *perfection*. Two much-abused instances of its use in the New Testament are Matthew 5:48 ("Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect"), and Matthew 19:21 ("If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me").

The word translated as *perfect* is in both cases *teleios*. It means mature, finished, complete, having reached its goal, mature. Thus, to be perfect in this sense does not mean sinlessness but maturity with respect to our God-given calling and talents. It implies that a goal is in view, and we live in terms of it. The *completed* aspect does not mean *ended*; rather, it means living fully in terms of a goal.

The word *teleios* comes from *telos*, meaning an end, conclusion, or goal. It is a culminating point, according to R. Schippers in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (vol. 2, p. 59), and it can refer, for example, to marriage; a goal is reached, and life is now lived with maturity in terms of it. Thus, "both a doctor and a thief can be perfect." We sometimes call a man a "perfect fool."

This Biblical meaning of *perfect* long governed the thinking of Christendom. In the preamble to the U.S. Constitution, the purpose of the document is "to form a more perfect union." In terms of current usage, this is bad grammar. In terms of its times, it meant "a more mature union." According to Webster's 1828 *Dictionary*, *perfect* as a verb meant to finish or complete, and, as an adjective, finished, or completed. In grammar

there is a perfect tense which gives us expressed completion.

The word *perfect* now has an often different meaning due to two influences, Arminianism and Romanticism. In Arminianism, denying as it did the doctrine of total depravity and often affirming Pelagianism, the word came to mean a totally sanctified and sinless state. The Christian was to attain total sanctification and be without sin. This was, of course, an unrealistic hope and belief. But that is not all. The emphasis at the same time was shifted from the Kingdom of God to the individual's perfection. The result was a gradual withdrawal of these Christians from the world into their inner realm. People from diverse backgrounds are now calling attention to this fact. For example, Dr. Donald E. Wildmon, in the January 1991 *AFA Journal*, wrote: "I am amazed that any minister can preach week after week, month after month and year after year, and never directly address many of the great issues which face the Christian community today . . . It hurts to say what I am about to say; I say it not with malice. I say it with hurt born of love. Quite often I am asked whose fault it is that our society finds itself in the moral mess it is in. In all honesty I am compelled to respond: 'It is the fault of the Church.'" False ideas of sinless perfection have not improved the moral character of churchmen, nor have they improved the world of our time. However "noble" our goals may be, if they are not Biblical, they lead to ignoble ends. Men who will not acknowledge their depravity and sin are ready to see themselves in idealistic terms. The church, by pursuing pietistic perfectionism, has made itself morally derelict and generally irrelevant. The church today is strong in members but weak in the faith and the power of God.

Romanticism also stressed a non-Biblical doctrine of perfection. Perfection was seen in nature and in the natural (or, fallen) man. If the natural man is perfect, then the imposition of Biblical law and morality on man is not only wrong but very evil. Man's natural bents define what is good for him, not God. Because of Romanticism, there was a steady attack on the very idea of morality, and men who saw themselves as intellectuals began to speak rather of mores, social customs. Morality was replaced by mores, and mores were of little value. Such doctrines as utilitarianism, pragmatism, and instrumentalism, and, supremely, existentialism, replaced morality. Not only morality but meaning was attacked, as in deconstructionism. Romanticism revived with fervor the famous premise of Protagoras that man is the measure of all things, and it did not mean rational man.

With Romanticism, perfection became self-expression. Alfred de Musset, a French Romanticist, expressed the romantic agony: he desired every woman who caught his eye but trusted none; to be dependent was alien

to him. He wrote, "I must experience everything," and this meant that everything was good because he was. Aurore Dudevant (George Sand) believed in catering to public appetites and saw no wrong in it: "Monsters are in fashion. Let us make monsters." Napoleon had declared to the Council of Five Hundred, "Make way, I am the god of the day." This was the Romantic temper. Sin was held to be an obsolete concept. George Sand said of the evils she had done, "I don't believe it is due to wickedness, but to ignorance" (Frances Winwar, *The Life of the Heart: George Sand and Her Times* [1945], pp. 91, 104, 283).

What Romanticism did, among other things, was to create the youth movement. If nature is perfect in this modern sense, and if the natural man is the perfect man, then the child and youth are closest to perfection! The poet, William Wordsworth (1770–1850), in his *Ode: Intimations of Immorality*, held that we are born "trailing clouds of glory" and that "Heaven lies about us in our infancy." Age perverts us: "Shades of the prison-house begin to close around the growing boy," and that prisonhouse is civilization. Given these premises, youth soon felt it had a "duty" to correct and even overthrow its elders, who represented the "corruption" of Christian civilization. Rebellious youth was a creation of the Romantic doctrine of perfection.

However, if civilization is the source of evil, then "the less civilized" peoples are the most good, according to this doctrine. Western white youth had once been the voice of natural goodness and the zealots for perfection, and their motto, in the 1960s, was, "Never trust anyone over 30." Almost at once, others seized the torch of this new faith. In the United States, black youth attacked as evil white leadership, no matter what it did: these people were "honkies" and evil. Since then, a new definition of blasphemy has emerged: Thou shalt not call attention to any sin of Martin Luther King, for this is the unforgivable sin.

This doctrine was not lost on various peoples of the Third World. While treating blacks (or, African-Americans) with politically-motivated friendliness, they were contemptuous of them as "de-tribalized" and overcivilized peoples. What we have had in process is an example of what Dr. Cornelius Van Til called integration downward into the void.

Of course, the environmental movement is a clear example of this fanatical Romanticism. It has become a new and fanatical religion, impervious to rationality. In many instances since the 1980s, foresters have allowed raging forest fires to burn; they are after all, a natural fact, and nature is perfect!

False perfectionism has led to unreasonable and even insane demands. All the achievements of the past are treated with contempt: the new

"wisdom" of these perfectionists is seen as infallible truth. They believe, like Job's sorry friends, that wisdom was born with them and is in danger of dying with them (Job 12:2). Such an attitude leads to the kind of insubordination which today marks families, businesses, churches, and all kinds of groups: every underling resents the fact that he is not in control and that his wisdom does not direct things! In this antinomian age, few pay attention to God's law: why, then, should we expect them to obey men?

The psalmist, however, prays, "Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths" (Ps. 25:4). Again, "Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness" (Ps. 143:10). These are among the many prayers to be conformed to God and His law. This is what Biblical perfection is about: finding our purpose under God, then moving faithfully in His way. This is maturity, and our completeness. It is the antithesis of rebelliousness and lawlessness. This is the way: walk ye in it.

34

THE HERESY OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 140, July 1991

Paul in Romans 6:23 makes a very important and interesting statement: "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." This is commonly misread and misinterpreted to mean that the punishment for sin is death, whereas Paul tells us that it is sin's wages or salary. We receive a grim pay, death, for sin.

Now, God's law is very specific about wages. According to Leviticus 19:13, and Deuteronomy 24:14–15, God's law is very strict about prompt payment in terms of an agreed salary. Paul tells us that God lives by His law: He pays us off for our sins according to His contracted or covenant law-word.

Because God's relationship with mankind is covenantal, and His law gives us the terms of the contract, there is no escaping its terms. All men, within and without the church, are paid in terms of it. James, the brother of our Lord, tells the church that "wars and fightings" amongst them come from their sins and will lead to God's judgment or payoff (James 4:1–4). Men who pray for peace when sin abounds are praying falsely and for their own judgment; they should pray for peace with God, without which men cannot be at peace with one another.

Paul in 1 Timothy 2:1–4 asks that we pray for rulers and all who are in authority. This is a sadly abused text. Does it require us to say, God bless the governor, president, or prime minster, when they are evil and ungodly men who favor abortion, homosexuality, and other evils? Are not such prayers asking that sin be blessed? Paul tells us in verse 4 *the purpose* of praying for all such authorities: God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Thus, we should pray for their salvation, or for their judgment, that Christ's Kingdom be advanced.

God, by His sovereign grace, with no merit nor good thing on our

part, redeems us and makes us members of His covenant. A covenant is a contract or a treaty: it is always conditional upon faithfulness or obedience. It is antinomianism and heresy, a rejection of the doctrine of the covenant, to call God's love unconditional. Grace and lawlessness do not go together. It is asking for grace as freedom to do as we please, and to do evil.

Such thinking is very much with us. As covenantalism declined in the church, and as antinomianism replaced it, the world rejoiced and carried to its logical ends this evil doctrine of unconditional love. It became "wrong" to call evil people what they were. Supposedly, they had "a good heart," whatever sins they committed. Our Lord calls this the doctrine of "false prophets" and "ravening wolves," to deny the relationship between the heart and the actions of a man, between a tree and its fruits (Matt. 7:15–20). We can always know them by their fruit.

But people want God and life on their terms. Edna St. Vincent Millay, one of this century's most gifted poets, expressed this ungodly faith in the opening line of "Moriturus":

> If I could have
> Two things in one:
> The peace of the grave,
> And the light of the sun . . .

This is a common hope: the irresponsibility and the peace of death, and all the privileges of life — with no drawbacks.

I recall a flagrantly adulterous woman who insisted that, if her husband truly loved her, his love would be unconditional; it would allow her the freedom to "be herself."

This is what people are telling God when they speak of His unconditional love. They want the freedom to forget His covenant law and to obey God only where it suits them. A few years ago, I encountered two pastors who "unchurched" any woman in their congregations who ever wore slacks anywhere; they use a text wrongly to justify their acts. Both pastors were militant antinomians, but they reserved the "right" to use or misuse an occasional law as it suited them. This is sin, and its wages remain death.

The meaning of Romans 6:23 applies to both men and nations. Can nations despise God's law, persecute His people, and supplant justice with evil, and expect to endure? *Without repentance and obedience*, greater wars will come, and cities will disappear all over the world, as well as here. Declarations of war, respect of civilian populations, just treatment of prisoners, these things and more are virtually gone. We may

see, as some believe, unmarked planes, without any declaration of war, obliterating cities and peoples they hate. And why not? Without God, all things are possible, as Dostoyevsky predicted. The New World Order, man's modern Tower of Babel, is being planned, and soon "nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do" (Gen. 11:6).

The world is moving towards collecting the pay due to it from Almighty God. The Lord God is a good and faithful paymaster, as the Bible and all history make clear. Paytime is not far ahead.

But Paul says more in Romans 6:23, "but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." The church needs to recognize that God's relationship to His redeemed people is covenantal or contractual, which means that we must be faithful to His law and fulfill His dominion mandate to bring all men and nations to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and to establish the Lord's dominion over every sphere of life and thought.

There were antinomians in Rome and elsewhere who wanted God's love to be unconditional. Paul's response was clear-cut: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid" (Rom. 6:1–2).

There are many churchmen who insist on God's "unconditional love" for Israel, in spite of its unbelief. What they are also insisting upon is God's "unconditional love" for themselves, despite their heresies, sins, and arrogances. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8), but not to give us license to continue in sin! The doctrine of unconditional love is antinomianism, and it is heresy. It binds God, but not man! God must go on loving such people, whatever they do, but men are not bound to obey God, or even to believe in Him, according to R. B. Thieme (A. J. ten Pas, *The Lordship of Christ*, pp. 19–20).

The Lord God is a gracious Redeemer; He is also a strict Paymaster, and the heresy of unconditional love will draw its wages, death.

35

THE HERESY OF LOVE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 160, February 1993

One of the more persistent heresies that have plagued the church has been the heresy of love as the redemptive and holy force. One of the "fathers" of this faith was the medieval abbot, Joachim of Fiore. He divided history into three dispensations. The first was the Age of the Father and of law, justice, and wrath. The second was the Age of the Son, and of grace and mercy. The third age or dispensation is that of love and of universal peace.

Joachims's thinking influenced many heretical groups, and, in the modern era, has also influenced Hegelians, New Age peoples, the hippies and "revolutionaries" of the 1960s, and more.

A profound locale of influence in the United States was the Unitarian Movement. For example, Moncure Daniel Conway (1832–1907), a Unitarian pastor (an ex-Methodist pastor), wrote in *My Pilgrimage to the Wise Men of the East*, of Kwan-yin, the Chinese goddess of mercy, as the truly holy being, saying, "She is the woman who refused to enter paradise so long as any human being is excluded. 'Never will I receive individual salvation,' she said, and still remains outside the gates of heaven" (p. 71).

Another Unitarian, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote, in his *Christus: A Mystery, First Interlude*, with the Abbot Joachim speaking,

> I am in love with Love,
> And the sole thing I hate is Hate;
> For Hate is death, and Love is life,
> A peace, a splendor from above;
> And Hate, a never ending strife,
> A smoke, a blackness from the abyss
> When unclean serpents coil and hiss!
> Love is the Holy Ghost within,

Hate the unpardonable sin!
Who preaches otherwise than this,
Betrays his Master with a kiss!

Given this new faith, Unitarians soon found much of the Bible unloving and untrue. They quickly found the exclusiveness of Christianity and its belief in Jesus Christ as alone man's Savior, to be intolerant and unloving, and all religions were embraced with equal fervor — or, should we not rather say of Unitarians, with equal coldness.

Unhappily, the fundamentalist churches in the main have, in recent years, been closer to Longfellow than to St. Paul. They hold, with as much intolerance as do the modernists, to the need to be loving. (Sad to say, I have found, over the years, that they get a bit testy if I ask how much love they showed for Hitler and Stalin!) They refuse to agree that God, who is love, is also wrath, law, justice, mercy, and more. They have, in effect, altered the statement; "God is love," to mean, love is god! They have also, in the name of love, become accomplished haters. Usually, our most hateful mail comes from these "love babies"!

Love without law becomes an indulgence of sin. If the murderer, rapist, or thief is simply a person who needs love, we are saying that his or her act was not a consequence of an evil nature but a response to the environment, or miseducation, or poor heredity and a bad home, and so on and on. The love heresy refuses to see sin as *sin*; but as 1 John 3:4 tells us, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

Longfellow said, "Love is the Holy Ghost within." The Holy Spirit, third person of the Trinity, had been replaced by a human emotion, man's frame of mind. Man was thereby replacing God, and man's feelings were now a saving power. For Longfellow, not God but this love in our hearts is life. Moreover, "the sole thing I hate is Hate." This means that it is not sin we hate, but hate; evil is our nonloving attitude.

The shift from Jesus Christ as Savior to love as our redeemer is very clear, but, in many, it is concealed. Jesus Christ is made into a false image of humanistic love, a false idol. The real Jesus Christ denounced sinners and sins; He manifested wrath towards hypocrites; He was unloving towards the scribes, Pharisees, and others. Most of His recorded words are angry, unloving denunciations! In fact, most of the Bible is hard, blunt language. In a world of sin, this *must* be the case. Jeremiah denounced in God's name as false preachers all who spoke, "Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (Jer. 6:14; 8:11).

Love is neither truly love nor godly unless it is in terms of the Word of God. What God requires from us is not pious gush but Christian action,

our faith applied to the world around us. "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Isa. 1:16–17).

This false doctrine of love is humanism, not Christianity. It makes man paramount, not the whole Word of God. It eliminates from the Scripture everything that doesn't conform to this "gospel" of love.

The Biblical doctrine of love is *first* and foremost concerned with God's love to men, an undeserved love given to us who deserve nothing from Him but judgment. It is *covenant* love: it gives us God's covenant law as our way of life. It demands of us an exclusive allegiance, because God has in His mercy chosen us.

Then, *second*, Biblical love means God's love to us gains the response of man's love to God. This means that we love and obey God. "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Instead of being rebels and lawbreakers, we reveal our love of God by our obedience, for love for God is our response to God's love, our gratitude shown by our obedience and faithfulness. Our love of God is God's Spirit working in us (Deut. 30:6), so that the God who chooses us also governs us.

Third, the Biblical doctrine of love means our love to other men in terms of His law. It is not a lawless love (as adultery, for example, is), nor a self-seeking love. It is a love of our neighbor and fellow man in terms of God's requirements. It is a practical, working love. It means that we put into force the second table of the Ten Commandments, and all related subordinate laws, in all our dealings with our neighbors. It is not a sentimental or an emotional love but one in faithfulness to God's law.

Humanistic love is not godly. As Solomon said, "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel" (Prov. 12:10). The humanistic love of our day is too often an indulgence of evil and a false substitute for Christian action and charity.

Moreover, the heresy of love is all too common in pulpit and pew. Too many of its advocates are themselves guilty men who need the forgiveness of their sin in Christ but pursue instead an antinomian love as salvation.

Longfellow said, "The sole thing I hate is Hate." This means that, in the name of virtue, the "love babies" believe they can hate all who do not share their gospel of love! Their self-deception is very great.

This false gospel leads to silliness also. Longfellow took his love of love seriously. When he married, his friend Charles Sumner (famous later as an abolitionist senator) was so upset over "losing" his friend that Longfellow took him along on his honeymoon! On the train trip, Sumner read to the newlyweds Bossuet's funeral orations!

If "Hate" is the "unpardonable sin," as Longfellow held, meaning hating another man, then the hatred of God is demoted to a minor status, and the focus of all morality becomes what man does to man, a humanistic doctrine wherein the measure of all things is man, not God. And this is where we are now. But without God's grace, there can be no truly moral love, because godly love is God's grace working in and through us. We have a world full of evil, much talk about love while evil proliferates, because too many people have replaced Biblical faith with the heresy of humanistic love.

36

ABSOLUTIZING THE RELATIVE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 130, February 1991

One of the great sins of any age is to absolutize the relative, and this evil is especially common in our time. We are told of God that He is perfection, all-sufficient, eternal, and unchangeable; He needs neither correction nor change.

Over the centuries, men have repeatedly tried to force a fixity on the human scene as though perfection exists or can exist among men. This means absolutizing the relative; it means requiring a fixity of men and institutions which is ungodly.

An important area of such a demand for fixity has been the state and its rulers. In the medieval area, many thinkers, much influenced by Greek philosophy, began to stress such an uncritical acceptance of the status quo. Although more than a few theologians spoke of the moral necessity of opposing tyrants and tyranny, all too many contributed to the growing political doctrine of the divine right of kings. The subject, it was held, owed an unconditional obedience to the monarch. James I of England was a passionate adherent of this doctrine in the seventeenth century, and Cromwell was its enemy.

This doctrine is not dead; it has simply taken other forms. In the trials of Christian schools and churches in the late 1970s and into the 1980s, I found some clergymen radically opposed to any and all opposition to the state as a violation of Romans 13:1ff. They viewed resisters as ungodly men and violators of Scripture.

More than a century ago, Charles Hodge, in his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians*, dealt with this basic issue in his observation of Ephesians 5:21, with respect to the obedience of wives to their husbands: "It teaches its extent, not its degree. It extends over all departments, but is limited in all; first, by the nature of the relation; and secondly, by the

higher authority of God." Nothing in this world can command our unconditional love nor our unconditional obedience. Not even God's love for us, nor His mercy, grace, and patience are unconditional; all are covenanted and are subject to the terms of God's covenant.

Because our thinking has become noncovenantal, and even anticovenantal, we absolutize the relative.

One of America's finest Christian thinkers wrote in mid-1990 on "When Is It Right to Leave the Church?" and concluded that it is never right, no matter how deep the faithlessness. Oddly enough, he quotes Calvin, who broke with Rome. Of course, our Lord and His disciples broke with the church of their day! We cannot give to the church the unconditional loyalty which belongs only to God.

To absolutize either the state or the church is to de-absolutize God in one's thinking; it means a rejection of the covenant, that God-given contract of law and grace. The absence of covenantal thinking is a prominent aspect of the church today.

A sad example of this is the Tenth Annual National Christian Prayer Breakfast to "Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem," January 30, 1991, in Washington, D.C. Besides prominent members of Congress, this gathering is to include major churchmen. The stated "purpose" of this breakfast meeting is "[t]o honor Israel by demonstrating our Lord's unconditional love for His ancient chosen people." Unconditional love? This statement nullifies the law and the prophets! Our Lord plainly said to Israel, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21:43). The churches today face a like judgment for their presumption in affirming a noncovenantal, unconditional love on God's part for them.

One noted preacher of unconditional love has said that, once we say "yes" to Jesus, we bind God unconditionally. He writes, "You can even become an atheist; but if you once accepted Christ as your Savior, you can't lose your salvation." "Do you know that if you were a genius, you couldn't figure out a way to go to hell! . . . You can blaspheme, you can deny the Lord, you can commit every sin in the Bible, plus all the others; but there is just NO WAY!" (Cited by A. J. ten Pas, *The Lordship of Christ*, pp. 19–20.)

Another area where we commonly find men absolutizing the relative is marriage. The "no divorce" doctrine is becoming common among evangelicals, and, as I travel, I see the disasters it creates, and the evils. In one case a woman was told that she must not leave her child-molesting husband, even though he was molesting their own child as well as others. But marriage is a covenant, and most marriage services still retain the

covenantal wording: "I do vow and covenant." A covenant is a treaty and contract. It requires obedience to the terms, and it can be dissolved when the terms are violated. To make marriage unconditional is to absolutize the relative and to hand over power to the evil partner.

The same is true of parental authority. Paul, in Ephesians 6:4 warns fathers not to provoke their children to wrath; their authority is conditional. Remember, too, that the commandment is to "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Exod. 20:12); an aspect of honor is godly obedience *where due*. Paul says, in Romans 13:7, "Render therefore to all *their dues*: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour." In every sphere of life, all relationships are under God's covenant law and are totally subject to His Word and will, not man's.

The drive everywhere to make all things unconditional means that we demand a continuation of the status quo, not godly reformation and change. Too often, it is the wrongdoers who insist on unconditional love, obedience, allegiance, and so on. A few years ago, a friend of Chalcedon, after careful investigation, confronted a nationally known pulpiteer with his financial crimes with church funds. The pastor's response was: How dare you criticize me? Don't you know I am the Lord's anointed?

This is the common refuge of scoundrels: You have no right, no grounds, no reason. Why? Supposedly because God has unconditionally guaranteed their status and power.

To insist on an unconditional love or obedience or anything on the human scene is to deny God's covenant and to become a covenant-breaker, an outlaw in God's sight. If the covenant, which is basic to Scripture (indeed, the Bible is the book of the covenant), means anything, then those who absolutize the relative place themselves outside of God's covenant. God requires our unconditional obedience *to Him*, not to church, state, husband, employer, or anything else.

Our Lord is emphatic on this matter: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, *and him only shalt thou serve*" (Matt. 4:10). Submission to human authorities is required of us "for the Lord's sake" (1 Pet. 2:13–16), to further godly order and to use our liberty "as the servants of God." We are not called to be revolutionists but a dominion people in Christ. We know that man's wrath accomplishes no good. We neither rebel against things, for we are called to be peacemakers, nor do we submit to evil out of cowardice. We must be governed by the covenant and its law. To absolutize the relative means that we are governed by the human scene rather than by the covenant God and His law. It means that preserving the status quo is more important than God's righteousness or justice.

It is an ironic fact that those who most insist on absolutizing the relative create the most rebellions, whether in church, state, marriage, or any other sphere.

The doctrine of unconditional love, obedience, loyalty, or whatever else men seek to fix as unchanging becomes usually a greater instrument of change because the temporal cannot be fixed nor absolutized in God's world. Henry Dwight Sedgwick (1785–1831), in the *North American Review*, October 1824, expressed the Unitarian hope of his day for a humanistic law. He wrote, "When the law shall have become thoroughly conformed to the spirit of the age, authority will become of double value and efficacy." However, replacing God's law with man's law has destroyed authority and created lawlessness and crime. The legal revolution has absolutized the relative by denying God's higher law; it has treated Biblical law with contempt and statist law with reverence, but instead of doubling the efficacy and authority of this law, it has eroded it. We live in the shambles of this humanistic revolution which first created the Renaissance and, later, the modern age. The church has too often imitated humanism: it has become antinomian, relativizing God's law, while at the same time transferring the absolute to the human scene. The result is judgment.

37

HOLINESS VERSUS PERFECTIONISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 61, April 1985

A Biblical incident rarely preached on is 2 Kings 5:18–19. The Syrian general Naaman, healed of his leprosy by the prophet Elisha, had made a profession of faith. He had a problem, however. The Syrian king, in his infirmity, required a man to lean on as he went to worship in the Temple of Rimmon. Naaman was that trusted man. For a general, who could easily seize the throne, to be so trusted indicates how highly Naaman was regarded. But Naaman was troubled. When the king bowed to his god, Naaman had to help him to do so and himself bow in the process. Would the Lord pardon Naaman for this? Elisha's answer was affirmative: "Go in peace." Naaman was not summoned to a life of perfection but of holiness, and there is a difference. Naaman was not compromising his faith but performing a minor duty in a major career.

The idea of perfection is in essence a pagan doctrine. The word *perfect* as it appears in Scripture has a different meaning than in pagan cultures. Several Greek words are used in the New Testament. In Matthew 5:48, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which in heaven is perfect," the word is *teleios* matured, reaching its appointed goal, completed; other words translated as "perfect" have related meanings. For us to be perfect in the Biblical sense means to mature in our calling, to do God's will for our lives, and to serve Him with all our heart, mind, and being. Perfection in this sense is a process. The preamble to the U.S. Constitution uses "perfect" in this theological sense and thus speaks of forming "a more perfect union." In the modern sense, this is absurd: what can be more perfect than perfect?

Perfection in the non-Biblical sense has long been a goal in various pagan religions, and it has been essentially linked to the idea of autonomous man. To use Neoplatonic terms, man must incarnate in himself

the principle of being and attain perfection. This is in essence a solitary quest, because to attain true spirituality or intellectuality, to be pure mind or pure spirit, one must divorce oneself from the material world and from other people. People are a troublesome burden, endlessly concerned with their trifles, and an impediment to the realization of the principle in one's being.

This pagan concept of perfection separated the person from the world and from society. It created hermits, monks, and detached people. In one pagan faith after another, the true goal of life is detachment, a world and life negation. Eastern religions in particular have been dedicated to this goal of detachment, but its influence has been powerful in the West also. Most of the desert hermits of the early church, many monks, and much popular piety, both Catholic and Protestant, have been dedicated to this ideal. In the fourteenth century, the monks of Athos believed that fasting plus concentration could enable them to realize the uncreated essence of God. The concentration came from navel-watching. When Barlaam opposed the "navel-souled ones," a synod was called to condemn him.

The way of perfection is the solitary way. It is often associated with mysticism. In its forms within the church, its goal is the vision of God, or, in other forms, pietism, the perfection of one's personal piety. It is, in any case, an autonomous exercise, not a social one. In relation to the world, it seeks escape and anonymity. Perfectionism and self-absorption go hand in hand.

The doctrine of holiness is radically different. When our Lord summons us to be "perfect" or mature, i.e., to grow in terms of our God-appointed end, He is summoning us to serve God with all our being, and to be holy unto Him. "And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine" (Lev. 20:26). Holiness is always unto the Lord. Moreover, as Revelation 15:4, in the great "song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb," declares, "for thou only art holy." God alone is holy; we are holy to the degree that we separate and dedicate ourselves to Him and to His Kingdom. To abide in Him means to bring forth fruit (John 15:2); to love God means to keep His commandments (John 15:10, 14). Our goal, thus, is to do the will of our Father, to serve Him with all our heart, mind, and being, to love God and our neighbor.

The Reformation, and especially the Puritans, defined this work of holiness as the Kingdom of God, as a ministry in Christ's name, with the goal being, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). This goal was present from the earliest days of the church and was strong

in many medieval movements, although the Neoplatonic perfectionism gained an ascendancy.

The rise of Pietism again subverted this priority of holiness in the Biblical sense; perfectionism took over. With the rise of perfectionism, impracticality has often been associated with perfection and a pseudo-holiness. Modernism, even more than Catholic and Protestant orthodoxies, has been very prone to perfectionism, and it has done much damage the world over. Pacifism is one form of this perfectionism; hostility to armament in any form is another. In one seminary, it was enough to dismiss from consideration as a worthy Christian a prominent churchman for the professor to say, "He has a collection of guns and loves to hunt."

The prevalence of perfectionism in the Western world has been part and parcel of incredibly stupid foreign and domestic policies. It means moving in terms of assumptions which are unrelated to reality, because the ideal must be assumed in order to make it real. Perfectionism sees man as the creator and the world as his will and idea.

Modern education is perfectionist. It teaches students that the world can be remade if we believe men are naturally good and peace-loving, and that, if only we treat them so, they will be as hoped for. As one prominent "theologian" believes, if we surrender to the Soviet Union and greet their troops with smiling faces, love will triumph.

Churchmen equate their "good intentions" with perfection. To end poverty is good; therefore, to call for the redistribution of wealth means to favor a godly society and a perfect solution to the problem of poverty. The solution to economic and other problems is seen as political, i.e., the issuing of political fiats which will supposedly change the world.

Perfectionism believes in cheap remedies. The great perfectionist, Satan, had a simple solution. God was requiring men to learn the discipline of work, science, and dominion in the Garden of Eden as the first step towards exercising dominion over all the earth (Gen. 1:26–28). This was seen as a painfully slow process which would require centuries and much effort. How much simpler it would be if man would, like God, issue a fiat word, determine good and evil for himself, and be the creator of his own world (Gen. 3:1–5). God's way required holiness, a total dedication and obedience to God's law-word, and the slow process of maturation (the Biblical meaning of perfection). The tempter offered a simpler route, perfection, not holiness, not obedience to every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4), but being one's own god and decreeing the perfect world. (So modern politics was born.)

Perfectionism also trusts in religious or devotional exercises as the way to power with God. Isaiah speaks very bluntly (as do other prophets)

about the evil this can be, saying that God declares, "Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; and the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward. Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday, And the LORD shall guide thee continually" (Isa. 58:5–11).

What the Lord requires of us is holiness, but holiness is not gained by saying, Go to now, I shall be a saint. Rather, holiness comes as we seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness or justice (Matt. 6:33). We do not become holy by seeking holiness in and of itself. The Lord is the Holy One, and we are holy if we do His will. Christ is holy because He is the obedient Son: "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me" (John 6:38). Twice in Hebrews we are told of our Lord that His avowed and ordained purpose was this: "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:7, 9). This must be our purpose, too, as members of His new humanity. We are not saved to retire to our own devices but to serve, glorify, and enjoy God forever. We are summoned to be holy, which means to love, serve, and obey the Lord with all our heart, mind, and being, and to love our neighbor as ourself.

Holiness is too often seen as mere negation. As one man said recently, echoing an old sentence, he had lived for years on the premise that he was a Christian because, "I don't smoke, and I don't chew, and I don't go with girls that do." Holiness is not merely nor essentially negation; it requires separation, but it is false to see it merely as separation from sin. Our Lord describes false separation tellingly. A man rid himself of an unclean spirit and cleansed his life of many things, but his zeal for perfection and a negative holiness left the "house" merely "empty, swept, and garnished." As a result, the unclean spirit returned with "seven other spirits more wicked than himself," with the result that "the last state of that man is

worse than the first" (Matt. 12:43–45). This parable by our Lord explains why some supposedly converted people are so great a problem.

True holiness is a dedication to the Lord's service with the totality of our being. It is not a concern with our perfection, but a concern for the Lord's work. As David says, "For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (Ps. 69:9), a sentence finding total expression in our Lord (John 2:17). David's sins were very real and were judged by God, but David's zeal for the Lord's work was honored and blessed by God because David sought God's Kingdom and glory.

Remember Naaman and Elisha's word. What would some of our modern perfectionists, with their false holiness, have said to Naaman? Or to Abraham, Solomon, Peter, and many another saint richly blessed by God?

There is much talk today about holiness, but it is a warped and perfectionist doctrine which is too often stressed. The result is negation, and, instead of powerful men of God, it is mousy churchmen who are the results of such teachings.

The church must be a training camp and barracks room, sending soldiers of Christ into the world, each in his or her own sphere, to exercise dominion in the name of the Lord. A good army is not trained for exhilaration and parade but for action.

Our God, who is alone holy in and of Himself, is a God of action and power. Our holiness comes in working in obedience and faithfulness to His law-word.

38

MATURITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 111, July 1989

One of the long popular hymns of the church is, "Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts." It is attributed by many to St. Bernard of Clairvaux, but an eleventh-century manuscript attributes it to a Benedictine abbess. Most hymnals now use only five stanzas of the hymn; it was written with fifty-four stanzas. Many older hymns had many more stanzas than hymnals carry now.

Similarly, many popular novels of the past century had long descriptive passages at the beginning and throughout. Very recently, I reread a boy's book written in 1889 and once very popular. It began with a foreword, and then almost seven pages of description and stage setting before a single instance of conversation; it ended with a Latin quotation. Dickens, Scott, and other popular writers are now edited to eliminate the long descriptive sections.

Another illustration: about forty years ago, shortly after the war, I heard an Episcopal bishop from India preach: his sermons lasted two hours and forty minutes, routine in India at the time. In Scotland, in the 1800s, preachers spoke two hours and more routinely, with forty to fifty points in their sermons. During the week, parishioners could routinely recite every point in order as they discussed the sermon.

Modern man's attention span is shorter! I myself do not favor a return to long sermons, or long anything! I am interested, however, in what has happened.

People now are less attuned to words, to reading and listening, and more attuned to action and sound. It is important to understand why.

The legitimate theater was for centuries a narrow realm, limited mostly to major cities and to a limited audience. The stage requires overstatement; the actors speak to be heard in the last row: this means an element

of overacting without appearing to do so. The slow pace of life must be stepped up to tell a story in a short time. This means also a heightened emotionalism to sustain interest.

The film industry began without sound — silent films. Overacting and action were increased to carry the meaning and story. With sound, the overacting was simply enhanced, and new technologies made more dramatic action possible.

All of this has led to an interesting result. Films have affected life. People, shaped because they lack a strong faith, became more emotional and more prone to dramatize themselves. Both children and adults are given to emotional outbursts. What fifty and sixty years ago would have embarrassed old and young is now routine with both. The decline in reading skills because of the growing failure of statist education has also aggravated the problem.

One of the marks of maturity is self-control. A child cries when hungry; this is natural enough in a baby, but maturity begins when the child learns to conform his appetites to the family's hours; the child is also taught to control his bladder and bowels; his temper tantrums are rebuked and are gradually replaced with intelligent behavior, and so on.

What we see now with adults is all too often a continuation of infantile behavior patterns. Maturity is less and less an ideal, and more and more evaded by all too many people. In the 1970s, I wrote, in a *Chalcedon Report* article, about the absurd and painful appearance of a woman well into her eighties in a bikini bathing suit, imitating a teenage girl. The response was amazing. Some were highly emotional as they insisted on the "right" of a woman to act as a teenager, whatever her age. Of course, I never denied her freedom to do such a thing; I did question her lack of common sense and maturity! A few years later, I referred to this incident again in the *Chalcedon Report*, and I received another angry letter!

I find such things amazing. Is no one interested in the joys of maturity any more? Is it any wonder, with the lust for perpetual youth (or, continuing infantilism, take your choice), that the attention span of old and young is shorter?

Life at every stage is wonderful. St. Peter (1 Pet. 3:7) speaks of "the grace of life." Life can only be a grace when it is lived under God with a readiness to grow in Him. We can then enjoy each stage of life with the knowledge that each has its problems and challenges, and the goal is eternal life in Him. Romans 8:28 tells us that, in Christ, all things are made by God to work together for our eternal good. The immediate event or burden may not be felt to be good, but we know it is used by our Lord for remarkable and blessed goals.

Paul in Romans 5:1–5 tells us that our troubles or tribulations produce patience. Patience gives us a mature experience, and experience increases our hope, because our faith has matured. The Berkeley Version (Verkuyl) of Hebrews 11:1 tells us that then "faith forms a solid ground for what is hoped for, a conviction of unseen reality." Then, too, we are no longer children, tossed about by every wind of doctrine, and so childish that we are the pawns of men (Eph. 4:14). Maturity is something which does not come from a television set, nor from emotional outbursts. Our growth in sanctification produces maturity, something to work for and enjoy.

39

HYPOCRITICAL GUILT

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 102, October 1988

On one occasion, Otto Scott and I met a young man who lost no time in telling us of his burden of "guilt." His forefathers had been Southern slavers, dealing in the transport and sale of black slaves. We quickly gathered that he was a sensitive soul who wore his "guilt" as a badge of nobility.

On another trip, I was told of a young white woman, about twenty years old, who had been raped by a black hoodlum. She refused to report this crime or to tell her parents of it. Like her father and mother, she was a liberal. To report the rape, she felt, would confirm "a racial stereotype," and this she could not do. She spoke of understanding "the suppressed rage of oppressed black men." She, too, was a "noble" soul who took upon herself the guilt of past generations.

Of course, all this is a false virtue which rests on a hypocritical guilt for past sins which they themselves did not commit. Neither of these two persons, nor others like them, feel any guilt for present sins in themselves. Instead, they claim a false nobility and virtue for their hypocritical guilt for the past of their people. As a student, I knew a wealthy young man who made it clear that his father's business practices (whatever they were) were repugnant to him. This was his claim to a high moral ground. His immediate personal life was very bad, but he felt virtuous in condemning his father, whose money he used freely.

We have a new form of Phariseeism today which looks at the past and says, "I thank Thee, Lord, that I am not as one of those insensitive souls." When our Lord says, "*Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof*" (Matt. 6:34), He forbids us to borrow troubles (or guilt) from both the past and the future. To borrow either problems or guilt from the past or the future is ungodly.

Even more, guilt is personal. It has to do with one's own sins of commission and omission. To confess our parents' sins, or our ancestors' sins, rather than our own is Phariseeism and a claim to being spiritually sensitive at their expense. It does not deal with one's own sins!

Some people feel very virtuous in "confessing" other people's sins. They are experts in correcting everyone around them. I regularly hear from such people about myself! Now, bad as that is, I believe it is even worse to confess our forefathers' sins and not our own. It is a violation of the law requiring us to honor our father and mother.

Paul speaks of some who have their "*conscience seared with a hot iron*" (1 Tim. 4:2), who claim a higher holiness than others. They refine their moral stance to give themselves a holier and higher way than others. To have one's conscience seared with a hot iron means to be insensitive to God, while sensitive to one's own will. It means that these insensitive people claim a higher sensitivity. Such people become adept at confessing other people's sins, and then we see whites confessing black sins, blacks confessing the sins of whites, Orientals confessing Western sins, and so on. People love to catalogue the sins of other nations, of the United States, Japan, South Africa, Guatemala, Britain, and so on and on.

All of this means devaluing sin and changing its seriousness. It is routine now in much so-called evangelism to assure people that their sins are forgiven before they have admitted to or confessed sin. It is no wonder that such "converts" are routinely moral problems. Cheap forgiveness shows contempt for the cross. If our sin required Christ's atoning death, to treat sin and forgiveness lightly is a very serious offense against God's grace and mercy.

David understood the seriousness of sin and forgiveness. He wrote, "For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight" (Ps. 51:3–4).

Confessing other people's sin, the sin of our forefathers or the sin of our nation in the past, is a common evasion of responsibilities in the present. One women's club revels in hearing speakers who regale them with the sins of everyone outside their own "enlightened" circles. They know more "dirt," or fancied "dirt," about more people and groups than one can imagine! They are a happy lot of Pharisees who believe that they grow in virtue as they grow in their information about the sins of others!

Such Phariseeism is common on the right and on the left. It is very popular politics. It adds nothing, however, to the moral direction of society.

All morality rests on a religious faith, and it results in action: no action, no morality.

Today we have a world in which everybody seems eager to correct or regulate everyone else. Whenever a congress, legislature, or parliament meets, it seeks more controls over others. (The U.S. Congress, as an accomplished body of Pharisees, routinely exempts itself from the laws it passes to bind all others!) This is Phariseeism, and it is evil.

Our Lord condemns Phariseeism above all else. He accused them of shutting up the Kingdom of Heaven by their warped teaching. He declares, "*ye shall receive the greater damnation*" (Matt. 23:14).

At the same time, our Lord *requires* us to seek *first* His Kingdom and righteousness (or, justice) (Matt. 6:33); this is Christian Reconstruction. The emphasis is on what the Lord would have us do, and it requires a faith with results, a faith which moves us to service and to faithfulness. When Paul was converted, his first words were, "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*" (Acts 9:6). He did not sit back to wait for heaven; he became a vineyard worker for the Lord. To be converted, to be regenerated, means to be made alive in Christ to serve and obey Him.

40

THE SINS OF THE FATHERS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 168, October 1993

One of the fundamental premises of Biblical law is now being radically set aside. One very superior professor of law, Herbert Titus, is almost alone in upholding it, which he does ably, and at a price to himself.

This law is set forth in Deuteronomy 24:16: "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin." Ezekiel 18:20 restates this: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."

To illustrate the implications of this, two or three years ago, I spoke at a conference, by invitation, in Washington, D.C., as did a black I had met about twenty five years previously. He was then obviously intelligent and well educated. Now he used a "black English" that was aggressively semiliterate. His purpose was simple: enormous reparations had to be repaid, he claimed, to all American blacks for the suffering in slavery of their ancestors. My answer was, *first*, that my parents came to the United States as immigrants in late 1915, and I had nothing to do with his past. *Second*, some of my wife's ancestors gave their lives to free his slave ancestors, and she resented any implication of guilt on her and their part. (Should the blacks pay reparations to the descendants of Union Soldiers in the Civil War? The logic of such thinking is dangerous to all!)

But such thinking is commonplace. It usually is targeted at deep pockets, like the United States. For many, many centuries before the European slave trade, black slaves were sold by black rulers to the Muslim world and the Far East. This trade continued *after* the American trade and still exists. The trade to the West was a trickle compared to the eastern

trade. But the United States has money, and a mush-head leadership and people! The same kind of thinking is common to nonreligious Jewish circles — *not the Orthodox* — who know God's law. Despite some *brutal* times, it is still true that Jews were often *protected* from evil peoples by Christian rulers and popes. But neither the good nor the bad in our Christian past can be credited to us; we stand or fall before God in terms of *our* righteousness, not a borrowed one.

The same is true also of many churchmen, especially modernists. They acquire virtue in their own eyes by condemning past sins, not their present ones. There is no virtue before God in confessing our forefather's sins as though this makes atonement for our own!

We live in a time when the confession of other people's sins is a popular religious rite, while the confession of our own sins is forgotten. We are very conscious of past sins, of our forbears', and of present corporate sins of various races, corporations, nations, and groups, but we are too seldom as ready to confess our own sins.

But our generation is unusually active in confessing the sins of the forefathers. If you refuse to join in this ritual, you are somehow at least morally retarded, if not evil! I have actually seen liturgies written for special occasions when one and all took part in an orgy of confessing the sins of previous generations, as though they had not enough of their own!

Almost none now use the old Office of Compline, in which the general confession reads, "I confess to Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and before all the company of heaven, that I have sinned, in thought, word and deed, through my fault, my own fault, my own most grievous fault: wherefore I pray Almighty God to have mercy on me, to forgive me all my sins, and to make clean my heart within me."

I was in my twenties when I first read the sharp language of the *Books of Homilies*, from the 1500s, in a sermon, "Of the Misery of all Mankind" (pt. 1), on man's Phariseeism and his devices in justifying himself: the sermon calls on all the earth to hear the word of the Lord and to humble themselves before the Lord, confessing their *own* sins. The magnificent concluding sentences read, "Wherefore, good people, let us beware of such hypocrisy, vainglory, and justifying of ourselves. Let us look upon our feet; and then down peacock's feathers, down proud heart, down vile clay, frail and brittle vessels." Amen.

THE FAMILY

41

THE FAMILY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 8, December 1979

The modern age has created a new view of law. Law is seen as confronting two realms; the one realm, the public sphere, belongs to the state and its law and jurisdiction. The other sphere is the private realm, which is outside the law of the state. The distinction is a modern fiction, created by the statists. Moreover, the right to define the extent of the public realm is reserved to the state. Naturally, the state has steadily increased its claims to the detriment of the private sphere, which has grown steadily smaller.

Furthermore, the state feels free to redefine what is public and what is private. Abortion was until recently in the public sphere, and legislated; now, it is more or less transferred to the private sphere, and a matter of opinion and private choice, not legislation. Homosexuality has been largely transferred from the public sphere, and legislative control, to the private sphere, and to free choice. Attempts are under way to make a similar transfer from public to private with prostitution, incest, and bestiality.

At the same time, other areas are being moved from the private to the public sphere: the family, especially children; the church and Christian school; medical practice, and much, much more.

At the heart of the evil of this current definition of law is the arrogant claim of the state to be the sole source of public law and the only definer thereof. This claim is as old as paganism, and yet it is fairly new in Christendom and is a product of the humanism of the modern age. Christian civilization has recognized several realms of public law, and the most notable of these has been family law. Other spheres of public law have included church law, (Christian) school law (as in the medieval university and since), merchant law, and more. The state held one sphere of public law among several, and it had no legitimate claim over other spheres.

The triumph of Christianity was also the triumph over the ancient pagan equation of the state with all public law. It was the fundamental principle of the pagan state that it was the sole public sphere, and its right to govern all of life, including the private sphere, was full and free. Plato's *Republic* presupposes the right of the state to govern everything; this claim was not new to Plato; it was only his form of it that was different.

The early church resisted this claim at every turn. It rejected the claim of Caesar over the church, family, school, and more. The rapid change of Europe after the fall of Rome was due more to faith than to collapse. Europe moved from the centralization and the totalitarianism of Rome to a decentralized society. Flandrin has observed, "Christianity seems to have brought about the disappearance of the powers of the State over the child, and thereby increased the responsibilities of the parents as regards their maintenance and their education. These responsibilities were, at the same time, shared between the father and the mother" (Jean-Louis Flandrin, *Families in Former Times: Kinship, Household and Sexuality in Early Modern France* [New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1979], p. 176). Step by step, society was altered to conform to the Biblical pattern, to become the Kingdom of God. This conformity was never more than dimly or at best moderately approximated at any point, but the benefits are with us still. In particular, the family became the central public sphere.

In Scripture, the family is the basic institution of society, to whom all the most basic powers are given, save one: the death penalty. (Hence, the death penalty could not be executed on Cain.) The family is man's basic government, his best school, and his best church. The decay of the family is the decay of civilization.

To review briefly the basic powers which Scripture gives to the family, the *first* is the control of children. The control of children is the control of the future. This power belongs neither to church nor state, nor to the school, but only to the family. This power is in the modern era, from the early 1800s, increasingly claimed by the state and its schools. Flandrin cited the disappearance of all statist powers over the child with the triumph of Christianity; today, with the retreat of Christianity into pietism, we see the increasing power of the state over both the child and the parents. Nothing will affect the disappearance of that power except a revival of Biblical faith.

Second, power over property is given in Scripture to the family. Modern man is used to thinking of two kinds of property control, private ownership and state ownership. The Bible affirms that "the earth is the Lord's," and God gives control of property into the hands of the family,

not the state, nor the individual. We have survivals of this form of property control in various community property laws, which mean family property. Community here has the older sense of family. Here too, however, the state claims vast powers: to tax, to confiscate, to control, and in various other ways to play god over property. Community property laws are all too often simply a relic: the man sees the property as his, but as legally his wife's only because of a legal necessity, not because his thinking is familistic.

Third, inheritance in Scripture is exclusively a family power, governed by God's law. The eldest son gains a double portion, unless he is godless and or incompetent. The godly seed are blessed by an inheritance, and God's Kingdom flourishes as a result. Now, however, the state claims prior right to the estate as the true elder son, offers to care for the surviving parent by means of welfare (which is usually needed, when the state claims its share), and makes itself the real executor of the estate. It supplants God's laws of inheritance with its own.

Fourth, welfare is the responsibility of the family, beginning with the care of its own. Paul says plainly, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, *he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel*" (1 Tim. 5:8). The family's duties towards fellow believers, strangers, widows, orphans, etc., are all strongly stressed in God's law. However much neglected by the modern church, they are basic to Scripture. Paul declares of all who do not care for their own that such have "denied the faith." Again, the state has moved into the area of welfare, not because of any godly or humanitarian concern for people, but to gain power over man and society.

Fifth, education, a basic power, is given by God to the family as its power and responsibility. The modern state claims the right to control and provide education, and it challenges the powers of the family in this area also. Education in the modern age is statist predominantly. Statist education in the United States has led to the highest illiteracy rate in its history.

Today, the attack on the family is being stepped up. Humanistic statism sees control of the child and the family as basic to its drive towards totalitarianism. Every revolutionary movement sees control over the family and the child as central to its goal. This goal was set forth by Fidel Castro as the creation of a new man, a fundamentally humanistic, altruistic man, a perfectible man. The family must give way to the Family of Man. In a speech on July 26, 1960, Castro said: "In a Communist society, man will have succeeded in achieving just as much understanding, closeness, and brotherhood as he has on occasion achieved within

the narrow circle of his own family. To live in a Communist society is to live without selfishness, to live among the people and with the people, as if every one of our fellow citizens were really our dearest brother" (cited in Marvin Leiner, *Children Are the Revolution: Day Care in Cuba* [New York, NY: Viking Press, 1974], p. 16). As Leiner noted, "The Cuban early-childhood education program, therefore, is only the first step on the road to educating the entire population" (p. 6).

Various groups in the United States and Europe have been producing manifesto after manifesto, setting forth "Children's Rights," "Youth Rights," "A Child's Bill of Rights," and like pretentious documents. These are presented as the last word in liberalism and radicalism. They are, in fact, reactionary, going back to the worst in paganism and in decaying cultures and civilizations. These set forth the supposed right of the child or children to sexual freedom, which often means the "right" to be exploited by others; the right to political power, i.e., voting, office-holding, etc.; the right to divorce themselves from their parents, and so on.

These plans must be taken seriously. With the International Year of the Child, every state save one is issuing pronouncements which strike at the heart of the Biblical doctrine of the family. The one exception is Alabama, where a superior governor, who believes that Christian faith means profession with action, has turned to Christians for the state's guidelines with respect to the child. What these revolutionary plans on the part of the enemies of the family call for is really the end of Biblical laws governing the family, the abolition of the family, and a "new man" created by humanism and in terms of humanism's goals.

The sexual revolution was in large measure a revolt against God's laws concerning sexuality and the family. Its goal was far less love and more obviously hatred, hatred of God and man alike. It called for the depersonalization of sex in order to depersonalize man, i.e., to dehumanize man in the name of humanism. Very early in the sexual freedom movement, one prominent advocate called for the same freedom demanded by the Cynics of ancient Greece, to copulate openly in public like dogs.

When the state claims totally the public realm and denies any of it to the family and the church, it destroys man in the process. By obliterating all other claims, it reduces man to a creature of the state, under the public law of the state. Man becomes then public man, even in his copulation!

But man is created in God's image (Gen. 1:26–28), and neither man nor the state can alter that fact. Efforts to do so destroy those who attempt it. History is littered with civilizations which undermined the family. The family is God's ordained life for man, and it endures.

42

THE FAMILY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 208, January 1997

Boswell, in his biography of Samuel Johnson, tells us that he observed to Johnson "of the little attachment which subsisted between near relations in London." Johnson answered, "Sir, in a country so commercial as ours where every man can do for himself, there is not so much occasion for the attachment. No man is thought worse of here, whose brother was hanged."

Owen Chadwick, in *The Popes and European Revolution* (1981), called attention to the use, at one time, of papal nephews as cardinals to assist the pope. This was common at one time and approved of, because a pope needed a close associate who would be loyal. The moral duty of family loyalty was very important, and it was held that a pope needed a loyal associate. This system at times led to problems, but it was also very often the best solution to problems.

At a later date, opinion turned against such officers in church, state, or business, and it was called nepotism to employ relatives. The culture of institutions had shifted to a bureaucratic one.

Now, there is no question that every system ever employed has led to problems, both the use of relatives and nonrelatives being subject to the same temptations of sin. Some powers, such as Byzantium, tried to keep the bureaucracy pure by employing only eunuchs to avoid the temptation to self-aggrandizement.

But no system has been immune to sin, and the family system has worked better than is today admitted. True enough, over the years congressmen have at times padded their rolls with nonworking relatives, but also with non-relatives. The real issue is whether or not the present hostility to nepotism is valid.

Today, of course, preferring your "own kind" is viewed adversely, but

people of all nations and races tend to do this. Evil begins when they treat other groups with hostility and resentment.

But loyalty is important. Too often we hear of employee problems caused by a total lack of loyalty. For example, a young man not unlike many others, with a pregnant wife, stole from his employer routinely, was caught, and fired. He felt no obligation to be honest with a stranger; what he had never done to friends and family, he did casually with his employer. Samuel Johnson was right. In modern culture, there is an erosion of loyalty — in some areas even within the family.

The state and modern culture have eroded the family in many strata of society, and the erosion is now devastating to communities. In some families, there is a distrust of one's own children.

As against this, homeschooling and Christian schooling are strengthening the family greatly. A familiar sign in small towns in my childhood read, "John Doe & Son," or the "Johnson Brothers." Family enterprises were highly regarded in business and in the professions.

Christian faith was then still sufficiently strong that to honor father and mother was not only commonplace but highly regarded. Parents commonly regarded a high standard of performance as necessary, and the children were expected to maintain the family's honor when working for others.

In most cases, what is now called "nepotism" was then seen as the most exacting kind of work. I can recall many comments by sons working for their fathers about the strictness of the requirements made of them. This was true of Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Jews. If a young man went to work for someone else, the admonition was, "Now don't disgrace!"

The family was a strict and efficient teacher. It has now, in many quarters, become indulgent and careless, with sad results.

The family is God's basic institution for us. We are now seeing a return to the centrality of the family, only a beginning, true, but a real one. But anything other than the family leads to a culture of death, to social demoralization such as we see all around us. With some, it means a downgrading of their own future. At times, young men will abandon the opportunity to continue their father's line of work, even though they like it, under the mistaken notion that they need to strike out on their own!

But to defend and uphold the family is to defend the future of civilization.

43

THE ATTACK AGAINST THE FAMILY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 23, August 1981

EARLIER this year (1981), I was a witness in the trial of some fathers for having their children in a Christian school which refused to submit to state controls. Some of the fathers were prominent citizens of that county. The charges against them were criminal charges. The state's attorney general granted immunity to their wives, who were then compelled to take the stand and testify against their husbands or face contempt of court charges.

At two points, this step meant a radical break with Biblical law. *First*, according to Scripture, husband and wife are "one flesh," a community of life, and members one of another (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5–6; Eph. 5:22–33). As a result, the one cannot testify against the other; spousal testimony for the prosecution is thus barred. *Second*, the testimony must come from two or more witnesses (Deut. 17:6; Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15; John 8:17; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim. 5:19; Heb. 10:28). Confession in itself is not enough to convict; there has to be corroborating evidence, as in Achan's case (Josh. 7:20–23). As a result, enforced confession is rendered meaningless, because corroboration and witnesses are required.

As a result of these laws, very early, despite abuses, justice reached a remarkably high level in Israel. Torture had no place in the law, and the burden of proof was placed on witnesses and the court. This Biblical principle had difficulty establishing itself in barbarian Europe. Legal processes were much simpler, given the "right" to use spousal testimony, or the "right" to torture. Historians for many years treated all victims of such legal procedures as necessarily innocent. Now, some scholars are finding that the evidences indicate a high rate of guilt. Then as now, a high percentage of those arrested were guilty men; because conviction was held to be desirable, ungodly and evil means were used to secure it, i.e., torture, enforced confessions, and spousal testimony.

The Fifth Amendment, and the legal bars against spousal testimony, represent one of the slowest yet most important victories in legal history. That victory is now being compromised, and the door opened to legal terrorism.

Many Americans were delighted, a few years ago, when members of criminal syndicates were brought before congressional committees, granted immunity, and ordered to testify. To have testified meant death for these men from their cohorts; to refuse to testify meant jail for contempt of court. A clever ploy, that, most Americans thought, failing to realize that the same tactics could be used against them. Moreover, few realized that the horrors of Tudor and Stuart England, and such instruments of tyranny as the Star Chamber proceedings, now have their revival in the arbitrary powers of congressional committees and bureaucratic agencies. Congress and the bureaucracy are the old tyrant writ large.

Moreover, at the same time, several states are relaxing the laws against spousal testimony. The stage is set for the kind of tyranny which prevails in the Soviet Union. It is dangerous there for a husband and wife to know too much about each other: it can be forced out of them. As a result, there is little exchange of confidence, in many cases, and yet, even with that, there are coerced false testimonies.

Even worse, some very foolish churchmen refuse to see that a problem exists. Legal convictions are more important to them than the doctrine of Christian marriage, and the moral value of freedom. It is important to remember that the goal of the law is not conviction but justice, and, in Biblical law, justice is not only a matter of righteousness in life and society but also in all procedures of law. God's law specifies the laws of evidence, hearings, and more, because justice is basic to every step of the conduct of the agencies of law, in church and state alike.

Moreover, to endanger the family is to endanger the basic institution of society according to Biblical law. The family is under attack. *First*, as we have seen, the unity of the twain as one flesh is being attacked by the weakening of the laws against spousal testimony. Such a step reduces marriage to a matter of sexual and economic convenience rather than the basic God-ordained unit of society. It is an anarchistic and atomistic step.

Second, abortion legalizes murder in the life of the family at the option of the mother, so that the cradle of life becomes a place of death. God gives to the family all the basic powers in society (control of children, property, inheritance, welfare, and education) save one, the death penalty. This is the reason why Cain was not executed for murder; all those then living were his immediate family. Ancient paganism, as in Rome, gave the father the power to destroy his own children. Our modern

paganism, humanism, is even worse: it gives this power to the mother, so that the very womb or matrix of life becomes also the place of murder. (Will the children of mothers who aborted a brother or sister as readily espouse euthanasia for their parents in the days ahead?) Abortion goes hand in hand with a contempt for the Biblical doctrine of the family. As Kent Kelly (*Abortion: The American Holocaust* [Southern Pines, NC: Calvary Press NC, 1981]) points out, abortion has taken more lives than all the wars in our history, which, from 1775 to 1975, took 1,205,291 lives, whereas deaths by abortion are ca. 8,000,000.

Third, the family is under attack because its Biblical legal powers are being replaced by statist powers over the family. The Biblical family is the basic law order, so that it is more than a sexual arrangement. If the family is not more than a sexual arrangement, then any and all sexual arrangements can claim equivalent privileges, as they are now doing. The Bible, however, sees the union of man and woman as the basic law order and the fundamental unit of society. Marriage creates a new unit: the twain become one flesh. As such, they have powers and responsibilities possessed by no other element of society. The family is the matrix of the future, and as a result God entrusts the control of the future to the family, not to the church or to the state. Both church and state have a duty to protect the family, not to control it. Biblical law, by giving control over children, property, inheritance, welfare, and education to the family, ensures that it will be the matrix of the future (see Chalcedon Position Paper No. 8, "The Family."[1])

Because the state is given the power of the death penalty, it is the most dangerous agency of all for man to entrust any planning to; the state plans by means of coercion, so that its planning for the future inescapably involves repressive legislation, taxation, controls, regulations, and, sooner or later, the death penalty. For the state to be made the agency for planning and future development is a form of social suicide: the hangman has one solution to social problems, and it is a swinging one. Without agreeing with all that he meant by it, we can echo Martin Luther's comment that the prince or the state is God's hangman. To make the hangman our caretaker and planner is the height of stupidity, but it is also a folly that modern man is very much addicted to.

Fourth, the family as the basic unit is being replaced in some circles by the atomistic individual. The rise of this social atomism has preceded much of what we are describing. The *Playboy* philosophy and mentality is an example of this atomism. The ultimate arbiter of all things becomes the atomistic and anarchistic individual. Early in the 1970s, Dorothy and

1. See pp. 171–174. — editor

I met a young woman in her mid-twenties; her beauty was remarkable and startling, and her two little daughters shared her beauty. Her husband had left her; he said frankly that he had no complaints: she was "tops" in every department, but he was "bored" with living with one woman and supporting a household. He wanted freedom to use his money as he saw fit and to do as he pleased without a "guilt-trip." Such moral anarchism is widespread and increasingly vocal. It is simply original sin, the desire of man to be his own god and law, determining for himself what constitutes good and evil (Gen. 3:5).

Such moral anarchists talk much about the separation of church and state. For them it means freedom *from* religion, and the enforced silence of Christians on all matters of law and morality (see Frank Brady on the *Playboy* position in *Hefner* [1974] pp. 219–220). Such people want to abolish religious freedom in favor of religious toleration. Toleration was the position of ancient Rome: a religion was tolerated if it submitted to licensure, regulation, taxation, controls, and certification, and, with all this, was silent where Rome wanted religion to be silent.

It was apparent, after the November 1980 U.S. election, that great segments of the press and U.S. federal government want to abolish religious freedom in favor of religious toleration. This is clearly the policy of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (and not even as *outwardly* tolerant as the Turkey of the murderous Sultans).

No small contributing factor to the rise of this atomism has been the rise of pietism in the modern era. Christianity was reduced to the experience of the individual soul. Now, certainly the conversion of the individual is the starting point, but it is the starting point, not the sum total, of Christian faith and life. To so limit Christianity, as pietism has done, is comparable to limiting all literature to the alphabet and abolishing all poetry, history, law, and more, in the name of the purity of the alphabet.

We began with a court case, and the compelling of spousal testimony. People who fail to see the far-reaching implications of that case have retreated from the world-encompassing scope of our Lord's word, power, and government to a small-scale god and religion. They may love their family, but they fail to see its meaning under God.

This is the key: all things must be viewed, not from the perspective of the state, nor the individual, but in terms of God and His law-word. "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light" (Ps. 36:9). This is as true of the family as all things else.

The modern age is given to absurd humanistic platitudes to justify its moral idiocy. Isadora Duncan, for example, once said, very self-righteously, "Nudity is truth . . . Therefore, it can never be vulgar; it can never

be immoral." This she said in Boston, from the stage of Symphony Hall, whereupon she tore her tunic down and bared one of her breasts. What her sententious spoutings failed to say was that *people* can be vulgar, and *people* can be immoral, and Isadora Duncan was both vulgar and immoral.

The world is full of such nonsense in all quarters. Cotton Mather, who should have known better, wrote, in *Manuductio ad Ministerium* (1726), "My Son, I advise you to consider yourself as a *Dying Person*... I move you, I press you, *To remember how short your time is*..." What he should have said was: Remember, you are a living person under God, accountable for all your talents and days. If you are faithful and responsible in life, you have nothing to fear from death. The best preparation for death is life, and the God-ordained matrix and locale for life is *the family*. Therefore, rejoice in the wife of thy youth (Prov. 5:15–21); praise God our Savior, and serve Him in all things with all your heart, mind, and being.

44

SOCIAL PLANNING AND THE FAMILY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 177, July 1994

In the middle of the fourth century A.D., history's most radical communist revolution occurred in Persia. What had been a powerful civilization was overthrown by the Mazdakites, who instituted a total communism of all wealth, property, and women. Proof of agreement with the revolutionist was required: this meant incest, mothers with sons, fathers with daughters, to demonstrate agreement with the Mazdakites. This revolution, antifamily to the core, was finally overthrown after some years by Khosroes Anosharvan II, but the damage had been done. In time, the Turks overthrew Persia.

Eleven centuries later, Sir Thomas More (1478–1535) wrote *Utopia* (1516). He reduced marriage to its physical level. A man inspected his bride naked before agreeing to marry her. (More used the same method with his daughter.) While More professed to be a devout Catholic, his career revealed him to be a dedicated statist.

In the nineteenth century, John Humphrey Noyes (1811–1886) was the founder of the Oneida Colony, an experiment in voluntary communism. All his followers pooled their property; Oneida became famous for its sexual communism, but few realize that Noyes at first planned on celibacy, like the Shakers, before turning to free love.

This raised an important question which is basic to any understanding of various social experiments. They are usually very hostile to marriage and the family. They prefer to favor celibacy, "free love," homosexuality, group marriages, and other expedients as an alternative to monogamous marriage. The reason for this is a very important one.

The Biblical family controls all the basic powers of life other than the death penalty. The Biblical family controls children, property, inheritance, welfare, education, and more. It has more powers than state or

church. It is the most powerful force in society, and it governs the future. Every institution seeking to dominate society and to shape the future must work against the family, or else recognize it as the basic institution.

At present, state schools, statist welfare, state control and taxation of property (which is anti-Biblical), inheritance taxes, and more, all challenge the family's priority and seek to further the growth of state power. Legislation and taxation penalize the family while favoring "alternate lifestyles" as legitimate.

Sociologists, psychiatrists, psychologists, and others have seen the family as the nursery of neurosis and evil. Freud, for example, saw the family and sex as the root of personal problems, but he failed to write about the family's potential for good. One of the first objectives of humanistic education is to sever the tie between the student and the family. Whereas freedom and family life were once equated, now our intellectuals see freedom as deliverance from the family and its morality.

Again and again in history, social and political revolutions have been preceded by a war against the family. The *Ancién Regime* in France did not realize that their Sadean ways, their contempt for sexual virtues, and their treatment of marriage as a joke prepared the way for their execution. They had eroded the major anchor in society for stability and character. By making the family an object of contemptuous humor, they prepared the way for the erosion of all things save the power state.

The war against the family often has very "idealistic" goals. Social life as against family life is stressed. World brotherhood, as against the supposedly narrow ties of family and blood, is promoted. It is held that world harmony, peace, and brotherhood require the bypassing and downgrading of family and blood ties. Men like Charles Horton Cooley have held that human nature is a group nature. It is not a product of creation nor of a fall of man, but of society. Human nature is a group nature. This means that a primary goal of education must be socialization. As a result, it is held that Christian schools and especially home schools are dangerously inadequate in failing to provide the desired socialization.

The Christian family sees itself as under God, not under the state, and this is offensive to the statist. The Christian stresses chastity strongly because it means loyalty to the family and to God: it is a virtue in the old sense of the word, a *strength* because it reinforces family life.

If, however, the family is seen in terms of humanistic statism, chastity is absurd and unduly possessive. It is, for the statist, replaced by the uncompromising faith in a one-world state, in the family of man, and in personal fulfillment, not under God nor in marriage, but in humanity and its unity. Humanistic "chastity" is its total belief and devotion to the

family of man and its worldwide social order.

Thus humanism can be very tolerant of all kinds of sexual deviancy, but it reacts instinctively against the family because it cannot tolerate a rival faith. Chastity has behind it God's mandate, i.e., a supernaturally required order and way of life, and this is anathema to the statist. The question is, whose order shall prevail, God's or man's? John Humphrey Noyes saw the issue: either celibacy or "free love," anything except Biblical marriage. He knew that he could not command diverse peoples if he allowed the institution of monogamous marriage to exist.

The war against the family goes on all around us. The best way to eliminate the church is to eliminate the family. Utopians have tried repeatedly to eliminate the family as the center by stressing values such as art. More than a few colonies with art as the focus were started by the hippies and their successors in the 1970s. One group stressed in their artwork "animals and people holding hands with each other" (Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Commitment and Community* [1972, 1973], p. 43). Kanter noted, "to many Utopians, monogamous marriage also represents a barrier in the road to brotherhood. Marriage is seen as exclusive possession, a kind of slavery, as well as a source of jealousy and tension" (ibid., p. 44). Ironically, the utopian colonies commonly became centers of jealousy and tension! And why not, when those who excel, such as doctors, are required to put in much time as janitors!

Their goal is to make a vision become reality. The dream assumes the goodness of all peoples, given the opportunity. The utopian group seeks to replace the Biblical family with a broader family, but the fact of sin warps and destroys the utopian colony.

Every social experiment that seeks to destroy the family in time destroys itself. God's fundamental order cannot be legislated out of existence. Man is God's creation and creature, and neither church, state, school, nor any other agency can subvert or overturn that fact.

The social planners have repeatedly over the centuries tried to eliminate the Biblical family, and they have always failed. God's plan predates theirs, is inescapable, and is predestined to prevail. What God has ordained no social planner can long put asunder.

45

THE DEFINITION OF MAN

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 58, January 1985

One of the problems of our time is the inadequacy and failure of men to be truly men under God. The popular images of masculinity are caricatures, and the "macho" idea ludicrous and absurd.

Because God created man, only God can define a man. The humanistic definitions are thus perversions which warp all who live by them.

According to the Bible, "man" was created by God in His image, and "male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:27). This tells us two things: *first*, the word "man" here is inclusive of male and female, so that, despite the difference in the time of their creation, male and female are alike comprehended as "man" and as a unity in God's purpose. *Second*, although there are differences, both male and female are created in God's image. The Shorter Catechism (Q. 10) tells us, "God created man male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures" (Gen. 1:27–28; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24). The Larger Catechism (Q. 20) tells us also that the providence of God toward man includes responsibility, marriage, communion with Himself, the sabbath, and the covenant of life with its requirement of "perpetual obedience." Thus, man is defined by God in terms of and in relation to Himself.

For men to seek a self-definition is a sin, and for men to define women in terms of themselves compounds the sin. In Ephesians 5:21–33, we have a much abused text concerning male and female. It is important to note that the command to love is given to the man concerning his wife, not to the wife concerning her husband. Husbands are commanded to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. Even as Christ is the head of the church to protect and care for it, so too must the husband be. His headship is not a "Gentile" fact, one of lording it over

his wife. The general command to male and female, to all Christians in their relationships, is in "submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." There is for both a hierarchy of authorities, first of all God, and then the community. In their human relationships, they are to be "members one of another" (Eph. 4:25), and, because of this, submit their will to the common good in Christ.

We are called and required to serve God unquestioningly. We cannot, however, serve any man so, for such an obedience would be a form of idolatry. Scripture presents Sarah as the model for wives (1 Pet. 3:6), and certainly Sarah spoke plainly and bluntly to Abraham (Gen. 21:9–10), but God on at least one occasion told Abraham, "in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice" (Gen. 21:12). For a woman to be silent and obedient to evil is a sin; it is morally wrong, and it makes her an accessory to the evil.

Unhappily, we have too many people promoting the idea of an unquestioning and servile obedience by wives to their husbands; this is to promote idolatry in the name of faithfulness. Some wives are guilty of a superobedience as a part of a false piety; they expect God to bless them and give them miracles if they make doormats of themselves. God created the woman to be man's helpmeet in the dominion mandate (Gen. 2:18), not to be his slave, doormat, or idolatrous servitor.

Moreover, the calling of man, male and female, is to be responsible and accountable, supremely to God, but also to one another. Our Lord says, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Luke 12:48). This means that both male and female, although especially males, have very great responsibilities and an accountability one to another: they are not their own: they belong to Christ (1 Cor. 6:19–20), and, after that, to one another, so that mutual consent is the premise in all things, including sexual abstinence or activity (1 Cor. 7:5).

This premise, that we are not our own (1 Cor. 6:19), is thus applied to all human relations, and especially to marriage. Male and female are accountable one to another in marriage; headship thus on the human level involves "submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (Eph. 5:21). The greater the responsibility, the greater the accountability, and the greater the realm of accountability. The accountability of a senator is great, but not equal to that of the president. The accountability of the husband is greater than that of the wife.

Reality is hierarchical. Modern man, with his radical equalitarianism, is unwilling to see that there are gradations of authority and ability in all the world. One of the first things dropped by every equalitarian

revolution, including the Russian Revolution, is the practice of equality. Equalitarian demands are usually the prelude to a new realignment of status and the coming to power of a new elite.

Elitism is the insistence and attempt of self-appointed leaders to assume a total power over society. Elitism is opposed to the idea of hierarchy, because hierarchy means sacred rule, i.e., authority in terms of a God-appointed order. The authority of a father and mother is God-ordained and to be used in terms of God's law: it is hierarchical. Elitism sets man-made standards and requires others to meet them; it means that man plays god and requires the world to bow down to his word.

Because man is created by God and defined by God, man's authority is hierarchical. Both male and female have a hierarchical power which is basic to life and necessary to social order.

In all authority, the primacy of God is the foundation. If God's primary and absolute authority be denied, all authority crumbles. All men then seek to do that which is right in their own eyes. If men will not be ruled by God, they lose the capacity to rule. Men who will not be ruled by God cannot rule themselves nor others. They can at best or worst be tyrants, not authorities.

Moreover, to deny God means ultimately to deny definition and meaning in every realm. The sexual chaos of our time is a logical one, for to deny God is to deny the meaning of all things, including male and female. The effort by men to define themselves apart from God is suicidal, because it substitutes an empty, humanistic perspective for the Biblical one. Because God is the creator of all things in heaven and on earth, only His order is the natural one. To depart from God's order is sin, a disturbance of the natural order of life.

Furthermore, because, as Paul says, we are members one of another in Christ, for men and women to put down one another is to put down themselves even more; because in marriage male and female become one flesh, a community of life, they cannot take advantage of one another without harming themselves. Life is not ordained by God to be lived in isolation from God and from one another. It is "not good" for man to be alone, God tells us.

But loneliness is much more than being alone. A man can be lonely in a crowd, if his life is out of focus. Loneliness is most deadly when we are out of touch with life, and to be out of touch with God is to be out of touch with life. We cannot see reality as it is unless we see all things as God's creation and of necessity understandable only in terms of God's law-word. Without faith in the triune God, our lives and vision are out of focus, and we are not in touch with reality.

Our Lord tells us, "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness (or, justice)" (Matt. 6:33). If we seek first our will and our hopes, we warp our lives and our perspectives. Failure to live in terms of reality and an insistence that our will constitutes the real and the true is insanity, and this insanity is endemic to fallen man. It is basic to our world's problems and evils, and also to our own. Our Lord says plainly that it is God's rule and justice we must seek first, i.e., above all things else. Only then, He says, will "all these things (which you desire) shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). In other words, our hopes have no place in God's purposes unless His rule and justice have priority with us.

Males who seek their own will first warp every area of life which they touch. Whereas Christ, their model, "loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25), such men make themselves, not their families, the center of their lives. They thus impose a warp on the lives of their families, and on all who are either associated with them or under them. Precisely because in God's order the family is the basic and central institution in life, to warp the family at the central point of human authority has repercussions of a radical sort. Society as a whole is then distorted and rendered ungodly.

Our calling requires us to give God the glory and the priority in all things. David tells us that God made man "a little lower than the angels, and . . . crowned him with glory and honour" to have "dominion over the works" of God's hands; "thou hast put all things under his feet" (Ps. 8:5–6). When men deny God the Lord, they deny also their calling. As a result, instead of having dominion, men fall under the dominion of sin. Their moral universe is turned upside down, and their true strength denied.

Julianus Pomerius (ca. A.D. 497), in *The Contemplative Life*, wrote that "faith . . . is the foundation of justice." For there to be justice, or righteousness, in the world, there must first be faith, men of faith. Faith, and its consequence, justice, make us aware that we are not our own, that we are part of a God-created order with a responsibility to God and to one another. As Julianus Pomerius added, "From justice equity also flows, which makes us call the necessities of all men our own and makes us believe we were born not for ourselves alone but also for mankind in general." "Born not for ourselves alone!" Man in his sin sees the whole world as existing for his pleasure, to be used as he wills it. But "man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever." For this we were created, for this we were ordained and born. To deny our nature and calling is to destroy our true freedom and to warp our being. As God's creatures, we are also called to love one another, and to be members one of another.

Our Lord tells us that the meaning of God's law can be summarized in two commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Matt. 22:37–39). These two sentences tell us what all of God's law deals with; the law gives us the specific ways in which our love of God and of our neighbor is to be manifested. God's law, James 1:25 and 2:12 tells us, is "the perfect law of liberty." An attempt recently to place an animal heart in a human baby was a disaster; the human body rejected the alien heart. When man is given an alien law, any law other than God's law, an even greater rejection factor is at work. Instead of liberty, the alien law produces death. The more a society departs from God's law, the closer it is to death.

The macho male and feminist female images warp life and replace liberty with social suicide.

In this development, false theology has played a key role. As Ann Douglas, in *The Feminization of American Culture*, shows so tellingly, America's departure from Calvinism led to a feminization of both theology and culture, as well as of the clergy.

Not surprisingly, the liberal clergy was regarded as effeminate, and people spoke of the three sexes, men, women, and preachers. We now see the consequences of that long and unhappy development. One of the common problems across the country is the oppression of the clergy by whining and complaining parishioners. The pastor is expected to serve the whims of sniveling men and whining women, not Christ the Lord. If he fails to do their bidding and play his sanctimonious part, the complaint is that "he is not a spiritual man." Some peoples redefine man and the church in terms of themselves. (A particularly fine pastor was recently told by a nasty old wretch, "You're not doing enough for us senior citizens"; the complainer had only one demand of the church, that it serve him, not that he serve the Lord.)

Until men define themselves in terms of the Lord, His Kingdom, His law, and His justice, our society's troubles will only increase. Man has no right to define himself. God did that on the day of creation.

46

THE FAILURE OF MEN

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 36, January 1983

The roots of every cultural crisis rest in personal crises. The failure of a culture is the failure of the men in it. A society cannot be vital and possessed of an on-going vigor if the men therein are marked by a loss of faith, a retreat from responsibility, and an unwillingness to cope with personal problems. A culture loses its will to live and to conquer if its members manifest a spirit of retreat and surrender.

In the cultural crisis of our time, the role of men is particularly significant. When we say "men" in this context we mean males, not humanity as a whole. How little true masculinity they in general possess is manifested in their predilection for role-playing. The macho image is cultivated in dress, speech, and behavior; the façade of a man replaces a man. Role-playing is basic to our times; people play a part, they act out a role, because the reality of their being is far less important than their public image. The roots of role-playing go deep into the modern mentality.

The foundations of modern philosophy are in Descartes. His thinking made the individual consciousness the world's basic reality and the starting point of all philosophy. Man's ego, the "I," took precedence over God and the world. Not surprisingly, the logic of this led to Hume, who dispensed with God and the world as epiphenoma, and even the mind was eroded to the point that it was only momentary states of consciousness rather than a reality. Immanuel Kant went a step further; things in themselves, i.e., realities, are unknowable and only phenomena can be known. The real world is thus not a valid area of knowledge, because we can only know appearances. As Schopenhauer put it, the world is will and idea.

Philosophy thus set the stage for the substitution of role-playing, i.e., phenomena, for the real man, the thing in itself, reality. It could thus be

said that clothes make the man (or woman), and that a good front is essential; appearances become everything.

Appearances began to replace reality in personal relations as well as in national policy, both domestic and foreign. The results have been devastating. Role-playing in the theater ends commonly in a curtain call and a paycheck. In real life, politics, role-playing leads instead to disaster.

The result is the failure of men, of males. Early in the modern era (only in the nineteenth century in the United States), men abandoned the family and its responsibilities to their wives, and religion was similarly relegated to women as their concern. Men chose irresponsibility, and the double standard became a way of life. Of course, men insisted on all the Biblical authority given to a man while denying its responsibilities, forgetting that all human authority in Scripture is conditional upon obedience to God. No absolute authority is given to man in any sphere, and all authority has service to both God and man as its purpose, not self-promotion or aggrandizement.

The women's liberation movement is simply the attempt by women to claim the irresponsibilities which today constitute male rights, for themselves. The purpose of the children's liberation movement is to claim like privileges of irresponsibility for children.

Logically, men who cannot govern themselves will not be able to govern successfully their families, vocations, or nations. The most famous American president of the twentieth century could not handle his money nor his own affairs, but he sought to rule the world. More than a few presidents have been like him. Of another man, twice a candidate for president, his ex-wife wrote a poem to the effect that men who cannot rule their nanny, wife, children, or nurse, are prone to seek to rule the universe! Not surprisingly, our worldwide cultural crisis is rooted in the failure of men. The remarkable fact of our era is not that we have had an, at times, aggressive women's liberation movement but that the vast majority of women have patiently endured the willful immaturity of men.

As a high school student, I was interested in athletics and earned two or three "letters" on the team of one sport; as a university student, I had no time to watch a single game. Since then, I have had an occasional interest in some sports. What amazes me is that men who never played while in school, nor showed much or any interest in sports then, will now show a startling devotion to televised sports. It almost seems as though any refuge from maturity and reality is desired, and spectator sports are a good substitute for the real world and its problems.

The pleasures of maturity and reality are to be found in family and work, in worship and in growth in the faith. If maturity and reality are

not desired and seen as fulfillment, then role-playing, which stresses a public image and perpetual youth (or immaturity), will be basic to man's way of life. (For the *Chalcedon Reports* since September 1965, one of the ugliest and most hostile reactions I have received was to a one-sentence reference about the pathetic absurdity of a woman over eighty dressed in a bikini! I was told that it was evil for me to question her "right" to play the role of a teenager!)

Although role-playing is common to men, women, and children, it is the failure of men because of their role-playing which has the deepest roots and the most tragic consequences. The abdication of men from their responsibilities as husbands and fathers is having sad results in family life.

This abdication does not end in the family. Again and again, all over the country, I have heard men say that they welcome union rules which prevent or make difficult the firing of any man. The responsibility of telling a man that he lacks competency is something they do not want. Some have closed down a particular department and laid off two or three good men to get rid of one incompetent one. An engineer in a plant dealing with federal contracts said that hiring was on a wholesale basis with new contracts; it would quickly become apparent that many of the engineers were only paper shufflers, but nothing would be done, because the contract would terminate in a year! At the end of the year, another plant with a new contract would hire the same unchallenged incompetents; no man ever had a bad record follow him. Whether in business, in the academic community, or in civil government, nothing is done that is decisive. Presidential candidates promise cuts and clean-ups but as president do nothing. Being role-playing men, they are good candidates and very poor executives.

The Madison Avenue approach has triumphed; advertising an appearance and playing a role have replaced reality. Manhood is now a front, not a reality, to our culture in its popular manifestations. Manhood is popularly defined, not in terms of God, calling, and family, but in terms of money and status, i.e., in terms of ability to present the right public image.

The church has done much to further this trend. Instead of an unswerving insistence on the unity of faith and works, profession and action, it has been ready to stress pious gush and surface instead of the reality of faith. As a result, pulpit and pew are given to role-playing. Now role-playing by churchmen is first of all an attempt to con God, the supreme act of arrogance. It has long been known that "con" men are most readily victimized by other "con" men. This is no less true in the church.

The old proverb is true: like priest, like people, and also, like people, like priest. The role players find one another, or, to cite another good bit of proverbial wisdom, birds of a feather flock together.

Our Lord says, "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20), a sentence constantly evaded as excuse makers try to offer a profession of faith (role-playing) for the reality thereof. Labels replace reality. If a man labels himself Christian, we are told we must take him for one. If a man calls himself a Christian lawyer, or a Christian politician, we are told it is wrong to call attention to the discrepancy between his profession and his actions. To do so is "judgmental" and a sin, it is held; the practical consequence is that those who are judged are they who expose sin, not those who commit it!

The result is a strange religious climate of surface faith. The church is full of millions who profess this surface faith, whom Paul describes as "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof (2 Tim. 3:5). We thus have people who want no tampering with their religion, while they refuse to allow their religion to tamper with them! One of the most obvious facts about God, however, is that He does more than tamper with us! He breaks us to remake us.

Our cultural crisis rests in the retreat of males from the responsibilities and duties of manhood. The faith has been sentimentalized, and a sentimental faith is unable to produce more than pious gush. The richness of life's spheres and all the varieties of institutional responsibilities have been eroded. Men do not see themselves as priests, prophets, and kings under God. Biblical law emphasizes the local and personal origins of government. All men are to be elders, rulers, under God, rulers over families, vocations, and the institutions of which they are a part. Over every ten families, there is to be an elder over ten, then over fifty, a hundred, thousands and so on up. The *hundreds* were once a basic unit of law and court structures. All men had to be men or pay a price for their refusal. In Scripture, the man who chose to live by subsidy had to have his ears pierced as a public witness to his rejection of a man's responsibility and freedom in favor of security.

The ironic fact is that when men cease to be men, they commonly pretend to be men, the macho role, or, more often, they seek to play God. Man's original sin is to try to be as God, every man his own god, knowing or determining for himself what is good and evil (Gen. 3:5). Some scientists have tried to use science to gain this goal. Dr. Joshua Lederberg holds that we shall enter a post-human age, one in which science will, through genetic engineering, create superhuman men, man-gods, who will have none of the infirmities of present-day men. Science will be able

to regrow defective organs such as a liver or a heart, a uterus will be implanted in a male body to produce a child, and so on and on. Because of the respect for the status of such scientists, their fantasies are not subjected to the ridicule they deserve.

Let us assume for a moment that these mad dreams are possible. Will the human predicament be any better? Will man's moral dereliction be solved, or will it not rather be enhanced to produce a demonic world order?

Moreover, will the men who do these things, and the men to whom they are done, be more-responsible men? It is clear that our scientific community shows no advantage over the rest of the population in integrity, responsibility, and a capacity to function as a husband and father! The dreams of these scientists solve no problems; they evade them.

One reason for the uneasiness of many men at the feminist challenge is that the indictment strikes home. However, conceding to the feminists is no substitute for responsibility but a further abdication.

Margaret Wade Labarge, in her study of *Henry V* (b. 1387), comments on the state of things in that era. Religion had become a superstructure, taken for granted by all. Everyone was given to conventional religious practices with neither commitment nor much concern. The clergy was dedicated to a "decent formalism." Henry V perhaps took his faith a bit more seriously than most, and, as an administrator, he sought to keep all things functioning in their proper order and place. One would have to say that he functioned better than most heads of state today and that society had a better focus on justice then than now.

There was, however, a silent and growing erosion, the erosion of faith and therefore of men. The crisis in English society was deferred, not resolved.

In our time, the crisis is past deferment. The time has come for men to ground themselves in the whole counsel of God, to be responsible, mature, and venturesome. There can be no resolution of our world crisis without a resolution of the crisis in male responsibility. To blame conspiracies (however real some may be), special problems, the past, and more, are all evasions if men do not assume their responsibilities today as a privilege and a duty under God.

47

THE PLACE OF WOMEN

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 47, February 1984

One of the chronic problems of men is that too often they react instead of acting. The terms and nature of the problems of life are set by their opposition rather than by themselves, and the reactions are foolish.

This has all too often been true of the reactions of men, both Christian and non-Christian, to the women's liberation movement. The results are sometimes painful. Two examples will suffice. In one church, some of the women came together to study Scripture. The women were of varying ages but with a common need to know the Bible better in its application to their everyday problems. The church ordered the meetings ended, although no problem had arisen. The concerns of the study were not ecclesiastical, and the meetings were not a part of the church's work nor limited to church members. By no stretch of the imagination can any text of Scripture be made to forbid women to study Scripture together.

In at least several other churches, the women are held in an un-Biblical subjection which treats them as children, not adults. The Bible declares Sarah to be the model wife in her obedience and subjection (1 Pet. 3:1–7). We cannot understand the meaning of that without recognizing the fact that, on occasion, Sarah, confident in the godliness of her position, gave Abraham an ultimatum (Gen. 16:5; 21:9–13), and God declared, "in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice" (Gen. 21:12), a sentence men rarely if ever use as a sermon text!

Moreover, as Charles Hodge said with respect to Ephesians 5:22, the authority of the husband (or any human authority) is not unlimited. "It extends over all departments, *but is limited in all*; first, by the nature of the relation; and secondly, by the higher authority of God. No superior, whether master, parent, husband or magistrate, can make it obligatory on us either

to do what God forbids, or not to do what God commands" (Charles Hodge, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians*, pp. 314–315).

But this is not all. The stupidity of all too many men is nowhere more apparent than in the assumption that subordination means inferiority. Most of us have at some time or other, and, usually, most of the time, been subordinate to very inferior men. In a fallen world, this is routine. The world commonly appraises a man's position in terms of very limited criteria, such as wealth, birth, education, and the like. The natural aristocracy of talent and character usually does not prevail in a sinful society! To assume that preeminence in position and power is preeminence in intelligence, character, and ability is to assume that the men who rule in Washington, D.C., and in the Kremlin, are the cream of history! Such a perspective would be sheer idiocy, but it is a kind of idiocy all too many men have in relationship to women.

One aspect of this idiocy, proudly taught as gospel by some such churches and pastors, is the blasphemous assumption that the husband is the mediator between God and the wife. Scripture tells us that the husband is the head of the family, not a mediator, nor a little Christ. In relationship to the Lord, husband and wife are declared to be "heirs together of the grace of life" (1 Pet. 3:7); the husband is not declared to be the central heir, nor the recipient of greater grace or wisdom. We are not told that the wife's prayers are hindered or void if she fails to pray through a mediator-husband. Too many men want a lovely and charming wife to serve them and then to be a silent zombie the rest of the time! Peter tells us that the prayers of a husband and a wife are hindered if either is false with respect to their duties under God.

Some churches give men a cheap and false religion which justifies keeping a wife in line while the man is free to be his fallen self. Men find such a religion very palatable!

When God ordained marriage, He also gave us a sentence to set forth its meaning: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). This is the opposite of what too many see in marriage: the woman is viewed as leaving her parents and cleaving, or adhering to, her husband. That she does so is true enough, but the Bible stresses the *requirement* that the man make a break and cleave to his wife. Moreover, Jesus Christ declares that this is God's own statement (Matt. 19:5). Why, then, are commentaries and preachers silent about its meaning? It is clear that headship is given to the husband. Is it not here equally clear that a particular and very great centrality is given to the woman, who is "the mother of all living" (Gen. 3:20)?

Man is of the bones and flesh of his father and mother, as C. A. Simpson has pointed out in *The Interpreter's Bible*, to become, in the act of marriage, one flesh, one community of life, with his wife. In the Hebrew, the word "cleave" means to cling close together, to be joined together, stick, or follow closely after. Given this meaning, it is most significant that it is the man whom God in particular requires this of. Since headship is given to the man, the human expectation would be that woman must adhere to the man and cling to him. God, however, places another requirement on marriage: the man must be joined to, cling to, or cleave unto his wife.

Man, it should be noted, is given dominion over the earth, over the fish, the birds, and the animals, and he shares the exercise of that dominion with his wife (Gen. 1:26–28). Man's headship is in the exercise of that dominion. When Sarah called Abraham "lord" (1 Pet. 3:1–7), it was because Abraham was the head in the exercise of their dominion under God's covenant. In other words, a man is given headship over his wife in the exercise of dominion, not dominion over her.

A man's relationship to his parents is a blood relationship. He is genetically bone of their bones, and flesh of their flesh. This, however, is the relationship he must "leave" to "cleave" unto his wife, a non-blood relationship. This new nongenetic relationship must still become bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh (Gen. 2:23–24).

It would be dangerous and false to push the point too far, or to see it as more than an important Biblical analogy, but the analogy to circumcision is there. In circumcision, the organ of generation is made the covenant mark by its circumcised status, signifying that man's hope is not in generation but in regeneration, a new life in the Lord. Circumcision, as Geerhardus Vos, in *Biblical Theology* (1948), pointed out, "stands for justification and regeneration, plus sanctification" (p. 105) (see Rom. 4:9–12; Col. 2:11–13).

In some sense, marriage is also comparable to a new life. The twain become "one flesh," a new community of life. In terms of this unity, Paul uses marriage as a type of the unity of Christ and His church (Eph. 5:21–33). By this analogy, we are told that husbands must love their wives as Christ also loved the church, "and gave himself for it." This, plainly, calls for sacrificial service to the new entity or life, the family. The headship of the husband is one of a comparable radical love and sacrificial service, not a tyrannical power. Headship in Scripture means service, as our Lord makes clear: "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matt. 23:11). In the foot-washing episode, our Lord says, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15). For men to

seek the blessings of Christian marriage with pagan doctrines of headship is blasphemous.

The family thus creates a new entity: the twain becomes one flesh. Two bloodlines and faith-lines come together to create a new union, one which unites two heritages. Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, in *The Multiformity of Man* (1936), called attention to the fact that, in the old days, a bride went from her father's house to a new house with a unity of faith and heritage. "She was not exposed to any other man's doctrine or ideals or values." This is now completely changed by public or statist education. The state imposes many fathers on a family's sons and daughters; these teach creeds and values antagonistic to those of the pupils' families. The result, said Rosenstock-Huessy, is a polytheistic education. "Thus, a modern man is not marrying one man's daughter, but many men's pupil," and the same polytheistic education is true for the young man.

The result is that, instead of marriage creating a new entity, it creates another carbon copy of a machine-stamped, factory-assembled, statist model. With the teaching of sex education in these "public" schools, carbon-copy techniques are carried to the marriage bed, where performance is by the book-model, and in terms of the most recent sexological research! That problems result should not surprise us.

One of the reasons for Christian schools is to preserve the priority of the family in the life of the child. The state school undercuts the Christian family and is anti-familistic and thus is the poorest kind of training ground for marriage.

The Biblical family is by nature future-oriented. Because it requires that there be a continuity of faith and honor, it maintains its roots in the past. "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Exod. 20:12). This "honor" means continuity and love. At the same time, there must be a departure: leaving father and mother to cleave unto one's wife. Past, present, and future, are from God and under God.

A statist world is different. The goal of the state is control and the restriction of change to the state. Instead of the individual or family as the source of innovation, change, and entrepreneurship, we then have the state in control of all these things. The state, however, when it becomes this powerful, becomes a vast bureaucracy, and it gives us a frozen, prearranged world, not a future.

The family, not the state, is the true wellspring of the future, and the woman is the key to it. The statist school is a citizen-producing factory designed to manufacture people whose every loyalty is eroded. No family ties bind the well-taught statist school product. Thus, all competing

institutions or loyalties of family, faith, and heritage are eliminated. The result is a mass man; such a man is easily a rebel, a malcontent, or a drone, but he is not capable of anything but a statist answer to problems, because for him no other agency has any stature or viability. He is a factory product with standardized reactions and responses.

The Biblical family, however, is future-oriented. It begins under God as an act of faith, not as a trial experiment in living. It is governed by a faith and by a way of life that ties the past to the present and to the future. The grandparents and the parents alike share a concern for the children's future, and for a continuity of faith and life. At the same time, they have a concern that there be progress for the children.

Some economists have somberly predicted that the current and coming generation will be the first in American history whose standard of living will be lower than that of their parents. If statist controls continue and increase, this may well be true, because statism seeks a frozen prearranged world order, not a free one.

Scripture orders a man to cleave or adhere to his wife because the godly woman is the mother of life. To cleave to one's wife means that one clings to, or follows closely after, not his parents but his wife. To cleave to one's wife means that a man sees the future with her and in terms of her, not in terms of his past, *nor in terms of the state*. We are definitely not told to cleave to or follow closely after the state, our president, governor, or prime minister. All too many men are more married to the state and its promises than to their wives, and the result is what can be called orgasmic politics. The future hope is then political, not personal.

Marriage is a personal act between two persons creating a very personal "one flesh" under the very personal God of Scripture. The future created by the family in Christ is not the impersonal monster-world of statist planners but a free society in the Lord.

The dominion mandate of Genesis 1:26–28 is followed by the institution of marriage, Genesis 2:20–24. These are not unrelated. The second implements the first.

The headship of men does not mean the shelving of women. The Pauline epistles tell us plainly how real and extensive the role of women was in the New Testament church. Men who seek to make a woman the mere adjunct of themselves are stupid, foolish, and un-Christian. They pass up the wealth of God's way for the poverty of their ego. The churches which relegate women to a limbo of irrelevance are guilty before God. Subordination does not mean irrelevance nor incompetence. If this were true, every corporation would be better off if all the staff and employees were fired, and only the chairman of the board remained! It would commonly

mean the departure of intelligence.

In terms of Scripture, the women's liberation movement is nonsense, but so too is the position of all too many churchmen. Genesis 2:24 tells us something we dare not forget. Beginning with the first couple, Adam and Eve, God requires a leaving and a cleaving. There is a natural and happy cleaving by women to their husbands, to godly husbands. But there is the cleaving which is central, is commanded by God, and is at the heart of true marriage; it is by the husband to his wife.

48

THE PARADISE OF WOMEN

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 98, June 1988

SLANDER shifts its ground readily, because it is concerned with what will hurt rather than what is true. In different eras, different charges hurt the most. What in one period may be a hurtful accusation may become a compliment in another day.

This was certainly true of Calvin, and of Geneva in Calvin's day and in his time of influence. As Gillian Lewis and Roger Stauffenegger have pointed out, Calvin's Geneva came to be known as "the paradise of women" ("Calvinism in Geneva in the Time of Calvin and of Beza (1545–1605)," in Menna Prestwich, ed., *International Calvinism, 1541–1715* [Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1985, 1986], p. 49). There were good reasons for this. Calvin was strongly protective of "women's rights." Under his guidance, church consistories went after wife abusers. They prosecuted guardians who had misappropriated trust funds of widows and orphans. Deserted wives were protected, and so on. Prestwich has referred to "the attraction of Calvinism for women" in that area ("Calvinism in France, 1555–1629," ibid., p. 96).

In that era, and for centuries before, powerful and prosperous elderly men and women contracted marriages with very young women and men. The families of the young complied with these arrangements for their personal advantages. Calvin felt strongly that such marriages should not be allowed. In January 1557, the consistory dissolved a marriage between a woman of "more than 70" with a man of 27 or 28. (Philip E. Hughes, ed., *The Register of the Company of Pastors of Geneva in the Time of Calvin* [Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1966], p. 321). Rules were published to protect both men and women in marriage. To avoid deception, many rules were established. Thus, "strangers coming from a distant country" could not be permitted to marry in Geneva until a

careful investigation of their past and their family were made (Hughes, p. 75). A woman persecuted for her faith could legitimately leave her husband (Hughes, p. 197).

It would be an error to say that the pastors of Geneva were always wise in their judgments in cases involving women. What is clear is that Calvinist Geneva was seen in its day as "the paradise of women" because of the receptivity of Calvin and others to their plight and their need for justice.

There was a reason for this attitude. It was the revival of the Old Testament as an inseparable part of the Bible; the New Testament was read as an essential part of the Old Testament.

Because the Old Testament solidly links holiness with the law, and the law is concerned with everyday life, the result was what Henri Hauser called the "secularization of holiness," i.e., holiness was made a matter of everyday life for all believers. Holiness now was the pursuit of all Christians. It was, in Luthy's words, an "insistence on saintly life as the duty of every believer" (Herbert Luthy, "Variations on a Theme by Max Weber," in Prestwich, p. 381). Calvin said of Luke 6:35 ("But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and the evil"), that it is our duty to do good, expecting nothing; we are to exercise a royal goodness, not a mercenary one; having received grace, we should then manifest grace (Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark and Luke*, vol. 1, pp. 302–303).

We have a remarkable fact here in Calvin's reformation of Geneva. It was a city rightly called in its day "the paradise of women." This is an aspect of the Reformation which has been given insufficient attention. The reason is that these reforms in civil and church law which made Geneva so remarkable in its day are now associated with patriarchalism, and patriarchy is a hated word to the feminists in both skirts and trousers. It suggests visions of male oppression, domination, and rule. It has become a symbol of past and present evils.

The significant fact, however, is that patriarchalism was not male-centered but faith- and family-governed. Modern men in the atomistic family often have more power, if they choose to exercise it, than did patriarchal man. The reason was a very clear one: patriarchal man was a trustee from the past to the future. In 1 Kings 21, we see that Naboth did not feel that he had the right to sell the family land no matter how much money King Ahab offered. The land was not his except as a trust from his forefathers to the generations yet unborn.

The appeal of existential living is that it limits all right and power to the present moment. Existential man sees no responsibility to the past nor to the future, nor to anything in the moment other than his will and desire. This is why, given any opportunity, existential man is always tyrannical and oppressive: he will do what he can safely do without incurring immediate judgment. Both power and "right" are limited to the moment and to his will.

Not so with patriarchal man. He is linked to responsibilities, to the family, and to other people. His wife is his partner and vicegerent in responsibilities, and both must be future-oriented.

Feminism, like masculinism, is existentialist and present-oriented. It has no sense of community nor the harmony of interests. Both feminists and masculinists believe in a war of the sexes and are out to win in that war. As good Darwinians, they believe in the survival of the fittest in a cosmic war for survival. Since the universe has no law nor morality in their faith, the fittest are simply the survivors, those whose radical ruthlessness and contempt for morality enables them to survive.

To all such people, patriarchy is a trap, because it presupposes, despite the fall and man's depravity, the ultimacy and triumph of God and His law. The universe is thus a moral universe. As Deborah declares in her song, "*the stars in their courses fought against Sisera*" (Judg. 5:20).

A Biblical, patriarchal culture sees the essential conflict in life as a *moral* conflict, not a personal one. As a student, I heard a professor, who not in favor of patriarchalism, call its central characteristic *hospitality*, and openness to people. He cited as revelatory of patriarchalism Abraham's response to the three strangers: he invited them in to share his "salt" or life (Genesis 18).

Modern social atomism, however, sees all men as enemies and turns the world into a hostile place. Class is set against class, and race against race. Woodrow Wilson, as a student at Princeton, shared in the hatred of students for town boys, called "snobs" at Princeton, and wrote, "We will have to kill some of those snobs yet before they will learn prudence" (Jonathan Daniels, "Woodrow Wilson's Pious Young," *New Republic*, October 29, 1966, p. 28). Wilson, of course, had no such murderous plan, but he liked to think in such terms. Not surprisingly, he helped advance the cause of class conflict. Even as he dreamed of a one world made safe for democracy, he advanced social divisions by his thinking.

Biblical, patriarchal culture is now very much despised by those who, as humanists, hate moral solutions. For them our problems are not to be diagnosed as a rebellion against Christ and God's law, but as a matter of economic conflicts, class tensions, and sociological conditionings of

a regressive and sociopathic nature. Calvin is for them a symbol of bad answers, and a recent book sees Calvin as essentially a "sick" man! The book tells us more about the author than Calvin.

I have on occasion cited, in speaking, the work of the bishop, St. Charles Borromeo, whose charities included "giving marriage dowries to penniless girls whose fate would otherwise have been the streets," and, in addition to the hostel for the street people of his day, orphanages, a home for reformed prostitutes, and a home for unhappily married women (Margaret Yeo, *Reformer: St. Charles Borromeo* [Milwaukee, WI: Bruce, 1938], pp. 115, 228–229). The reaction is sometimes a cold one. "Social" problems, many hold, should be dealt with by the state, not by "amateurs."

When we depersonalize the problems of men and women, we also depersonalize ourselves. We reduce people to mathematical ciphers whose answers lie in acts of Congress or Parliament. We deny Christianity and Christ in favor of the state and its social workers. Borromeo in Milan and Calvin in Geneva gave us another answer.

But for many today, Geneva could not have been "the paradise of women." After all, Geneva had no Equal Rights Amendment or law!

Paul tells us, however, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17), and it is the Spirit who gave us the law and the gospels.

If we do not seek our answers in the Lord and His Word, we are a part of the problem.

ECONOMICS & CAPITALISM

49

THE DOCTRINE OF DEBT

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 72, March 1986

The doctrine of debt is an important and neglected emphasis of Scripture. The Lord God having created us and redeemed us, we are totally His creation and possession, and absolutely in debt to Him. We are therefore not our own, but the Lord's (1 Cor. 6:19–20). We cannot legitimately treat ourselves nor our possessions as our own. As Paul tells us, "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. 4:7). Our Lord makes it clear that we can never put God in our debt: "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10).

Because we are God's property and in debt to Him for everything, God's law does not allow us to incur long-term debt to men. The seventh year must be a sabbatical from debt, among other things (Deut. 15:1–6), because debt is a form of slavery (Prov. 22:7), and we are called to be freemen in Christ (John 8:36). While short-term debt (six years) is permitted as a need at times, the normal premise is to "owe no man any thing, but to love one another" (Rom. 13:8).

If men obeyed the Biblical laws on debt, there would be no inflationary society. Debt makes men past-oriented in their work, in that a sizable portion of their income ties them to debt, past spending, decisions, or commitments. Debt-free men can command the present and the future. The economic ramifications alone of God's law concerning debt, money, interest, and other economic concerns, if applied, would give us an inflation-free and prosperous society, which is the intention of God's law. We can see all around us the economic chaos created by humanistic law.

With John Law (1671–1729), the monetary policies of nations began to change. What had previously been practiced as a form of theft now became "good" monetary policy. The repeated failures of paper money since Law's day have not changed men's minds, because Law's economics give men the opportunity to play god and to create monetary values on their fiat word. The hope of these humanists is that eventually, given enough power, they will make it work. As a result, what now stands behind paper currencies is debt, not wealth in the form of gold or silver. In the lives of the people also, debt has become a form of pseudo-wealth, and true wealth is confiscated by statist controls and policies.

In another and very much neglected area, a major change in the doctrine of wealth came into focus in the nineteenth century. The name Peter Lavrov (1823–1900) is little known today; he was in his time a major force in Russian thought and abroad. He was a friend of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, while not in full agreement with them, and his ideas on a revolutionary party formation had a decisive influence on Lenin. The Russian Revolution owed more than a little to Lavrov.

Our concern with Lavrov is in a related area, the concept of debt. In his very influential *Historical Letters* (1840, also the year of Lenin's birth), Lavrov wrote with a strong moral burden. The privileged minority, he held, owes a debt to "the people." The privileged classes owe their advantages to the exploitation of the poor. Like all socialists, Lavrov could not see wealth and technology as something created by the intelligence, character, foresight, thrift, and industry of some men, but rather purely as exploitation and expropriation. This perspective of Lavrov's *Historical Letters* now governs the world, is taught in our schools and universities, and governs the nations.

Given this "debt to the people," it followed for Lavrov and his successors that this debt must be repaid. A debt, it was held, ought to be repaid. As a result, while sociologists generally deny any moral absolutes, at this one point they are absolutists: "the debt to the people" must be repaid. It is, in fact, an article of faith from Lavrov to the present that "historical necessity" will effect the payment. A form of economic and social predestination mandates the repayment of the debt to the people.

The earlier Russian populists favored a romantic view of the people. The peasants and workers were the innocent peoples, the good ones, and the rich were bad. Later, the peasants and workers were seen as exploited fools whom the elite revolutionary cadres had to control for their own good. No change took place in the view of the capitalists: they were by definition evil.

The influence of Lavrov's *Historical Letters* was dramatic and far-reaching. A. O. Lukashevich said of its influence in 1871–1872: "The

latter book, which quickly became a special sort of gospel among the young people, placed before us very vividly the thesis — which stirred us profoundly — of the *irredeemable debt* to the people owed by the Russian intelligentsia" (Peter Lavrov, *Historical Letters* [1967 ed.], p. 49).

Lavrov's thinking spread across the world as a new gospel of debt and salvation. It went hand in hand with humanism. Lavrov, in his "First Letter," held with Hegel that man was now taking a great step forward: "Man again became the center of the entire world." Given the tremendous inequity of society, and the need to repay "the debt to the people," Lavrov wrote in favor of terrorism. The use of violence to destroy evil would hasten the triumph of good.

The terrorists of our day have not heard of Lavrov, but they are his heirs and successors. They unite with their atheism and moral relativism this one "great moral demand"; the debt to the people must be repaid, and terrorism is justified as a means of righting ancient wrongs.

The politics of the world is now the politics and morality of Lavrov. The Marxists states apply Lavrov's doctrine of the debt to the people logically and systematically. The democracies agree with Lavrov but are slower in paying the debt, and hence they are morally weaker versions of the Marxist states.

American foreign policy since World War II is infected with Lavrovian thinking. Throwing money at poorer nations is viewed as a moral necessity and a debt to be paid for being a successful nation. The intelligentsia, the press, the media, and the women's clubs for the elite treat even modest cuts in foreign aid as a moral offense and as proof of evil in those who propose them. If Congress were true to its convictions, it would order a statue of Lavrov to be placed in the halls of Congress!

The churches, too, have adopted this doctrine of a debt to the people. The Bible tells us that we are totally in debt to the Lord God, that we owe Him as our Lord the tithe as a minimum, and our lives as living sacrifice. The new doctrine of debt turns the moral universe upside down. The poor replace God as the focus of moral concern.

Now, the Bible requires that we care for the poor, for widows and orphans, the alien, and all in need. This concern is mandated for the Lord's sake, not for the poor's. It is obedience to God, our debt to the Lord, not a debt to the people, which must govern us. It is therefore God who judges us, not the poor, nor the elite revolutionaries.

Because of this shift in the doctrine of debt from God to man, there is also a shift in the nature and necessity of judgment. In Scripture, God settles all accounts, rights all wrongs, and repays all debts on Judgment Day. The books are then opened, and there is a final and full accounting.

History ends in total justice, and a new heaven and earth begin.

Humanistic socialist faith also has its doctrine of judgment and of the repayment of all debts. Its name is THE REVOLUTION. The Revolution, in every country, is a bloody affair, in that sharp and savage judgment is meted out to all the "privileged" classes. No punishment or torture is too much for them. "The moral debt to the people" requires the obliteration of all its "enemies," and it is the revolutionaries who decide who the enemies are. If you deny this doctrine of a "moral debt to the people," then you are the enemy, whether you are rich or poor. If you feel that your work entitles you to what you yourself grow, to sell or to use, then you are an enemy. The peasants of Russia, the "Kulaks" of the Ukraine, and others were poor people, but by retaining a Biblical perspective on work and debt, they became enemies and were murdered by the millions.

What about Lavrov? The academicians alone remember him. They disagree as fellow intellectuals with him on various points, but he is treated with respect as a fellow member in the great fraternity of anti-Christian thinkers who plan a brave new world.

All over the world today, people are brutally oppressed and murdered in the name of paying a moral debt to the people. This evil doctrine of debt is one of the governing moral truisms of the twentieth century. It no longer belongs to one man, Lavrov. It has become the common property of journalists, teachers, preachers, professors, legislators, the media men, and children. It is a part of the humanistic plan of salvation.

But God is not mocked. We either live by God's law, or we die by it; in the long run, it is death for all, and the world is marching towards a self-inflicted judgment.

Knowing about this evil doctrine is necessary, but it is not enough. We must know God's doctrine. Our debt of judgment and death is paid to God the Father by Jesus Christ in His atonement. Our debt of service must be paid all our life. Because we are now alive in Christ, we must follow the way of life, His law, and we must see ourselves as saved to serve, to love and to obey Him.

> What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people. (Ps. 116:12–14)

50

THE LOVE OF MONEY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 157, November 1992

In 1 Timothy 6:10, St. Paul writes, "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred (or, been seduced) from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." In understanding what Paul tells us, we must avoid two errors. *First*, Paul does not say that money is the root of all evil, but rather that the love thereof is. *Second*, we must not neglect to understand why the love of money is so singled out as "the root of all evil." After all, according to Genesis 3:1–5, original sin, the root of all evil, is man's desire to be his own god and to determine good and evil, law and morality, for himself. How is this related to the love of money?

Notice that St. Paul does *not* say that the love of *wealth* is the root of all evil. Wealth has had a variety of definitions. A man strong in faith is wealthy, because he has riches too many men lack. Again, in much of history, wealth has been defined in terms of a strong family and clan. In some cultures, a man without a family cannot find work and is regarded as an outlaw because he has no family to vouch for him or to make good on any wrong he commits; a man who leaves his family is in such a society an outlaw.

The same is true of friends. For some cultures, a network of friends is wealth and security; they will help or defend you, as you will, them. The strength of feudalism was the fact that it was a network of obligations, duties, and ties. Men were not alone.

In the material sphere, the major form of wealth in history has been land. Land provides both home and a source of potential food. A landed man over the centuries was a free man. (Our tax structure has put an end to that, and this has been done deliberately.) It was once true that, "A man's home is his castle," and a man's land was immune to trespass. In

my lifetime, more than a few Western ranchers held that they had a right to shoot a trespasser. Their thinking had ancient roots.

St. Paul speaks against none of these forms of wealth. They are, in fact, thoroughly Biblical in character. Why did he single out money?

Money has a curious history. True money is gold or silver, whereas base currencies and paper money represent the statist counterfeiting of money. Rome has a long history of debasing its coinage.

Why was money so dangerously evil in Paul's sight? The *root of all evil* is man's will to be his own god and his own determiner of reality, of good, evil, everything. *The love of money* has the same deluding power: it distorts or destroys reality. In the past two years, one well-known churchman tried to tell me I had no right to an opinion, and he told me how much he was worth, and he asked, "And how much did *you* make last year?" This man has long been seduced from the faith by his love of money; he is now being stripped of his money, is pierced by much trouble, but he lacks godly sorrow. The love of money destroys a man's awareness of reality. Virtue, friends, family, and all other forms of wealth are despised in favor of money.

Moreover, it is interesting that, as material wealth has shifted towards money in the thinking of people, it has shifted from true money, gold and silver, to counterfeit coins and paper money. There is a reason for this. Paper money gives man the opportunity to play god, to "create" wealth by printing paper currencies, and to supplant God's reality with man's new order.

But paper money self-destructs. It winds up destroying its creators and users and the false social order they have created. The essence of sin, the will to be god, means a radical distortion and falsification of reality. It creates an inflationary social order in which man substitutes his own paper-created assets for true and enduring wealth.

The older forms of wealth meant a network of duties and obligations. It meant an awareness that we are all dependent on one another and on the land: "the king himself is served (or, prospered) by the field" (Eccles. 5:9).

Money as wealth, or paper money as wealth, not only is subject to the whims of a planning society and inflation, but it also strips a man progressively of all true forms of wealth unless he is a strong man in the faith and mindful earnestly of the social obligations of his wealth.

One of our very fine Chalcedon friends was an heir to an estate, 300 years in the family, with a village and many farmers. Two deaths, one after another, led to the loss of it because of death taxes. The people on the estate saw with grief their transition from a closely knit and caring family government to a socialist state. It was a disaster and a grief.

How do we change all this? It means a strong faith in Christ as our Savior and governor, and in God's law-word as our charter of freedom. It means that wealth has a new definition for us, and it begins with our faith.

How rich are you?

51

KARMA, DEBT, AND THE SABBATH

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 22, June 1981

The doctrine of *Karma* is one of the most important religious doctrines invented by man. Its origins are Brahmanic, but its great development is Buddhist. Perhaps no other non-Biblical doctrine is more important and more perceptive, however deadly. Karma is the law of cause and effect as it regulates the present and future life of man. Karma says that what a man sows, that shall he also reap; every man inherits his own burden of sin and guilt, and no man can inherit the good or evil acts of another man. Karma holds that sin cannot be destroyed by sacrifice, penance, or repentance, but only by self-expiation. A man thus spends his life (and future reincarnations, according to this doctrine) working out the atonement for sin. The important fact about Karma is that this doctrine does justice to the reality of cause and effect; it recognizes the reality of sin in man, and the burden which sin imposes on the present and the future. Modern humanism is unable to cope with this fact of causality and chooses to ignore it. It does not escape causality thereby and only compounds its problem.

According to Karma, the past determines the present and the future. Man's sin most surely finds him out and will not let him go.

The Karma faiths have no savior, but they are at least aware of the reality of sin and its demand for expiation. Their doctrines of self-atonement are ineffectual, but their realism as to man's condition make them wiser than those moderns who choose to deny causality.

The doctrine of Karma was current in the world of the Bible, especially the New Testament era. The Bible speaks emphatically of causality, and the consequences of sin (Gen. 2:17; 3:7). Moses declares, "ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. 32:23). Paul warns, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). However, rather than

an abstract world of causality, for the Bible the cosmos is the creation of the personal God. This fact creates a vast gulf between the Bible and the doctrine of Karma.

But Karma does stress a fact that the modern world chooses to forget: causality. It is this fact that Keynesian economists choose to forget. Keynes himself, when asked about the long-run consequences of his economics, replied, "In the long run, we are all dead." Because of its disregard for causality, Keynesianism creates an inflationary economy; long-term consequences are dismissed in favor of short-term benefits.

The average American and European is not familiar with Keynesian as a body of economic thought; they are familiar with it as a way of life, their own way of life. In Keynesian terms, all sin is assessed in terms of present benefits, not in terms of long-term consequences. As a result, debt living has become a way of life. From a moral liability at the beginning of the century, debt has become now an asset, and the word "credit," which once meant reliability, now means the ability to contract debt. The world's monetary systems are no longer based on the gold standard but on debt; paper money represents debt, not wealth.

The modern Keynesian world is a rejection of the triune God and His law-word, which prohibits debt beyond a six-year limit, and then for necessities only, which requires covetous-free living, and which regards debt as a form of slavery. Between 1945 and 1980, many fortunes were built (and many lost) by pyramiding debt.

But debt, like sin, has its consequences. Karma holds that past sins govern our present and future lives. With its concomitant doctrine of reincarnation, Karma holds that thousands of generations or reincarnations may be necessary in some cases to work out the self-expiation necessary. The burden of sin and guilt is not lightly discarded simply because man wills it. Causality rules all things unrelentingly.

This brings us to the deadly aspect of the doctrine of Karma. Because of its unrelenting doctrine of causality, the past rules the present and the future. Only insofar as we have a better past or Karma can we have a better future. The world of Karma is a past-oriented world.

The same is true of the world of debt. For those who are in debt, the past governs the present. The first claimant on their monthly check is the past: the house payment and other debts have a fixed claim on their income before either they or God can touch it. One of the most common questions I encounter with respect to the tithe is this: "How can I tithe, and still meet my payments on my debts?" The house is on "the never-never plan"; the car and furniture get old and shabby before they are paid for, and man's days are dominated by the past.

Modern man may not believe in Karma, but he has created a new world of Karma in debt.

The same is true in politics. Cause and effect in politics has brought the world's many nations to the raw edge of judgment. In politics, this has brought some vaguely conservative parties and administrations to power. All are looking for cosmetic solutions and avoiding the long and ugly chain of causality which has led to the present crisis. The Karma of modern politics threatens them like a crumbling cliff over a cottage, and all are offering a more modest table fare as the solution.

All around us a host of things have created a vast chain of causes and effects which threaten our world: debt, the minimum-wage law, statist education and the new illiteracy, welfarism, and much, much more. The world may say, "Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die," but God says, "Tomorrow the judgment." (One is reminded of the cartoon, picturing a sad-faced man carrying a sign on a busy street, reading: "We are all doomed: the world will not end!" Man has no escape from his sins in any way of his own devising.)

When the past governs the present, it has a paralyzing effect on it. As J. Estlin Carpenter pointed out many years ago, the doctrine of Karma froze society and led to the caste system. Basic to the dogma was this principle: "a man is born into the world that he has made." The present is read in terms of the past.

Our current Karma culture is also seeing a like stratification. Despite the talk of equality, the premise of welfarism and more is the incapacity of vast numbers of peoples. The ghettos of America have seen successive waves of immigrants come and go as they worked their way into more advanced positions. Now we have, as a policy of state, an assumption that a permanent ghetto resident is a fact of life. (Of course, because of environmentalism, we now seem to hold that a man is born into the world others made for him.)

The two principles of Karma are, *first*, "A man is born into the world that he has made," and *second*, "The Deed does not perish," i.e., consequences continue until they are fully expiated. Karma cannot be destroyed, either by fire, flood, wind, or the gods. It must proceed unrelentingly and unerringly to its results. A man might briefly postpone the workings of his Karma, but he could never frustrate nor destroy them. All else passes, but acts and their consequences remain. Destiny, Karma, reigns and rules. The word *deva* is gods, and *daiva*, derived from it, means destiny, and, for the Buddhist, destiny is simply *past acts*, according to L. de la Vallée Poussin. Since Karma includes in its unrelenting causality mental acts as well, man's waking thoughts as well as his dreams in sleep

govern his life and add to his Karma. Only through good acts can man expiate his past sins, and "the good act has three roots: the absence of lust, of hatred, and of error" (Poussin). Thus, we have a negative idea of good, so that its essential function is to diminish the retribution for the vast accumulation of past acts.

The very clear fact which emerges from this is that, in the world of Karma, there can be passivity and withdrawal, but definitely not rest. The Biblical doctrine of the sabbath is thus unique. We are commanded to observe the sabbath in Deuteronomy and to "remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day" (Deut. 5:15). Redeemed man can *rest* because he knows that the Lord has saved him. The meaning of the cross is not that the consequences of our sin are simply overlooked, but that Jesus Christ makes full expiation for our sins. The causality is worked out on the cross; atonement is made for our sins, and we are free from the guilt and the burden of sin. Where men deny the causality of sin, they deny also the atonement, and they become antinomians.

But only Christ's atonement can free man from sin and death and give him rest. The answer to the doctrine of Karma is the atonement and the sabbath rest which the atonement creates. The sabbath law follows the Passover event, and it sets forth the salvation-rest of the Old Israel. The Christian sabbath follows the atonement and the resurrection, the first day of the week, and it celebrates the salvation-rest of the New Israel of God.

The redeemed in Christ now are governed, not by the past, not by their sins, nor by Karma, but by the Lord, who is the same, yesterday, today, and forever (Heb. 13:8). They are to live righteously, to render to all their due honor, to love their neighbor as themselves, and, as a normal practice, to owe no man anything, save to love one another (Rom. 13:8).

The true sabbath enables us to rest, because, *first*, it is Christ's finished work of atonement and continuing work of providence that is our life, not our deeds and past acts. *Second*, we can rest, because we are not past-bound and past-oppressed and haunted. We can say with David, "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety" (Ps. 4:8). We have the blessedness of restful, trusting sleep. Instead of a burden, the past has become an asset in the Lord, who makes all things work together for good to them that love Him, to them who are the called according to His purpose. (The converse of this is that all things work together for evil for those who hate God, Jer. 50:29; Lam. 1:22; Obad. 15.)

Third, because we are now future-oriented, we become dominion men, working for godly reconstruction in every area of life and thought. Our lives are dominated, not by past burdens but by present responsibilities and the assurance of power (John 1:12). Together with Joshua (and the apostles, Matt. 28:18–20), we have the assurance: "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you . . . There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Josh. 1:3, 5).

The sad fact today is that many church members profess Christ but live in the world of Karma. To illustrate, one church officer, an able and talented man but a despiser of God's law, has twice been bankrupt, several times a failure in business because of lawless policies and debts, and is a sour and critical leader whose ways are oppressive to many. There is no sabbath in his life, nor any freedom and power; he has the aura of a hunted man, and, in his work, he is a "plunger," one who prefers risks to sound practices. We have all too many pastors whose sermons are trumpets always sounding defeat, and echoing with the oppressiveness of sin, not the freedom and joy of victory and redemption. Their sermons echo the death of the tomb, not the triumph of the resurrection.

To all such we must say with Paul, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph. 5:14).

The Congregation of the Dead (June 1981)

According to Solomon, "The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain (or, find rest, or end up) in the congregation of the dead" (Prov. 21:16).

To wander out of "the way of understanding" is to wander away from Jesus Christ and His every word, the whole of Scripture. It means trusting in our own understanding rather than in the Lord (Prov. 3:5).

Practically, what does this involve? When we come to the church and demand that it meet our needs and our desires rather than the Lord's purposes, we have forsaken understanding. We have then become humanists as well: we want the church to please man, not God.

The great answer of Dr. John Henry Jowett, sixty or more years ago, still remains the telling one. When a foolish woman asked him what he thought about God, he answered quietly, "Madam, I think the question is, What does God think about me?"

The important thing thus is not what we think about Christ's church,

nor about God, but what the Lord thinks about us. Remember, the congregation of the dead is made up of those who lean on their own understanding.

52

MAN AND THE STATE

Position Paper No. 165, July 1993

Julius Goebel Jr., in *Felony and Misdemeanor: A Study in the History of Criminal Law* (1937, 1976), analyzes carefully what happened in the medieval era as church and state took over jurisdiction from kinship groups. The state in particular increased its powers substantially. Goebel's concern was a study of the development of laws. In describing the Carolingian system after the Charlemagne, he sums up what happened in a devastating sentence: "The objective is no longer peace and order; it is primarily fiscal" (p. 133). In other words, the state no longer saw the protection of the people from war and lawlessness as its main reason for existence: its reason for being became taxation, shearing sheep.

Whenever the state gains great powers, its own existence becomes its goal, and the people then are primarily the source of money, not an asset to be guarded. Civil governments, as they grow in power, grow in their distance from the people. One young man, a scientist in an important arm of the state, told me that 85 percent of all the personnel in that bureaucracy regard the people as the enemy. Instead of being a people to be defended, the state sees its people as the enemy. Instead of seeing the only division among the citizenry as the one between the lawless and the law abiding, the state rules by creating division. The rich, the middle class, and the poor are set one against the other; farmers, manufacturers, and workers are seen as hostile groups, and various racial minorities are encouraged to seek their "rights." A divided people makes possible a strong state.

A *national budget* is a modern device whose purpose is to appropriate nonexisting funds. A state does not tax and then, with funds in hand, decide how to spend the money. Rather, the various state agencies submit their ever-increasing demands, and a budget is drafted in terms of these

expectations. If the revenues then fail to meet these enacted demands, then borrowing, via bonds, usually makes up the difference. This means a growing national debt.

The absurdity of this routine process can be understood if we apply it to ourselves. Can we begin the new year by stating that we "need" so much money during the next twelve months? Can we then proceed to spend in terms of that supposedly "need" budget? Can we shift the resulting debt on to our relatives and neighbors? If we cannot do it, why can the federal government?

It should be apparent that the handling of money is a moral fact, and we are surrounded by peoples and civil governments who are moral failures. How we plan the use of our money, as persons and nations, will determine whether we are living morally or immorally. Our lives and our nations should be dedicated to furthering a moral order, but we are in fact creating an immoral order. We can then, in anger, demonstrate, riot, and kill, but we are part of that immoral order. James 2:10 tells us that to break God's law at one point is to be guilty of all: a chain is broken; a law order is destroyed.

Men and nations can budget in terms of money they have, or money they want to have. The difference is between virtue and sin. Obviously, sin is more popular than ever in our time. Carolyn Webber and Aaron Wildavsky, in their *History of Taxation and Expenditure in the Western World* (1986), point out that "[m]odern budgeting is allocation plus control" (p. 77). When wisely and morally done, it is an exercise in self-control. When immorally done, it is a means of controlling others. State inflation controls us by overtaxation, and by inflation, which robs us by reducing the value of our income, among other things. Neither men nor nations are nowadays given to self-control.

The modern power state, according to Webber and Wildavsky, is a product of Enlightenment rationalism, and "rationality in government means centralization" (p. 317). Reason synthesizes, and, where divorced from Biblical norms, it centralizes. It also rationalizes theft. In 1908, Lloyd George still reflected enough moral order to call his tax plan theft, saying, "I have got to rob somebody's hen roost next year. I am on the look-out which will be the easiest to get and where I shall be least punished, and where shall I get the most eggs" (p. 315). To make such theft appealing, the state on varying occasions appeals to various special interest groups to take part in the theft by receiving some of the loot. The people are made part of the looters' league, and their moral indignation is thereby undermined. The expanding role of the state is the result. The modern state exists to tax and to control more than to provide peace and

order. The harmony of society has disappeared or is disappearing.

We cannot expect the state to control its taxation and the increase of its national debt when we do not exercise fiscal self-control. Immoral states are the expression of immoral peoples.

"We, the people," are dedicated to long-term debt in violation of God's law. Debt-living is the American way of life. We are dedicated to nontithing, and we expect God's blessing for refusing to pay His tax. Our prayers are given to complaining (we need so much) rather than to praise. We are "a mess," and we wonder at the mess the world is in.

The modern state is indeed an enemy to God and to man, but simply because the people have drifted from the Lord and His Word. Yes, the modern state is an enemy to man, but only because modern man is his own worst enemy.

53

THE TROUBLE WITH SOCIAL SECURITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 25, October 1981

The Social Security system can be criticized on both economic and moral grounds.

Economically, the system is cruelly unfair. Thus, if a man pays in $75,000 to Social Security between the ages of eighteen and sixty-five, the likelihood of getting his money back is poor. His life expectancy after sixty-five makes it unlikely that he will get back all or half the amount he paid in for forty-seven years. If he dies, his widow's benefits again are too small to add up to any significant return on his "investment." The combined amount paid in by the employer and employee adds up to a very considerable sum, and the returns on it are small. The only real gainer from Social Security is the federal government. In 1969, Edward J. Van Allen, in *The Trouble With Social Security*, pointed out that a young worker who began paying into Social Security at age eighteen and retired at sixty-five would have to live to be one-hundred-eleven years old to break even. If any insurance company or pension plan gave as poor returns, or misused funds as does Social Security, the managers thereof would quickly find themselves in prison!

The Social Security system, according to the federal courts, is not an insurance or pension plan but a tax. It gives us no claims nor rights; Congress can alter the benefits at will, or cut us out of them, and for some, this has happened. Moreover, because the federal government uses the funds as they come in, instead of saving them, we must pay interest (in the form of extra taxes) on the federal bonds which have replaced our payments.

Moreover, the Social Security system promotes insecurity. It limits our ability to save; it prevents us from investing in sound pension plans, and it fuels inflation. If, instead of a federally operated system, the law

required free-market insurance and pension plans to provide the benefits, we would then have a sound and stable system.

There is, however, another aspect to Social Security, the moral and religious factor. A simple historical fact tells us much at this point. Some years after the War of Independence, the U.S. Congress passed a pension plan for all veterans of that war. All veterans desiring a pension were to apply at designated places, submit evidence of their military status, and dictate to a court clerk their memories of the war. Those brief memoirs give us sometimes vivid glimpses of George Washington, Putnam, and other leaders of that era. The stories, however, come as a shock to any Christian reader. Were there no Christians in the Continental Army? Almost uniformly, the veterans showed no interest in the faith or the church in their mature years.

The answer to that question is a very simple one. No Christian veteran applied for a federal pension, and the churches were united in their opposition to any such application. They believed that Christian participation in a state or federal pension plan was morally wrong. They based their stand on many texts in Scripture, from the Old Testament and the New, and they saw their position as summed up and required by 1 Timothy 5:8, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." From the days of the early church until this century, and definitely through the first half of the last, Christians saw this as a binding duty and law. For them it meant, *first*, that every Christian has a duty before God to care for his own family, especially those in his own household or under his roof. This did not apply to those who, like the prodigal son, had denied the faith and separated themselves. The family is more than a blood institution in Scripture: it is a faith bond. Indeed, where a son is an incorrigible and habitual delinquent, the family must witness for the faith and against the son by denouncing him to the authorities (Deut. 21:18–21). On the other hand, all believing members must be cared for. Our Lord denounces all who refused to provide for their parents and felt that the money for parental support could be better used by the Temple or God's ministry. He equates this with cursing one's parents, which the law says requires the death penalty (Mark 7:9–13). Very clearly, failure to provide for one's needy kin is a fearful offense in the sight of God. The Social Security system is a welcome fact for all such sinners, who are readier to see this tax increase than to care for their parents.

Second, the "family" of which Paul speaks in 1 Timothy 5:8 includes our fellow believers. Very early, following Old Testament practices, the disciples took steps to provide for the needy widows and other like

persons in the church. In Acts 6:1–3, we do not have the institution of such a practice; it was already a "daily ministration." Rather, what we have is the organization of a diaconate to provide an efficient and well-organized ministry in this area. The work of the early church in this area was remarkable. No charity beyond one day was given to able-bodied men, but work was found for them, or work was made for them on subsistence wages. Indeed, one of the telling "advertisements" for the early church throughout the Roman Empire was their care one for another. Hence the saying, "Behold, how these Christians love one another!" To be a Christian meant to be a responsible person and a member of a larger family. This is one aspect of what Paul means when he says, "we are members one of another" (Eph. 4:25). It was not a light thing to be a Christian: it meant joining, or rather, being adopted into, the family of Jesus Christ as a working, obedient, and responsible member.

We cannot appreciate the significance of all this unless we realize that the New Testament was written, and the early church lived, in the context of the Roman Empire. Until our time, Rome provided the world's most massive social security and welfare system in history. It was "bread and circuses," i.e., food, housing, and entertainment. As in our day, the state was seen as god walking on earth, the source of providence and providing. Rome resented the Christian insistence that Jesus, not Caesar, is Lord, and the Christians' care one for another. Such care meant that the government of another ruler than Caesar was determining the lives of man, and that a god other than Caesar was the provider.

Third, the early church was mindful of the poor outside the fold. As early as in the days of the twelve disciples, there was a treasury for the care of such poor. We have a reference to this in John 12:1–6, and to the fact that this fund was in Judas's care, and he was a thief. What people have not bothered to note is that funds were obviously being given to our Lord, i.e., tithes and offerings. These were apparently apportioned for various purposes, the care of our Lord's ministry and its expenses, perhaps the support of the disciples' families at home, as well as the poor. There were thus perhaps several treasurers, one for each cause.

We do know that one of the great conflicts of the early church with Rome was over abortion. Not only did the church strongly oppose abortion, but it did more. Abortion was then crude and primitive and not always successful. Unwanted babies were then abandoned, in Rome itself under the bridges, where wild dogs consumed them. Christians quickly began to collect all such abandoned newborn babies and then passed them around to member families. This added to the rapid growth of the Christian population. It also embarrassed Romans, who spread stories

saying that the babies were collected to be eaten in the communion services, and their blood drunk.

Much more can be said. Hospitals began as an outgrowth of the Christian ministry, and, until fairly recent generations, all hospitals were Christian. Schooling goes back to the Levite schools (Deut. 33:10), and statist education is a recent, humanistic, and socialistic step. All welfare was once Christian, and so on and on. The Bible provides for the world's only sound social security system, spiritually and materially, and Christians once applied it. It begins with salvation, and it continues with being members one of another. The Lord requires it of us.

Social Insecurity (October 1981)

One of the ironies of history is the fact that every age which has sought social security has produced instead dramatic insecurity. This is not to say that security is not an important and worthy consideration. To live securely in one's home, to be in safety on the streets, to have protection from assault and theft, and to have a stable monetary and economic order is clearly a positive and obvious good. It is an aspect of the Messiah's world peace that men convert their weapons into productive tools and live peacefully, "every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid" (Mic. 4:3–4). The desire for security is a religious and a godly goal. To condemn it is clearly wrong.

The trouble begins when security is detached from its moral and religious context. When we regard security as a product of man's order rather than God's order, we undercut the very foundations of security. I repeatedly have heard statements like this, from people in very good housing as well as in "depressed" areas: My neighbor's boys are on drugs, and they act like animals. We are afraid to leave the house empty, because they vandalize it.

Because we have a statist school system which denies God's Word and law, we have produced a lawless generation and dramatic social insecurity. (Not a few Social Security checks fall into the hands of these new vandals, as they rob the elderly.)

The psalmist thus sees the essence of social security in godly faith and order. Unless the society is God's construction, based on His law-word, it is "vain" or futile:

> Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is vain for you to rise

> up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep. (Ps. 127:1–2)

Our society is very insecure. Recently, a very liberal gun control man, after some serious episodes, bought handguns for himself and his wife. Such incidents are becoming commonplace. However, such a step gives only a limited although real protection. The society of our time is in decay; the lawlessness is increasing, and countermeasures do not alter the developing anarchy around us.

Moreover, most people, including churchmen, too commonly see the threat as from one direction only, i.e., from lawless peoples. The even greater threat is from Almighty God, from the triune God. It is His law which is broken, His Word which is despised, His name which is blasphemed, and His person that is bypassed and neglected. Nothing can produce greater social insecurity than the judgment of God!

Unhappily, the very word *security* has been debased in our day by being given, in its primary sense, a limited meaning. It has come to mean, *first*, an insurance against economic hazards and dangers. Its meaning is in this sense economic. The Social Security system, according to one definition, "conveys the assurance of freedom from the dangers of a penniless old age, unemployment without compensation, etc." (*Dictionary of Sociology*). *Second*, security has come to mean also a psychological stability from fears and neuroses. The hunger for this psychological security has made various forms of psychotherapy one of the great growth "industries" of the twentieth century. The intense concern about both these forms of security witnesses to the intense insecurity of modern man. They also witness to his very limited view of security.

God's promise to the faithful is very plain: "There shall no evil befall thee" (Ps. 91:10). Note that the promise does not say, no trouble shall befall thee, but rather no evil; there is a difference. In an age certainly not lacking in problems, Thomas Aquinas defined security as freedom from evil in this Biblical sense.

There is another meaning to *security* which seems at first glance peripheral but is actually basic. *Security* in this sense is a deposit to secure the payment of a debt, or the performance of a contract. In this sense, our security is a theological fact. The Lord God, having already given us His only-begotten Son to effect our redemption at the price of His blood, finds it surely a small thing by comparison to care for us. He is in every sense of the word our security.

In a fallen and sinful world, to expect the kind of security politicians too often promise is fallacious, illusory, and dangerous. It leads people to an avoidance of the basic source of insecurity, the sin of man. Man's

depravity is the root of evils in every sphere — marital, political, economic, and so on. No political system can side-step the implications of man's nature. Man's sin manifests itself in the family, in the spheres of capital and labor, in politics and education, as well as in open criminality. Man's nature is not changed by his choice of a profession or calling. Being a clergyman, politician, bureaucrat, capitalist, or union man sanctifies no one. Only God who made man can remake him. An age which looks to man's way rather than God's for the dynamics of social change can only increase its disorder and insecurity.

54

THE MILITARIZATION OF LIFE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 100, August 1988

Reality is unpleasant for fallen man because it is not his creation. "A world I never made" is what most people do not want. As a result, they prefer to live by their own myths, in terms of what they imagine reality to be, or what it should be. Because the twentieth century seeks aggressively to live without God, to live profanely, it is especially prone to myths. Myths can kill you, because falsifications of reality mean the risks of disaster and death.

More and more, various states are built on myths. A common myth insists that all wealth comes from the workers, and that capitalists are parasites who contribute nothing and take almost everything. This myth is common to most nations. Thus, in the United States, when students and voters have been asked what corporate profits amount to, the answers run from 25 to 75 percent of the net. In reality, during better and freer years, they ran 4 to 6 percent, and they are now commonly 2 to 2.5 percent. "Excessive profits" are usually a myth.

When the Russian Revolution resulted in the Bolsheviks' triumph, and the seizure of businesses and factories, this myth led to remarkable incidents. The workers expected to find vast wealth in gold and paper in the seized offices and found nothing. They searched carefully for all the "ill-gotten wealth" supposedly seized from the workers' sweat and blood, and they found none. The Communist workers filed reports like this: "I arrived at the factory and began to exercise control. I broke open the safety vault but could take no account of the money. There was no money to be found there" (James Bunyan, *The Origin of Forced Labor in the Soviet State, 1917–1921* [1967], p. 24).

The Communists tried to run the shops and factories, but they failed to recognize the central role of capitalization and management in

production. As a result, production collapsed, and the Soviet Union was very quickly in a major crisis. They had the workers, and they had the plants, but no production.

If myths had not governed the Bolsheviks so thoroughly, they would have recognized the fallacy of their theories. This they were not ready to do. The fault could not be in Marxist theory, which, in their thinking, was reality. As a result, God's reality had to be corrected to conform to Marxism.

The problem, created by Marxism, had to be resolved, but only on Marxist terms. This was like saying that the cure for poison is more poison. Lenin by late 1919 recognized the vast dimensions of the crisis and the growing economic collapse. He turned to Leon Trotsky, who was then the people's commissar of war and chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic. Trotsky came up with a plan, with twenty-four propositions or theses in good Kantian-Hegelian-Marxist style. The essence of Trotsky's plan was the radical militarization of all Soviet labor, urban and rural, commercial, industrial, scientific, educational, and agricultural. This meant the end of the freedom to change jobs at will, an end to all strikes, and an end to any freedom for labor.

Later, of course, Stalin and Trotsky clashed, and Trotsky lost. The Soviet Union, however, never has abandoned its Trotskyite militarization of all labor: it is basic to the Soviet Union. The slave labor camps represent the ultimate in the militarization of labor. Because of Trotsky's logical development of Marxist theory, the workers' destiny in "the workers' paradise" is slavery. Of course, productivity has declined in every segment of the Soviet economy. Slavery has never been an effective form of labor, and the Soviet Union is a classic example of its incompetence and inefficiency.

The premises of Marxism, however, were not the exclusive property of Marxists; they were shared by Western liberals, such as the British Labour Party, and the followers of Woodrow Wilson in the United States.

Thus, when President Franklin Roosevelt took office during the Depression, he turned at once to the military model. He also turned to an army officer, General Hugh S. Johnson, to head up the National Recovery Act, 1933–1934. Johnson proceeded (he was a lawyer also) to lay down the law to businessmen like an occupation-army chief. Very few, like Walter Chrysler, were ready to stand up to him. Roosevelt's military model destroyed many small businesses before the Supreme Court voided the NRA.

Faith in the military model did not die, however. Both Republican and Democratic administrations have turned to it repeatedly, and the

courts now view it benignly. The military model is thus being applied to every sphere of life, business, education, religion, everything. Controls are the answer to all problems. American productivity has declined, as has American education.

This same decline — with the same cause, the militarization of national life — is occurring in countries all over the world, and with the same ugly results. In no country do the politicians seem ready to recognize the stupidity of the Trotsky plan for productivity.

Ironically, the militarization of national life has gone hand in hand with the demilitarization of the military! In the Soviet Union, political commissars saturate the military with their presence and hamper military common sense.

In the West, the military has also been politicized in one country after another, in some nations to a startling degree. In the name of civilian control, the military have been politicized. In all this, only one group apparently retains power and trust: the theoreticians. Where reality has its slimmest hold, there the greatest power resides!

In all this, it is clear that, *first*, God has no place. Men are determined to play god. They believe that their theories can create a new and better reality, and they see wisdom as born with them. For freedom to militarize men and institutions more effectively, the "superstitions" of Christianity must be eliminated, they maintain. In one nation after another, the war on Christianity begins with an attack on cults, and the definition of cults is soon expanded to include Christianity. The U.S. Congress is now talking about the need to do something about "cults." If, as Congress insists, it must be "neutral" with respect to religions, why should some be labeled "cults" and singled out for national hostility?

Second, the militarization of society means a radical distrust of freedom. Almost twenty years ago, I was one of three men speaking at a well-attended forum, with a distinguished professor presiding. My subject was freedom in education. When the session ended, one state-school teacher, who had not gained recognition during the question-and-answer time, came up indignantly to accuse me of quackery for talking about freedom. She said, "In the modern world, freedom is obsolete." In a scientifically governed social order, all factors had to be controlled to produce valid results, and freedom was thus an obsolete and nonvalid concept. This is the faith of all too many today.

Of course, most such believers would resent the Trotskyite term of *militarization*; they prefer to use the concept of a *scientifically governed and controlled social order.* Whichever term is used, the results are the same: freedom is replaced with controls.

The controls are man-made controls; they are means whereby man seeks to create new terms and conditions for living, and to remake the world. Man's dream "reality" or utopia replaces God's creation. Instead of original sin as the problem, such men see God and His law as the problem.

In October 1837, the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* carried a long statement expressing the Jacksonian democratic faith. The author was probably the political editor, John O'Sullivan. He held, "Democracy is the cause of Humanity. It has faith in human nature. It believes in its essential equality and fundamental goodness." This for him was the governing principle in terms of which "[a]ll history has to be rewritten." At the same time, other theoreticians of Jacksonian democracy were asserting, as Gilbert Vale did in 1832, and again in his *Manual of Political Economy: A Supplement to the Diamond* in 1841, "We find it gravely asserted, and almost uniformly acted upon, that the *majority should govern the minority*; and this is the key to all the miserable legislation in the world, and the foundation of most of the evils; this is the father of the religious and political persecutions, and the grand impediment to improvement . . . What is this governing majority but a subversion of all justice."

Thus, long before Trotsky, and in terms of Rousseau, men were promoting the suppression of the popular will in favor of an imaginary general will. Their ideas, from Rousseau on, called for one "logical" solution: the militarization of life and society.

The conclusion to all such efforts, however, is not life but death. It is the fool who says in his heart, "There is no God" (Ps. 14:1). God, who sits "in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision" (Ps. 2:4).

55

OWNERSHIP

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 120, April 1990

According to Scripture, all property belongs to God, the earth, its peoples, and all their possessions. "The earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." (Ps. 24:1). God declares, "all the earth is mine" (Exod. 19:5; cf. Ps. 49:10–12, 17). "I am God . . . For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills" (Ps. 50:7, 10). Such statements are repeated in the New Testament (1 Cor. 10:26, 28; 2 Cor. 5:18). God in particular specifies the land and its gold and silver as His (Hag. 2:8).

Because God gives man the duty to "subdue" the earth and to exercise "dominion" over it (Gen. 1:28), man has God's permission to use the earth as a steward under Him. No man nor nation has an absolute and perpetual right to anything, however. As the U.S. courts declared, "The idea of absolute property forever in any particular owner . . . is a fiction. There can be no such thing . . . as absolute property forever, in the true sense of the term" (*Harvard Law Review*, vol. 11 [1897]: p. 69).

In trying to understand the Biblical meaning of stewardship-ownership, we have some gaps in our knowledge, and also some specific data. The conquest of Canaan had apparently several aspects. *First*, not all of Canaan was conquered at once. Some pagan enclaves remained, to be conquered later, or to merge with Israel by conversion. Some texts, like Psalm 87, celebrate the conversions of aliens to Israel. *Second*, at the conquest, the land was divided among the tribes (or clans) and their families. It was a division of land in terms of covenant membership. *Third*, the land was covenant ground; therefore, "The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me" (Lev. 25:23). Urban properties could be sold, but rural lands could only be leased out until the next jubilee year. The rural population was thus

a conservative element with roots in the place, as witness the case of Naboth (1 Kings 21).

Land ownership was a covenant fact; it required covenant membership. Aliens to the covenant could lease land, but they could not own it. Thus, the stewardship-ownership of property was a covenant privilege; it did not require blood relationship but faith and covenant membership. The people were to be a religious unity, in covenant with the Lord. The covenant land could not be alienated.

In Deuteronomy 28, we have a powerful statement of covenantal status. For faithfulness to the Lord, the people and the land would be pursued by inescapable blessings in every sphere of their lives. As a people holy unto the Lord, they would be eminent among the nations, and feared. They would be lenders, not borrowers, "the head and not the tail," and God's blessing would be poured out upon them (Deut. 28:1–14). If unfaithful, they would be accursed by God; the weather and the earth would confound them. They would face captivity and the loss of their land, and every kind of evil would overcome them (Deut. 28:15–68).

By God's law, the covenant people were and are strictly barred from being unjust to any alien (Exod. 22:21, 23:9; Lev. 19:33; Deut. 1:16, 10:18, 23:7, 24:14; Mal. 3:5, etc.).

The alien, however, could not be a member of the community apart from covenant faith and, if from certain "national" groups of very degenerate cultures, this could mean that a record of covenant membership of three or ten generations was in certain cases required. The alien had a specifically protected status, but so too did the covenant land.

This means that land possession as a covenant stewardship is placed by God's law not on a racial or nationalistic basis, but on a faith and covenant basis. Israel, after all, was very much a "mixed multitude" when it left Egypt, with many foreigners in its midst who had become covenant members (Exod. 12:38). Long before that, Abraham had fought a battle with 318 men "born in his house," but not of his blood (Gen. 14:14). When Jacob's family moved from Egypt, they numbered seventy blood kin and their wives (Gen. 46:27), but, with all those born of Abraham's men, who were not of his blood, they were so numerous that the land of Goshen was given to them (Gen. 47:27). Israel was thus a people in a covenant of faith, not of blood. Land possession was not a matter of blood membership but of faith and covenant membership. When they forsook the Lord and His covenant, God the Lord dispossessed them.

All of this is relevant to our time. The newspapers are full of articles about the increasing foreign ownerships of American properties, and magazine articles regularly supply us with data on the subject. At

one time, some states restricted land ownership to certain groups; these laws were nullified after World War II. Historically, such laws have been found again and again in history.

It is important, however, to recognize the difference between such laws and Biblical law. The non-Biblical laws have made a difference in terms of nationality or race. The modern concern is a sterile one, because it "protects" a particular national or racial group. There is no religious stipulation of faith or character. What advantage is there in being protected as an American if the word "American" is inclusive of men of evil character, perverts, hoodlums, and so on? Racial and nationalistic grouping are not moral divisions. In Amos 5:19, we have a particularly vivid and dramatic picture of false security: it is "as if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him." Serpents in the house are commonplace now that we have placed citizenship on a nonmoral basis!

We cannot (and must not) change the matter by new laws on property and its possession, because such laws are unrelated to moral facts. We are not a covenant people, and laws passed by Congress cannot make us moral or covenantal. We are not interested in converting the alien but in clobbering him. In fact, too many American church people are not even interested enough in the conversion of their children to put them into Christian schools. If they object to foreigners "buying up America," it is because they want "our kind" to own it, and "our kind" has gotten us into our present griefs and disasters. Too often the church itself has a false concept of membership.

The *first* and basic step towards a Biblical doctrine of ownership is to recognize that "the earth is the LORD's," not ours, nor is it the property of "our kind." History is a process whereby God disinherits one group to test another, and the whole world is now in a time of testing and judgment.

Second, not only is the earth the Lord's, but also "all they that dwell therein." That means us. We are God's property, and He can and will do with us whatsoever He pleases. All of us are full of ideas as to what God should do to everyone else in the way of judgment, all the while expecting Him to bless us! We need to think God's thoughts after Him, concerning ourselves and everything else.

Third, we must recognize the God-centered and covenantal basis of all ownership. What God gives to us, whether possessions or talents, is in terms of His ownership and purpose, not for our personal benefits. Our stewardship of all property includes our stewardship of ourselves, and we are accountable to Him for all that we are and have. Whether we like it or not, we shall be required to give an accounting.

Fourth, we must restore the covenantal basis of all life, and we must recognize that the covenant is a law covenant given to us as an act of grace, for our benefit and welfare. God's requirements of us are not intended to punish or deprive us, but to bless us. We are too often poor stewards of property, but God is not, and His chastenings have as their purpose the recalling of men and nations to His way.

We are His property and possession. His plan for us is better than anything we can imagine. We must bring ourselves and the aliens in our midst, and then our countries into His covenantal grace, mercy, and peace.

Fifth, Scripture is very clear about the alien *within* the country; he must be treated the same as a covenant man, even if an unbeliever. As a believer, he is free to intermarry with covenant families. The alien *outside* the covenant country has no property rights within the land. Ownership is a form of responsibility, and responsibility within the covenant land is to the covenant God. No unbeliever can exercise such responsibility; hence, he cannot buy into the land. The firstfruits of the earth, and the tithes on agricultural and commercial increase, belong to the Lord. Today, we see the increase in terms of taxes to the state and of profit to the owner. God and His covenant are divorced from ownership, and our responsibility to God is seen as a private option; for many people, to give or not to God is their decision, not God's law. Having separated God from the ownership of the earth, God is separating men from control of the land and of the city.

56

THE DECAPITALIZATION OF MANKIND

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 145, November 1991

The older meaning of capitalization meant the ability to convert one's holdings into cash and other assets. A more modern meaning, in accounting, tells us how far we have strayed: it has come to mean the number of shares and debts outstanding.

By contrast, decapitalization is the loss of assets and holdings. I recall, after the 1971 earthquake in the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles, that many office buildings lost many windows. A glass-walled bank in Westwood lost all. Someone said that this was all good for business! It was, in fact, decapitalizing, because money that would otherwise have gone into productive uses went into massive repairs of various kinds.

Decapitalization is more than material and financial. It is also moral and religious. There are obvious examples of this. Abortion is a form of human, moral, and religious decapitalization. Before abortions were legalized, there were serious declines in the life of people: they had decapitalized themselves religiously. Only a Christian renewal can recapitalize people. Remember, in the Wichita, Kansas case, the abortion clinic was owned and operated by a doctor who is a member of an "evangelical" church whose pastor disapproves of abortion! Homosexuality is another form of moral decapitalization, as are ungodly films and television shows.

To abhor these things on humanistic grounds is far from enough. I know humanists who hate homosexuality and are against abortion. They are themselves a part of the decapitalization of humanity. We must be governed by God and His law-word, not by humanistic feelings.

A major source of decapitalization all over the world, from the simplest tribal society to the major power states, is envy. Envy resents any and every kind of success; it hates any and all who are one's betters or superiors. It cannot even accept help from more successful men without hostility.

One of the major business successes of our day has been the "fast food" chains. Their founders have developed a standardized cuisine based on careful studies of tastes, costs, and popular appeal. Some have even developed a standardized architecture which most efficiently promotes work and sales. Whatever one's opinion of their food, one must admit that they are a merchandising success. But they are not without problems, and it takes a special person to operate a "fast food" place successfully. The temptation is to think that one can improve on a tested success! The temptation is to add one's own "wisdom" to the operation, and the results are usually very, very bad.

People are unwilling to say that others know more than they do, are wiser than they are, and also are better experienced. I have been disgusted more than once at the envy shown by assistant pastors and staff members for the senior pastor. Of course the senior pastor has faults; none of us is perfect. Of course there are some things that can be improved on; what is there that cannot be? But subordinates are hired to do a specific job, not to correct their superior. All their purported "wisdom" is usually another name for envy. The same is true in Christian schools, businesses, institutions of various sorts, and so on.

Envy destroys progress. It decapitalizes the envious man and also his society. Some old American proverbs, now forgotten, spoke accurately of envy: "The dogs of envy bark at a celebrity." "As a moth gnaws at a garment, so does envy consume a man." "The envious die, but envy never." "After honor and state, follow envy and hate." "The dog with the bone is always in danger."

In Scripture, Proverbs 14:30 tells us, "A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones." Many people and many societies now are suffering from "rottenness of the bones." Proverbs 27:4 says, "Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?" We are told that Pilate, faced with the arrested Christ, and the leaders of Judea, "knew that for envy they had delivered him" (Matt. 27:18). Out of envy, in the church today all too many suffer greatly, among both the clergy and the people. As a result, we have a decapitalized church, rendered weak by envy, which is itself a manifestation of little or no faith, and a contempt for the Holy Spirit.

One of the dramatic successes of the modern age has been industry, business, farming, and ranching, i.e., the whole realm of production. The hostility manifested towards this sphere is amazing. To speak favorably about their productivity is seen by many as evil, or as a sign that one has "sold out." All this is grounded in envy, in a hatred for anyone more successful, more intelligent, or more wealthy than we are. Education today

is too often indoctrination into envy, so that our schools are schools for barbarians.

Envy decapitalizes mankind because it strikes at the best men in every field and seeks to level them to the same status as failures.

There is not much hope for the future of the Soviet Union countries, nor for Central Europe, unless they can cast off envy. This is also true of Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas, and including the United States. Modern politics are the politics of envy. As a result, no matter who wins, we usually go from bad to worse. Our political messiahs all have a common gospel, envy. Satisfy the envy of evil men, and paradise will be restored.

Not without reason, very early in church history theologians and pastors classified envy as one of the seven deadly sins. It is indeed a deadly sin, because it destroys every institution and every social order it commands.

People are envious because they are sinners, some saved, some lost. Basic to our original sin is the will to be our own god, knowing or determining for ourselves all law and morality, what is good and what is evil, and all things else. Not being a god, we cannot so reorder the world, however much we try, and so we show our sin by trying to strike at all who are above us. How dare they excel, or be rich, when we are not?! But, as an old Russian proverb has it, "If your face is ugly, don't blame the mirror."

Envy destroys man; a man's body may be in fine shape, but is if his heart dies, he is dead. Envy does this to man. An old proverb common to many Christian countries says, "The Devil does not come until he is called." With envy, we are calling up the devils of destruction.

The decapitalization of the world is in process through envy. People on all sides manifest hostility to anyone more successful than they. Envy builds the coffin of every culture governed by it.

There are many good Biblical texts on envy. How sad that it is not the subject of preaching.

57

WEALTH

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 26, November 1981

The modern attitude towards wealth is a most ambivalent one. Man's materialistic bent makes him desire wealth and hunger passionately for it. Modern advertising appeals to this lust for wealth, and much of current selling and buying is motivated by the urge to appear wealthy, while appearing unconcerned about wealth. To be wealthy is seen as a reproach by the very people who hunger for wealth. In their envy, they try to make wealth into the great sin of the times. Wealth is presented as the product of exploitation; it is depicted as evidence of unconcern for the poor and needy and as something to feel guilty about. Modern man has a love-hate relationship and attitude towards wealth.

The matter is even more complex than that. The contemporary view of wealth has no awareness of the fact that wealth in different areas has meant different things. A man with many (and godly) children and grandchildren can and commonly has felt very rich, although having relatively little money. Moreover, money has not always been an evidence of wealth; more often, land has been the index of wealth, and sometimes position. Then, too, people can sometimes be rich and feel poor. A few years ago, one of America's wealthiest women married one of America's wealthier men. Both had jealous regards for their money, and they agreed, before their wedding, to share equally all living costs. The marriage foundered, because the bridegroom, worried about the high cost of honeymoons, tried to make his bride share the cost of their honeymoon, beginning with their first breakfast! Despite all his wealth, he was in the true sense of the word, a very poor man.

Mental and religious attitudes thus are thoroughly intertwined with our ideas of wealth. What we believe can make our wealth a blessing or a curse in our eyes, and in the eyes of others. We can feel that wealth

gives us a privilege and responsibility, or we can regard it as something to apologize for, as though we had some unfair advantage because of it. Wealth can be a blessing in a godly era, and a burden in an age of envy.

It is important to recognize that the main word for *wealth* in the Hebrew, *chayil*, means *strength*. Another word means *substance*, another, *good*; still others mean *power*, *things laid up*, *fullness*, *rest*, *prosperity*. Clearly, the Bible does not see wealth as the problem, but the problem is what men do with it, and what the possessors of wealth themselves are. At times, some very harsh things are said about rich men, but wealth itself is seen as a blessing (Deut. 8:18). It is trust in wealth which is strongly condemned (Ps. 49:6–8). The love of wealth can lead men into grave injustices towards their poorer covenant brothers (Isa. 5:8–10). It is not money but "the love of money" which "is the root of all evil" (1 Tim. 6:10).

The idea of wealth has changed from age to age, and the concept of poverty also. Philippe Aries, in *The Hour of Our Death* (New York, NY: Alfred Knopf, 1981), notes that, in the Middle Ages, wealth was not seen as the possession of things; rather, it was identified with power over men, whereas poverty was identified with solitude (p. 136). Each concept of wealth creates its own culture, and its own advantages and problems.

Later, wealth was identified with cultivated lands and houses, and the wealthy families of Europe were not necessarily rich in money but in land and in castles or manor houses. Whatever gold or silver they acquired went into furthering their landed wealth. This attitude carried over into Colonial America, and, as rapidly as possible, bullion wealth, gold and silver, which was in excess of current needs, was turned into utensils. Much of Paul Revere's work in silver represented such assets, made for his contemporaries. In times of need, the silver teapots, trays, and other items were simply melted down into bullion for monetary use.

The Industrial Revolution redefined wealth. Capital wealth was less and less land and houses and more and more the means of production. It meant mines, ships, railroads, looms and mills, and the like. The social standard was still the older one, and the new capitalists, as they grew wealthy, bought country estates and married their children to the older families in order to gain status. Wealthy Americans bought English estates in order to feel truly rich! In time, however, the older doctrine of wealth began to decline. Both wealth and power were now industrial in orientation, and the future was defined, not in terms of land and houses, but in terms of industrial production. Thus, Henry Ford hated horses and worked to mechanize farming; he saw man's products as superior and promoted "soybean milk" and synthetic foods (John Cote Dahlinger and

Frances Spatz Leighton, *The Secret Life of Henry Ford* [Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1978] pp. 170–177). As a part of this same temper, for years oleomargarine was promoted as a better and healthier food than butter. At World Fairs, the wonderful world of plastics was presented as a great hope for man and as the new road to cheap wealth for all. Manufactured products as the key to popular wealth, and the means of production as the instrument of great wealth, played an important part in the development of the twentieth century and its technology. Few doctrines of wealth have had a more revolutionary impact on the world.

This new idea of wealth meant a more fluid and liquid conception of riches, and it moved quietly and steadily to another concept, one to which the market investor and speculator, while playing an important part in the development of industrial wealth, contributed greatly. The new wealth was *monetary*. It meant, not simply the ownership of the means of production, but money, millions and even billions of dollars in money. The idea of money as wealth was being separated from the production which created it.

Less and less in the popular imagination was the really rich man the producer, and more and more the nonworking investor and playboy. Since World War II, we have seen the rapid development of an anticapitalist mentality. Ludwig von Mises has written with especial effectiveness about the implications of this phenomenon in *The Anti-Capitalist Mentality* (1956). At the same time, an unprecedented number of people have become "investors" in the stock market; large numbers of these new "investors" have a hostility to the free market and demand regulations of industry. They seem to regard the stock exchange as something like Las Vegas and a slot machine, or, better, like a race track and horse betting. The idea of money has for many separated itself from the means of production.

The consequences of this have been far-reaching. Wealth has come to mean money, not land, houses, and the means of production. The idea of wealth has become highly liquid, and the new money is equally liquid. It is fiat money, paper money.

A society which separates wealth from the realities of land, houses, and the means of production on the one hand, and the capital of work and thrift on the other, will soon have a money which is inflated, because its idea of wealth is inflated; it has no substance.

At the same time, the doctrine of wealth will shift from a production orientation to a consumer orientation. Service industries begin to predominate over production industries. The social structure stresses wealth while producing less and less of it.

At the same time, a change takes place in the uses of wealth. We have already noted the prevalence of the consumer mentality in an inflationary culture. There is, however, always another use of wealth, for *benevolence*. Men in every age have in varying degrees shared their wealth with others; in particular, this has been a basic aspect of every culture which to any degree has been influenced by Christianity. Philanthropy becomes a major social force.

The care of the poor, the sick, and the hungry was in the Middle Ages the function of Christian foundations. Monasteries provided for a variety of social needs, and, whatever other criticisms were made of the church, a lack of charity was rarely charged or valid.

However, charity, like wealth, can be variously defined and often has radically different motivations. Helmut Schoeck, in *Envy* (1966), has shown that, in many cultures, not only is envy the basis of law but also of charity. To avoid the destructive forces of envy, the men who accumulate riches regularly divest themselves of all that they possess. Because, as Schoeck demonstrates, "the envious man is, by definition, the negation of the basis of any society" (p. 26), "charity" in such a society is counterproductive and is socially destructive. Prince Kropotkin in *Mutual Aid* chose to see such "charity" as evidence of a universal moral character in men, and in this he followed Darwin's suggestion in his *Descent of Man*. However, as Schoeck shows, the desire for an equalitarian society comes from envy, not from any noble motive, and, as a result, the private and statist "charity" created by envy is socially ruinous.

In Buddhism, charity has in large measure a contempt for life. A very popular tale among the Buddhist peasantry is that of King Sivi, who gave away his eyes, and Vessantara, who gave away his kingdom, all his possessions, and even his wife and children. Many of the classic tales of Buddhist charity have a strongly suicidal character.

This suicidal motive is an important fact. Whenever and wherever envy becomes a governing force in charitable giving, suicide becomes a ruling factor. In the United States, for example, many heirs to great fortunes are so heavily influenced by the politics of guilt, pity, and envy, that their charities had a strongly suicidal element. Such persons seek to absolve themselves of guilt and to escape from envy by becoming advocates of radical politics and instruments of charities designed to allay envy. Such charities do not stifle envy; rather, they feed and justify it.

In this there is a relationship to Hindu charity, which, as A. S. Geden showed, has a religious motive, "the desire to secure personal advantages and reward in the future life" (James Hastings, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 3, p. 388). Not generosity but a desire to escape from

Karma and the cycle of reincarnation governs such charity. The goal of society and of charity is thus not community and love but an escape from this world. The rich give to expiate past sins and to improve their karma and their future reincarnations.

The goal in these various forms of non-Biblical charity is thus man-centered. Man seeks by his giving to gain a personal advantage: deliverance from guilt, social approval, a mitigation of karmic burdens and an improvement of future lives, and so on.

In other words, many of these charities are past-oriented, and others are death-oriented. In past-oriented charities, the donor is seeking to make atonement for past sins and guilt, by himself or by his parents. The present world is essentially a place wherein atonement is made for the past. The inheritance of wealth is seen as a burden which must be expiated for and justified by a course of guilt-governed charitable giving. Much of modern humanistic giving has such a motive. Great fortunes lead to great foundations whose function is to rehabilitate a bad conscience or a "bad name." The giving of such foundations is thus essentially on a false basis.

Other charities are death-oriented. There is a link between wealth and death; the old saying has it that "you can't take it with you," but death-oriented giving seeks to evade the force of that fact. Death-oriented charities seek to build up points for the afterlife, either by their effect on the afterlife, or by their effect on one's name and reputation here on earth. In many cases, charities and foundations are both past-oriented and death-oriented.

Biblical wealth and charity have as their focus the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt. 6:33). Both acquisition and dispersion are governed by God's law and justice. Their function is to capitalize the present and the future under God and to further covenant life. When a man gives to justify or to atone for his wealth, his giving is self-serving and counterproductive. When he acquires wealth and gives of it in terms of God's calling and Kingdom, his activity furthers community. He then functions as a member of a covenant community, and his relationship to all who are outside the covenant is one of justice and mercy.

In such a perspective, wealth is not seen as power over men, nor as lands and houses (however desirable), nor as the means of production, and certainly not as fiat money. What a man has is the blessing of the Lord, and to be used in terms of God's law-word. All that we are and have is of the providence of God and to be used in terms of His calling, justice, and law. St. Paul states the matter simply and bluntly: "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst

not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. 4:7).

The wealth we have received from God may be material or intellectual; it can be money, lands, graces, aptitudes, and callings. This wealth can be accompanied by money or come without it. In any and in every case, we all have a common obligation to use it to God's glory and purpose. "The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it" (Prov. 10:22). Note that it is neither money nor land that makes us rich in the Biblical sense but "the blessing of the LORD." We cannot have that blessing or richness if we see only money as wealth, nor if we are eaten by envy. What we have, we must give. Our Lord is emphatic on this: "freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8). If we do not, we are very poor indeed, poor in our very being. Rich man or poor man, which are you?

58

WEALTH, RESPONSIBILITY, AND COWARDICE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 93, January 1988

In recent years, a very important fact with great repercussions has marked our society. At one time, for better or worse, men of great wealth exercised important powers and positions in society. Their gifts created charities, subsidized the arts, and governed many areas of life. In more ways than one, men of great wealth set the pace.

In this century, this has steadily become reversed. In part, this is due to the democratization which Alexis de Tocqueville feared would subvert Western civilization and lead to a barbarization of society.

But this is not all. There are other factors which are far more important which have been at work. There is a very clear religious dimension here which we must never overlook. The Bible is clear that wealth brings with it responsibilities. Our Lord sums up the meaning of the law and the prophets in these words: "*For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more*" (Luke 12:48). The history of Western civilization and Christendom cannot be written apart from these words. Both the medieval church, and the Reformation churches, have unleashed vast sums of giving by their insistence on the duties of all who prosper, whether little or much, towards others. In every part of the world, such Christian giving has made an impact unequalled in all of history. It warps history to make no note of this fact.

In recent years, however, some signs of change are readily apparent. The patronage of the arts is an obvious realm in which the difference appears. The ultramodern, avant-garde art, really pretentious junk art, has a patronage perhaps unequalled in history. To gain respectability, our corporations great and small buy such junk art for their office and

corridor walls, and to store in their warehouses. The corporations are the mainstay of the various purveyors of junk art. At the same time, television has on its "public" channels all kinds of programs financed by corporations.

Two things can be said. *First*, all such funding, including much funding of the left, wins no friends for the corporations. Their money is taken, and they continue to be reviled. They in effect finance their own condemnation. *Second*, the corporations are careful to give little or nothing to Christian churches and agencies which are evangelical or Reformed. Except for a few men, they act as though some kind of sin against society would be committed by such a gift. Some executives justify this, saying, our shareholders are not all Christian, so it would mean problems if we gave such gifts. But many of their shareholders are Christians: does their stand and faith count for nothing? Moreover, how many of their shareholders would favor their gifts to leftist causes?

The problem lies elsewhere. *First*, too many corporate executives are men without faith. They may belong to "mainline" churches, and, in some parts of the country, are expected to join them for public relations purposes, but they are still men without faith, often in churches without faith. Recent studies have shown that, whereas most Americans affirm a Christian faith, a very great majority of the men in the communications media do not. Moreover, many are strongly anti-Christian. It would be interesting to see if a study of corporate executives would give like results. Of course, for public relations purposes, many such executives would perhaps routinely give dishonest answers.

Second, without faith, a man finds courage drained out of his system. For him, then, the world is without meaning, and, in such a world, what is worth fighting for? To such a man, easy and evasive solutions are the best. Not surprisingly, cowardice has become very common among corporate executives. Nowadays, to find a courageous executive usually means that he is a believer, whether Christian or Jew. He does not evade responsibility: he assumes it as a privilege. Most, however, have much to lose and no faith, and hence are timid and cowardly.

As a result, most corporate leaders today are supportive of power, whoever holds it. They reject any stand on the basis of beliefs and morals, and hold to a pragmatic position.

As a result of this lack of faith, and this cowardice, men of wealth have abandoned their responsibilities to society. Some such men have organized various councils to deal with a variety of social and political issues, but all these groups are models of impotence. If a problem arises, and a group or people become threatening, the "solution" is to throw money at

them. Hence our foreign aid program, and hence, too, our insane bank loans to countries incapable of repayment. The solutions of these councils are the "solutions" of bankruptcy — moral, intellectual, and financial.

Because of this, we have seen the rise of underground man, of the lowest elements in society. They are the new revolutionary element! They are bold, because, having nothing, they have nothing to lose. And they are bold because they can smell the fear of them by the rich, and also by the middle class.

Moreover, because the rich, *and* the middle class, are marked by a weak faith or no faith at all, they are cowardly when challenged. The underground people, sensing this, push as much as they can.

Once underground man was confronted with the challenge of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Now, money is thrown at him in the vain hope of buying him off.

Cowards find talk of conspiracies comforting. Conspiracies have always existed, but men of faith have conquered them again and again over the centuries. Now, as someone has rightly observed, the homosexuals have come out of the closet, and the Christians have entered the closet. Every kind of group grows bolder as the rich, the middle class, and the lower class show a weak faith and much cowardice. Cowardice is no respecter of class or status.

"For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." Our generation has been given much, and the Lord requires much of us. We have been schooled to demand much of others, however, and we demand to be saved! I am regularly amazed by the fact that people who have *never* contributed a penny to Chalcedon will write to demand hours of thought and work from us at their bidding! One such person wrote twice thereafter, very indignantly, to indict us for failing to answer to his every demand! As a professor of history told me about fifteen years ago, we are witnessing the death of civility.

Much is required of this generation, and the time of reckoning draws near. We have a calling to serve the Lord with all our heart, mind, and being. We have a work to do, or a judgment to face. As against all that we face, we have the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). If we know Christ, then we know the power of His resurrection (Phil. 3:10), so that we are summoned, not to continue in weakness or cowardice, but in His almighty power.

59

WEALTH AND HEIRSHIP

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 27, December 1981

One of the most powerful, corrosive, and destructive forces in all of history is very much at work today in all the world: envy. Envy is, in terms of Biblical faith, very clearly a sin, but in the modern age, it comes disguised as a virtue. The motive force in much of the equalitarianism of our day is not a sense of brotherhood but an envy which seeks to level all things. Envy also masks itself as a concern, very commonly, for social justice, and it lays claims to saintly character while promoting hatred, revolution, and murder.

Envy wars against status, but every revolution in the modern age has promoted a new elitism and established a social order more static, fixed, and class-conscious than those orders it displaces. Envy claims to promote equality, justice, and democracy, while in practice working to destroy all three of these things. Envy capitalizes on issues, not on principles. The world being a sinful and fallen order, the best of societies have glaring defects in need of correction, but envy capitalizes on these defects while avoiding principles. Envy does not correct: it destroys.

Because envy is sin, it wars against virtue and character. While capitalizing on the weaknesses of, let us say, the middle class, the doctors, technicians, press, clergy, and so on, it seeks in reality to suppress and destroy their character and strength. It says, in effect, let none be better than myself. (Some years ago, as a young man, I saw in a particular church an evil family champion a pastor of bad character. In one incident, I learned that they liked him for his sins, because it "justified" them, whereas every godly man was slandered and resented by them.) The unwritten law in the hearts of envious men is, let no man be better than myself.

Because envy is evil, it resents the good and is hence very destructive socially. It reduces church, state, and society to the lowest common

denominator. Aristides the Just (ca. 468 B.C.), an Athenian statesman and general, was ostracized from the city in part because many people were resentful of hearing him called "the Just." Then and now, many people prefer a corrupt politician to a good and honest man: they resent excellence and superiority.

The role of envy in many spheres and with respect to many things could be cited at length, but our concern now is with a key area for envy: wealth and heirship. It is commonly said that we live in a very materialistic age; Pitirim Sorokin called it also a sensate culture. The lust for wealth, or at least the appearance of wealth, is commonplace. A variety of things such as furniture, automobiles, and clothing, sell less for their durability and more for their utility in creating the proper image, the image of careless and assumed wealth.

Together with this lust for material and monetary wealth goes a resentment for the wealthy. The tacit premise is that, let no man be wealthy if we cannot all be wealthy. Hence, the revolutionary urge is to destroy wealth and then try to recreate it for all, an illusory hope. The result instead is a wealthy group of social planners who will not allow any man to transcend their control or status.

At the same time, there is an intense envy and resentment of heirs. How dare anyone inherit wealth! Over the years, from professors, students, and a wide range of peoples, I have heard expressed a radical hostility to heirship. Our estate and inheritance taxes witness to this hatred, and today this uncontrolled envy of heirs has made the robbing of widows and orphans a matter of state policy. The estate of the father may be a limited one and of consequence only because of inflation, but envy strikes increasingly lower and lower, from the upper class to the middle class, and now increasingly lower on the economic scale. The income tax is similarly a consequence of envy.

Many churchmen are very much a part of this world of envy, and they promote it as gospel. The word "rich" (by which they mean richer than I) is for many the ultimate insult. Our Chalcedon mailing list friends report some examples of this. One clergyman said that it was immoral for any man to have an income in excess of $20,000 a year; another, several hundred miles away, said that an annual income of over $40,000 was un-Christian and a sin. (It takes little imagination to guess what their own salaries were!)

If a goodly income is a sin, how much more so an inheritance in the eyes of these men! An heir receives money he has not earned, we are told, and therefore does not deserve. Such money should be taken from heirs and given to "the needy." In practice, taking money from the rich means

giving it to an even richer state, not to the needy. Moreover, if failure to earn the money is the heir's problem, then why is it proper to give this money either to the state or to the needy, neither of whom have earned it? We have, in all envy and its social programs, a double standard.

There is one point, and a necessary point, which we must grant, and, in fact, we must insist on granting: the heir's money is unearned. This is a crucial point theologically, as we shall see. However, before proceeding to that fact, let us stop briefly to stress an important distinction. There is a very great difference between unearned wealth and unjustly gained wealth. My father left me no money, being a poor pastor, but he left me some books (a very important form of wealth for me). I have a personal library of 25–30,000 books, many of which I inherited from my father, and from two other pastors (and many of which I bought). I did not earn many of those books (although many I did). Am I unjustly the owner of the unearned books? They were given to me as acts of love and grace, and I am happily and gratefully their present possessor. My books are a form of wealth for me, and they have been so also for friends and associates who have used them in their research. Only if I were to have some stolen books in my library would these be an illegitimate form of wealth. The distinction between legitimate and illegitimate wealth must not be obscured.

Now we are ready to deal with the key question, the unearned nature of wealth which is inherited. The modern world, being anti-Christian, is very hostile to heirship, whereas the Christian must regard it as central to his faith. There are far-reaching theological implications here. Very centrally, the doctrine of grace is involved.

The language of "rights" is basic to our humanistic age, which at the same time is the most murderous era in all history, very often in the name of the rights of man. Modern man assumes that he has a right to many things, and, with each decade, the catalogue of rights is increased, as is the scale of oppression and totalitarianism in the name of rights.

Theologically, however, man has no rights as he stands before God. All that he has is of grace, sovereign grace. Both man and his world are the creation of the triune God. No man is born into an empty world; we are all born heirs of our history, and we inherit the riches and the devastations of our forbears. We are what we are by the grace and the providence of God. St. Paul, in a key verse, struck at the pretensions of man, saying, "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. 4:7).

St. Peter says that life itself is a grace, a gift of God (1 Pet. 3:7). We are not the authors of life, nor the determiners of the conditions thereof. Life

is a grace, a gift from God, and, for better or worse, we are all heirs. Our inheritance is often a marred one because of sin, but, all the same, we are heirs, redeemed or unredeemed. If we fail to recognize God's grace and purpose, or fail to bow before His sovereignty, we are judged and disinherited.

But, if we are the redeemed, we are heirs of the Kingdom of God, confirmed heirs, heirs together with Christ, we are repeatedly told (Rom. 8:17; Gal. 3:29, 4:7; Eph. 3:6; Heb. 6:17; James 2:5, etc.).

The Bible requires that we recognize the fact of grace and heirship. They are essential to the doctrine of salvation, and also to the Biblical way of life. What we are, we have received, and we are not our own (1 Cor. 6:19). "Therefore let no man glory in men" (1 Cor. 3:21) for any reason, neither in other men nor especially in ourselves. We are not only created by the Lord but also bought back and redeemed at the price of Christ's blood (1 Cor. 6:20).

The envious man of today refuses to see all this. The world is a product of chance, and, in that realm of chance, man has struggled, fought, survived, and advanced himself. He has come so far that he can now self-consciously control and direct his future evolution. We have here the most radical doctrine of works in all history. The works involved are "red in tooth and claw." And man evolves by destroying lesser forms, including the abortion of unwanted and also potentially defective unborn babies, he believes.

This envious humanistic man feels justified also in striking at the born, heirs especially, in order to further his concept of social advance and justice. Because he is at war with God, this humanistic man rejects radically the idea of grace and heirship in any and every realm, from the theological to the societal. He does more than reject it: he wars against it, and it is a total war.

Some scholars write as though Social Darwinism were a thing of the past. Their works are simply a fraud. What has passed away is the Social Darwinism of the men of Carnegie's day and class, i.e., the Social Darwinism of the powerful and largely non-Christian or anti-Christian industrialists who believed in the manipulation of the state for their purposes. In their place, we have the Social Darwinism of socialism and modern democracies, a disguised form thereof but real all the same. Behind the façade of benevolence, the modern state applies a legal guillotine to all whom it deems unfit to serve.

In such a situation, more than ever, it is imperative for Christians to revive the Biblical doctrines of grace and heirship. In a world of grace, we are all heirs: we have received unearned wealth without any work or

works on our part. Heirship imposes upon us a major task of stewardship. The whole of the law gives us the pattern of stewardship for the heirs of grace. Our Lord sums it all up in six words: "freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8).

This commandment was given to the disciples, and to us. It applies to all, whether rich or poor according to man's reckoning. We are all too prone today to assume that the duty to give freely or generously belongs to the rich, and the rest of us have the duty of receiving! It is, in fact, basic to envy that it demands that the envied give and the envier either receive or determine the disposition of that which is given. We have seen a great variety of peoples see themselves as the necessary recipients. The various minority groups believe that they have a right to gifts. So, too, do the elderly, and, along with the state school personnel, they constitute our most powerful lobby. Of course, industry, agriculture, and labor all seek subsidies or gifts. Envy leads to the world of coercion.

The Bible, however, says that all men begin with the grace of life. The redeemed are doubly the recipients of grace, and they are the heirs-designate of all things in Christ. They have received freely, and they must give freely.

The Christian position is thus founded on heirship and grace. We must recognize that we have received freely and that the Lord requires us to work for the reconstruction of all things in terms of God's law-word. This reconstruction requires that we give our lives, time, thought, effort, and money to that end. When James speaks of us as heirs (James 2:5), and as joint heirs with Christ the King, princes of grace, he summons us to fulfill or keep the royal law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (James 2:8).

We are told, "thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth" (Deut. 8:18). We are told, "Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land" (Deut. 15:11).

Envy is divisive and destructive. It creates a world of conflict and hatred. Hatred of the rich is as much a sin as hatred of the poor is. When we are commanded by God to love our neighbor, no qualifications are made exempting us from loving him if he is rich or poor, black or white. We are to fulfill, i.e., keep the law in relation to him by respecting the sanctity of his marriage, life, property, and reputation, in word, thought, and deed (Rom. 13:8–10), and to see him as our God-given neighbor.

Some neighbors will indeed be problems, of that there is no question! However, we must remember that in this world of grace and heirship, among the things we often inherit are problems. We have them because

God intended them, not for us to complain about but to meet in His grace and by His law-word. We must face them in the confidence of Romans 8:28, that indeed all things do work together for good to them who love God and are the called according to His purpose. But to be called of God means that we are fulfilling His calling.

If all is of grace, there is no place for envy. We are heirs by the adoption of grace in order that we might give of that which we have received in order to be faithful citizens and members of the Kingdom of God.

Let us leave the world of envy for the wealth of grace and heirship.

60

WEALTH AND THE CITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 28, January 1982

The word *society* comes from *socius*, an associate. A society is a family group in some sense, a community of people who feel some kinship. Historically, the binding tie in a society is a common faith, and obedience to the law of that faith. All who deny that faith and law have been in the past called *outlaws*.

The locale of a society has historically been a city, not the city as a civil structure but the city as a faith center. In the ancient world, in the "middle ages," in the Puritan village, and elsewhere, the center of the city has been the temple, cathedral, or church.

The city as the faith center for an area has thus also been the wealth center. A people's life, wealth, and faith are closely linked. As our Lord says, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:21). If a people's treasure is their faith and in society of faith, then their hearts and their material wealth will be there also, in the same locale.

For ages, that center of faith, society, and wealth was also walled, to protect the concentration of treasures in the forms of faith, lives, society, and material wealth. The walled city was thus a symbol of a common faith and life, and also of security. (When the Huguenots lost their walled cities, it was the beginning of the end for them.) At the same time, the walled city became a target for every enemy, and every thief. The strength and wealth of the city attracted the attention of the lawless.

Faith, wealth, family, land, and the city have often been associated as means of strength and security. Thus, Proverbs 10:15 reads, "The rich man's wealth is his strong city: the destruction of the poor is their poverty." As R. N. Whybray, in *The Book of Proverbs*, noted, "wealth protects a man from misfortune just as a strongly fortified capital protects a king from his enemies." On the other hand, Proverbs 18:10–11 tells us that

there are two different ways to obtain security in life: to trust in God, or to trust in wealth. The separation of wealth from faith is the destruction of man and finally of wealth. The same is true of the walled city: "except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps. 127:1). Apart from the Lord and faith in Him, the city can be a death trap, and so can the countryside, too.

A city gives men proximity one to another, but without the moral bond of a common faith, the city and its government become aliens and then oppressors of the people. In the ancient city, citizens were all who partook of the lustrations or whatever other rite of atonement they adhered to. In other words, atonement made the city and the citizen. Hence, to attempt to change faiths (and atonements) was an act of revolution. The new faith had to be either incorporated with the current one, or destroyed. Hence the persecution of the early church. Its lord was not Caesar but Jesus Christ, and its atonement was not from the civil religion but the cross.

Modern man has worked self-consciously to throw off the shackles of the past, most notably to discard Biblical faith and all its restraints. The modern city is to be the work of man. No less than the builders of the Tower of Babel who sought to build a social order without God, have the builders of the modern city, and the modern state, sought a nontheistic order. The modern state and the modern city united to assert a neutrality and an autonomy from God. Neutrality commended itself as a restraint upon the clamor of various churches to be established. Under the merits of antiestablishmentarianism, a separation from Christianity was effected. This supposed neutrality with respect to the claims of all religions served to mask an allegiance to another religion, humanism, which is the new established religion of states, courts, and state schools of the modern age.

At the same time, the claim to autonomy was advanced. The city and the state are supposedly independent of God; they constitute a free zone where God's power and law do not extend, and where man as man is his own god and law. The autonomous city sees itself as the free city, free to plan and chart its course in terms of purely humanistic considerations. The modern city was determined to be the City of Man, not the City of God.

A fundamental assumption of this new faith has been at worst the moral neutrality of man, or at best the goodness of man. All the centuries of slow and painstaking work to civilize the barbarian peoples by means of faith, and to order their lives by means of God's law, were viewed as a great aberration. Man will be most good when most natural, it was

declared. As against the redeemed, twice-born man, the once-born man was championed. As against supernatural man, natural man was seen as the hope of the world.

Men like Horace Mann were enthusiastic about the prospects of mankind. The natural man, reeducated out of the superstitions of the past, would produce a crime-free, poverty-free world in which man would be his own lord. Disagreements were prevalent in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as to the best means to this golden age of man. Some believed revolution and massive destruction were needed; others advocated democracy and mass education as the way to the great City of Man, the "Great Community" of John Dewey and others.

But a problem arose, however unacknowledged. Whether in the United States or the Soviet Union, Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas, or elsewhere, man remained not what the ideologists and theoreticians said he was, but what God says man is, a sinner.

The new City of Man was to be a product of humanistic education, the new technology, and autonomous wealth. Humanistic education has produced a new barbarian, and mass illiteracy. The liberal Jonathan Kozol, in *Prisoners of Silence* (1980), cites federal data which reveals that 54 to 64 million Americans are not truly literate, and of these 23 million are illiterate. Natural man, moreover, was not only now increasingly illiterate but also immoral and lawless. The city was becoming a dangerous place, and more and more parents feared their own children. In perhaps the safest of America's very largest cities, over 60,000 homes were robbed in 1981. The city was now breeding its own destruction.

Wealth without faith was proving to be wealth without principles, immoral and arrogant, even as the poor had also become, as well as a derelict middle class. Technology has indeed been creating marvels, but the people who dwell among them, and use them, are increasingly like marauding barbarians in an ancient city. Neither technology nor the bobby pin have served to make man one whit a better man in any moral sense.

The new humanistic man is a parasite. Whether farmer, manufacturer, worker, or unemployed, he wants subsidies. The modern city is a subsidy center. The earlier mercantilism worked to create the humanistic, producing, urban center by means of protectionism and tariffs. A new kind of wall surrounds the city. The ancient city was walled against thieves and enemies. The modern city is walled against competition and the free market.

The United States, in its earliest years, faced a choice here. It could become the great supplier to the world of food, minerals, and other resources. It chose, however, to follow the very European pattern it had in

part fought against, protectionism aimed at subsidizing industry and the city. Given the virtues of industry and commerce, protectionism all the same perverts them and renders them a source of continuing problems. Thomas Jefferson protested against these policies until he became president, whereupon he and his followers became Federalists and protectionists. The protectionism became a major contributing cause of the conflict between the North and the South, and of war in 1860.

Protectionism and subsidies do not stop. It was a natural development of this premise that led, step by step, to welfarism, to Medicare, to cradle-to-grave subsidies for all. How dare one class complain about subsidies to another class when all are increasingly becoming beneficiaries?

Thus, we have the grand climax of the modern age. Having destroyed the city as a faith center, it has converted the city into a welfare center. It is routine now for our major cities to have a welfare population of a million or more. These are simply the recipients of actual welfare checks. Others receive subsidies, and some are heavily penalized to provide subsidies to others. The subsidy program now extends into all the world in terms of foreign aid to nations. It includes subsidies to foreign industries by restraints upon U.S. producers (i.e., in oil, cattle, etc.) which handicap them. The faith city has been supplanted by the welfare city, a lawless and selfish place.

The result is a debauchery of men and money. Protectionism must be paid for, and it is paid for by deficit financing, mortgaging the future to pay for the present. Inflation and debt are basic to the modern city. (If only the debt-free buildings and homes were to remain in our big cities, and all others suddenly disappeared, our cities would suddenly become small towns.)

Men, too, are debauched. Helmut Thielicke, in *Nihilism* (1961), wrote on the fact that atheistic states always become totalitarian. The premise of atheism is that "without God, everything is lawful," and men then act on this, and no man can trust another. The state becomes a police state, because the people can only be held in check by stronger and stronger controls, and by terror. (Also, the state begins to play god.) Law then becomes what the state says it is, and the result is the breakdown of law, because it has no roots in the nature of being. The city then begins to resemble a nightmare.

Past history gives us many examples of the sacking of cities by invaders. One of the worst instances was the sack of Rome by the armies of Spain. These sacks were prompted by war and by enmity. Now we have a different kind of sacking, one by the people of the city, the poor, minority groups, youths, and college and university students. The second half of

the twentieth century has seen more cities sacked than centuries before. The modern city is indeed a wealth center, but it is not a society, and it is being sacked by its own children.

When Rome was first sacked by the barbarians, many people, when the hordes passed, went back to life as usual. The rich villas of southern Gaul continued to be the locale of gay parties, music, poetry, and fox hunts by the wealthy, literate, and cultured old Romans, but, little by little, their lights went out, only to be relit out of the ruins and among the barbarians by Christianity.

What had happened was that the City of Rome, the wealth center, had become the poverty center. This was physically true in that welfare mobs ruled the city, to the point that emperors found it much more expedient to live elsewhere. For Roman emperors, Rome had become an unsafe place, a place of assassinations, riots, and unruly mobs.

Well before that, however, Rome had become, morally and religiously, a poverty center. The old Roman faith and virtue had given way to degeneracy and perversion. In time, as Rome's intangible wealth began to disappear, so too its tangible wealth followed and waned.

The wealth of a city begins and ends with its faith. If the city is not a faith center, it will cease to be a society and will become a conflict and poverty center.

One key form of wealth which has left the modern city is justice and vengeance, godly vengeance. One of the key facts of Scripture is God's declaration, "To me belongeth vengeance, and recompense" (Deut. 32:35; Ps. 94:1; 99:8; Isa. 34:8; Jer. 50:15; Ezek. 25:14; Nah. 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:8; etc.). We are commanded not to avenge ourselves, for "Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord" (Rom. 12:19).

The Greek text of the New Testament is as clear as to the meaning of vengeance as the church is confused. The word is *ekdikesis*, very literally, (that which proceeds) out of justice. When God says that vengeance belongs to Him, He is very plainly declaring that only His law is justice, and that no other law can be used to attain justice. When He forbids us to avenge ourselves, God is saying that we can have no law nor justice other than His own, and through His appointed means. This is the plain meaning of the statement in Scripture.

Clearly, justice is gone out of the city, the state, the church, and man. Humanistic doctrines of justice and the enforcement of justice prevail because the city is not a faith center, nor a justice center as Biblical faith requires it to be, but a man-center.

For a city to be a faith center means that it must be a justice center. Justice is a key form of wealth. (One Hebrew word for wealth is a

good thing.) The modern city is thus an impoverished place and a poverty center in every sense of the word. Not until the pulpits of the Word of God again become central to a city, and the Bible its word of justice and vengeance or that which proceeds out of justice, will the city again be a center of true wealth.

That restoration is under way, slowly but surely. The humanistic city still has its worst days ahead probably. However, out of its decay, the City of God will emerge. We are beginning to see the stirrings of a strong faith, among minority and majority groups alike. We are seeing the rise of Christian schools and agencies, manifesting a renewed literacy, and a greater Christian compassion than we have seen for years. We are witnessing on all sides the growth of Christian Reconstruction, and the applications of God's law-word to every area of life and thought.

We live in an exciting era. True, it is a time of conflict and of stress, a bloody and murderous age. An old "order," humanism, is in decay, and its strongholds are crumbling and collapsing. It is a time for building in the certainty of our Lord's triumph. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

61

WEALTH AND THE STATE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 30, March 1982

A key aspect of idolatry is that an often otherwise legitimate aspect of this world is made absolute. Very commonly, the state, which has a very limited but lawful status under God, is made into an idol and becomes, in Hegel's terms, God walking on earth. This is idolatry. However, it is equally false to see the state as absolute evil and the source of sin. It is the heart of man which is the source of sin, and the state reflects our sins and our envious desires.

The same is true of wealth. It is not in and of itself good, nor is it evil. It is man who makes wealth either a good or an evil. Wealth can be a blessing from God, and a means whereby we can bless others, or it can be a witness to our lust for power and a curse to others. Private wealth can capitalize a society, as it has in Christendom, or it can decapitalize a society, as in old India, where the vast wealth of the rajahs served only their pleasures.

Attempts, therefore, to think of wealth in isolation from God and His purposes lead us readily into idolatry. Wealth is made into an ultimate good or an ultimate evil, and the latter is becoming all too common in our day. For some churchmen, the ultimate evil is to be rich, especially a rich Christian in a hungry world. Some pastors actually declare that it is a sin for any man to be paid more than $20,000 a year, or, as another holds, more than $40,000 a year, which may be his way of saying it is a sin for others to make more than I do!

Wealth, like all things else, must be understood in terms of God's purposes. Any consideration apart from that is not faithful to Scripture, Again and again, the Bible speaks of God's concern for the poor, and while we are told that the poor man is our brother, it would be absurd to conclude that poverty is seen as a happy goal for man! Rather, we

are told, if God's people are faithful to His law, "there shall be no poor among you; for the Lord shall greatly bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it: Only if thou carefully harken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day" (Deut. 15:4–5). God thus designates the abolition of poverty as the goal of His law-word. To avoid the force of Deuteronomy 15:4–5, all too many will cite Matthew 26:11, "For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always." All this means is that the Lord told the disciples that, during their lifetime, they would always have opportunities to minister to the poor, but not to His physical person and presence.

Over and over again, the Bible stresses the fact that the godly seed must inherit the wealth, and that God's purpose in time is that all the world's wealth pour into the Kingdom of God: "ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves" (Isa. 61:6). God's purpose is that wealth capitalize the godly, and through them, His Kingdom. This capitalization of the Kingdom of God means conversion, knowledge, technology, and godly progress in every area of life and thought.

The modern world, however, is deeply committed to decapitalization because of the reign of envy. Envy says, if I cannot be rich, let no other man be rich. Modern politics and economics is governed by envy, and envy cloaks itself in the name of the welfare of the poor.

The world is now seeing the economic consequences of decapitalization. Through taxation and inflation, men's assets have been watered down and decapitalized. We hear much talk about the wealth of the "big" corporations, and too little about their precarious existence. Martin D. Weiss, in *The Great Money Panic* (1981), points out that in 1973 General Motors and its subsidiaries had an interest cost of 36 cents of every dollar of net profits. In 1979, interest costs were 93 cents of every dollar of net profit. The cost of borrowed money was almost equal to the money earned. The situation since has grown worse. In varying degrees, all of the 500 major corporations in the United States save one are in the same predicament. Probably the largest of all American corporations is General Motors. How "big" is it? The press, the university, the pulpit, and the media promote the idea of gigantism, as though our major corporations are rivals in size and wealth to the United States. However, as Michael Novak, in *Toward a Theology of the Corporation* (1981), has pointed out, "Running a multinational corporation in the *Fortune 500* is, in most instances, about equivalent to running a major university." The smallest of the 500 has only 529 employees; the largest, General

Motors, has no more than 14,000 employees in Michigan; add to this its over 200 units in over 177 congressional districts, and General Motors still does not equal in size and wealth the University of California. The problem with the corporations has not been their size and power but their cowardice in the face of federal power and their too frequent compliance.

The corporations have been decapitalized by controls, taxation, and inflation, and the people also. As long as inflation and fiat money continue, this decapitalization will continue. Each succeeding presidency has furthered this decapitalization in the name of remedying it. To rob the people, every political scoundrel pleads a great concern for the poor and the needy while never giving to any need out of their own often considerable wealth.

The central guilt, however, belongs to the church. There is scarcely a seminary where liberation theology, a sentimental form of Marxism, is not taught. Catholic and Protestant seminaries and missionary agencies are too often cesspools of liberation theology.

The pulpit, too, is radically delinquent. Where do we hear sermons on Matthew 23:14, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation"? Our Lord here thunders out against an evil which was small compared to what is commonplace today, our confiscation by estate and inheritance taxes of the properties rightfully belonging to widows and orphans. It is easy, in such contemporary instances, to feel a rage against the Internal Revenue Service, but this is to miss the point. The IRS is the agency of the voters' envy. Through Congress, we enact envy into law, and now that envy reaches into our pockets, we are angry. This is not to say that the IRS is without guilt, but that the primary guilt rests with Congress and the people. The fact is that the majority of the people want out of envy to see their superiors hurt, even if it means their own hurt. A friend, while in a country in Europe, was discussing the confiscatory taxation of that nation and called attention to its destructiveness. His hosts defended the taxation, while agreeing as to its threat. Their reason? It's good to see the high and mighty humbled.

Octavio Paz, in *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (1961), said, "Marx wrote that all radicalism is a form of humanism, since man is the root of both reason and society. Thus every revolution tries to create a world in which man, free at last from the trammels of the old regime, can express himself truly and fulfill his human condition. Man is a being who can realize himself, and *be* himself, only in a revolutionary society."

This revolutionary society is the goal of every humanistic state. Some hope to achieve it by violence, others by democratic change. In either

case, the goal is the same, man as god or, more specifically, the humanistic state as god. Since one attribute of God is creation, the modern state seeks to create wealth, cradle-to-grave or womb-to-tomb security, and also to create money. Modern money, fiat, paper money is the result. It is state-created money which is used to erode all traditional forms of wealth, and to place all wealth under the control of the state. We see today small family farms, in the same family for generations or from the colonial era, being sold because of taxes. This disaster is also taking place in Britain and elsewhere.

Godly wealth in Scripture is in terms of the faithful development of potentialities under God. God created the world, and He created the possibility of wealth through its natural resources, the earth's fertility, and the mind of man. Creation and all its ingredients are the handiwork of the triune God and none other. It is His law, therefore, which is the only true ground for godly wealth. The Lord condemns all *trust* in wealth as a form of humanism, as a kind of worship of the creation of our own hands rather than the Creator of all.

This, however, is the kind of wealth the modern state regards as alone acceptable, a state-created, humanistic wealth. Instead of being defined in terms of some God-given aspect of creation, gold, silver, land, or other assets, all wealth is to be reduced to state-created paper. Now the value of money is its liquidity which makes for its ready and easy use. When the modern hyper-taxing state creates a paper money inflation, it thereby requires every other form of wealth to be equally liquid. The family farm is no longer an inheritance from the past to the future generations; it is converted from a stable form of wealth to a highly unstable and liquid form by paper money, inflation, and taxation. In the years of limited state power, the tax on a family farm in many areas was a few dollars at most. After World War II, many farmers were shocked when their taxes hit $25 and then $50; now they run into the thousands of dollars. At present, a growing number of American farmers are in serious trouble because of the combination of high taxes and debts they cannot repay. In the United States, every economic crisis has been preceded by a farm crisis.

Decapitalization is a worldwide fact today. In the Soviet Union, it is far gone, and not for the first time. In 1939, Stalin's Russia was bankrupt; by means of World War II, it recapitalized itself through an act of piracy approved by Roosevelt and Churchill. The Soviet Union was allowed to seize Central Europe, cannibalize East Germany and Poland, and more. Since then, the Soviet Union has been recapitalized annually by aid from the United States, and from American and European banks. These loans have been even more profitable than the seizure of Central

Europe, perhaps. However, both by its foreign and its domestic policies, the United States has been decapitalizing itself. A socialistic economy is a parasitic one: its continued life depends on the life of the host. Both the Soviet Union *and* the United States are today parasites living off the American people. There is no future for the American people until they rid themselves of the parasites, which means a radical change of perspective with regard to the nature of civil government.

Unless we have freedom under God and in obedience to Him, our definition of wealth is born of hunger, not of bounty. One American, long a prisoner in the Soviet Union, saw wealth as one potato, and two potatoes as undreamed of wealth. A refugee couple from Cambodia celebrated their wedding anniversary in the Cambodian jungle with an unexpected and welcome gift in their hunger, a rat's skin shared with them, to boil into a broth. A decapitalized (and unfree) society redefines wealth in pathetic terms. To each according to his needs, Marx held, and the Marxists have reduced the level of needs to beggarly dimensions. They have redefined wealth to make it the legitimate possession of the state and none other.

Redefinition has occurred in many areas. Students are routinely taught that there is an economic distinction between consumption and investment. Franklin W. Ryan, and Dr. Elgin Groseclose, in his excellent *America's Money Machine: The Story of the Federal Reserve System*, show otherwise. (The family is called by them the greatest production enterprise in society, and yet we are today at war against the family.) If I feed myself and my family, I am investing in our future; if I use junk food, I am making a poor investment. Whatever money I spend on the family is either a good or bad investment or consumption. To indict the idea of consumption is absurd; there is good consumption and unsound consumption.

The point of it all is that we are seeing an assault on and an erosion of the Biblical doctrine of wealth and stewardship. In its place, the state as the new god wants to remake man and society, and it believes that it can also create wealth by legislation, taxation, redistribution, and controls. What the modern state is accomplishing instead is the erosion of true wealth, and morality as well. The modern state has become history's great devourer of widows' houses, while it talks piously of a love for the poor, and the church is largely silent in the face of this growing evil. The sure promise of God to all such is judgment, unless men separate themselves from these evil ones to the Lord, Who says to us today as Moses did when Israel worshipped the golden calf, "Who is on the LORD's side? let him come unto me" (Exod. 32:26).

HISTORY

62

OUR DOXOLOGY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 107, March 1989

We are very clearly told in Acts 6:7 that, in the earliest days of the church, "the word of God increased; and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." The religious control of Judea was firmly in the hands of Rome through collaborators. As a result, men of faith were routinely shelved by Rome and the Sanhedrin in favor of pragmatic men. The goal of these pragmatists was freedom for Judea, but meanwhile, an astute policy of resistance and compromise prevailed. Until the Jewish-Roman war of A.D. 66–70, the Roman and Jewish leadership maintained an uneasy alliance.

The Christians, with their faith in Jesus Christ as the world's Messiah, and in terms of His Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20), were outsiders to this situation. However many Jews they converted, and priests as well, the Judean goal was at odds with their purpose. Caiaphas, the high priest, had expressed clearly the national perspective: "it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not" (John 11:50). In Judea, as well as throughout the Roman Empire, the Christian converts were largely Israelites.

Dr. Jakob Jocz, a brilliant Jewish Christian scholar, has described Judaism as believing in man's ability to save himself, with help from God; "man only sins, but is *not sinful*." Man at birth is pure and sinless, not fallen. It is a religion of self-salvation whose essence is ethics; "the covenant of God with man is never broken." "Israel's sufferings sufficiently warrant their redemption, regardless of repentance." Righteousness is not imputed but attained. Hence, in Judaism and Christianity, we have "two worlds diametrically opposed to each other" (Jakob Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, (1949) 1979], pp. 264–286).

It is easy to see why there was conflict between the two faiths; it was inescapable. The question is this: after the close of the New Testament era, was the conflict only an intellectual one, or did it continue to be one in which Jewish Christians were in a charged emotional conflict against their unconverted brethren? Did Jewish conversions dwindle after the fall of Jerusalem, or did they continue? Were only the Ebionites and a few others left of Jewish Christianity, or did the conversions continue, and the absorption into the world faith of Jewish Christians become an influence of note, or was it only the Hellenic converts who then shaped the church? Were the Jewish Christians only a remnant of Israel, or were the unbelievers the remnant? These are questions which cannot be answered with certainty, but they need to be asked, and some direction determined, if possible.

We do know that many churchmen over the centuries were converted Jews. Eusebius, in Constantine's day, gave a list of a number of Jewish bishops. Earlier, Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho* made it clear that Jews were very much a part of the faith and that the debate, tension, and conversion factors remained very much as in St. Paul's day. Much later, Jewish popes appeared from time to time, indicating the continuing presence, zeal, and importance of Jewish Christians. Early in the eleventh century, Hildebrand became pope as Gregory VII. Jewish descent has been ascribed to him; whether this is true or not, we do not know. We do know that, in a crisis, he raised an army, with "the help of financially gifted Jews" (J. P. Whitney, *Hildebrandine Essays* [Cambridge University Press, 1932], pp. 10, 22).

But there are other indications of a close tie between church and synagogue. In the twelfth century, we find that one of the great Armenian Church fathers, St. Nerses Shnorhali, a writer of hymns, produced hymns which link him to Rabbi Jehuda Halevi of Spain (and, briefly, Egypt). There are too many links like this to be ignored.

The great authority here in a specific area was Eric Werner, a professor of liturgical music, who in 1959 published his findings, titled, *The Sacred Circle: The Interdependence of Liturgy and Music in Synagogue and Church During the First Millennium*. We know that the earliest term for the church was *synagogue*, as we see in the Greek text of James 2:2. The synagogue officers and structure were taken over by the church. But, Werner showed, so too was the liturgy and music. The use of musical instruments was dropped by the synagogue after the fall of Jerusalem. Instruments such as the organ were too joyful for a people in mourning over the fall of their city and country. The old forms were retained in the church, both of the Temple and of the synagogue. The Christian church

sought to be faithful to the Old Testament church because it saw itself as the true continuation thereof. After Paul, the church saw itself as "*the Israel of God*" (Gal. 6:16). In its better moments, the church's call to the Jews was to come home.

This influence and faithfulness to Old Testament liturgical practices continued. Thus, in the Reformation, a notable figure was John Immanuel Tremellius (1510–1580), a converted Jew who was born in Ferrara. He became a Catholic about 1540, and his godfather was Cardinal Reginald Pole, later archbishop of Canterbury. In 1542, Tremellius became a Protestant and a Calvinist. He was then in England, in Lambeth Palace with Cranmer, and also Cambridge, before going to Germany when Queen Mary's persecution began. He returned to England in 1565 and concluded his teaching career at Sedan. In England, Tremellius helped frame the Thirty-Nine Articles and assisted in the formation of the *Book of Common Prayer*. The unification of worship sought by the English reformers meant faithfulness to Scripture and to the Biblical precedents in the worship in the Temple and the synagogue.

The ugly side of the relationship between church and synagogue is often told, i.e., enforced baptisms, compulsory Jewish attendance at times to Christian preachings, and so on. At times, the worst in hostility to the Jews were Jewish converts, or men of Jewish ancestry, such as King Ferdinand of Spain, and Tomas de Torquemada, the Grand Inquisitor. All the same, the "come home" motive was also very much a fact. When, shortly after World War II, Pope Pius XII said that spiritually we are all Semites, he was echoing a centuries-old theme.

The heretical influence of Marcion led to a division between the Old and New Testaments, to antinomianism, and to a hostility to the Jews. As against this, there was always also a belief in the unity of Scripture, plus an insistence that faith without works is dead (Matt. 7:16–20; Rom. 3:31; James 2:14–26), and an adherence to the Pauline hope and summons to "come home."

This aspect of church history is of more than academic interest. It is important to know how deep our roots are, that the church is "*the Israel of God*" (Gal. 6:16), and that our worship echoes that of Old Testament saints and is linked to the victorious song of the church triumphant (Rev. 15:3).

In the early church, the Greek intellectuals expressed contempt for all music which did not follow the standards of classic Greek music. They were thus not congenial to the Christian (hence strongly Hebraic) music. Many held to Pythagorean doctrines, such as the cathartic power of music; this was the theory set forth in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, a

strongly Masonic opera. Hebraic-Christian music was not men-centered; its goal was not a humanistic cathartic result but the glory of God. We can perhaps call the doxology the epitome of truly Biblical worship and song because it centers on God, not man. Although it is trinitarian, the doxology echoes Scripture, the Temple, and the synagogue (see E. Werner, *The Sacred Circle*, pp. 273–313.) The spirit of the doxology and of Hebraic, Biblical music is well summarized in the first statement of the Westminster Shorter Catechism: "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever." It is also joyfully expressed in a Christian hymn with an Old Testament root and an ancient Hebrew melody ("Leoni"), the magnificent "The God of Abraham Praise."

The church was not born with us, nor with our rebirth. Men who despise their past also despise their future. As Christians, we are the heirs of the ages, and heirs in Christ of all things (Rom. 8:17; Gal. 3:29; 4:7; Eph. 3:6; Heb. 6:17; James 2:5, etc.). We have a doxology to sing which resounds across the centuries and is the music of eternity.

63

THE PAGAN CRITIQUES OF CHRISTIANITY

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Almost at once, the early church attracted hostility and soon had pagan philosophers attacking it as a threat and a danger. C. N. Cochrane, in *Christianity and Classical Culture*, has given us a remarkable analysis of that debate.

Our purpose here is a humbler one. What were some of the simple, practical arguments against Christianity? On this level, we can see the contrast between Christianity and paganism in a dramatic way.

Perhaps the most offensive aspect of Christianity to the Greco-Roman world was its exclusiveness. The Roman Empire was ready to tolerate any new religion as long as it accepted the supremacy and priority of the Roman state. It regularly gave legal status to one new religion and cult after another, always subject to their acceptance of imperial supremacy and emperor worship. The various religions borrowed at times from each other, but, whatever else was done, Roman supremacy was maintained.

The Christian refusal to mix or unite with other faiths was taken as evidence of their ill will and their dangerous exclusiveness. The Jews previously had been disliked for their religious exclusiveness, but, after the Jewish-Roman War, A.D. 66–70, and the subsequent failure of the Bar Kochba revolt, they were not a significant factor. Moreover, the Christian rejection of compromise was so radical that Rome was concerned with this dissident force in its borders.

Syncretism, the blending of various religions, was a way of life for the Romans. It was held, by men like Aurelius Symmachus, that there are many paths to the gods or God, and various peoples find one or another path most to their tastes and aptitudes. Thus, a variety of ways to God is a stimulus to religion, and it opens the doors to God to more people.

This position was essential to the argument. For the pagans, the way to the gods or God depended on human initiative. Given this fact, different men had varying natures, and a variety of religious choices gave men not only more freedom of choice but also a greater opportunity of finding a way suitable to themselves.

The battle over this point was critical. The Christian rejected all attempts by man to find God. The essence of Christian faith is that God finds wayward, sinful man. Man seeks to flee from God, and it is God who arrests man's flight, and, by His sovereign grace, redeems him. Quite naturally, some of the earliest Christian apologists stressed predestination, God's absolute initiative in choosing men.

This was a total rejection of every man-made religion. There were not many roads to God. Rather, there was only one, from God to man, and the name of that route is Jesus Christ, the only way (John 14:6).

The pagan plea was for *toleration*; the Christian insistence was on truth, Jesus Christ. If truth is absolute, then there can be no other way. Error can at times be tolerated, but it cannot be accepted.

Next, Christianity was seen as antistate. Now the Christians were, as Tertullian and others pointed out, the empire's most loyal and honest citizens, but they could not worship the emperor. At this point, the debate reversed itself on the matter of tolerance and intolerance. The Christians did not tolerate nor compromise with other gods, religions, or moralities. The Romans did. The Christians, however, while unhappy with a non-Christian state, were obedient to it. But they could only give priority to the triune God. They saw themselves as citizens of the Kingdom of God. They held that Rome was under Christ the King, not the church under Caesar. At this point, Roman intolerance was severe. Every system of life and thought has its areas of intolerance, and, for Rome as for the modern state, the priority of the state is central, and deviations from that are not permitted.

Christianity insisted that for all time, it is the only *catholic* or universal faith, whereas "eternal Rome" saw itself as the true city of man, and it rejected the ultimacy of God and His Kingdom.

In the best sense of the word, both Rome and Christianity were imperial: they had a faith that circumscribed all things. The conflict became one between the holy faith and the total state.

Michael Grant called attention to the statement of Pliny the Elder: "Chance is our god." This meant that for the Romans the empire, the *state*, is the principle of order, not anything beyond the state. In such a view, the state, then, must be determinative: the state is the principle of order.

For the Christians, God and His predestination, not the state, provide order. The state must be instead a minister of God, serving Him (Rom. 13:1ff.). If chance is god, however, then the state must control and predetermine all things. Such a view requires a totalitarian state, then and now. The modern state, like Rome, seeks total control in all spheres. It was not an accident that some of the earliest Christian apologists stressed predestination. Quite logically, too, Cicero stressed the need for the state to use religion to control the people.

No pagan died for religion in Rome. Many died for art. Murders on stage were real, not fictitious. In a play, *Death of Hercules*, which Tertullian saw, the actor representing Hercules was burned to death as a part of the show. Human sacrifices for the Roman state were numerous, but only Christians died for religion!

There was another area of conflict, sex. The Romans saw sex as essentially related to personal satisfaction, whereas Christians saw it in terms of the family. (Philip Schaff gave ten pages to a sketchy report on the family revolution created by early Christianity.) The Roman poet Ovid, in Michael Grant's words, "reduced wide areas of human relations to the level of sexual seduction" (Michael Grant, *The World of Rome* [1960], p. 230).

In our time, we have a similar critique of Christianity by a paganized world. Rome then committed suicide, as the world around us is determined also to do. It becomes urgently necessary for us to stand without compromise for Christ and the faith. The choice is between life and death.

64

THE FAILURE OF CHURCH HISTORY

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CHURCH history has been a failure in at least two important aspects. *First*, in most seminaries, it is the least respected subject and often the dullest. In this respect, I was privileged to be a student of Dr. George Huntston Williams, in whose hands church history was not only the most exciting subject but the focal point of Biblical and theological studies. *Second*, church history has been a failure in the sense that the church has commonly viewed the history of Christianity as an institutional history, as the development of ecclesiastical forms, power, and movements, all centrally controlled.

Nothing more clearly reveals the evil than the term "parachurch ministries." Such ministries are resented by many churchmen; they are regarded as illegitimate because they are outside the control of the church. Whether a seminary, a college or university, a missionary group, a publication, a youth work, or anything else, it is regarded as morally wrong if not church controlled.

This is totalitarianism in the church. Just as the state seeks, when totalitarian, to have total power over all things, so the church totalitarians demand that no Christian work exist outside their control. Many such groups are Protestants who out-Rome even Rome at its lowest ebb: total control by the church is their goal.

Now, this was the dream of the pagan state. Nothing had the right to exist without its permission. No institution had the right to an independent existence; no unlicensed meeting could be held, and no unsupervised and nonregistered activity could take place.

Recently, one very able businessman found that among his many fellow associates, all young men, a number were interested in the faith. He invited them to his home for an introductory statement by himself and a

question and answer session. There were sixteen young men who came. When the leader's well-known church learned of the meeting, he was called in for a rebuke. He expressed his willingness to allow an associate pastor to lead the group. He was told that he had no right to ask any such thing, only to cease and desist all unauthorized meetings. He left the church. Such church totalitarianism is not unusual. I know of enough incidents to compile a book of them.

The church's conflict with Rome was over this issue, freedom from state controls for the church, the Christian family, its educational and welfare work, and more.

I was amazed a while back to read a study by a fine man of Philip's work. Philip became a deacon (Acts 6:5) in order to assist in the charitable ministry of the church. In Acts 8:5ff., we find him preaching in Samaria. According to the writer of the study, Philip had been commissioned apparently to a ministerial task by the apostles! But Acts 8:3–4 tells us that Philip was one of the Christians "scattered abroad" by Saul's persecution. No formal act by the Jerusalem church had empowered Philip; persecution had given him an opportunity, and he took it. The freedom of the church community permitted this.

A few centuries later, with the earliest ecumenical councils, the church met to define Biblical doctrine, not to compel union.

In recent years, Christianity has again outgrown — as in every time of strength — the church. Christian schools and home schools, independent of the church, have spread from coast to coast. Many teaching ministries, such as Chalcedon's, have arisen. Work among drug addicts, juvenile delinquents, ministries to the elderly, to prisoners, and much, much more have developed, usually in independence from the church. These are creating major social changes. The totalitarian-minded churches which oppose these movements are denying Christian freedom and attempting to restore the total controls which marked paganism.

Is it any wonder that both church and state are in disrepute? Both are marked by strong drives towards totalitarian controls.

To cite one example, one large church, I have been told, has "a total program" for the Christian family. The children go to the church after school for guided help in homework. The parents come in the evening for a church dinner. Then, youth meetings, a nursery, special programs for all, young couples meetings, and more keep all safely in the bosom of Mother Church until bedtime. This is ecclesiastical totalitarianism. It is destructive of family life, and it is not Biblical.

Remember, God's purpose is that both church and state be limited in their powers. The state tax was limited to half a shekel for every male

from age twenty up; the Levites, who were the instructors of Israel (Deut. 33:10), could receive the tithe; they then tithed the tithe to the priests for worship (Num. 18:26). A man could personally administer his tithes, firstfruits, and offerings, as did the man from Baal-shalisha (2 Kings 4:42).

The true church history is not an account of the development of an institution, its formalization of structure, worship, and polity, but rather, it is the history of how Christianity has revolutionized every area of life and thought. It has created a variety of institutions and also a variety of movements and forces which are not institutionalized.

Because true Christianity is a living faith, it cannot be confined to institutional walls without dying. It must express itself in every area of life and thought, freely and variously. Totalitarianism in the church leads to strangulation and death.

One very fine and overworked pastor was confronted by a woman whose children were no longer at home, and who was still young and healthy; she told him of a real need that called for Christian action. The pastor quietly commended her for her vision and then suggested that she inform other women of the problem and, together with them, take independent action. The woman resented the answer and was thereafter critical of the pastor.

Confronted by problems, too many citizens say, "Why doesn't the local, county, state, or federal government do something about it?" The result is our rapid drift into socialism. Similarly, confronted by problems, too many church members say, "Why doesn't the church do something about it?" The result is the steady rise of church totalitarianism.

You and I belong in the history of Christianity by our daily lives, stands, faith, and activities. Paul speaks of those who assisted him, in no formal capacities but in devotion to the faith, as ones "whose names are in the book of life" (Phil. 4:3). In Revelation, "the book of life" refers to all who are faithful to their calling in Christ (Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12; 21:27). God's account of church history is not institutional: it has to do with the expression and power of faith in all of life.

65

LATITUDINARIANISM

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Latitudinarianism is not classified as a heresy, although it has been a greater problem to the church than any single heretical group or doctrine. Heretics have usually been marked by a passionate adherence to a false doctrine; some heretics have been ready to die for their faith. No latitudinarian has ever been ready to die for anything, least of all for the Christian faith.

The name "latitudinarian" was first given to the men, prominent clergymen, in the Church of England who were indifferent to what they regarded as petty issues which divided Puritans and high church men. They professed belief in all the doctrines of the faith but attached no great importance to most or even any of them. Their priorities were not in the Christian faith but in matters of state and of science.

Latitudinarianism was first a formal body of thought in the Church of England because of various factors common to that church. It was a state church, and all Englishmen were members, so that unity rather than truth was a primary goal for many. Because it was a state church, policies of state had priority over theological issues.

However, the latitudinarian attitude was not new. One of its greatest exponents was Erasmus, and many Catholics shared his view. In every communion, the latitudinarian attitude, in time, prevailed.

An example of a latitudinarian divine in the seventeenth century is John Wilkins (1614–1672). Wilkins was warden of an Oxford college, later master of Trinity College at Cambridge, a brother-in-law to Oliver Cromwell, a founding member of the Royal Society and deeply involved in the new study of science, an advocate of "natural religion," an early experimenter with the idea of a universal language, and more. He became close to Charles II, a bishop, and a power in Parliament after the

Restoration. He slipped easily from a Puritan to a royalist position, from Calvinism to Arminianism, from a belief in predestination and sovereign grace to salvation by works. He was not hostile to Socinianism (or, Unitarianism), and so on (Barbara Shapiro, *John Wilkins, 1614–1672*. [n.p.: University of California Press, 1969]). It would be easy to charge Wilkins with hypocrisy, but it would be wrong. The latitudinarian, then and now, simply does not believe that the precise articles of religion are worth fighting for; this is the heart of the latitudinarian evil.

Moreover, the latitudinarian position, as it seeped into all the churches, led to antinomianism, because God's law was not seen as too important. The advancement of science and society was given priority. In time, this meant a hostility to "fine points" of doctrine; sociology replaced theology. It meant an adaptation to the theological climate of indifferentism. In time, for example, the followers of Richard Baxter became Arminian, and then Arian, and, of course, antinomian as well. The surviving Calvinists of later years saw latitudinarianism as a non-Christian faith at heart. George Whitefield said of Archbishop Tillotson that he "knew no more of true Christianity than Mohamet." As Wallace commented, this statement represented "an earlier tradition concerning the true nature of Latitudinarian religion" (Dewey D. Wallace Jr., *Puritans and Predestination: Grace in English Protestant Theology, 1525–1695* [n.p.: University of North Carolina Press, 1982], p. 190). Of course, as time passed, the latitudinarians, as they gained control of all the churches, became very short on love and toleration for their orthodox and evangelical brothers who insisted on fidelity to the faith! They became advocates of minimalism with respect to faith and doctrine and maximalism with respect to "loyalty" to the church.

The early latitudinarians, i.e., those within the Church of England, opposed what they called "rigid Calvinism and rigid Catholicism" in favor of "the middle way," which meant taking nothing too seriously. After all, who has perfect knowledge of perfect virtue? We must therefore be tolerant and indulgent of other positions.

Within the Scottish church, the latitudinarians called themselves "Moderates." John Witherspoon noted with disgust that these "Moderates" were tolerant of those who believed less, not those who believed more.

The churches today represent the triumph of latitudinarianism. Witherspooon's comment is more valid than ever. Such people prefer modernism, feminism, socialism, homosexuality, abortion, and more. They are ever tolerant towards the practices of humanism, while intolerant towards Christian orthodoxy. They allow latitude in one direction only.

According to Shapiro, in Bishop Willkins's day, there was an "alliance between latitudinarianism and science." The two movements "shared a theory of knowledge," and members of both became the principal proponents of a rationalized religion and natural theology" (Shapiro, *John Wilkins*, p. 228). This alliance led to the ready acceptance of the view of higher criticism on the supposed origins of the Biblical texts. Whatever the supposedly scientific study of the texts concluded was immediately received as the higher wisdom.

The same was true in all other areas. "The latitudinarians' approach to church government was pragmatic rather than Scriptural" (ibid., p. 156). There was an emphasis on morality rather than theology, and morality was steadily detached from Biblical law and attached to humanistic norms. In this century, this separation of Biblical law from morality has been largely responsible for the legalization of abortion. The latitudinarians in the churches earnestly support abortions as "the moral choice," because morality is now faithfulness to personal values rather than to God's law.

A seventeenth-century definition of a latitudinarian was, "a Gentleman of a wide swallow." Such men were widely suspected of hypocrisy and dishonesty. Such charges missed the mark. For a zealous believer to compromise the dearly held faith would mean cowardice or hypocrisy. For an Erasmian or a latitudinarian, the faith was not that important.

Another great evil propagated by latitudinarianism was "the placing of piety in the context of the church as an institution" (Wallace, p. 183). This contributed greatly to the rise of pietism. In our time, it is called also "Sunday religion." The relationship and total concern of Christianity for every idea of life and thought gave way to a retreat into private devotions. Catholic and Protestant manuals for personal, internal piety began to proliferate. Whereas previously Christianity had provided the norms for civil government, education, capital and labor, science, and everything else, it was now restricted to the inner life. Leonard Trinterud called it the "dying" of "the clerical world," i.e., of the church as the norm setter and center of all society. Men now looked to science and the state, and the latitudinarians led the way.

Theologically, the latitudinarians sided steadily with the compromising theologies; thus, in the Church of England, these men favored Arminianism over Calvinism and eventually weakened both. In time, this meant the "reduction of the Christian religion to some simple moral essentials" (Wallace, p. 165). "The path that led in England from Latitudinarianism to Deism was already in full view in the 1670s" (ibid., p. 171). A "rational religion" was the goal. A. S. P. Woodhouse held that "Arminianism was

preeminently the doctrine of Christian rationalism and Christian humanism, rereading the stern pronouncement of the Reformation in the mellow light of the Renaissance." In fact, he said, Arminianism "represents a shift towards a rational theology and a humanistic, even a humanitarian, religion" (Woodhouse, *Puritanism and Liberty*, p. 54).

For very, very different theological reasons, both Calvinism and Roman Catholicism *in that era* stressed works, either as the necessary fruits of grace, or as an accompaniment to faith. With latitudinarians, this emphasis was eroded in both communions. Two things began to replace the works of faith. On the one hand there was pietism, with its stress on heart religion, on devotional exercises as the works of faith, and on emotionalism. On the other hand, many stressed reason, the rational government by man of himself and his world. In either case, the center was and is man, whereas the doctrine of sovereign grace stresses God's free and gracious gift and man's grateful response of obedience.

Preaching also changed from proclaiming without equivocation the sovereign word of the Lord, from "thus saith the Lord," to appeals to man's reason or to man's emotions. John Wilkins, for example, preached four sermons during Lent before King Charles II, and the king ordered three of them to be published. All three sermons "appealed to the self-interest of his audience. Religious duty and self-interest coincided" (Shapiro, p. 180). Since then, preaching has stressed psychology, politics (or, the social gospel), and other forms of self-interest under the façade of God's Word.

Latitudinarianism scuttled interest in God's law, interest in clear-cut doctrinal statements and concerns, church authority and discipline, and much, much more. No heresy has done more to harm the church, nor captured so much of it, as latitudinarianism. It has become a part of the intellectual air that we breathe. Few are aware of how much we have lost to this movement, or how pervasive it now is in the churches.

Christianity and latitudinarianism are antithetical beliefs, because the one is God-centered and the other man-centered; the one gives full priority to the Word of God, the other to the word of man.

Because of latitudinarianism, we see an increasing toleration towards evil, but no toleration towards Christianity.

The return to a Christian culture requires the end of latitudinarianism.

66

THE DARK AGES

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One of the enduring myths is that Europe, after the fall of Rome, entered "the dark ages." Before Rome fell, as far back as the times of Livy, that writer could say, "Wherever the publican penetrates, there is no more justice or liberty for anyone." Livy's dates are 59 B.C. to A.D. 17. The tax collectors were about as destructive of Rome as an invading army. Historian William Carroll Bark, in the *Origins of the Medieval World*, said of Rome's fall: "Few observers of this period of history can have failed to ponder the fact that millions of Romans were vanquished by scores of thousands of Germans. According to Salvian, it was not by the natural strength of their bodies that the barbarian conquered, nor by the weakness of their nature that the Romans were defeated. It was the Roman's moral vices alone that overcame them. Narrow as it is, this judgment by one very close to the event remains respectable" (p. 184).

There were two kinds of people in Rome. *First*, there were the moral degenerates, strongly favorable to abortion, homosexuality, immorality in general, a belief in an all-powerful state, and excellent only at complaining about conditions while doing nothing. *Second*, there were those who were moral, godly people, but who felt there was nothing in Rome worth fighting for.

The true dark ages preceded the fall of Rome. Only if one identifies statism with light and civilization can one regard late republican and then imperial Rome as other than dark ages.

Of course, the term "dark ages" was in origin theological, used by Christians to describe times and places outside of Christ. In terms of this, Washington, D.C., London, Moscow, Paris, Rome, and other great cities are in the dark ages. In many cities, whether in the Marxist realms or in the West, public copulation, dangerous streets, and high crime and

murder rates are common and growing worse. In one inflation-ridden country, the middle class is gone; many people live in the streets; children live by thievery, and at night these children are hunted down and shot. The dark ages? You are living in them now, and it is getting darker.

The historians who coined the term "dark ages" for the years after the fall of Rome at first included all the centuries until the Renaissance and its revival of paganism and statist tyranny. Later, they limited the term to a few number of centuries. Some now have wisely abandoned the term.

The centuries after the fall of Rome were dark only if the absence of a powerful imperial tyranny and a torturing tax collection system constitute light. After the fall of Rome, there were no strong states; neither was there any Biblical tax on land and property. While the barbarian tribes which overran Europe did not represent light, their tyrannies were not equal to those of imperial Rome. Moreover, Christian missionaries, the light-bringers, were slowly but steadily civilizing by Christianization these barbarian peoples. The remarkable Irish monks, and in some areas Syrians, were notable in their work.

Step by step, with times of regression, Europe became Christendom. Even though the Renaissance and the Enlightenment returned to pagan premises, it was not until after the French Revolution that the revived paganism began to reach the peoples at large. By 1850, it was beginning to penetrate Western civilization, and, with the two world wars in the twentieth century, it took over.

Those of us who can remember the era between the two world wars can remember that Christendom's order still prevailed. One could walk the streets of London, New York, or San Francisco safely at any time of the day or night.

The triumph of statism is the triumph of darkness. It means that people's lives are no longer governed by faith and morality, but by coercion. People no longer rely on their ability to work to ensure their future, but make demands on the state. Legislation replaces work and morality.

Before World War II, I listened at dinner to a visiting medical missionary describe his work. He had trained native nurses and men to do amazing things. He spoke of the sure hand of some of his native associates, who could perform delicate surgeries, often better than physicians here, but only under his directions. Diagnosis was beyond them, because they never really grasped the nature of disease, but their sureness of hand was phenomenal. Those medical missions are now commonly in ruins. The physical dexterities of the doctor's aides did not have behind them the understanding and knowledge to command the hand when the American doctors were gone.

Technology, great or small, does not save a culture. Roman roads and aqueducts stood for centuries after Rome fell, but the organizing, working, and minds were gone.

J. H. Plumb, in *The Death of the Past* (1970), wrote: "The historians of the Enlightenment could discover with delicious joy the antique past that beckoned them in Greece and Rome; the multiplicity of historical worlds that rose above their intellectual horizon — Egypt, Persia, India, China — gave them new stimulus, fresh ideas, and a deep sense of recovery, of escape into a fresher more viable historical understanding. Alas, such an experience cannot revitalize the historian of this century" (p. 139).

Having given up on the past, men have looked to the future. Revolutions have had as their goals a new world order. Writers like Bellamy (*Looking Backward*) have given a glowing picture of the world of the future. When Bellamy's "golden age" arrived, men like H. G. Wells and Aldous Huxley, and also George Orwell, saw it only as a nightmare world. Science fiction, in dealing with the future, has shown us technologically governed hells with mindless wars and terrors. Whether looking backward or looking forward, our modern intellectuals can give us no hope.

This should not surprise us. We were warned of this long ago: "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps. 127:1). When and where the state replaces the triune God as man's hope of salvation, security, and freedom, we have a dark age. We have a collapse of faith and morality, and we see society give way to coercion. It is communion in one faith which creates community, not superimposed force.

William Holmes and John W. Barber, in *Religious Emblems* (1846), compared false premises to icebergs, tall, sparkling, dazzling, and capable of crushing things in their path, but unable to take the heat of the sun or adversity. God and His truth they compared to a giant rock:

> Firm as a Rock, God's truth must stand,
> When rolling years shall cease to move.

"*Semper idem*," always the same, is God and His truth. We are in a war which we must and shall win. We have a duty to proclaim the whole Word of God and to bring all things into happy captivity to Christ. We have this sure word: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15).

"Except the LORD build" means that we too must be builders in Christ. Too much activity is spent in "exposing evil," not in doing good. What the "muckrakers" began at the beginning of the twentieth century,

too many churchmen, conservatives, liberals, and even *Playboy* and *Penthouse* have continued — namely, exposing evils. But exposing evils makes no man good! Certainly, evil must be exposed, but it is futile unless accompanied by stronger efforts to do good, unless the power of God to do God's work is manifested.

The dark ages are very much with us. Where do we stand with the Lord God and His redemptive grace and sanctifying law?

67

WEALTH, TIME, AND HISTORY

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THEFT is a crime which increasingly creates a general uneasiness among people. Its prevalence is frightening to many. One woman, a political liberal, reacted emotionally to the sight of a burglarized home on her return: "I felt personally violated." This is a very common reaction. The privacy and safety of a home once broken leaves a psychic uneasiness and fear. Theft is all too common a fact of life in our time.

This uneasiness has had dramatic consequences in many directions. One of these is in city life. Until recently, the elite lived at the center of the city. Around the central plaza were clustered the main church, court or palace, and the great homes of the rich and powerful families. The central city was the place of freedom and security. The poor lived in the outskirts or suburb of the city. Look at almost any city and the evidences of the closeness of the great homes to the center is in evidence, except that now those great homes are either offices or slum dwellings. Taxes and lawlessness have robbed the city of its ancient character.

Theft, however, is not of material goods alone. It can involve a theft of time and history. As bad as the rise of common criminality has been, the theft of time and history has been far greater, and much more devastating. It began with the philosophers and historians, and it was put into harsh practice by statist educators.

Edward Gibbon (1737–1794) is a landmark figure in this development. His *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–1788) reflected the spirit of the French *philosophes*, and he regarded them as his teachers. The *philosophes* mocked Christianity and regarded the past as a long night out of which reason had delivered them. They laid down a fundamental premise of modern thought which has ever since distorted historiography. Everything in the past must be viewed with cynicism, and

every evil in the past must be magnified, made to be a product of Christianity, Christianity must be equated with superstition, and reason and modernity exalted. As a result, today, if anything in the past is exalted, it is usually because it was hostile to Christianity. Voltaire is an example of this. As a writer and thinker, he was of little consequence and usually dishonest in his presentation of facts. This, however, is precisely why Voltaire is seen as important: he was a successful enemy of Christianity.

Gibbon took this premise of the *philosophes* and applied it rigorously to history. He venerated Roman antiquity only to denigrate Christianity. The importance of Gibbon and his work is that he worked seriously, and methodically (unlike the French *philosophes*), to reconstruct history and the past in radically non-Christian terms. Man was now to be explained and understood in terms of man only, not God. The stage was set for a "scientific" view of man in purely naturalistic terms, as supplied about seventy-five years later by Darwin.

Gibbon was still very much a product of a Christian past. He viewed history moralistically, in terms of good and evil. A humanistic moralism was the result, leading to the nineteenth-century liberal fervor to right all wrongs. The new temper also led to a new joy in discovery, the discovery of non-Christian pasts. All over the world, funds, energy, and zeal were poured into archaeological and other research into the pagan past. Egypt, India, China, and the Americas saw intense research into a past "innocent" of Christianity and the Biblical God. The nineteenth century saw the monumental research and publication of such literature as the "sacred" books of the East.

Humanism, however, continued its logical development. Max Stirner very early saw that all morality, all ideas of good and evil, represented a hangover from a Biblical past. Nietzsche called for life beyond good and evil, and, in the 1970s, Walter Kaufmann logically attacked the ideas of guilt and justice as relics of the Bible and called the tempter's premise of Genesis 3:1–5 the true basis for human life.

Historians reflected the same development. They began to speak of the meaninglessness of history. Providential history was not even a possible option for them. The world or universe had arisen out of a meaningless nothingness; it had neither purpose nor direction, and its destiny is universal death. Such men found a Christian declaration of total meaning a particularly offensive fact. (At one collegiate conference, a professor from a major university graduate school was deeply offended and horrified because in my address, I spoke of the total rationality of creation and history, because it is the handiwork of the totally rational God. He held that the universe had in it only a thin and temporary edge of rationality in the mind of man.)

Thus, for modern man, because the world and the past are meaningless, so too are the present and the future. This attitude has infiltrated the modern mind through the state school's social studies program and its radical relativism.

The result is the great theft, the grand heist, of all history: modern man finds life robbed of meaning. Instead of a universe created, governed, and filled by the triune God, and peopled with God's heavenly hosts and guardian angels, it is an empty world. No robbed householder, returning to find his home stripped of its valuables, finds a more empty dwelling than does modern man. By the time he finishes his schooling, the world is for him an empty room. Even in a crowded place, he is surrounded, not by men and women created in the image of God and under His government, but empty faces and empty minds. Life is full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

Modern man thus, although he has inherited a great technological history and development, is very poor. He has no meaningful and purposive history. The uneasiness felt by people whose house has been robbed is an example of the disquiet modern man feels as he views life, time, and history. It is the feeling which once marked the dying of Greece and of Rome, and it expressed itself in the old proverb, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

The Christian today is commonly infected by this same temper. The spirit of the age has a widespread contamination. The contemporary Christian may believe in God, and in the Bible from cover to cover, but the Lord seems far away, the communists and the IRS very near, and what is a man to do? The real presence of the Lord is not very meaningful to him; it is the real presence of the devil which seems to be most important to all too many Christians.

Early in this century, Holbrook Jackson, in *The Eighteen Nineties* (1913), ably characterized the new spirit. The whole attitude of the new decadence he saw contained in Ernest Dowson's famous poem on Cynara. He called it "that insatiate demand of a soul surfeited with the food that nourishes not, and finding what relief it can in a rapture of desolation." In the same era, Oscar Wilde expressed the modern will to perversity in his life and in his epigrams. One such epigram is very revealing: "I don't like novels that end happily. They depress me so much." And why not? If life has no happy endings because it is meaningless, why should a novel have one? In my student days, a professor took some time to rail against happy endings as unrealistic and not true to life; his own life manifested a wilful destruction of every possibility of happiness.

We see the consequences in modern literature. It is a long war against

meaning, an assault on morality as a myth, and a declaration of war against all who hold to Biblical faith. Modern literature manifests a hatred of progress and industry, of patriotism, fidelity, and love as against sexuality. The new frontier for literature was now the moral underground and underground man. In 1871, Edmond de Goncourt manifested the new temper in his comment: "The riff-raff have for me the particular attraction of races unknown and undiscovered, something of that exotic quality which travellers seek in far-off lands at the cost of many hardships." Other men were still excited by ancient Troy, Egypt, India, and China, but the artist and the writer now had a new world to explore, the world of the underground. Hence, for Jean-Paul Sartre, Jean Genet became Saint Genet. Norman Mailer lionized a convict, secured his release, and the result was a killing. The moral underground has become holy ground to modern writers, and the only thing that stirs their wrath is Biblical faith and morality.

The empty world was made even more empty by the poets and writers who began to insist that meaning was anathema to a work of art. Symbolism began to be popular, greatly reinforced by Freudianism and the doctrine of the unconscious. Rational and coherent meaning had to give way to vague expressions of underground impulses and intentions. Not only was the world emptied, but now the mind also! Mallarme's Herodias said, "I await a thing unknown," an expressive line, because modern man continually awaits the unknown, never the sure hand of God. Arthur Rimbaud, in a letter to Paul Demeny on May 15, 1871, wrote, "The poet makes himself a seer by a long, intensive, and reasoned disordering of all the senses." The goal of much literature since has been to produce the same disordering in all of us.

The result of all this has been the impoverishing of man. Man's greatest and surest wealth lies in the religious realm, in the meaning which Biblical faith provides. The Bible tells man that the world witnesses to the glory of God (Psalm 19). The rainbow is a reminder to men who will see it that God will preserve this world and finally renew it into an eternal glory. The rainbow signifies God's providential peace towards the very inanimate creation.

The sabbath requires rest one day in seven, and one year in seven. It is a sign that the future essentially rests, not on man's shoulders, but on God's government and grace. Thus, man's future is not man-made but either God-blessed or God-cursed; in either case, the handiwork of God. The sabbath thus calls on man to leave the government on God's shoulders and to recognize that the Lord governs and rules man's own life better than man can ever dream of doing. God's signs tell us that God the

Lord is closer to us than we are to ourselves. We are not alone, nor in an empty universe. Francis Thompson (1859–1907), in his wonderful poem, "The Kingdom of God, In No Strange Land," expressed this beautifully. In the second stanza, he wrote:

> Does the fish soar to find the ocean,
> The eagle plunge to find the air —
> That we ask of the stars in motion
> If they have rumor of Thee there?

The poverty of modern man is thus very great. He lives in a dead and empty world, he believes, but the deadness and the emptiness are in his own soul.

The psalmist tells us, concerning Israel in the wilderness, that, "They soon forgat his (God's) works; they waited not for His counsel: But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their request: but sent leanness into their soul" (Ps. 106:13–15).

Leanness is very much in the souls of modern men, however fat their bodies. But now, inexorably, the consequences of their apostasy are beginning to come home to them. The economics of humanism lead always to disaster. Fiat money is sooner or later no money at all, and the inflation-created wealth deflates into disaster. The economic chickens are coming home to roost with a vengeance. We will see more inflation, and more dislocation as well. Today, more and more Americans are unable to buy either houses or cars, because the price is too high. The humanists are trying to solve the problem with more inflation, which will only increase the gap between affordability and purchase price. This gap will set in, not only with respect to automobiles and houses, but other things as well. As a consequence of this gap, one segment of the economy after another will cease to be affordable to more people, and unemployment will increase.

The emptiness which humanism has brought to time and history will become an emptiness in the pocketbook and at the dinner table.

Modern man is singularly unprepared for trouble. He has too meager a reserve of inner strength to cope with problems. On top of that, he is at every turn harried by his new god, the state. When the state fails him, as it most certainly shall, and his money fails him also and becomes very cheap paper, the poverty of modern man will be very great, and it will be an evil poverty. The treasures of humanism are corruptible ones, and they are now steadily appearing for what they are. We are summoned to do otherwise: "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through

nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:20–21). Our greatest and surest treasure is God the Lord, His grace and government. We are not alone. We are the people of the King of kings, and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16). We have been called to victory, knowing that "whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world . . . even our faith" (1 John 5:4).

God's victory requires the destruction of the present world order, and He will destroy it. God laughs at the plans and conspirings of His enemies: "the Lord shall have them in derision" (Ps. 2:4). His victory is sure and inevitable, and His presence and government fills all heaven and earth and transcends all things.

68

SOCIAL AMNESIA

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 153, July 1992

It was, I believe, Pitirim Sorokin who years ago warned people of the growing social amnesia, the loss of the past, and the growing ignorance of the foundations of our civilization. I was reminded of this recently as I listened to the comments in the media by black and white leaders with respect to the rioting and looting that erupted first in Los Angeles over the Rodney King case.

The problem of social amnesia is compounded by the deliberate amnesia of much of the media. Consider, for example, the facts that Llewellyn H. Rockwell Jr. called attention to in his "Opposing View" in the April 23, 1992 edition of *USA Today*: Rodney G. King, with a criminal record, raced through residential areas at 115 mph. When finally stopped, Rockwell reported, "the muscular, 250-pound perpetrator danced maniacally, made sexual advances toward a policewoman and refused to do as he was told. The police had good reason to think King was on PCP, even though he was simply an alcohol consumer of historic proportions. Did he have a gun? He wouldn't let himself be frisked. The cops tried to subdue him with an electric stunner, but he was unaffected, something cops rarely see." These facts and more were available to Governor Pete Wilson and President George Bush, as well as to all the media and to politicians. Virtually all chose to make "politically correct" statements and to disregard the very clear evidence presented at the trial. This is deliberate amnesia, and it is very prevalent.

Deliberate amnesia leads to social amnesia on a massive scale. People have no real past, because it has been supplanted by fiction. Consider, for example, this statement by Lawrence M. Mead, in *The New Politics of Poverty* (1992), that in the depression of the 1930s, there was no problem among blacks because they were ready to work, and they were ready to

take lowest wages (pp. 32–33). Today, most immigrants get work on their first day in the United States (p. 91ff.). In the 1930s, there was discrimination against the blacks that no longer exists, but there was also a different character. Our history is being rewritten.

Social amnesia is a loss of the past. Amnesia is a loss of memory: it reduces a man to a mindless state because he remembers nothing and does not know who he is. This is what is happening to mankind today, especially to Western man.

Drunkenness has a somewhat similar effect, except that it cuts off a man from the present and leaves him disoriented. People today, by their false thinking, have cut themselves off from the past and the present —and therefore from the future.

Social amnesia and drunkenness in a social order produce mindless thinking. In a May 1992 Letter to Pro-Lifers, Phyllis Schlafly quoted a woman leader in a Republican proabortion group who argued thus: "What about natural rock formations that look like people? Just because something is formed in that shape (i.e., a fetus, an unborn child) does not necessarily mean that that's what it is." In this statement, the amnesia means a loss of logic and common sense, a very common failing today.

Most people living today were born after 1950; the overwhelming majority was born after 1940. More people are alive today than have lived and died since Adam's day. More people have, by a falsified education and media, been cut off from their past: they have a social amnesia. Think of yourself as suddenly having no memory, no known past, nameless, and surrounded by people who are in the same condition. This is where we are historically.

Worse yet, the churches have helped get us there because they have forgotten their faith and their origins. It is ironic that theonomy is regarded as novelty by the churches when it was once normative, the faith of virtually all and regarded as basic to the historic faith.

The church's roots are a historic revelation that goes back to the beginnings of man and history. For the church to neglect the faith, law, and history that Scripture is, means to deny its Lord and itself. The amount of instruction *in the Bible* (as against *about* the Bible) is very low in most seminaries. (I recall one student who boasted that he had gotten an A in his Old Testament course without ever reading the Old Testament: he read all the required textbooks and took careful notes of the professor's lectures.) The church may sing the hymn, "Faith of Our Fathers, Living Still," but in too many cases it knows neither the faith nor the fathers.

To cut ourselves off from the past is to destroy our present and our future. It turns us into barbarians. Studies of various so-called primitive

peoples have shown that they are not interested in "abstract" thinking; they have no desire for any knowledge that serves no immediate and pragmatic purpose. Their intellectual aptitudes may be high, but their interests, beyond curiosity, are present-oriented. They will not apply their minds to anything other than immediate and practical concerns.

Our modern world is more given to entertainment and fiction than any previous era. Books, magazines, radio, movies, and television feed this will to fiction, and there has been a steady increase in the amount of sensations and shocks needed to satisfy the public's appetite. As a result, people have not only lost their past, but they have surrendered the present to the existential moment.

Christians must, through church and school, reestablish a sense of history, and the Bible is the key book to all history. Christians must see their calling as one of "redeeming the time" (Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5). Samuel Johnson said that many people were bubble chasers and "an assembly of beings counterfeiting a happiness they do not feel." The expression, "redeeming the time" means literally buying for yourselves the season, time, or opportunity: it is a mandate for Christian Reconstruction. It means that we pay a price of work and self-sacrifice to redeem our time or season of history. If we have social amnesia, we lose the time and our own souls. If we redeem the time, we are blessed by God, and we leave a godly heritage to our children's children. We *must* redeem the time!

69

LIVING IN THE PAST

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 70, January 1986

Living in the past is a favorite and chosen pastime of many people everywhere. Individuals and classes, nations and races, regions and localities, all are addicted to their version of the Golden Age in the past.

This is not all. Being surrounded in many cases with the achievements and glories of the past, people assume that these things are their own accomplishments. Men without faith have lived near the cathedrals of the Middle Ages and other monuments of the past and acted as though this past greatness somehow accrued to them. In the United States, the monuments of a Puritan culture are treated by descendents and present inhabitants as their present merit, even while they despise the Puritan faith. Throughout the Western world, we have all too many pygmies living among the ruins and relics of the past as though past greatness means their greatness, too.

Europe and America are not alone in this. All over the world, some segments of various cultures look back to the past, a past they never made nor can reduplicate, and act as though the past were their accomplishment. At the same time, such people are an impediment to the development of a better today and tomorrow.

Rome in its dying days was sure that so great a past ensured an enduring future, but Rome was dead and never knew it. "The old order" in many cultures is a handicap to the very values it professes to believe in. As one American of colonial origins and long standing roots once sadly remarked to me, "Our old families act upset over what is happening here, but they themselves are the worst element, because they have power and yet they use power to conspire against our future. Every ugly power group is loaded with 'our kind' of people."

But this is not all. Again and again, those who claim to be the heirs of

past greatness invent a mythical past to suit their fancies. A sad example of this is Ireland. The greatness of the early Irish church is an exciting fact, but Irish nationalism in the late 1800s passed over this in favor of an invented past. The folklore romantics who began their work in Germany had a profound effect on some Irish romantics. An Irish past was invented, filled with little people, leprechauns, witches, hobgoblins, the evil eye, and more. Every little scrap of peasant belief was converted into a national treasure. In due time, more and more people of Irish descent became convinced that such things as "second sight" were "in their blood." Men like George Russell and William Butler Yeats created a new image of the Irish, and many since have been trying to live in terms of that image.

The Irish were by no means alone in this. What makes the Irish change so notable is that it occurred in a country so devoted to its faith. All the same, Ireland was converted from a Catholic culture towards a nationalistic one which stressed the mystical qualities of Celtic blood.

At the same time, of course, the national character of many European countries was molded into new characteristics by the folklorist and nationalist impulses.

This movement has not been lacking in the United States, a nation of immigrants. Many of the immigrants changed their names on arriving on American shores out of anger and resentment at what their native land had become. Their descendents now romanticize the country of their origin and have made a spiritual emigration to the country their ancestors renounced. At a safe distance from the poverty and oppression of the past, these heirs can fly in comfort to the places of their remote origin and talk glibly of their heritage. However, the more men live in the past, the less relevant they are to the future.

In fact, we need to see changes as opportunities sent to us by the grace of God. To cite but two examples, the American South and the American West have changed dramatically and radically since World War II. However much we may have liked the past, we need to recognize that it is gone, and that the present comes from the hand of God and is a challenge to new growth and greatness. If we are not in Christ, we are dead men, and all our todays and tomorrows will only emphasize the fact that we are dead and irrelevant.

Some years ago, when I began the studies which led to the writing of *The Messianic Character of American Education* (1963), I was greatly interested in the role of New England men in the development of the United States. In the early years, New England's Puritan faith had its impact in other colonies, in England itself, and in the formation of the United

States. By the early 1800s, the New England influence had shifted from Christ to politics in terms of a new hope of salvation by political and social action. In 1830, thirty-six members of Congress, one-eighth of that body, were born in Connecticut, and that state by population was only one-forty-third part of the United States. Of these thirty-six congressmen, thirty-one came from Western states to which they had migrated. New England men were moving westward to assume leadership in the states in politics, and then in education. Much of the Western radicalism was New England radicalism.

In California, New Englanders like John Swett, state superintendent of schools, 1863–1867, one of many such men to head west, left their names on many streets and institutions. They also brought Unitarianism to California as to other places. Swett's life's motto came from Horace Mann, another Unitarian: "Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity." This was now the New England god, not Christ but humanity. Swett saw private property as the property of the state, and the children in California as "the children of the state." The sons of the Puritans were Yankees and statists.

Nothing stands still, however. William Hale Thompson Sr., a prominent descendent of a New England family, was on the staff of Admiral David G. Farragut. While on leave in 1865, he married Medora Gale, a member of a pioneer Chicago family, whose father was one of the thirty-eight original incorporators of the town of Chicago, and whose grandfather, Theophilus Smith, was a justice of the Illinois Supreme Court. Two notable families were thus united. Their second son, William Hale Thompson Jr., was born on May 14, 1867; he was to become Chicago's most notorious mayor.

Earlier, New Englanders had left Christ for the gospel of salvation by the state, or for salvation by education. Now another step was taken, the quest for power as such. "Big Bill" Thompson, born into prominence and culture, vulgarized himself progressively to become "a man of the people." He was Chicago's mayor in the corrupt Al Capone era. His morality was expediency. Thus, in campaigning for Len Small for governor, he attacked Small's able opponent because he was a Jew. When Thompson's Jewish friends protested, "Big Bill" was bewildered and told them: "You know I've been a friend to Jews. Look at the record of my appointments. I'm saying what I've got to say to make Small win. That's the only thing that's important here. Len Small has got to win!" Thompson ran repeatedly on a "reform" platform; he had the churches on his side during his early years. For Thompson, politics was an invigorating game, and the meaning of his life for him was the enjoyment thereof. He introduced

religious and racial bigotry into some of his campaigns, not because he personally had any such feelings, but in order to exploit existing suspicions and hostilities. It is likely that, as far as Thompson was capable of having a sincere belief, he was appreciative of the American past. Certainly he was a professional patriot and flag-waver. He took America's power and success as a natural fact of life, and, like Lake Michigan, something to be used and exploited.

The history of "Big Bill" Thompson is revelatory of the history of New England and, in miniature, of the United States, and of other countries as well. The age of faith, which established its greatness, gave way to non-Christian faith, statism, political action as salvation. New Englanders moved across the United States to mold the frontier areas while working at the same time to destroy the old South. These humanistic reformers gave way in time to the exploiters, political bosses, and men of expediency in one area after another. Boston, once the center of Puritanism, became after some generations a city better known for political corruption.

All over the world, people like the New Englanders, Englishmen, Germans, Hollanders, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Italians, Austrians, and others sit among the disappearing relics of a great past like pygmies. They identify themselves in all their pettiness, triviality, and unbelief with past greatness, as though honor and greatness are inherited with land and buildings. I have walked across the grounds of famous colleges and universities and had professors speak proudly to me of past glories as though they were a present fact, when a casual acquaintance with the school made clear its intellectual and moral bankruptcy.

Living in the past is very comforting. Its problems are gone, and only its monuments remain. In every country, men live proudly and nostalgically in terms of their past. In the United States, New Englanders, Easterners, Southerners, and even some Westerners, who have very little past, can tell you how wonderful things were before "they" came in and destroyed them. It is a superficially comforting way to live, but its promise is death. To arrest the past in any country or place is to turn it into a cemetery, or, at best, into a museum. This seems to be the goal of much of the Western world. An expression of a few years ago aptly stated this frame of mind: "Stop the world. I want to get off." This is a will to suicide.

One cannot live under God without living in terms of the present and the future, albeit with a respect for the past. Some years ago, Nathan R. Wood, in *The Secret of the Universe* (1936, 1955), spoke of the movement of time from the future to the past: "Tomorrow becomes today. Today becomes yesterday. The future becomes the present. The present becomes

yesterday. The future becomes the present. The present becomes the past. The future is the source, it is the reservoir of time which will some day be present, and then past . . . The Past issues, it proceeds, from the Future, through the Present."

This concept has been formulated by a few writers in terms of scientific theories. For us, it must be a theological fact. Given the Biblical doctrine of God and His plan of predestination, the future goal of the triune God determines the present and the past. The crucifixion, Second Advent, and the new creation determine all history back to Adam, and behind Adam to day one of creation. To live in Christ is thus to live in terms of the present and the future. The graveyards of history are the places for those living in the past. We have a future, and it comes from the Lord.

EDUCATION

70

ARISTOTLE VERSUS CHRIST

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 238
This paper was never published, but was originally numbered as No. 220, 1998

In the mid-1950s, I began studies in statist education which led to the publication of *Intellectual Schizophrenia* (1959) and *The Messianic Character of American Education* (1963). The latter work was done on a research grant. Today, a grant for such a work would be unlikely as too controversial. At the time, statist education seemed to have triumphed, and more than a few persons felt that I was wasting my time trying to bring about a separation of schools and state. *The Messianic Character of American Education* was not reviewed by any periodical, but some state boards of education asked for a report on it! Now, with the dramatic growth of Christian and homeschools, statist establishment of schools is seriously questioned.

It is important to raise a more basic question: Why did the state get into education?

The origins of the concept of state control of education have pagan roots, and they are best set forth by Aristotle and his *Politics*. For Aristotle, the state "is the highest (good) of all, and . . . embraces all the rest" (bk. I, 1). He sees man as simply "the best of animals" and "a political animal" (bk. I, 2; bk. III, 6; etc.). Moreover, "the citizen should be moulded to suit the form of government under which he lives." Furthermore, "Neither must we suppose that any one of the citizens belongs to himself, for they all belong to the state, and are each of them a part of the state" (bk. VIII, 1). Education for Aristotle must be regulated by the state, and for him this was beyond question (bk. VIII, 2). This should not surprise us. All non-Biblical cultures of antiquity were radically totalitarian.

In his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle simply intensified his position.

In Book VIII, he discusses sex as a biological phenomenon which is no more a matter for moralization than hunger or thirst. Attempts to Christianize Aristotle's thinking are futile. For him, "God" was an idea, not a reality, a philosophical limiting concept to avoid the idea of an infinite regress by positing a first cause and a beginning.

In the Bible, priest and prophet were outside state control. St. Paul saw himself as an *ambassador* for Christ (2 Cor. 5:20); he did not ask men to pray *to* the king, as the person or agency of God, but to pray *for* the king, that he conform himself to God (1 Tim. 2:1–2). The church, as the embassy of Christ the King was beyond state control. The roots of the medieval and modern church/state conflict are in this Biblical premise. The world of Aristotle and Plato is an alien, totalitarian realm.

We have thus two radically different doctrines of man: each is the antithesis of the other. For the Christian, man is a creative being made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26–28); for Aristotle, man is at best a political animal. For the Christian, salvation is only possible by Christ's atonement. For Aristotle, salvation is statist to the core and is by means of education. For the Christian, education cannot be salvic or messianic, because only Christ can regenerate and save man. In the tradition of Aristotle, the state by education can remake man. These two views are mutually exclusive, and it is only man's propensity to avoid conflict that leads him to attempt the reconciliation of Aristotle and Jesus Christ!

This reconciliation is what all who place their children in state schools are attempting to do. This syncretistic effort has led to the steady retreat of the church and to its adoption of alien "gospels" such as humanism. All efforts to merge the two plans of salvation are doomed to fail because God is God, and His truth is unchanging and unchangeable. At issue is more than a matter of forms of schooling. Rather, it is the basic question: Who is man's savior, Christ or the state?

71

EDUCATION AND DECADENCE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 77, August 1986

On June 19, 1986, *USA Today* carried an editorial on the "crack" epidemic. "Crack" is a form of refined cocaine which the editorial said "causes convulsions, brain seizures, heart attacks, respiratory problems and severe vitamin deficiencies. It leads to paranoia, depression, suicide and homicide." In a "sampling" of opinions from coast to coast, seven persons were quoted as to the answer to the question, "What can we do about the 'crack' epidemic?" Three of the seven called for more education of our students; three called for stricter law enforcement (one of these three called for more information to children from their parents), and the seventh felt the solution was "to have a Hands Across America to fight drugs." None mentioned Christian faith and life as the solution. All believed in the great delusion of our time, namely, that human problems can be resolved by technical means rather than by faith and character.

It can with merit be argued that our law enforcement agencies, other than the courts, are better now than fifty years ago. There is no lack of zeal on the part of the police in many areas to enforce the law. Even if the courts were as good as we would like them to be, this still would not alter the delinquent and suicidal bent of youth and adults alike. No man who takes Scripture seriously can believe so. Proverbs 8:35–36 tells us plainly: "For who so findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death."

Law enforcement is a necessity in any godly society, but it protects rather than creates godliness. When the lawbreakers far outnumber the police, a society is in trouble. When besides lawbreakers, we have an antinomian population which pits a lawless love against God's law, we have death facing a society. Pour all the antibiotics and drugs you can into a

dead man, and it will not heal him. Too often also a body without the will to live resists curative medicine but gives ground readily to a disease, because its resistance is gone. Societies, too, can reach a point where their sickness is more prized by the body politic than any cure. Evidence for this fact can be found on most editorial pages. Whether or not this truly represents society in the main will be determined in the next decade.

Education today is a part of the problem, not the cure. Proverbs 1:7 tells us, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction." This means that the neglect of God and His Word is the beginning of ignorance and death, because the fools have despised the source of wisdom. Therefore, it can be asked if our state schools today are not educating for death, since Christ is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6).

Statist education today is suicidal in its impact because of its emphasis on evolution and equalitarianism. If evolution is true, then all things are the product of chance. Instead of absolute truth and order undergirding all creation, we have chance and meaninglessness as ultimate. This means that "truth" is an evolutionary and changing thing, and we cannot be bound by past truths as we face the future. Law is then the evolving experience of mankind, and the criminal is perhaps an evolutionary pioneer, as some have held. To further evolution, it becomes necessary to break up old forms of law and order to facilitate evolutionary growth. Such a perspective reduces past, present, and future to meaninglessness. Instead of being the great force for progress, as early evolutionists believed, the doctrine of evolution has worked to destroy the belief in progress. Reason also has come to be seen, since Freud, as another fallen idol.

Equalitarianism has been no less destructive, especially when linked with evolutionary faith. Equalitarianism cuts the ground out from under authority and obedience. Given equality as an article of faith, every man is as good as everyone else, or as bad. If we are as good as the next man, why submit to his authority? When, then, should we obey him? We have on all sides, both in the church and out of it, a general spirit of rebelliousness, a refusal to submit to authority. In Sweden today, we see the extremes of this: it is illegal to maintain discipline and authority by spanking one's daughter, but not illegal to have sexual relations with her; the one act asserts authority and the need for obedience, the other applies equality.

Thus, we see everywhere savage disagreements and even court contests because people refuse to submit to authority where only minor matters are involved. One woman took after her husband with a butcher's knife because, seeing the sinks and drainboards piled high with dirty

dishes, pots, and utensils, he dared to suggest that perhaps she ought to wash the dishes. Her statement later was, "How dare he lay down the law to me? Who does he think he is?" If no one is higher in authority than we are, how then can anyone tell us what to do?

Given this perspective, the proposed Children's Bill of Rights is logical. Children have as many "rights" as their parents do! Given, too, the fact of evolution, the next generation must be "free" to express itself and to develop without the governance of "the dead hand of the past."

Equalitarian education is thus a training ground for social anarchy and chaos. It is a form of social suicide, since it subverts the normal order of education, the importation of the learning skills, and the faith of the past, in order to provide for stability and growth tomorrow.

Moreover, modern education, in terms of Dewey's philosophy, sees truth as pragmatic and instrumental. Truth then becomes whatever works for us. The consequences of such a belief are far-reaching and deadly. If "truth" is a pragmatic and instrumental thing, it changes as circumstances change. There is then no fixity of good and evil. Men will not willingly die for a truth which may change tomorrow, and neither will they live for it. Men and societies then see bare survival as the only value, if a value at all; for them, nothing is important enough to make a stand for because all things are equally meaningless.

Otto Scott has wisely observed that a people are decadent when they will no longer defend themselves and their culture. Our era is cynical of the concept of decadence. Richard Gilman, in *Decadence* (1975), called the concept the refuge of "the shallow, the thoughtless and imitative, the academically frozen: monkey-minds." This is a simple device to rule out all who disagree! With respect to Oscar Wilde, Gilman held that to think of him as "decadent" was very wrong; it "would be to abet the conspiracy through which our icy, unyielding moral technology maintains its power to settle things, to bring complexity to heel." Gilman agreed with Wilde's comment to a friend in a letter about his condition, which Gilman called "besieged and mysterious." Wilde had said, "I was a problem for which there was no solution."

If good and evil are equal, equally valid or invalid, then there are no solutions to any problems, whether they be Wilde's homosexuality or anything else. If there be no right nor wrong, there can be no answer to any problem, no solutions, and finally, no problems. There can then be no judgment and no answer, hence nothing worth fighting for. This is decadence, and it is very much with us.

It is also a basic part of statist education. If God's absolute authority and Word do not undergird our education, then there is no solid ground

for judgment. If the concepts of good and evil, of morality and immorality, of social strength and decadence, are invalid and are the refuge of "the shallow, the thoughtless . . . and . . . monkey-minds," then children and youth in their education are open to all possibilities. Even more, they are directed against Biblical faith by the pragmatic or instrumentalist philosophies which undergird statist education today. Moral judgment is denied validity, and the student is encouraged to establish his own values, not to follow those of church and family.

Education then becomes education for decadence. To yield up one's children to state schools is to surrender them to a major source of decadence. It is noteworthy that state schoolteachers in so many cases have their children in Christian schools. In fact, the ratio is twice that of the general population.

The belief that education per se is good is wrong; Nazi education and Soviet education are obvious examples of deadly and false schoolings of the child. Education can be for good or for evil; it can strengthen a society or destroy it. To believe that education can neglect the source of all wisdom, the triune God, is to believe that folly and suicide are better than wisdom and life.

72

EDUCATION AS A PANACEA

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 149, March 1992

In 1969, Julius Lester's book, *Revolutionary Notes*, was published. From start to finish, the book is full of the myths of the rebelling student generation, out to change the world overnight. The publisher described it thus: "This is a book to carry to the barricades."

The book is almost a catalog of humanistic nonsense. We are told, "It is difficult to be a revolutionary, for to be a revolutionary means to believe in the innate goodness of man and to know that man in this environment has been programmed (sp) into nonman" (p. 172). This is good humanism, a belief in man's goodness. The problem, then, is to explain why certain men are evil, and why the environment, human society, has been made evil. The Christian doctrine of man as a sinner at war against God easily accounts for evil in this world. For humanism, it is a problem.

Lester's answer is the classic answer of humanism from the Enlightenment, through Jean-Jacques Rousseau and through John Dewey to the present: "Ignorance is our greatest enemy." It was this faith that led the Unitarian Horace Mann to see the school as man's true church and savior. He saw an end to crime and evil coming with universal public education.

Unhappily for these humanists, as this humanistic education has prospered, so, too, have crime and social decay. On all sides, we see education heavily financed as the key to social salvation but producing instead social decay. Christian schools, and Christian home schools, meanwhile are producing literate students who are providing leadership in one field after another. Black Christian schools are growing rapidly as a countermeasure to the destruction wrought by state schools to black children. These nonstatist schools reach the middle- and lower-class families and cannot be rightfully charged with elitism.

The clear evidence of the differences between the two kinds of schools is overwhelming. To compare, for example, the black students in a Christian school with those in a neighboring state school is a contrast of dramatic character.

But evidence does not work! Humanism, one of the world's most fanatical religions, keeps insisting that the great enemy is ignorance and *only their humanistic statist schools can solve the problem*. Meanwhile, all over the Western world, the functional illiteracy generated by humanistic state schools continues to grow. As unskilled labor becomes less useful in a technological society, the number of unskilled people is growing. The army (and often business) finds it necessary to reeducate its recruits in great numbers.

Why this fanaticism, this intense dedication to the faith that "ignorance is our greatest enemy"? Few things have been shown to be more untenable. It is a belief which represents the blindest kind of faith. We have a world of crime, drugs, violence, gangs, murder, abortion, euthanasia, and sexual perversions, and we are still told that "ignorance is our greatest enemy," when the state schools are the purveyors of functional illiteracy and ignorance. If it is true that ignorance is our greatest enemy, why not a return to phonics in order to reestablish literacy? Samuel L. Blumenfeld of Chalcedon is the authority on phonics. Why does a president of the National Educational Association call him "public education enemy number one"? If literacy is their goal, Blumenfeld should be honored by them.

But old fashioned literacy is no longer the goal. Such a function was abandoned beginning at least in the late 1920s, and it is now the prevailing temper of statist educators to oppose phonics and traditional education. Let us remember that the central faith of humanism, the belief in the innate goodness of man, is a religious belief, not an educational fact. If man is naturally good, and if his problem is an evil environment, then the central purpose of education must be to strip the child of everything that restrains his natural goodness, his natural impulses and needs. Laws, rules, and restraints must go.

Given this fact, we can understand why the Bible has been thrown out of "public" education, and why such state schools are anti-family. The child is taught to reject the values of Christianity and the family, to despise the past, and to choose his own value system. Whatever suits him is best for him. Freedom from the compulsion of the past, from absolute values and morals, and freedom to live one's own lifestyle becomes, then, the goal of statist education.

In terms of this, it is logical that condoms are passed out in state schools and that chastity is not taught. The goal is to free the child's

innate goodness and to release his being into the freedom of a truly human society!

Given this faith, we must recognize that our humanistic statist education is not only at war with Christianity, but must logically regard it as its greatest enemy. The graffiti, "Kill Christians," is a logical expression of this faith.

The Larger Catechism, A. 24, declares, "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, any law of God" (1 John 3:4; cf. Rom. 3:23 and James 4:17). 1 John 3:4 simply tells us that sin is lawlessness; it is a violation of any law of God.

This tells us how serious our problem is. The humanist hates God and His law; his life is one long enmity with God. Humanism is the world's second oldest religion, having been set forth first by the tempter in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1–5).

But what complicates our problem today is that most churches are radically antinomian; they are on the side of the humanists in rejecting God's law. How, then, can they contend against this great evil overwhelming our society?

It is said that in antinomian church circles, the amount of sexual delinquency is about the same as for unbelievers. This statement, based on a survey, was made to John Lofton by a leading antinomian Arminian. It should not surprise us. It should lead us to pray with the psalmist, "It is time for thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law" (Ps. 119:126). The "work" the psalmist had in mind was judgment. We are beginning to see the Lord work His judgment on our time.

The humanists are logical, if wrong. Given their faith in the innate goodness of men, for them education is the loosening of restraint. Some hold that the present freedom, despite its problem, will lead to a greater good for humanity. Their faith is at least a consistent one, and very passionately held.

So what is the excuse of the churches? They are full of lawlessness; they despise God's law; they see a virtue in their antinomianism, and so on. They forget Peter's words, "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God" (1 Pet. 4:17).

I found little or nothing to agree with in Julius Lester's *Revolutionary Notes*, but I respect it more than I do inconsistent churches who profess Christ and feel that "believing" on Jesus gives them a license to despise God's law. They have blinded themselves and see their blindness as a blessing.

Our Lord has a word for such churches and churchmen: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be

salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13).

73

THE RESTORATION OF EDUCATION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 219, December 1997

The background of American schooling is the Protestant emphasis on the reading of the Bible. The Calvinistic and Lutheran emphasis on literacy came from its Biblical doctrine of God. God is unchanging because He is totally self-conscious. His Word is an infallible Word because He is the infallible God; His infallibility and total self-consciousness are apparent in His predestination of all things. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18). Such knowledge is only possible to a totally self-conscious, omnipotent, and infallible God. The Bible, His Word, is an expression of His being and its infallibility. Knowledge of it is thus basic to existence. Reading this has a dimension in Biblical religion not found in any other. *When, as in some areas of the Christian world, literacy, tradition, or anything other than the Bible is given priority, the result is a regression into a non-Christian religion. Mystery will then often be stressed above knowledge.*

The American Puritans stressed literacy to defeat "that old deluder, Satan." Education was also important to man in terms of his calling. Schooling was thus very practical. In my youth, older men with any American schooling were excellent at "figuring." They could calculate in their heads data about crops, expenses, and so on.

Early American schooling, and in the era of the early republic prior to Horace Mann, had short years, six weeks to three months. It was solid and hard training because the parents expected it. "Reading, writing, and arithmetic, taught to the tune of the hickory stick," was what they wanted for their children. School discipline, like home discipline, had to be strict.

After grade school, i.e., after grade eight, those going to a college or university attended a summer academy to get foreign languages,

mathematics, and science. This meant college graduation at age seventeen to nineteen, and an early entry into the adult world, and earlier marriage often.

Statist educators gradually lengthened the school years, weakened its content, and lessened its discipline. However, up to the 1929 Depression, an eighth-grade school prepared students ably for a working world. They had the basic skills.

With the 1929 Depression, state compulsory attendance laws were raised, even up to sixteen and eighteen, to remove vast numbers from the work force. Many youths, unemployed, returned to school, i.e., high school. In my high school years, graduating in 1934, many students who were involved in sports were routinely disqualified from further participation because they had reached their twenty-first birthday. A problem of the day was that some younger teachers were twenty and twenty-one years old, and some students were dating them.

Especially after World War II, a dilution of the curriculum followed. Young parents who felt that the Depression and the war had been deprivations sought "a better life" for their children, leading in the 1950s to the child-centered society, which meant the spoiled-brat student rebels of the 1960s.

At the same time, the influx of more students into junior or community colleges led to watering down that area of education. Next came the universities and graduate schools.

Christian and home schools must take the lead in reversing all this, in shortening the present K–12 schooling into K–8 (or at most K–9), and by again making higher education into sound schooling.

Such a move requires Christian leadership, and it must come soon.

CONFLICT

74

CONFLICT WITH THE STATE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 1, January 1979

In recent years, under the influences of humanism on the one hand and pietism on the other, the church has withdrawn from many of its historic and basic functions. As the church begins to revive and resume its required ministry, the result is conflict with the humanistic state. It is important, therefore, to examine some of the historic and necessary duties of the Christian church.

The *church* can be understood in part by the Biblical words used to describe it in the Bible. The basic word in the New Testament Greek is *ecclesia*, assembly, or congregation, which in the Old Testament was *qahal* and *edah*. The church is also described in James 2:2 as a *synagoge*, or synagogue. In the Old Testament, the government of the synagogue was by *elders* or *presbyters*; this office continues in the Christian synagogue, with the same basic requirements for the office (1 Tim. 3:1–13, etc.) as required by the synagogue. The Old Testament pattern was so carefully preserved by the church that the English word *priest* is an abridgment of *presbyter*, and the College of Cardinals for centuries was a lay council of seventy (Num. 11:16), like the Sanhedrin, with the pope, like the Jewish high priest as the seventy-first. Jesus created a ruling-serving body of seventy also, a kind of diaconate (Luke 10:1, 17), as the "Sanhedrin" of the church, which called itself "the Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16).

The Old Testament clergy was divided into two classes, priests and Levites. The work of the priests was hieratic, sacrifice and offerings being its essential function. For Christians, this aspect of the Old Testament ministry ended with Christ. Even those communions who call their clergy *priests* do so with a difference, so that the Old Testament priesthood is seen as finished. The function of the Levitical ministry was instruction (Deut. 33:10). As a result, education was basic to the life of the

synagogue and the Levitical ministry. The well-known Hebrew proverb declares that a man who did not teach his son the Torah (i.e., the Old Testament) and a trade taught him to be a thief. Hence, Israel was unique in antiquity because of its well-nigh universal education as the ministry of the synagogue.

Josephus declared that the origin of Hebrew schools was with Moses (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 4.8.12). In *Against Apion* (2.25), Josephus said of Moses, "He commanded to instruct the children in the elements of knowledge, to teach them to walk according to the laws, and to know the deeds of their fathers. The latter, that they might imitate them; the former, that growing up with the laws, they might not transgress them, nor have the excuse of ignorance." While most scholars would be skeptical of a Mosaic origin for the schools, it is clear that Deuteronomy is largely concerned with *instruction*, of both adults and children.

The influence of this standard was great. Hillel held, "an ignorant man (i.e., one ignorant of the Torah) cannot be truly pious . . . The more teaching of the Law, the more life; the more school, the more wisdom; the more counsel, the more reasonable action" (*Sayings of the Fathers*, 2:5; 2:7) This educational standard, noted Barclay, "has left its mark deeply upon the world, because in the last analysis it aims to educate the child in order to fit him to be a servant of God; it is an education of children for God" (William Barclay, *Train Up a Child: Educational Ideals in the Ancient World* [1959], p. 48).

The early church, the medieval church, the Reformation church, and the contemporary fundamentalist and orthodox churches seek to continue this ancient mandate of education. The church is, as E. Schweizer, in *Church Order in The New Testament* (7b, p. 92), pointed out, "the realm of dominion in which the risen Lord continues to work" (cited in Colin Brown, ed., *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 1 [1967, 1975], p. 300).

The early church came into conflict with Rome, which sought to license, regulate, control, and tax all religions because the church refused to submit to controls. Its resistance was based on the lordship or sovereignty of Christ: Christ's domain cannot be under the dominion of Caesar. Caesar is under Christ the Creator and Lord, not Christ under Caesar. The church thus engaged in several unlicensed activities:

1. It held meetings which were instructional and worship meetings, without permits.

2. It collected abandoned babies (as part of its opposition to abortion), gave them to various church families, and reared and instructed them; orphanages were maintained also.

3. Because of the Levitical nature of the church, i.e., a center of instruction, libraries and schools began to be built very early. Later, cathedral schools developed, and universities.

The doctrine of academic freedom is a relic of the day when the academy was a part of the church and its functions, and hence entitled to the immunities thereof. How seriously this aspect was seen as basic to the church's life is apparent from the fact that, as soon as churches were built (not possible for the first two centuries), libraries (and schools) were a part of them. Joseph Bingham, in *The Antiquities of the Christian Church* (1850), wrote, "there were such places anciently adjoining to many churches, from the time that churches began to be erected among Christians" (bk. 8, chap. 7, sec. 12). Bingham cited some of the ancient references to these schools and libraries (Eusebius, book 6, chap. 20; Hieronymus [Jerome], *Catalog. Scriptor. Eccles.*, chap. 75; *Gesta Purgat., ad calcem Optati*, p. 267; Augustine, *De Haeresibus*, chap. 80; Basil, Epistle 82; Hospinian, *De Templis*, book 3, chap. 6). Bingham referred also to a canon attributed to the Sixth Ecumenical Council, in Constantinople, A.D. 680–681, which required that presbyters in country towns and villages maintain schools for all children. He added, summing up all the evidences, "we may conclude, that schools were anciently very common appendants both of cathedral and country churches" (bk. 8, chap. 7, sec. 12). Fault can only be found with Bingham's statement on the ground that they were not "appendants" but a basic aspect of the life of the church, whether separate from the church or within it. Bingham's high church tendencies led him to stress the liturgical rather than educational life of the church. Many critical scholars would deny that schools existed at so early a date; too often their premise is to assume a rootless church, i.e., a church without the fact of the synagogue and the Levite in the background as its origin, and in the present as a rival and reminder. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that Christianity is the religion of the book, the Bible. Literacy and education were thus natural concomitants to conversion. But this is not all. Being the religion of the Book meant that translations were made into various tongues, and, to make the translation readable, education was stressed. In Armenia, an alphabet was created for the Bible translation, and a new culture developed as a result of the new learning in that new alphabet of the Bible. Granted that invasions, wars, and the backwardness of many of the newly converted peoples (as in northern Europe) made the development of schools and learning at times a slow process, but it is clear that (1) Christianity saw education or instruction as basic to its life and a necessary function of the church, and (2) education in the Western world is a unique development in history and a child of the church.

Moreover, we must remember that, in the early church, the service was Levitical or instructional. At the conclusion of the instruction (or sermon), there were questions designed to enable the hearers to clarify misunderstood or difficult points. Since not all who attended were believers, but were sometimes visitors or the unbelieving husband or wife of a believer, questions could be at times contentious. Women were forbidden to engage in this debating or in challenging the pastor or teacher. Paul says,

> Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. (1 Cor. 14:34–35)

The point is that the church itself in the New Testament was more a school than a temple. The Reformation, and later the Puritans, restored this instructional emphasis to church meetings. This historic emphasis is again coming to the forefront. At a few morning services in the United States, the question and answer format has been revived; it is more common at evening services. Even more, churches are establishing, whether as parochial or separate bodies, schools as basic to the life of the church. These are often grade and high schools, Bible colleges, in two or more cases (in 1978) seminaries, and so on. These are not seen as innovations nor as activities alien to the church but as central to it. Whenever and wherever there is or has been a deepening of the Old Testament foundations of the Christian faith, together with a revived emphasis on the lordship or sovereignty of Jesus Christ, there has been a corresponding and necessary development of the *Levitical* nature of the ministry. Education then becomes essential to the ministry. The warning of Jeremiah 10:2, "Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen," is taken seriously.

Another factor is also stressed. Baptism, depending on the church communion, involves an explicit or implicit vow that the baptized, under penalty of curse, is the property of Jesus Christ. He and his children must be instructed in the Word of the Lord. It was once commonplace to require all baptized Christians to place their children in church schools. That mandate is again returning, because of the faith that a child who is the property of Christ by virtue of his baptism, or the parent's baptism, cannot be placed in a humanistic school. The Christian school movement is the result.

The German historian, Ethelbert Stauffer, in his important study of *Christ and the Caesars* (1952 in Germany; 1955, United States), showed clearly that the roots of the ancient conflict between church and state

are religious. Where the state claims to be god walking on earth, the state will claim sovereignty and will seek to control every area of life and thought. A free society becomes impossible. The Christian claim is not that the church is sovereign over the world, for it is not; lordship or sovereignty is an attribute of God, not of man. But the Christian insistence is on the freedom of the church, "the realm of dominion in which the risen Lord continues to work" (E. Schweizer), from the controls of the state or any other agency.

It involves, moreover, a denial of the doctrine of state sovereignty. The very word sovereignty is absent from the U.S. Constitution because of the theological context of those times. The historian A. F. Pollard wrote:

> The colonies had been as anxious to get rid of James II in 1688 as they were to be free from Parliament in 1776. Their fundamental objection was to any sovereignty vested in any State whatsoever, even in their own. Americans may be defined as that part of the English-speaking world which has instinctively revolted against the doctrine of the sovereignty of the State and has, not quite successfully, striven to maintain that attitude from the time of the Pilgrim Fathers to the present day . . . It is this denial of all sovereignty which gives its profound and permanent interest to the American Revolution. The Pilgrim Fathers crossed the Atlantic to escape from sovereign power; Washington called it a "monster"; the professor of American History at Oxford calls it a "bugaboo" . . . and Mr. Lansing writes of the Peace Conference that "nine-tenths of all international difficulties arise out of the problem of sovereignty and the so-called sovereign state." (A. F. Pollard, *Factors in American History* [1925], pp. 31–32)

This statement is all the more of interest because Pollard was an English scholar and a great authority of his day on constitutionalism. Since Pollard's day, of course, the U.S. federal government and the states have steadily advanced claims of sovereignty. At the same time, they have become increasingly humanistic in their view of law and have firmly established humanism as the religion of the "public" or state schools.

The novelty in the present conflict is not that the church or the Christian schools are claiming new, and historically novel, immunities, but that the various American states are claiming a jurisdiction never before exercised or existing. *The novelty is on the part of the state.* It is a product of its claim to sovereignty. This claim places the state on a collision course with the church, and even more, with God, the only Sovereign. On April 30, 1839, on "The Jubilee of the Constitution," John Quincy Adams attacked the new doctrine of state sovereignty. As against parliamentary omnipotence and sovereignty, the colonists in 1776 appealed to the omnipotence and sovereignty of God. Adams declared:

> There is the Declaration of Independence, and there is the Constitution of the United States — let them speak for themselves. The grossly immoral and dishonest doctrine of despotic state sovereignty, the exclusive judge of its own obligations, and responsible to no power on earth or in heaven, for the violation of them, is not there. The Declaration says it is not in me. The Constitution says it is not in me. (S. H. Peabody, ed., *American Patriotism: Speeches, Letters, and other Papers, etc.* [1880], p. 321).

The conflict is the same religious conflict which saw Rome and the early church in bitter war, and with many Christians martyred. It is Christ versus Caesar. For the Christian, there can be no compromise. What is at stake is not his property, concern, or income, but Christ's dominion, "the realm of dominion in which the risen Lord continues to work."

75

IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, OR IN THE NAME OF CAESAR?

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 2, February 1979

The meaning of names is largely irrelevant in our day. We name our children in terms of names that please us, whatever they may mean. In the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, names are definitions, and a man's name changed as his faith and character changed. We do not know Abraham's name before his calling; we do know that God first named him Abram, and then Abraham, to signify his place in God's plan; it was a name Abraham had to use by faith, because, humanly speaking, he was not the father of a great multitude.

Because names have become meaningless to us, we assume that they are so with God as well. Far from being the case, one of God's basic laws concerns His name: "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Exod. 20:7; Deut. 5:11). Proverbs 18:10 tells us, "The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." Paul declares, in Colossians 3:17, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

In Hebrew, name is *Shem*, and it appears some 770 times; in Greek, it is *onoma*. The *name* sets forth and defines the person named. Hence, when Moses asked what God's name is, God made it clear that He was beyond definition, so that His "Name" is simply I AM THAT I AM, or He Who Is, Jehovah or Yahweh. Then the Lord declares Himself to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exod. 3:13–15). Because God is infinite, omnipotent, and omniscient, He cannot be limited or described by any definition: He is the Eternal God, the One who creates and defines all things but is Himself beyond definition. He is, however, knowable in His

revelation to Abraham and others, and in His Word. The Name of God is thus I Am that I Am.

But names not only set forth the meaning and definition of a person, they also set forth his *power, dominion, and authority*. Hence, the commandments are given in the name of God. The authority, power, and dominion of Jesus Christ are so total "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Phil. 2:10).

Now, practically, what does this mean? It means, *first*, that we have seriously erred in limiting the third commandment to verbal profanity. To be profane means literally to be outside the temple, outside the Lord. In its true meaning, profanity is any and every word, thought, and action which is outside the triune God, which is apart from His Word and government. To be bearers of the Name, i.e., to be called Christian, means that we are totally under Christ's rule and dominion.

Very briefly, salvation, sovereignty, and government cannot be separated. Only a totally sovereign God who controls all things can save us. Such a God is totally the Lord over all creation: the government of all things is upon His shoulders (Isa. 9:6–7; Ps. 2). There is not a moment of time nor an atom or corner of all the universe which is outside the power and government of the triune God, of Christ the King. As a result, it is profanity to assume that any area can be outside of God and His law. A very common question asked of us these days is this: "I agree that homosexuals have no place in the pulpit or in a Christian school, but how can we bar them from a neutral realm like the public school or the civil service?" The answer is that there are no neutral realms: God is God over all things, and to exempt any realm from His government and law-word is profanity and a violation of the third commandment. "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

Second, throughout the Bible the lives and actions of God's people were conducted in the Name of the Lord, which, we are told, "is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Prov. 18:10). Of this verse, Franz Delitzsch wrote, "The name of Jahve is the Revelation of God, and the God of Revelation Himself . . . His name is His nature representing itself . . . His free and all-powerful government in grace and truth . . . This name, which is afterwards interwoven in the name of Jesus is (Ps. lxi:4), a strong high tower bidding defiance to every hostile assault."

However, not only is the Lord's name our defense, but also our strength in overcoming the enemy. Thus, *third*, the Lord's name is the name of power in overcoming all enemies and in subduing all things to

Jesus Christ (Phil. 2:9–11). He is the Lord, and all things shall be placed under His feet (Ps. 2; Heb. 2:8).

Fourth, we must therefore, if we would not profane God's name, do *all* things, whether in the area of thought, education, or learning, or in the area of action or deeds, in the name of the Lord Jesus (Col. 3:17). This means that our lives, homes, churches, schools, civil governments, arts and sciences, and all things else must be done in the Name, that is, under the kingship, dominion, authority, power, and the Word of the Lord. Anything else is profanity and practical unbelief.

In whose name does our world operate now? The old-fashioned order, "Halt, in the name of the law," summoned up the authority of the state. That state authority was once to a degree in the name of the Lord. Today, the state, its courts and law, and its schools are profane. They are outside of Christ and in contempt of Him.

The war of the early church against Rome was *a war of names*. Which name was the name of power, of ultimate authority, the name of Christ, or the name of Caesar? Rome's position was expressed in its fundamental law: "The health (or, welfare) of the people is the highest law." Rome's approach to the early church was thus in the name of the general welfare of the people, and the Roman Empire was the expression of that concern, and the source of authority. The approach of Rome thus was to deny that it sought to suppress freedom of religion. Rather, it sought to protect the health and general welfare of the people by requiring certain submissions of all religious groups. Implicit in this position, however, was the belief that, *first*, the state or Caesar is the best judge of the health or welfare of the people. This meant that the word of truth and wisdom was not the Word of God but the word of the state. Sound social order and health thus was held to require that Caesar's word prevail and govern.

Second, the governing word is the word of power, and Rome held that Caesar's word was the word of power. But Caesar's word could not save Rome, and Caesar's coercive power could kill, but it could neither redeem nor save. The more emphatically imperial Rome asserted its word and law, the greater became the decay and the decline of Rome.

Third, "the highest law" is not the health of the people but the law-word of God, and, as a result, Roman law and society, like our own, had a false and rotting center. The more Rome developed the fundamental premises of its law, the more it hastened its decay and collapse, even as the world today increases the extent of its crisis with its remedial effort, because all its remedies have a false premise, humanism.

Fourth, the conflict then and now is a war of names. Which is the name of power, Christ or Caesar?

All too many churchmen are radically profane and blasphemous. They are either silent in the face of, or agreeable to, the state's usurpation of one area of life after another to its humanistic authority. These churchmen withdraw into a sanctimonious surrender and do nothing to stop the growing profanity whereby one area of life after another is withdrawn from the government of Christ the King and placed into the hands of Caesar. Again, all over the world, "the chief priests" of our day, like those of old, are declaring, "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15). If for a moment we allow humanism any title or right to any area of creation, we are profane, and we deny Christ to affirm Caesar.

Again and again, the summons of Scripture is to "believe on the name of Jesus Christ." This means to ground the totality of our lives, thinking, institutions, and world, including church, state, and school, on the name of Christ the King, *under* His authority, power, law-word, and government. This is clear from 2 Timothy 2:19: "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Paul was condemning "profane and vain babblers" who wrongly divided the word of truth. God's foundation or reign is not affected by their profanity. God knows His own. Those who *name* the Lord are those who depart from iniquity, or injustice, unrighteousness (*adikia*). Iniquity is that condition where man opposes to God's right or righteousness, to God's order and justice, his own humanistic doctrine of order, right, or justice. Iniquity can be a physical act of lawlessness; it can also be a faith, philosophy, or order to society which sets up a law, institution, state, or order outside of God and His law-word. It is not under the name and authority of God: it does not serve or obey Him.

It was a strong emphasis of Christian teaching and preaching for centuries that the state must serve the Lord. The New England Puritan Charles Turner pastor at Duxbury, in a sermon before Governor Thomas Hutchinson and the House of Representatives of the Massachusetts Bay Province, May 26, 1773, declared:

> Rulers are, at once, *ministers* of God, and *servants of society*; as Gospel ministers are servants of Christ, and of the Churches. And, if God has given to the community a right to appoint its servants, it is but rational and consistent to suppose, that the community should have a right to take effectual care, that their servants should not counteract and disappoint the great purpose for which they were distinguished from their fellow-creatures; and if, in any case, it may be seen necessary for the public salvation, to give the servants of society a dismission.

In other words, as surely as the church must dismiss ungodly pastors

as false ministers, so too it must dismiss all state officers who will not serve the Lord as being ungodly ministers of state. To fail to do so is to partake in their sin and to become ourselves profane. We are today a profane society, and our cities and countryside are spotted by profane churches which take the Lord's name in vain.

The encroachments of humanism into church, state, school, and every other realm must cease. We must cease from all personal and corporate profanity, or face God's judgment as traitors and rebels. A piety which concerns itself only with man's soul and leaves the world to the devil is a profane piety. God's warning is clear: "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isa. 2:22). To be profane is to be outside of God's grace and mercy. Isaiah lived in a generation that professed the Name of the Lord, but were "a people of unclean lips" (Isa. 6:5), because their lives and politics were profane. Are we not far worse? Is there any remedy other than total submission to Christ the King, doing all things, in every area of life, thought, and action, in the name, or power, authority, and government of the Lord? "Who is on the LORD's side?" (Exod. 32:26). Let him stand in the name of the King.

Can We Tithe Our Children?

Scripture requires us to tithe our income. God requires His tithe, a modest amount as compared to the modern state's demands. But, in all things else, God requires the totality of our allegiance, our service, and our lives. We cannot tithe our children, nor ourselves. We cannot give our tenth child only to the Lord and to Christian schools, while sending all others to the state school. Neither can we give our children to the Lord one day in seven or in ten, and to the state the rest of the time.

We and all that we have are God's possession. Children are described as a "gift" or "heritage" from the Lord, and also as a "reward," "boon," or "blessing" (Ps. 127:3). To misuse God's gifts and blessings is to incur His wrath. It is only "every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways" who is "blessed" (Ps. 128:1).

The first and basic premise of paganism, socialism, and Molech worship is its claim that the state owns the child. The basic premise of the public schools is this claim of ownership, a fact some parents are encountering in the courts. It is the essence of paganism to claim first the lives of the children, then the properties of the people.

For too long most professing Christians have been practicing pagans who have honored God falsely: they "with their lips do honour me, but

have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men" (Isa. 29:13). On all such, God's judgment is assured, and God's judgment on our age is in increasing evidence. Judgment is neither averted nor moderated by much crying or bemoaning but only by a renewed heart, by faith and obedience. How can we expect God to honor us, or bless us, when we give our children to the state schools and surrender their minds daily to the teachings of humanism? It is sin and madness to believe so, and those who try to justify their sin only increase it.

The true believer will, like Hannah (1 Sam. 1:27–28), see children as a gift from the Lord, to be given to the Lord as long as they live.

76

CONFLICT VERSUS HARMONY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 135, May 1991

The false idea of pluralism has a long history in America. It was basic to the first war faced by American colonists, King Philip's War.

American Indian culture had no overarching law to provide order and harmony; it was a conflict society. Men took what they were strong enough to take, and they enslaved whom they were strong enough to enslave.

Mark Twain lied when he said of the Pilgrims and the Puritans and their coming to America that first they fell upon their knees, and then they fell upon the Indians. The colonists wanted to share with the Indians the rights of freeborn Englishmen and the freedom of life under God's law.

On January 29, 1675, a Christian Indian, John Sassamon, was murdered and thrown into a pond. He had warned the colonists of a forthcoming attack on them. Evidence, including an eyewitness, led to the conviction and hanging of three Indians, Wampanoags. The jury had been made up of both Indians and Englishmen. With this conviction, the Indians attacked (Mary Rowlandson, *The Captive*, intro. Mark Ludwig [Tucson, AZ: American Eagle Publications, 1988], pp. x–xi).

To the Indians, an overarching law governing all men was alien; they believed in a pluralism where every kind of practice was permissible, if a man could so enforce his will.

Richard Weaver was right: ideas do have consequences. It has often been pointed out that armies march because of the ideas of some men unknown to most of them. Ideas seep into unlikely quarters and often influence men who profess hostility to their sources. One such idea is the conflict of interests: its great immediate source is Charles Darwin. An evolving universe marked by the struggle for survival, and the survival

of the fittest, is indeed a realm "red in tooth and claw." The concept of Darwinian evolution presupposes a universal conflict of interests. This idea replaced the Christian faith in the harmony of interests. While moral conflict exists because of the fall of man, there is no metaphysical conflict; the moral conflict is born of sin, and it is a violation of essential order. The Christian faith received classic statement in John Dryden (1631–1700); in "A Song for St. Cecilia's Day, 1687," Dryden wrote in part:

> From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
> This universal frame began:
> From harmony to harmony,
> Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
> The diapason closing full in man.

This once highly regarded poem is now less known; its premises run counter to the modern world and life view.

Man since Darwin has viewed life as conflict because of a radical and essential conflict of interests. Capital and labor are seen as necessary enemies; farm and city are held to have opposing interests; the generations are supposedly necessarily at war with each other; adolescence is seen as by nature a time of rebellion; races and nationalities are assumed to be natural enemies, and so on and on. Racism, a modern phenomenon, is a product of scientific theory, specifically of Darwinism. We have not mentioned another area of assumed conflict, the sexes; the "war of the sexes" is seen as inescapable.

The logic of Darwinism is a conflict society; the struggle to gain the advantage over others, to do in others before they do you in, it's a dog-eat-dog world, and survival is the chief if not the only virtue. There can be no peace in a Darwinian culture, only perpetual warfare between various groups. The rhetoric of minority and majority groups today is the rhetoric of conflict. As a result, the more we "war for peace" in any area of life and thought, the deeper the conflict becomes.

As Henry Van Til pointed out some years ago, culture is religion externalized. The culture of a conflict society sees only a deepening of its premise that conflict is basic to life and progress. The *Dictionary of Sociology* states in part: "Conflict arises out of the principle of limitation inherent in a finite universe. The wishes and interests of sentient beings run counter to each other, and the quality of egoism impels each party to seek to eliminate the other to the extent necessary for the satisfaction of his own desires. By analogy, the term may be extended to include the struggle with inanimate or subhuman objects (cf. struggle for existence), but in its sociological meaning all the parties involved must be human"

(Charles J. Bushnell, "conflict," in Henry Pratt Fairchild, ed., *Dictionary of Sociology* [New York, NY: Philosophical Library, 1944], p. 59). The premises of this definition are, *first*, "the principle of limitation inherent in a finite universe." Now, Christians believe in a finite universe even more than evolutionists, but they do not see finitude as requiring conflict. Because of God's providence, there is no necessary conflict. Humanism, however, from Plato to the present, has insisted that the world is overpopulated. If other people are necessarily at war with you for the available resources, then conflict is necessary. If, however, the all-wise God has provided resources for all if men will work to develop them, harmony is then the key.

Second, this definition sees that a "necessary" conflict of interests "impels each party to seek to eliminate the other." This gives us a world of total warfare, whereas in the Biblical view all peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations must be converted, made members of Jesus Christ, and brought into communion and community one with another. This is why creationism is so essential to world peace; evolution presupposes a cosmic mindlessness and perpetual conflict.

Third, this conflict is not only with other peoples, and hence racism, but also with inanimate objects, and hence the humanistic presupposition that man is at war with his environment. There is a necessary link in the minds of non-Christian environmentalists between population control and abortion on the one hand, and a pagan view of the environment on the other. The belief in the conflict of interests pits man against man, and man against things. Instead of an essential and metaphysical harmony of interests, this false faith insists on an essential conflict of interests.

There is a reason for this. If the God of Scripture is recognized as the Creator and governor of all things, then all of creation has a common origin, a common meaning, and a common purpose and goal. If God be denied, then there exists only a total warfare, a total struggle for survival and domination. The result is a chaos of conflict.

Recent history gives us a telling example of this, the Vietnam War. Both the entrance and the exit of the United States into and from this war were evil. Presidents Kennedy and Johnson took us into the war with the premise that the United States could be the world's savior, an idolatrous belief. We left the war because public opinion, in part manipulated by the New Left and its propaganda, exalted peace over all things else. Johnson like Kennedy believed in salvation by U.S. foreign policy; the enemies of the war believed in salvation by peace at any price. Both were guilty of idolatry. Recent admissions by North Vietnam General Vo Nguyen Giap indicate that about a million North Vietnamese were killed as against

58,000 American soldiers (Joseph L. Galloway, "Fatal Victory," *U.S. News and World Report*, October 29, 1990, p. 32). Both pro-war and antiwar advocates in the United States began with radically humanistic premises, and the results were disastrous.

The same fallacy is true in other areas. With regard to racial problems, both segregationists and integrationists have had humanistic premises, and both courses of action have been disastrous and nonmoral or immoral. As against the Biblical requirement of conversion and communion in Christ, humanism has approached the problem with two alien premises: the necessary conflict of interests (a Darwinian belief), and a necessary equality (a premise borrowed from mathematics). The word *equal* does appear in our English Bible, but it is a translation of a different concept. It appears in the Greek text of 1 Peter 3:8 meaning *like-minded*, as in Philippians 2:20, where it is so translated. Usually, *isos* means the same in size or numbers; in another form, it means *fairness*; and, in still another, of the same age. Our English word has reference to mathematics: two plus two equals four. It posits an abstract identity which can only be applied to inanimate objects, i.e., to number, produce, and the like, but basically mathematics deals with *abstractions* and has relevance to abstractions. As a result, the concepts of equality *and* inequality can only warp human relationships. The Christian approach to people must recognize a moral division between the saved and the unsaved. Its goal must be conversion and communion. This means, not a trust in coercive legislation but in Jesus Christ and the triumph of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Both segregation and integration have been moral failures; both have created conflict, whereas Christ brings about a harmony.

There is no small dismay in the media over the rise of Islam and its growing militancy. This, however, should be no surprise to us. As Christians, we should recognize the reason for this. St. Paul set forth the basic premise of his position thus: "he is a Jew (i.e., a covenant man) which is one inwardly" (Rom. 2:29). As against this, Mohammed declared, "He is a Muslim who is one outwardly," and the "five pillars of Islam" are all aspects of externalism (regular repetition of the creed, repetition of prescribed prayers five times daily, almsgiving, observance of the Feast of Ramadan, and pilgrimage to Mecca). Modern science has also reduced man to externalism, to an animal status. The externalism of Islam has been vindicated and the Biblical stress on the governance of the Holy Spirit discredited by such a view of science.

In a mindless world, the fortuitous concourse of atoms means conflict, and progress through conflict, through the clash of varying forces. The premise of Hegel that life is a perpetual conflict, leading to a resolution,

leading to a new conflict, is not only the Marxist premise but that of all non-Christian modern thought and action. This leads to cultural polarization and enmity. Peace attempts become at the same time war strategies. Nations seek to establish cooperating trading blocs in order to war against other traders as well as against dissenters in their own midst. The goal is peace through coercion, peace through some kind of warfare. The result is "perpetual war for perpetual peace."

In analyzing the idea of the *conflict of interests*, we have been dealing with one of the two basic concepts of our time. The other has its roots in modern philosophy, beginning with Descartes and culminating in Kant and Hegel, namely, the intellectual destruction of an objective world order and the substitution of man's autonomous mind in its place. Hegel summed this up in the belief that *the rational is the real*. The loss of reality in our time has its origins in this insane idea. What the intellectual elite sees as rational is hence reality! Our modern planning is in terms of the ostensible reality of what the planners declare is rational.

The Word of God and His Holy Spirit has no place in such planning, and therefore freedom is sacrificed. God's law-word stresses the self-government of the Christian man. The basic spheres of Scripture are man, the family, the church, the school, the vocations of man, the community, and then civil government, one form of government among many. God's law is limited to some 600 ordinances, and many of these are only enforceable by God, not by man.

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is the assurance of man's freedom, because its necessary implication is that the basic motivation and determination of man comes from within, from the heart of man's being. Pluralism apart from Christ leads only to conflict, whereas pluralism in Christ means that our essential government comes, not from self-interest and an ugly survival-of-the-fittest warfare, but from the peace of God through Christ's atonement, God's law-word, and the governance of the Holy Spirit. Freedom in a secular society is another name for unending conflict. Freedom in Christ means that we are governed not by self-interest but by the grace, law, and Spirit of the Living God.

VOLUME II • ECCLESIOLOGY, DOCTRINE & BIBLICAL LAW

AN INFORMED FAITH

the POSITION PAPERS *of* R.J. RUSHDOONY

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CONTENTS OF VOLUME 2

Ecclesiology

77 Accreditation and Certification 337
78 The Freedom of the Church 343
79 Baptism and Citizenship 348
80 Heretical Baptism 353
81 Sin, Confession, and Dominion. 355
82 Confessing Other People's Sins 360
83 The Church as Function 364
84 Proxy Religion 367
85 The Counseling Heresy 371
86 Altar Versus Pulpit 375
87 Basilicas 378
88 The Antichurch Within the Church. 381
89 The Retreatists 384
90 Faith 387
91 Catholicity 390
92 The Heresy of Democracy with God. 395
93 The Way 401
94 Masochism and Antinomianism 406
95 The Lust for Respectability 409
96 The Doctrine of Grace 412
97 Pragmatism 415
98 Revolution, Counter-Revolution, and Christianity 418
99 Capturing God? 422
100 The Possessor of Truth 425
101 The Source of Law 430

102 Incorporation 433

Theology & Doctrine

103 Box Theology 441
104 Covenant Versus Detente 446
105 Covenant Versus Contract 451
106 Covenant, Law, Grace, and Antinomianism 454
107 Discontinuity and Antinomianism 460
108 False Antinomies 465
109 The Incarnation 469
110 Demonism 472
111 The Providence of God 476

Sin & Evil

112 The Doctrine of Original Sin 481
113 Original Sin 484
114 The Freedom to Sin 489
115 The Opposite of Sin 493
116 Sin and Evil 499
117 Conspiracies 504
118 Loyalties 506
119 The Reversal of Standards 511

Biblical Law

120 The Meaning of Theocracy 517
121 The Source of Law 523
122 Natural Law and Theonomy 526
123 Natural Law and Canon Law 531
124 The Limitations of Law 536
125 Inferences and Commandments 541
126 Inferences and the Law 544
127 The Law, the State, and the People 548
128 The Meaning of the Sabbath 553
129 The Sabbath 558
130 The Tax Revolt Against God 560
131 Biblical Military Laws 563
132 God's Law 566
133 Justice and Torture 568

Man

134 Persona 575
135 The Flight from Responsibility 580
136 "Empty Suits" 582
137 The Death of God and the Death of Man 584
138 Man's Hatred for Man 587
139 False Morality and False Reform 590
140 The Cult of Victimization 594
141 Hypocrisy 599
142 Detachment 604
143 The Definition of Insanity 609
144 Bigotry in the Name of Tolerance 613

Authority

145 Faith and Logic 619
146 Presuppositionalism 621
147 Jurisdiction: By Christ or by Caesar? 623
148 Sovereignty 629
149 The Question of Authority 640
150 The Self-Righteousness of Satan 646
151 The Crisis of Authority 648
152 Atonement and Authority 651
153 Ownership and Authority 656

Autonomy

154 Autonomy 663
155 Reality 666
156 Knowledge 668
157 Dethroning God 670

ECCLESIOLOGY

77

ACCREDITATION AND CERTIFICATION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 5, July 1979

The word *accreditation* comes from *credo*, meaning I believe, and *certification* comes from a Latin word meaning *certain* and means to verify. Both words have an inescapably religious connotation. They imply a verification, a declaring that a thing is true, by the religious lord of those who seek accreditation and certification. To seek these things from the state is to declare the state to be our lord.

Is the state God's appointed agency of accreditation and certification? Is there any warrant in Scripture for contesting the state's claim to accredit and certify a church or Christian school? The answer to this question is urgently important. Today the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, and a variety of other federal and state agencies, claim precisely that right. It is held that a church has no valid status as a church, nor a Christian school any standing or legal status as a school, until some statist agency renders its decision and gives its stamp of approval. The same is held to be true of Christian school teachers. Our answer is very important: we will either offend and anger a powerful humanistic state, or we will anger and offend the sovereign and almighty God. It can also be added that, with either decision, we will offend many men.

What say the Scriptures? When we turn to the Bible, it immediately becomes apparent that our present practice reverses God's order. In Scripture, it is the prophetic ministry of God's law-word which accredits or certifies, or denounces and places under a ban, all officers of state, and entire nations as well. The sovereign prerogative of accreditation and certification of both church and state is the Lord's, and it is the calling of all God's faithful ministers to apply the rule or canon of the accrediting, certifying law-word to all men, institutions, and nations.

The ministry of all God's faithful servants in every age has had this

focus. Elijah denied certification to Ahab, and accreditation to Israel and its people, in terms of God's holy law. Athanasius denounced the Roman Empire and a compromising church in terms of that law-word.

The Biblical origin of the Christian ministry is the Levite. The Levites were a teaching ministry (Deut. 33:10), and the Christian pastor continues the Levitical calling, because the priestly order and sacrifice is ended. The Levites collected the tithe (Num. 18:21–28), of which one-tenth went to the priests. The rest provided for instruction, the care of the sanctuary, music, health, and, with the second tithe, welfare. The Levites taught the law throughout the nation under Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 17:7ff.), served as judges (2 Chron. 19:8ff.), and performed other services for society in general.

But the Christian ministry has another source in addition to the Levites, the prophets. The inspired, predictive role of the prophet ended in Christ; the duty of the prophet to proclaim God's Word to church, state, and all of life remains. It was the duty of God's prophets and Levites to declare God's Word to all men, to reprove kings and governors, and to "accredit" or refuse to certify in terms of God's law-word, the things of this world, including the state.

Civil government was strictly barred from invading God's house, as witness the case of Uzziah (2 Chron. 26:16–23). It was the duty of civil authorities to protect and build up God's house, but never to claim powers in or over it. Rulers thus called for reform, but the reformation was then entrusted to God's chosen ministry.

Thus, in every area of life, accreditation and certification were by the Word of God, not by state, church, or man. The law-word, not man's will, is the standard. It is a usurpation of God's prerogative when the state claims the right to accredit and to certify either a church or a Christian school. It becomes a claim to be god on earth. Those who accept such an accreditation and certification are like the 400 false prophets who served Ahab (1 Kings 22:6–7). As Jehoshaphat rightly saw, these men were not prophets of the Lord.

Rome, of course, was ready to accredit all churches who would come before the authorities and confess that "Caesar is Lord." The early church refused accreditation, licensure, permits, and controls, because it confessed Jesus Christ, not Caesar, as Lord.

The Puritans, of course, had election sermons on every Sunday preceding an election in civil government. Accreditation was the purpose of these sermons. Because no area of life or creation exists outside its Creator's law, that word must be declared, in all its binding power, to every area. The election sermon was thus an accreditation sermon: it set forth

the Word of God as it bore upon the issues of the day. It certified that which is righteous or just in terms of God's Word.

There is a law-word thus in terms of which all things are judged, and there is a bar before which all things must stand. It is God's law, and it is God's throne, and the government is on none other shoulders than that of the Lord (Isa. 9:6). For any human agency to attempt to replace God's law and God's accreditation with its own is to sin, and to play god. Its test then becomes that of Ahab concerning God's prophet, Micaiah: "I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil" (1 Kings 22:8). The servants of the Word of God are always hated by the humanists, in every age.

But, in the final analysis, and on the last day, no man stands apart from that Word and the grace it proclaims, and no man has that grace who denies the law-word of the Lord of all grace.

The redeemed of God are those who, standing in grace, believe and obey God's every word (Matt. 4:4). That law-word is in their hands and in their hearts. As Scripture declares:

> I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. (Ps. 40:8)
>
> But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Jer. 31:33)
>
> And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh. (Ezek. 11:19)
>
> A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you an heart of flesh. (Ezek. 36:26)
>
> For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. (Heb. 8:10)

John Calvin, in a famous passage, declared that "the law is a silent magistrate, and a magistrate a speaking law" (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 4.20.14). However, as the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers (Exod. 19:6; Isa. 61:6; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6, etc.) makes clear, every man is called to be God's walking law. The law of God is the way of holiness for the redeemed; it is written on the tables of their hearts, and it governs their being. It is only when this is so that we can love and serve the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, strength, and being, and

love our neighbor as ourselves (Deut. 6:5, 10:12; 30:6; Matt. 22:37–40; Mark 12:29–31; Luke 10:27, etc.).

The Christian is the manifest grace of God, and is called to be the walking law of and witness to his Lord. This places a great responsibility upon covenant man.

God's law assigns various duties to institutions. Civil government is thus called to be a ministry of justice, of God's righteousness or justice (Rom. 13:1ff.), and the church is called to be the ministry of the Word, and of God's grace and righteousness. It is a serious error to limit the doctrine of ordination and calling to institutions. St. Paul declares, "For we are his (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). We are redeemed so "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us" (Rom. 8:4).

The law in terms of which the redeemed of the Lord move is thus God's law. Only this law can accredit and certify the believer. The state may legalize abortion, homosexuality, fornication, and more, but the redeemed cannot be party to such practices nor recognize any validity in such laws. "For conscience sake" (Rom. 13:5) the believer, in obedience to God, avoids rebellion, but for conscience' sake he also obeys God rather than men (Acts 5:29).

Least of all can the redeemed allow men to control that which belongs to the Lord. The church and the Christian school are not the property of the state, nor are they the property of the congregation: they are the Lord's, and can be surrendered to no man. The pagan principle that the state is God walking on earth has a major revival in our time. In old Russia, the Tatar invaders held that all were obliged to serve the state. Later, the tsars held to the same doctrine. A confidant of Alexander I (1801–1825) said of him, "In a word, he would willingly have agreed that every man should be free, on the condition that he should do only what the Emperor wished." Communist Russia has carried the pagan doctrine of the supremacy of the state to this logical conclusion.

In the West, however, the same doctrine has been very prevalent also, earlier in the divine right of kings, now in the doctrine of the general will and its incarnation in the state. In England, Henry VIII was part of a process going back at least to the Synod of Whitby in A.D. 664. His confiscation of church properties, and his use thereof, was an act of arrogation and blasphemy. The step preceding this act was a royal commission which indicted the church and denied it "accreditation" as the preliminary step towards confiscation. This was no new step; every tyrant who seized as much as one church first of all claimed the authority to deny that church its credentials.

The modern, twentieth-century attack on the church and the Christian school uses the same ploy. The Russian Revolution promoted the idea of corruption in the Russian church, but it loved and used the corrupt and compromising, and persecuted the faithful, as it still does.

The situation is no different in the United States. The attack is on the faithful and the uncompromising, on those who declare unequivocally, "Jesus Christ is Lord," and who will not sacrifice what is the Lord's to Caesar. The Reverend Levi Whisner, and Dr. Lester Roloff, and others, have been ready to surrender their freedom, and have gone to jail at no small cost to themselves, but they have refused to surrender what belongs to Jesus Christ to American caesars.

The compromising clergy are, of course, full of "good" reasons why their way is "the path of reason." But reason is not our lord: Jesus Christ is. These compromising clergymen cannot say with Paul, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after men" (Gal. 1:11). The word Paul uses is *gnorizo*, meaning to certify, declare, know, understand. Paul declared that he had been faithful, not to men, but to the Lord, and he had paid a price for that faithfulness. He understood that God's Word cannot be compromised; no man can claim rights over God, or the power to judge and accredit God's realm.

To be a walking law means above all to be governed and to live, as our Lord declares, "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4; see also Deut. 8:3; Luke 4:4). It means to be, like Elijah, "very jealous for the LORD God of hosts" (1 Kings 19:10), to guard God's realm from the covetous hands of ungodly men. It means, as prophets and disciples saw, being "brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them" (Matt. 10:18). It means knowing the whole of God's counsel, His law-word, in all our being; living and obeying it, and bringing men and nations into conformity to it in Christ. We accredit ourselves by the Lord's sovereign Word, and we require all things to be accredited by it. It means denouncing the Ahabs of our day, in church, state, and school, and declaring the lordship of Jesus Christ over all things. It means, in brief, proclaiming the crown rights of Christ the King.

The Reason for the Attacks (July 1979)

One of the problems facing Christian school men, and churches, under fire from the state is the attacks from other churchmen. No matter how flagrant the attack, excuses are made for the state. When I told someone

of the demands made by the IRS on a newly formed Bible church, which included giving power of attorney to the IRS, the response was, "There must be a reason."

I have given copies of the *Christian Law Association Defender*, and Chalcedon materials, to many, and met with a similar response, or been told that these and other lawyers are trying to make money.

There is a reason for these attitudes: it is compromise, and it is sin. No man has the right to surrender anything which belongs to Jesus Christ to Caesar. There cannot be two masters over Christ's domain.

Even more, instead of surrendering Christ's realm, we must enlarge it. In the trial of a Michigan state trooper for refusing to obey an order contrary to his Christian convictions, one witness reminded the trial board that, in terms of Scripture, they are ministers of God, and will be judged as such by Him. He witnessed to the necessity for recognizing the total claims of Christ the Lord. Anything short of that is sin.

78

THE FREEDOM OF THE CHURCH

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 16, September 1980

We are today being subjected to a steady attack on churches, Christian schools, and other Christian activities. With this assault goes an attack on the First Amendment. At the same time, when evangelical ministers and church groups call attention to serious moral problems in our political affairs, or oppose abortion or homosexuality, for example, they are widely attacked for violating the First Amendment.

It is important, therefore, to understand a basic purpose of the First Amendment. Let us remind ourselves of the text of that law:

> Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

First of all, there is no mention of the separation of church and state. This amendment did in fact separate the *federal* government and the church, but not the various states and the church. In the years that followed, separation became a fact gradually in every state. This separation is a fact which I believe we must welcome. It was a necessary consequence of the amendment, but it was not its stated and primary purpose.

Second, this amendment does *not* separate *religion* and the state. Such a separation is impossible. Every law is an expression of morality or procedural thereto. Laws express moral concern. All morality is an aspect of religion. We have Buddhist morality and law, Islamic morality and law, humanistic morality and law, and so on. Every law order is an establishment of religion. What we are seeing is the progressive attempt to disestablish *Christianity* and to establish *humanism*. Our state schools are the religious establishments of humanism, and our courts, television, films,

and press reflect humanism. We must avoid a *church* establishment, but we cannot escape a *religious* establishment or foundation in this country or in any country.

Third, the First Amendment, in speaking of "an establishment of religion," was using the language of its day: it meant an established church. Robert Allen Rutland, in his study, *The Birth of the Bill of Rights, 1776–1791* (1955), called attention to the fact that the clergy of the day demanded this amendment. They were not alone.

Thus, the focus of the First Amendment is on the disestablishment of the church. We cannot understand their thinking unless we realize that the colonists, whether British, German, Dutch, Swedish, French, or anything else, had a European background. They usually had a horror of a state-imposed church. They saw serious problems in any such church. A state church easily becomes a *controlled church*: it is the voice of the crown rather than the voice of God. In England, first the monarch, beginning with Henry VIII, and then Parliament, was the head of the church. Americans wanted no such church.

As a matter of fact, Carl Bridenbaugh, in *Mitre and Sceptre: Transatlantic Faiths, Ideas, Personalities, and Politics, 1689–1775* (1962), held that a fundamental cause of the War of Independence was the American fear of a forthcoming plan to force the Church of England and Crown-appointed bishops on all the colonies. This led to war, and also to the First Amendment.

Moreover, the colonists knew that a *controlled church* is very readily a *corrupt church*. The English church was suffering then, and had for some years, from political bishops, men whose only qualification for office was their service to the Crown, not the Lord. Only the rise of competition in the form of Methodism produced a measure of reform in the English Church.

However, the key factor was something more. A corrupt church is a *silent church*. The colonists were very much accustomed to a vocal church, plain-spoken in its criticism of moral and political trends. More than a few scholars have seen the origin of the War of Independence in the Great Awakening. The alarms sounded by the colonial clergy were a major factor in arousing a moral resistance among colonists. Both from the pulpit and in print, the colonial clergy played a central role in the events which led to 1776.

The British knew this. Hence their readiness during the war to burn American churches, to burn Bibles, hymnals, and church records. The colonies, one Tory said, had run off with "an American parson," i.e., had been "seduced" by the clergy.

The purpose of the First Amendment, in requiring that the churches be disestablished, or, rather, never established in the new country, had as its purpose the protection of the freedom of the church and the school. The colonists distrusted a powerful central government. To create a federal government and to give it power to create a state church represented tyranny to them. To ensure that free religious and moral voice of judgment against all evils in state and society, they demanded the First Amendment. They wanted the *prophetic* voice of the church to be free to judge the federal government in terms of the Word of God. The role the prophets fulfilled in the Old Testament the church must fulfill now.

Thus, those churchmen who speak out concerning our national life and political morality are *not* violating the First Amendment. Instead, they are doing precisely what the founding fathers and Americans of 1781 wanted to see done, the Christian voice freely and powerfully raised against sin in high places.

George Washington, in his Farewell Address, issued on September 17, 1796, with the evils of the French Revolution in mind, warned against the idea of a secular state. There could be, he held, no separation of religion and political order, nor of religion and morality. The freedom of the church and the school (and only Christian schools existed then) were basic to his perspective.

The First Amendment is being subjected not only to misrepresentation but attack. Since World War II, the Internal Revenue Service has been actively claiming the right to establish religion. A church is supposedly not a church, unless the IRS approves. For the IRS to define and approve a church is to make itself the agency for the establishment of religion.

Moreover, recent efforts by state and federal agencies have implicit or explicit in them a very dangerous definition of the church. The Christian school, the Sunday school, and the sermon are *educational* and hence not *religious*. They are thus said to be outside the First Amendment protection, as are the church nursery, women's guilds, and the like. The meaning of the church, and its First Amendment immunity, is reduced to a liturgical service.

It is also held that the Sixteenth Amendment has nullified the First Amendment and that churches are liable to income and other taxes. Instead of a constitutional immunity, only a statutory immunity exists, revocable at any time.

The church, however, must oppose all such efforts to limit its freedom, because they are really controls on Christ our King, and His infallible and sovereign Word. The church is an educational institution,

proclaiming and teaching the Word of God. The Old Testament ministry was priestly (sacrificial), and Levitical (instructional, Deut. 33:10). The New Testament ministry is a continuation of the Levitical, and instruction of every kind is basic to its life.

It has been pointed out that the clergy of the day led in the demand for the First Amendment. They had come to see that the lordship of Jesus Christ requires a church free of all statist controls. The church must be able to speak freely and boldly in terms of the law-word of God.

All attempts to silence the Christian voice must be seen as a denial of God's crown rights over all men. Those who try to silence the church in the name of the First Amendment are not ready to silence pornography, or anything else, save God's Word.

The First Amendment requires freedom of speech, freedom of press, assembly, and petition. All these are related to freedom of religion. Most publications then were Christian; the church was the meeting-house, the place of assembly, petition, and free speech. It was not accidental that all five factors are linked together in the First Amendment: they were linked together in life.

They still are, in that all presuppose a faith and a conviction which demands expression and acts upon its convictions. The church cannot be silent without sin. It must speak, write, assemble, and petition in terms of the crown rights of Jesus Christ. His lordship is total and cosmic. Not only the church, but every man, every state, every school, and every aspect of life must either serve Him, or be judged by Him. He is the Lord.

The Crisis (September 1980)

There is an old folk tale about a man on board an old sailing vessel who was asked to go to the other end of the ship and give help. The ship had sprung a leak, and men were needed to man the pump and do emergency work. The man refused, saying, it wasn't his end of the ship, and besides, he didn't think much of the people down there, anyway!

That kind of stupidity and blindness is very much with us today. The First Amendment immunities of the church and Christian school are being breached and denied. Court cases are being used to establish new legal precedents to spell the destruction of Christian institutions. In the face of this, there is an unwillingness on the part of many to get involved because they disagree with the persecuted group. However, if a court case destroys the First Amendment's meaning, all religious groups are involved. Whether the case involves a Christian or a non-Christian group,

or an orthodox or an heretical group, if it sets a legal precedent to serve the needs of our humanistic statists, all of us will suffer.

Yet, too often, Protestants and Catholics will not work together; Arminians and Calvinists will not help one another; neither will work with charismatic churches, who are also divided; none will work together with heretics, or non-Christian groups.

No such action means ecumenicism; it simply means a common legal threat, and action against it. It means an affirmation that freedom and conversion, not tyranny and coercion, are basic to our faith.

It does not involve any approval of the "Moonies" to oppose their kidnapping and deprogramming. To give assent to such deprogramming is to open the door to the deprogramming of converts to Christ, and there are hints of this already.

In the face of this common threat to all, the threat of totalitarian humanism, it is distressing to see the narrow-mindedness of some. I have been a witness at a number of trials. It has been amazing to me to receive letters denouncing me for appearing in behalf of a person or group, because they were supposedly the "wrong" kind of Baptist! Even worse are those "spiritually-minded" people who favor surrender to resistance and insist on calling it holiness.

It has been heartening in a few cases to see diverse groups work together. None of this led to ecumenicism; it only led to a wiser defense.

Moreover, too often churchmen assume that the Biblical requirement of separation means separation from Christians who disagree with us. In Scripture, we are told not to be unequally yoked with *unbelievers* (2 Cor. 6:14–18), a very different thing. What is condemned by Paul is an unequal or subservient yoking, and a belief that there is a common ground between believers and unbelievers, in themselves. To face an enemy on the shores of our country, or in our courts, does not uphold a common religious faith but simply deals with a threat to one and all.

79

BAPTISM AND CITIZENSHIP

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 37, February 1983

Churchmen have long discussed, debated, and analyzed the meaning of baptism in terms of the church. They have called attention to its meaning in terms of regeneration, purification, and more. All these emphases are important, and it is not our intention to displace or downgrade them in calling attention to another and central meaning.

Baptism is an act of citizenship. In the early church, it was not only an act of citizenship in Christ's Kingdom, but it involved what was in the eyes of the Roman Empire a treasonable affirmation. The New Testament tells us that baptism is "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8:16; 19:5; 1 Cor. 6:11). The *name* stands for the person, authority, and power, so that baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus is into citizenship or membership in His person, authority, and power, and hence Christians face the world as citizens of the Kingdom of God and as ambassadors thereof.

In the early church, Christians faced the requirement of Rome to be a licensed religion, with an imperial certificate in their meeting place. To gain that certificate meant an affirmation of subjection to the Empire; the required confession was, "Caesar is Lord." As Polycarp faced martyrdom for refusing that confession, the imperial magistrate, doing his best to persuade the aged Christian, asked him, "What harm is there in saying Caesar is Lord?" As the historian J. N. D. Kelly commented, "The acclamation *Kurios Kaiser* would seem to have been a popular one in the civic cult of the Roman empire, and Christians were no doubt conscious of the implicit denial of it contained in their own *Kurios Iesous*" (*Early Christian Creeds*, p. 15). In fact, the confession, Jesus Christ is Lord, was the baptismal confession of the early church (Acts 8:36–38; Phil. 2:9–11).

Rome boasted of being the conqueror of the world, and its emperors were gods. The early church countered this. 1 John 4:15 declares, "Whosoever

shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." Every believer was given a higher status than the emperor! As against the emperor as the world conqueror, John declares, "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:5). Since one meaning of Lord is *God*, the implications of the baptismal confession are obvious. Every believer confessed a greater and higher citizenship in a Kingdom which would overcome and outlast all others. In terms of his faith, he held, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). The joy of Pentecost is inseparable from this faith. So intense was this faith in the Lord and subjection to the great King of kings, that Ignatius wrote in a letter (Trall. 9), "Be deaf when anyone speaks to you apart from Jesus Christ." The horror of Rome in facing these Christians can be seen in part by the irritation of modern statists as they face American Christians on trial for refusing statist controls.

Rome recognized no power and no loyalty beyond itself. Even the gods of Rome were made gods by resolution of the Senate and were thus subordinate to the Empire. The idea of a power greater than and over the Roman Empire was anathema. This, however, was precisely the faith of the early church. Jesus Christ, they held, is the King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tim. 6:15). It is difficult to imagine a faith which was more an affront to Rome. Christians declared to one and all that Jesus Christ is the universal and cosmic Lord. He is Lord not only over the church, the individual, and the family, but over the state, the arts and sciences, economics, education, and all things else. All things must either serve Christ the Lord or be judged by Him. So great is His overlordship, that He will not only judge all things in time as lord and ruler, but, at the last, in the general resurrection of the dead, "he will judge the world" (Acts 17:31). When Paul spoke of this, the Athenians on Mars Hill turned away; the idea of such a lord was too much for them.

It should now be apparent what baptism meant to the early church, and to Rome. It was an act of membership, of citizenship, in the Lord Jesus Christ. It was the public declaration of a higher loyalty and a higher obedience. It was baptism into Christ and His Kingdom, of which the local church was a visible outpost. It is thus a seriously misplaced emphasis to speak of being baptized into the church; this is a secondary aspect. Baptism is essentially into Christ and His Kingdom. After baptism, a person was regarded as being "in Christ," or "in the Lord."

Citizenship in the Roman Empire, in the New Testament era, was a privilege highly prized; most people were subjects, not citizens. When the Roman chief captain in Jerusalem learned that Paul was a Roman

citizen, he said, "With a great sum obtained I this freedom" (i.e., Roman citizenship), and Paul answered, "But I was free born" (i.e., born a citizen, Acts 22:28). To lay hands on a Roman citizen could be dangerous: he was a privileged person. But now these Christians were claiming a higher citizenship, with greater powers, and one which was open to every man!

Paul in Philippians 3:20 declares, "For our conversation is in heaven: from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." The word *conversation* is a translation for the Greek *politeuma* which means *citizenship* or *commonwealth*. The word *conversation* is an aspect of its meaning. Members of a family have a common life, conversation, and citizenship. To be a citizen of heaven and the Kingdom of God is to have a conversation with the Lord and with fellow members in Him, to be members of Him and of one another, and to be together a commonwealth and kingdom and citizens thereof.

Hence, the call to baptism is a call to regeneration and to citizenship in Christ and His Kingdom. Peter in Acts 2:38 declares, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ . . ." *Name* meant person. To be baptized into the name of Jesus means to be baptized into His body, His life, into citizenship and membership in His Kingdom.

This tells us, too, what it meant to confess "Caesar is Lord," *Kurios Kaisar*. It meant confessing that Caesar is god, and that our highest allegiance is to Caesar. This is a confession which some pastors and churches are making; in so doing, they are implicitly denying that Jesus Christ is their Lord. Then, and until recently, the invocation of a name was the invocation of one's lord. We have an echo of this in the old expression, "Open, in the name of the law," i.e., in the name of the ruling power. To invoke the name was to swear allegiance to one's king and Lord. It also invoked aid and protection, and the king's servants could claim the immunities of the king by declaring that they acted in the name of the king. Hence, the Christian prays in Jesus' name, the name of power at the throne; he calls himself a Christian and so claims the protection of the name and citizenship in the Lord's Kingdom.

Truly to say that "Jesus Christ is Lord," is to reveal our faithfulness and obedience to Him. It means that our conversation or citizenship is manifest in all our being in words, thought, and deed. Moreover, as Paul makes clear, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. 12:3); it is the revelation of the power of the Kingdom in and through him. The life of all such is a manifestation of the Lord, and they are like men "having his (the Lamb's) Father's name written in their foreheads" (Rev. 14:1). The baptized confessed their citizenship in the name, in the Lord, in all their being.

Citizenship requires allegiance and loyalty, faithfulness to the lord of the realm, who in turn confesses, knows, and protects them. Paul thus says, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Tim. 2:19). *The Didache*, before giving instructions about baptism, spoke at length of the two ways, the way of obedience to the every word of God (Matt. 4:4), the way of life, as against the way of death, and then said: "Now concerning baptism: Baptize as follows, *when you have rehearsed the aforesaid teaching.*" In other words, baptism is into a way of life as set forth in the Person of Christ and the righteousness of God, His law. Peter speaks of this in 1 Peter 3:21, when he writes, baptism is "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh," i.e., not merely an external cleansing of the body like a bath, but a new life in Christ, "the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Christ having made atonement for us, gives us also the new life of the resurrection; therefore, as the faithful and obedient people of the Lord, we have a good conscience, because we manifest God's righteousness as set forth in his law-word and thereby follow Christ as members of His new humanity.

The old humanity of the first Adam has a common life, conversation, and citizenship in sin and death. The new humanity of the last Adam has a common life, conversation, and citizenship in Jesus Christ. The rulers of the old humanity recognize only one loyalty and one citizenship, to themselves. All men, says John, are summoned by this old world power to acknowledge its power and to be marked or branded as the possession of this humanistic power. This old power seeks total control over humanity, an exclusive control, to the point that "no man might buy or sell," or have a church or Christian school, except under its control (Rev. 13:16–18).

However, the early church saw all men as God's creation and therefore under God and His law, and hence under God's judgment. For them, the Word of God was clear on this matter: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). Hence, says John, the rejoicing in heaven: the triumph of the Lord is assured.

This means that all Christians are by baptism members of Christ and citizens of the Kingdom of God; they are therefore "more than conquerors" in Christ (Rom. 8:37).

In antiquity, men wore the garb of their rank, i.e., their clothing was a badge indicating who they were, and what their status was. Sumptuary laws required the same kind of identification well into the modern era and made it illegal for a man or woman to dress above his rank.

St. Paul has an amazing reference to this practice. In Galatians 3:27, he writes, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." This means we wear the marks of membership, citizenship, in the royal household of the King of kings and Lord of lords! The parable of the wedding feast tells us the same thing (Matt. 22:1–14). No man has any place in the royal court unless he is one who puts on the raiment of the king, i.e., is a member of the family of the king in word, thought, and deed. Baptism is thus the act of citizenship, of membership.

As citizens of the great Kingdom of God, we pay our tax, the tithe, to the king and His work, and, above and over the tax, we bring our gifts and offerings. Because we belong to the king, our children too must be offered to Him, as His to take and use with us, and this is the true meaning of infant circumcision and then baptism. As citizens of the Lord's realm, we place all other allegiances under our duty to the Lord. Thus, we obey rulers in civil government, not because they require it, but because the Lord requires it and only as far as His Word permits. Our obedience is thus not for the state's sake, but "for conscience sake" (Rom. 13:5), as a part of our baptismal requirement of obedience unto "a good conscience toward God" (1 Pet. 3:21).

As we have seen, in antiquity, very few men were citizens of a country. Only a privileged few had that status, and the power and wealth that marked citizenship. Paul tells us that the mark of baptism is the gift of the Spirit and all the wealth and power which the king gives to the royal family. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles" (1 Cor. 12:13). So great was the early Christian sense of wealth, power, and joy in their Savior-King that Paul could say to King Agrippa, "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds (or chains)" (Acts 26:29)! It was this recognition of power that made the early Christians "more than conquerors." Only the same faith and citizenship can triumph today.

80

HERETICAL BAPTISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 199, April 1996

By the third century A.D., baptism had become a subject of bitter controversy, and yet, curiously enough, both sides were commonly intensely orthodox in their intentions. The main area of dissent was over the baptizers: could one hold that baptism by a heretical clergyman was valid? Should children baptized by a man who was later revealed to be a heretic be rebaptized? On what did the validity of baptism depend?

Tertullian dealt with this issue in *On Baptism*, chapter 15. Heretics have no true fellowship with us, he stated, and we do not have the same God nor the same Christ. Because their baptism seems the same as ours does *not* make it valid, because it is not the same.

The Roman bishop, Stephen (A.D. 253–257) took the opposite view. For him, baptisms by heretics were valid if they were in the name of Jesus Christ, or, in the name of the Trinity. Cyprian took a similar view, while not sacramental in his doctrine as was Stephen. Protestants have mainly taken the same view, that baptism does not depend on the man performing it but on the validity of the act, i.e., in the name of the triune God. The Baptists have denied the validity of any other form of baptism than immersion. For most Baptists also, baptism is not, as with some, a regeneration ordinance but rather a *sign* that regeneration or conversion has already taken place, and baptism is a public witness of that fact.

Since some churches, including Protestant bodies, have held to baptismal regeneration, this Baptist position has had an obvious strength. Of its weakness, we will see more later.

The view of Tertullian had a serious weakness and fallacy, because the *validity* of baptism was made to depend upon a man, a clergyman, and not God. The implications were serious. If church rites, ceremonies, or ordinances could be invalidated if the man performing them were later

shown to be a heretic, then marriages performed by such a clergyman were invalid also, and the children born thereof were bastards! To make the validity depend on man was to undercut God's work. It was one thing for an avowed heretic, for example, to perform a service with pagan forms and meaning, another for the service to be held in orthodox fashion. Who could know the mind of the man presiding at baptism, communion, or at a wedding? And who is efficacious here, God or man?

As a result, in virtually all circles, the validity of ordinances rests on God, and the faithful use of Biblical and trinitarian forms.

This whole issue is important now precisely because theological ignorance has led to a serious loss of awareness and discernment.

Another area of unclear thinking has had to do with baptism and salvation. Who regenerates man? The answer is obvious: God does. Does the person regenerated have to be old enough to understand, or can God regenerate us as little children? Obviously, God can do anything. If God's election can be evident in a child, what does baptism signify? Some hold to baptismal regeneration, others to regeneration as preceding baptism. But baptism has been seen also as giving a child or one's mature self to the Lord and invoking His reign in one's life. Infant baptism is then a surrender of the child to God. Hannah took the little boy Samuel to Eli, saying, this child was given to me by the Lord; as long as he lives, he shall be given to the Lord (1 Sam. 1:28). We are God's property, His possession, and, in baptism we give our children and ourselves to the Lord. We are not our own: we are the Lord's, and, in baptism, we acknowledge His ownership of ourselves and of our children. In giving ourselves to the Lord, we give Him all that we have and are, so that we are now committed to His use and service.

We are no longer our own possession but the Lord's, and this means that baptism covers us, our children, our house, farm, or business, because we cannot surrender our lives and withhold anything else.

The church's earliest baptismal confession, the ancient records indicate, was taken from Philippians 2:9–11, "Jesus Christ is Lord." A lord, sovereign, or God, for such is the meaning of *kurios*, is total owner and controller of us, and baptism means that God is now our Lord, our owner. Nothing can be withheld from Him.

Disagreements over the *form* and *age* of baptism have obscured its lordship connotation. To be baptized means that we are not our own, for we have been bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:19–20).

We have too long stressed the forms and forgotten that baptism testifies to our ownership by the Lord Jesus Christ. The greatest heresy is to overlook His ownership.

81

SIN, CONFESSION, AND DOMINION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 34, October 1982

By early summer of 1982, it was clear that the feminist equal rights amendment to the U.S. Constitution was dead. The movement perished in part because of its own excesses. These excesses were born out of the mythology of modern man and man's view of himself as a victim rather than a sinner. Of course, ever since Adam and Eve, people have chosen to plead an innocence born of environmental premises. Adam and Eve both pleaded victimization; their own hearts were good, but the environment led them astray. When the women's liberation movement made half the human race into victims and the other half into oppressors, it pushed the myth too far. One woman, in an impassioned book, portrayed all men at heart as rapists. Sadly, some clergymen, in reviewing the work, praised it; one wonders at their mentality, and certainly their womenfolk should! In another highly praised book, another feminist wrote, "When a female child is passed from lap to lap so that all the males in the room (father, brother, acquaintance) can get a hard-on, it is the helpless mother standing there and looking on that creates the sense of shame and guilt in the child." Prestigious publications praised this garbage, but attitudes like this have helped weaken the old foundations of humanistic thought which has made us all into victims and also all into oppressors. If we are male or female, we victimize sometime. If we are parents, we warp children. If we are rich, middle class, or poor, we somehow are responsible for the evils of our time.

Responsibility, denied by environmentalism, has a habit of reappearing! We may be victims of our environment, but, because we are someone else's environment, we are guilty, not for our own sins, but for someone else's sins! This places us in an ugly predicament; our own sins, we can do something about, but we cannot do much about the sins of a man down the road.

The doctrine of the conflict of interests (and Darwinism) has greatly increased the problem. Class (or race, or religious, or social) warfare is assumed to be basic to the human situation. The "superior" group is then by definition the oppressing group. If you are rich, you are by common assumption the oppressor of the poor. If you are white, you are racist; if you are a male, you are guilty of sexism, and so on and on.

But sin is common to all of us. Marx portrayed the capitalist as the oppressor of the workingman, and the debaucher of the working-girl. Of course, this did not keep Marx, the socialist, from debauching his wife's maid, nor modern socialists from doing the same. Women executives can be as guilty of sexism as men, and as zealous in their pursuit of underlings.

Moreover, the plain fact is that maids have often seduced their masters or their master's son, no less than masters have seduced maids. Sin is not a property belonging to any race or class, nor is virtue.

We have long been subjected to the myth of the innocent or oppressed class. Films and television have treated us ad nauseam with tales of whores with hearts of gold. For film writers, it would seem that the one qualification for virtue is to have no virtue. We are shown a world of sorry victims who are the casualties of life, having been exploited by someone.

It is at this point that modern thought is meeting with disaster. It denies the Biblical doctrine of sin for a concept of an evil environment. We are all victims, but, because we are all somebody's environment, we are all an evil force which needs bulldozing out of the way. Out of such an impasse, men see no escape.

For some years now, we have seen a growing disaffection and distaste for modern thought on the part of the very children of our modern leaders. The student rebels of the 1960s came largely from liberal and permissive homes; they were indeed the children of the establishment.

The rebellion of the 1960s has given way to cynicism and indifference. There is a dropping out into drugs, liquor, or simple existence without relevance. I talked briefly in the past year or so with the son of a prominent father, whose mother is also a part of the intellectual community. His parents were both dismayed, he said, because he had quit the university, after less than two years, to take a job. When I asked him why, he described the university as "just plain s—t. All they do is to lay a guilt trip on you." This young man was very much a part of the modern culture in his habits and tastes, but he had broken with the essence of modernism, its doctrine of man as victim. When he saw his parents, he loved to offend them, by his own admission, by ridiculing their belief in the innocence of minority groups, unions, or anything else he could think of, not out of conviction but out of contempt for the modern myth.

The homosexuals and the feminists have both exploited the myth, and both are beginning to see the hints of its decline and even backlash.

David, in Psalm 8:4, asks the question of God, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" To be *mindful* in Hebrew means to think well of, to consider favorably. In essence, mindfulness has a religious root. God is *mindful* of man, because, *first*, man is His creation, made in His own image, for righteousness, knowledge, holiness, and dominion. *Second*, God is mindful of man, because He has given man a great calling, the task of subduing the earth, and of exercising dominion over it (Gen. 1:26–28). For the performance of this task, God has crowned man "with glory and honour" (Ps. 8:5) and has placed all things implicitly under man.

At least from Nietzsche to Stalin and the present, a major strand of humanism has seen man merely as manure for the creation of the future superman or communistic man, or the Great Society. Virtually all humanism has seen man as either good or as neutral in his moral nature, and hence as a victim of God or the environment. This view of man is now in decay. Freud rightly saw his role as critical in the destruction of the Enlightenment's optimistic view of man. Man for Freud is a product of his unconscious, and the unconscious is made up of the *id*, the anarchistic pleasure principle, man's will to live; of the *ego*, the reality principle and the will to death; and the *superego*, the teachings and effects of the immediate environment. The *id* and *ego* represent the past environment. Freud saw little hope for man in escaping from his past. While some of Freud's ideas are now under attack, his doctrine of man essentially remains in force, and it is contributing to the decay of the world of humanism.

In answer to the question, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him," the modern world is answering that it is mindful of ideal man, the man of its imagined future. It is not mindful of independent man, Christian man, resisting man, or any man who refuses to bow down to the state. The modern state says, in effect, be a victim, and we will love you, and care for you.

But man today is seeing only the breakdown of the humanist order. In a play of 1967, *The Hawk*, a product of the experimental theater, the "Hawk" is a heroin peddler with an insatiable lust for victims. The Hawk's litany is a simple one: he is an animal; he "kills" because he is hungry; whatever happens has no moral meaning; we do what by nature we are impelled to do. The world of *The Hawk* is beyond good and evil, beyond morality. It is a world in which all men are victims of their own nature, and their nature is a product of the past. In 1970, Michael Novak, in *The Experience of Nothingness*, said that the fundamental

human question is, "Granted that I must die, how shall I live?" (p. 48). To this question, the modern mind has no answer. In fact, at that time Novak himself could only say that there is no self over and apart from the world, only a self in tension with the world and a part of it, so that, better than speaking of the self, we should speak instead of "a conscious world" or "a horizon" (p. 55). Ethics, instead of being God's commandment, was for Novak at that time simply man's "invention" or "creation," man's "possibility" (p. 79).

For such opinions, men pay a price, or, in Seon Manley's apt sentence, "we pay for dreams." And dreams are broken by reality.

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" has been answered increasingly with a rejection of mindfulness. Men are not even mindful of themselves, and suicidal habits are prevalent. To blunt one's mind with drugs or marijuana is certainly a blatant example of unmindfulness. Man as victim cannot confess sin; he can only indulge in self-pity.

On the other hand, in the Bible, we have a different view. In Joshua 7:19, Joshua tells Achan, the sinner, "My son, give, I pray thee, glory unto the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him." The word *confession* in the Hebrew is *todah*, which means confession and praise. Thus, when Joshua asks Achan to confess his sins, which carried a death penalty, he was also asking him to praise God. This gives us a glimpse into a radically different world than that of twentieth-century man, for whom confession means essentially self-abasement and humiliation. In the Bible, the confession of sin is a major step in the restoration of order, God's order, and it is thus a means toward praising God. The church of our day has lost the meaning of confession.

A victim cannot make confession. A man created to be a priest, prophet, and king in Christ finds in confession his restoration into a royal estate and a great calling.

"Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God," according to the Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 14. Confession is the first step towards restoration into our God-appointed status and dominion. It is the recognition that we are not victims but sinners, and we are sinners because we have departed from and rebelled against God's mandate and calling.

There are indications that, in earlier centuries of the Christian era, monarchs, before their coronation, had to make confession. However falsely done by many kings, its purpose was to remind them that all men are judged by God's law, and the praise of God begins with our confession of sins, and our submission to God's law order. It is God's law order which alone can exalt human society and make it joyful and triumphant.

David, after asking, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" goes on to say: "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet" (Ps. 8:6). The conclusion of true confession is dominion. The restored man as king exercises dominion over every area of life and thought and brings all things into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5).

The myth of victimization is being shattered. Its own advocates, by pushing it to its logical limits, have exposed its absurdities. It is a myth that has failed, and it is now dying.

This, however, is not enough. Clearing the ground of a tottering structure is a need, but it does not erect a new building. What is now needed is a strong and forthright emphasis on Christian Reconstruction, on dominion man and his mandate to conquer every area of life and thought for Christ, and on the certainty of victory. For victims, there is no victory. For confessors of the Name, victory is inescapable, because God the Lord remains forever king over all creation. Then let us be joyful, let the earth be glad "before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth" (Ps. 96:13).

82

CONFESSING OTHER PEOPLE'S SINS[1]

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 137, June 1991

It would seem that in some circles today, Christian and humanistic, true confession means to many "confessing" other people's sins. For some, it is a mark of holiness to be able to "confess" their spouse's, pastor's, neighbor's or employer's sins — if sins they be.

A very popular form of this is to "confess" the sins of one's parents. All too many young men and women feel cheated by life because their parents represent something less than perfection; it does not occur to them that it is their parents who have the surer grounds for complaints. Too many school counselors encourage students to complain about their parents, a most ungodly procedure. In the 1930s, I did some practice teaching at a prestigious high school. I was shown the students' records as compiled by staff counselors of the "advanced" school and encouraged to familiarize myself with the records of those in my class. I looked at one or two records of students whose families I knew; one of them was a professor of national renown, a gracious scholar, a kindly man, one who regularly had groups of students in his home and who helped and encouraged them in their careers. Although this professor was not a Christian and was politically a liberal, he reflected the manners, discipline, morality, and standards of an old-fashioned Christian family. The counselor's "report" on this professor was libelous to the extreme; he was classified as a reactionary and as an unfit father. Had he been anything other than a distinguished scholar, the counselor would have recommended some kind of action against him. (The boy grew up to be a happy and successful man.)

Students were encouraged to discuss their family "problems," by which was meant whatever they thought was wrong with their parents.

1. This position paper is a section of a later published book on the theology of confession, *The Cure of Souls: Recovering the Biblical Doctrine of Confession.* — editor

This was good training in phariseeism, and it was an incentive to self-righteousness. With all too many psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors, and pastors, "good" counseling too often means "confessing" other people's sins, especially our parents'. All this has fostered an evil generation.

Such false confession marks individuals, and also nationalities and races. We have developed professional finger pointers who make a life's work of "confessing" the sins of other peoples. Thus, many whites find it easy to "confess" the sins of blacks, Asiatics, Indians, and others. There are enough offenders out there to make it easy to do so. But as Christians we must believe that grace and growth in sanctification come from confessing our own sins. The Lord God nowhere pronounces forgiveness or a blessing on anyone confessing someone else's sins.

African-Americans in recent years have also become masters of such pharisaic confessions. To hear some talk, all evil was born with the white man, and blacks have only been victims. One wonderful pastor of a large black congregation with many black university professors as members, had his pastorate terminated for calling attention to African American sins, including welfarism. The congregation wanted to hear about sins, but not their own.

In the 1930s, as a student, I worked part time in an antique jewelry store, as an errand boy, doing cleaning work, and also sales with "minor" customers (i.e., not the wealthy, well-known persons). Occasionally, another jeweler, an elderly Jew, would come in to chat with the owner, an old friend and a Florentine. The old man was a kindly person and a good storyteller who often chatted with me. On one occasion, in discussing his childhood in old San Francisco, he described his fights with Irish and Italian boys, who, in the verbal assaults, called him a "Christ-killer." The truth was, he said, getting somewhat emotional, he had nothing to do with the killing of someone he had never seen; the truth was, he said earnestly, Christians were "Jew-killers," and he cited medieval incidents! I started to tell him two things: *first*, that my people were being killed by Turks in those medieval centuries, and, *second*, if today's Jews are not Christ-killers, neither are today's Christians Jew-killers! He was guilty of the same fallacy. My Italian boss told me to keep quiet, turned the conversation into a humorous story, and a friendly parting followed. But after the man left, my boss said sadly, he's a good man, but Jews will never admit they are Christ-killers! Confessing other people's sins, real or unreal, is a common and an international habit.

In recent years, American Indians have learned this art of false confession and practice it widely.

On the ecclesiastical scene, such confessions are a well-practiced art.

In this century, all the churches are so deeply involved in a variety of heresies, immoralities, offenses, and sins that they all need to be deeply in prayer and self-confession, not in mutual recriminations. Careful theological analyses and critiques are one thing, when accompanied by a careful statement of God's enscriptured truth, but cheap "virtue" gained by "confessing" someone else's sins is another matter, a sinful one.

Counseling today stresses such false confessions. For example, a man, irritated over a minor problem, provoked his boss into firing him. He wanted an excuse to feel sorry for himself, and this was a regular pattern with him. A very capable man, he went from job to job, soon angry with his superiors and creating incidents which led to his discharge. His wife, sick with shingles from his job migrations and tantrums, went to bed, unable to take his drunken ranting. She awoke hearing her daughter screaming because of her father's attempted molestation. She filed for divorce. The pastor's questions were motivated by his "no-divorce" policy; he insisted that she must have done something to "provoke" her husband into such behavior! Had she, he inquired, "delicately," he thought, kept her legs crossed when he needed her? She, not he, was disciplined by the church. She was told that she had no grounds for divorce.

Unusual? Unhappily, no. The pastor had not asked the husband to confess his sins; he had made no attempt to examine the facts carefully; he was "saving" a marriage. The husband had "admitted" his offense on questioning, but he had blamed his ex-boss for his drunkenness, and his wife for "nagging" him; he saw himself as a victim. He had "confessed" his ex-employer's "sin" and his wife's "sin" as justification for a "misstep" that he said he regretted and knew was wrong. But if we plead extenuating circumstances for sin, we have not confessed sin. The confession of the old Office of Compline is sadly forgotten in our time:

> I confess to God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and before all the company of heaven, that I have sinned, in thought, word and deed, through my fault, my own fault, my own most grievous fault: wherefore I pray Almighty God to have mercy upon me, to forgive me all my sins, and to make clean my heart within me.

The primary task of the pastor-counselor is not to preserve the marriage, not to break it up, but to ascertain what the sin is, whose it is, whether or not there is repentance, and thereby to enable the man and woman to see their problem more clearly. Sin and salvation must be his primary concerns. The fact that both the man and the woman are church members is no assurance of their salvation.

Similarly, in counseling in nonmarital problems, there is a certainty

of further dissension unless true confession and restitution have primacy. Christians do have problems, but not all people in churches are Christians.

Confessing other people's sins has become the essence of too much counseling. It is too often equated with an efficient ministry! The results are deadly. "Good" church people have become masters at whining and complaining, and "confessing" the sins of others. Some prospective employers are now investigating the complaining habits of job applicants. I have heard of several men who were regarded as the best qualified by far for a job opening but were passed over when their habit of talking against present and past employers became known. After all, if a man is ready to complain freely to one and all about present and past employers, it is reasonable to assume that he will complain about the next one!

The church is derelict in these matters. I recall that some years ago, high among the list of favorite Bible verses of many people were the following:

> Be careful (or, anxious) for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:6–7)
>
> I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. (Phil. 4:11)
>
> But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. (1 Tim. 6:6–8)

Many more such verses can be cited. I grew up knowing people who had survived wars, massacres, and revolution by these verses, when what they had we now would not call fit food or raiment. When they had the opportunity, they became the backbone of society, free men and women who were builders and a thankful people. They confessed Christ, and they confessed their own sins. One of my dearest memories is of a hard-working woman who had known a full complement of sorrows. She was always a happy woman, though twice widowed by massacres and barely surviving famine. Although not a Catholic, her well-worn prayer beads were commonly in hand, one round of prayers to confess her sins and shortcomings, and another to thank God for His grace, mercy, and blessings. It is impossible for me to think of her, my grandmother, without joy and gratitude. She left nothing when she died except a rich heritage of faith, and a godly confession.

The Lord God will give you neither absolution nor grace for confessing other people's sins. Begin and end with your own, or face His judgment.

83

THE CHURCH AS FUNCTION

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The church began its history in the Roman Empire, in the midst of a Greco-Roman culture. Jerusalem itself reflected that fact and was richly subsidized by the emperors because of its strategic importance. Keeping Judea peaceful and happy was a basic policy. Judea's failure to appreciate its "privileges" led to the intensity of Roman vengeance during and after the war of A.D. 66–70.

The church was both influenced by that Greco-Roman culture and also hostile to it. Herbert B. Workman, in *Persecution in the Early Church* (1906), noted: "By Roman theory the State was the one society which must engross every interest of its subjects, religious, social, political, humanitarian, with the one possible exception of the family. There was no room in Roman law for the existence, much less the development on its own lines of organic growth, of any corporation or society which did not recognize itself from the first as a mere department or auxiliary of the State. The State was all and in all, the one organism with a life of its own. Such a theory the Church, as the living kingdom of Jesus, could not possibly accept in either the first century or the twentieth." Many churchmen, then as now, tried to accommodate themselves to the sovereignty of the state or emperor rather than Christ. They were willing to confess, "Caesar is lord." The church in part was preserved from absorption by Roman persecution. The intransigent, uncompromising Christians preserved the church by their refusal to compromise.

All the same, however, some things were absorbed, i.e., Neoplatonism, Aristotelianism, Stoicism, asceticism, and the like. An important borrowing from Rome was organization and bureaucratization. The church was in a very real sense a continuation of the synagogue, and in the Greek text of James 2:2, the word translated as *assembly* is actually *synagogue*.

The church, unlike the synagogue, was not only an Hebraic organization, but it was essentially an organic body, a corporation: the body of Christ. Now the members of a body (i.e., hands, feet, etc.) do not hold offices; they have *functions*. The words translated as *office* in the New Testament make this clear. For Romans 11:13 and 1 Timothy 3:10, 13, the word used is *diakonia* in Romans and *diakoneo* in Timothy. The word, in English as *deacon*, means a servant, service; it refers to a function. In Romans 12:4, *office* in the Greek is *praxis*, function. In 1 Timothy 3:1, it is *episkope*, and its meaning is supervision or inspection to give relief or help. In Hebrews 7:5, the reference is to the Old Testament priesthood, *hierateia*, and refers to the sacerdotal function.

Thus, what we call church offices are in reality functions of the body of Christ in this world. This fact is very important. Offices lead to a bureaucracy and a ruling class, whereas functions keep a body alive.

In the early church also, we have no evidence of what is commonplace today, regular, stated bureaucratic meetings of presbyteries, synods, councils, bishops, etc. Instead, beginning with the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15, the meetings were called to resolve a problem or meet a need. They were functional meetings, not organizational; they were aspects of the life of a body, not of a bureaucratic organization. They exercised no coercive power, but they did formulate questions and answers pertaining to faith and morals carefully and precisely.

Both Eastern and Western churches, and, in the West, Catholicism, Protestantism, and Anabaptism, have developed great and powerful bureaucracies which impede the life of the church. Both church and state, and especially the state, suffer badly from bureaucratization and consequent constipation in their life. As a result, in the United States, many Protestants and Catholics have some home study groups which bring new life to their faith. In Edinburgh, Scotland, I found a remarkable charismatic church; it had purchased a large stone church closed by the Presbyterians and was the center of extensive ministries. But it had no membership list! Fearful of bureaucratic strangulation, it was keeping the church together as a faith bond in the Spirit rather than as an institution. While it is not necessary to go to such a length, clearly a corrective to emphasize function and life is urgently needed.

One of the consequences of bureaucratization in the church is the rise of the star system. This is certainly true also in other spheres, especially the state. People vote for presidents in terms of their "image" projection, not their faith and life, not their action. Most of the presidents of the earlier years of the United States would never be elected today. Lincoln is liked in retrospect. His high pitched voice, carelessness in dress, and

much more, would today finish him after one television appearance.

The importance of the star system is necessary to understand. People want the star to epitomize what they want, or would like to be. They identify with the image he projects. Thus, some people feel that a prominent political leader, or a religious leader, is "entitled" to moral lapses because of his importance. In earlier times, such lapses were called the royal prerogative. The star must be the expression of the popular or common will, the general will.

In the church in the United States, the star system set in soon after churches began to move on the one hand into Unitarianism, and on the other, into Arminian revivalism. People gravitated towards powerful pulpiteers on both sides of the fence. The churches then began to take their life from the star: a star could bring in hundreds and even thousands of people, lead to a great church complex, attract people and money, and give the members the vicarious feeling of being part of a great church. This still is very, very much with us. Some people will simply say, "I want a church where the action is." By action, they mean crowds; the result is often a surrogate "Christianity," not a living faith.

The result, too, is spectator "Christianity," a star performing before hundreds and thousands. The mandate to believers in both numerically large churches as well as small is then reduced to being good spectators and contributors. For the surrogate "Christian," someone else expresses the faith and does the work. We have then what General William Booth called mummified church members.

The star system has had its shipwrecked stars over the centuries, men like Savonarola, Henry Ward Beecher, and others of more recent years, and the end is not yet. The star system tends to give, not life, but a form of life. As Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:5, some have the form of godliness but not the power thereof. Instead, what the stars usually have is the power of money.

Paul tells us that we are "the church of the living God" (1 Tim. 3:15). Jesus Christ declares that He is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). The Trinity is never identified as the Great Bureaucracy but as life, the author of life, and more. For the church to identify itself in terms of its bureaucracy is a sorry fact.

If the church indeed is the body of Christ, it must function as if it is alive. A dead church is a nonfunctioning church; it is salt which has lost its savor and is fit only to be cast out and trodden under foot by men (Matt. 5:13).

This is a grim possibility in our time. We cannot say that in all places the church today is dead, but in too many areas it is badly arthritic and feeble. Christ, the Lord of life, commands us, saying, "I say unto thee, arise!"

84

PROXY RELIGION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 234
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It is an interesting fact that St. Patrick was almost completely unknown on the continent in his own lifetime, and for centuries afterward. Even more, he was almost completely forgotten in Ireland itself. He was not a great thinker; he was a man of one book, the Bible. Although insignificant in his own day, he is now more widely known than Jerome, Augustine, and Constantine the Great. He was a missionary eager to convert the heathen Irish, not simply to serve the Irish Christians. Having been captured and enslaved as a young man, he was concerned with ransoming captured and enslaved Christians, and relieving the poor. In the Mediterranean areas, many famous hermits and ascetics attracted international notice and pilgrimages. As far as we know, no Christians of his day thought Patrick was worth a pilgrimage or special attention.

The simple fact is that in his day St. Patrick was not a "star," a prominent personality, such as St. Jerome was. He was simply a hard-working missionary, and, later, after being passed over once and humiliated, finally a bishop.

Skipping over the centuries to the nineteenth century, we come to General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army. Booth (1829–1912) moved into the city slums of the world with a program of salvation, social reform, and charities. To this day, the Salvation Army, for all its outstanding work, has not caught up to Booth's vision.

Booth was repelled by the irrelevance of the churches. The bigger the church, the greater its "star system," i.e., a prominent pastor in the pulpit, and a large number of passive, inactive people in the pews. He declared that, as soon as men were converted, the church mummified them

so that their only real function was to sit in the pew and listen.

Many criticized Booth's organization as dictatorial, as a denial of the freedom and initiative of army members, and so on. Booth, however, saw it differently. Army members were disciplined for action and effectiveness, each to serve in a front-line capacity for King Jesus, the Great Commander of the Army. Instead of leaving the faith to a "star" performer in the pulpit, every Army member had his pulpit in the streets, in action for his King. The result was a movement which in Asia, Europe, and America became a major force.

Coming to our own day, we see that, in recent years, a major and dramatic movement was born. In order to concentrate on the heart of the matter rather than on personalities, no names will be mentioned. This movement was the Charismatic revival. Its first years gave indication that it would be little more perhaps than the Higher Life movement of the pre-World War I era, much given to cultivating personal experience and little given to serving the Lord.

However, one leader in particular began to develop a very specific plan of organization and action, a discipleship structure. Every member is to be under authority and also learn growth in faith, responsibility, and authority. From top to bottom, the church is to be organized for service, for action, for growth. Such a plan lends itself to zealots and abuses, and there have been many. Even as some of the early faults of the Salvation Army are embarrassing to recall, so too some of the errors and abuses of discipleship.

One result has been a division in the Charismatic community. On the one side, the advocates of the "star system" have flourished and gained national prominence. A passive stance suits most people today. We live in an age of "groupies" in popular music, sports, and also religion. The jetsetters, at their luxury resorts, have their "kept" intellectuals and artists to garnish the company of the self-appointed elite.

So too in the church. All too many want to express their faith in their passive exaltation of pulpit stars, of great names, and so on. More than one mission to youth since World War II has regularly paraded "big name" sports and entertainment figures before youth as "proof" of their importance and "effectiveness." The parade still goes on, and the slide of the world into disaster and judgment continues. The star system pleases men not God. Politics itself is increasingly conscious of the "star system" rather than issues. It is fitting that the United States elected a card-carrying actor to the presidency. For some time, its politicians have been star actors in their own sphere instead of men with a faith and a cause.

On the other side, both in the Charismatic and non-Charismatic

churches there is a steadily growing emphasis on the duties of every believer, on the necessity of a faith with works (James 2:14–26; Rom. 3:31; Matt. 7:16–20), on some very specific forms of discipleship.

Now some will no doubt write in to vent their dislike of some specifics of discipleship, as though this were the issue. Chalcedon has set forth the imperatives of God's law; it has described the nature of a community action program, of the need for family associations, and more. These are all ways of discipleship; and they are only a beginning.

The church today, among other things, is plagued by too many stars, and by the star system. Some very fine and prominent pastors are distressed at the proneness of too many people to leave the exercise of Christianity by proxy to the church staff. A corporate shareholder's activities in the life of a corporation is limited strictly. He can cast a proxy vote, and he can draw dividends.

Not so in the church. There are no dividends without full participation in the life and works of faith. No man enters into the Kingdom of God by a proxy! The star system works on earth, but it carries no weight with heaven.

John Berger, in *Ways of Seeing*, noted that in our time consumption has become a substitute for democracy (1972, p. 149). Whether we like democracy or not, we must recognize that it remains with us only as a form. His premise is government by the people. It requires a concern for self-government and a desire to implement self-government. Today, however, in voting, most people are little concerned with the responsibilities of government. The appeal that succeeds in elections is the consumption appeal: what are the benefits in a particular ballot measure? What is promised by the candidate?

Elections thus become less and less an exercise in democracy and more and more an appeal to consumers. The most effective election tool in the United States is now television, and the television appeal by parties and candidates is an appeal to consumers. The parties promise to deliver more benefits to the consumer if elected.

In modern political marketing, the star is the man who has the combination of personal attractiveness with promises of consumer satisfaction.

There are, of course, good men in religious broadcasting in both radio and television, but here too the preference of most people is for stars to give them proxy religion. The road to hell is paved with proxy religion.

It is an interesting fact that three times the New Testament accuses false teachers of being guilty of the sin of Balaam, "who loved the wages of unrighteousness" or injustice (2 Peter 2:15; c.f. Jude 11; Rev. 2:14). Our Lord tells us that Balaam taught compromise (Rev. 2:14), and He

charges the church at Pergamos with a readiness to compromise His truth and law. The letters to the churches of Asia in Revelation 2 and 3 give us examples of the star system at work in the churches, and with deadly consequences. Paul in 1 Corinthians accuses that church, among other things, of a critical and deadly weakness, the star system.

The Corinthians were, in fact, taking the very apostles and leaders of the early church and trying to make stars of them. He says bluntly, "let no man glory in men," nor can they without sin divide the church in terms of Paul, Apollos, or Cephas (1 Cor. 3:2–11, 21–22). Paul was fully aware of his importance, but he also knew fully that the only hope for the Corinthian church was its own life and growth in Christ.

The star system has very practical consequences in the everyday life of church. One problem I regularly encounter across the country is the expectation that the life of faith is to be lived by the pastor, not the entire church. It is rare for someone, hearing of a death in their fellowship, to call and say, "I am ready to bring dinner to you. Let me know when I can bring it," or in hearing of a sickness, offer to help the sick or shut-ins by cleaning house, doing the wash, or shopping, and so on. With the growing number of elderly people in most churches, the opportunities for service in this one sphere are many. Proxy religion sees no opportunities and obligations.

Our Lord tells us emphatically, "by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:20–21).

Are you disciple, or a spectator? Is yours a faith with works, or a proxy religion?

85

THE COUNSELING HERESY[1]

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 136, June 1991

The church, all too prone to aping the world, has in the twentieth century gone over to the practice of counseling. Now, godly counsel can be very beneficial, and to relate the Word of God to human problems is thoroughly necessary. The therapy heresy, however, is the adoption of humanistic premises as a means for the cure of souls. By Freud's deliberate design, psychological counseling, psychotherapy, was to replace the work of priests and pastors as the best means of eliminating religion. No attempts to "disprove" the Bible would succeed in undermining such faith. All men feel guilt, and they want a remedy for it. If science can take over the remedial therapy for guilt, Freud held, religion can be destroyed. Freud saw guilt as basic to the human problem, and those who enabled men to cope with it would become the true priests of the future. Out of this premise, psychotherapy was born. Sadly, the churches have been very quick to adopt it.

Freud's analysis was brilliant but flawed. He saw guilt as the problem, whereas guilt is simply man's response to his sin. If sin is a myth arising out of man's primordial experience, then the problem must be dealt with psychologically, because guilt is a state of the psyche of man, a deeply-rooted feeling. If, however, guilt is not the problem but rather a response to the problem, then we must look elsewhere. Because guilt is a manifestation of the root problem, sin, then all our efforts are in vain if we do not face up to the heart of the matter. Sin is an act, a state of mind, a direction of the heart, and the essential character and orientation of a person. Dealing with guilt alone is like treating a cancer of the liver or of the intestines with salve. It is quackery.

1. This position paper is a section of a later published book on the theology of confession, *The Cure of Souls: Recovering the Biblical Doctrine of Confession*. — editor

It is a basic premise of Biblical faith that there can be no effectual change without regeneration. Apart from that, any change is pragmatic, cosmetic, or prudential. Counseling deals with the human scene and human relationships. The pastoral cure of souls gives primacy to man's relationship to God in Christ, man's eternal destiny, and then to the problems of human relationships.

This why the true and effectual cure of souls begins with confession. Confession in our time is a much neglected ministry, but it is all the same an essential one. Confession, among other things, requires two things. *First*, there must be a confession of sin; this means, not specific sins but the fact of a sin nature, our will to be our own god and our own source of good and evil, our own determiners of law and morality (Gen. 3:1–5). Sin is basic to man's determination, my will be done. *Second*, there must be a confession of sins, of specific expressions of our evil bent. Too many are ready to say, "Of course I sin; after all, I'm only human." Moreover, where the counseling of couples is involved, there is a readiness to say, "I did do that, but what about my spouse's sins? They provoked me into sinning!" There is another aspect to such confessions. A false confession can be true in the stated facts, but false because so much has been hidden or falsified. In our civil criminal courts, there is a practice known as plea bargaining. To save court time, a man accused of a very serious crime is allowed to plead guilty to a lesser one while the serious charge is dropped. Pleading guilty to the lesser offense is routine in counseling; it is often used to gain a façade of openness and repentance.

The Shorter Catechism asks (Q. 14), "What is sin? A. Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God." In 1 John 3:4, we have the basic source for this statement: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for *sin* is *the transgression of the law*." Apart from this fact, all attempts to deal with offenders is false and in vain, and, of course, humanistic. This is why antinomianism has been so ready to adopt counseling, because it replaces God's law, the need for regeneration, and the necessity of confession and repentance. Of course, the heresy of counseling does not consider restitution. Its goal is a humanistic reconciliation, a peace at any price. As such, it is clearly evil.

The therapy heresy bypasses the fundamentals of Christian faith: the atonement, regeneration, restitution, and more. Years ago, I heard a lecturer describe to an audience of ministers and ministerial students a marital problem which involved numerous offenses by one partner, including habitual adultery. His rhetorical question was, "How can we bring this couple together again?" The reunion of the couple was the goal, not God's law nor God's grace.

The therapy heresy sees itself in terms of the medical model. Medical healing means medication is "added" to the life of the patient, or, by surgery, something is removed. In terms of Scripture, the need in many cases begins with regeneration. In other instances, where the persons are truly Christian, there must be confession and repentance, followed by restitution. Repentance means a reversal of direction, a total change in a person's life and character. Only after these things take place can there be restoration. To restore a sinning church member, or a wayward spouse, simply on his or her verbal affirmation, is humanism.

The counseling heresy is a thriving evil because exegesis and theology are no longer central to the church or the pulpit. Preaching is no longer systematic. If a pastor began a careful series of studies, chapter and verse, of all of Romans, or all of Exodus, his people would rebel, if he did not first abandon the idea. Our humanistic pulpits give us a smorgasbord of subjects, choosing texts of general interest in order to command attention. The most important question about a sermon is, *Is it interesting?*, not, *Does it enable us to understand the whole counsel of God?* As it is now, people can attend a Reformed or evangelical church all their lives and still be ignorant of the Bible and its doctrines. (I have encountered devout Catholics and Protestants who thought reincarnation was "in the Bible!") The counseling heresy thrives with non-Biblical preaching, because it, too, bypasses the fundamentals of the faith.

An old proverb says, "We know a man by the company he keeps." The counseling regime keeps close company with humanism. We have now a considerable body of ostensibly Christian books on counseling, especially marital counseling. These books are full of pious goals, and their announced goals are saving marriages and helping people. "After all these things do the Gentiles seek" (Matt. 6:32). "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

In Isaiah 30:1, we read, "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin." God declares, in Hosea 4:12, "My people ask counsel at their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them: for the spirit of whoredoms hath caused them to err, and they have gone a-whoring from under their God." This is strong language; it applies to all attempts to redirect our lives apart from God and the priority of His law-word. Humanistic counseling is man-centered; however "noble" its humanistic goals, it is alien to a God-centered faith.

However, before we have the counseling heresy, we have had a failure in the pulpit. Word and doctrine have been replaced with inspirational

pap, and the clergy have become men-servers. A church with a "good" counseling program will have doctrine given a minor place at best.

86

ALTAR VERSUS PULPIT

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 172, February 1994

In a study marked by a rather harsh dislike for the Puritans, Hugh Trevor-Roper, in *Catholics, Anglicans, and Puritans* (1987), makes a very important and decisive point in describing the developments within the Church of England. The different parties began as one, with a common allegiance to the Anglican church and its order. They then divided sharply and bitterly. In time, Archbishop Laud became a hard and persecuting prelate, and the Puritans were later to manifest a strong desire to dismantle a church they had long loved. These Puritans were Church of England Puritans, strongly wedded to the establishment and its heritage. They were alike given to a tracing of and love for the old English Church before the Norman Conquest, and before the Council of Whitby.

Why did they divide, and what was the root cause of the difference? According to Trevor-Roper, it was a clash between the primacy of the altar as against the primacy of the pulpit. In the Church of England, "To the Arminian, as to the Catholic, the pulpit was a utilitarian feature, secondary to the altar, which was invested with an aura of mystery. To the Calvinist, the order was reversed: the function of the Church was preaching: the altar was the utilitarian feature" (p. 94). Laud said, on one occasion, to William Prynne, "the altar is the greatest place of God's residence on earth, greater than the pulpit, for there 'tis at most *hoc est corpus meum*, this is my body, but in the other it is at most *hoc est verbum meum*, this is my word" (p. 94). Well before Cromwell's army, the hostilities broke in violence to opposing chapels. Parliament in 1643 authorized a campaign against images, under the authority of the Earl of Manchester, whose men arrived at Cambridge to purge its chapels of image; they worked with hammers, saws, and other instruments to smash the Laudian additions.

Both parties had begun with a common loyalty to the Church of England and a common faith. They parted company on the priority of altar or pulpit. The fathers in faith of the altar party were men like Erasmus, Grotius, and Arminius, men who rejected the priority of the Word over the altar. Their theologies were inclined to be vague at points, and tolerant of much. Thus, the altar party was often accused of Socinianism (Unitarianism), even though they were trinitarian, the reason being their toleration of differing theologies, but no toleration of any hostility to their high church sacramentalism. They liked Socinian's rationalism more than they did the theological precision of the Calvinists.

The altar party moved into a theological toleration but became fanatical about gowns, candles, bowing to the altar, and more. On such issues, they at times put the Puritans to shame with their zeal. The church Puritans at times treated the Lord's Table with studied indifference; any table would do, and it could be stored out of sight, when not used. Their churches were, to the altar party, unclean and disorderly. Both side used intense rhetoric, and physical force. The altar party's force was used against people. Both had their triumphs, and both paid heavy price for their victories. And the Church of England declined in its power and relevance.

But the controversy was important. Ideas do have consequences, and often beyond the scope of our vision. The altar party did not win; it was simply favored by Charles II, whose private preference was Rome, if one could say he had any loyalty beyond pleasure and his mistresses. The altar party commanded the church but gradually lost the nation. Its subsequent stance, besides Deism, was high church, broad church, and low church. All three positions have reference to the altar and to the church's clerical parties. Where the nation and its people were concerned, it was marginally relevant, and, today, is inconsequential.

The pulpit party, like the altar party, never looked beyond its struggle with the opposition to see its place in the life of England. Both parties had seen their position as the truth of God. Neither had confronted the fact that they did not represent what the people of England wanted. Of course, what God wants is most important, but how could they minister *to* the people as a victorious political party?

The true altar party after 1688 was the Non-Juror group, and none was more irrelevant. The continuing church was made up of the politically expedient clergy.

The Church-Puritans were in part the winning party in the Civil War, but they demonstrated, as had Laud earlier, that victory on their terms was something the nation could not grant. Cromwell had to stand against

them. After Cromwell's death, the Church-Puritans (the Presbyterians) were the ones who brought back Charles II in 1660, who then ejected them from the church in 1662.

Both the altar and the pulpit party had struggled to control a state establishment, so that theirs was a struggle for power, not a mission. The state in time would only allow a church that, for many years, was not allowed a convocation until it was incapable of any independence.

They had begun with a common loyalty and starting point. Their presuppositions drove them in different directions.

Non-Anglican Arminians drifted away from the altar-faith to stress what was implicit in their position from the beginning, an emphasis on the freedom of man from God's sovereign power, on free will as against sovereign grace. Ironically, the pulpit party (the English Presbyterians) drifted into the error they accused the altar party of, Socinianism.

Both groups had erred seriously in having a church focus instead of a faith focus. The institution came to mean more to them than the faith and the Lord that it was supposed to represent. They therefore betrayed both the pulpit and the altar. We live in the consequences of their failure. The beautiful altars and pulpits remain, but their meaning is gone. It is time to bring back the King (2 Sam. 19:10).

87

BASILICAS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 174, April 1994

By its very existence, the early church was an offense to good Romans. They were accustomed to seeing themselves as superior to all other peoples, and they had good reason to think so. Roman armies had conquered vast domains in Europe, Asia Minor, and North Africa. Their civil power, law, architecture, arts, and more, marked them as the great world power, and they were conscious of their power and assured of their destiny. The phrase "Eternal Rome" tells the story.

Now, in their midst, there was a group, made up mainly of the despised Judeans, who claimed an emperor ("King of kings, Lord of lords," the "*only* Potentate" or power in creation, 1 Tim. 6:15) and declared themselves to be God's ambassador to the world! This Rome saw as a startling arrogance, and Rome had dealt with arrogant men before, but not like this.

These Christians saw their crucified leader as God, Savior, and King. Their Scriptures, liturgy, and language clearly revealed this amazing belief.

But this was not all. Perhaps two centuries passed before there were any church buildings, but, when these were built, of stone, they were called *basilicas*. Now, the word *basil* means *king*, and a basilica was the royal court. It is true that Roman basilicas were courtroom buildings, a marketplace, or a meeting hall, but they were *state* buildings where the emperor's word was law. In the Christian basilica, or throne room of Christ the King, all men stood when Scripture, the king's law-word, was read. By Constantine's time, or soon thereafter, major cities, where a bishop held sway, had a bishop's throne building, the *cathedra*, but every church was the throne room of Christ the King.

Now, not every basilica of Rome could say that the emperor actually held court there, but they were, all the same, royal courts. Specifically,

a basilica in a remote area was a court of imperial justice, or a meeting place where the emperor's business was conducted by his agents.

Similarly, the Christian basilicas were the meeting places of the royal retinue, the people of the king. They were Christ's courts of law, where His law-word was proclaimed. In terms of Paul's requirement in 1 Corinthians 6, the early church established courts of arbitration in terms of God's law.

In fact, after Constantine's day, many of the "newer" church buildings were simply old Roman Courts. Thus, the church in its life and in its building structure was a basilica, the king's court, and it served in that capacity. We cannot understand the boldness of men like Ambrose in rebuking an emperor from the pulpit if we do not recognize that such men self-consciously proclaimed the law-word of the King of kings from their pulpits. The preachers of the early church often had a holy boldness because they knew themselves to be the ministers of the Great King of all creation, but they also had a humility stemming from the knowledge that, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31), and to be presumptuous was to court judgment.

The Christian basilica at once had a variety of functions. It was a place for the proclamation of the law-word of the King of kings. It was also a teaching center for the Kingdom of God. It was a house of prayer for the king's business, and for all the work of His Kingdom.

It is interesting that church construction all over Europe after the fall of Rome still retained the basilica structure and function. The pagans recognized that the church represented more than another set of beliefs: it was a kingdom, a Savior-King, a law, and a government. The basilica building structure went hand in hand with an imperial law and rule. The church was there to save men and to give them the glorious rule of the only true king.

This is why pagan kings wrestled with the matter of permitting Christianity to enter their realms. It meant a rule overruling theirs, a court above them, and a king who sits in perpetual judgment over them.

In the course of its Christian history, the word *basilica* gained another meaning, a related one. The word *basilica* came to mean a law code issued by a king. In A.D. 878, the Byzantine emperor Basil the Macedonian had a law code collected and issued. A basilica now meant the king's court and also the king's law.

The relationship now between the word *basilica* and *church* is minimal. The true basilicas of our time are, as with Rome, state buildings. They represent state power and a bureaucracy, not the King of kings. They are unable to give salvation, and their justice is at best a very flawed one, if not outright injustice.

In architecture, the church at times still resembles a basilica, but in spirit, it is very alien to it. To return to the old pattern, we must first by faith recognize Jesus Christ as Savior, King, and Lawgiver. There must be a return to the absolute priority of God and His Kingdom (Matt. 6:33), and there must be a readiness to apply His law-word to every sphere of life and thought. We cannot have a true basilica unless we first know the King, and He acknowledges us.

88

THE ANTICHURCH WITHIN THE CHURCH

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 167, September 1993

In a very important study, Malachi Martin, in *The Keys of This Blood* (1990, 1991), writes on the antichurch within the church. Its goal is to remake the church in terms of imported standards. The goal of these antichurch persons within the Roman Catholic Church is to convert the church into an agency integrated into modern life. The antichurch insists on remaining within the church. Its goal is "The people as source and authority of all faith standards; of all religious order; of all laws — including the definition of what is sinful and what prayers are to be said." Majoritarianism should govern in all questions of religion and morality; equality should prevail. There should be moral pluralism, with neither homophobia nor heterophobia, and with no restrictions on sexual expression (Malachi Martin, *The Keys of This Blood*, p. 605).

This antichurch gained some ground at Vatican II, and Pope Paul VI shared sentiments with them (p. 609).

The consequences of Vatican II led to a decline of seminarians. There were in 1965 in the United States 8,885 in theologates, in the last step before ordination, but in 1989 there were only 3,689. One result was that candidates who in 1960 would have been excluded were now allowed to remain.

The results were deadly. *First*, theological ignorance was widespread. For many, such things did not matter. "People" counted, supposedly, not dogma. *Second*, with the "sexual revolution," many homosexuals were able to enter the priesthood.

Conservative Catholics, as witness *The Wanderer*, have been concerned on *both* counts. Liberal Catholics, as witness Jason Berry's *Lead Us Not Into Temptation* (1992), have been concerned over Catholic

priests and the sexual abuse of children. In June 1993, Pope John Paul II instructed bishops to clean house on such priests.

This problem has not been restricted to Roman Catholic circles. In Protestant mainline churches, *first*, modernism is endemic, and *second*, the sexual dereliction also commonplace. *Heterodoxy*, May–June 1993, reports on the situation in an article entitled, "Roadmap for a Queer Church" (p. 14).

The antichurch is as active in Protestantism as elsewhere.

The history of the church gives us many parallels to the present. Certainly St. Athanasius faced a militant antichurch, and so have many saints over the centuries. There is a difference now, however, in that there is a purposive drive to remake the church to conform to the world rather than to Jesus Christ. This drive seeks to give to the Bible and to the church a new definition, one derived from man and history rather than the triune God and His Word.

Rather than seeing the world, man, time, history, and all things else as deriving their meaning from God and His absolutely transcendent person and nature, meaning is sought from within history and from man. If God is not the definer, then no meaning stands.

Bryan R. Wilson, in *Magic and the Millennium* (1973), called attention to the reason why Navaho have resisted Christianization: "The Navaho, traditionally saw the gods as existing for man's benefit: he need not abase himself, as conversionist Christianity, with its strong preoccupation with sin, demanded" (p. 48). The antichurch has a like faith: if God exists, He should exist for man's benefit, to serve man and to bless man forever.

The antichurch offers man-centered, not God-centered, religion. It offers itself as the nobler, more sensitive faith. Its goal is the fulfillment of man, not the glory of God. In the name of Christ, it proclaims man. Karl Barth wrote, "Since God Himself has become man, man is the measure of all things" (From *Christengemeinde und Bürgergemeinde* [1946], p. 46; quoted by W. Dantine, *Scottish Journal of Theology*, p. 18 [June 1965]: p. 133). To believe in this is to believe in "a universe grounded in man alone" (W. Taylor Stevenson, *History as Myth* [1969], p. 4). This means turning the faith upside down!

Given the nature of the antichurch, its goal is the capture of the church in its every branch in order to destroy it. The God-centered nature of the true church is an offense. Even when this aspect of the church is watered down or muted, it is an offense to the antichurch, which seeks total victory.

Not only churches but their colleges and seminaries have too often fallen into the hands of the antichurch, with deadly results. Too commonly,

seminaries are a polluting rather than a healing, nurturing source. The antichurch is militantly and earnestly dedicated to the building of the city of man. St. Augustine saw two cities in process of construction in the world, the City of God, and the city of man. These two, which should be in opposition, are too often in seeming merger. Even in the most orthodox of the various continuing breakaway churches, we see the infiltration of both false theologies and false moralities. The drive by the antichurch to capture Christianity is a most zealous one.

They do, however, reckon without God. Because they fail to know Him as the *living* God, they believe that they have simply declared war on an incorrect idea. This is like a man assuming that a volcano smoldering under his feet is only a myth, an idea! Our God, as the losers over the centuries have found out, "is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29). The antichurch is at war with more than the church; it is at war with the triune God. We dare not be neutral in this warfare, because there are no neutrals where God is concerned. Neither dare we believe that the antichurch, however powerful, can ever prevail. Because God is God, His will alone shall be done, in heaven and on earth.

89

THE RETREATISTS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 182, November 1994

A book advertisement recently stated that its author, a prominent pastor, asks these questions: "Should we demonstrate against the social issues that threaten the moral fiber of our world?" "Should we do everything we can to make our government Christian?" "Should we fight against the secular and humanistic philosophies of our day?" We are told that the author "believed that we have lost sight of our real mission as Christians if we answer 'Yes' to any of those questions." He believes that we have then become a cultist, not a Christian.

This, of course, is alien to our Lord's commission to, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8). In 1 Corinthians 6, we are told to set up courts of arbitration for judgments in terms of God's law. In Acts, care of the poor began early, and collections for the poor. The early church had homes for the elderly without families, for abandoned children, hospitals to care for all, schools, and so on and on.

The purely spiritual concern our author insists on was the mark of the pagan mystery religions or cults. Generations before the early church had a building for worship, it had a variety of institutions to meet needs.

As a way of meeting these needs in Christ, deacons were created and empowered to minister in Christ's name. Once a powerful force in all Christendom, the diaconate is in too many cases a nonfunctioning office. Once the shaper of Christian community, the deacon is now peripheral to church and society. They were very early known as the Christian Levites because they were the most actively engaged in the life of the society. Indeed, there are hints that the *sacerdos*, the presbyters, tried to limit the powers of the deacons, and their ordination to the pastorate, because of their extensive importance. Their part in worship was severely limited.

They were tied to severely limited spheres. All the same, their impact on society was great, and the mercy and compassion in Christ which the diaconate manifested was seen as revelatory of the gospel.

Pagan Rome, like other powers, had welfarism as a means of controlling the poor, but no religiously grounded charity which impelled all men. Our present situation is comparable to that of ancient paganism: charity is a good idea, but it is best if the state undertake it. The personal impulse, and theologically grounded faith, that we have an obligation under God to minister to human needs, to bring *every* area of life under Christ's dominion and God's law, and the duty to make God's earth His Kingdom, all this has been abandoned as the church has retreated into the position of a mystery religion or cult. All the world is surrendered to evil, and only a little corner, the church and the people in it, represent Christ's domain. How will Christ the King treat a church that hands His world over to His enemies? Is this not doing the enemy's work for him?

It is amazing how many people there are who actually believe they are holier and purer because they have surrendered one area after another to Christ's enemies.

But when we turn to the early church, to Justin Martyr, we read: "Those who prosper, and who so wish, contribute each one as much as he chooses to. What is collected is deposited with the president (of the deacons), and he takes care of orphans and widows, and those who are in want on account of sickness or any other cause, and those who are in bonds, and the strangers who are sojourners among us, and briefly, he is the protector of all those in need" (*1 Apology*, 69, 67.5–6).

The churches today too often seek a cheap pseudo-holiness in "spiritual exercises," in attendance to meetings, in reading much lightweight "spiritual" books, and so on. The situation in some areas is so bad that to cite Micah 6:8 is seen as almost heresy! ("He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?") What is wrong with that verse? Oh, say these people, this is from the Old Testament, and there is no Christ in it. Well, who gave that word except Christ if you take the Scriptures literally?

Sanctification, or holiness, is gained by faithfulness to God's law. Sin is *anomia*, lawlessness, "for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). And holiness is faithfulness to God's law. Holiness does not come by meditating on, or expecting, the Rapture!

Our faith is an intensely practical one. It has given us the best and most free culture the world has known. God knows, Christianity has enemies enough. How sad that its own leaders are now surrendering it.

But the future belongs to God, and to all His faithful ones. Let us stand firmly in terms of our faith, and we shall be *more* than conquerors in Christ (Rom. 8:37).

90

FAITH

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 192, September 1995

Some decades ago, during the Depression, I had the privilege of visiting briefly in a community very much influenced by a fine old pastor. I attended one service and also had a brief visit with the man. He had studied under great men at the old Princeton Seminary, and his conversation was stimulating as he recalled his teachers. His preaching was very different, essentially devotional, and, with the passing of the years, he had limited himself to a short number of favorite texts. His Bible had become very small. I was therefore saddened but not surprised that his successor was a modernist. He had passed on no theological awareness.

In this century, Protestantism has been in steady retreat because the pulpit too often has fallen short in solid theological and Biblical teaching. Men have been too prone to stress their own theological and ecclesiastical affiliation to the exclusion of the whole Word of God. In the triune God, all His attributes are equally of importance. You and I have disproportionate attributes: we are good at some things and incompetent with others. Our aptitudes and abilities differ greatly. But nothing in the Godhead is greater or lesser than anything else. We cannot say that "God is love" to the neglect of the fact that He says His name is Jealous (Exod. 34:14). He is the God of grace, and also of law, of peace and of wrath, and so on. If we stress in God what we like, then we create an idol with supposedly Biblical materials.

A key area where, in this century, Biblical materials have been used to warp the faith has to do with the word *faith*. When I was young, the common stress was on the atoning blood of Jesus Christ as our salvation. Neither our faith nor our works save us: "for in thy sight shall no man living be justified" (Ps. 143:2). Faith is the gift of God which enables us to know what He has done. Paul tells us, in Ephesians 2:5, "Even when

we were dead in sins, [God] hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)." In Ephesians 2:8, we read, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourself: it is the gift of God."

Faith cannot be turned, as Louis Berkhof pointed out, into "a meritorious work of man, on the basis of which he is accepted in favor by God" (Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, p. 497.)

The Westminster Confession, in the chapter on "Justification," tells us that the justified are those to whom God had *imputed* "the obedience and satisfaction of Christ . . . they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness by faith, which faith they have not of themselves; it is the gift of God" (Acts 13:38–39; Eph. 2:8; Phil. 3:9).

Christ's atonement is an objective fact. We have nothing to do with it. God, by His sovereign grace, imparts knowledge of it to us, to our great joy. Faith is evidence of our justification and regeneration; it leads us to ever increasing trust in our Redeemer, but it is He, not our believing, that saves us.

Faith is the gift of God which enables us to walk in the confidence and power of His victory.

When faith is separated from the atonement, the doctrine of salvation is seriously warped. It becomes "easy believism" and a good work on man's part. A young man, self-appointed "soul-saver," stopped me once to summon me to repent of my learning and preach the "simple gospel" of faith. When I questioned what he meant by faith, he accused me of evil sophistry designed to confuse the "simple gospel." He was very ignorant of the Bible as a whole, of meaning of atonement and justification, and proud of it. With the "Rapture" due any day, he said that he could not afford to waste time on "the details" of the Bible.

Our faith and trust cannot be in faith but in Christ and His atonement. If we shift our emphasis from Him to our believing, we have warped the faith and weakened it dramatically.

When Hebrews 11 gives us the roll call of the great men and women of faith, it is not talking about easy, comfortable faith, but it chronicles the men who suffered for their faith. They did not look to their faith for their confidence, but to the Lord who had made them His people.

There are more ways of harming the church than by disbelief in the orthodox faith of the saints and the reformers. By neglecting the full-orbed stress of the Bible to ride our own pet subjects, we can sometimes do more damage than unbelievers.

Because of the extensive hostilities that Biblical faith encounters, too many limit their commitment. I learned over twenty years ago of a group of churches, all claiming to be evangelical, who had decided *against*

preaching on creationism, the virgin birth, and the miracles, and they concluded that they would not oppose abortion and homosexuality so that they could concentrate on John 3:16 and reach more people! Reach more people for what?

God gives power, not to the compromisers, but to those who, without fear or rancor, proclaim His undiluted gospel.

91

CATHOLICITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 66, September 1985

In the earliest forerunners of the Apostles' Creed, we find the confession, "I believe . . . in the holy church." In its final form, this became, "the holy catholic church." The word "catholic" comes from two Greek words, *kata*, concerning, and *holos*, whole, meaning universal. This catholicity, universality or all-inclusiveness of the Kingdom of God was declared by Paul in Galatians 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Status before the Lord does not depend upon status before men; salvation is for all peoples. The distinctions which remain are thus those required by God's law-word not those created by men.

This was the practice of the early church. An interesting example was Callistus, who became bishop of Rome in A.D. 220. Some years earlier, Callistus, then a pagan slave, had been imprisoned for theft. As pope, Callistus allowed the marriage of patrician girls to freedmen, something forbidden by Roman law. We do not know whether or not this contributed to Callistus's martyrdom. What we do know is that more than a few men of low estate, like Callistus, governed over Christians with an aristocratic status. What counted in the church was a person's status before the Lord rather than before men.

While the word "catholic" came into usage slowly, it did very early mark the life of the church. Catholicity means not only universal, but also universal jurisdiction. Because the head of the church is Jesus Christ, "who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15), the church is catholic or universal because our king has universal jurisdiction.

It was this fact that made the declaration, "Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil. 2:9–11), the baptismal confession of the early church.

We must not forget that Rome, the empire, saw herself as "eternal Rome" and thus as universal Rome. Its required confession of allegiance was, "Caesar is Lord," and the obvious implication was that Caesar was the catholic or universal lord.

The result was conflict. Two powers, Caesar and his empire, and Christ and His church, both claimed catholicity. Rome fought Christianity as she did no other religion. Herbert B. Workman, in *Persecution in the Early Church* (1906), stated the issue: "The Christians were not persecuted because of their creed, but because of their universal claims." Their offense was "this universality of claim, this aggressiveness of temper, this consciousness from the first of worldwide dominion — in a word, all that in later days was summed up in the title of Catholic."

It is a sad fact that for many who call themselves "Catholics," the word is a name, not a fact, and that for many Protestants the word is something they are against, not something that describes the church, something saints died for.

When Callistus, in violation of Roman law, said that freed slaves could marry noble women, it was a radical step. Rome had all kinds of legal lines of separation. There was no equal standing before the law. A Roman citizen was a privileged person, a member of the ruling class.

In the third century, however, by an edict of Caracalla, all free inhabitants of the Roman Empire were given the status of citizens. At the same time, efforts were soon made to compel all inhabitants to observe the old Roman religion as the one universal or catholic faith. They could hold their personal religion on a local, private basis; the public faith had to be that of Rome, the imperial cult. This was the required and "catholic" faith. The result was more Christian martyrs.

The catholicity of the church had been an offense to Rome, and as a result the Roman Empire developed, reasserted, and increased its own claim to catholicity. Catholic Rome and Catholic Church battled for supremacy and universality.

All this is very important for us to know. If we forget their meaning, forgotten past victories become present defeats. Because Rome insisted that the empire alone was catholic or universal in its jurisdiction, all religions had to be local, limited, and personal, not public and catholic. All other religions were agreeable to such a place; Christianity alone insisted on the universal jurisdiction of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and the church as Christ's catholic voice on earth.

Today we face a similar battle. The modern state sees itself as catholic, i.e., universal. Within its borders it asserts total power and jurisdiction. It sees freedom in any sphere as a state grant, not as a God-given immunity.

As a result, the state, its legislatures, and its courts increasingly seek to extend the powers of the state as the logic of catholicity.

To this, all too many churchmen have agreed. We have the immoral horror of many church leaders who claim to believe the Bible from cover to cover insisting they cannot take a stand against abortion or homosexuality, for example, because it would be the "social gospel" to do so. For them, Christianity's only concern is saving souls. This would reduce Christianity to the status of Rome's mystery religions, i.e., to paganism and to a denial of Christ's catholicity of power and jurisdiction.

Antinomianism, too, is a denial of catholicity. God's law is His plan of government for every sphere of life. It is the expression of God's dominion as creator and lord or sovereign, and it is His plan for covenant man to exercise dominion. To live under a foreign law is to be a slave, however comfortable the slavery. The laws of the nations are today humanistic laws. They are motivated by an anti-Christian faith and purpose. The society they envision and educate for is one aiming to destroy Christianity totally. Antinomianism surrenders Christ's lordship or sovereignty to the state and is the expression of a people who are in captivity and love it.

We must remember that it was the best Roman emperors who were usually the worst persecutors. As Workman pointed out, the more faithfully Roman they were, the more zealously they persecuted the church to preserve Rome's exclusive and total jurisdiction. Today also, a "good" humanist civil ruler is often a major problem to the church, because the rigors of statist claims over the church increase. Thus, to vote for a "good" humanist can mean voting in a man more dedicated than most to the idea of a catholic state.

When the word "catholic" was first used by the early church, it was to designate the church as Christ's body, open to all mankind, in order to distinguish the church from the Jewish congregations. Both originally called themselves synagogues, or assemblies. The Christian synagogue was the one summoning all mankind to Christ without the necessity of becoming Jews first.

One of the earliest uses of the word is by St. Ignatius, in "The Epistle to the Smyrnaeans," chapter 8, who said, "wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the catholic church." The word "catholic" was also used by Polycarp, according to Eusebius's *Church History*, volume 4, chapter 15.

In its earliest usage, the word "catholic" meant, *first*, more than Jewish; many churchmen were Jews, but the church was inclusive of all peoples. *Second*, as problems developed in the church, the word early came to mean "orthodox" as against "heretical." The catholic faith, while still

persecuted, had to defend itself against a variety of false and anti-Christian doctrines which had been brought in by various peoples. Both these meanings were accurate: the true church was more than Jewish, and it was orthodox, not heretical. These were, however, subordinate meanings. Catholic means universality of scope and of jurisdiction.

To proclaim the catholic faith thus meant and means to set forth "the crown rights of Christ the King" over every area of life and thought. Indeed, "The Crown Rights of Christ the King" was a Puritan battle cry in Cromwell's day. One of the texts most used to set forth the church's catholicity has been Hebrews 12:22–24: "But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

This tells us, *first*, that the covenant has been renewed; in Jesus Christ we are again at Mount Zion, and there the old covenant is made with a new people, now God's new Israel and chosen ones. *Second*, this realm is also "the city of the living God." "City" here means kingdom or realm, as the City of Rome. St. Augustine, in writing on *The City of God* in this sense, meant the Kingdom of God. *Third*, this realm is also "the heavenly Jerusalem," so that it is more than natural. It is a supernatural Kingdom which is inclusive of all God's creation, natural and supernatural.

Fourth, this supernatural aspect and power of Christ's catholic or universal jurisdiction includes "an innumerable company of angels" who are, with us, fellow subjects and citizens of Christ's Kingdom.

Fifth, this Kingdom has the church as part of its jurisdiction, "the general assembly and church of the firstborn." Christ is the firstborn, and, as members of His body, we are in union with the great company of heavenly powers that are part of His realm.

Sixth, these are all, ourselves included, "written in heaven," because our membership in Christ is not our doing but God's grace through Jesus Christ.

Seventh, because this catholic realm is total in its jurisdiction over all things in heaven and earth, God is "the Judge of all." All things and all peoples are accountable to Him because God's power and jurisdiction are catholic and total.

Eighth, this Kingdom includes "the spirits of just men made perfect," i.e., those saints who have died and are now with their Lord.

Ninth, supremely, it includes our Savior and mediator, through whose

atoning blood we have been made members of this catholic or universal Kingdom or empire.

The modern state is a false messiah, a false savior. Its only legitimate place is under Christ, together with the church, family, school, our vocations, the arts and sciences, and all things else. The claims of the state to universal jurisdiction, to catholicity, are a lie. Do you believe and serve that lie, or is Christ your Lord?

92

THE HERESY OF DEMOCRACY WITH GOD

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 6, August 1979

A young woman, mother of a girl of six years, described conditions in the grade school (K–6) across from their church. One teacher is openly a lesbian. Some boys regularly drag screaming girls into the boys' toilets to expose themselves to the girls, and nothing is done about it. The leading church officer had an answer to her call for a Christian school: he did not believe in spiritual isolationism for Christians, and this is what Christian schools represent. Unusual? On the contrary, all too common an attitude.

In Chalcedon Position Paper No. 2,[1] I wrote on "Can We Tithe Our Children?" and I quoted Psalm 128:1, "Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways." This fell into the hands of a minister, who was apparently very upset by it. He *corrected* the Word of God, and wrote to declare, "I do not like the word feareth, rather *loveth* the Lord." Unusual? No, all too common.

A pastor, planning to speak on Biblical *authority*, had the word "authority" altered in the church bulletin by members to read "leadership." A prominent church publication spoke with ridicule and hatred of all who would believe in anything so "primitive" as Biblical law. Another pastor, planning to discipline a seriously sinning member, was attacked by his fellow pastors at a church meeting; somehow, it is unloving to deal with sin as God's Word requires it.

Is it necessary to give further examples? More pastors lose pulpits for their faithfulness to Scripture than for any other reason. Trifling excuses are found to make possible the dissolution of a pastoral relationship. Open sin is condoned, and simple faithfulness is despised. The telephone rings regularly to bring reports of fresh instances of churches in revolt against God and His Word. Gary North is right. Humanism's

1. See pp. 327–328. — editor

accomplices are in the church (*Christian Reconstruction*, 3.2).

Much of this stems from one of the great heresies of our day, the belief in democracy. At the beginning of the century, some churchmen began talking about the democracy of God, i.e., that God wants a universe where He and His creatures can work and plan together in a democratic way. Of course, if our relationship with God is a democratic one, we can correct the Bible where it displeases us, eliminate what we cannot correct, and use other standards and tests for the church and the clergy than God's enscriptured Word. Then, logically, our word is as good as God's word, and as authoritative as God's.

In his important study, *The Heresy of Democracy* (1955), Lord Percy of Newcastle declared of democracy that it is a "philosophy which is nothing less than a new religion" (p. 16). The justification for all things is not to be found in the triune God but in the people. Virtue means meeting people's needs, and the democratic state, church, and God have one function, to supply human wants. State, school, church, and God become chaplains to man, called upon to bow down before man's authority. In fact, Lord Percy said of state schools, "This is, indeed, democracy's characteristic Mark of the Beast... of all means of assimilation, the most essential to democracy is a uniform State-controlled education" (p. 13). To challenge that system is to shake democracy's structure, including its state and church. Earlier, Fichte saw statist education in messianic terms: "Progress is that perfection of education by which the Nation is made Man."

Within the church, the modernists first advocated the state as God's voice and instrument. Wellhausen, the German leader of the higher criticism of the Old Testament, declared: "We must acknowledge that the Nation is more certainly created by God than the Church, and that God works more powerfully in the history of nations than in Church history."

Behind all this is the question of authority: is it from God, or from man? If God is the sovereign authority over all things, then His law-word alone can govern all things. Religion, politics, economics, science, education, law, and all things else must be under God, or they are in revolt.

If the ultimate authority is man, then all things must serve man and bow down before man's authority. As T. Robert Ingram has so clearly pointed out in *What's Wrong with Human Rights* (1978), the doctrine of human rights is the humanistic replacement for Biblical law. Man now being regarded as sovereign, his rights have replaced God's law as the binding force and authority over man and his world.

The cultural effects of this change have been far-reaching. In a remarkably brilliant and telling study, Ann Douglas, in *The Feminization*

of American Culture (1977), has shown the effects of Unitarianism and religious liberalism on American culture. From a God-centered emphasis (not necessarily consistent or thorough in application), a man-centered focus emerged. The new justification of women became the cult of motherhood (a humanistic, man-centered focus), and for men and women alike, "doing good" for one's fellow men. With this new emphasis, men left the church, or regarded it as peripheral to their lives, and the liberal clergy developed the fundamentals of what we have today as soap-opera religion. In Ann Douglas's delightfully incisive wording, "It is hardly accidental that soap opera, an increasing specialty of nineteenth-century liberal Protestantism, is a phenomenon which we associate with the special needs of feminine subculture" (p. 48). Liberal religion feminized the clergy, made women and Christianity irrelevant to life, and created a spineless, gutless clergy for whom the faith is sentimental talk and not the power of God unto salvation. To quote Dr. Douglas again, "The liberal minister who abandoned theology lost his right to start from the 'facts' of the Bible as his predecessors understood them: that God made man, man sinned against him, and God had and has the right to assign any punishment he judges fit for the offenses" (p. 200).

This humanistic soap-opera religion conquered other areas of the church. Arminianism quickly adopted it, as did much of Calvinism, as their emphases shifted from God's sovereign act of salvation to man's ostensible choice, or man's experience, and from the centrality and authority of the Word, to an emotional, experientially governed "heart-religion."

In this humanist parody of Christianity, man's experience has priority over God's Word. One "Christian worker" told me that it was unwise for people to read the Bible without the guidance of a "real" experience of "Spirit-filled" heart religion. Of course, for him the Spirit freed him from the Word, a heretical opinion. One pastor, who announced a series of sermons on authority, i.e., the authority of God, of His Word, authority under God, etc., was told bluntly that he should preach on "fellowship" with God, not God's authority. When churchmen are hostile to God's authority, they are not Christians. Fellowship with God through Christ is on His terms and under His grace and authority. "If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth" (1 John 1:6).

A church which denies God's authority will be in no position to resist the state's authority. It will look to authorities other than the Lord's for its justification, and, in yielding to the state, it will do so in the spirit of cooperation, not compromise, because its true fellowship is with man and the state, not the Lord. Ambrose, in A.D. 385, resisted the state's

requisition of a church in Milan, declaring, "What belongs to God is outside the emperor's power." Ambrose said further, in his Sermon Against Auxentius, "We pay to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's. Tribute is due to Caesar, we do not deny it. The Church belongs to God, therefore it ought not to be assigned to Caesar. For the temple of God cannot be Caesar's by right." The emperor, he added, could be *in* the church by faith, but never *above* or over it.

Chrysostom, in dealing also with conflict with Caesar warned his people, In "Concerning the Statues," homily 3.19:

> This certainly I foretell and testify, that although this cloud should pass away, and we yet remain in the same condition of listlessness, we shall again have to suffer much heavier evils than those we are now dreading; for I do not so much fear the wrath of the Emperor, as your own listlessness.

Here Chrysostom put his finger on the heart of the matter: the threat was less the emperor and more a listless and indifferent church. The same problem confronts us today. The greater majority of church members do not feel that Christianity is worth fighting for, let alone dying for. They only want the freedom to be irrelevant, and to emit pious gush as a substitute for faithfulness and obedience. In soap-opera religion, life is without dominion; instead, it is a forever-abounding mess, met with a sensitive and bleeding heart. Soap-opera religion is the faith of the castrated, of the impotent, and the irrelevant. The devotees of soap-opera religion are full of impotent self-pity and rage over the human predicament, but are devoid of any constructive action; only destruction and negation become them.

The heresy of democracy leads to the triumph of sentimental religion. Dr. Douglas defines sentimentalism thus: "Sentimentalism is a cluster of ostensibly private feelings which always attains public and conspicuous expression" (p. 307). The focus in sentimental religion shifts from God's Word to man's feelings, and from basic doctrine to psychology and human needs. The doctrine of the sovereignty of man means the sovereignty of the total man, and all his feelings. We have a generation now whose concern is themselves, whose self-love blots out reality and truth.

So great is this self-absorption that, in any office, faculty, church group, or other fellowship, there are commonly persons who give their momentous personal communiques on purely private matters: "I didn't sleep well last night . . . I'm so tired today . . . Nothing I eat agrees with me lately, and I'm always gassy . . . I saw that film and used oodles of Kleenex . . . The color green always upsets me . . . I can't bear to have children around . . ." and so on and on. Purely private feelings are announced as though the world should react, be concerned, and be governed by them.

Even worse, God is approached with a similar endless gush of private feelings, as though God should be concerned and upset when an egomaniac is distressed. Few people pray, asking, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). Rather, they pray with a list of demands on God, for Him to supply. Now, Paul declares that God will supply all our needs "according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19), but that promise is preceded by an epistle which speaks at length of God's requirements of us, and also calls for contentment on our part with our God-decreed lot (Phil. 4:11).

Basic also to the heresy of democracy in the church is its belief, not only in man's needs as against God's requirements, but its belief in the irrelevance of God's law. If man is sovereign, God's law cannot bind man, and both hell and justice fade away. God then is allowed only one approach to man, love. He is portrayed as needing, yearning for, and calling for man's love. Man is in the driver's seat, to accept or reject that plea.

Lord Percy stated it succinctly: "A mere breaker of law . . . may always be saved; but there is no salvation for the deniers of law" (p. 108). They have denied God's sovereignty and His power to save. Their only logical relationship to God, then, is not by salvation but by man-ordained fellowship. Then, too, what man has ordained, man can destroy, so there is no efficacious salvation, and no perseverance of the saints.

This brings us to the conclusion of sovereign man. On both sides of the "iron curtain," politicians trumpet the claim that theirs is *the free world*. "The free world" is a curious and popular term in the twentieth century, so commonly used that its meaning is hardly considered. What is the free world free from? *First* of all, it means freedom from the other side. The enemy represents bondage, "our side," freedom, although all the while freedom decreases in the West, even as its relics grow fewer behind the Iron Curtain. The less free we become, the more we are told of the virtues of our freedom. But, *second*, the whole world is not free in its more basic sense, "free" from God. For the Marxists, religion, Biblical faith in particular, is the opium of the masses. For democratic thinkers like John Dewey and James Bryant Conant, Christianity and the family are antidemocratic and aristocratic and hence incompatible with democracy (see R. J. Rushdoony, *The Messianic Character of American Education*). The Death of God school of a few years ago did not say that God is dead in Himself, but that God is dead for us, because, they declared, we find Him "nonhistorical" and irrelevant to our purposes in this world. Only that which meets man's needs and purposes is alive for man, and therefore man wants to be free from the sovereign God.

The man who did not believe in "spiritual isolationism," of which he

accused the Christian schools, was emphatic on one point: we must obey the powers that be, the state, because God ordains it. Peter's words, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29), brought little response from him. Obedience to many other things in Scripture, such as tithing, bring no similar strong demand for obedience, but all such are ready to call their compromise with Caesar a faithfulness to God.

But to *obey* in the Hebrew Scripture means essentially to hear the word of God, to believe it, and to act on it. Therefore W. A. Whitehouse said that the word obey has "the closest possible association with 'believe'" (A. Richardson, ed., *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, p. 160.)

Contrary to the humanistic, democratic mood in religious thought today, Christianity is an authoritative faith. It is held, throughout all Scripture, that all human authority is derived or conferred (or falsely claimed) and is always subject to the sovereign and absolute authority of God and is always subject to the terms of His law-word.

We have an age that wants, if it has anything to do with God, only His fellowship, on man's terms, and without His sovereignty and lordship. It dares to correct and amend God's Word; it refuses to hear Him but offers rather to love Him. (One Hollywood "Christian" leader of a few years back spoke of God as "a living doll.") It wants a universe in which man plays sovereign and creator, endeavoring to create a brave new world out of sinful man, or out of self-centered churchmen, and it produces a fair facsimile of hell. Such a world is begging for judgment, and then as now "judgment must begin at the house of God" (1 Pet. 4:17). As always, judgment precedes salvation.

93

THE WAY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 56, November 1984

If we begin our thinking with a false premise, we will work our way to a false conclusion, or, at best, a faulty one. A persistent problem which has plagued the church has been the influence of Greek philosophy. So many of the Greco-Roman converts were men of learning and ability, that their entrance into the church meant also the entrance of alien presuppositions. An important example of this was Origen (A.D. 186–254); Origen was apparently a most appealing figure as well as a scholar of note, but he brought into the church some strange opinions. With respect to Scripture, Origen held to the belief that Scripture's plain sense could not be accepted. No man of intelligence, he said, could believe, with respect to Genesis 1, that the first, second, and third days of creation were literal and normal days without the sun, moon, or stars. Also, he held it was "silly" to believe, in terms of Genesis 2, that God, like a farmer, "planted a paradise eastward in Eden." The Bible gave us, Origen believed, "figurative expressions which indicate certain mysteries through a semblance of history and not through actual events" (*On First Principles*, chap. 3).

For such men, the "truth" of the Bible was not in its material content but in the ideas or principles set forth in the "history" and behind the "history." For Greek philosophy, there were two kinds of being, matter and ideas; the wise men worked through the material husk to grasp the ideas or principles, the universals.

In the Eastern Church, this approach was very strong. St. Gregory of Nyssa (ca. A.D. 331–ca. 396), the younger brother of Basil the Great, wrote *The Life of Moses* in terms of this. The law of God through Moses was ignored as too materialistic. Now Gregory's premise was, "the law does not instruct us how to eat," because "Nature . . . is a sufficient

lawgiver with regard to these things." As a result, even the Passover was seen in terms of a hidden meaning. Gregory was a leader in the kind of interpretation still popular in some evangelical circles; the law was ignored, but hidden meanings were seen in the tabernacle colors and the colors of the priest's vestments. Gregory always sought "the hidden meaning" of the Bible's history, the spiritual truth behind the material dross. Like a good Greek, his trust was in "guiding reason." Even the Egyptian army in pursuit of Israel was reduced to "the various passions of the soul by which man is enslaved."

Gregory's *Life of Moses* tells us little about Moses or God's Word. It tells us much about a Greek view of the spiritual life. The Bible became an arcane book which philosophers alone could interpret. It was a book which revealed hidden meanings which only the elite minds could penetrate.

Western, Latin Christianity was less infected by such thinking and grew rapidly and vigorously. However, the revival of Greek thought affected the West in time. From 1100 to 1517, according to scholars, we see the emergence of lay spirituality in the West. Ideas previously limited to some monastic groups now became popular, and doctrine gave way to "spiritual religion." The new piety, according to Caroline Walker Bynum, in *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (University of California Press, 1982), now located the fundamental religious drama and battle not on the cross, but within man's self. Religious faith became experiential and revivalistic. Christ's propitiation was replaced by the individual's experiential approach to God. By the thirteenth century, some women were preaching, hearing confessions from nuns under them, and bestowing blessings, and some nuns claimed priestly powers. Experience gave authority, it was held, i.e., religious experiences. Gertrude of Helfta spoke to fellow nuns, in the late thirteenth century, of God as "She," saying that God is a mother. The spirituality of the day became feminized, and, Bynum says, it was held that "in the eucharist, God gives to the soul power over himself." In Gertrude's writings, Bynum noted, there is "no reference to a cosmic war between good and evil, little attention to the devil, and little sense of an ontological rift in the universe created by the fall and knit up in some way by the resurrection."

The medieval church was destroyed in part by spiritual religion, by a shift from Christ and His finished work to man and his spiritual experiences. The Bible had become a book for scholars and pietists, in which levels of hidden meaning were found.

The Reformation stressed the Bible in its historical and doctrinal meaning, and the results were explosive. However, all too soon, the

Greek influence was revived. In England, the Puritan power was quickly undermined by the Cambridge Platonists and their spiritual religion. The Anglican, William Gurnall, in *The Christian in Complete Armour*, saw life as a perpetual inner struggle and inner quest for experience. Gurnall lived and died in a critical period of history without ever making a stand for anything. He was irrelevant to his times, and thus to the faith.

What passes for Protestantism today very often has closer ties to Gregory of Nyssa than to the Reformers.

Of late, many fine persons speak eloquently of restoring "the principled approach" to education, the Bible, and politics. They are echoing Origen and Gregory of Nyssa. *Principles are abstractions.* They are ideas we see as "basic" to something and which we formulate, as though the goal of thinking is an abstraction. However well intentioned, this method is anti-Christian. The focus of Scripture is on Jesus Christ: He is not an abstraction nor a principle but God incarnate. Our focus cannot be principles or ideas, abstractions, but incarnation. Our calling is to incarnate God's law-word in all our being, our education, politics, family life, economics, arts and sciences, and all things else. "The principled approach" is a retreat, not an advance; it overlooks the incarnation instead of building on it. It returns to a Greek universalism instead of seeing the unity of the universal and the particular in Jesus Christ and the triune God.

History requires the incarnation, because history is God's handiwork. History moved to Christ's incarnation, now moves to our incarnating His law-word in our lives, and in all the world, and to His coming again.

Because God's history requires the incarnation and its mandate for us, when Christians turn aside from their task, others assume it. And for Christians, with the wealth of God's law-word and the power of the Holy Spirit, to go after the (purely spiritual) Greek fleshpots is insanity. The result has been antinomianism and irrelevance on the part of the Greeks in our pulpits.

Others have assumed the task of incarnational work. In 1835, David Friedrich Strauss published in Germany his work, *The Life of Jesus.* Its effect was revolutionary in more ways than one. Strauss divided the Jesus of history from the Christ of faith. The Jesus of history was a Palestinian peasant of whom we know little or nothing, except that He made such an impression on His time and place that all kinds of sayings, miracles, and events were attached to Him, and He was called divine, although the real Jesus was none of these things. Thus far, Strauss had no new statement of great importance. What was important was that Strauss gave expression to a Hegelian philosophy which he related to the idea of Christ. As Marilyn Chapin Massey, in *Christ Unmasked: The Meaning of The*

Life of Jesus in German Politics (1983), points out, European intellectuals for over a century had been affirming that Humanity should replace Christ as the true divinity. Strauss saw the Jesus of history as a primitive forerunner of this idea of the true Christ, the human species, so that "Humanity is the union of the two natures — God become man." This "God" was Hegel's Spirit in nature, working blindly to find expression in an evolving culture.

For Strauss, the Biblical history was not true, nor was it important. It is the ideas or principles behind that history which are true. Taken literally, Bible history is offensive because it is supernatural. If things happen in the Biblical manner, which Strauss did not believe, they could not be divine, because the truly divine is the truly natural, working in the evolving natural process.

For Strauss, in differing editions of his book, there were two possible incarnations of this evolving god. *First*, he could become identical with Humanity, with people as a whole, so that true democracy would express the voice of God. *Second*, this natural god could incarnate himself in an elite group of philosopher-kings who rule over lesser men. Both these forms of incarnationism are very much with us today.

Unhappily, some churchmen have nothing to offer a world in the grips of a savage war of evil against God but homilies on the colors of the tabernacle furnishings! Origen is alive and well in all too many pulpits. Origen is well known as a man who castrated himself to avoid lust; it did not work! Antinomians have cut themselves off from the power of God and think they have gained thereby.

Origen said, "who will dare to say that the Word of God is of no use and contributes in no way to salvation, but does no more than tell of events that happened in the past and have no relation to us?" Here was the key: everything had to have a "relation to us," i.e., to our spiritual experience! Now, the many chapters on the construction of the tabernacle (Exod. 25–40) deal with the past, but not our present situation or experience. For the sons of Origen, these chapters on the tabernacle must be spiritualized, and books have been written and many sermons preached on their esoteric meaning. But what does the Bible tell us in Exodus 25–40? It tells us that the living God, the God with whom we have to do, is so precise in His requirements that He permits no creative or innovative designing in His house. This should scare these addlepated "spiritual" leaders. The God who is so exacting and precise about His house will never permit innovative ethics, symbolic theology, or creative churchmanship. This is no God to trifle with by using our imagination to come up with new meanings.

David saw that he could not fight God's battle in Saul's armor, nor can we.

Gregory of Nyssa, in his account of Joshua and the spies, cites the bunch of grapes brought back by the spies and suspended on wood as typical of Christ on the cross, and His blood as the "saving drink for those who believe." Gregory excelled in this kind of imaginative symbolism, and he brought no small intellectual power to the task. But, while Gregory wrote, Rome was dying. Unlike Salvian, he was little aware of that fact. He wrote *The Life of Moses* in the early 390s, when Rome had not long to live. Not surprisingly, he wrote for monks who had withdrawn from the world. He believed in Aristotle's doctrine of virtue as the mean, not Scripture's view of virtue as faithful obedience to the law-word of God. His greatest debt was to Plato, with whom he sought truth in abstractions.

But Jesus Christ declares, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). Jesus Christ is a person, not an abstraction, a principle, or an idea, and He declares that truth is a person, Himself. We cannot seek after abstractions and be faithful to Christ. He alone is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

94

MASOCHISM AND ANTINOMIANISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 147, February 1992

A masochist is someone who invites punishment as a way of making self-atonement; an antinomian is one who rejects God's law. Both are common today and very prevalent in the churches.

I regularly receive letters from people who tell me that "true" Christianity means being saved so that you no longer need to worry about sinning. I have been told of churches which forbid the use of the Ten Commandments in their liturgies or order of worship. I regularly hear of cases where child molesters within a church are restored to their positions, and the young mothers of molested children are rebuked as hard-hearted and lacking in grace if they insist that the tears shed and the professed repentance of the guilty party are not enough, that they should be removed from office and reported to the police. This is antinomianism with a vengeance. It replaces works with words, despising our Lord's statement, "by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20), or, in His brother's James' words, "faith without works is dead" (James 2:26). One minister, who has no use for God's law, told a young, very viciously abused wife to overlook God's law and go back to her husband because all her problems would any day be ended by the Rapture!

No society can exist without law. Law is simply enacted morality and a branch of religion. The religion of any society is easily identified by two things, its laws and its education. In the United States, both are humanistic to the core. When the church renounces God's law, it is thereby giving assent to humanistic law and has joined Christ's enemies. As a result, the church is in retreat. The new members it adds are too often people seeking fire and life insurance, not the sovereign Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

It should not surprise us that an antinomian church has, as its doctrine of atonement, masochism, self-atonement. People feel a special holiness

exists in putting up with evil. To cite one example, a type of situation I have encountered a few times in the past decade: A godly woman discovers her husband is a homosexual. All are ready to say, "You poor thing," until she starts to do something about it. Then she is told that it is questionable whether having male lovers qualifies as adultery! She should "preserve" the marriage, even if her husband tells her to get lost. What about AIDS? Oh, the Lord will protect you, and so on and on. How pious these evil counselors are.

In one instance, a woman destroyed her children by continuing to live with her adulterous husband. They all left the faith in disgust. When the lovely wife began to age as she reached sixty, he left her for a mistress. A few years later, he was felled by a stroke, and the mistress dumped him at the wife's door. When his speech returned, the bedridden husband laughed at his wife's stupidity, swore at her pornographically, and was too foul-mouthed for visitors to come near. The man lived on a couple of years this way. The woman's church considered her "a saint." Is this Christianity, or is it subsidizing evil?

Recent events make it clear that, while the Soviet Union is near monetary and economic collapse, its military force is stronger than ever, and nuclear submarines of the Soviet Union constantly ring all the waters of the United States They are in a position to issue ultimatums.

The response of some church people is that this gives us an opportunity for special holiness in God's sight, because, "If thine enemy hunger, give him bread to eat" (Prov. 25:21–22; Rom. 12:20). But this text has no relationship to foreign affairs. It has reference to personal relations with personal enemies; it has reference to overcoming personal enmities with good. It "heaps coals of fire" on their heads; it is, in its own way, a form of punishment which is good. It has no reference to armed ultimatums.

Our Lord's way, someone insisted to me recently, was always and only love! What about all His indictments of the Pharisees? What about His strong threats to the Seven Churches of Asia in Revelation 2 and 3? Is it any wonder that the church is weak and impotent, strong in numbers but lacking in faith?

The churches often trouble me more deeply than do the evil nations, ours and others. Evil is evil, whatever the color of its skin or the name of its nation. God has no more respect for a godless Europe and the godless America than for any other anti-God powers of the past. The future does not belong to any nation or race, but only to the triune God, and if we are not in and under His grace and law, we are only salt that has lost it savor, and "thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13). We are either God's city, set on a hill to

give light to the world, or we shall be shoveled under by the onslaught of God's judgment.

Too often, the church only sounds a message of retreat, and it occupies itself with its petty ways while a world harvest awaits.

The laws of Christendom have their origin, as H. J. Berman's *Law and Revolution* made clear, in the doctrine of the atonement. God's law defines sin, and sin must be atoned for; this atonement required the sacrificial death of God the Son in His incarnation. This tells us how seriously God takes His law and how great His grace is. This means now that we must regard that law as our way of life, our means of sanctification. We do not sin to make grace abound (Rom. 6:1), but as we obey, grace abounds to us.

The future comes from the hand of God. No faithless, antinomian church has any place in that future. Antinomianism undermines the doctrine of the atonement, and it promotes masochism as holiness. Holiness does not mean making ourselves doormats to evil but being faithful to the Lord God and His law-word. Again and again, God, as He gives His law, declares, "Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy" (Lev. 19:2; also 11:44; cf. 1 Pet. 1:15–16). Holiness must be our way of life, and it does not mean surrendering to evil.

In fact, in 1 Corinthians 15:53–54, when St. Paul speaks of "putting on" incorruption and immortality, the Greek word is a form of *enduo*, which means, as James Moffatt rightly rendered it, *invested*. It has reference to royal investiture, to victory, and to the final conquest of all things and our investiture into God's eternal purpose for us. It is a mark of accession and victory.

In our Lord's parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14–30), our Lord condemns to hell the man who saw his duty as merely a holding operation for the Lord. He calls this man wicked and unfaithful. A no-loss, no-gain operation is anathema to Him. We are called to be more than conquerors in Christ (Rom. 8:37), and He had in mind the Roman conquerors. We are to turn this world into Christ's realm, and we dare not be trumpets that only sound retreat.

The spirit of retreat must stop. What follows from our salvation is this: "If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:31–32).

We face worldwide economic collapse, already beginning, wars, overthrown statist orders, epidemics, bad weather, and more. This is a time of judgment, God's judgment. We either die, or we advance and conquer in Christ's name.

95

THE LUST FOR RESPECTABILITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 151, May 1992

One of the very important and revealing moments of our Lord's life occurred at the great feast of ingathering at the Temple. Because His teaching so clearly manifested Who He was, it created a sensation. The leaders, the chief priests and Pharisees, sent officers to arrest Jesus. The men returned empty-handed. These powers in Judea demanded, "Why have ye not brought him?" The officers answered, "Never man spake like this man." In disgust, the Pharisees said, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" (John 7:44–48).

What they were plainly saying was this: no men of prestige, no academicians, scholars, or intellectuals believe in this man. How can you be so foolish as to be swayed by Him?

I submit that you have to understand this episode to appreciate what is happening in the church. The lust for respectability has possessed all kinds of groups and persons. If our Lord were to reappear briefly, instead of casting out demons, He would have to cast out the insatiable lust for respectability in countless Christians and churches. I am regularly told by people that they do agree with us, *but* they cannot afford to be open about it because of the common belief that we are "outside the camp" of the modern saints and not respectable! Poor, pitiable men!

Both in and out of the church, this lust for respectability dominates our time. Of course, we are all familiar with its most common form, the *nouveau riche*, the newly rich, or the pretentious *parvenus*. They are also called social climbers. The sad fact is that very often these people are already equal to or better than those whom they are trying to emulate and into whose circles they are trying to move. Our so-called elite, both in and out of the church, are today usually the epitome of sterility and impotence. For anyone to see any advantage in moving into such circles is pathetic and very sad.

One area where it is very prevalent is in the academic community. There are actually church schools which not only seek state funds, but also state accreditation and teacher certification. There are Christian colleges and seminaries, virtually all, in fact, who boast of their accreditation. This is comparable to believing that Christ should never have begun His ministry without first being certified by the Sanhedrin!

Some will defend themselves by saying that we have set up our own accreditation agency, which they have, in the image of the enemy's committees! The whole thing is a façade for the lust for respectability.

It is worth noting that some famous universities, such as Harvard, are not accredited. Accreditation is a weapon used by the intellectual establishment to keep the opposition impotent.

I believe that respectability has become one of the great evils of our time. Seminary professors write, not for the Lord's congregation, but for the opposition, which pays no attention to their work. The monographs and articles by "reformed" and "evangelical" scholars are never used or considered by the modernists unless these men surrender their faith to become a part of the anti-Christian intellectual establishment. This is why the seminary scene is so pitiful a one. These seminaries, in more ways than one, look to the population for approval, *not to the Lord*.

But this lust for respectability is a death of power in the Lord. Over the centuries, and in many parts of the world today, Christians were and are imprisoned or executed for their faith, while here our churchmen are unwilling to lose respectability for Christ's sake! I believe our respectable churches and churchmen have become an abomination, a stench in God's nostrils.

Now, the word *respect* is a good word, potentially, as is *respectability*. The problem is the context. There is a difference in being respected by dedicated and self-sacrificing Christians, and being respected by a motorcycle gang, abortionists, or criminals.

St. Paul could say, as he stood before the high priest and the Sanhedrin, "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until (or, down to) this day" (Acts 23:1).

The lust for respectability is at war with conscience. Even if we want the approval of "nice" people, we are saying that the opinion of "leading" people weighs more heavily with us than does the standing we have before God and His opinion of our goals. Remember what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 13:7: "Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates." (The Berkeley Version rendered this verse, "But we make supplication to God that ye may practice no wrong; and

our purpose is not that our integrity shall be shown, but that ye may behave well, even though we be classed as counterfeits.") Think that one over. False churchmen in the New Testament era prized respectability above faithfulness and virtue, and they actually viewed St. Paul as a reprobate or a counterfeit! So much for the respectable Christians of that day. What would they do to him now?

Respectability can at times lead to strange places. George Orwell wrote in 1943 that to be a man who loved his country made him low class, whereas the intellectuals would have praised him and elevated him if he wrote, "a shelf of books in praise of sodomy" (Stephen Lutman, "Orwell's Patriotism," in Walter Laqueur and George L. Mosse, eds., *Literature and Politics in the Twentieth Century* [1967], pp. 150–151).

The arts have replaced Christianity in the modern era as the source of inspiration. Amoralism has replaced morality. In terms of our world today, respectability in intellectual circles goes hand in hand with a contempt for Christianity, and in church circles, with an emphasis on minimal Christianity. The false gospel of the churches holds that a simple, "I believe in Jesus," can cover all our sins, and give us freedom to indulge in our lust for respectability. But Christ's atonement alone covers our sins, and our only valid response to His atoning death and our salvation is to be totally and unreservedly faithful to Him, and to obey His law-word. Having given us everything, He will not accept cheap words from us. It is said that hell is paved with good intentions; no doubt it is also full of respectable people!

96

THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 159, January 1993

The doctrine of grace is so basic to the whole Bible that failure to understand (and practice) its meaning warps the whole life of Christianity. The meaning of grace in the Old Testament is that it is "God's favour . . . entirely free and wholly undeserved, and that there is no obligation of any kind that God should be favourable to his people." The doctrine is covenantal, and "the establishment of the covenant itself was due in the first place to God's favour, undeserved and unconditioned" (Alan Richardson, *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, p. 101ff.).

In the New Testament, the Greek word translated into English as grace is *charis*, and this word *charis* is the root of our English word charity. This tells us at once what grace means: it is God's act of charity to us, in and through Jesus Christ and His atonement. Grace is God's sovereign and free act, His charitable act, and man therefore contributes nothing to his salvation. As Otto Scott has observed, "God doesn't need the church to save men." That God uses the church is also His act of grace, and a church which arrogates undue powers to itself forfeits God's grace and mercy.

Once we recognize that our salvation, God's grace, is His act of charity to us, we begin to understand what a life of grace, and in a state of grace, means. It is a life of charity, of sharing our gifts and blessings with others. When our Lord sent out His disciples to preach and to be a healing and giving ministry, He said, "freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8).

At times, the medieval church understood this clearly. So, too, did John Calvin, St. Charles Borromeo, and many more since, such as Thomas Chalmers. The redeemed, those who have received God's charity, pass on the grace given to them in all forms of charity to others. These acts

of charity begin with the gospel, and they continue with every kind of effort to minister to the whole life of man. This is why schools, hospitals, homes for the aged and homeless, orphanages, homes for unwed mothers, rescue missions, study centers, and much more, are all parts of the Christian ministry. "Freely ye have received, freely give." Giving to all these ministries is an aspect of the life of grace. Having received God's charity to the fullest measure, we also give in full measure. We may know about grace and do nothing. When we have received it, we act.

This tells us why ours is a graceless age. Charity today is an act of state, its central business, in fact. What the state gives, however, is not truly charity but an instrument of power. From the days of imperial Rome to the present, "charity" or welfarism has been a key means of increasing taxation and controlling the people. It has also been a very effective instrument in undermining the church and Christian charity. The state, not the church, is now the patron of the arts, and not surprisingly, the arts have become largely anti-Christian. The state has seized the areas of grace, of charity, and it now controls them. Not surprisingly, although from 1969 to 1989 the number of Bible-believing Christians in the United States (aged eighteen and over) increased from forty million to ninety-one million, their effectiveness declined, while statism prospered. If the evangelical churches had gained as much grace as they gained numbers, the situation would be radically different. Grace like a fire grows and grows.

Too often today, church people find charitable activities disruptive of their lives; they find that such work puts them into contact with harsh realities when they want comfortable tasks that give them a glow of self-satisfied well being. We all prefer to be comfortable sinners rather than hard-working and disturbed saints, but the Lord God will not long endure our love of creaturely comforts over the duties of grace receivers. "Freely ye have received, freely give."

If the church people of the United States did no more than tithe, and give a tithe of a tithe of their time to the ministries of grace, it would not take long to eliminate statism, socialism, and a variety of problems facing our society.

Why do the churches and their members fail to respond? The problem is that people want salvation more than grace, as though the two could be separated. For them, salvation means escaping hell and gaining heaven. It means saying "yes" to Jesus, as though the initiative were in man's hands. Grace means that we, who deserve nothing from the hand of God, receive His charity, our salvation, and that grace in us cannot rest but must reach out to others in one way or another. Grace provides the God-ordained dynamics of history. It comes to us from heaven, and it courses through

us into the world. (It does not miss our pocketbook!) "Freely ye have received, freely give."

Grace is a supernatural fact: it is God's mercy in us, and it grows in its momentum when it is manifested in our daily lives. God's charity is not a static thing but a dynamic fact that radically alters all whom it touches. It gives men no humanistic peace nor comfort but rather compels them by God's Spirit to be more than men choose to be, their own captains and controllers. Grace in history creates changes like an overwhelming flood in that it sweeps away an old order to create a great new one. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). "Freely ye have received, freely give."

97

PRAGMATISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 161, March 1993

We will not be able to understand pragmatism if we see it simply as a school of philosophy whose main thinkers have been Charles S. Peirce, William James, and John Dewey. The roots of these thinkers include Nietzsche, whose philosophy insisted on the greater usefulness of the lie at times, and therefore its *validity*. For the pragmatists, truth is what works. It is instrumental and experimental. Instead of being subject to a test by God and His revealed word, "truth" for pragmatism is what works for man *and the state*. This means that you can lie when it is to your advantage. This also means that others can lie to you when it is helpful to them. Most important, the state is not bound to any absolute truth and can therefore lie to other nations and to its own people when this helps the state. The philosophical pragmatists have usually been, and Dewey most notably, hostile to Christianity because of its doctrine of the absoluteness of God and His revelation, because Christianity is held to be antidemocratic. If, as Carl Sandburg held, it is, *The People, Yes*, then its corollary is, "The Christian God, No." In pragmatism, the source of truth is not God but man and the state. Truth is what works for them.

This doctrine has quietly infiltrated the churches to the point that preaching and teaching have been radically altered over the past few generations. Preaching is less Biblical: no longer, as in the early church, in the better eras of the medieval church and the Reformation, does the pastor teach systematically through the various books of the Bible. He picks and chooses texts which are likely to be interesting to a "picky" congregation. As for theological and catechetical teaching, it is virtually gone.

What has replaced traditional preaching is pastoral counseling talks, texts chosen each week at random from the Bible because the congregation

wants "timely" and above all *interesting* subjects, and, supremely, sermons that will *please* the people.

The result has been the destruction of the church. The members are largely ignorant of the Bible and of doctrine. Catechisms are viewed as historical relics, and the *teaching* ministry is virtually gone.

At the same time, the church member's knowledge of the faith has undergone a revolution. It has largely ceased to be theological and God-centered and has become pragmatic and man-centered.

The doctrine of God is a good example of this. God is triune, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The attributes of God are divided into those that are incommunicable and those which are communicable. Among the incommunicable attributes of God are his aseity or self-existence (*autarkia*, *omnisufficientia*), His immutability or His unchangeable existence and essence, His infinity, and His unity.

The communicable attributes of God include His full self-consciousness, because God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5). Thus, we can know God truly although not exhaustively; to know Him exhaustively would mean having a mind equal to God's. Similarly, we can know the wisdom of God truly through His revelation, even though not exhaustively. The moral attributes of God are central in their communicable nature and are basic to the life of faith. God must be man's summum bonum, man's highest good, in that man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. God's holiness is also a communicable attribute: it is God's "absolute internal moral purity," in Cornelius Van Til's phrase, and man must therefore separate himself from sin to serve the Lord God with all his heart, mind, and being. God is all righteousness or justice, and man must grow in grace and manifest God's justice.

Much more can be said, but this is sufficient to indicate these aspects of God's being.

If men lose interest in God Himself, His incommunicable attributes, they soon lose interest in His communicable nature and attributes. Their interests, if pragmatic, are in what God can give to them, in "What's in it for me?"

Theology also speaks of the ontological Trinity, the ontological God, i.e., God in Himself, in His own being, and also the economical Trinity, God in His relationship to men, in His operation in creation. Interest in the ontological Trinity is minimal wherever pragmatism prevails because then men are interested in what God can provide for them, in "What's in it for me?"

For example, we can approach Jesus, then, simply as our Savior and as one through whom we pray and get things. I have on occasion been

rebuked by pious church members for trying to get them to see more in Jesus than a cosmic Santa Claus who exists to bail them out of their troubles. They are not interested in His office as King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tim. 6:15). They want a Jesus there to help them, not as a Lord whom they must serve. Likewise, they want the Holy Spirit to provide them with a warm glow, not to commission them in the King's service. This is pragmatism. It approaches the triune God as a resource for man to use, not as the absolute Lord of all creation *and* of all eternity, whom man *must* serve, not *use*.

To put it mildly, it does not please God to be used! Men who do so may believe they are devout because they are perpetually at God's throne with their demands, but they are in reality being insulting.

It is time for the church to wake up: God is God!

98

REVOLUTION, COUNTER-REVOLUTION, AND CHRISTIANITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 114, October 1989

On July 14, 1789, the French Revolution began with the storming of the Bastille. In the succeeding months and years, millions were killed to help establish the civil reign of "Reason." On July 14, 1989, many heads of state gathered in Paris to honor and celebrate that event. Only one, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of Great Britain, called attention to the murderous nature of the French Revolution and questioned the absurd idea that human rights and freedoms originated in it.

The French Revolution quickly developed into the Reign of Terror, as have all revolutions since then. It was morally and intellectually bankrupt, but men have continued to believe that men, nations, and history can only be regenerated by bloodletting, and murders continue.

The thesis of revolution is radically anti-Christian. Revolutionary man believes that the rise of Christianity was the fall of man, and that the true direction of history must be from Christ to Adam, from supernatural man to natural man. This means that Christianity is the greatest impediment humanity has ever had, and so the forces of revolution seek its obliteration. The greatest holocaust of all history, and of the twentieth century, has been and is the massacre of Christians. It occurs all over the world, and the media is in the main silent concerning it.

In 1989, the evil of revolutions was clearly underscored by the events in China, Russia, Poland, Bulgaria, and elsewhere in the realms of humanistic statism. None of this dimmed the determination to celebrate the French Revolution, and to extend the dominion of revolution.

But what about counterrevolution? Did it not finally succeed in Europe after Napoleon? It did indeed, and the successes of the counterrevolution revealed its bankruptcy. Its theorists were right: the old order, however

bad, was better; they worked for a restoration.

What they failed to recognize was that the old order was a decayed relic of Christendom. A Christian society could not be restored without a vital Christianity. Chateaubriand could say, "Religion is the source of liberty," but this intellectual awareness did not necessarily mean a living faith (Jacques Godechot, *The Counter-Revolution: Doctrine and Action, 1789–1804* [Princeton University Press, 1971], p. 135). To talk about "God and country" does not align God on your side, nor mean that you believe His every Word.

The failure of counterrevolution, put simply, was that it wanted the form of godliness but not the power thereof, the name of God but not God Himself. Men are not governed by echoes, however lovely their sound, and counterrevolution was an echo.

The greatest theorist of the counterrevolution was Edmund Burke. Burke was a good analyst of his times; he knew the strength of the old order; Burke saw the value of Christian premises, but reality to him was continuity, not Jesus Christ. As a result, Burke's work was essentially a failure.

Other men recognized the failure of the revolution, and of the counterrevolution. For them, Christianity was not an option. Civilization, as they saw it, needed a new foundation. In this, they agreed with the French Revolution. Two men who were deeply concerned over this issue were Ralph Waldo Emerson and Thomas Carlyle. Both had abandoned orthodox Christianity. Emerson, in "Historic Notes of Life and Letters in New England," wrote of the new generation of men "born with knives in their brains, a tendency to introversion, self-dissection, (and) anatomizing of motives." These men with knives in their brains put the knife to Christianity. Emerson and Carlyle had seen the removal of Christianity from the center of their own being. Even among conventional Christians, faith was less and less the dominant force in their lives. God's law was giving way to the state's law.

Emerson and Carlyle were not as radical as men like Karl Marx, Max Stirner, and Friedrich Nietzsche, although "Carlyle did love destruction for its own sake, the attraction was mainly esthetic" (Kenneth Marc Harris, *Carlyle and Emerson* [Harvard University Press, 1978], p. 116). As far as ideas were concerned, their premises were very radical. Man and history replaced God and Christ in their thinking (ibid., p. 117ff.). For Carlyle, the hero, and for Emerson, the power of man and his character replaced the power of God (Robert E. Spiller and Wallace E. Williams, eds., *The Early Lectures of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, vol. 3, 1838–1842 [Harvard University Press, 1972], pp. 243–244, 276–277, etc.).

As counterrevolution developed into conservatism, its premises, despite a sometimes pious façade, became as humanistic as those on the left. Both revolution and counterrevolution, right and left, had become humanistic and explicitly or implicitly anti-Christian. Because the churches are themselves all too often infused with humanism, they have been little disturbed by these developments.

National indignation should have been aroused when it became known that, during the Reagan presidency, homosexual prostitutes and their customers were at times given private, guided tours of the White House. One wealthy homosexual in particular had much power among Republicans (Gary Potter, "GOP Homosexuals: The Reason Why 'Social Agenda' Gets Nowhere?" *The Wanderer*, July 20, 1989, pp. 1, 8). John Lofton wrote in the *Washington Times* (July 31, 1989) about another prominent Republican who had raped and sodomized a teenaged intern, and in another case, was convicted but given a suspended prison term for a savage five-hour rape of a young woman. A prominent conservative publisher berated John Lofton for writing against a Republican! Apparently only Democratic rapes are bad.

The rot runs deep, not only in the body politic but in the churches. Too many churchmen are too busy warring against each other, or waiting for the Rapture (due in eighteen months, I was told today), and being generally irrelevant to know what is happening all around them.

For some years, I have been in many court trials as a witness for churches, Christian schools, home schools, families, and so on, who faced an attack for their faith and practice. I have seen a state attorney hold aloft a Bible and declare it a child-abuse manual. Several pastors were on trial for requiring the chastising of children in their schools or day-care facilities, although no parents had complained. This was in a southern Bible-belt state. No church members were in the courtroom to lend their moral support. (Neither pastors nor the lawyer have ever informed me of the outcome of the trial, a routine occurrence. So much for the calibre of our churches!)

Incidents like this are commonplace. The enemy is shooting at Christians, and the church is indifferent.

But now total war is under way, as Shelby Sharpe so telling reports it. The purpose is the obliteration of Christianity. If America's churches do not resist this attack, God will give them over to destruction and replace them with another people and other churches.

In 1 Peter 4:17 we read, "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"

What will happen to churches who are blind to what is taking place? And what can we say of a political order, which, faced with crisis upon crisis, plans to convert the country to Methanol-powered automobiles, using a particularly dangerous and poisonous fuel? There is a growing blindness all around us which is a prelude to God's judgment. There is a concern with irrelevant issues which is always the mark of irrelevant man.

We are at war, but the weapons of our war are not material but Biblical and spiritual ones, and our calling is to believe and obey the Lord, to bring people to Christ, to extend His dominion, and to establish the crown rights of our king in every area of life and thought.

99

CAPTURING GOD?

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 169, November 1993

A persistent problem in the history of Christianity has been the attempt to command or to capture God. It was, of course, basic to most forms of paganism that a continuity of being existed between man and creation on the one hand, and the gods or God on the other. They were held to be all one being. This means that there is an element of control or power to be found in the lowliest aspect of creation, since all share the same being. If my ankle is sprained, I limp: the whole man is affected. Mystics who posit a oneness of all being have held that God feels it and is hindered when we are hurt.

However, if God is absolute and uncreated Being, then all creation is His handiwork, not a part of Him. All things were *made* by Him (John 1:3), but they are not a part of Him.

But men want a hold on God; they want somehow to place God in their debt; they want to capture God in the web of mortality and to command Him.

The incarnation was used by such people to entangle man's life with God's and to place God in man's debt. The early church had more than a few heresies aimed at asserting, however indirectly, a continuity of being. The Council of Chalcedon, A.D. 451, guided by the Tome of Leo (pp. 440–461), rejected the attempts to capture God in the person of the God-man, Jesus Christ. The council said of Jesus Christ that He is "Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized IN TWO NATURES: WITHOUT CONFUSION, WITHOUT CHANGE, WITHOUT DIVISION, WITHOUT SEPARATION." The incarnation united the two natures, divine and human, but without confusion, in a *unique* incarnation. The human *cannot* become divine. Those who seek to deny this fact cite 2 Peter 1:4, which speaks of our becoming "partakers of the divine nature." The word "partakers"

translates *koinonoi*, a form of *koinonos*, meaning "communion." The usual translation of *koinonia* is communion. According to M. R. Vincent, the phrase is better rendered, "may become partakers," "conveying the idea of growth." In brief, the idea of deification is not in view; the concern is with sanctification and communion.

Great as was the achievement of Chalcedon, and the work of St. Leo, churchmen soon bypassed it to try to establish some kind of continuity of being between God and man. The idea of the great chain of being, uniting all creation to God in a vast unity of nature, was powerful at least through the eighteenth century.

Another approach became even more commonplace, the use of the church to establish divinity on the human order. More than one church called itself the continuation of the incarnation. It is held that the absolute second person of the Trinity became incarnate in the church, and the absolute was thus present in time and history. Protestant groups have insisted that the church is the Body of Christ, a definition which becomes radically false if it is not specified that it is Christ's humanity, not deity, that the church represents. Christ as the last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45ff.) creates and heads in His perfect humanity a new human race, a new humanity, to replace the fallen race of Adam and his seed. There can be no confusion of His humanity and His deity. We are redeemed to be a new humanity in Christ. We are a part of His church, the new human race. We are not deified, nor is His church, nor humanity.

Another indirect method at confusion is to distort the meaning of conversion. Instead of the externality of entrance into an incarnate church, there is the internality of an overstress on the conversion experience whereby man ostensibly gains a pipeline to God and His Spirit, which for some means a personal semi-incarnational power. We receive God's *grace*, not His deity. We receive God's Spirit as our teacher and guide, not to make us God's manifest presence and voice. An emphasis on internality separates men from authorities such as pastors and churches and seemingly gives them the power to make presumptuous ex cathedra pronouncements. Protestantism is riddled with such nonsense.

But the determining force in the world is not a continuing incarnation in the church, nor the divine witness through persons whose experiences are claimed to be of an incarnational kind. The world's determining force is the Holy Trinity and its absolute and eternal decree. The absolutism of God's purpose and decree governs all things. We are God's creatures; He made us to serve Him, to glorify and to enjoy Him forever. Ours are the duties, not the burdens and ruins of history. We cannot be God, but we can have communion with Him by His grace through Jesus Christ.

The goal is *koinonia*, communion, not deification. It means a growth in fellowship because we believe and obey the Lord. Man's sin (Gen. 3:5) broke the communion between God and man; Jesus Christ restores it. Our part is to grow in it.

The word *koinonia* is practical in its meaning. In Acts 2:42, it means *fellowship*, that is, the breaking or sharing of food. In 1 Corinthians 1:9 the word is again translated as *fellowship*, and also in 2 Corinthians 8:4; Galatians 2:9; Philippians 1:5; Philemon 6 and elsewhere. It refers to the community of believers, to the common life of the new humanity.

Schattenmann, in the *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, volume 1 (p. 644), summed up the meaning of the word thus: "*Koninonia* in 1 John 1:3, 6–7 does not refer to a mystical fusion with Christ and God, but to fellowship in faith. It is basic in the apostolic preaching of the historical Jesus which cleanses from all sin. It thus excludes the sectarian pride which denies the incarnation and misrepresents the power of sin."

Every emphasis on church or experience at the expense of the truth of *koinonia* leads to a devaluation of our Lord. Chalcedon summed it up definitively: only Jesus Christ unites in Himself, without confusion, humanity and deity. We are partakers (2) of God's grace, not His Being. The first is true Christianity; the second echoes paganism. We cannot command or capture God by church nor by experience. Attempts to do so have only driven us further away from Him!

100

THE POSSESSOR OF TRUTH

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 81, December 1986

The history of the Christian church is a very remarkable one. It tells us of men of faith who carried the gospel into all the world, transformed men who were savages and barbarians into men of God, and made the peoples of northern Europe, many of whom practiced human sacrifice, into cathedral builders and architects of civilization. Despite the attacks of its enemies, the great achievements of the church are obvious and clear.

This does not mean that the church has not been guilty of great wrongs, nor that all criticism is in error. The years ahead promise us, if present trends continue, a dramatic resurgence of Christian power and culture. If Christians as individuals and as churches are going to exert the right kind of influence, and initiate the right kind of action, they must learn from the past, and this means both recognizing our sins and errors, and also reestablishing our roots in the Word of God.

Our concern here is with one particular error, and with its implications. Before doing so, the connection between sin and error needs to be cited. Years ago, I heard about a man who bought his first automobile and, being a successful man, rejected the attempt of the seller to teach him a few things about its maintenance. His attitude was, when I need to have the car taken care of, I'll bring it back to you. He did, very soon, towed by horses, because of neglect by ignorance of a simple fact. He made a foolish error, because in his sin, he was too arrogant to bother learning a few simple facts. Sin warps our perspective, and the result is often error.

A great error of the churches over the centuries into the early years of the modern era had its roots in the doctrine of the church. The church is the body of Christ; it is a supernatural fact, created by God in Christ, and beginning its life in us with God's supernatural and regenerating grace.

Moreover, theologians have spoken of the church as militant and triumphant. The Church Triumphant is the church in heaven, the great assembly of the redeemed from the beginning of history until now. The Church Militant is the church in history, working to bring all things into Christ's realm and rule, to disciple all nations, and to teach them the totality of God's command word. The Church Militant cannot be severed from the Church Triumphant, but neither can it be identified with it.

The source of great error has been the belief that there can by definition be only one true church. In a very real sense, this is true. Outside of Christ, there is no salvation. Peter declares, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). This fact is basic to Christianity.

The problem arises when we predicate what is true of the church in Christ for the church as an institution in history, with sinful and fallible men as members and officers thereof. What is true of Christ is not true of us, and what the church is in eternity, it is not yet on earth.

The belief in "our" church as the one true church has marked East and West, Orthodox and Latin churches alike, Catholics and Protestants, as well as the Anabaptists. It has led to persecution, because if "our" church is the one true church, we cannot view with kindly eyes false churches.

Because of this belief, a gradual shift took place in church life. Earlier, men sought to formulate creeds, confessions, and theological treatises in order to correct error and further the truth. The answer to error was to deepen one's knowledge of the faith and to proclaim the truth as the corrective to error.

However, in time, as each group identified itself as the one true church, it followed that they saw themselves as the sole possessor of truth. Over the centuries, each has seen the "fallacies" in the positions of other churches while remaining confident in itself as Christ's one true body and voice.

In a very real sense, this identification had pagan roots. Paganism, like humanism today, absolutized the temporal, and this is idolatry. In terms of God's law, idolatry is a fearful offense. A particular church may be closer to the truth on certain particulars, i.e., a specific doctrine, a form of government, and some other facet of the life of the church, but no church this side of heaven can be defined as the one true church. When God says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exod. 20:3), He does not thereby ask us to judge the other churches but to clean up our own lives and to separate ourselves from every idolatry of church, nation, race, person, and so on.

From Old Testament times, however, the covenant people have looked

to themselves rather than to God in defining the true order. God through Amos (9:7) asked the people of Israel "Do you think you are more than the children of Ethiopia to me, O children of Israel?" Israel like the church stood only by God's truth.

Given this propensity to believe that one is the sole possessor of truth, it followed that each group felt that its control over a people made all the difference between eternal life and eternal damnation. According to Scripture, it is Christ, not the church, who makes the difference.

Absolutizing one's perspective, group, or powers is the constant problem of history. It is one of the marks of the apostate intelligentsia of the modern era. In the eighteenth century, the French philosophes believed in "the omnipotence of criticism." Our modern intellectuals use more modest language, but their beliefs are no different.

In the political sphere, men and nations are prone often to regard their nation as the bearer of civilization, so that the welfare of mankind depends on their survival and triumph. The Lord God did very well when the modern nations did not exist, and He will do better when they are gone!

Our Lord tells us, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). He did not say, "the church is the truth, and no man can go to the Father apart from the church."

When a church falls into idolatry and sees itself as the possessor of the truth, it shifts its ministry from the lordship of Christ to the lordship of the pastors, elders, bishops, deacons, or whatever its authorities may be. Such an idolatrous church then makes central to its dealings with its members not departures from Scripture, but disagreements with the idle and oppressive pontificating of the church's little caesars.

St. Paul, though inspired of God and personally called to the apostleship by the revelation of Jesus Christ, still wrote humbly, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ" (Phil. 3:12).

It is not we who are the truth of God, either as individuals, nor as churches. The triune God can never be contained and limited to an institution, however great.

Solomon dealt with this issue at the dedication of the Temple. The Temple had what no church has ever had, the tabernacling presence of God in the Holy of Holies. But Solomon said, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?" (1 Kings 8:27). If the Temple could not be viewed as the sole possessor of God and His

truth, how can any church make such a claim? The church becomes great by serving Christ, not by exalting itself.

To scale down the claims of the church is not to scale down the truth of God, His absolute claim on us, and the exclusive truth of His revelation. Rather, it is to recognize the servant role of churches and peoples.

We need to recognize that the more naturalistic and humanistic men and institutions are, the more they see themselves as the voice of truth. Having denied a truth over them, their only truth is, after Hegel, what is incarnated in history as the state and its elite rulers. The less Biblical we are, the more idolatrous we become. It should not surprise us that Marxism is radically idolatrous. Absolutizing the temporal is always idolatry wherever it appears.

Foolish churchmen have often seen themselves as the truth (and also as the wrath) of God. This is idolatry, and God will judge such men. Not the church, nor men, but Jesus Christ is the truth of God, and He alone is our Redeemer.

The Death Wish of Modern Man (December 1986)

At our staff breakfast recently, John Saunders commented on the fact that modern humanistic man has a death wish and is suicidal. The humanists are thus destroying themselves. Otto Scott added that in the process, they are surrendering the world to the Soviet Union, and us to slavery.

Proverbs 8:36 declares, "But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death." To understand our times, we must understand the importance of this verse. Life apart from the Lord is suicidal; it is a rejection of the conditions of life. Since all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made (John 1:3), all conditions of life are God-created. God's law is a condition of life.

It is useless to look to solutions which neglect this fact. A suicidal people will vote for death, not for solutions which lead to life. This does not mean that voting is not very important, but it does mean that the heart of the matter is that people who vote, act, and live suicidally have a very serious religious problem. "For whoso findeth me findeth life" (Prov. 8:35).

We have today an international drug problem; we have abortion, homosexuality, alcoholism, a high suicide rate, and more. We have a declining birth rate, an evidence of a loss of faith in a good future, and we have a zero-expectations generation. We have occultism, Satanism, and destructive forms of music.

With all these things, to expect hope in anything else than a return to a radical faithfulness to God is illusory. Man cannot live by bread alone, only by the every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4). The redeemed in Christ will hear and obey Him.

101

THE SOURCE OF LAW

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 198, March 1996

The Enlightenment saw itself as the source of light and liberation because it replaced the priority of religion and the church with the rule of reason and the state. The long night of superstition it held to be ended by the shift of civilization to a secular basis.

Before long, an emptiness set in. The English Enlightenment figures had seen many of their hopes realized after the Glorious Revolution of 1688, so with them disillusionment set in earlier than on the Continent. The leaders of thought tended to become very corpulent because for them little meaning remained other than physical satisfaction. Garth and Fenton, Edmund W. Gosse tells us in *Gray*, became fat and could not be persuaded to get out of bed. Swift, Thomson, and Gray were marked by physical and mental decay. The joy of life was waning for many.

In France, the Marquis de Sade pushed the logic of the Enlightenment to its bitter end. God had been displaced by nature and natural law. Sade held that, without God there could be no law nor morality. The *natural* sphere makes evil legitimate because murder, theft, rape, sodomy, incest, prostitution, bestiality, and all other offenses are natural. In a natural law order no law nor morality can exist because the natural is alien to them. Law and morality are alien because they represent a supernatural imposition on the natural. The universe for Sade has no God nor law, and no society can justify reasonably any law except Nature. And Nature leads us to do what Christianity falsely calls *sin*. For Sade, the worst mania was religion, Christianity in particular, not sexual mania. Christianity regards the natural as fallen, whereas for Sade the natural is normative.

Because for Sade there is no God, or, if He exists, He must be disobeyed and warred against, ultimacy for Sade resided in nature, which in origin was chaos. If chaos be ultimate, then the revitalizing force in

society is chaos. Christian revivalism recalls people to God and to Christ because the Creator and Maker of all things is the triune God. If, however, chaos is ultimate, then the true revival meeting is a sexual orgy, a Saturnalia, a massive tide of promiscuity and sexual "freedom." The acts proscribed by Christianity must be legalized, i.e., promiscuity, abortion, homosexuality, bestiality, necrophilia, and more. Sadean man sees Christianity and its moral order as stultifying, and its own sexual program as liberating.

Both positions are logical. If God be God, the living God, and the Bible is His infallible Word, then personal and social revivification require that God's law govern man and that man seek regeneration for his fallen and sinful estate through Christ and His atonement. Fallen man is held to be dead in his sins and trespasses and therefore incapable of self-renewal and self-salvation. Neither man nor society can then be renewed apart from Christ's atonement and regenerating grace.

This means that the doctrine of creation as an act and not a process, as something done by God's fiat word in six days, requires that man look to God and not to Nature. Nature does not exist per se, but is a collective noun applied to God's creation. Nature like man is fallen, and the whole order, instead of being normative, is in need of redemption. As one man has stated it, Nature does not lead to chastity; it is Christian faith that does. The consistent Christian thus cannot see either "Nature" or the fallen political realm of the state as capable of giving us valid law. Their direction is anti-God, and they express a hatred of God and His law.

To affirm the ultimacy of chaos in any fashion is to enthrone chaos in every sphere. We now have scientists who see chaos as the source of order! Their account of the universe of "multi-verse" holds that random conditions of order are a natural product of chaos. Their theory is an evasion of the fact of cosmic order.

Within the church, the infiltration of the Hegelian-Darwinian mythology has had devastating consequences. Too many churchmen have surrendered and either adopted the evolutionary myth or else compromised with ideas of theistic evolution and the like. All such thinking represents process philosophy. It means, above all, that God being at least compromised as the Creator and Maker of all things, is also not the lawgiver. What has priority also has determining power. If Nature is our source, then Nature gives us our law. But if chaos is our point of origin, then chaos is the determiner, and the state, in assuming the power to make law, holds that it is our bulwark against disintegration. The state, thus, is for modern man the source of order. The state, however, has a problem, because the modern state is not Christian, and it affirms in its state

schools the myth of evolution and therefore the priority of chaos. The modern state is to some degree implicitly anti-Christian, even where an establishment of the church exists. The state needs order, but, by its humanistic premises, must oppose Christianity and its insistence on God's order and law. The modern state has established evolution as its official faith, and it thereby encourages anti-law Sadean man. It is thus in the unhappy position of establishing disorder and lawlessness.

Meanwhile, the churches, by their compromise on the doctrine of creation, have made themselves irrelevant. They have become radically antinomian. Their antinomian thinking reduces God from His throne of rule to an advisory chair. Because God is no longer *stressed* as the absolute Creator of all things in heaven and earth, He is therefore not the predestinator nor the lawgiver but simply a kindly spiritual adviser. "Spiritual" Christianity does not want to think of God's power nor law. Its concerns are above mere mundane matters. It is more interested in getting out of this world than occupying it in Christ's name. Instead of working for dominion, it seeks sweet surrender to spiritual influences. It abandons Christianity for a faith comparable to the old Roman mystery religions.

The source of law is the sovereign power. If the sovereign power be nature, the state, man, or chaos, then the character of that power will dictate our way of life. The culture of our time does not see the sovereign power nor determination in God's hands, and therefore it does not serve God even when it professes to believe in Him.

It is interesting to note that interest continues in both Hitler and Stalin. The interest is not historical but psychological, an absorption in their evil use of power. Both were twentieth-century man, anti-Christian and with a vicious use of power. Donald Thomas, in *The Marquis de Sade* (1992), tells us that according to Restif de la Bretonne, "Danton read Sade to excite himself to new acts of cruelty during the Terror of 1793" (p. 11). Sade held egoism to be nature's primary law (p. 137), and the twentieth-century has agreed with Sade. Voltaire wanted to destroy Christianity but at the same time keep the common man faithful to its morality. Events proved Voltaire a fool and Sade the more logical of the two. But the greater folly is to be found among churchmen who believe that the world will retain some good law and morality while departing from Christ, as though all that is needed is faith to ice man's cake, a kind of *donum superaddition* to make even better man's "good" life. But man outside Christ is lost in his sins and trespasses, and he lives in the suburbs of hell. He is subject to sin and death and is without hope. Men must find their law where their salvation is to be found, in Jesus Christ and the Holy Trinity and His Word, the Bible.

102

INCORPORATION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 50, May 1984

One of history's most important doctrines is today widely subject to abuse, neglect, and attack. This is the concept of the corporation. In any truly strict definition of the term, no corporation existed outside of the Biblical revelation nor apart from Scripture's doctrine of a people created by God's covenant. Some Roman developments had a resemblance to the corporation but cannot be identified with it.

The word *corporation* tells us much. It is from the Latin, and is related to the term common in medieval faith, "*De corpore et sanguine Domini*," "the body and blood of the Lord." In its original sense, the corporation, which means a body which does not die with the death of its members, has reference to the body of Christ, His church. This corporation, Christ's body, has as its origin covenant Israel; the calling of twelve disciples to replace the twelve patriarchs of Israel had as its purpose to set forth the continuity of the corporate covenant community. The church is the new Israel of God; it used that term, "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16), to distinguish itself from the Israel of blood.

The church thus, as the original and true corporation, has an earthly as well as a supernatural life. It is here in history, but it is also "the heavenly Jerusalem"; it is "an innumerable company of angels," and the "general assembly and church of the firstborn" (Heb. 12:22–23). Paul says that Christians are "one body in Christ" (Rom. 12:5), i.e., a corporate entity in and of Him. We are all "baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12:12–20), wherein there are "many members, yet one body." The texts which stress this fact are too many to cite in so small a compass as this. The church saw itself from the beginning as a "corporation," a body whose life and continuity did not depend on the life of its members.

It is amazing that there is so little to be found on the significance to

society of the doctrine of the church as Christ's corporation. It is one of history's most revolutionary doctrines, and it has influenced many areas of life and thought. A key sphere of influence has been, for better or worse, the state. One of the problems of the non-Christian world was long the lack of any concept of continuity. The office or person of a king might be sacred, but rule was personal, i.e., noninstitutional. Subordinate rulers swore loyalty, not to a civil government, but to a man, a ruler. The death of that ruler dissolved the ties, and his successor had to regain loyalties through demonstrable power to compel it. The result was that civil authority was purely personal in most cases, and very erratic as a result. This was a problem Rome tried to solve, but not very successfully. With the rise of Christendom, this problem lingered. The Holy Roman Empire continued in the old pattern, and, as a result, alternated between great power and virtual nonexistence as an effective force.

Not surprisingly, the doctrine of the church as Christ's corporation began to influence society. It should be added that the church was not the only corporation set forth in Scripture: the family is another. When a man dies, the Bible tells us he is "gathered unto his people" or his fathers (Gen. 49:33), or, with some analogous term, stresses the family's corporate unity. Naboth's refusal to sell the vineyard to Ahab was due to this corporate fact: it was the property of his father before him (1 Kings 21:3), and of his descendents after him. This strong sense of the family as a corporate religious entity has been the reason for the survival of the Jews; with the rise of humanism, the Jewish family is now disintegrating. Within Christendom, many of the problems created by men in their false sense of dominion, and women with their feminist rights movements, have been due to a failure to recognize the corporate nature of the family in Biblical law. That corporate nature, and its relationship to the doctrine of the church, is very forcefully set forth in Ephesians 5:21–33.

Ernst H. Kantorowicz, in *The King's Two Bodies* (1957), set forth the statist use of this concept and its many perversions, in the medieval and early modern developments of the doctrine. The Crown became a corporation; hence, it could be said, when a king died, "The king is dead; long live the king," because the monarchy did not die with the death of one monarch. The state indeed went so far as to see itself as the mystical body of Christ and as the true and central Christian corporation. The consequences of this and other perversions are very much with us, and in well developed forms. The fact that, since Hegel, a pantheistic theology undergirds the doctrine of the state does not alter the fact that the modern state sees itself as the true church or kingdom under whom all things subsist. The state sees itself as god walking on earth and as the

great corporation of which all men are members.

The Bible tells us that there are two great bodies or corporations, with all other bodies as aspects of the one or the other. These two are the humanity, body, or corporation of the old or first Adam, and that of the new or last Adam, Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:45–50). The modern state sees itself as the supercorporation, embracing both. St. Augustine saw the two humanities as the Kingdom or City of God, in Christ, or the City of Man, in the fallen Adam. The state without Christ is in the City of Man and is no different in character than a band of robbers; it is an evil, criminal agency oppressing man. Augustine did not counsel revolt, because he knew that the key to change is regeneration in Christ, not revolution.

The influence of the concept or doctrine of incorporation or the corporation went beyond the state into the world of commerce. The business corporation echoes, whether or not it knows it, the Biblical doctrine of the church.

Two things may be said at this point. *First*, it goes without question that the doctrine of the corporation has, in humanistic hands, been greatly abused and misused. However, this should not lead us into overlooking a *second* fact, namely, that the concept of the corporation has given continuity to man's activities in one sphere after another. Medieval and modern institutions have a continuity and history unlike anything in the non-Christian world.

What the corporation doctrine has enabled men to do is to transcend the limitations of their time and life span. Men can create and develop a business, a school, or an agency whose functions live beyond themselves. This has been a very revolutionary and Biblical fact. The Bible tells us that man is earthbound, and, because of his sin, will return to earth, "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:19). However, this is not the whole story. We are also told, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13). That a man's works can survive him on earth is obvious; we are told that they follow him beyond the grave. Such a faith gives a great confidence in both time and eternity. Men can work knowing that their "labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

Granted that corporations are not necessarily good (nor necessarily bad), it still remains true that the concept of the corporation has been important in history by giving continuity to the works of men. Among other things, the original corporation, the church, has given a new meaning to time. Time is now time in terms of Christ, B.C., Before Christ, or A.D., Anno Domini, the year of our Lord, in Christ. Previously, time

was commonly dated in terms of the accession of the current ruler, i.e., in the first year of Mithradates, or the eighth year of Antiochus, and so on. There was no continuity, only an endless beginning and ending. Now all time is in Christ, and His body is the great corporation. That pattern gives continuity to all of life, so that human activities now have a life span beyond that of their founders. Moreover, all that the ungodly accumulate shall flow into God's Kingdom, so that its continuity will prosper His people (Isa. 54:3; 61:6, etc.). The continuity serves Christ, and us in Him.

The development of corporations in Western history has been very important. Many Christian corporations were established during the medieval era to carry on specific Biblical duties and to organize people for common action to meet a specific Christian need or function. Attempts at statist control were also common. In the reign of James I of England, that monarch held that corporations could only be created by the fiat of the state. This meant that neither a Christian calling nor vocation could create a corporation but only the Crown.

In the United States, virtually total freedom existed for generations for all kinds of corporations. The incorporation of a church or Christian agency of any kind was simply a legal formality notifying the state of the existence of such a body and its immunity from statist controls. In recent years, the statists have turned that notification into a form of licensure and control. The matter can be compared to filing a birth certificate. When the birth of Sarah Jones is recorded by her parents and doctor, permission for Sarah Jones to exist is definitely not requested; rather, a fact is legally recorded. Similarly, in American law, religious trusts, foundations, or trusts did not apply for the right to exist but recorded their certificate of birth, their incorporation. The current Internal Revenue Service doctrine is that the filing is a petition for the right to exist. This turns the historic position, and the First Amendment, upside down. It asserts for the federal government the "right" to establish religion and to control the exercise thereof. As a result, a major conflict of church and state is under way.

At the same time, many abuses of the concept of a church corporation prevail. Some organizations sell "ordinations" as pastors and priests to enable men in the evasion of income taxes. This kind of abuse does not invalidate the integrity of a true church, nor is it a legitimate reason for the entrance of the state into the life of valid churches.

Then too, because of the intrusion of the federal and state governments into the sphere of church incorporation, some are advocating disincorporation by churches. Given the vulnerability of the church as an

incorporated legal entity to statist controls, we should not forget the total vulnerability with disincorporation. In some court cases, the results are proving to be especially disastrous. If our weapons against an enemy prove to be somewhat defective, does it make sense to throw away those weapons and to disarm ourselves?

Not only should the church fight for the freedom of incorporated existence, but Christians need to establish a wide variety of Christian foundations to meet their wide-flung responsibilities in Christ. Educational foundations to further the promotion of Biblical faith and knowledge are needed. Christian charitable trusts to minister to the needs of the poor, prisoners, the sick, delinquents, and more are urgently needed. Hospitals are a product of Christian corporate activity to minister to human need; they were once all Christian. There is a need to reclaim this ministry which, in humanistic hands, has become increasingly a problem.

Christian corporations or foundations were once the ministries in the spheres of health, education, and welfare, and there is a growing return to responsibilities in these areas. These agencies use God's tax, the tithe, to exercise government in key spheres of life in the name of Christ. They are outside the sphere of statist taxation and control, because they are areas of Christ's Kingdom and government.

We have a weak doctrine of corporation today because we have a weak doctrine of the body of our Lord, and of communion. If we limit the doctrine of corporation to the institutional church, we limit the scope of Christ's work in the world. To incorporate means to give body to something; we need to incorporate our faith into the total context of our world and to minister and govern in our various spheres in Christ's name and power.

THEOLOGY & DOCTRINE

103

BOX THEOLOGY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 39, April 1983

In the presidential address to the Economic History Association September 12, 1980, Richard A. Easterlin commented on the fact that the modern era began with the rejection of the medieval church (and, one can add, Christianity), and "humanity ultimately took up a new 'religion of knowledge,' whose churches are the schools and universities of the world, whose priests are its teachers, and whose creed is belief in science and the power of rational inquiry, and in the ultimate capacity of humanity to shape its own destiny" (*Journal of Economic History*, vol. 41, no. 1 [March 1981], p. 17). We can add that the great agency of this new religion is the modern humanistic state. If a religion is not catholic, universal in its faith, jurisdiction, and scope, it will quickly fail. Religion by its very nature either speaks to all of life, or it in time speaks to none. Man by his nature has boundaries to his life and activities; they are inescapable for man. There are boundaries to my property, my abilities, and my authority. By definition, no god nor religion can have boundaries and limitations to its sway without self-destruction. A god is either sovereign and total in his jurisdiction, or else he is soon no god at all; something else bests him and replaces him. All the false gods of history until recently were false gods because the men who made them also placed limits upon them. This was especially clear with the gods of Rome; they were created by men, the Roman Senate specifically, and hence men always had priority over the gods. The gods in time became more and more obviously tools and a department of state for the Roman Empire, which claimed catholic or universal sway and sovereignty for itself.

In the modern world, the humanistic state claims this sovereignty: it is the modern god walking upon earth. The modern state claims sovereignty and catholicity; the United Nations is the attempt of humanistic

statism to attain true and full universality and catholicity.

Meanwhile, the Christian church is busily departing from the doctrine of God's sovereignty and His necessary catholic jurisdiction. Christianity is increasingly limited to a "spiritual" realm (of which it now concedes vast areas to psychology and psychiatry), and the rest of the world is granted to the state.

The result is *box theology*. To understand what box theology is, let us compare the universe to the Empire State Building, a great, modern, skyscraper office building. In box theology, the church claims one small office among hundreds for Christianity. All the rest of the building is given over to the jurisdiction of the state and the sciences. One area after another is deemed nonreligious and is surrendered. This is done despite the fact that God is the Creator and Lord of the whole universe and therefore has total and absolute jurisdiction over all things. God's law-word, jurisdiction, and authority must govern all things. "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3).

The jurisdiction of the *church* is a limited one, but the jurisdiction of the triune God, of Christ our King, and of the Bible, God's law-word, cannot be limited. Every area of life and thought must be under the dominion of the Lord: He alone is truly sovereign. To limit the jurisdiction of Christ is to posit a limited god, one who cannot survive because a limited god is a contradiction and is no god at all. If God is God, if He truly is the Lord or Sovereign, everything must serve Him and be under His dominion, the state, schools, arts, sciences, the church, and all things else. To limit the jurisdiction of the God of Scripture to the soul of man and to the church is to deny Him. A limited god cannot save man, because he is not in control of all things; what he does today can be undone tomorrow, and his "salvation" is at best temporary.

Box theology limits the church, moreover, and destroys it. If the church and its word is limited, to return to our image, to one room and none other in the Empire State Building, then its only legitimate area of concern is the church, and, to a degree, the soul of man. There can then be no dealing with the problems of the age, because they lie outside the jurisdiction of the church.

The results are both deplorable and revolting. The "world" of the church is then no larger than the church; it is boxed into its narrow little room. All its battles then are waged within that "world," the church. This means that the world of the church in box theology becomes a realm of continual civil war, Protestants and Catholics against one another, Arminians and Calvinists in opposition to one another, and so on. This does not mean that the issues between these groups are inconsequential.

It does mean that subordinate issues are made the only ones. The crown rights of Christ our King over the whole world are then neglected or forgotten. The necessity of bringing politics, economics, the arts and sciences, education, the family, all peoples, tongues, tribes, and nations under the dominion of Christ the Lord is truncated or short-circuited.

Box theology believes it is strict because it is narrow in its scope, whereas a true strictness claims all things for Christ the King. This false strictness leads to Phariseeism and to censoriousness. (One such pathetic little group of box theology advocates rails at all other Christians in issue after issue. One recent publication actually declared that John Whitehead "scorns the cross" because he disagrees with their view, and held that I believe in the Inquisition, arriving at this by a wild misreading of one of my books! These are the pathetic dead, revelling in their narrow coffin box.)

Box theology men battle against their fellow Christians continually, while the world claims more and more of Christ's realm. Because box theology allows the state to be sovereign or lord, it offers no resistance to statist controls. As a result, in state after state, where attempts to control the church are in process, many advocates of box theology insist on surrender to the state and sometimes go to court to witness for the state against the resisting churches.

Box theology is implicit polytheism. It says in effect that there is one God over the church, but other gods over every other realm, or else, that all realms other than the church are neutral realms. These "neutral" realms are not under the mandate of Scripture but are free to follow the dictates of natural (fallen) reason wherever it leads them.

This idea of neutrality is, of course, a myth. If the God of Scripture is the true and living God, there can be no realm of neutral facts and neutral jurisdiction. All things are under God's sovereignty and law, and nothing can exist apart from Him, nor can any law be valid other than His law. To claim neutrality for any realm is to deny that God created it, and to posit neutrality is to cease to be a Christian.

Because God is God, His jurisdiction is total, and His sovereignty absolute and indivisible. No human institution, neither church nor state, can claim any jurisdiction beyond its limited sphere. Thus, while the church has a limited sphere of authority under God, the word it must proclaim is the word of the total God for the totality of life and thought. The word proclaimed by the church cannot be limited to the church, because, if it is Scripture, it is not the word of the church, but the word of God. The word judges all things, governs all things, and offers hope in Christ to all men and all areas of life.

Box theology is dead theology, with a god too small to speak to anything more than the church. In its own way, box theology proclaims the death of God, because a limited God ceases to be God. The forces of humanistic statism have advanced only through default. Churchmen have retreated from and abandoned one area after another to the humanists, and many continue to retreat. Sigmund Freud saw the inner world of man as the last domain of Biblical religion; all other spheres had been captured.

By converting psychology (the word concerning the soul) from a theological to a scientific discipline, and guilt from a theological fact to a scientific concern, Freud hoped to make religion totally irrelevant (see R. J. Rushdoony, *Freud*). Even more than Freud, the pietists have been remarkable in their enforced limitations upon Biblical faith.

Ironically, the bankruptcy of humanism has increased as its sway and power have been broadened. When the Enlightenment triumphed over the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, it brought into sharp focus a development which had previously marked the Renaissance era, the rift between classes. There had previously been very serious problems between the rich and the poor, but the fact of a common faith and a common life in the church had provided a bond and a basis for community, a hope for the potential solution to problems. Christian faith had stressed a necessary harmony of interests.

With the Enlightenment, the common faith gave way to a widening gulf and to hostilities. Leon Garfield, in *The House of Hanover* (1976), called attention to the fact that, with the first Hanover ruler in England, the first Riot Act was passed. The foreign king, George I, was a fitting symbol of the fact that rulers and the people were now foreigners one to another. The people, said Garfield, were prone to rioting. Silk-weavers, coal-heavers, sailors, powdered footmen, gaolbirds, and ex-soldiers, all were rioting. Ex-soldiers from Marlborough's foreign wars turned highwaymen, and the modern age came with the affirmation of "Reason," and with riots.

The number of offenses which received the death penalty grew steadily, but so too did crime. Today, too, we have many who believe that stricter laws and penalties will solve the problem of crime, but they did not then, nor will they now. All such men have their own version of box theology or box philosophy. Hanging children for stealing a loaf of bread did not stop crime or juvenile delinquency in eighteenth-century England; the evangelical awakening, a partial return of Puritanism, did much to alter the situation.

Moreover, law and order have various meanings in the Soviet Union, Red China, Sweden, and the United States, but they are all variations of

humanism. Only Biblical law and order, coupled with the regenerating power of Jesus Christ, can alter a society.

Ultimately, any faith which does not have the triune God of Scripture and Jesus Christ as its Alpha and Omega is a box philosophy or theology, and this is clearly true of our new imitation catholicism, the modern humanistic state. However totalitarian its claims, its faith fails to be universal or true, because it boxes itself in to insulate itself from God and His law-word. It is thus dead to life and to truth, and it is doomed to collapse and the grave.

The law of the modern state is the law of death. In both the United States and Canada, for example, pornography trials have as their premise "community standards." Whether it be adult or child pornography, the test of its legality is the community standard. This is the legal enactment of Genesis 3:5, every man as his own god, knowing, or determining for himself, what is good and evil. Such a "community standard" as law means that, if the community favors abortion, theft, murder, rape, or incest, these things can become legal.

A box theology or philosophy is finally no bigger than man, whether man's pietism or man's sin, but, in any case, it is no bigger than man. God's sentence upon it is the sentence already pronounced on all the sons of Adam, and upon all their institutions, philosophies, and theologies — death. There is no escaping this sentence apart from Jesus Christ, who is the Lord or Sovereign over all men and all creation.

To acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord is to bring ourselves, our every thought, every action and word, all spheres of life, and all institutions, under His jurisdiction and law-word. Box theologies and philosophies are finally allotted a narrow box by God; its name is hell. The glorious liberty of the sons of God is to be a new creation in and through Jesus Christ, to work for the fullness of that new creation, and to dwell therein eternally in the great consummation by Him who makes all things new.

104

COVENANT VERSUS DETENTE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 85, April 1987

St. Paul, in 2 Corinthians 6:14, sums up a basic premise of God's law: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

In Exodus 23:31–33, all treaties and alliances with godless nations are banned, and this is restated in Exodus 34:12–16, where this ban includes interfaith marriages. We are also told that all such unequal yoking is the prelude to idolatry (Deut. 7:3–4). Not only are treaties and marriages religious facts, but they also presuppose and require, if they are to succeed, a common morality, law, and truth. Every religion has its own doctrine of morality, of law, and of truth. If we believe in Marxism, then we believe that truth is instrumental; there is no absolute truth, and words are as surely to be used as weapons as are guns. For Marxists, law and morality are determined by the dictatorship of the proletariat, and they are thus also relativistic and instrumental, not binding. The same words thus mean different things to a Marxist and to a Christian. Failure to recognize this fact means that Christians are regularly duped. They are duped because they refuse to take God's law seriously. They are not covenantally minded.

A covenant is a treaty of law. God's covenant with man is an act of grace whereby God gives to man His saving grace and the laws of life, of holiness and righteousness or justice. Because God gives us His law as an act of grace, we cannot violate His covenant, His treaty with us in Christ, by entering into a treaty with any unbelieving nation or in marriage with an unbelieving person. To do so is to renounce God and His covenant for other gods. It is an act of apostasy and unbelief. From beginning to end, Scripture speaks plainly on this issue. It tells us that the source of detente is unbelief.

The word *detente* is relatively new to English; it comes from the French, and only in very recent years has it gained much usage. It presupposes a humanistic religious faith and mission.

Dale T. Irvin, a liberal seminary professor, has spoken of mission as "dialogue," not conversion. For a time, Irvin met regularly with a group of prison inmates, not to convert them, but to hold a dialogue with them. (Some would say that the prisoners converted him!) Irvin is dubious that "salvation comes only through one particular story, one particular history." He is happy that "a new form of mission" is now underway, and promoted by such groups as the Seminarians for Peace. This new mission is "coexistence." For the "Christian" participants in this kind of mission, i.e., such as the Seminarians for Peace, "it was clear that the categories of Western Christian thought are in their last hours." For such people, there is no exclusive truth or revelation, and traditional, orthodox Christianity must die in order to make way for "a new humanity." For Irvin, the true resurrection is to enter into a worldwide coexistence, with all the old "forms" now "integrated into the common life of humanity" (Dale T. Irvin, "Mission as Dialogue," in M. D. Bryant and H. R. Huessy, editors, *Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy: Studies in His Life and Thought* [Edwin Mellen Press, 1986], pp. 203–216).

In this perspective, all that matters is humanity as such, not God, not truth, not justice, only the coexistence of humanity, only detente.

From China, we get a like word. The *Beijing Review,* January 12, 1987, tells us that Mao Tse-tung, in "Two Talks of Philosophy," wrote: "The extinction of mankind and the earth is different from the 'end of the world' preached in Christian churches. We predict that after the extinction of mankind and the earth, more progressive things will replace mankind, that is, a higher stage of development." Mao went on to say, "Marxism also has its emergence, development and extinction. This may sound strange, but since Marxism holds that everything born must die, why shouldn't this apply to Marxism itself? It is metaphysics to deny its extinction. Of course, more progressive things will replace it." In such a faith, the only thing not permissible is the belief in an absolute God, the God of Scripture, and His truth.

In another issue of the *Beijing Review* (January 5, 1987), a student, Shi Ling, confesses that she once believed in a fixed Marxism and hence found it "hard to believe our great Chairman Mao had made such monumental mistakes." But she did believe, because the state told her so! She came to understand, and she titled her article, "What Marxism Means." It means that, "if reality changes, knowledge must change . . . Inflexible doctrines must be discarded." A true Marxist thus recognizes that it is

change which demonstrates vitality. For this reason, "Marxism is powerful and there is hope for socialism."

In terms of this, instrumentalism is basic: people, words, truth, treaties, and all things else are valued only insofar as they can be used. There are no unchanging values. In terms of this, detente, not covenant, is man's practical course of action. One American general, in expressing his dissent with U.S. foreign policy and its dedication to detente, did so on Christian grounds. He was told that his "devil theory" of foreign policy (i.e., a belief that the issues involve good and evil) is "untenable."

The Bible tells us that our relationship to God is a covenantal one, that is, it rests on His grace and is in terms of His law-word. On both counts, it is personal. "Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). Sin, moreover, is the transgression of the law of the totally personal God, and it is offensive to Him. In the humanistic state, law is an impersonal fact, whereas to the triune God sin is a personal affront. When the concept of "crime" replaces "sin," we depersonalize the offense. The legal charge then is the state versus the criminal, whereas in Scripture it is God versus man. Humanism also depersonalizes the relationship between the sinner and the one sinned against. Marriage becomes a legal tie, not a totally personal union which involves two persons, two families, and all society.

The covenantal relationship is under God. The humanistic relationship is ultimately atomistic and is governed by autonomous man.

To remove the covenant of God as the foundation of man's life and of law and society is to open the door to total relativism, to detente. Because of the spirit of detente, i.e., peaceful coexistence, we now have a major movement to legalize sodomite and lesbian marriages. There is also a move to drop adultery as a ground for divorce, property divisions in divorce, and children's custody. The logic of detente requires us to subordinate all things to peaceful coexistence.

The poet William Blake was an early advocate of detente. He wrote of it honestly as *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. In any such "marriage," heaven must cease to be heaven, for to coexist with hell is to turn all things into hell.

St. Paul tells us that unequal yoking is evil and forbidden; it is also a surrender, because what fellowship can righteousness or justice have with unrighteousness, or injustice? What communion, he asks, can light have with darkness? The requirements for detente with darkness is to put out the light!

It is startling, then, to find that many churchmen who piously oppose mixed marriages advocate mixed politics, mixed everything, as the "common sense" perspective. There is an old saying about something

or other not having a snowball's chance in hell. The point in this saying is that a snowball in hell is not in its proper context. A snowball at the North Pole has a good "life expectancy," but not at sea level at the equator. The same is true of all unequal yoking.

We have today many advocates of cultural, educational, and political conservatism who preach detente, unequal yoking, as the solution. One conservative periodical recently hailed this concept as the hope of the future, as the solution to our problems. A. A. Hodge a century ago saw the fallacy in such thinking. Speaking of state education, he wrote, "he that believes most must give way to him that believes least, and then he that believes least must give way to him that believes absolutely nothing" (*Popular Lectures on Theological Themes* [1887], pp. 283–284).

At one time, both Catholics and Protestants opposed all such unequal yoking; now, too often both are frequently avid for it. At one time, a declaration by God commonly recognized and obeyed was His word in Isaiah 42:8, "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."

The Lord God is emphatic that He will not give His glory to another. The prophets repeatedly declare God's wrath and judgment on all persons and nations who practice unequal yoking, who make alliances with ungodly nations, and who believe that man's diplomacy and detente rather than God's law is the way to peace and to victory.

If the Old Testament and the New are true, then it is clear that we face a worldwide judgment for our policies of detente. We have made our peace with evil and become evil. We have had more faith in detente than in the power of our covenant God. We have done evil and called it good. The men and nations of the world have treated God and His law as irrelevant and immaterial to their problems, and now they face their greatest problem, the wrath of God. Detente is an alliance with evil to accomplish a humanistic good, and it is therefore as much under God's judgment now as in Biblical times. God who does not change, condemns all forms of detente.

Liberation theology is a form of detente. It is easy to condemn such an unequal yoking. However, does such a practice of detente become tenable and holy if we practice it? Does "our side" define what is good, or does God? The essence of injustice and evil is, "In those days there was no king in Israel (i.e., God was rejected as king): every man did that which was right in his own eyes." (Judg. 21:25). The covenant requirement is, "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart" (Deut. 6:6) and shall govern all of life. Jesus Christ is the covenant Redeemer, come to create a new covenant people and to empower them to establish His kingdom.

All who are brought into the covenant of God by His grace are, in terms of Scripture and the ancient laws of covenants or treaties, *vassals* of God in Christ. The vassal cannot enter into any treaty with another power, or with anyone who is not also a vassal of the triune God. To do so is to betray the covenant and to be guilty of treason. The covenant God requires uncompromising and unswerving allegiance. Then alone is our warfare God's warfare.

The curses pronounced in Scripture are curses against covenant-breaking, and the blessings pronounced are for covenant faithfulness. To be in the covenant is to be in God's power and endowed with it.

Oliver Cromwell was a strong champion, not of any particular church, but of God's covenant. In a letter to his son-in-law, Lord Fleetwood, husband of Cromwell's eldest daughter, Bridget, Cromwell wrote, on June 22, 1655: "Dear Charles, my love to thee; and to my dear Biddy, who is a joy to my heart, for what I hear of the Lord in her. Bid her be cheerful and rejoice in the Lord once again: if she know of the Covenant, she cannot but do so. For that transaction is without her; sure and steadfast, between the Father and the Mediator in His blood. Therefore, lean upon the Son, or looking to Him, thirsting after Him, and embracing Him, we are His seed; and the Covenant is sure to all His seed. The Compact is for the Seed; God is bound in faithfulness to Christ, and in Him, to us. The Covenant is without us; a transaction between God and Christ. Look up to it. God engageth in it to pardon us; to write His law in our hearts; to plant His fear so that we shall never depart from Him. We, under all our sins and infirmities, can daily offer a perfect Christ; and thus we have peace and safety, and apprehension of love, from a Father in the Covenant, who cannot deny Himself. And truly in this is all my salvation; and this helps me to bear my great burdens" (M. H. Watts, *God's Covenants*, vol. 1, pp. 10–11.)

In detente, all we have is man and his folly. In the covenant, we have the power of the triune God.

105

COVENANT VERSUS CONTRACT

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 164, June 1993

It is well known that the modern social contract theories of civil government are derived from Biblical, covenantal thinking. There is, however, a great difference between them. Both have to do with law, but, in contracts, man determines the law. In the Biblical record, covenants are laws given by God to man as an act of grace. God's covenant is thus entirely a God-given law, whereas contracts are entirely man-made.

The thesis of contracts was boldly set forth in 1812 by Benjamin Watkins Leigh in *Substitute, Proposed by Mr. Leigh, of Dinwiddie, to the Preamble and Resolutions, on the Subject of the Right of the State Legislatures, to Instruct Their Senators in the Congress of the U.S.* In this pamphlet on government by consent and the doctrine of virtual representation, Leigh wrote: "It is maxim of all governments founded on contract, that no man can be bounded by laws to which he had not given his assent, either directly; or mediately by his representative, or virtually thro' representatives chosen by his fellow citizens, among whom he dwells, having the same local and general interests with himself."

This is a plain statement of a faith which is still working out its implications in the United States and elsewhere. All over the world, the social contract theory is increasingly basic to governmental theory. However it be done, everywhere to some degree, "It is a maxim of all governments that no man can be bound by laws to which he has not given his assent." This is basic to constitutionalism, and it is also basic to anticonstitutionalism and its belief that no document from the past can be valid for the present. In the 1930s, it was held that the United States Constitution was a social contract for a horse and buggy era, not for the twentieth century. If "no man is bound by laws to which he has not given his assent," then no law is binding on any man, nor any tax, if the man has not consented

to it. This gives us a society like that of the book of Judges, when men, having rejected God as king and lawgiver, did as each one pleased: "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judg. 21:25).

This is increasingly what we see in the world around us. All the so-called minority groups feel free to despise every law they disagree with. The same applies to some Christians. If they see a law as wrong, they refuse to obey it because they have not given their consent to it. Lawlessness and rioting are thus on the increase.

All contractual theories of civil government rest on this same doctrine of assent. It has led to universal suffrage; but, if everyone has the vote, not everyone votes for the existing laws. Marxist countries have provided a single slate, with only one option, to gain nearly unanimous voting, but even then dissenting votes appear. The demand for universal assent leads not only to universal suffrage, but also to total controls to gain a total assent.

Benjamin Watkins Leigh was a Southern gentleman. He had no idea of the implications that the reigning doctrine of the social contract would lead to. The example of the French Revolution did not register with him, nor did he foresee the implications of his theory for the South. In time, Southern blacks would demand that laws exist only with their assent. The social contract theory came from Enlightenment thinkers who saw it as a noble concept. They believed the future of mankind required it for peace and harmony.

The doctrine of covenantal law states simply that God, being the Creator, Lawgiver, and Redeemer, is the only valid source of law. God gives His law as an act of grace to man, so that His covenant is both law and grace. It is not within man's jurisdiction to debate, for example, as to whether or not murder and theft should be allowed or banned. God decrees the law, and man's duty is to obey and enforce it. Man has no right to make law; God gives man the law, and man's duty is to obey it.

In a humanistic society, law is whatever men may decree. As in the Soviet Union, men may then make your assent mandatory! Your assent is coerced.

Almost from the beginning, and before the United States Constitution was ratified, there were demands for a more democratic order. A social contract theory of civil government having been adopted, the people increasingly demanded that it become democratic. It was felt that the suffrage had to be extended so that all laws receive more and more of the people's assent.

As the area of consent was enlarged, so too were the areas of control. As the United States became more democratic, it became less and less

free because assent had replaced freedom and justice. Is an American free now that he pays 49 percent of his income as local, state, or federal taxes? Has the freedom to vote made us more free when we vote for more statism via both major parties? Of what value is our assent (or dissent) when the progressive tyranny of universal assent rules us?

I recall very, very vividly the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt to the presidency as against Herbert Hoover. Hoover was himself a liberal out-liberaled by Roosevelt. In some areas, certainly our own, anyone against Roosevelt was called an "enemy of the people." He who disliked Roosevelt was a nonperson, a capitalistic fool, and so on and on. This was in 1931, in a still free America! Why?

The social contract theory requires a universal assent to the general will, as Rousseau saw it. In *The Social Contract* (chap. 8), Rousseau wrote, "whosoever shall refuse to obey the general will must be constrained by the whole body of his fellow citizens to do so: which is no more than to say that it may be necessary to compel a man to be free." This is the world of George Orwell's *1984*.

There is no escape from the logical conclusion of humanism's social contract theory of law other than by a return to Biblical covenantalism, to God's law and God's salvation. Civil government under humanistic presuppositions is increasingly becoming a hellish nightmare. Is it not time to speak a word about bringing back the King, Jesus Christ? (2 Sam. 19:10).

106

COVENANT, LAW, GRACE, AND ANTINOMIANISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 11, April 1980

The Bible is a covenant book, and, basic to the understanding of all its teachings, is the doctrine of the covenant.

A covenant is a treaty, marriage, or bond between two parties, either individuals or groups. Covenants can be divided into two classes. *First*, we have covenants between relative "equals," or between "unequal" parties of a comparable nature. All covenants between people, or between nations, fall into this class. *Second*, a covenant can be between a great and transcendental power, a god, and a people whom he chooses; here, there is no comparable nature, nor any common level of communication. Such a covenant, on the initiative of the superior power, is a covenant of grace.

The covenant of Scripture, between the triune God and a chosen people, is a covenant of grace. For God the Lord to enter into a treaty or relationship with His creatures, and to bind Himself to faithfulness thereto, is an act of sovereign grace. Thus, from beginning to end, the Bible gives us God's covenant of grace. God's relationship to Adam, to Noah, to Moses, to David, and to us is an act of grace. God does not need man's aid, and, to bind Himself to a treaty with man is pure grace on His part.

A covenant, however, is also always a matter of law. To speak of a covenant is to speak of law. In covenants, two parties agree to abide by a common law and justice (or righteousness). This means a common faith or religion. Hence, God forbids all alliances by a covenant nation with ungodly powers (Exod. 23:31–33; 34:12–16; Deut. 7:1–4). Similarly, all mixed marriages, of believers and unbelievers, are forbidden as violations of God's covenant. As Amos asks of all such unequal yoking, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). Paul summarizes

the doctrine thus: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6:14). A covenant with an unbelieving person or nation means being yoked to an ungodly doctrine of justice or righteousness, and bound by a law which is evil in God's sight.

In a covenant, the superior power gives the law to the lesser power; in human covenants, there is often some trading with regard to the legal requirements. In God's covenant with man, there is a unilateral declaration of law: the law of the covenant is God's law only. Where there is no law, there is no covenant, for a covenant imposes a law on all concerned, and the penalty for violation of covenant law is death.

Hence, a covenant is not made: it is cut, and it requires the shedding of blood to indicate the penalty for all violations of the covenant and its law. But a covenant also requires an eating, a common meal, to indicate communion and community. The covenant members are now one family. In God's covenant with man, we are by His sovereign grace made members of His family by adoption.

God's covenant with man is all of grace, and yet it is also law. For God to give His law to man is an act of grace, a covenant act, for law is the bond of community. Law sets forth the common righteousness or justice which governs the family members. To oppose law, grace, and covenant is to deny all three; they are not opposing concepts but rather different aspects of the same fact of a relationship to the throne of God.

Scripture repeatedly equates breaking God's law with breaking His covenant. Hosea 8:1 tells us, "Set the trumpet to thy mouth. He shall come as an eagle against the house of the LORD, because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law." Psalm 78:10 reads, "They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law." To be in covenant with the Lord requires keeping His law (2 Kings 23:3, 24). According to Isaiah 24:5, "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant." Again and again, Scripture indicts all who break God's law as covenant-breakers.

Antinomianism thus is more than covenant-breaking. It is the denial of the covenant and of covenant justice or righteousness. God's covenant, grace, and law are inseparable. Antinomians, however, seek to separate grace from law, and then finally from the covenant as well. The end result is no grace at all. An unrighteous and lawless grace is not grace but sin.

Phariseeism commits the opposite sin, legalism. It denies grace in favor of works and thereby seeks to reduce the covenant to the human level,

i.e., two parties of more or less equal standing, able to give something one to another. The covenant law is then altered, as in Phariseeism, to make it by reinterpretation man's tradition and law. The result is again the destruction of God's covenant, and a denial of law as well as grace.

The product of the covenant is peace, peace between God and man, and between covenant men. To violate God's covenant is to violate His peace as well. The lack of peace today is evidence of a violated covenant.

Again, basic to every covenant is an oath, a blood oath (Exod. 24:6–8), whereby each party pledged themselves ready to die for the other, or to die if they violated the covenant law. We cannot understand the constitutional requirement for an oath of office in the United States apart from this fact. An oath had only one meaning to the framers of the U.S. Constitution, a covenant oath. Hence, the oath was taken (and still is) on a Bible, at one time opened to Deuteronomy 28. The oath signified a nation and its officers in covenant with God, invoking covenant blessings and curses on themselves in terms of their faithfulness or disobedience.

Christ's death can only be understood in terms of the covenant. God's people had broken His covenant, and the penalty was death. Christ came, as very God, to manifest God's faithfulness to His own. Christ, as very man, took upon Himself the covenant sentence of death for His remnant. The unbelieving covenant people perished, and the redeemed remnant became the nucleus of a continuing and renewed covenant of the people of God's calling and choosing.

Just as the Hebrew speaks of cutting a covenant, so it speaks of cutting an oath (Deut. 29:12). The covenant and its oath both witness to the shedding of blood for the violation of God's covenant. To violate God's law is to despise His grace and covenant, and vice versa.

Marriage is a form of covenant, and every covenant, like marriage, requires a commitment to a common life. It means that we are not our own, "For ye are bought with a price," the price of Christ's atonement (1 Cor. 6:20). No more than love in marriage is antinomian and lawless, is covenant love antinomian or lawless. The covenant is totally grace, law, and love.

Basic to understanding God's covenant is the fact that, in Adam, the covenant was with all mankind. Again, with Noah (Gen. 9:1–17), it was with all men, with Noah and all his descendants. Thus, the covenant is misread if seen in purely national or ecclesiastical terms. The covenant is with mankind; hence, all men are either covenant-keepers or covenant-breakers. In Jesus Christ, God creates a new humanity as His covenant people, and the Lord of the covenant sends out His people into all the world, to bring all men and nations into His covenant and under His law

and grace (Matt. 28:18–20). The covenant law thus makes a claim upon all men everywhere.

The covenant requires all men to be God's people, to live in His grace by His law. The covenant alone gives peace with God, and, in Him, between men. The covenant is a brotherly covenant, or a covenant of brotherhood between covenant men (Amos 1:9). It is a covenant of peace (Num. 25:12), and of peace and prosperity (Deut. 23:6). In Deuteronomy 28, all the blessings and curses of the covenant, for faithfulness and for unfaithfulness, are plainly set forth; they tell us much about the calamities of our time.

Because the covenant is the mark of God's peace, certain covenant signs set forth that peace and rest in God's covenant grace. The rainbow is a witness to God's covenant (Gen. 9:17), but, even more, the sabbath is the regular and recurring witness to the covenant and its peace. Faithfulness to the sabbath in all its fullness of meaning thus means true rest and peace in the covenant of grace. (Circumcision and then baptism mark covenant faith as well.) In Deuteronomy 31:9–13, the public reading of the covenant law every seventh year set forth symbolically that the law of God is His peace treaty with us in Christ, in that His law shows to covenant man the life of righteousness and peace, i.e., how to walk with the Lord.

Law is the definer of relationships; it is enacted morality and is a theological concern. All men give allegiance to one form of law, while denying other kinds of law. Law can be statist, humanistic, Buddhist, Islamic, anarchistic (every man his own law), or what have you, but law of some kind is inescapable. Any kind of law we affirm will be a religious affirmation. Men today are commonly antinomian in relationship to God's law, but they are dedicated to their own law, whatever it may be.

The crisis of our age can be seen as a crisis of law. Our age is passionately concerned with law and justice of a humanistic sort, and the result is a growing lawlessness and injustice, because humanistic doctrines of law and justice are not based on God's reality. Moreover, the more "democratic" justice becomes, the more it exalts every man's desire to be his own law, and the more the will of man takes priority over the law of God. As a result, we have what John Lukacs, in *The Passing of the Modern Age* (1970), called "the democratization of violence" (p. 48).

The Bible equates antinomianism with practical atheism. The theme verse of Judges states: "In those days there was no king in Israel (that is, God the King and lawgiver had been rejected by Israel): every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judg. 21:25; cf. 17:6, 18:1, 19:1). The first half of this statement calls attention to the fact that, whatever

the Israelites may have professed, they had actually or implicitly denied God as their Lord and lawgiver. As a result, original sin, the principle of the fall, had become operative: "ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," i.e., determining for yourself what constitutes good and evil, or law (Gen. 3:5). Law and morality today are do-it-yourself projects. Basic to statist education is a pragmatic view of truth and morality. For progressive education, truth became the will of the democratic majority, and the Great Community, the incarnation of truth. Facts in themselves, it was held, are not true: they are instruments, and truth is their pragmatic application to fulfill the democratic consensus. Values, then, are personal goals which permit self-realization in a social context without harm to others. (The doctrine of consenting adults as validation for any act has its source in this concept.) Value or morality is not obedience to God-given laws but the pursuit of personal goals without social violence. Morality was thus taught as an antiauthoritarian and purely personal standard according to which all men can do as they please, provided other persons as individuals, the group, or society were not coerced or hurt.

The practical implication was that a new and very dangerous authority was introduced, society and/or the state. God's entire body of laws is comprehended in one average-sized book: it is readily understandable by all men, and its commandments easily obeyed. The laws of the state give us an ever-expanding, ever-changing body of rules. The laws governing any man, city, county, state, or federal organization, and those of all regulatory agencies at each level, are greater by far than any man can know. Even lawyers must research each case in terms of the jungle of applicable laws. Daily, new laws and recent court decisions expand this body of laws. There are enough laws to enable the state to find any and every man guilty of some violation or other. Moreover, the body of laws applicable to each man is so great that if he sought to have a copy of each law, to know them, he would have to have a library building greater than his house, to hold them.

Society as a standard is no better. Social judgments on good and evil have varied dramatically in my lifetime, with respect to abortion, sexual laws, war (pacificism, militarism, isolationism, interventionism, etc.), and much more. The weather vane is a fitting symbol of socially determined values and morality.

Thus, humanism begins by becoming antinomian with respect to God's law. It creates in time such social chaos that its own children become antinomian with respect to humanistic law and regard "the Establishment" anti-law as itself the cause of disorder and the enemy.

The world's present course points to disaster. "Now therefore why

speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?" (2 Sam. 19:10). God the Lord is always king. However, if He is not our Savior and Lawgiver, then as King He is our Judge and our enemy. The harvest of antinomianism is judgment and destruction.

107

DISCONTINUITY AND ANTINOMIANISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 59, February 1985

From the days of the early church to the present, a variety of heresies and opinions have contributed to the development of modern antinomianism. In our previous position papers, some of these have been discussed. It is important now to look at the American influences, and other modern philosophies, which have gone into the modern formulation of this concept.

In the early years of the republic, the pressures of English Deism led to a progressive de-emphasis on the Old Testament. For the Deists, the Old Testament was a primitive religious expression of the ancient Hebrews; having no love for their contemporary Jews, the Deists were not disposed to view their Hebrew forbears favorably.

The results became apparent in a lessened interest in the Old Testament. Whereas earlier the Puritans had seen the whole Bible as the binding word of God, now, as Jay Fliegelman has noted in *Prodigals and Pilgrims* (1982), "'The Bible' was slowly becoming identified with the New Testament alone." From 1777 to 1800, there were only thirty-three American editions of the whole Bible, but nearly eighty separate printings of the New Testament. This was a break with the Puritan love of the whole Word of God.

At the same time, the Baptists were waging a dual attack on the old order. *First*, and rightly so, they fought against the establishment of any church in favor of the establishment of Christianity as the faith undergirding the social order. *Second*, because the other churches stressed the continuity between circumcision and infant baptism, the Baptists attacked the validity of this continuity by denying the continuity between the Old and the New Testaments. Instead of a renewed covenant in Christ with a new Israel of God, a new chosen people, the Baptists

insisted on two covenants of differing characteristics.

This assault was followed by a more deadly one, by the Unitarians. William Ellery Channing in 1819 preached the ordination sermon for Jared Sparks in Baltimore, Maryland. On that occasion, Channing attacked the Calvinists and declared that "the dispensation of Moses" was very different from the new one and had been "adapted to the childhood of the human race." The Bible thus represented two very different dispensations of religion.

Ralph Waldo Emerson went further. In an address to the senior class in divinity at Harvard, he attacked "the assumption that the age of inspiration is past, that the Bible is closed." He insisted that men need no mediator, and that all of us can become "bards of the Holy Ghost." In "Uses of Great Men," Emerson insisted that a "rotation" or change of dispensations "is the law of nature," and added, "nor can the Bible be closed until the last great man is born."

During this time, the idea of cultural evolution was being advanced, and, later, it was applied to biology. The influence of evolutionary thinking on dispensationalism was real, despite the fact that, at a later date, evolutionary and dispensational thought separated and clashed.

Another powerful influence was the philosopher Hegel. In Hegel's thought, a variety of ancient pagan strands resurfaced, among them the belief in the conflict of interests as necessary to progress. Whereas Biblical faith asserts the harmony of interests because of the governing and predestinating hand of God, non-Biblical faiths see order evolving out of a conflict of interests.

These pagan ideas had long plagued Christian thought, but never so much as after Hegel, whose influence was decisive throughout Christendom, and especially so in Germany. Hegel came into Biblical studies very plainly in the work of Ferdinand Christian Baur. As Hans Conzelmann noted, in *An Outline of the Theology of The New Testament* (1969), and noted with approval, Baur "interprets Paul with the basic concepts of Hegel." What this meant was that Scripture was no longer seen as a unified whole, as the one Word of God. From beginning to end, the Bible was now seen as a war of ostensibly true ideas and factors. In Paul especially, this warfare was supposedly sharpest. Flesh is for Paul by presupposition in antithesis to spirit, law is opposed to grace, mercy to judgment, love to wrath, and so on.

The Bible was now seen as a divided book, and, by implication, God was divided and in conflict with Himself. God had one plan of salvation for the Jews, another for the Christians.

Such ideas were not new. As heresies, they had long plagued the church and often influenced the orthodox. Now, however, such antinomian and

dispensational ideas represented "the latest scholarship." Biblical studies began to major in dividing the Word and in seeing one writer as opposed to another, or in conflict with himself.

It became "good scholarship" to see error and division in the Bible. Martin Dibelius, in *James: A Commentary on the Epistle of James* (1976), held that, because Christians "were living in expectation of the end of the world, they had neither the inclination nor the ability to initiate an ethical renewal of a world which seemed to be doomed for destruction." How a commentator on James could make such a statement is amazing. It is a witness to the triumph of scholarship over reality.

This is not all. Another and revolutionary influence which came to focus in the United States was a hostility to continuity. America was to be "the new order of the ages," a totally new dispensation. The Old Testament era was "primitive"; Europe was "backward," but America was to be the new "course of empire" and a new age in a new world. Many Deists in Europe shared this view and adored Franklin as an example of the new, free man. Jefferson was hostile to the past in the same way and believed that family and continuity were impediments. As he wrote to John Adams on October 28, 1813, he believed the human race should be scientifically bred like animals, with superior men (like himself) given harems, "not for the sake of pleasure" but to breed. For the same reason, hostility to continuity, Jefferson affirmed in another letter (September 4, 1823) his belief in perpetual revolution to destroy the past and create Jefferson's imagined paradise. He knew that so radical a revolution as he wanted was mass murder, "yet the object (or goal) is worth rivers of blood and years of desolation" (*The Adams–Jefferson Letters*). Jefferson's great hatred was reserved for Calvinism, which he called demonism.

Jefferson made respectable the belief in discontinuity. Since his Unitarianism, while suspected by some, was not public knowledge, his influence among churchmen was extensive, and he carried their votes easily. Jefferson did popularize the belief that the United States has to break with the past, and sons with their fathers. Jefferson hated the power of birth and inheritance, i.e., the ability of men to begin with an inherited advantage. John Adams said of Plato, but with an eye on Jefferson, "no man expressed so much terror of the Power of Birth. His genius could invent no remedy or precaution against it; but a Community of Wives, a confusion of Families, a total extinction of all Relations of Father, Son and Brother." It is not an accident that all radical movements, from the ancient Mazdakites to the Marxists, have tried to destroy the family.

In the United States, this Jeffersonian antifamilism has meant a hostility to sons of successful men. Is a wealthy industrialist the son of a

rich founding father? Then it is assumed that the son is only successful because of his inheritance. The fact is that very often (not always) the son advances what the father began. The belief in discontinuity plus envy directed against ability leads to the hostility. To cite a very specific current example from within the church, Franky Schaeffer, son of Francis Schaeffer, is regularly the target of hostile comments in and out of print. These sanctimonious hypocrites attack Frank with a show of sadness and regret because he is supposedly not up to his father's abilities and name. The fact is that Frank Schaeffer begins where his father left off in *The Christian Manifesto* and builds logically and very ably on that foundation. His work is a step forward and in excellent continuity with his father's work. Two motives are at work against him. First, those who lacked the courage to attack his father are now piously bleating about a supposed "decline." Second, the old hostility against continuity is at work. There must be no inheritance of wealth, ability, or status for these men. The Jeffersonian hatred of continuity is very much with us.

Such a view is essential to antinomianism. Law means continuity. It means that God has an established order in all of history. The sins of the fathers have an effect on the children, and the mercy of God upon the fathers is also felt by the children. The past is not dead; it is alive in all of history, because God's law governs, ordains, and uses all things. Because the wages of sin are always death, history can only change within a God-given framework of curses or blessings. Men have no other options than those given by the triune God and set forth in His law-word.

The idea of revolution, of discontinuity, is to overthrow the force, power, and government of God's law, to break the bonds of God's rule (Psalm 2). The Mazdakites in A.D. 451 sought to eradicate the past by enforcing the communism of wealth, women, and land, and killing Christians (among them a hostage, Isaac Rushdoony), but they ended by destroying their realm. Today state schools are a great weapon of discontinuity, well tooled to destroy the family. Those who resist state control of education are taken to court on *criminal* charges.

Within the church, all these currents of thought had an extensive influence. The Unitarians like Channing dismissed the Old Testament and its law as a primitive dispensation for the ancient Hebrews. They also dismissed Puritan Calvinism as an old and barbarous era, as clinging to a dispensation well left behind. The believer, in his devotional life, was encouraged to concentrate on the New Testament, and the Psalms. Alexander Campbell attacked the law and called for "New Testament Christianity." Such thinking was seeping into all churches, although Southern Presbyterians resisted it until 1869. The church was abandoning the Bible of Jesus Christ!

In 1970, Bible-believers in the United States numbered at least one fourth of the population, enough to command the country, but most of them did not vote and regarded politics as "a dirty business." They failed to appreciate the fact that their retreat had made it so.

Not surprisingly, the persecution of churches, Christian schools, and home schools soon began. The god of the law was now the state, not the Lord God of Scripture. In one state, where such persecutions have taken place, a Christian attorney called attention to the dereliction and surrender of some churches; as a result, six pastors banded together in an effort to force the attorney out of town.

Newsweek (February 4, 1985) called attention to the epidemic of sexually transmitted diseases, now said to number "25 or so diseases" which infect "1 in 4 Americans between the ages of 15 and 55 at some point in his or her life." Serious as this is, it does not compare in its harm to the damage done by antinomianism. If God's law does not govern man, the state's law will, and the state's law is Genesis 3:5 writ large, every man (or civil government) as his own god, determining for himself what is good and evil.

It is time to ask churchmen plainly: who is on the Lord's side? Let him serve the King and honor His law.

108

FALSE ANTINOMIES

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 82, January 1987

William H. Riker, in *The Art of Political Manipulation* (1986), describes how men win by setting up a situation in such a way that people will join them, sometimes with no persuasion at all. He terms this "heresthetics," and it is "structuring the world so that you can win." Riker sees this as legitimate and is not concerned with either the immoral or unintended uses of this method, but rather its legitimate usage.

However, intentionally or unintentionally, many people do structure things to give one answer, the one they want. For example, do Americans favor or oppose abortion? It all depends on whose poll you take as your authority. There are enough people "in the middle" who can be easily swayed one way or another by the nature of the questions asked to give either side their desired result.

The same is true in the realm of the church. Issues can be falsified and so presented that only one conclusion seems possible. Anyone dissenting can then be called a heretic, or any name the champions of the false antinomy choose.

The great classic example of a false antinomy is grace versus law. Are these two things to be opposed one to another? Certainly salvation is by grace, not by law, but it is not therefore salvation by lawlessness. If we are logical about this false antinomy, we must then fall into the evil Paul describes, i.e., believing that we should continue in sin that grace may abound! This is the logic of antinomianism. But the opposite of grace is not law: it is reprobation. We are saved by grace, and if we do not have grace, we are reprobate. This is the true contrast, grace versus reprobation. This alone sets forth the issue as to what is at stake, salvation.

The false antinomy of grace versus law has done much harm. It has led to the depreciation of the law and far-fetched and fantastic efforts to

escape the force of our Lord's words in Matthew 5:18–20, where the requirement that the law be fulfilled or put into force is very bluntly stated.

But this is not all. This false antinomy has led men to abandon dominion, because God's law is the instrument for dominion. As a result, the church has been in steady retreat, surrendering one area of life after another to humanism. The law, as the way of sanctification, spells out the means whereby man, growing in grace by faithfulness to God's every word (Matt. 4:4), brings all things into captivity to Jesus Christ.

This false antinomy, by pitting God's grace against God's law and eliminating God's law, has put churchmen into the evil position of turning to humanistic law as the solution to the world's problems. The church thus becomes an ally of anti-Christian forces.

Another false antinomy is faith versus works. Such an antinomy is a violation of God's plain word that faith without works is dead (James 2:14–26), because faith cannot be fruitless: it has consequences and manifests itself in works. The man of faith is a good tree bearing good fruit, good works (Matt. 7:16–20), whereas an evil man has evil works. Paul, in affirming justification by the grace of God through faith, says, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (Rom. 3:31).

When men oppose faith and works, they limit faith to one outlet, pietistic exercises. Prayer then becomes "vain repetition" and a public display to give the aura of holiness (Matt. 6:5–7), rather than talking with our heavenly Father, thanking Him, submitting ourselves and our needs to Him, and looking to Him for our help and our daily needs. The life of holiness is warped by antinomianism into a shallow form.

To condemn the works of faith is to condemn the Lord who requires them. Power in the Lord is associated with fruit-bearing, works: when we bring forth fruit, then "whatsoever ye shall ask in my (Jesus's) name," He will give us (John 14:13–14).

Another false antinomy is love versus law. Again, this is a clear defiance of Scripture. We are told that "love is the fulfilling of the law," i.e., the keeping of God's law (Rom. 13:7–10). We do not love God if we despise His law, nor do we love our neighbor, our spouse, or our children if we break God's laws that protect them. Sin does not express love but rather hatred of both God and man. Sin means saying, "My will be done." It is the application of the tempter's program, every man as his own god and law, determining or knowing for himself what is good and evil (Gen. 3:5).

The opposite of grace is not law but reprobation. The opposite of law is lawlessness. The opposite of faith is faithlessness or unbelief, and the

opposite of good works is evil works. The opposite of love is hatred, not law. These false antinomies are not only erroneous but evil. They paralyze Christian faith and action and falsify Scripture.

Heretics and heresies over the centuries have used false antinomies to break up the unity of the faith, to divide wrongly the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15). We have seen the Old and New Testaments held to be opposites rather than the one word of God. Paul is opposed to Jesus, James to Paul, and so on and on, Peter against Paul, the law versus the prophets, and every imaginable antinomy men can devise. *These all lead to evil.*

If we have a false view of what Scripture teaches, we will soon have a false doctrine of God, and the consequences of that are very serious. Walter Oetting, in *The Church of the Catacombs* (1964), outlined the Roman doctrine of God: "'Deity' was usually not defined philosophically, but was seen as that which gives good things. Since Rome brought peace and justice, it was honored and praised and worshipped. But what was the symbol of imperial Rome? The person of the emperor was the obvious choice. Hence the emperor cult" (p. 98). In our time, men in effect have worshipped the modern state because it is the "god" which gives them good things. The devil then becomes whatever works against the modern state. Marx very early held that all enemies of the socialist state should be viewed as evil and separated into a hell for such dissenters. Marx had set up a false antinomy deliberately, and it has been used to kill millions of peoples.

The theological false antinomies have been even more deadly because they deal with the issues of time and eternity. They tamper with God's revealed Word and misdirect men and churches. They are a very serious form of false witness and a violation of God's law. They lead to the degradation of the faith.

Oetting's definition of the meaning of the word "god" to the Romans has been cited. This definition did not stand still. As Harold Mattingly, in *The Man in the Roman Street* (1947), pointed out, for the Greeks and Romans the word came to mean two things. *First*, god or gods could mean powers outside and over man. These could be transcendent gods or spirits, or the current emperor. *Second*, it could mean "inner" gods, a man's genius, the virtue in a man's soul, and the like. Since the great gods like Jupiter or Zeus were once men, all men of power (virtue) could become transcendent gods also (pp. 86–87). By beginning with a false definition of god, the Greeks and Romans went from one error to another and thereby falsified their view of things. They then created false antinomies to compound their error. The Roman Empire had great power, but in its economic and political policies it began by positing false antinomies, and thus it aggravated its problems by false solutions.

To avoid such errors, we must be rigorously Biblical, as Cornelius Van Til has always insisted. In Isaiah's words, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20).

Our age needs the light of God's requirement, that we believe and obey His Word, not man's.

In the middle of the sixteenth century, Bishop Hooper found that in his diocese of Gloucester (England), a hundred and seventy clergymen could not repeat the Ten Commandments, and twenty seven were ignorant as to who was the author of the Lord's Prayer. Under Queen Mary, the situation grew worse as men were hastily ordained without qualifications. As a result of this kind of ignorance, the church was weak, both before and after Henry VIII.

This was very bad, but at least the Puritan party could point to an obvious evil and gain strength by their obvious knowledge of the faith. Today, the ignorance is of a different kind, rests in error, and is more serious because it falsifies the truth. By teaching the false antinomy of grace versus law, they obscure the fact that the opposite of grace is reprobation, and the opposite of law is lawlessness. This is a gross error and a dangerous one. It has a monumental implications for evil, and for the destruction of the church.

109

THE INCARNATION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 173, March 1994

The Christian community is too prone to believe the attacks on the Bible and the history of Christianity made by its enemies. They take seriously a great deal of nonsense and mythology as sound scholarship and history. We are told, for example, that many tales of virgin births and incarnations circulated prior to our Lord's birth, and that such stories were common to the Greco-Roman world.

In reality, no such stories existed. The idea of incarnation was anathema to Greco-Roman thinking. The tales of miraculous births and manifestations of the gods were radically hostile to the idea of incarnation.

When John wrote, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14), what he said was the antithesis of Greco-Roman thinking. Dr. Cornelius Van Til often stressed the importance of Paul's statement that the incarnation and crucifixion of Jesus Christ was to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks, foolishness (1 Cor. 1:23).

The concept of God held by the Greeks made an incarnation impossible. In fact, as Patrick Madigan pointed out in *Christian Revelation and the Completion of the Aristotelian Revolution* (1988), Aristotle's philosophy can be called a "deconstruction" of explanation because it renders its "God" so self-sufficient and so beyond the universe that he cannot even be seen as its creator. To be the maker of all things would demean Aristotle's god. He "could never function as an efficient cause of anything" (p. 17). For Aristotle's philosophy, "the world as it appears to us is impossible" (p. 21). The philosophers were bound by Parmenides's central thesis: "Ultimate reality must in some sense be unchangeable" (p. 27). In terms of this, Biblical thinking was foolishness of an embarrassing kind.

Explaining creation was a problem. To understand an incarnation was impossible.

Paganism was full of marvelous tales of appearances and seeming appearances, not an incarnation. To mix, unite, or confuse the divine and the created order was impossible. To quote Madigan once again, "for a Hellenistic Greek no god could touch matter and still remain god" (p. 83). The Gnostics tried to remedy the lack of any adequate explanation of creation by positing a whole realm of inferior spiritual beings, demiurges, and the like, to account for the world, but they too denied the reality of an incarnation: they saw it as impossible.

Thus, we are told that in one of the mystery religions, which, according to Lucian of Samosata, claimed that the Greek god Asklepios had revealed himself in a snake, Glykon, the actual belief was in some kind of manifestation. The leader of this group, Alexander, had a service wherein he began the ritual with the words, "Christians begone!" (Marvin W. Meyer, ed., *The Ancient Mysteries: A Sourcebook of Sacred Texts*, p. 87). The Christian faith was anathema to all who claimed intellectual respectability. But this meant that, rejecting Christ, these groups had no source for law. Augustine and others tell us that immorality was a form of worship among some groups.

Philosophically, the Greco-Roman world rated ideas as basic, and matter as the lowest kind of being. The Gnostics saw the material world as the lowest emanation from either the One or the demiurges. It was so remote from true being that it was close to nonbeing and actual evil. Most Gnostics saw the material world as evil. The idea of evil and nonbeing and matter as related still lingers in the thoughts of many churchmen as a relic of Gnosticism. St. Augustine, as a Greco-Roman product, postponed entering the church for ten years, in part because he found the Bible too anthropomorphic in its view of God, and too materialistic in its revelation and worldview.

In fact, according to Madigan, "Creation tended for Alfarabi and Avicenna, John Scotus Erigena and Alfred the Great, Avincebron and Maimonides, to dissolve into a necessary emanation, following the Neoplatonic pattern" (p. 90).

Both creation and law were thus outside the concern of the god of the philosophers. For God to concern Himself with creating humanity, and then regulating their affairs by law, was an absurd and rather childish concept. The philosophers had to take the universe for granted: they could not account for it. Their god was too remote and too perfect to be involved with mankind.

As a result, Christianity was a startling religion. It declared God's love

for His creation, and His plan to redeem mankind. It set forth an actual law-word, a revelation from God, and, even more, the incarnation of the second person of the triune God in human flesh. It was a shocking word. It was seen by the intellectuals as foolishness.

Because Western philosophy has insisted on retaining a Greek foundation, it perpetuates that same sense of offense. Only in the philosophies of men like Cornelius Van Til and Herman Dooyeweerd is there a substantial challenge to this philosophic tradition.

As against that tradition, the reality of the incarnation is the great bulwark and manifesto. Our God is One who is totally mindful of all His creation. He has declared His plan of redemption, and He, in the incarnation of the Son, invaded history to conquer and redeem it.

To the Greek, i.e., the intellectuals in their tradition, this is still foolishness. "But unto them which are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ [is] the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:24). Who is wisdom and power for you, Aristotle, or Jesus Christ?

J. N. Hillgarth (*Christianity and Paganism, 350–750*) pointed out what happened. The Greco-Roman world saw the poor and the slaves as little more than animals; they were termed "talking stock" and "semi vocal stock." Christianity not only changed this, but developed "the cult of the poor," of mercy and care for them. The maimed, the lame, and the blind were cared for. Gregory the Great stressed that "God hath chosen them of the world despised" (p. 4). It later became a ritual for kings to wash poor men's feet. The world began to change because, just as the Word was made flesh, so, too, men's faith had to become incarnate in material action. Incarnationist theology requires our immersion in the problems of our time, and the application of the gospel to our age. It requires that, as the Word became flesh, so, too, our faith makes a material change in us and in our world.

If we have beheld His Glory, the glory of the incarnation, we will manifest that light and glory to our time.

110

DEMONISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 132, March 1991

In the 1920s, a very perceptive non-Christian, Kenneth Burke, predicted the rise of occultism and the return of the demonic to modern life. Because modern thought had discarded the supernatural, man no longer had recourse to power and grace from above. Needing more than routine strength for his life, man would seek power and grace from below and the demonic would again be real to man and more natural and persuasive than ever.

Today, we have a curious situation. Many unbelievers in Christianity are intense believers in occult and demonic forces which for them are the essence of naturalistic powers. Other unbelievers totally deny the existence of any such beings. Meanwhile, within the church, we have all too many who have a warped view: overrating the demonic, and manifesting an undue interest in it. Of late, "Christian" novels dealing with satanic forces have had a very successful sale among Christians. Basic to the success of such books is an overrating of the demonic, and an overly curious interest in the subject. Very few churchmen take seriously our Lord's strong warning in Revelation 2:24 against a study of "the depths of Satan," or "the deep things of Satan." This *forbids* us to study and concern ourselves with evil conspiracies or demonic forces. Our concern must be to do the will of God and to know His Word. Our Lord also says, "If any man will do his (God's) will, he shall know of the doctrine" (John 7:17).

The Bible tells us what we need to know of the subject. Genesis 3:5 tells us that Satan's essential program is that every man is his own god, determining or knowing good and evil, law and morality, for himself. Satan calls for a declaration of independence from God. In the temptation of our Lord in Matthew 4:1–11, we see a further development of the satanic plan of salvation. *First*, turn these stones into bread. If you are the

Messiah, Jesus, solve the economic problem; feed the poor of this world. Eliminate poverty and all related problems. *Second*, "cast thyself down" from the pinnacle of the temple, and have the angels bear Thee up, "lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Make work unnecessary. Let sight replace it. Let miracles make unbelief impossible. It is unfair to ask work and faith of men, the tempter held. *Third*, "fall down and worship me"; recognize the logic of my position and the hardness of God's way. Our Lord's answer in each case was, "It is written . . ."

We are told that Satan has "nothing" on Christ or over Him; the Holy Spirit is Judge over Satan, who is "cast out" of this world because Christ has come (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). This is now Christ's realm, although persons in it not of Christ are still Satan's. Satan is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44), and so he loves to overstate his power. Remember, he offered "all the kingdoms of the world" to our Lord. Because we are Christ's, we are rescued from Satan and his dominion (John 15:19; 17:12, 14). "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). The word translated as "destroy" is luse (*luo*), meaning to dissolve or demolish.

The demonic is the evil. Both physical and moral evil can be viewed from two standpoints. *First*, physical and moral evil exist in man. Since the Fall, sickness and death are inevitable for mankind; all the same, Scripture presents both as evil and as a result of man's rebellion against God. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that (or, in whom) all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). Man is his own source of evil, for himself and the world around him. However, *second*, evil also has a source outside of man; there are evil spiritual powers, and also evil human powers. The Bible does not discount the power of evil outside of man. All the same, man is the determining factor. He is not a helpless pawn.

Man is made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26–28). The angels are below man in God's creation. They are "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be the heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:14). The correct reading of Psalm 8:5 is, "For thou hast made him a little lower than *God*, and hast crowned him with glory and honour." The word for "God" is *elohim*; it means God, or at its least, it means a judge, here possibly a judge under God over creation. Certainly, he is made higher than the angels, including all fallen angels. There are thus two ugly aspects to the modern view of many Christians concerning the demonic: *first*, God is underrated and Satan is exalted; *second*, man is also underrated.

When men, without believing in Darwinism, are nonetheless influenced by its mythology, God becomes very remote to them except in

occasional experiences. The billions of years of past history posited by Darwinism, and the vagueness of any higher power, make men more aware of lower powers. The demonic then becomes real to modern peoples, both within the church and outside of it. It is a grim and ugly fact of the 1990s, that they have begun with record sales for two novels about the demonic; no serious work about Scripture has had an even remotely comparable sale. Church people are very curious about evil in all its forms; they show no comparable interest in theology and the Bible. The warning of Revelation 2:24 is of no concern to them.

Satanism should not be of concern and an object of study by any but pastors and counselors who must deal with its effects, and, unless their concentration on God's Word and work is far greater, they had better avoid the subject. It is evil to be overly interested in evil. When Paul in Philippians 4:8 says, "think upon these things," he is not referring to the demonic but to virtues. Our Lord says, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:21). If we are more interested in learning about the demonic than God's Word, our hearts are in the wrong place!

In Mark 6:12–13, we read that among the many apostolic triumphs was casting out many devils. This was one consequence of preaching Christ. It meant victory over all forces and enemies, human and nonhuman. The Christian message was and is, where faithfully proclaimed, the most amazing in all of history. Not only would the power of sin and all evil be destroyed, but death itself would perish. Death would be "swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:54). At the name of Jesus, all demonic powers would fail.

By contrast, Buddhism, in origin a very naturalistic philosophy, has been plagued over the centuries by a fear of the demonic. Evil forces are omnipresent, and a great concern of man becomes the avoidance of offense to all such powers.

In Deuteronomy 32:17, Moses's indictment of Israel is that some "sacrificed to devils, not to God," and these were "new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not." Their offense was thus a false faith, divinizing devils, and fearing what God's people should not fear. This false faith and fear led in time to sacrificing their sons and their daughters to devils (Ps. 106:37). Such fear is an evil fear.

As against this, we are told, "The fear of the Lord is clean" (Ps. 19:9) and healthy; it is "the beginning of knowledge" (Prov. 1:7) because we then live in terms of reality and God's absolute power. We must "fear the Lord, and depart from evil" (Prov. 3:7). Moreover, "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil" (Prov. 8:13); it is also "the beginning of wisdom" (Prov. 9:10). "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life" (Prov. 14:27); it

"tendeth to life" (Prov. 19:23), whereas interest in evil and the demonic tends to death.

Our interests tell us how and where our lives are centered. All too often, churches have false centers. Their concerns are humanistic, or they are overly fearful of human and demonic powers. There is no more overpowering faith than the fact that we belong to the Lord who is Lord over all, and whose victory is over sin and death. A diminished Christ is not the living Christ, nor Lord of all. Our faith, the Christian faith in the Christ who is born of God, "is the victory that overcometh the world" (1 John 5:4). To proclaim anything less is to deceive men.

111

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 196, December 1995

One of the interesting aspects of Reformation history is the widespread emphasis given to the doctrine of *providence*. In the English-speaking world, the word *providence* became commonplace in everyday speech: it was a name given to ships, to a city, and the doctrine was very present in the thoughts and words of men. Now the concept is rarely invoked and has become remote to most churchmen.

Its prominence for generations was due to John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Calvin saw the essential link between the doctrines of creation and providence. He wrote, "unless we proceed to his [God's] providence, we have no correct conception of the meaning of this article, 'that God is the Creator'" (*Institutes*, 1.16.1). Calvin insisted on the essential and necessary relationship between creation and providence. The doctrine of creation, when truly understood, means that we recognize that the Creator of all things "is also their perpetual governor and preserver . . . by a particular providence sustaining, nourishing, and providing for everything which he has made." In fact, "all the parts of the world are quickened by the secret inspiration of God" (ibid.). Providence, Calvin held, cannot be confused with "fortune and fortuitous accidents":

> But whoever has been taught from the mouth of Christ, that the hairs of his head are all numbered (*Matt. x. 30*), will seek further for a cause, and conclude that all events are by the secret counsel of God . . . every year, month and day, is governed by a new and particular providence of God. (ibid., 1.16.2)

Providence is more than a doctrine: "providence consists in action" by God: it is more than prescience or foreknowledge (ibid., 1.16.5). In fact, Calvin held,

> All future things being uncertain to us, we hold them in suspense, as though they might happen either one way or another. Yet this remains a fixed principle in our hearts, that there will be no event which God has not ordained." (ibid., 1.16.9)

Calvin was not alone in teaching the doctrine of predestination. Medieval scholars, and Luther, consistently affirmed it in various ways. Luther's *On the Bondage of the Will* is the great classic on the subject. The doctrine, however, has been most associated with Calvin, not because he stressed it more, but because of the Biblical context he affirmed. God, he held, is the absolute Creator of all things in heaven and on earth, their Maker and their Governor. Having made all things in terms of His sovereign purpose, all things move in terms of His holy decree and will. Providence is a necessary consequence of creation. The Westminster Larger Catechism, Answer 18, tells us, "God's works of providence are his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving, and governing all his creatures, ordering them, and all their actions, to his glory." Likewise, creation and providence require the doctrine of predestination. The Westminster Confession of Faith states in part with regard to "God's Eternal Decree":

> God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin; nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.

This means that creationism must recognize that it is radically linked to the doctrines of providence and predestination. If this connection is not made and stressed, then we have Deism, not Biblical creationism. Deism was ready to credit God with starting things, but then God withdrew to allow the cosmos to move ahead or to develop on its own. Deism could grant the presence of God at the beginning, but not thereafter, and, together with its surrender of providence and predestination, there was a drift away from the doctrine of the atonement and redemption. God was thus screened out of the world.

Even in churches that profess to be Biblically sound, where only the historical and scientific facts of creationism are stressed, a theological drift sets in because the seamless garment of doctrine has been rent. We cannot isolate salvation from creation. If God is not the absolute Creator of all things in heaven and on earth, He cannot be the Redeemer thereof because their meaning and purpose are not a part of His ordination and decree, nor totally subject to and dependent on Him.

We are not mindful of the doctrine of providence when we do not

see God's creation and purpose and sovereign decree in all things. By neglecting providence, we neglect God, and we cease to feel and know His total nearness to us in His providential dealings with us. To neglect providence in our thinking is to neglect God, who is closer to us than we are to ourselves, and whose providence is the most marvelous assurance of His grace and mercy. Charles Buck (1771–1815) wrote, "Providence [is] the superintendence and care which God exercises over creation." He said also,

> Nothing can be more clear, from the testimony of Scripture, than that God takes part in all that happens among mankind; Directing and overruling the whole course of events so as to make every one of them answer the designs of his wise and righteous government. We cannot, indeed, conceive of God acting as the governor of the world at all, unless his government were to extend to all the events that happen. It is upon the supposition of a particular providence that worship and prayers to him are founded. All his perfections would be utterly insignificant to us, if they were not exercised, on every occasion, according as the circumstances of his creatures required. The Almighty would then be no more than an unconcerned spectator of the behavior of his subjects, regarding the obedient and the rebellious with an equal eye. (Charles Buck, *A Theological Dictionary*, p. 502)

Many texts in Scripture, now read as "poetic," are in fact affirmations of God's providence. In Psalm 29, for example, we are told of His presence in thunder, in great bodies of water, in earthquakes, in floods, and more: "The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever" (Ps. 29:10).

The decline of the doctrine of the providence of God has meant a loss of His nearness and presence at all times. The omnipresent God is ever near us: we dare not be blind to Him. By neglecting the doctrine of providence, we have lost the great certainty of victory in the triune God, a tragic loss.

SIN & EVIL

112

THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN

Position Paper No. 170, December 1993

Few doctrines are more thoroughly related to everyday life, political order, and hope for the future than the doctrine of *sin*. Tragically, the subject is not even considered in education nor in politics, and yet *the fact* of sin conditions every area of life and thought.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism defines sin thus: "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God." The Bible's definition is the basis of this statement: "sin is the transgression of the law" of God (1 John 3:4).

Sin is disobedience to God and rebellion against Him and His law. Those who deny the validity of God's law are in rebellion against Him, whatever they may call themselves. All men are sinners. Paul tells us that there are none who are righteous outside of Christ, no, not one. The punishment for sin is death in time and eternity. Salvation is deliverance from condemnation and from the power of sin and death.

The effect of sin in us is total. Calvinists speak of total depravity, meaning thereby that every aspect of our being is governed by our sin: our mind and reason, together with everything else. Calvin recognized that some unbelievers are at times capable of great good, but their essential and abiding direction is against God and for evil, and for themselves as the final arbiters of good and evil.

Our world today is warped because of its disbelief in original sin and total depravity. One consequence is *racism*.

Few people have considered the interesting fact that racism is mainly a modern phenomenon. (One of the few to recognize its humanistic roots has been Dr. Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn.) Racism holds that certain peoples have a particularly evil bent. Now, *historically*, various peoples at times have taken an especially evil course, but no race nor nation has

a monopoly on sin. All have at times been degenerate and evil. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

Today, because even among faithful church members knowledge of the Bible and its doctrines is minimal, racism is not uncommon. The evil in our world is attributed to a particular people or race. It is blacks or whites, Jews or Gentiles, and so on and on.

This is a deadly fallacy. It transforms evil from a moral fact into a genetic one. It makes conversion "impossible" because it is then a blood fact, not a moral transgression. Moreover, it shifts the focus of sin from God to man. The Bible tells us that sin is a transgression of the law of God. Racism tells us that evil is a genetic fact, a racist quality. Such a view replaces conversion as the remedy for sin with total warfare against certain peoples as the solution.

Darwinism made racism respectable and commonplace. Scientists today downplay the racism of Darwin's theory, but Darwin's original text *and title* make clear his perspective. Darwin believed that some peoples were not sufficiently evolved to be civilized.

Without the doctrine of original sin and total depravity, it becomes possible to trust man and the state unduly. If men are not depraved, the civil governments they create can be trusted, because their intentions are good. Educated experts are seen as good men, not sinners. Godless courts of law can dispense excellent justice supposedly, because men are either naturally good, or, at worst, neutral in their nature.

We live in an era where the harmony of interests has been replaced with a belief in the radical conflict of interests. We thus have a conflict society and the politics of conflict. War is waged against one's opponents, not an effort to convert them. The Marxists, as in China and Russia, have carried this to its logical conclusion. Those who cannot be educated are executed. They are irredeemable. Evil is basic to their being. The solution to evil is not conversion but coercion and execution. This is why the conflict in our world widens and deepens. It does not see evil as a moral fact but as a physical, racial, or genetic fact. Then war is waged against a class, race, or nation.

Until we have a Biblical doctrine of sin, the conflict society will see more and more conflict and hatred. People will continue to insist that a particular race, class, or nation is the incarnation of evil. They will then be cynical of conversion efforts, because total war is for them the only solution.

The grim fact is that politics and popular thinking around the world are closer to Stalin and Hitler than people want to admit. Their solutions are implicitly similar. "The final solution" for social problems then becomes coercion and death.

The Biblical answer to sin is salvation. This is the reason for the coming of Christ, to bring in the fullness of salvation.

The political answer is more politics, more controls, and more coercion as the solution. We are deep into the political "solution" to the problem. It is a solution which in the long run costs a great many lives. It is time we understood the Biblical answer, and it is time the churches showed the way.

All too many people, in our nontheological age, in the church and out of the church, are too prone to believe that evil is in essence the nature of a particular race, nation, or class. In terms of the Bible, we can better understand evil by looking at ourselves, and then to God's grace. We will then be better able to cope with the sin all around us because we will know the answer.

113

ORIGINAL SIN

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 76, July 1986

Sin is usually a very interesting subject to most people, provided it is not their sin which is the subject of conversation. Our concern here, however, is everybody's sin, original sin, the common inheritance of all mankind. It is described for us in a single sentence in Genesis 3:5; it is man's desire to be his own god, knowing or determining for himself what is good and evil, what is law and morality, and becoming himself the sovereign or lord over his life.

This desire to be one's own autonomous lord and governor permeates all of fallen man's being; it infects his thinking, willing, and acting. This is the meaning of total depravity. Total depravity does not mean that fallen man is incapable of doing some things which are outwardly good, but rather that all man's actions are governed by his will to be the autonomous lord of his life and realm. His actions may conform outwardly to the law of God, but his reasons for acting rest in his own "autonomous" selfhood.

The fall of man was his agreement with the tempter that his program, set forth in Genesis 3:5, is the way, the truth, and the life for man, and that the tempter was right in holding that God seeks to limit and control man's own "divinity" and freedom.

It was the fall which introduced fear into the world. Man, having sinned, was now afraid of God and His judgment (Gen. 3:10). Fear is now basic to the human scene. Theodor Reik wrote somewhere that he did not know a single psychiatrist who believed in God, or know of one who was not afraid of Him! There is no escaping the fact of fear.

Many texts tell us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of learning, life, and wisdom (Prov. 1:7, 14:27, 15:33; 19:23, etc.) We are also told, "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe" (Prov. 29:25). The fear of God is clean and

healthy, whereas the fear of man is servile. With Christ, the love of God begins to grow in us; 1 John 4:18 declares, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear." Such a perfect love will only be ours in heaven, but, as we grow in grace, so too does our love of God increase. This love of God is not and cannot be antinomian, for love is the fulfilling, the putting into force, of God's law because we now are remade in His image (Rom. 13:8–10).

Meanwhile, fear is not only a constant element in life but a major fact of history and politics. The modern state cultivates fear in the people. The Internal Revenue Service finds that, the more people fear it, the easier their work is. Civil regimes find that guilty people are subservient to their will, and it therefore uses guilt as an instrument of power. In every modern state, because of the great multiplicity of laws, rules, and regulations, it is easy to keep most people afraid of being subject to prosecution.

Totalitarian states create a mindless terror in order to have a mindless fear among the people. If I know a simple set of laws, such as the Ten Commandments, and I know that I am not in physical violation of any, and I earnestly seek to keep them faithfully in my mind, then I have a sense of peace and freedom. I then know the law, and my status before it. If, however, laws and regulations are produced by tens of thousands each year, I cannot know them, and I am left with a vague disquiet about them. Fear can disarm people and leave them defenseless.

Fear is thus a basic instrument of government in the modern world. If men are kept in a state of fear and uncertainty, they are thereby disarmed of their courage and strength.

Paul, in speaking of love as keeping the law, mentions the need also to keep God's law concerning debt (Rom. 13:8–10). Debt, like fear, creates a paralysis of moral strength and a dependency. It limits our freedom. It is not without significance that, since World War II, the modern state has encouraged debt, and has given tax benefits to those who go into debt. In the United States, interest payments on debts gain tax deductions for the debtor. By encouraging debt, the state enables debt-slavery, moral bondage, and a paralysis of freedom to result. Combine debt with fear, and you have a greatly weakened moral fiber in the people.

The decay of the family is another concomitant, and it further weakens the freedom and moral power of men. As the family is undermined, it leaves the lonely individual with no intervening and controlling power between itself and the state.

Original sin thus divides man from man, and from his own family, and it leads to fear, debt, and slavery to the state. The human condition becomes a sorry one.

Among the responses of our time to this human crisis are the various gospels of liberation by love. New Testament or Koine Greek has three words for love. *Eros* refers to sexual or erotic love. More than a few of our "love-babies" have seen this as the way of liberation. Sin for them is denying oneself of the liberation of sexuality. Henry Miller was an advocate of such a salvation, and the sexual revolution was a manifestation of it. This hope is now foundering, with its consequences including many mental and emotional wrecks, the proliferation of sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDs, and death as the result of freedom. Another Greek word is *philos*, which refers to human love, brotherly love, the love of man for his fellow men. The problem with this gospel of love has been that fallen man, being governed by original sin, is exploitive in his love. The "love-babies" who are going to save the world with this kind of love are unwilling to face up to the fact of sin, especially their own. There is a particularly obnoxious arrogance and pride about these "love-babies." They are sure that the power of their love can regenerate the world, but they are incapable of coping with the fact of man as a sinner. Their answers are superficial and their love a form of pride.

There are, of course, ostensibly "Christian love-babies" as well, people who believe that *agape*, or love as grace, is being channelled through them. They are antinomian to the core, and for them love has replaced God's law. They know all the "love texts" in the New Testament, except John 15:10, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love"; "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14); and, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). To separate love from law is to turn it into a denial of God's Word and into a form of humanism. The "love-babies" are full of themselves and their love, not Jesus Christ, nor the Holy Spirit.

Original sin is man's effort to replace God as God with man, to replace God's law with man's word, to replace the mercy, grace, and love of God with the love of man. Thus, original sin is antinomianism, and Adam and Eve were the first antinomians. They replaced God's law-word with their own will. When the tempter said, "Yea, hath God said . . . ?" (Gen. 3:1), Adam and Eve agreed that, whatever God has said, man's own word should be equally valid.

Thus, original sin is man saying, my will be done. This is the governing impulse in fallen man. When our Lord, at the Mount of Olives, just prior to His arrest, trial, and crucifixion, said, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42), He, as the Adam of the new humanity (1 Cor. 15:45–50), established the pattern for His people. We are the new human race in

Christ in whose hearts the law is now written (Jer. 31:33), and who say in Christ, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:9). It is we who must say always, "not my will, but thine be done." Antinomianism is at the heart of fallen man; it is original sin.

History has been the long attempt of men to make original sin work. Politics (in the United States, whether Republican, Democrat, or anything else) is usually the art of persuading men that a particular platform and version of original sin will solve all our problems and abolish sin itself. Most political campaigning today is like that of the tempter in the Garden of Eden: it offers sin as the way of salvation.

This brings us to the heart of the matter. Original sin is man's own plan of salvation. God had created all things, and, on earth, fenced off one area, the Garden of Eden, as a pilot project for man. Here man was to learn how to exercise dominion and to subdue the world (Gen. 1:26–28). This was an agricultural task, calling for tillage; a scientific task, because it required "naming" or classifying the animals; a technological task, because it required making tools, fencing fruits and vegetables from the animals, and so on. In a variety of ways, this calling of man to knowledge and dominion required work, very hard work; it was especially hard because Adam and Eve began with nothing. It was a sinless world, but not a perfect or mature one, and certainly not easy.

The tempter offered an easier way to dominion and wealth than work. God was seeking to repress man's powers and limit man's scope. Thus God's word was not to be trusted. The best word is man's own autonomous word, because man's enlightened self-interest will work best to further man's dominion and wealth.

Original sin was thus the denial of God's law-word in favor of man's law, word, and plan. As men develop their original sin, they develop also their five-year plans, their regional plans, economic plans, educational, cultural, and other plans, because for them the solution is in man's autonomous word.

The world thus sees the deepening shadows of the fall and of the judgment of God on man's autonomy. It cannot escape judgment. As Isaiah 14:26–27 tells us, "This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" God's judgment shall fall on all the nations until they know, Isaiah says, that God is the Lord and Sovereign. Man in his original sin has no hope, nor have the nations.

Our Lord requires us to pray, not in terms of our plan, but God's. Someone has observed that too many people, in their prayers, are giving

God His instructions for the day. Then they wonder why they are not heard!

Our Lord requires us to seek first God's Kingdom and His justice (Matt. 6:33), and to pray thus: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). Only then will the things we need be added to us (Matt. 6:32–33).

114

THE FREEDOM TO SIN

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 78, September 1986

Some many years ago, a man asked me a rhetorical question, "What would you do if you were God?" he demanded, and then proceeded to answer it himself. "I know what I would do." He continued to tell us what he as god would do, and most of the men agreed. His conclusion was this: because God did *not* do these to him so obviously good things, and God is supposed to be all good, God does not exist.

The essence of all that he said was very simple: he felt that a good God could not allow men to sin, to make mistakes, to wrong themselves and others, and so on and on. In brief, man should not have the freedom to sin. The Garden of Eden was for him no paradise, because at its very center there was a tree to tempt man and destroy him. All our lives, no matter how well-intentioned we are, and no matter how "good," we are prey to ugly consequences from simple mistakes. For this man, Darwin's struggle for survival and the survival of the fittest was at least an accurate description of life and the world. The human endeavor, he believed, should be to eliminate the problems which frustrate and trip up man by means of intelligent social planning and control. Only so could man create the world which the Biblical God refused to create.

At the heart of this man's argument was the desire to play god and to prevent man from sinning. It was implicit to his argument that mankind through the state should strive to create the great world community which God refused to create. Naturally, for him sin was not the problem: it was and is the ugly circumstances and environment which man faces.

Humanistic man has tried to save man and the world by works of statist law. I discussed the approaches used in the *Chalcedon Report*, issues 161–163, January–March 1979.[1] As I pointed out then, the *first* step was

1. See "Law as Revolution" (January 1979), "Law as Regulation" (February 1979),

law as a means of *reformation*, the salvation of man and society by law. A basic step in this plan was the introduction of the prison system, reformatories wherein men were to be reformed and made into useful citizens.

The *second* step was *regulation*, laws used to so control men as to make sinning impossible. In such a social order, all men are controlled by various state agencies in order to prevent any outbreak of evil. Prohibition was a major step towards this goal; gun control is another. Regulating agencies to police capital, labor, farming, medical practice, and all other spheres of activity are now commonplace attempts to abolish sin.

The *third* step is now in process, law as a means of *redistribution*, and the Internal Revenue Service is important towards this goal. The "evils" of inequality of wealth and opportunity must be equalized, it is held, by the compulsion of taxation, confiscation, and various forms of legalized expropriation. The redistributive state wants a world beyond good and evil, beyond criticism and judgment, a world of total equality — except for the elite rulers.

By eliminating the freedom to sin, the modern state becomes progressively more coercive, and brutally so. The "Gulag Archipelago" is the logical conclusion of every attempt by man to play god and to eliminate the freedom of sinning. At root, our political and related problems have their source in man's desire to have a new Garden of Eden without any possible source of temptation and fall. Many of the child-rearing problems which confront modern parents have a like origin. Parents want to spare their children the necessity of being tried and tested, which means that the parents believe in indulgence, not true freedom. True freedom necessitates risks, trials, and temptations. It necessitates the possibility of failure, but it also makes success possible. A risk-free, failure-free world is a world doomed to die.

Let us look at this problem a bit further, and theologically so. *First*, we have seen the statist solution; statist men say, let us prevent the possibility of sinning that grace may abound. Of course, the grace here meant is humanistic grace, a beneficent spirit on the part of all men which will create the great world community of men's dreams. In such a faith, grace is a purely negative factor; it is the absence of all opportunity for sinning. It produces an unfree, graveyard society. If such a society could be realized, men would cease to be men. Not surprisingly, some socialistic thinkers have seen this ideal world as one comparable to an anthill or a beehive. Personal consciousness will disappear, and, like the ants, all subordinate men will be like the worker ants.

Over the centuries, a *second* answer has arisen repeatedly from heretical

and "Law as Redistribution" (March 1979). — editor

sources. Paul summarizes this position in Romans 6:1, "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" Antinomianism often flirts with this evil doctrine. Because God is all love and all grace, it has been held, sin draws God's pitying love, grace, and mercy. Before the Russian Revolution, some cults in that country showed evidences of such a belief, as have groups in other areas over the centuries. All such views manifest a mechanistic doctrine of God, as though there is an automatic reaction from God to certain conditions.

Neither the supposedly no-sinning great community of the states, nor the deliberate sinning of Manichaeans and some antinomians can produce grace: it is always the gift of God, and it is sovereign grace. Nothing man can do can produce grace. However, grace in the life of man produces faith and faithfulness, the spirit of obedience to the Lord.

Man's law seeks to create a temptation-free world wherein men cannot sin, and it creates instead hell on earth. Man's law has as its goal a naturalistic grace produced by the legalistic abolition of the possibilities of temptation, trial, testing, and failure, but instead of men of grace it produces human monsters.

Quite obviously, men need testing. Adam had the freedom to sin, and to pay the price thereof. We too have a like freedom, and we too must pay a price for all of our sins.

William Blake, often the source of every heresy, at one point saw the issue clearly when he wrote, "I saw the finger of God go forth . . . Giving a body to falsehood that it may be cast off forever." Man is made in God's image, but this does not make him a god. It gives him a very great potential for dominion under God, but it also tempts him to play god. However, as Solomon said, "The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov. 16:4). We are not our own; we have been bought with a price, and we must therefore serve and glorify God (1 Cor. 6:19–20).

What God's permission for us to sin means is that we quickly learn that we are not gods, and that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). We rebel against this knowledge, and many suppress it, but we are not usable to the Lord until, by His grace, we accept the fact of what we are and what we must become in Christ.

I was a young man when I first read a line from the concluding portion of James Russell Lowell's poem "Under the Willows." Lowell spoke of men as, "We, who by shipwreck only find the shores Of divine wisdom." He was right. It is not our works nor our self-righteousness that saves us. God shipwrecks us to makes us ready for His grace.

We live now in an age of judgment which will soon break over us.

Scripture makes it clear that judgment and salvation go together; the cross is the supreme example of their coincidence. It is the symbol of God's judgment upon us, and His grace unto salvation. Without judgment, we would have no hope. The world would then proceed systematically into hell.

The freedom to sin in Eden, and in the world, is God's purpose. By our sins, we know ourselves to be but men, however proud and angry, by our sinning. By His grace, we know ourselves to be His creatures, called to be His dominion men, priests, kings, and prophets in His everlasting Kingdom.

A medieval popular song thanked God for the fall of Adam, concluding thus:

> Blessed be the time that apple taken was!
> Therefore we may singen Deo gracias.

115

THE OPPOSITE OF SIN

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 33, August 1982

Sometimes the best way to understand the meaning of an idea or concept is to know its opposite. Thus, the opposite of night is day, which tells us something about both night and day. The opposite of life is death, but if we say it is freedom, we reveal a suicidal disposition. Some psychologists have used this matter of antonyms, opposites in words, to understand the mental state of patients.

This means of understanding has other uses, including philosophical and theological ones. Our concern here is Biblical and theological. Ask yourself this question: what is the opposite of sin? The answer is not a new one; it goes back to the Bible, and Proverbs especially sets opposites together to help us understand what God means. This teaching method was used in Israel, and it still continues to a degree in Jewish educational forms. The church once used it but has abandoned it.

To return to our question, what is the opposite of sin? The Old Testament Hebrew has several words for sin, *chatha*, *'aven*, *pesha*, *'avah*, and more. (The New Testament Greek uses especially *hamartia,* and *anomia*.) These words mean failure, blameworthiness, iniquity, rebellion or transgression, and crooked. They have reference to a wrong done to God or to man in violation of God's law. The Westminster Shorter Catechism summarized it thus: "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God" (1 John 3:4).

The opposite of sin is a commandment obeyed in faithfulness, or, in terms of current Hebrew, a *mitzvah*. A *mitzvah* is, in its primary sense, a commandment of God as set forth in His Word. In its secondary sense, it means our faithfulness to God's law, our act of faith and obedience whereby we manifest the grace and righteousness of God. To "do a mitzvah" was thus to obey the Lord. (One folk proverb said, "one *mitzvah* leads to another.")

In origin, the word mitzvah is derived from a Hebrew root meaning "to command" or "to ordain." It has reference to God's law-word. (Most people are familiar with the word "mitzvah" from the rite of bar mitzvah, when boys, at the age of thirteen plus one day, and girls in the bat mitzvah, at the age of twelve plus one day, publicly acknowledge their duty to keep the commandments of God. This rite in some form is very ancient, and it was continued in the church in the rite of confirmation. It is very regrettable that confirmation is becoming a less and less educational process, or, in some churches, has been dropped entirely. A study is long overdue on the purpose and place given to a child by the bar/bat mitzvah and by confirmation. Here we have a cultural fact of great importance which has been ignored by historians.)

The opposite of sin is a commandment by God, the whole of God's law-word. As we have seen, sin is any want of conformity to, or transgression of, the law of God. Saving righteousness, justifying righteousness, or justice, is the faithfulness of Jesus Christ to the every word of God, and His atoning death and resurrection, as our vicarious substitute and head. Sanctifying righteousness is our faithfulness to the law-word of God.

The child, from its earliest days, is taught that certain things are forbidden, and certain acts required. The world is governed by "thou shalt nots," and also by requirements, "this shall ye do, and live." By chastisement and by discipline, the child is taught the right way, and barred from the wrong, while being told that one's only justifying righteousness before God is in and through our redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Then, with Christian schooling, and in some form a mature confirmation of the faith in his own life and experience, the young man or woman is now ready for adult life, for maturity, "to do a mitzvah," to use the old phrase.

It is at this point that the church, like the synagogue before it, has failed. College and university graduates are regularly told that their real schooling is just beginning. More correctly, they should be told, it should now begin, but, for the most part, they settle into the routines of their life and learn as little as possible thereafter. The same is true in the church. One pastor, who visited a former charge after more than twenty-five years, found it a joy to see old friends, but, religiously, a discouraging experience. Despite the many years, there were too few evidences of growth in Christian faith, knowledge, and action. In the intervening time, they had been served by pastors who were able teachers, but they had been content to remain babes in Christ.

If the opposite of sin is the commandment or law-word of God, and

doing His will, this means that Christian action in the world is the antonym of sin. The Christian community has a world responsibility (Matt. 28:18–20).

We have forgotten what was once a very important doctrine, *vocation*. It means seeing our life *and* work as a calling from God to serve and obey Him. A famous poem by George Herbert set forth this doctrine:

> Teach me, my God and King,
> In all things Thee to see;
> And what I do in any thing,
> To do it as for Thee!
>
> A man that looks on glass,
> On it may stay his eye;
> Or if he pleaseth, through it pass,
> And then the heaven espy.
>
> All may of Thee partake;
> Nothing can be so mean,
> Which with this tincture, "for Thy sake,"
> Will not grow bright and clean.
>
> A servant with this clause
> Makes drudgery divine:
> Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,
> Makes that and the action fine.
>
> This is that famous stone
> That turneth all to gold;
> For that which God doth touch and own
> Cannot for less be told.

W. R. Forrester, in *Christian Vocation* (1953), called attention to the fact, "in language after language the same word is used for toil and childbearing, e.g., 'labour' and 'travail'" (p. 129). Both are burdened with the curse of the fall (Gen. 3:16–19), but the two are the essential key to any possible future for man. Both are the purpose of God for man, and, with man's redemption, become man's blessing (Ps. 127). Our Lord says, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34). By this He says that for a man's soul, a calling is the sustaining thing, as food is for the body.

Luther said, "What you do in your house is worth as much as if you did it up in heaven for our Lord God . . . Therefore we should accustom ourselves to think of our position and work as sacred and well-pleasing to God, not on account of the position and the work, but on account

of the word and faith from which the obedience and the work flow. No Christian should despise his position and life if he is living in accordance with the word of God, but should say, 'I believe in Jesus Christ, and do as the ten commandments teach, and pray that our dear Lord God may help me thus to do.'"

Calvin, in his *Institutes* (3.10.6), spoke of "the boiling restlessness of the human mind," and our need of a calling. This calling is of God's appointing, not our daydreaming. "Every man's mode of life, therefore, is a kind of station assigned him by the Lord, that he may not be always driven about at random. So necessary is this distinction, that all our actions are thereby estimated in his sight, and often in a very different way from that in which human reason or philosophy would estimate them . . . in everything the call of the Lord is the foundation and beginning of right action."

This calling, doing God's will and living in terms of His law-word or commandments, is life to the faithful. One of the sharpest and clearest comments about this came from James Chalmers, missionary to New Guinea in the very earliest days of that mission: "Don't send us men who talk of self-sacrifice." We must say with Christ, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:9), because life apart from our calling of faithfulness, of obedience, is not life for us.

The psalmist knew what it was "to do a mitzvah"; he sang about it: "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. I have remembered thy name, O Lord, in the night, and have kept thy law" (Ps. 119:54–55). Again, "O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day" (Ps. 119:97).

To have a calling without faith in God and obedience to His commandments is evil and even demonic. Oswald Spengler, in *The Decline of the West*, saw the decline and destruction of the West in the rise of ambitious men with purely secular callings. He saw the socialists of the future as the arch-imperialists of history, and, of Cecil Rhodes he said, "Rhodes is to be regarded as the first precursor of a Western type of Caesars, whose day is to come though yet distant" (1, p. 37).

The demonic Titanism which Spengler, writing in 1914–1918, saw in the world's future, came much earlier than he had predicted. Socialism, both national and international, has become imperialistic. Fascism and Nazism, and especially the Soviet Union, Cuba, Libya, and other Marxist states, have been history's bloodiest powers. Since 1975, in its brief history, Marxist Cambodia (or Kampuchea) has executed half of its population. At the same time, as Carroll Quigley has shown in *The Anglo-American Establishment* (Books in Focus, 1981), the heirs and followers of Rhodes have devastated the rest of the world with their sickly idealism.

If our calling, our *mitzvah*, is not to do the will of Him that sent us, and to finish His work (John 4:34), we are faithless to our Lord and dangerous to society. To have a calling without and apart from God's law-word is to be a deadly menace to other men and to society.

The opposite of sin is to do the commandments in faith, to *confirm* our faith in action. This means the Great Commission, the conversion of all the world, the discipling of all nations, the application of God's law to every area of life, and the recognition by every sphere of the lordship of Christ.

Forrester called attention to the difference between vocation and ambition. Vocation allies itself with the Lord and places itself under the every word of God (Matt. 4:4). A vocation is the result of regeneration and faithful obedience. It sees freedom as obedience to the Lord. Ambition is marked by a lust for power and preeminence. The ambitious man seeks to use God and man to gain his own ends.

The ambitious man assents to the great temptation and says, I shall be my own god, determining or establishing for myself, in terms of my will, what constitutes good and evil (Gen. 3:5). The man with a calling says with our Lord, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4).

The ambitious man, because power is his god, will slaughter kulaks, persecute Jews, capitalists, whites, blacks, or workers, exploit all men, treat youth as cannon fodder, and generally dedicate himself to what, in terms of God's law-word, is sin and only sin, however noble a cause he may ascribe to his actions. (Most sins come labelled with a noble rationale; sinning is usually called liberation; and murders in the cause of sin are usually called victories over the enemies of the people, the state, or the "Great Cause.")

As against this, our Lord says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt. 22:37–40). On these two also hang the future of society. For the man with a godly vocation, this is the way of life.

The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is inseparable from the facts of confirmation (and doing a mitzvah), and vocation. A work of some years ago, on confirmation, spoke of the training for, and the rite of, confirmation as having this goal, "the professing of the faith" in all one's life and actions.

Thomas Wilson (1663–1755), bishop of Sodor and Man, in his *Sacra Privata*, wrote, "He lives to no purpose who is not glorifying God." We

glorify God when we keep His commandments, do His will, and rejoice in our calling in Him.

The opposite of sin is doing the commandments in faithfulness. "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:14–26). Our Lord speaks clearly on this: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21).

116

SIN AND EVIL

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 90, September 1987

Words often tend to be dulled and cheapened with time. Careless usage, poor education, and indifference to clarity serve to blur the meaning of words, so that we often inherit words which were once sharp tools but now have dulled edges.

Two such words are sin and evil. Until recently, the dictionary definition of sin retained its Biblical focus: "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4), God's law. The Biblical orientation of the word "sin" tells us why the term is not much used outside of the church: it speaks too clearly of personal responsibility to God.

"Evil," on the other hand, has a broader definition, in the Bible and in dictionaries. It can and does include sin, but it means much more. It covers calamities, diseases, death, disasters, and the like.

Evil can be a result of sin; thus, sexually transmitted diseases are always evil, but they are not always a result of sin, if caught innocently. On the other hand, death is a result of the fall and of man's sin, but death itself is not a sin, although it is called an "enemy" (1 Cor. 15:26). Sickness is an evil, but not necessarily a sin, although on occasion it can be a result of sin.

The distinction between sin and evil is a very important one. Theological errors have resulted from their confusion. Thus, Christ by His atonement redeems us from sin; He takes upon Himself the penalty for sin, the death sentence, so that we are delivered into everlasting life. By His atonement, we are made a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17), and our calling is to reconstruction, to the restoration of all things and the elimination of all evils until, with Christ's coming again, "the last enemy . . . death," is then destroyed (1 Cor. 15:25–26).

The atonement thus covers sin, not evil. The redeemed man has a

duty to destroy the effect of sin in himself, i.e., to "mortify" it (Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5). Christ must reign in the new man and through him subjugate "all rule and all authority and power," so that only "the last enemy . . . death," remains at Christ's coming (1 Cor. 15:24–26). This destruction of evil comes through sanctification; it comes also through scientific work which overcomes diseases and "natural" threats of a fallen world. In every sphere, we are to work to overcome evil and enthrone Christ.

Our atonement does not sanctify us perfectly: it gives us the power to make our lives and spheres holy. Our standing before God is as innocent in Christ, but we now have the duty to develop the new life of righteousness or justice in every sphere.

In false views of the atonement, sin and evil are both seen as destroyed, not only with respect to our legal status before God, but in our psychological status, so that we are supposedly perfect in holiness and freed from evil. To be sick then becomes evidence of sin! A generation or two ago, one minor cult leader was sure that the atonement had freed him from sin and death so that he would neither sin nor die. (He did both.)

In terms of such thinking, healing, instead of being a ministry of compassion, became a demand for trust or belief in the atonement.

A key difference between sin and evil is that sin is always personal, whereas evil is often impersonal. Sins are the acts of men and have no existence apart from human action, creaturely action, in transgression of the law of God. It is thus an absurdity to say we should hate the sin and love the sinner. It is an artificial distinction. Theft, adultery, murder, false witness, covetousness, idolatry, dishonoring parents, and other sins are the acts of men and are the expressions of their moral nature. The man who steals is a thief, and the man who commits murder is a murderer. The act does not occur of itself; it is the act of a sinful man, and it is an expression of his will and life. Our Lord insists on the unity of a man's life and his works; hence, "by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20). "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12:33–34).

Sin is not an entity: it is an act of man's will, whereby he transgresses God's law because man prefers his own will and way to God's requirements. Its origins are in Genesis 3:5, man's will to be his own god.

Modern man does not like to speak of "sin." Many churches have dropped the word "sin" from their vocabulary. Pastoral psychology finds all kinds of good reasons for sins: need, loneliness, neglect, self-realization, deprivation, and much, much more. All these "reasons" have a

common purpose, to diminish personal responsibility for sin. We are full of "good excuses," and we encourage them. "I didn't know what I was doing." "My intentions were good, but, before I knew what I was doing, I was in trouble." "If only my training had better prepared me, this never would have happened." Or, in "Flip" Wilson's words, "The devil made me do it." Perhaps the most common "not guilty" plea is this: "Well, I'm only human!" In other words, God made me this way, so He is to blame.

Sin is not a popular subject for preaching these days! Many church officers and members will insist on "positive preaching" to "build up" the listeners, and the congregation's size. (For a year or two, one woman wrote me particularly vicious letters every few weeks to let me know what a hateful person I obviously was because of my writings. Particular statements would move her to fury; they obviously troubled her, and she called me every kind of ugly name. She demanded a gospel of love, told me she was praying for my salvation, and then signed her letters, "In Christian love." I have received, over the years, much hatred and venom by mail, all in the name of love! Show me a "love-baby," and I will likely be face to face with an accomplished hater!)

Modern man does not like to hear anything about sin, but he does speak freely of evil. Remember, sin is personal, very personal. If someone talks about sin in your life and mine, they are getting totally personal! However, if they talk about the evil we experience, the talk is impersonal. A disastrous storm, or a tornado, can do much evil, but it involves no guilt on your part and mine. But if you talk about my sin, you are getting very personal!

Today, because fallen men run nations, the talk is about evils, not sins. These evils are outside of us. They are things like poverty, hunger, war, sickness, and more. The "solution" to social evils is then declared to be the appropriation of more money; more power to the state; more money for education, research, and study; more social engineers and planners; and so on and on.

The cost of these legislative and bureaucratic solutions is very, very great. For one thing, it means more and more taxation. In the United States, it adds up, on all levels, to a taxation in excess of 45 percent of our income. In most countries, the direct and indirect taxes add up to far more. This, however, is only the taxation cost by income, sales, manufacturing, and other taxes. An even more deadly form of taxation is inflation, which steadily devours savings and capital; it also destroys the value of pensions and life insurance. There is also the cost of freedom, and we continually see our freedom diminished in the name of this war against social evils.

Meanwhile, the evils increase, because the solution is a false one and only aggravates the problem. It was man's sin that brought evil into the world, and to bypass sin is to give evil greater freedom. God declares (Deut. 28) that He diminishes evils as men believe and obey Him, and increases and intensifies them as men disobey Him.

We also aggravate our plight by insisting that sin is not sin but a social evil, not personal but impersonal. Sociologists do not call sin by its proper name; criminals are explained by heredity, or by environment. Their genes were bad, or their family environment was entirely wrong for them. This is another way of saying that criminals are "not guilty."

Drop the word "sin" from law, and in time you drop also the word "guilty." Remember, sin is personal; it is the transgression of the law of God. It is a personal act of rebellion by man against God and His Word.

Dostoyevsky saw the logic of unbelief: if there were no God, all men could do as they pleased, because there would then be no sin. Nietzsche embraced this belief: the new man must live beyond good and evil because, he held, God is dead. Walter Kaufmann, in *Without Guilt and Justice* (1973), held that guilt and innocence, justice and injustice, are theological doctrines. Because man now lives beyond this belief in God, in autonomy, he can dispense with guilt and justice, because neither concept now has meaning. The last "chapter" of Kaufmann's book is his retelling of Genesis 3:5; man is now ready to be his own god and determine good and evil for himself. "Nobody knows what is good. There is no such knowledge. Once upon a time God decided, but now that he is dead it is up to you to decide. It is up to you to leave behind guilt and fear. You can be autonomous" (p. 237). (We should not be surprised at any kind of madness in Kaufmann's writings: he was a man who not only read Hegel on his honeymoon but wrote proudly of it!)

No God, no sin, no guilt — this is the modern equation, a thoroughly suicidal one. God declares, "he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death" (Prov. 8:36). The men who heralded the death of God were actually declaring the death of man.

Long before Nietzsche and Kaufmann, men were paving the way for them by subverting the moral criteria. When Milton's Satan, in *Paradise Lost*, says, "Evil be thou my good," Milton was giving us a long-current opinion through Satan. The humanist scholar, Lorenzo Valla, in *De voluptate* (1431), held that pleasure is the only authentic good of man; all goods can be reduced to pleasure. This is man's natural and hence normative goal. True, Valla could say, and his apologists use it to justify him, that glory and a contemplative life give pleasure to some. Let us remember, however, the pleasure Valla took in declaring, "courtesans

and harlots are more deserving of honor from humankind than holy and chaste virgins." Some men try to tell us that Renaissance humanism meant simply the study of classical literature. It was indeed that, but it was commonly governed by a delight in classical immoralism. For too many classical scholars, sin was a form of freedom, and for some the key form.

This is still true of many circles, including the circles in which Lord Keynes, Strachey, and others, the so-called "Apostles," moved. It is basic to the "sexual revolution," to abortion, and to the homosexual agitation: sin is declared to be the new freedom. Evil is by some then defined as restriction on the freedom of man to live in defiance of God and to declare sin to be man's true freedom.

It is instructive, in this regard, to remember that this was the creed of developed and mature paganism in imperial Rome. As Donald Earl noted, in *The Age of Augustus* (1980), "Sexual freedom . . . was a prerogative of the Roman noble, female as well as male" (p. 192). Now, with the prevalence of the democratic spirit, this "right" to immoralism is claimed by all classes. Less than ten years ago, a raging University of California Los Angeles student insisted to me that the wages of sin are not death (Rom. 6:23), but a richer and freer life.

The Westminster Larger Catechism echoes Scripture to declare, "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, any law of God, given as a rule to the reasonable creature" (Question 24). As 1 John 3:4 and all of Scripture makes clear, "sin is the transgression of the law," i.e., the law of God.

This brings us to the heart of our problem. When the church is antinomian and despises the law of God, what can we expect of the world? When the church bypasses the Bible's definition of sin, why should the world pay attention to it? The reformation of society must begin with the reformation of the church.

117

CONSPIRACIES

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 229, October 1998

Perhaps throughout all of history there have been large numbers of people dedicated to the faith that history is dominated by secret conspiracies and groups. It is not that I doubt the existence of many such groups, but that I question their relevance. Man's basic problem is not a group of insiders, but himself and his revolt against God and God's law. Every attempt to localize the problem into some class, race, or other conspiracy confuses the issue. Man is the problem: he is a sinner in revolt against God and God's law. He knows in his heart the consequences of breaking it, but break it he does, and then he blames someone or something else for the results. He sees himself as the victim of a conspiracy, and he blames often some group, class, race, or interest as the source of all his problems.

Now, evil groups are real and plentiful enough, but there is more to the story than that. For example, recently a black woman judge was up for nomination to the federal bench. Testimony showed that in one case she had wept after a jury found guilty a defendant who had raped a ten-year-old child, saying, "It's not that I think the rape did not occur. But five years is a lot of time," referring to the prison term (*World*, March 28, 1998, p. 9). Under fire, this judge withdrew her name from the nomination process.

Her character was known before her nomination by the president. Was her nomination a conspiracy, or was it a sin? True, behind her nomination were racial motives (she was black), feminist hopes, and more, but basic to it all was a lack of moral standards, a contempt for God's law.

Any revolt against God's law is a sin and a form of rebellion against the King of Creation and His Kingdom. We trivialize sin and therefore life when we fail to see the true dimension of lawbreaking, a war against God.

We also trivialize God when we fail to see that all sin is a form of war against God. Because we do not want God to rule over us, we find every reason to limit the responsibility for the world's fallen estate. If we can limit it to a class, race, or faction, we have placed ourselves in the camp of the saints merely by reclassification. It is an interesting fact that in a time of war, internal mental problems, suicides, and ills decrease because we localize sin and the world's evils in a foreign enemy.

By denying that all men are sinners without exception, save Jesus Christ, and that all men equally need His redemption, we falsify the human problem. We can localize sin in a conspiracy rather than the whole human race. We then wage war against a group rather than seeking to become a new creation in Jesus Christ. We try to end the problem by redefinition.

118

LOYALTIES

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 62, May 1985

Over the years, I have repeatedly seen, and commented very often about, the evil of self-pity. Self-pity is the most deadly spiritual cancer a man can inflict upon himself. With self-pity, we wall ourselves off from the world and joy, we give a self-centered meaning to all events, and we see life, not as a gift and grace from God (1 Pet. 3:7), but as a conspiracy against us. We then view life and politics, not as a responsibility, but as a vast plot. That men conspire is true, and Psalm 2 tells us that the basic conspiracy of history is against God and His law. We are also told by all of Scripture that faithfulness to the Lord makes us victorious in history against all enemies and powers (Deut. 28).

Men, however, find it easier to blame others than to assume responsibility. Hence the radical absorption of many in documenting all the evils perpetrated by one group or another. Such documentation changes nothing. Men are not saved by knowing their enemies but by knowing and being strong in the Lord. We can best see where our enemies are, and who they are, when we are most in Christ.

A great deal of our bigotry comes from a concentration on the wrongs we have suffered rather than on the wrongs we inflict on other people. No lying is involved, only an emphasis on one aspect of our lives. To illustrate, and to limit the illustrations to the American experience, ever since I was young, I have had Jewish friends tell me of the bitter persecutions they endured: being called "Christ-killers," "Kikes," and more, being discriminated against in various ways, and so on. All of this is clearly true.

Again, I have heard Catholic friends express their hurt and indignation at having their church called "the whore of Babylon," at being treated as evil people because of their faith, abused for their religious practices, and

so on. Some of the indignities suffered are painful to hear about. I have no doubt as to their truth.

Furthermore, many Protestants can tell like stories, all true. One girl told me of her painful experience in being the only Protestant in a business establishment with over a dozen girls, all the rest Catholic, with a Jewish boss! Only her unquestionable excellence kept her out in front; every kind of effort was made to push errors on to her. She was the target of ugly remarks about her faith, and so on and on. Only the pay and her need to work kept her going. Many, many more such tales can be told, all true.

But this is only one side of the story. More than one Catholic, Protestant, and atheist has told me of the problems of living in an old-fashioned Jewish neighborhood, and walking as a child down the street and having the Jewish old folks on their stoops spitting at them, of falling and hurting oneself badly and everyone laughing with delight, and so on.

Again, a Jewish boy in any non-Jewish neighborhood has suffered torment at the hands of Catholic, Protestant, and atheist boys in the neighborhood. I have heard more than a few stories of the cruel humor, the nasty pranks, and the like, all too routine in such cases. Each has tried to outdo the other in unkindness.

Need I say more? There is not a group in society which has not suffered some indignities and also inflicted indignities on others. Can you convince any group of their sins? They love to major in the sins of others.

This holds true in marriage. "Men!" I heard a woman snort indignantly once, "I could tell you a lot about them, the ———!" I am sure she could have, and I am sure that men could have told me a lot about her. In marriage, men and women too often have the bad habit of concentrating on their spouse's sins and shortcomings, not their own, and feeling a great deal of self-pity. One wife, who neglected her most routine responsibilities as a wife but complained endlessly about her husband, became venomously angry when I asked her about her responsibilities. I have seen men bitterly angry because their wife has a problem; the men have assumed that only they have a right to needs and wants. We all tend to forget that the one person we can change is ourselves, and this is our God-required duty. Everyone, however, wants to reform others, especially their enemies. We forget that the greatest menace to community comes from this kind of Phariseeism. It is the essence of Phariseeism to see oneself as superior, and others as the problem people of the world. We miss the whole point of our Lord's indictment of the Pharisees if we forget that, to a very real degree, they were the best people of their day, and they knew it. Their attitude towards others reflected this. In His biting

attack on the Pharisees, our Lord portrays one boasting even to God of his superiority: "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican" (Luke 18:11). What the Pharisee did was to separate himself from other men in terms of his ostensibly superior religious stand. Our Lord tells us that the publican was justified before God, not the Pharisee (Luke 18:14).

Let us remember, too, that our Lord declares that the summation of God's law is in two commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind . . . And . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:37, 39). Not humanistic or social criteria but the love of God must govern all our being. When we love God truly, then we can also love our neighbor as ourselves. Two things are clear in this latter commandment. *First*, it presupposes that we love ourselves. We can only respect ourselves and have a healthy self-love when we know that we are created in the image of God and redeemed by Jesus Christ. Men who cannot love themselves cannot love others. Much of the failure of various groups, Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and others, to have the godly respect for groups or persons outside their fellowship that they should is due to a lack of a Biblical view of themselves under God.

God's repeated test of the integrity of a people's faith is their care for widows, orphans, and strangers, for those who are outside their normal realm of association. This is the *second* aspect of this commandment. To love our neighbor as ourselves is to show as great a concern for his or her welfare, rights, and reputation as for our own. To love our neighbor as ourselves means to respect our neighbor's marriage and its sanctity ("Thou shalt not commit adultery"); his life ("Thou shalt not kill"); his property ("Thou shalt not steal"); his reputation ("Thou shalt not bear false witness"); and to do this in word, thought, and deed ("Thou shalt not covet").

What this means is very clear. Beyond a very limited sphere, judgment is the province of God. A godless state will assume more and more of the prerogatives of God and assume powers of judgment over all of life. Because we are not God, for us the decisive power in society must be the regenerating power of God and the work of the Holy Spirit in and through us. Not revolution but regeneration, not coercion but conversion, is our way of changing the world and furthering the Kingdom of God. This is the heart of Christian Reconstruction. The heart of Biblical law is that it makes us the basic government of society in and through our personal and family life, through our vocations, churches, and schools. In Biblical law, civil government is a very limited and minor sphere of rule and power.

No society can be healthy if the people are not strong in their faith. A strong state means a weak people. The various civil governments of the world are all strong and overbearing in their power because the peoples are weak in the faith. Statist power grows to fill a vacuum in government created by the irresponsibility of the people. When men say of their Lord, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14), they are inviting anarchy. The book of Judges describes such a time. Men had rejected God as their king, and, because "In those days there was no king in Israel" God having been denied, "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judg. 21:25).

When men do that which is right in their own eyes, when they deny Christ our King and His law-word, then their word and their group become the source of determination for them. Men then act humanistically and are determined by their group, not the Lord. Our governing allegiance must be to Jesus Christ and His reign, not to our Catholic or Protestant churches.

Our faith can rarely surpass our allegiance. If our allegiance is Presbyterian, Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, or what have you, we are small men indeed, and our "faith" a warped one at best. Churches like persons must be instruments in the hand of God, not the centers of our lives. We can and must respect the instruments, but we warp the faith if we are not God-centered.

The story is told of a famous evangelist of almost a century ago who encountered a drunkard who blubbered gratefully that he owed his conversion to him. The evangelist responded, "I must have converted you, because obviously the Lord didn't."

If our allegiance is to anything short of the triune God and His Word, our loyalties will be humanistically oriented. We will be overly-governed by groups and institutions, however good, and insufficiently governed by God the Lord. A prominent American political leader, a man of unique independence, once told me that peer pressure governs most politicians. Before their election, they are motivated by what they and their constituency want. After their election, the peer pressure of their new group now governs them, and they are less responsive to the demands of their electorate.

Peer pressure is a most potent force in the modern world because religious faith is by contrast weak and fragile. Indeed, in one church college, group dynamics are taught as an important and worthy source of social strength.

This goes hand in hand with a major shift in man's outlook which came progressively into force with the Enlightenment. The domain belonging

to religion and the church was seen as the inner world, the spiritual life of man. The domain of reason and the state was held to be the material sphere. There is no warrant in Scripture for any such division. All things were made by God the Lord, and all things are subject to His law-word and government. His church must declare God's Word and its relevance to all the world, the state no less than any other sphere. For the church to be silent in any sphere, or to limit the scope of God's government, law, and rule is to sin and to deny to that degree its Lord.

We are not therefore to be governed by our parochial loyalties, nor by group dynamics, nor by peer pressure. All our churches, institutions, groups, races, nationalities, and allegiances must be subject to the prior government of the triune God and His law-word. Anything short of that is idolatry.

The fundamental declaration of God's law is this: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exod. 20:3). We must remember that even very good things can be turned into idols and false gods. For many, their church is an idol, or their family, their children, their race, nationality, or group. However good these things may be, they can become and often are idols when we give them priority over the love of God, and, in that love of God, our love of our neighbor. A limited good, if given too high a place in our lives, can be as destruction or more than an open and obvious evil. Remember, such a perspective led men into crucifying Christ.

119

THE REVERSAL OF STANDARDS

Position Paper No. 119, March 1990

Over the centuries, as Christianity has advanced, countermovements have arisen. With the Enlightenment, a major and lasting countermovement began its history, and, although the Enlightenment gave way to Romanticism, and a variety of other motifs, the anti-Christianity remained, but with a difference.

The Marquis de Sade, waging unrelenting war against Christianity, rebelled against the idea of good and rejected it. This rejection became rapidly more and more vocal. Max Stirner, in *The Ego and Its Own*, expressed contempt for atheists who professed to have rejected Christianity but were still closet Christians because they did not practice incest; the "death of God" for him meant also the death of all ideas of good and evil. Friederich Nietzsche called for living beyond good and evil.

The conflict was not to be between good and evil, but rather, with both good and evil abandoned as false concepts, it was to be between moral and religious standards on the one side, and "freedom" to live in an "objective," ostensibly nonmoral, realm on the other. Emile Durkheim, in terms of an evolutionary premise, saw the criminal as an evolutionary pioneer breaking new ground for society.

One consequence of this change was that very early in the modern era the criminal became a romantic hero. The thinking which led to Rousseau's philosophy led in literature to the idealization of the outlaw as one who represented a true state of nature (see Paul Angiolillo, *A Criminal as Hero* [The Regent Press of Kansas, 1979], pp. 32–33). In the twentieth century, films popularized this idea greatly. Actors like James Cagney played the part of noble criminals warring against a hypocritical and evil society. In time, public sympathy was with convicts as against their guards. In 1989, a prison guard, Michael McLaughlin, with R. S. Dynda and Warren

Jamison, wrote an account of prison life in an institution for hardened criminals (*Screw: The Truth about Walpole State Prison by the Guard Who Lived It* [Far Hills, NJ: New Horizon Press, 1989]). The guards must wear rain gear on their rounds because prisoners, among other things, shower them with urine and feces. In any conflict, politicians, lawyers, and courts side with the criminals. Murder by convicts is routine; guards are regularly wounded; narcotics flourish. So, too, does homosexuality. Mothers would openly copulate with their sons when visiting them, and sisters would pay off a brother's gambling debts by sexually servicing the creditor. Brutal murderers would regularly get furloughs. At every turn, the criminal was favored, and guards and society became the losers.

What takes place in prison is a paradigm of modern society. The death penalty for murderers is opposed, but unborn babies are murdered. The reversal of standards denies the validity of Biblical morality and favors practices designed to undermine Christianity.

All this should not surprise us. Modern humanism is logical and systematic in the application of its faith in a way that Christians are not. The humanist is a more religious man usually than the Christian, and more dedicated to his faith.

The churchman usually holds his faith lightly, and he does not allow it to interfere with his lifestyle. He expects much from God in exchange for a slight profession of faith. If any Christian leader's preaching or writing troubles his conscience, he often reacts venomously. His concept of Jesus Christ is of one who gives man various guarantees in return for an occasional "nod to God" and a pittance of giving. Many churchmen are as much, and sometimes more, of a problem to the faith than are its enemies.

The advance of this great reversal of values is expedited by the "conservative" intellectual, churchman or "agnostic." His perspective is one of a studied rootlessness. He advocates all kinds of "traditional values" without calling attention to their necessary source in Biblical faith. To admit to Christian faith is seen as alien to an intelligent discourse.

The result is a curious one. In the 1920s, an old-fashioned liberal, H. L. Mencken, had a major influence. Mencken, in the name of intellectualism, did little more than attack bitterly Christians and Southerners. (Since Mencken, a curious development has taken place. Southerners who aspire to status as intellectuals routinely damn the South to prove that they are worthy of status.)

Mencken, as an old-fashioned liberal, broke with the New Deal and F. D. Roosevelt. In the 1980s, his fall from liberal grace continued as it became known that he disliked both blacks and Jews!

Mencken's influence, curiously, is alive and well in conservative circles. Imitation Menckenism gained its first revival in the *National Review*, then in *The American Spectator*, and later in *Chronicles of Culture*. All three are often of great interest; their writers are among the finest, and their issues are usually good reading. Their high quality makes their failure all the more distressing.

They share in a common error: a studied rootlessness. Their thinking is in a vacuum. More than Christianity's enemies, they simply ignore its existence. The liberal and radical humanists take Christianity seriously and attack it strongly. The latter-day Menckenites act as if it does not exist, or never existed. Some of them are churchmen, but one would never know it to read them.

As a result, their work, often finely honed, witty, and learned, is marked by a curious sterility. By their unwillingness to allow religion into intellectual discourse, they become trivial. Paul Tillich rightly defined religion as "ultimate concern." The latter-day Menckenites live and think with trivial concerns. They do themselves the gravest injustice, because their studied rootlessness invites a sad description of them: "the intellectual as eunuch." By ignoring the religious nature of human concerns, they condemn themselves to a life of appearances, to a carefully cultivated irrelevance.

Our liberals and radicals are indeed anti-Christian, but they are religious men, earnest humanists. Too many churchmen are like the Laodiceans described and condemned by our Lord: neither hot nor cold, simply lukewarm (Rev. 3:14–16). And too many conservative intellectuals have become abstracted from reality because of their hostility to the matters of faith; they read sometimes like guests at a Mad Hatter's tea party.

It is no wonder, then, that a major reversal of morals and standards has long been under way. In the academic world, the disaster is far gone, and a new reign of the dunces prevails. Charles J. Sykes rightly subtitled his *ProfScam*, "Professors and the Demise of Higher Education" (Regnery Gateway, 1988).

Those who believe that an imaginary pendulum will restore moral standards are assuming that a naturalistic and mechanical factor is always at work. This belief is itself an evidence of the breakdown of standards! Restoration comes through God's judgment and grace, and man's faith and work. It begins in us and with us. We put our lives, our faith, our time, and our money on the line. There is no other way. The belief in a mechanical adjustment by a "pendulum" is to believe in a modern fairy tale. Civilizations have routinely perished and disappeared. No society

can have standards when men lack them in all their being. Such a society does have a peace — in the grave.

Our Lord and His law-word have been treated with contempt by our culture. God will surely deal with all such men and nations. How will He deal with us?

BIBLICAL LAW

120

THE MEANING OF THEOCRACY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 15, August 1980

Few things are more commonly misunderstood than the nature and meaning of theocracy. It is commonly assumed to be a dictatorial rule by self-appointed men who claim to rule for God. In reality, theocracy in Biblical law is the closest thing to a radical libertarianism that can be had.

In Biblical law, the only civil tax was the head or poll tax, the same for all males twenty years of age and older (Exod. 30:16). This tax provided an atonement or covering for people, i.e., the covering of civil protection by the state as a ministry of justice (Rom. 13:1–4). This very limited tax was continued by the Jews after the fall of Jerusalem, and, from A.D. 768–900, helped make the Jewish princedom of Narbonne (in France) and other areas a very important and powerful realm (see Arthur J. Zuckerman, *A Jewish Princedom in Feudal France, 768–900* [New York, NY: Columbia University Press, (1965) 1972]). This tax was limited to half a shekel of silver per man.

All other functions of government were financed by the tithe. Health, education, welfare, worship, etc., were all provided for by tithes and offerings. Of this tithe, one-tenth (i.e., 1 percent of one's income) went to the priests, for worship. Perhaps an equal amount went for music, and for the care of the sanctuary. The tithe was God's tax, to provide for basic government in God's way. The second and the third tithes provided for welfare, and for the family's rest and rejoicing before the Lord (see E. A. Powell and R. J. Rushdoony, *Tithing and Dominion* [Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books]).

What we today fail to see, and must recapture, is the fact that the basic *government* is the self-government of covenant man; then the family is the central governing *institution* of Scripture. The school is a governmental

agency, and so too is the church. Our vocation also governs us, and our society. Civil government must be one form of government among many, and a minor one. Paganism (and Baal worship in all its forms) made the state and its rulers into a god or gods walking on earth, and gave them total overrule in all spheres. The prophets denounced all such idolatry, and the apostles held, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

From the days of the Caesars to the heads of democratic states and Marxist empires, the ungodly have seen what Christians too often fail to see, namely, that Biblical faith requires and creates a rival government to the humanistic state. Defective faith seeks to reduce Biblical faith to a man-centered minimum, salvation. Now salvation, our regeneration, is the absolutely essential starting point of the Christian life, but, if it is made the sum total thereof, it is in effect denied. Salvation is then made into a man-centered and egotistical thing, when it is in fact God-centered and requires the death, not the enthronement, of our sinful and self-centered ego. We are saved for God's purposes, saved to serve, not in time only, but eternally (Rev. 22:3). To be saved is to be members of a new creation and God's Kingdom, and to be working members of that realm.

In a theocracy, therefore, God and His law rule. The state ceases to be the overlord and ruler of man. God's tax, the tithe, is used by godly men to create schools, hospitals, welfare agencies, counselors, and more. It provides, as it did in Scripture, for music and more. All the basic social financing, other than the head tax of Exodus 30:16, was provided for by tithes and offerings or gifts. An offering or gift was that which was given above and over a tithe.

Since none of the tithe agencies have any coercive power to collect funds, none can exist beyond their useful service to God and man. For the modern state, uselessness and corruption are no problem; they do not limit its power to collect more taxes. Indeed, the state increases its taxing power because it is more corrupt and more useless, because its growing bureaucracy demands it.

California State Senator H. L. "Bill" Richardson has repeatedly called attention to the fact that, once elected, public officials respond only under pressure to their voters but more to their peer group and their superiors. Lacking faith, they are governed by power.

People may complain about the unresponsiveness of their elected officials, and their subservience to their peers and superiors, but nothing will alter this fact other than a change in the faith of the electorate and the elected. Men will respond to and obey the dominant power in their lives, faith, and perspective. If that dominant power or god in their lives is the state, they will react to it. If it is man, or their own ego, they will

be governed by it. If, however, it is the triune God of Scripture who rules them, then men will respond to and obey His law-word. Men will obey their gods.

One of the more important books of this century was Albert Jay Nock's *Our Enemy, The State* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1935). Without agreeing with Nock in all things, it is necessary to agree with him that the modern state is man's new church and saving institution. The state, however, is an antisocial institution, determined to suppress and destroy all the historic and religiously grounded powers of society. With F. D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, the goal of the statists became openly "the complete extinction of social power through absorption by the State" (p. 21). This will continue in its suicidal course, until there is not enough social power left to finance the state's plans (as became the case in Rome). The state's intervention into every realm is financed by the productivity of the nonstatist and economic sector: "Intervention retards production; then the resulting stringency and inconvenience enable further intervention, which in turn still further retards production; and this process goes on until, as in Rome, in the third century, production ceases entirely, and the source of payment dries up" (pp. 151–155). It is true that crime needs suppression, but, instead of suppressing crime, the state safeguards its own monopoly of crime.

We can add that the solution to crime and injustice is not more power to the state, but God's law and a regenerate man. The best safeguard against crime is godly men and a godly society. Furthermore, God's law, in dealing with crime, requires restitution, and, with habitual criminals, the death penalty (see R. J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law*).

One more important point from Nock: he called attention to the fact that "social power" once took care of all emergencies, reliefs, and disasters. When the Johnstown flood occurred, all relief and aid was the result of a great outpouring of "private" giving. "Its abundance, measured by money alone, was so great that when everything was finally put in order, something like a million dollars remained" (p. 6).

This was once the only way such crises were met. Can it happen again? The fact is that it is happening again. Today, between 20–30 percent of all school children, kindergarten through twelfth grade, are in nonstatist schools, and the percentage is likely to pass 50 percent by 1990 if Christians defend their schools from statist interventionism. More and more Christians are recognizing their duties for the care of their parents; churches are again assuming, in many cases, the care of elderly members. Homes for elderly people, and also for delinquent children, are being established. (One of the more famous of these, under the leadership of

Lester Roloff, is under attack by the state, which refuses to recognize sin as the basic problem with delinquents, and regeneration and sanctification as the answer.) Christians are moving into the areas of radio and television, not only to preach salvation but to apply Scripture to political, economic, and other issues.

Moreover, everywhere Christians are asking themselves the question, what must I do, now that I am saved? Answers take a variety of forms: textbook publishing for Christian schools, periodicals, and more. The need to revive and extend Christian hospitals is being recognized, and much, much more.

Isaiah 9:6–7 tells us that, when Christ was born, the government was to be on His shoulders, and that, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." By means of their tithing and actions, believers are in increasing numbers submitting to Christ's government and reordering life and society in terms of it.

The essence of humanism, from Francis Bacon to the present, has been this creed: to be human, man must be in control (Jeremy Rifkin with Ted Howard, *The Emerging Order*, p. 27). This is an indirect way of saying that man is not man unless the government of all things is upon his shoulders, unless he is himself god. It is the expression of the tempter's program of revolt against God (Gen. 3:5). John Locke developed this faith by insisting that Christianity is a private concern, not a public matter. Christianity thus could not be the basis of public activity but only a private faith. The foundation of the state and of public life was for Locke in reason.

But reason, separated from Christian faith and presupposition, became man's will, or, better, man's will in radical independence from God. The state then began to claim one area of life after another as public domain and hence under the state as reason incarnate. One of the first things claimed by Locke's philosophy and "reason" was man himself! Man, instead of being a sinner, was, at least in the human and public realm, morally neutral; he was a blank piece of paper, and what he became was a product of education and experience. It thus was held necessary for the state, the incarnate voice of "reason," to control education in order to produce the desired kind of man.

The state claimed the public realm. The public realm had belonged, in terms of Christian faith, to God, like all things else, and to a free society under God. The church was scarcely dislodged from its claims over the public realm when the state came in to claim it with even more total powers.

But this was not all. The state enlarged the public realm by new definitions, so that steadily, one sphere after another fell into the hands of

the state. Education was claimed, and control over economics, a control which is now destroying money and decreasing social and economic productivity. The arts and sciences are subsidized and controlled, and are begging for more. Marriage and the family are controlled; the White House Conference on the Family views the family as a public and hence statist realm, one the state must invade and control.

Ancient Rome regarded religion itself as a public domain and hence licensed and controlled it. (The very word *liturgy*, Greek in origin, means public service. Religion is indeed a public concern, more so than the state, but not thereby a matter for statist control.) Rome, like all ancient pagan states, equated the public domain with the state's domain, and it saw all things as aspects of the state's domain.

For any one institution to see itself as the public domain is totalitarianism. All things public and private are in the religious domain and under God. No institution, neither church nor state, can equate itself with God and claim control of the public (or private) domain. Every sphere of life is interdependent with other spheres and alike under God. No more than mathematics has the "right" to control biology do church or state have the "right" to control one another, or anything beyond their severely limited sphere of government.

There are thus a variety of spheres of government under God. These spheres are limited, interdependent, and under God's sovereign government and law-word. They cannot legitimately exceed their sphere. The legitimate financial powers of all are limited. The state has a small head tax. The tithe finances all other spheres.

The tithe, it must be emphasized, is to the Lord, not to the church, a difference some churchmen choose to miss or overlook. This robs the individual believer of all right to complain about things; by the godly use of his tithe, he can create new agencies, churches, schools, and institutions to further God's Kingdom in every area of life and thought. Holiness comes not by our abilities to whine and bewail the things that are, but by our faithful use of the tithe and the power God gives us to remake all things according to His Word.

Tithing and godly action, these are the keys to dominion. We are called to dominion (Gen. 1:26–28; 9:1–17; Josh. 1:1–9; Matt. 28:18–20; etc.). The creation mandate is our covenant mandate; restoration into the covenant through Christ's atonement restores us into the mandate to exercise dominion and gives us the power to effect it.

Aspects of that mandate can be exercised through institutions, and sometimes must be, but the mandate can never be surrendered to them. The mandate precedes all institutions, and it is to man personally as man

(Gen. 1:28). This is the heart of theocracy as the Bible sets it forth. Dictionaries to the contrary, theocracy is not a government by the state but a government over every institution by God and His law, and through the activities of the free man in Christ to bring every area of life and thought under Christ's kingship.

121

THE SOURCE OF LAW

Position Paper No. 185, February 1995

Sensible thinking becomes a rare thing in an age like ours, when men are determined to reject God at every turn. For an example of illogic, consider this comment by Larry Kramer, in his *Reports from the Holocaust: The Making of an AIDS Activist*. He wrote, "The AIDS pandemic is the fault of the white, middle-class majority. AIDS is here because the straight world would not grant equal rights to gay people."

Certainly, where theonomy is concerned, a like illogic prevails. After all, law is simply legalized morality and its procedural premises, and all morality expresses some kind of religious faith. "Thou shalt not kill" is not a universal moral law; the Marquis de Sade's radical intellectual challenge to it was not unique; in practice, many cultures had in part preceded in this. In this century, Walter Kaufmann held that guilt and *innocence* are ideas which presuppose Biblical faith and law and are therefore invalid in our day and age. If there is no God, why should there be any morality? Are we not, then, beyond good and evil?

Of course, most people refuse to be so logical. They want some kind of law because they want safety. To believe that laws in and of themselves can give us safety is a dangerous illusion. Lawless men, as their numbers increase, become the ruling force, and no law can restrain them.

People, however, insist on some kind of law to "protect" them, but what kind of law? The source of law is a key concern. Laws can be created by majority rule (but what if the majority of men are evil?) or by legislators (but we have seen what legislators too often are), or by dictators (and who wants to trust his life and property to a dictator's will?). If our laws do not come from God, then they come from some man, or some group of men. Can we trust men? Few things could be more foolish.

Basically, our choice as lawgiver is either God or man. If we reject God

as lawgiver, we have rejected Him as our sovereign, our ruler. The first edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1771, defined law thus: "The command of the sovereign power, containing a common rule of life for the subjects." The law a person recognizes as his law tells us who his king is, God or man. Today, the god of the peoples, and of the churches, is too often man, not the triune God. We are rebels against the true king when we set aside His law. False laws are a recipe for lawlessness and anarchy, and we are gaining a growing measure of both.

The matter is a simple one: Who is your god, your king? If you deny God's law, you declare of His Son, and therefore of the Father, that they are not sovereign over their own creation. You in effect choose another god.

Law always has a theological foundation, but its god may be other than the God of Scripture. When Biblical law is forsaken, justice goes out of that society.

Justice is the administration of that which is right; it is a moral concept. If we look to political, majoritarian, elitist, pragmatic, or like sources for our idea of justice, we destroy it because it is no longer a moral premise above and beyond the human order, but a product of it. We then vindicate Marx's belief that "justice" is merely the idea of a class in society whereby power can be established over others.

Some look to "natural law," an ambiguous concept. Medieval thinkers often meant by it the law of God written in Scripture, and the law of God ruling *over* nature. With the Enlightenment, this idea was converted into a law *inherent* in nature, a very different doctrine. Nature being fallen cannot be normative.

When we deny God's enscriptured law, we then enthrone human and institutional opinions, and we nullify the moral authority of law, and we erode the doctrine of justice.

Whenever antinomian doctrines have triumphed, as in the nineteenth-century, groups which brought forth also new eschatological doctrines and rapturism, so too immoralism has flourished. One cannot deny God's law without moral consequences.

The New Testament church saw the law of God as fully valid. Paul took a Nazirite vow (Acts 21:15–26). Failure to abide by God's law meant one was "uncircumcised in heart and ears" (Acts 7:51). As Gerard S. Sloyan wrote, "In summary, all the Christians of the apostolic age assumed that the whole Law had to be observed" (p. 171). Sloyan also pointed out that the Wellhausen shift from "law" to "spirit" had an evolutionary bias (p. 27).

Harold J. Brokke pointed out, "Where there is government, there is law" (*The Law is Holy*, p. 16). The question is thus, whose government?

We are inevitably under some kind of government and law, but the question is, whose government, and whose law? The choice is between God and man. Too many churches, either by their modernism or by their antinomianism, have as surely rejected Christ as did Pilate and the Sanhedrin of that day.

When Charles I of England ordered all clergymen to read his royal law bidding people to return to their Sunday sports, many refused to read it. One man, however, read it and then added, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Brethren, I have laid before you the commandment of your king and the commandment of your God. I leave it to you to judge which of the two ought rather to be observed" (p. 71).

We face a like choice today.

122

NATURAL LAW AND THEONOMY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 200, May 1996

The idea of natural law goes back to Greek and Roman thought. It has over the centuries taken many forms. Natural law has meant state law at times because the state is seen as nature's highest expression. On the other hand, it has meant to many a law inherent in nature, and more than a few see it as God's creative hand that has given nature this law.

One the other hand, a growing trend in the Reformed community of faith has rejected the concept. It has seen the realm of nature as possessing certain physical laws but not the source of moral law nor a natural theology. The essential presupposition is that nature is a fallen realm and therefore not normative. In a fallen world, evil is more "natural" than virtue. The Marquis de Sade is not usually thought of as a champion of natural law, but the idea was basic to his thinking. Grace and virtue require a supernatural gift, so Christianity is antinatural and hence for Sade mankind's enemy. Theft, murder, rape, incest, dishonesty, etc., are more clearly natural than are any of the virtues. Hence, the natural inclination for Sade needed cultivation rather than antinatural Christian virtues. Sade made natural law the justification for every kind of crime because no law of God was other than antinatural and therefore unfit for man and this world.

All the same, men regularly call for a return to natural law as the moral alternative! At the beginning of the 1980s, at a well-attended conference, a noted Protestant champion of natural law (and, logically, a Pelagian as well) called for a return to natural law as a moral necessity. One man, Wayne Johnson, then asked him, "What does natural law say about adultery?", only to have the question dismissed as frivolous. Natural-law thinking has never contributed *anything* to morality, only to political theory as a vague and general support.

It was Cornelius Van Til who most tellingly called attention to this alien tradition known as natural law, natural theology, and sometimes, as common grace. In his seminal work, *Christian Theistic Ethics* (1947), he summarized the matter thus:

> The ethics of Plato and Aristotle are autonomous as well as the ethics of Kant. *There is no alternative but that of theonomy and autonomy.* It was vain to attempt to flee from God and flee to a universe in order to seek there for eternal laws. (Cornelius Van Til, *Christian Theistic Ethics* [Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Theological Seminary syllabus, 1947]. In the 1971 edition, by the Den Dulk Foundation, see p. 134. In both editions, the italics are original.)

There can be no understanding of Cornelius Van Til apart from this premise. *Autonomy*, literally *self-law*, is man's attempt to supplant God's law with his own, which, however much in many versions makes claims to be godly and moral, separates itself from the God of Scripture. Man becomes the determiner of "law," which is more opinion than law. Theonomy, which means God's law, takes law, and ultimate rule, out of the hands of man because it belongs to God. There can be no understanding also of Christian Reconstruction apart from Van Til and his presuppositional thinking. Given Van Til's rejection of natural law as an aspect of autonomy, the Christian community must look to God's law or become lawless. Theonomy is inseparable from Christianity.

The matter is more than an academic one. Our world is seeing too many Elmer Gantrys in the pulpit. J. Schultze's *Preacher's Girl* (1993) is a sickening account of immoral preachers, modernists and fundamentalists (although we can add Roman Catholics and mainline Protestants to the evil catalogue of child-molesting, adulterous, homosexual, and generally derelict clergy and laity). Antinomianism in any circle will result in sin. In Schultze's account, it includes child molestation, adulteries, theft, and murder. Granted that Schultze's account is mainly but not entirely concerned with untrained pastors, the evidence is still clear from many sources that a rejection of theonomy means autonomy, and original sin as seen in Genesis 3:5 is autonomy.

It is logically necessary that in a religious system where man's decision saves him, man's law will also suffice for him, not God's law. It follows, too, as Van Til pointed out, "[m]an's autonomy is assumed to be the sole presupposition in terms of which any revelation that might come from any god would be intelligible" (*The New Hermeneutic* [Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., 1974], p. 25). Man's desire to assert his autonomy as against God, or by way of adding to God, leads to natural theology. Van Til observed:

> It is of basic importance that what has just been said about God's revelation in the world of nature and of man be not confused with what is called natural theology. Natural theology is the result of the interpretative reaction that sinful man has given to the revelation of God to him in the created world. When we speak of revelation in nature we speak of an act of God directed manward. When we speak of natural theology we speak of a reaction on the part of man directed Godward. This distinction is all important for a proper exegesis of Romans one. (*The Doctrine of Scripture* [n.p.: The Den Dulk Foundation, 1967], p. 56).

Van Til wrote emphatically about God's revelation in nature, but he was equally emphatic in rejecting man's interpretation of that revelation as against the acceptance of the essential and primary authority of the enscriptured Word. To use natural theology was to supplant the clear Word of God with man's version of reality. As Van Til pointed out:

> Instead of boldly offering the idea of the self-contained God as the presupposition of the intelligent interpretation of nature, it starts with the idea of the self-contained character of nature and then argues to a god who must at best be finite in character. Instead of starting with the wholly revelational character of the created universe, including the mind of man, this natural theology starts with the nonrevelational character of the universe and ends with making it revelational of the mind of would-be autonomous man.
>
> This sort of natural theology has had its origin in Greek speculation, and more particularly in the systems of Plato and Aristotle. With no lack of appreciation for the genius of these great Greek thinkers it must yet be maintained that they, with all men, inherited the sinfulness of Adam and, accordingly, had their reasons for not wishing to hear the voice of God. With all men they assume that nature is self-sufficient and has its principles of interpretation within itself. ("Nature and Scripture," N. B. Stonehouse, Paul Woolley, eds., *The Infallible Word: A Symposium* [Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., 1946], p. 275)

We come here to the heart of Van Til's "problem" that makes him a gauche figure to many who are otherwise friendly: Van Til always introduces sin into philosophical discussions, and philosophers want to see their thinking as purely intellectual, not as commonly sinful. All too many hands were raised against Van Til for breaking with the philosophical tradition which bars the idea and fact of sin from intellectual discussions. Do these philosophers and theologians think they are immune to sin, or that philosophical discussions cannot reflect man's depravity? Is it any wonder that philosophy is in so low repute? As one university student once stated it, "I always thought philosophy was high-level thinking until I took a few courses from those idiots!"

The ultimate implication in natural theology is the autonomy of man. A true "natural theology" will recognize what Scripture and the confessions tell us about God the Creator; it will not attempt to go from nature to God but will begin with God's enscriptured Word and will know nature in terms of it. Autonomous reason is then rejected, and all things are understood in terms of the self-contained God of Scripture.

Then, too, the premise of Genesis 3:5 is rejected because it is anti-God and it is the essence of man's original sin, to be his own god and the determiner of law, of good and evil, to be in his thinking his own ultimate frame of reference and to use nature in modesty to cover his own tracks as god and lawgiver. Natural law is a fig leaf whereby man attempts to cover his moral and intellectual nakedness, and the attempt is a failure.

The relevance of Genesis 3 is stressed by Van Til. It means that, unless we begin with the fact of man's sin, we will stress with fallen men "the principle of autonomy." "Can the difference between the principle of autonomy and that of Christian theism be ignored so that men can together seek to interpret natural revelation in terms of one procedure?" (*A Christian Theory of Knowledge* [Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Theological Seminary, 1954], p. 156). Our starting point must be in the Scriptures, and with God, not man. Our reason being an aspect of our fallen being seeks priority over God, and, the redeemed man being not perfected in this life, his reason as the autonomous judge is a dangerous and perverse guide. It is God's revelation that must guide us, not our minds.

Men insist, as they embark on their premise of the autonomy of man's reason, on their neutrality. The assumption behind their claim to neutrality includes, among other things, the premise, *first*, that God's enscriptured Word cannot be taken at face value but must submit to the test of man's reason. God must be verified by man! *Second*, there is the assumption that man's reason is autonomous, neutral, and objective, and therefore a valid judge. An examination of these autonomous, neutral, and objective minds in philosophy and theology quickly gives us a picture of partisan, biased, and highly subjective minds and persons. Being sinners, our minds seek to work against God and to give more heed to our word than His Word. Men try to prove God in their arrogance when nothing is more obvious than His existence. In Van Til's words:

> God has never left himself without a witness to men. He witnessed to them through every fact of the universe from the beginning of time. No rational creature can escape this witness. It is the witness of the triune God whose face is before men everywhere and all the time. Even the lost in the hereafter cannot escape the revelation of God. God made man a rational-moral creature. He will always be that. As such he is confronted with God.

> He is addressed by God. He exists in the relationship of covenant interaction. He is a covenant being. To not know God man would have to destroy himself. He cannot do this. There is no nonbeing into which man can slip in order to escape God's face and voice. The mountains will not cover him; Hades will not hide him. Nothing can prevent his being confronted "with Him with whom we have to do." Whenever he sees himself, he sees himself confronted with God.
>
> Whatever may happen, whatever sin may bring about, whatever havoc it may occasion, it cannot destroy man's knowledge of God and his sense of responsibility to God. Sin would not be sin except for this ineradicable knowledge of God. Even sin as a process of ever-increasing alienation from God presupposes for its background this knowledge of God.
>
> This knowledge is always that which all men have in common. For the race of men is made of one blood. There are no atheists, and least of all in the hereafter. Metaphysically speaking then, both parties, believers and unbelievers, have all things in common; they have God in common, they have every fact in the universe in common.

(Too little has been said about Van Til's ability as a writer. The above passage, and the whole body of his works, tell us what an eloquent and powerful writer he was.)

Of course, this is what Scripture tells us from start to finish, notably in Romans 1:18–21. As Van Til noted, "only on the basis of a world in which every fact testifies of God can there be a Word of God that testifies of itself as interpreting every other fact" (Van Til, *A Christian Theory of Knowledge*, p. 179).

To rely on natural law or natural theology is a subterfuge for evading God and His Word. I cited earlier the question asked of a natural-law seminary professor about natural law and adultery. Of course, natural law cannot give a clear confirmation of any of the Ten Commandments, or any other Biblical law. It is used to confirm the thinker's own ideas in a general way, usually political. No man has ever been arrested or hung for violating a natural law. The French Revolution, which most used natural law, instituted a reign of terror because it quickly identified natural law with the voice of the people, and the revolutionary leaders as the only valid voice thereof. All this was in terms of Rousseau's general will, the infallible voice of "Nature," and the people.

Deny natural law and the infallible general will, and your alternative then is God's enscriptured law-word. To confuse the two, or to choose natural theology or law, is ultimately to open the door to tyranny in politics and anti-Christianity in religion.

123

NATURAL LAW AND CANON LAW

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 55, October 1984

Words change their meanings with time, and it is a mistake to assume that an older or "original" meaning still governs the word. Thus, the word "silly" once meant good or blessed; "farm" meant a tax, and a "farmer" was a tax collector; "vote" could mean either a plea or prayer, or a determination, or an expression of will, which is closer to its present meaning. These and other words have changed in meaning, and it is important, in using writings of the past, to understand each change of meaning in the term.

One such very changed term is "natural law." It comes from the ancient Greeks, who meant something very different by it than many recognize. *First* of all, for the Greek thinkers, nature was not fallen; *second*, the material world was divided into two substances, matter and ideas. The ideas or patterns were universals which good reasoning could discover, so that the philosophers, in their reasoning, assumed that their rational conclusions, where correct, represented natural law. Aristotle and Plato thus assumed that their political reasoning grasped the universals of life and thus represented true order and natural law. The distinction was between "man-made law" (what unreasoning men legislated) and "natural law" (what the philosophers saw as the logos or reason of being). Natural law thus claimed to set forth the true order in nature. We can say that Marx, in describing the inevitable historical process and its conclusion, echoed natural law in this sense.

The medieval era had a different concept at first, although never entirely free from the Greek inheritance. Gratian (ca. 1148) wrote, "mankind is ruled in two ways: namely, by natural law and by customs. The law of nature is that contained in the law and the Gospels" (*Decretum*, pt. 1, distinction 1). In subsequent passages, the Greek influence is apparent,

but for most men of his day, Biblical law was seen as natural law, the law of the Creator by which all things are governed.

In Aquinas, the Greek revival was strong. Natural law was seen as something pertaining to right reason. God and man share a common being, and "all beings other than God are not their own being, but are beings by participation" (*Summa Theologica*, pt. 1, Q. 44, A. 1); this represented a shift from creation to participation, a Greek concept. It meant that "the intellectual principle which we call the human soul is incorruptible" (Q. 75, A. 6). The rational creature therefore "shares in the eternal reason . . . and such participation of the rational creature in the eternal law is called natural law" (Q. 91, A. 2). Nicholas of Cusa (ca. 1400–1464) also held to this: "since natural law is naturally in the reason, every law is known to man in its root."

Such thinking bypassed the doctrine of creation, and it made void the doctrine of the fall. Evil became metaphysical instead of moral and was equated with nonbeing. All being was good, because all being by participation was continuous with God's being. The revival of Aristotle made the Enlightenment inevitable, because the Enlightenment simply took over these concepts of right reason and natural law and carried them to their logical conclusion. Christianity and the church were very quickly seen to be excess baggage.

If right reason is expressive of natural law, then the rational state, i.e., that order established by philosopher-kings, is the true state and expressive of natural law. The theory of the divine right of kings held to the royal manifestation of natural power and law.

The two great enemies of the divine right of kings were the Jesuits and the Calvinists. The Jesuits upheld the power of the papacy to govern all things spiritual and to declare God's will for rulers; the Calvinists insisted on the sovereignty of God over church and state.

The divine right of kings was a curious doctrine. It held to the claim that the king's power came directly from God to the king. Some exponents of this theory attached the divine right to the *office* rather than the person, but this limitation was rejected by men like James I of England. The right was natural and hereditary as well as divine. Like the private succession of land under feudal law, divine right was a natural hereditary possession belonging to a royal line and its rightful heirs. Hence, care was given to establish the legitimate order of succession. The power of divine right "included nothing less than the complete disposal of his subjects' persons and property" (Charles Howard McIlwain, ed., *The Political Works of James I* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1918], pp. xxxiii–xxxiv). Kings were thus little gods, according to James I.

No supernatural law could take priority over, or be cited against, this natural succession. As a result, there was an increasing de-emphasis of Biblical law and supernaturalism in favor of natural law and right reason. One consequence, very early, was Deism. Another, later on, was Romanticism. Nature became the new source of law, learning, and revelation. William Wordsworth, in "The Tables Turned," said,

> One impulse from a vernal wood
> May teach you more of man,
> Of moral evil and of good,
> Than all the sages can.

Plato and Aristotle held that persons or things were only rightly employed when used according to their nature. The stoic morality summed up the matter in the precept, "Follow Nature."

Jeremy Bentham, in *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789), saw all standards of right and wrong determined by *pleasure and pain*. Darwin added to this triumph of natural law the thesis of a struggle for survival, and Herbert Spencer identified the right with what is conducive to survival.

The moral content, a Biblical content, of natural law in Gratian had been reduced to zero. ("If it feels good, do it!") By making nature normative, natural-law advocates had made sin normative, and the pro-abortion, homosexual "rights" movements, and like causes are the logical outcomes of this fact.

At a recent meeting of Christian leaders, a natural-law advocate was challenged to define or name an agreed upon content of natural law. The theologian making the challenge called attention to the fact that the concept is contentless (unless borrowings are made from Scripture). Two political leaders asked, "What does natural law have to say about adultery and fornication?" The answer: "That question is irrelevant."

Natural-law thinking, where pursued consistently, ends up in antinomianism and Arminianism. Gratian's meaning (which he did not consistently maintain) is best maintained by seeing God's law as over nature, not inherent in it. When Paul speaks of the inescapable knowledge of God in Romans 1:20, he does not say that this knowledge is seen in creation but "*from* the creation of the world." This is a clearly different meaning.

The fact that many natural law advocates, Catholic and Protestant, have been fine men does not alter the fact that the concept has been a confused one. It has readily lent itself to misuse because it begins with a false premise. The venerable antiquity of a concept does not give it truth. After all, the premise of sin, Genesis 3:5, every man as his own god and

lawmaker, goes back to the Garden of Eden! Whatever usefulness the doctrine may have had has long since been lost. Even more, why cling to so nebulous a concept of natural law when we have the clear and written law of God, the Bible? It seems that the abiding value of natural law is to give men a chance to puff themselves up as the discoverers of law.

At this point, it is necessary to contrast natural law and canon law. Ask almost anyone what canon law is and most will tell you it is ecclesiastical or church law, a mistake made even by the *Catholic Encyclopedia* of 1910 because they defined it, not historically, but in terms of today. The word "canon" means a rule, a straight line or measure. Paul uses the word in 2 Corinthians 10:13 (*canonos*) and 16 (*canoni*), as well as Galatians 6:16 (*canoni*). The early church used the term extensively. Irenaeus called the baptismal creed "the canon of truth"; others spoke of "the canon of faith." As the early councils faced problems, they set forth canons or truths and laws in terms of Scripture. True canon law is Biblical law. Canon law most certainly applied and applies to the church, but we miss a critical fact of history if we fail to see that Christians have always held that canon law applies also to nations. Two current examples of this application to nations are God's laws, or the rule or canons, concerning abortion and homosexuality. During most of the church's history, the church has seen God's rule or canon as applicable to all men, institutions, and states. In fact, the justice pagans recognized in old Rome in the canon law led them to go to church courts with their cases. So much of the litigation by A.D. 300 was in the hands of the church courts that Constantine, on gaining power, gave all bishops the status of Roman magistrates in order to give official status to the governing courts! To this day, bishops wear the garb and carry the insignia of Roman magistrates. For some centuries after the fall of Rome, canon or Biblical law was the only law of Europe. (Biblical law was the essential law of American colonies and the early republic.)

Recently, several nominal Catholics denied the relevance of God's law to the state, insisting on consensus and private choice. These persons, Governor Mario Cuomo, Senator Edward Kennedy, and Representative Geraldine Ferraro (all bucking for the status of Heretic, First Class), were reminded by columnist John Lofton (Calvinist, First Class), "Canon 21 of the Council of Trent's sixth session decree . . . says this: 'If anyone says that Jesus Christ was given by God to men as a redeemer in whom to trust, and not also as a legislator whom to obey, let him be anathema'" (*The Washington Times*, September 21, 1984, p. 3-A).

Canon or Biblical law was restricted to the church by the rise of natural law. The natural law advocates, in turning to the old Greco-Roman

concept, did not realize what they were doing. Ostensibly, they found classical support for Biblical faith; in reality, they undermined it.

The natural sphere could now claim to be a source of law. The church was seen as the voice of the supernatural kingdom and realm, and the state as the voice and head of the natural sphere and realm. This freed the monarchs from the constraints of canon law; each could now claim to be his own law sphere. The church was to limit itself to the "spiritual" sphere, and the state was to rule the "natural" sphere. This meant that the church was to keep out of that law sphere which belonged to the state, and its canons might be valid for the believer's private life, but not in civil life. (Of late, Governor Cuomo of New York, and vice-presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro have echoed this argument.)

The results have been deadly. The state, with its independent law sphere, now recognizes no canon or rule other than its will. Both in Protestant and Catholic countries, there is a wide gap between the canon professed "within the church" and the canon professed by the same persons "within the state." Where there is no universal canon, there is hypocrisy and social decay.

A significant legal term is "the rule of law," i.e., the canon of law. The primary meaning of the rule of law is its supremacy over all things, its application to all classes and groups, and the exclusion of all exemptions from its province. In other words, the rule of law means the catholicity or universality of law. The significant part of the rule-of-law concept is that it has reference to the state's law, not God's. The law of the state has become the new canon law because the state claims sovereignty or lordship. It is the natural order in its full power, and it recognizes no other canon or rule, least of all now from and by God.

A good many years ago, when I was somewhat younger, I listened in silence to an informal discussion on natural law by Christian and non-Christian advocates of it. They had dismissed their differences, in response to a woman's statement that natural law did not seem to affirm any clear-cut content, by saying that this was true of the Bible too, because interpretations differed. Where, asked the woman, are your Ten Commandments? We may differ in their numbering, but the words are the same for all Christians. They had no real answer. Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage; at that, he got more than those who abandoned God's canon for that of fallen nature.

124

THE LIMITATIONS OF LAW

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 3, May 1979

We fail to understand God's law unless we realize how carefully it limits man. God's law prevents man from placing too much trust in law, and from becoming a tyrant, by limiting man's powers of enforcement.

An obvious limitation on the courts of law is the requirements of corroboration: one witness alone cannot convict (Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15). However, a more basic limitation is that many offenses, some very serious, have no penalties which any man or court can impose. For example, tithing is God's tax; failure to pay the tithe is theft; it is robbing God (Mal. 3:7–12). God Himself imposes very severe penalties on this kind of theft, but He does not call for any man-imposed penalty. Another example: Deuteronomy 22:5 forbids transvestite dress, i.e., the wearing of clothing belonging to the opposite sex, and 1 Timothy 2:9 requires modest apparel of women, but no penalties for disobedience are cited.

God's law covers every area of life: the family, the church, the state, our vocation, our relationships one to another, the use of the earth, sanitation, sexuality, warfare, boundaries, weights and measures, and all things else. The Lord makes very clear the curses and blessings He places on disobedience (Deut. 28; Lev. 26, etc.). His government is total: we can never, for a moment, step outside of God's law and government. There is not a neutral corner or atom in all of creation. God is totally God, and His government and law are total, covering all things. At every point in our lives, we are face to face with the living God, in all things accountable to Him, and totally His creatures and servants.

Man, however, is not God, nor can he play god without being guilty of the great temptation of the evil one. Original sin is precisely this fact, the desire to be as God, to determine for ourselves what constitutes good

and evil, and to rule all things totally. Among Nietzsche's manuscripts, after his death, was found a slip of paper on which he had written these words: "Since the old God has been abolished, I am prepared to rule the world." This is the meaning of humanism's inescapable totalitarianism. Total government is a necessity, and everything in man requires it. If there is no God to provide it, then man must supply it. More accurately, when man rebels against God's total sovereignty and government, he replaces it with his own claim to total sovereignty and government.

Thus, the present totalitarian claims and trends of virtually every civil government in the world are aspects of their humanism and their explicit or implicit denial of God. Humanism says of God, our law and government provide a better way than God's, and ours is the way, the truth, and the life. In the United States, the efforts of federal and state governments to control churches and Christian schools are the logical results of their humanism. There must be sovereignty and law, and it must be man's, not God's, is their faith. Clearly, we are in the basic religious war, and there can be no compromise nor negotiation in this war. Humanism seeks to abolish the God of Scripture and rule the world.

Humanism thus will permit no independent realm to exist outside its government. Every area must be controlled and ruled by humanistic law and sovereign power. The result is a growing statist tyranny everywhere, and the death of freedom is in sight all over the world.

The record of the church, while not as deadly as that of the modern state, is also none too good. The church, too, has often played god on earth and sought to exercise total government in the name of God. Protestants and Catholics alike have been guilty of going beyond God's law and usurping judgments which Biblical law reserves to God alone. Humanists are very prone to exaggerating the evils of the church's record, and Protestants and Catholics too often dearly love to believe the worst and tell the worst about one another. Granted, that humanistic historians have not done justice to the history of the church, the errors there are still real.

The problem can be illustrated by the history of a large evangelical church of the 1930s. It sought to be strictly fundamental, a commendable goal, but, in the process, it usurped God's prerogatives. For example, in terms of 1 Corinthians 11:1–15, it held that Scripture has a requirement that women's hair be "long." Well and good, but Scripture neither sets a length nor attaches penalties; it gives to no man, nor to the church, any such power. This church, however, decided to legislate against "bobbed hair," and it specified a length in terms of inches; anything shorter meant an appearance before the church court. Next, they specified the length of skirts, and so on and on. The results were devastating.

First, the central emphasis in the life of this once strong church became externals, with everyone overly conscious of appearances. Women eyed one another to see who was flirting with the limits of the law, and everyone began to develop censoriousness. *Second*, the youth became rebellious. The gospel was now reduced to compliance with externals, and they readily rebelled as soon as they went off to college. It was very difficult to talk with any of the youth about matters of faith and doctrine. For them, the church and Christianity represented not faith and life in Christ but a multitude of petty rules and regulations. *Third*, the church began to associate the purity of its faith more and more with its observance of forms, and less and less with a solid knowledge of Biblical doctrine. Faith was giving way to form. Rules lead to more rules, and the yoke of Pharisaic laws came to be rivalled.

Much more could be added, but, suffice it to say that finally a rebellion set in, but a sorry one. The antithesis to pharisaic legalism and to playing God was seen as being more *loving*, and a neo-evangelical emphasis on love was the next stage in the slide of this church into modernism, and, finally, the social gospel, with the state now becoming the universal rule and lawmaker in their sorry "gospel."

God's law, by reserving, in one area after another, the right of enforcement to God alone, severely limits the power of all human forms of government. Neither church, nor state, nor any other human agency is empowered to play God. Moreover, we do not gain in holiness by becoming "stricter" than God: we gain only in presumptuous sin. God alone is God: He does not delegate His throne nor His sovereign lawmaking power to any human being or agency. To become "stricter" than God's law, as one pastor boasted to me of being, is to imply a moral defect in God and is blasphemy.

God's law thus allows man many areas of freedom to obey or disobey without man-imposed penalties. The result is a great freedom for man to sin or to obey than most man-made institutions believe is wise. Certainly, church and state have alike worked to limit the freedom God allows.

One critic of Biblical law has declared to me that any strict adherence in every realm to God's order would be "disastrous," *first*, because in a few areas God's law is marked by an "undue severity," as witness the death penalty for adultery. (The family being God's basic institution, treason in the Bible is adultery; there is no treason with respect to the state.) *Second*, in most areas, Biblical law would produce "anarchy," because no penalties can be enforced by man in any strict reading thereof.

From the standpoint of Scripture, God's rule is not anarchy but justice and freedom. Redemption is not by rules and regulation; salvation is not

by law. It is by God's sovereign grace through Jesus Christ. The redeemed man lives a life of faith and obedience in the Spirit and in terms of the enscriptured Word. Our liberty in Christ is from the bondage or slavery of sin and the penalty of death, and it is a deliverance also from fallen man's way of salvation, a total government by the words of law, man-made law.

If we take any law of God and alter it, or go beyond it, we too become humanistic. We "correct" God as gods over God, and we limit and finally destroy man's freedom under God.

One of the more frequently repeated declarations of Scripture is, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Rom. 12:19; see also Deut. 32:35, 41, 43; Ps. 94:1, etc.). Again, in Hebrews 10:30, we read, "Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people." In certain specified areas, and within carefully circumscribed limits, God gives to men and to courts of law the power to judge and convict. The word vengeance is in the Greek text *ekdikesis*, that which proceeds out of justice, *dike* being justice. God declares that He alone is the judge and lawmaker. No man can go beyond His law-word, for to do so is not that which proceeds out of justice but out of presumption and sin. Thus, when the Lord declares, "Vengeance (or, the enforcement of justice) is mine," He bars man from playing God, from adding or subtracting from God's law-word, or from attempting to rule over men in any way which exceeds God's Word. Only as men stand in terms of this faith are they protected from being enslaved by, or enslaving, other men. The law-word of God is man's only charter of liberty, and man's defense against the tyrannies of state, church, and man. The redeemed of the Lord will stand in His Word as freemen.

Salvation: By Whose Works? (May 1979)

No man can be saved by his works; his salvation is the work of God, not man. This is a fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith, affirmed on all sides and dishonored widely. Our Lord, citing Isaiah 29:13, declares, "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:7–9).

To believe that salvation is by grace and not by works means that all of man's works outside of Christ are futile to commend him to God and to effect his salvation.

Now, Augustine made it clear that for a state or civil government

to be built on any other foundation than the Lord and His Word is to build nothing more than a band of robbers. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps. 127:1). How, then, can we imagine that any law, school, church, state, or any other thing can be a good thing or a good work when it is outside of Christ and has no place for Him? How can we imagine that a state or school which neglects or despises the basic fact of all being, our Lord and His sovereignty, can be anything but an abomination to Him?

Today, however, we have indignant churchmen waging war against pastors and Christians who work for Christian schools; these people defend the godless state schools and seek to drive away from the church all who criticize them. To defend statist education is to defend a humanistic plan of salvation which seeks to save the world by man's educational work.

The same is true of the state. The modern humanistic state offers a cradle-to-grave plan of salvation. It is at war with Christ the Lord and denies His plan of redemption for its own. The state issues its own decrees of predestination, election, and salvation. Today, the Internal Revenue Service is seeking to break all who will not conform to "public policy," i.e., to the statist plan of salvation. Its doctrine of sanctification means compliance with the state and its doctrines of social justice. To be a Christian today requires that we stand against the great false doctrine of works of our time, salvation by the works of the humanistic state.

The Bible does not give us museum piece doctrines. When it condemns unregenerate man's works, it condemns not merely the Pharisees but the statist educators, the humanistic statists, the Republicans, Democrats, Socialists, Communists, and others, the male and female "chauvinists" and all others who see a hope of salvation outside of the Lord and His law-word.

By its own do-nothing, antinomian ways, the church today approves the works of humanistic educators and statists. The Bible did not merely condemn theological formulations of salvation by works; it declares false every effort by man to save himself by his own works. The Judaizers of Paul's day were wrong; so too are all organized bands of thieves who call themselves a civil government, and so too are all their schools.

Paul declares, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8–9). "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isa. 2:22). Salvation is the work of God, not man.

125

INFERENCES AND COMMANDMENTS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 108, April 1989

The failure to distinguish between God's commandments and inferences made from them has, over the centuries, led to serious moral problems in Judaism and Christianity. When God gives a commandment, He speaks very plainly; there can be no mistaking what He says. His "thou shalt nots" and His "thou shalts" are blunt and unequivocal. Unhappily, too many people over the centuries have insisted on seeing commandments where there are none. They base their rules, and their determination to bind the conscience of the faithful, on inferences, sometimes wrongful ones. Not even a valid inference is a commandment.

To illustrate, our Lord, in Luke 12:48, says, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." In other words, the greater the responsibility a man has, the greater is his culpability and guilt. In Leviticus 4, the laws of sacrifice set forth this same premise: the sin offering of a priest or prince is a greater one than that of a commoner. God says that, in His sight, the greater our responsibilities, the greater is our sin in His sight. A logical inference is that the sins or crimes of important people deserve more punishment. Before *God*, guilt is greater, according to Leviticus 4, but this greater punishment is not a law for *man* to enforce, although it is a sound inference. Notice, too, that in Luke 12:48 our Lord says that, in such cases, *men* "will ask the more." While it can be done, it is not mandatory. How God enforces His law is not always what He requires of *us*.

The problem becomes even more serious where unwarranted inferences are made. I recall, as a student at the university, listening to an off-campus Christian speaker who laid down the "law" in unequivocal terms; the text he used for his particular "mandate" was very familiar

to me, but I had never seen such a meaning in it. My immediate reaction was one of anger; then I thought that perhaps there was a meaning in the Greek text I was ignorant of; I later learned there was no such meaning, only his inference, and a wrong one.

The trouble with inferences is that, when repeated over and over again, they become a part of the meaning of the law, and people read them into the text.

There are many who resent the strange and alien ways in which the U.S. Supreme Court routinely interprets the U.S. Constitution. The U.S. Government Printing Office periodically issues a revised edition of a heavy tome entitled, *The Constitution of the United States: Analysis and Interpretation*, which gives us, line by line, the Constitution with all the interpretations thereof, sometimes of a single word, made by the Supreme Court. At times, by inferences, the original meaning is turned around.

Chief Justice John Marshall was known for his ability to take a statement and make it mean what he chose. His cousin, Thomas Jefferson, said: "When conversing with Marshall I never admit anything. So sure as you admit any position to be good, no matter how remote from the conclusion he seeks to establish, you are gone. So great is his sophistry, you must never give him an affirmative answer, or you will be forced to grant his conclusion. Why, if he were to ask me whether it was daylight or not, I'd reply, 'Sir, I don't know. I can't tell.'"

We have many people who are vehement strict constructionists with respect to the U.S. Constitution who at the same time are looser than loose constructionists where the Bible is concerned. They erect a vast structure of inferences and call it God's law. What amazes me is that these same people are strongly hostile to theonomy, to God's law! If the law itself is no longer binding, how can strange inferences be made binding?

Operation Rescue builds its case on inferences; so too do those who oppose birth control, smoking tobacco, and interest, and so on and on. In his personal life, perhaps, a man can seek ways which his conscience feels are important, but can he bind the conscience of other men? God's law is very plain, so that all may understand. Inferences take us into the realm of human conclusions. Anything important enough to be a law and bind our conscience is plainly stated by God: it is not left for men to discover.

Inferences can be very, very dangerous, not only to the life of faith, but to our standing before God. People who major in inferences wind up trying to be holier than God, a particularly evil state (see Otto Scott's essay on "Easy Virtue," pp. 7–8.) Sadly enough, the world of inferences is peopled by persons who began at times with earnestness and a sound zeal.

In the time of our Lord, the Pharisees were the result of an earnest and dedicated development of inferences. Their inferences in time became more important to them than God's law-word. Our Lord attacked them and their misinterpretation with particular intensity, because He knew how evil their methodology was.

Phariseeism not only continued as Judaism itself, virtually supplanting other parties, but, over the centuries, it has had a powerful influence in Greek Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, and Protestantism. Its appeal is a supposed super-piety and a super-holiness. It appears to offer a greater purity and strength.

When our Lord attacks "*the tradition of the elders*" (Matt. 15:2), He attacks the tradition of inferences. One example He gives of this brings together the law requiring that one honor his father and his mother, and the law, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," i.e., God's absolute priority. The Pharisees said that one could cease supporting one's parents if the money were dedicated to God instead. This was a logical inference! Yet our Lord called them "hypocrites" and said:

> Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. (Matt. 15:7–9)

Was it wrong for the Pharisees to draw inferences, and is it right for churchmen to do so? Did it make the Pharisees hypocrites, while it makes churchmen super-faithful saints? Will the Pharisees triumph again, and destroy their civilization in the process?

Remember, God's law is always very plain, even too blunt and plain! Mark Twain was right when he said that what bothered him in the Bible was not what he could not understand, but what he did understand!

If it is not plainly written as law by God Almighty, let no man bind your conscience with it.

Our Lord said of the Pharisees of His day that they were hypocrites, because they gave as God's Word that which was their own inference, and they bound men by them. Beware of the Pharisees. They are with us still.

126

INFERENCES AND THE LAW

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 115, November 1989

One of the "problems" with God, for many people, is that He gives His creature man too much freedom — the freedom to sin, to think, and to make decisions. As far as most people, churches, and civil governments are concerned, this is wrong. They want laws to govern every area of life and thought. I get letters from time to time written by people who question the validity of God's law because, they tell me, there is so much in the modern world which is not covered by the few pages of Biblical law (some 600-plus laws only). Such people want a totalitarian set of laws to control everything! Where God is silent, they impose laws through church or state, or in their personal domain.

But God's law has limits! Man seeks a total law, whereas God does not, even though He is the absolute Sovereign and Creator. God does not present His law as the salvation of man and society but as the way of holiness. This is a very different thing.

In understanding God's law, we must recognize, *first*, that much of it is *case law*. The classic instance of this, used by Scripture to show us its meaning, is Deuteronomy 25:4, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." This minimum example sets forth the fact that, even with an animal, the laborer is worthy of his hire (1 Cor. 9:9; 1 Tim. 5:18). This means that especially to those who labor worthily in Christ's work, double "honor" or pay should be given (1 Tim. 5:17).

Another case law is found in Deuteronomy 21:18–21, the case of an incorrigible son. Those who are hostile to God's law insist on reading "son" as a baby. The age is not specified, but what is clearly intended is what we call an incorrigible and habitual criminal. The point made is that a family must side with God's law against its own flesh and blood, if necessary, and society hence must not hesitate to execute habitual criminals.

Case law give us clear statements about the *application* of God's law.

Second, God's law does not always require a man-imposed sentence. We are told that God's penalties for failure to tithe are severe (Mal. 3:8–12), but no human agency is given any right to enforce the tithe. Deuteronomy 25:4 (cited above) is very important, but, again, God reserves to Himself the power to punish as well as to bless. A very considerable percentage of the 600-plus laws of God call for no punishment by man, the church, the state, or any human agency! However, man's original sin is his desire to be his own god and to determine his own law (Gen. 3:5), and, as a result, man strives in every sphere to impose a totalitarian law. This totalitarian tendency is present in every sphere of life today, with ugly results. Men want a totally prescribed life, and the power of total prescription for themselves.

In recent years, with serious problems in the Catholic Church and in Protestant churches, many distressed members have come together to set up organizations to recall the church to its faith, or to establish new or continuing church bodies. Very commonly, these groups have serious problems which end in their dissolution. The most common problem is a desire to overcontrol everyone, beginning often with compilation of voluminous bylaws which often break up the group! They want a totally prescriptive governing document and thereby in effect deny the power of the Holy Spirit. For them, safety lies in full controls, not in the third person of the Trinity.

Third, God's law gives us plain commandments, and our humanistic inferences cannot supplement them. In the April 1989 *Chalcedon Report*, Position Paper No. 108, I wrote on "Inferences and Commandments."[1] The response was amazing and amusing. Together with my article on "Revolution or Regeneration,"[2] it aroused rage and fury in many. One man told us to "cease publication" at once! Very few were ready to cite Scripture with respect to either article in their arguments. The few who did made inferences.

Matthew 15:1–9 is the classic text against inferences and their traditions. God commands honoring father and mother, and He commands tithing, and He asks us to give gifts above and over the tithe. The Pharisees took two commandments and opposed them to one another. They held that honoring God takes priority over honoring parents, hence, by inference, money for the support of one's parents could be better used as a "gift" to God. Our Lord calls this "logical inference," hypocrisy. "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." It is vain worship because it substitutes men's commandments for God's.

1. See pp. 541–543. — editor
2. See pp. 85–88. — editor

Such people, He said, seem very close to God in their verbal professions, "but their heart is far from me." We are not permitted to expand on God's law by our humanistic inferences. This is how the U.S. Supreme Court treats the Constitution, but it is not how we are to treat God's Word.

Fourth, let us remember how few God's laws are. Let us remember, also, how limited in number are those that allow man to punish the offenders. God requires us to take His law very literally, but never to place our trust for salvation in law, least of all man's law. Beginning with Eden, God's law gives man the freedom to sin and to make a mess of his life. God obviously does not share the view of the modern state that men must be so controlled that the opportunity to sin (for men or business, or churches, or unions, or anyone) be reduced to the minimum, or to point zero. Of course, the result has been the development of an irresponsible people and the increase of crime, and welfarism has become history's most potent antihuman welfare activity. The horrors of wars and famines have usually been short-term; the destruction of man's sense of responsibility is having long-term consequences. Scripture equates true freedom with our redemption and regeneration in Christ: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). The inescapable fact of history and Scripture is that God has given men the freedom to rebel *against* Him and His law, to create their evil empires, dream their humanistic dreams, and seek to control all things (Psalm 2). His goal is by "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" to free us from "the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2) The truth, Jesus Christ, can alone make us free (John 8:32; 14:6).

The desire to use coercion, or to compel by massive demonstrations, any redirection of human action is a humanistic methodology. A corrupt society cannot be kept more than briefly and poorly by massive coercion. The compelling force must be in the hearts of men, or society will remain corrupt. The truth of the old saying remains: "You can't make a good omelette with rotten eggs."

Some find it baffling that we, as advocates of God's law, are so hostile to some kinds of legal (or illegal) action. It is because we take God's law-word very seriously, and the triune God who gave the law most seriously.

Men must turn to Christ for atonement and regeneration. They must be guided by the Holy Spirit: not by their anger against certain things, but by their grace and power in the Spirit.

There are too many churchmen today more filled with rage than with the Spirit of God. A verse once commonly quoted seems now to be forgotten by man: "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17). Only by this freedom can the power of sin and evil be broken.

In the April 1989 *Chalcedon Report*, Otto Scott wrote on "Easy

Virtue" and said, "No one has ever managed to reach heaven through ridding someone else of sin," for, "To correct the sins of others does not lessen one's own." Our generation seems determined to rely on coercion rather than regeneration; it prefers its way to God's way; it follows the Pharisees in replacing God's law with their inferences. Can we escape the judgment of the Pharisees by adopting their methods and calling them Christian?

Can we, by a totally prescriptive law, replace the work of the Holy Spirit? The goal of the totalitarian state, and too often of the church, is to so control people that they cannot have the freedom to sin. Our world today is in a shambles because of this policy of salvation by law. We may well say, of our time, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jer. 8:20)—nor can we be saved by the present trust in law.

God gave man the freedom to sin, and today both church and state are earnestly trying to nullify the freedom God has given. A cartoonist recently depicted a police commando team surrounding a building, and an officer with a bull-horn declaring, "We know you're smoking in there. Come out of the bathroom and the house with your hands up!"

It does not occur to those who criticize Biblical law for not covering every conceivable sin that, *first*, God wants us to grow in holiness in His Spirit and to apply the meaning of righteousness to all of life: and, *second*, if God had given us the totally prescriptive law some people demand, men would be zealously hounding one another for tens of thousands of infractions of the law, exactly as the state is now doing, and as the church too often yearns to do. The Bible leaves such people without excuse.

The Christian and the church must learn to believe, obey, and respect not only the enscriptured law-word of God, but His silences also.

127

THE LAW, THE STATE, AND THE PEOPLE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 40, May 1983

The nature and the meaning of law have changed from one culture to another. *First* of all, all law is religious in its presuppositions, because it is an expression of basic and ultimate values. Laws protect those values most important to a society and proscribe those regarded as alien and evil. Every legal system embodies a concept of ultimate concern, of religion and ethics. *Second*, laws, beside protecting *values*, also protect *men*. The men protected in contemporary states can be, theoretically, all men within the society, the state and its agents, or one class of men, such as the proletariat. It is not our concern at the moment whether or not the protection is theoretical or actual. In antiquity, the law was commonly royal law; even more, it was often the law of an ostensibly divine-human king whose word was law. In some sense, the law is always *partial*; it protects those whom the law deems just and prosecutes those suspected of injustice. Where the partiality of the law is determined by men, all who differ from the lawmakers can be judged illicit and criminal. There is thus no freedom for capitalists in the Soviet Union, and there are limitations at times on the freedom of communists in some democracies. Where laws come from men, men will determine the limits of the law's protection.

The law thus always has an *interest*; law protects and punishes in terms of pretheoretical presuppositions which are in essence religious. The important question to ask of law is the nature of its *interest* or concern. The interest can be royal, democratic, fascist, racist, and so on. In every case, it is an expression of values.

Historically, law, which we like to see as the expression of justice, has been very commonly seen as injustice. The royal law in India for centuries was exploitive of the peoples and seen as oppressive. One aging missionary who had a contact with elderly Chinese who had seen the

rules of the empress, the "republic," and the communists, asked them about the difference from one regime to another as they affected them, the peasants. Their answer was that all things were essentially the same: "All masters want their will and our work." Theoreticians of the law like to see it as equivalent to justice. During most of history, men have seen it as the oppressive will of the masters.

Ancient Israel was an exception to this. Lawmaking was recognized in times of faithfulness as God's prerogative, not man's, and God had revealed His covenant law through Moses. This law was defended and expounded by the prophets, and it was binding for the king and the people. Nathan's indictment of King David, one of a long series of such confrontations, was without parallel in antiquity. A law beyond man and from God judged both kings and peoples, indeed, all men and nations.

For our purposes here, a few limited aspects of Biblical law must be noted. *First*, every system of law imposes certain restraints on some for the freedom of others. Outside of Biblical law, these restraints are on one segment of men for the freedom of another, sometimes only a few. In Plato's *Republic*, the free are very few; they are the philosopher-kings. In other systems, other elites are free and the rest restrained. *Second*, not only is freedom in a social order selective, but it is also both positive and negative. Thus, in Soviet Russia, there is a freedom *from* capitalism, and a freedom *for* the state to control its citizenry. A man who exercises the freedom to sin thereby ensures freedom from virtue and its many blessings. No stand or act has a single consequence; we are at all times in a nexus of events, past, present, and future. Biblical law gives us freedom from men and from the state, but not from God. The social order created by Biblical law distrusts man as a sinner and thus minimizes his controls while stressing his responsibility.

This means, *third*, that Biblical law leads to a minimal state. The king or judge in Israel had less power than is now routine for the higher officials of state bureaucracies. The stress of Biblical law is on man's responsibility to God and to his fellow men under God. Man must distrust himself, his fellow men, and his rulers. In Isaiah's words, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isa. 2:22). Power and authority are not to be accorded to men apart from God's Word and law. At the same time, we are commanded to remember always that "we are members one of another" (Eph. 4:25).

Much more can be said of Biblical law, but, for our present purposes, this suffices. With the progressive conversion of the Western world to Christ, the canon of society and the states became God's law-word, so that a new element was introduced into the life of the law. Rome early

saw the far-reaching implications of Christianity and therefore resisted it. Two rival doctrines of sovereignty and law were at war one with another, the sovereignty of God and His law versus the sovereignty of man, the state, and man-made law. From the days of Rome to the present, history has been witness to this continuing battle.

In any system of thought, the sovereign is the lawmaker and thus the de facto god. Sovereignty, or lordship, and lawmaking are inseparable. The power to make laws is a manifestation of ultimacy and sovereignty in a society and over a society. It is a religious fact, and it manifests the god of that system.

Because of this, the conflict of Christianity with various forces, most notably the state, has been a continuing fact of Western history. The periodic prevalence of the Christian perspective has meant the freeing of man from statist controls. It has also meant that Western history has been marked by a freedom unknown to other areas of the world, and the result has been a vitality in the West of unequalled dimensions.

Instead of a monolithic society dominated by a monolithic state, we have seen both conflict and freedom. However faulty the Christian community has usually been, its presence has been productive of social energies and progress unequalled in all of history. Any study of the history of the West which is separated from theology is an exercise in evasion and futility. To chronicle events is not to understand history.

As a result of this Christian factor, the *interest* of a social order is a divided one. It is popular now with statists to speak of the *state interest* and to equate it with the *public interest*. This identification was basic to ancient tyrannies and is now a commonplace with our newer ones. Its modern origins are in Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who identified the state as the voice of the people's general will. This identification has made possible the tyrannies of modern Marxism and National Socialism. Rousseau held that the public "must be taught to know what it is that it wills." In *The Social Contract*, Rousseau held that while the will of the people may not correspond to the general will, "The general will is always right and tends always to the public good; but it does not follow that the deliberations of the people always have the same rectitude . . . There is often a great difference between the will of all and the general will." This identification of the *true* will of the people as the general will, and the general will with the state, led to a revival of the ancient pagan state. After Hegel, the state was indeed a god walking on earth.

The French Revolution began the idealization of the state to a degree previously unknown in the Western world. It also rationalized tyranny in the name of the people. The recognition that the public interest and the

state interest could be very different had grown slowly and steadily. Now, with the secularization of society and the idealization of the state, that distinction began to be set aside.

In the English-speaking world, that distinction had become especially strong. A long tradition of courageous men defended the public interest against the powers of the Crown. Step by step, that distinction was stressed and expanded. The unlimited powers of Crown commissions were checked, and the areas of freedom expanded. The statement of James Otis in New England, that a man's house is his castle, was in this tradition, which goes back to the Middle Ages, Thomas Becket, the Magna Carta, and more. The papacy had a role in this, a major one, in challenging the controls various monarchs sought to place on the church. Freedom was a long battle, or, rather, a war with many battles, some still to be fought.

We must now turn to a key factor in all this. As we have seen, this Christian development led slowly to a recognition of the difference between the state interest and the public interest. David's indictment by the prophet Nathan is an important example of this in Old Testament history. European, English, and American histories give us many more examples of this.

The fact which made possible this differentiation and more was law, God's law. Unlike all other laws, God's law was not identified with any class, race, or people; it judged the Hebrews, and later, the Jews, even more harshly than other peoples, so that it gave them no exemptions and was emphatic about precluding this.

God's law is not identified with the state interest nor with the public interest. It stresses their differences, but it does not favor either. Rather, the law of God speaks from beyond history to judge and govern all within history. In 2 Samuel 12, the prophet Nathan says to David, "Thou are the man," and then pronounces God's judgment upon him. God's law judges both the public interest and the private interest because it transcends both.

All man-made laws reflect a particular human interest. At this point, humanistic legal theories and systems have been vulnerable to the Marxist critique. According to Marxism, laws are not objective systems of transcendental truth but class products. As class products, the legal systems defend their creating and sponsoring class. Accepting this premise, Marxists hold that the workers must be the dominant and controlling class, and the laws must reflect their class interest. Here too, however, an elite group expresses the supposed will of the people, but not with the consent of the people or workers.

Moreover, while Marxism has seen the partiality of the law, it has not solved the problem but has aggravated it by insisting on a rigid and

total class partiality to replace the older limited one. As a result, it has replaced the mixed society with its frequent injustices with a totalitarian state dedicated to unremitting and total injustice.

Clearly, the state is not god; it cannot escape, on its humanistic premises, confusing the state interest with the public interest and from insisting that its will is the law. Because of this identification, there is a steady loss of religious freedom, and personal and family freedom. The loss in other realms, economic, educational, cultural, and so on, is also considerable. The state increasingly identifies its concerns with justice.

In the United States, there is a steady movement by regulation and by law to enforce a "public social policy" doctrine on all churches. This would give the federal government the power to regulate, control, or eliminate any and all groups whose stands conflict with "public policy." Since "public policy" currently favors such things as homosexuality and abortion, this means that churches opposed to either have the option of surrendering their faith or submitting to the state on these and other issues. Such a trend spells the death of freedom.

Whenever and wherever law has been seen as the voice of the people or the voice of the state, this totalitarian faith has prevailed. Either law is transcendental, or it is the product of some human agency. If law is the product of a human agency, it cannot judge that agency. When the state makes laws, it cannot be taken to court without its own consent, and then in its own courts. In every humanistic social order, justice becomes the will of the state, and freedom becomes a luxury reserved for the state and its agents.

Because we are today witnessing the long consequences of a deeply entrenched departure from the transcendental nature of law, from God's law, we witness on all sides an attack on Christian liberty.

At the same time, we see the rise of another kind of freedom, the freedom of slaves, the freedom of irresponsibility. What we often forget is that one of the worst factors in slavery has always been the intangible one, the diminution of responsibility. Nothing is more devastating to man and society. Abortion, the sexual revolution, homosexuality, and more are all evidences of slave freedom, not responsible freedom.

Those who despise God's law are thus railing against responsibility, justice, and responsible freedom. Freedom under God makes us members of, not lords over, one another. It delivers us from bondage into a calling under God. The law of God is justice; man's lawmaking leads to injustice. The starting point of freedom and justice is Jesus Christ and His regenerating power: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

128

THE MEANING OF THE SABBATH

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Men commonly sin even in their professed obedience to God by reducing God's law to the lowest common denominator or to its minimal meaning. The law, "Thou shalt not steal" (Exod. 20:15), covers every form of theft: robbing another man, robbing God of His tithes and offerings (Mal. 3:8–12), the debasement of coinage and inflation (Isa. 1:22), and much, much more. Men find it convenience to limit the law to simple theft: this means that a man who produces or sells shoddy merchandise under false pretenses, or a man who does not work to earn his pay but rather does as little as possible, can claim they are not thieves. In God's sight, however, and in His court, the full meaning of the law prevails.

A key mistreated law is the Sabbath law: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Exod. 20:8–11).

Before beginning a study of these words, two things need to be understood: *first*, the commandment is to rest, not worship. Worship is to be a continuous fact, as well as a weekly one, but the central aspect of the Sabbath observance is rest. *Second*, many have limited this observance of rest to their definitions. The Pharisees strictly limited the number of feet a man could walk on the Sabbath and had precise rules of limitation on every activity. On the other hand, many today see the Sabbath as a day for their personal relaxation and leisure. Neither is right.

To understand the Sabbath, we must see first what it involves. It means a weekly day of rest, one day in seven. The Hebrew Sabbath began on sundown of the night before, and it continued until dawn of the next day. Many Puritans observed a like Sabbath. The Sabbath rest included the work animals and also the earth, which, with man, had to rest one year in seven. The faculties of universities still are allowed a sabbatical year, but, for the most part, this observance has fallen into disuse. We need to work for its restoration. The fiftieth year was also a Sabbath, the Jubilee.

Now consider the meaning of all this as it relates to time: every seventh day, every seventh year, and every half century another year, were set aside for rest! The implications of this were far more radical in those days than now. Except for works of necessity (i.e., where continuous operation was required as in milking; or works of mercy), rest was mandatory. Since production of food was then more marginal than now, it was far more difficult to store up sufficient food reserves for a sabbatical year. There was a further aspect to the Sabbath, a rest from debt. Debts had to be for a six-year term only, or a fraction thereof, if the Sabbath year were closer.

An obvious fact now appears: a society observing the Sabbath had to be provident, and it *could* not be inflationary. To earn enough, and to produce enough, to make work unnecessary eight years out of fifty, and on over 2,000 weekly Sabbath days as well (almost six years more in aggregate, making almost fourteen out of fifty years given to the waking, Sabbath rest), required a future-oriented and provident people. Such a people must be willing, able, and productive workers. They must be able to plan and use widely their time and wealth. To observe the Sabbath was a mark of character, and more.

Even further, a society in which debt is limited to six years (Deut. 15:1–6) is a society which is anti-inflationary. Add to this the requirement of just monetary weights (Lev. 19:35–36), and inflation is virtually impossible. The result is social stability and prosperity. A society, thus, which observes the Sabbath can truly rest in the Lord: its todays and tomorrows are circumscribed by God's law and therefore God's blessing and providential care.

Furthermore, such a society is free from anxiety. With most men, today and tomorrow are matters of anxiety. Their failure to be provident, their participation in a lawless society, and the uncertainty of their future lead to a neurotic and anxious frame of mind. It is foolishness to believe that counselling or spiritual exercises can remove an anxiety which is the product of lawlessness. A lawless people will always be an anxious people. We are confronted today with a constant flow of books aimed at

relieving anxiety, and psychotherapy is a big business, but few work at the root problem of anxiety: sin and guilt before God, and a failure to trust in His law and government.

Basic to the Sabbath and its rest is *liberation from work*. The root of this liberation is faith, faith in the Lord and His covenant salvation. To cease from our labors to so great an extent as the law requires, requires on the one hand a provident and diligent life, and, on the other, a deep trust in God's work. The Lord, having given us His covenant salvation, is able to give His covenant care. The nation, to have God's blessing, must observe this covenant sign, which means that the goal is not only a weekly observance, but the observance of the sabbatical year of rest so that all God's people may rest and rejoice in Him. This is a legal, national duty and requirement.

When we cease from our labors, we rest in the Lord's accomplished work of salvation and His ongoing work of providential care. It is a rest in which we commit ourselves and all our being into God's hands. David says, "Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass" (Ps. 37:7). In terms of this resting in the Lord, William Whiting Borden (1887–1913) wrote in his notebook in his freshman year at Yale, "Lord Jesus, I take hands off, as far as my life is concerned. I put Thee on the throne in my heart" (Mrs. Howard Taylor, *Borden of Yale '09*, p. 123).

The Sabbath is liberation because it frees us from ourselves and our work in the confidence of God's superior government and work. It is liberation from history as the determining agent, because it affirms God's determination of all things. The opposite of the Sabbath is the Hindu doctrine of Karma; according to this doctrine, man is a captive of his past, of his history, and he is inescapably bound to the past. Only through a long series of many, many reincarnations can he free himself from history into death. The Sabbath does not deny causality, but, whereas Karma says causality is essentially historical, the Sabbath and its rest are a triumphant witness to the fact that causality is primarily supernatural.

The Sabbath is blessed and hallowed by God above all other days and years as a witness to its liberating character and its witness to His supernatural government and providence. The Sabbath is separated from other days, and thus we too must separate ourselves from all our other days and activities. When we reduce, as is so commonly done, the day to a church Sabbath, we deny the necessity for the separation of the whole of man and his society to the Lord. This is why the Sabbath applies to all things: ourselves, our land, the aliens in our midst, church, state, and

all things. For the state to deny the Sabbath is to deny God. Biblical law separates (while making them interdependent) church and state; it does not separate the Sabbath and the state.

There is, however, a further and basic meaning to the Sabbath. As we have seen, it requires both faith and providence on the part of man: man must live so that he can rest in the seventh year without an income. He must rest (apart from works of necessity) and must do so without anxiety. Clearly, covenant man must be future-oriented and provident.

He must, however, be also present-oriented. The Sabbath is a celebration of God's present order, and His ever-present help. Psalm 46 gives us this kind of faith. In the midst of cataclysmic earthquakes, floods, and desolations, the word for faith is, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Ps. 46:10). It is knowing that the "LORD of hosts is with us" (Ps. 46:11), and that it is His righteous judgment that shakes our world. The things that are, are being shaken, so that only those things which cannot be shaken may remain (Heb. 12:27). It means knowing that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28).

Psalm 118:24 declares, "This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." The commandment orders us to keep the Sabbath because "in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is" (Exod. 20:11). God, having created all things, has no problem in the government of all things. In the midst of our world's miseries, which are His judgments, we can rest in His government. The Sabbath is a celebration of the present day, in the face of all things, in the certain knowledge that it is God's ordained day, and we are members of His covenant. Therefore, rejoice.

Karma and the Sabbath

The world of Karma is a world without God, and without rest. Hinduism has no Sabbath, and no naturalistic faith can have a true Sabbath. In a naturalistic world, man is caught in tension between two conflicting facts. *First*, if there is no God, everything depends upon man. If everything depends on man, then man must be at the command post of his life continuously, night and day, awake and asleep. The psychological implications of this are enormous: rest is precluded, and humanistic man is plagued with insomnia, an inability to rest while seeking it with intensity, and a nightmare-haunted life with things threatening to go out of

control. Life is lonely at the top, especially if we live in a dead universe, and if we are all alone in our heart's concerns.

Second, if man is alone in a dead universe, a world without God, he faces the relentless and blind workings of that universe. Things happen because they must happen, without any source in mind, reason, or purpose. This means that man's purposes work against a world of total purposelessness. It means, moreover, that an unrelenting and blind causality works against him. Hinduism calls this Karma; others have varying names for it. The sum total of a blind world's forces and past work against us, and govern us. Heredity, the environment, our sins, the stars, our *id*, *ego*, *superego*, our primordial past, and much, much more controls us. Instead of being in control, we are controlled.

Thus, a naturalistic worldview or faith tells us to be the captains of our souls and fate, but also tells us that we are the creatures of nature, Karma, or what have you. The result is *no rest*.

The Sabbath can only flourish with a living faith. It means knowing that the government of all things is on the Lord's shoulders, not ours (Isa. 9:6–7). We can therefore rest in His government, providence, and care. We can also work in the magnificent assurance that our labor is not vain or futile in the Lord (1 Cor. 15:58; Rom. 8:28). If there is no God, there can be no rest. "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (Isa. 57:20–21).

If we have peace and rest, we communicate it. We are then at all times a Sabbath people. If we do not have rest, then we are a restless and a warring people. We are at war with God, with our neighbor, and with ourselves. We become a center of unrest, and we radiate disturbance. We then create conflicts and try to justify them in the name of our principles.

Men without a Sabbath rest as the principle of their lives are men without Christ, who is our true Sabbath (Heb. 4:9–16). We rest in Him who declares, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

The Sabbath is thus much more than a day. It is the Lord, a faith, and a faithfulness. It is resting in Him, and also living and working in Him.

Are you living under Karma, or in the terms of the Sabbath?

129

THE SABBATH

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 211, April 1997

Much confused thinking prevails concerning the Sabbath, which is commonly identified with Saturday. The day of Israel's redemption from Egypt was the Passover, and all Sabbaths dated from the event. The seventh day of creation was the pattern, but the day of observance was in terms of God's summons through Moses to separate the people from Egypt unto the Lord by observances culminating in the Passover. The Old Testament Sabbath was on particular dates of the *month*, not on the seventh day of the week, even as one's birthday is always on the same date but on a different day from year to year. After the fall of Jerusalem, some generations later when a return to Jerusalem was unlikely, the Jewish Sabbath was made to be the seventh day of the Roman calendar. Because the old Jewish calendar is still used to mark the day of resurrection, the *date* of Resurrection Day, or Easter, is variable from year to year in terms of the Roman calendar.

Our central concern must be with the meaning thereof, the meaning of the Sabbath for Christians. Our day of salvation is not the death of the firstborn of Egypt and the Exodus but Christ's resurrection, His atoning death and triumph over sin and death.

Paul tells us that Jesus Christ is the firstfruits of the dead and the beginning of the resurrection and the new creation (1 Cor. 15:20, 23). This means that the Christian Sabbath, which celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ on the first day of the week, is directed, not to a past event, but to a future one. It celebrates the deliverance of Christ's people from sin and death, and it looks ahead to the new creation. Older hymns celebrated the Sabbath as a type of Christ's victory over this world, His Kingdom triumphs here, and for eternity. The Sabbath is a rest from the war to "put all enemies under his feet," after which the last enemy, death,

is destroyed (1 Cor. 15:24–26). This means that the Christian Sabbath is eschatological in its meaning, and that meaning is postmillennial.

To celebrate the Sabbath is thus to herald Christ's resurrection and our hope, His victory and ours.

In Exodus 20:8–11, the commandment concerning the Sabbath cites the pattern it follows, God's rest on the conclusion of the creation week. In Deuteronomy 5:12–15, the reason for Israel's Sabbath observance is given, their mighty deliverance from Egypt. In the New Testament, the day of resurrection, on the first day of the week, becomes the ground for the Christian Sabbath. This points ahead to the conquest of the world for Christ in terms of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20). We observe the Sabbath best as we extend Christ's Kingdom and dominion. The future orientation of strong Christianity is faithfulness to the meaning of the Sabbath.

Deuteronomy 5:15 tells us that because God delivered Israel out of bondage to Egypt, "*therefore* the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day." Gratitude is the mark of Sabbath observance. It is to be a day of holiness, a day of sanctification, meaning set apart for the Lord. This means essentially sanctifying ourselves so that every day we can serve Him with all our heart, mind, and being. Our deliverance requires our total dedication.

The test as to whether or not the Sabbath has been kept is not what goes on each Sunday, as much as what happens during the week. If there is no holiness during the week, it means that there really was none on the Lord's Day. The true observance of the Christian Sabbath means that all of life is renewed and altered.

On a true Sabbath, there is a confrontation of the people by God's blessing, healing, strengthening, overpowering, and commanding word. The Word of God gives us our marching orders. It is not a place where the drop-outs of life are comforted, but where men gain strength for the wars of the Lord. The meaning of the Lord's Day is postmillennial in all its implications.

130

THE TAX REVOLT AGAINST GOD

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 94, February 1988

An important fact of the current American scene is the tax revolt, primarily directed against the U.S. federal government. No one knows how many people are involved in this, but the numbers are considerable. While not at all in agreement with this movement, I must add that it has in its ranks some of the finest and most dedicated men in the country. They recognize clearly the growing power of the state, the onset of totalitarianism, and the awesome waste of tax funds. For fifty years, the policy of "tax and spend" has governed both parties. Their occasional good resolutions when out of office turn into forgotten rhetoric when in office. The evil is clearly there. Writers like columnist Donald Lambro, in such books as *Washington: City of Scandals* (1984), document the prodigal waste of funds by Congress. As against critics who decry this waste, both parties excuse their actions by citing the needs of the poor, when in reality much of the money goes to enrich the rich even more.

We must remember, however, that Scripture gives no room for tax revolt. Judea, in our Lord's day, was deeply involved in a tax rebellion against Rome. In one instance, tax money was demanded of Jesus, who made clear His immunity from taxation as the Son of God the King, but, at the same time, He instructed Peter to pay it by means of a miracle (Matt. 17:24–27).

On another occasion, spies, and a "trick" question, were used in an attempt to trap Jesus. In that day, anyone opposing the tax revolt lost popular support, and was regarded as a tool or servant of Rome by the people. On the other hand, if a well-known person advocated the tax revolt, his arrest quickly followed. The question asked of Jesus was, "Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or no?" To answer, "yes," would mean the contempt of most Jews; to answer, "no," would mean arrest and

prison. Our Lord called attention to Caesar's image and superscription on the coin, and said, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's" (Luke 20:20–26).

The meaning was clear: the coin witnessed to the fact that Caesar provided them with coinage, military protection, courts, law, public works, roads, and more. By their sins, they had made Caesar their lord or sovereign. However, if they would render to God what God requires, in full obedience to His law, then God would again be their Lord. In other words, the tax revolt was the wrong answer; it did not alter the moral and religious fact of their apostasy. They invoked the name of the Lord, as churchmen do today, but they did not obey His law-word.

Charles Adams, in *Fight, Flight, Fraud: The Story of Taxation* (1982), gives us an excellent survey of the history of taxation. Even more, he sees the heart of the matter clearly, stating, "taxing power is the guts of sovereignty" (p. 125). This is the key fact. Whomsoever we make our sovereign has then the right to tax us: taxation is the prerogative of sovereignty. Today, the state is man's sovereign; it is Hegel's god walking in history, and hence it has unlimited powers, because a sovereign cannot be bound or controlled by any law.

According to Scripture, God is our lord or sovereign. The most common term applied to God the Father in the Old Testament is "Lord," and in the New Testament, "Lord" is the most used term for Jesus. The triune God is our creator (Gen. 1:1–31). Therefore, "The earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1). It is God the Lord who therefore allots funds to church and state alike. Civil government is limited to half a shekel for all males eighteen years and older (Exod. 30:10–16) to provide an "atonement" or civil protection or covering for them. For worship, *one-tenth* of the tithe, or 1 percent of a man's increase, was provided (Num. 18:24–26). The Levites were to use the rest of the tithe for education (Deut. 33:10) and a variety of other societal services. Thus, clearly, God does not allow in His law for any centers of power in church or state. Both are to be small institutions, the one a ministry or diaconate for civil protection, the other a ministry of grace (Rom. 13:1ff.).

When the problem of a power state develops, the key is not rebellion but obedience to God the Lord. All things are under the government and the providence of God. We are in our present predicament because of our disobedience to the Almighty.

Remember, the major tax revolt is not against the modern state: it is against God. It is significant, too, that God's law makes no provision for the enforcement of the tithe *by man*. Neither church nor state have the

power to require the tithe of us, nor to tell us where it should be allocated, i.e., whether to Christian schools or colleges, educational foundations, missions, charities, or anything else. The tithe is to the Lord.

The fact is clear that man cannot impose rules to govern God's tax, nor require it of us. God, however, can enforce this law in His own way, and does. In Malachi 3:8–12, God tells us certain things about His tax. *First*, failure to pay it means robbing Him, robbing God! God expects not only tithes from us, but also offerings, i.e., gifts above and beyond the tithe. *Second*, failure to pay God His tax means that we shall be under a curse. This curse will affect us in the realm of nature, in the realm of civil government, and in every other sphere of life. In other words, in Malachi's plain terms, God takes a tax revolt against Him far more seriously than the U.S. Internal Revenue Service does in cases of tax revolts against it. And God has far more efficient powers of enforcement! *Third*, God declares that His powers to bless us for paying His tax far exceed anything we imagine. It is the promise of life.

All God's laws carry with them curses and blessings (Deut. 28). The first promise in this regard, i.e., first in importance, concerns the family: "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Exod. 20:12). In Ephesians 6:2–3, Paul stresses the life-giving fact of obedience to this commandment. The tithe is one of these life-giving laws when obeyed.

This means that men and nations cannot expect God's blessing when they neglect His tax and laws. Why should God bless a people who disobey Him, are engaged in a tax revolt against Him, and who insist on declaring that His law has been done away with? It was because God's law is so important and unchanging that only the vicarious sacrifice of the Son of God could make atonement for us. Is the law now a trifle? Some insist that we are no longer under such laws as, "Thou shalt not commit adultery . . . steal . . . kill . . . bear false witness," and so on, only under grace. Granted that these are extreme antinomians, but what grace is there in any neglect of God's law, of any disregard for it? Remember, our Lord declares, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:19). Did our Lord change His mind about this after the resurrection? If so, He neglected to say so!

The tax revolt against the U.S. federal government is thus really a small matter. It will not affect the fundamental course of things, nor stop the growing totalitarianism. The key problem is the tax and law revolt against God. You can be sure that He does not take it lightly.

131

BIBLICAL MILITARY LAWS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 131, March 1991

There is much humanistic opinion in our time with respect to warfare, and too little Biblical thought. Humanistic opinions wander between two poles. Human life is absolutized so that killing in warfare (or killing murderers by legal executions) is seen as morally wrong. Such a view divinizes human life and makes any taking of life evil. Others have held that reasons of state can validate war, which means the divinization of the state as absolute. The Biblical view does not permit any surrender of the sovereignty of God and the rule of His law. God's justice must govern all things, including man and the state.

The Biblical rules of war are analogous to the rules of defense of one's life and property. If a man breaks into a house, he can be killed if necessary without any blood guiltiness; if, however, the breaking and entering is in daylight, any unwarranted killing of the criminal incurs blood guiltiness. The "house" in such laws includes also the barn (Exod. 22:1–4).

In warfare, essentially a defensive purpose is normal. Men are soldiers, in Biblical law, who are aged twenty upward, as long as they are able-bodied (Num. 1:2–3, 18, 20, 45; 26:2, 4). Family concerns took priority over a military draft: a new vineyard, or a new house, was grounds for exemption: the future of the family was the basic defense. Similarly, a newly wed man had a year's exemption (Deut. 20:1, 5–8; 24:5). The clergy were exempt (Num. 1:47ff.): they were constantly engaged in the wars of the Lord against sin and evil. There had to be a formal declaration of war *preceded* by peace negotiations (Deut. 20:10–12). There is an important case law in Deuteronomy 20:19–20 which forbids destroying the enemies' fruit trees, a means of ongoing life. This meant that, if fruit trees were spared, noncombatants were also. The only exemption to this law was with regard to certain Canaanite peoples whom God had

sentenced to death; Israel was ordered to execute God's sentence; this was not an aspect of normal legal strategy.

A very central aspect of law with respect to both peace and war is God's law against any alliance with any nation which rejects God and His covenant. This nonalliance requirement is a radical one: no marriage with unbelievers, and no peacetime or wartime alliances with ungodly nations (Exod. 23:31–33; 34:12–16; Deut. 7:1–4). St. Paul sums up this law in these words: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6:14).

This law is now routinely disregarded. In Saudi Arabia, U.S. troops reportedly cannot have specifically Christian chapel services, display crosses or wear them, organize among themselves Bible studies, and so on. As commander in chief, President George Bush has de-Christianized the chaplains and the troops. The U.S. Army has been plainly separated from Biblical faith on even the most voluntary basis.

There is another aspect of war, an especially grim one, that marks modern warfare. Modern declarations of war are not like warfare in the past, such as in the eighteenth century. Since the French Revolution, and with the U.S. Civil War, we have seen the rise of total war. War is not only waged against the enemy, but against one's own population. The enemy civilian population is subjected to air raids and massive obliteration bombing to destroy all morale at home. Civilians have become as much a military target, where possible, as are the armies. Each country, however, has also waged a hidden war against its own people. This is done by means of controls as a wartime measure which are then retained in some degree with the coming of peace. Modern warfare has thus become a major means of effecting social change.

In fact, it must be said that the historic forms of revolution, such as the French and Russian Revolutions, are no longer as successful nor as common. We now have a new fact, *war as revolution*. The losing country usually faces a change of leadership, some kind of revolution. The winners, however, are also subjected to a thorough revolution by means of the vast growth of statism during the war. A good history of the twentieth century could be written under the title, *War as Revolution*.

This fact has made war more welcome than ever to some social thinkers. It enables the state to make changes which would otherwise be impossible in many cases. There is thus an entrenched predisposition to war among many in the *political* sphere. It needs to be stressed that this predisposition is political, not military. It is a silly myth that holds that military men want war; such has rarely been the case. In war, it is men in

the military who are certain to be shot at. It is the high-ranking officers who can lose their reputations and end in disgrace. Every day of a war is a disaster for some service men, who are killed, and to some military leaders, whose reputations and futures are destroyed. Military men believe in preparing for any possible attack but prefer normally to begin and end their days in peace. The gainers in wartime are the bureaucracies, which grow enormously and then almost never shrink back to their previous size.

Warfare thus has changed greatly from its original purposes. At its worst, warfare once meant loot, rape, and conquest. Now it means also calculated social change for both sides.

James tells us that the origin of wars and all human conflict is in sin. The warfare begins in our own being with our warfare against God, with our evil desires and lusts, our envy and our hatred (James 4:1–3). Thus, at root the problem of war is the problem of sin, a religious problem. This does not necessarily mean that both parties or nations are evil, but rather that sin creates the crisis. Both parties *can* be in sin, but one can also be innocent.

The religious aspect of war means that regeneration is the best strategy for peace. As men are born into the peace of God, they then can become blessed peacemakers. Our Lord, citing the Old Testament, tells us that all godly peacemakers are blessed (Matt. 5:9). The meek, the tamed of God, inherit the earth (Matt. 5:5). David tells us, "But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace" (Ps. 37:11). It is our calling to be God's peacemakers.

132

GOD'S LAW

Position Paper No. 232, July 1999

The world is full of many people who are ready to believe in God and in the Bible from cover to cover except where it disagrees with them. They would favor a shorter and revised Bible which would leave out most of the "thou shalt nots," especially where such things as sexual misconduct are concerned. They want an "inspiring" Bible rather than a commanding one, and they are therefore in favor of shorter "Bibles" which omit the law but retain inspirational texts.

The reason is simple: man is a sinner, and he wants no control, least of all by God, over his "private life," especially where sex is concerned. The term "private life" is a curious one because, no matter how much sexual privacy is sought, sex in its ramification is very public. The consequences of adultery and homosexuality are far-reaching in any society. Private acts have social consequences. A world order built on the family is challenged by sexual sins, and man's choice is an obvious one. Either such offenses as adultery, and especially homosexuality, are opposed, or else society collapses.

Some churchmen oppose adultery, homosexuality, and other sexual offenses simply because the Bible condemns them. (Too many are too cowardly to speak out.) We should condemn what God condemns, and we have no valid choice in the matter, but we need also to understand that a godly civilization requires godly living. Those whose opinion is simply, and they are many, let the world live its way, and we Christians God's way, are deadly wrong. *First*, God's law concerning sexuality is for all men. *Second*, a godly world order requires God's law. Since all men are created by God, all men must be under God's law. To forget this fact is to believe in a world under man's law as the goal of history.

A brief glance at the Bible tells us that much space is given to the law

and to salvation. The law tells us what the life of salvation is, one of obedience to our Lord. If we examine the literature of the sexual revolution, we see that it strikes against salvation, and it offers freedom from God's law as its way of salvation.

Take your choice, then. Antinomianism in the church, or in the sexual revolution, has as its goal the death of God. If God's law be dead, then God is dead for us. Is this what you want?

133

JUSTICE AND TORTURE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 68, November 1985

An important and neglected fact of Biblical law has to do with "confession." The appearances of this word in any form are restricted to the confession of sins before God. Leviticus 5:5 requires it as a part of the trespass offering. Leviticus 16:21 tells us that Aaron confessed the sins of all Israel and laid them on the scapegoat for atonement. Leviticus 26:40 refers to the confession of apostasy. Numbers 5:7 is again about the confession of sin before atonement.

An amazing fact emerges: Biblical law gives no place to the confession of a criminal offense as a means of court trial and conviction. H. B. Clark's *Biblical Law*, an old legal study, has no entry for it. Very clearly, in Biblical law there was to be no conviction on confession.

The Bible gives us a remarkable instance of this, Achan's offense. The enormity of his crime against God and Israel is stressed; men died because of it. God required the death penalty for the offender, and He also gave to Joshua a supernatural means of discovering the offender. Joshua then appealed to Achan to "give . . . glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him" (Josh. 7:19). Even the confession of a crime had to be primarily to God, secondarily to man.

But this is not all. Not even God's supernatural discovery of Achan, nor Achan's confession, sufficed for conviction. Only after Achan's story was confirmed by full evidences which plainly convicted him and his family was he convicted and executed. In terms of God's law, thus, even a God-established confession must have the corroboration of evidences. Clearly, confession in itself had no real standing in Biblical law. In this respect, Biblical law preserves the person of the suspect with all the respect due to one created in the image of God.

According to George Horowitz, in his influential study, *The Spirit of*

Jewish Law (1953), the Mishnah spoke of confession, not in relation to court procedure, but that, on conviction and before execution, the condemned man was asked to confess his sin in order to be received of God. In fact, "a confession, of course, could never be used against a defendant to assure his punishment on earth." (sec. 338, p. 641). The importance of this is very great; it meant that, because a confession was inadmissible evidence, torture was not and could not be used. This preserved the person of the accused from torture, the third degree, or any other like method of extracting a confession. It meant that justice required evidence gained by lawful means.

Thus, the whole of Biblical law worked, *first*, to protect the accused from lawless methods of compelling a confession. Since a confession in itself is not evidence in Biblical law, we have all the ingredients of what in the United States became the Fifth Amendment, the immunity of the accused from being compelled to testify. The Biblical legislation goes further than the Fifth Amendment, in fact. *Second*, Biblical law requires restitution and atonement for every offense. Thus, in Deuteronomy 21:1–9, when a murdered man's body was located in a field, the responsibility fell on the nearest town to see that justice was served. If the murderer remained unknown, then the work of restoration was the duty of that nearest town.

How remarkable it is that men choose to despise God's law and idolize or at least idealize Greek and Roman law. The Greeks used torture regularly, and their methods of capital punishment included crucifixion, beheading, poison, clubbing the person to death, burial alive, stoning, hurling a man from a precipice, and more. The Romans eliminated poisoning and strangling but used torture, and they refined crucifixion.

Early Christendom more or less followed Biblical law, and the results were good. The two revivals of torture took place in the thirteenth century, with its effects lasting to the nineteenth, and again in the twentieth century on a most formidable scale. It is worthy of note that in A.D. 865. Pope Nicholas I, in a letter to the Bulgars, forbad the use of torture, because confessions were not to be extracted by coercion and were forbidden as a result.

When scholars began to study Roman law, and, later, Aristotle, Greco-Roman norms began to replace Biblical ones. Whereas Biblical law required evidence, not confession, now, as Edward Peters noted in *Torture* (1985), "Confession ascended to the top of the hierarchy of proofs" and remained there (p. 44). The consequences were devastating. *First*, it simplified the work of law enforcement. The needed "evidence" was extracted by torture from the suspect. There was an analogy, Peters noted,

to plea bargaining. Most suspects in plea bargaining cases are guilty; the work of the police and the court is simplified by having the suspect plead guilty to a lesser offense. Torture also simplified the legal process; a majority of the suspects may have been guilty, but, as for the rest, well, human justice could not be perfect.

Second, in Greco-Roman thought, politics or the state, as Aristotle so plainly outlined it, is the source of morality, not a religion. Such a faith shifts the whole center of the moral universe from God's Word to the state's word. With the revival of Greco-Roman thought, the shift began in Europe from the centrality of the faith and the church to politics and the state. We are now reaping the consequences of that shift in our operative paganism.

Third, as a result of this shift, the rational modern state and its philosopher-kings or elite became the great defenders of man. Reason, progress, and man's hope were now defined in terms of the state. The state was seen as man's savior from the evils and superstitions of Christianity and the church. To suspect the state was for the philosophers of the state like suspecting God. They held plainly that right is what the state does. Marxism holds to the infallibility of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Mussolini said, of the fascist state, "Beyond the state, nothing that is human or spiritual has any value whatsoever." In Nazi Germany, justice became racial: "The People's sound sense of justice" governed; "Law is what serves the German people. Injustice is what injures it." Some of the worst statements came from English idealist philosophers, Bosanquet, Green, and others, who identified the state with "Right," after Hegel.

We have thus had a major revival of torture in our time, and the greatest mass murders as well. A higher percentage of mankind has been killed in the twentieth century than ever before by mass murders, death camps, man-made famines, war, revolution, torture, and so on. The end is not yet.

So routine has man's torture of man become, that in Marxism and fascism, the medical profession has been routinely used in sophisticated modern forms of torture. It has taken much of this century to bring Western psychiatrists even to the point of considering the condemnation of Soviet psychiatric tortures.

This should not surprise us. As Western medical practice has departed from Christianity, it has become more and more a class of professional technicians rather than healers. The inability of medical societies to condemn and bar abortionists makes clear their moral dereliction. How can men condemn the torture of adults when they will not condemn the murder of unborn babes?

It is ironic, given the injustices of humanistic law, that men declare God's law to be "barbaric" and "primitive" and affirm the validity of modern humanistic law. Greek law was brutal towards all save the limited number of elite, and Greek society was a slave society in which the elite few regarded their will as justice. The idealization of the Greeks is by our modern elitists, who dream of a like power over the masses, i.e., over the rest of us. It is an anti-Christian dream.

The clergy, by their indifference or hostility to God's law, are thereby implicitly affirming humanistic law. For humanism, man is a product of evolution, not a person created in the image of God. For an evolutionary faith, man is expendable, because, as man controls and guides evolution, he must eliminate the unfit to create the new man of the future.

It is no longer God and His Great Assize, the Supreme Court of the universe, which is the focus of justice, but the temporal state. Because the state is now central, reasons of state have replaced the laws of God. It is significant that, as Congress regularly debates tax laws, it talks about closing "loopholes." Those loopholes are the areas of freedom still left to us where our money is our own; reasons of state call what we are allowed to keep "exemptions," which the state gives and can take away.

Biblical law is not popular with men even though it limits civil government to a minimal dimension; sharply limits civil taxation to a small sum; preserves the person from torture; requires self-government; and furthers freedom. It has a great fault; it indicts all men as sinners before God, something man refuses to hear.

But hear it he shall! Scripture speaks of the Last Judgment. This was once important in church art, and in church teachings. Men were made aware that the books shall be opened on us all, and there will be a total accounting and final and full judgment. The ultimate Court will institute ultimate, full, and final justice, so that a total restitution and restoration will be effected. The Last Judgment tells us, *first*, that justice is inescapable. We live in a moral universe, God's universe, and all wrongs shall be righted. So total is this justice, our Lord tells us, that it will extend to "the uttermost farthing" (Matt. 5:26). The ungodly will vainly say to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb" (Rev. 6:16). Every aborted child will be there to accuse the guilty parents and doctors.

Second, the Great Judge is also our Savior and Lord, whose members we are by His atonement. Hence the magnificent promise and pledge: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more

pain: for the former things are passed away . . . Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:4–5). This is the glorious climax of God's covenant law.

Some men say with a show of horror, "How can you go back to Biblical law?" The answer is, we haven't even come up to it yet, with its justice and freedom! Humanistic law is ancient despotism idolized afresh. It sycophants are never lacking. The Stuarts, and the Tudors before them, had their choruses of lackeys praising them as saviors. Ben Jonson, in his "Irish Masque," had "wild" Irishmen turn into civilized courtiers by the divine power of King James (a homosexual). "In the presence of the King," Jonson, that lackey of lackeys, said, even "wild" Irishmen "came forth new-born creatures all!" For like insanities, consult your daily paper, your television set, the nearest university, and statists anywhere. Their hope for justice is in acts of state, and the acts of state are bringing them doom.

MAN

134

PERSONA

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 175, May 1994

The word *person* has a curious history. It comes from the Etruscan *phersu*, into Latin *persona*, meaning a mask. It had reference in both cases to the mask worn by actors, thus to a pretended character, a dramatic figure rather than a reality.

This use of *persona* pointed to a fact in classical antiquity, i.e., the insubstantial nature of man. Men were defined socially, by nation and by class. The view of classical antiquity to people was in a sense closer to Karl Marx than to the Bible.

Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans gives us examples of this, taken from the highest levels of society. Thus, we are told of Lycurgus of Sparta,

> Lycurgus allowed a man who was advanced in years and had a young wife to recommend some virtuous and approved young man, that she might have a child by him, who might inherit the good qualities of the father, and be a son to himself. On the other side, an honest man who had love for a married woman upon account of her modesty and well-favoured-ness of her children, might, without formality, beg her company of her husband, that he might raise, as it were, from this plot of good ground, worthy and well-allied children for himself. And indeed, Lycurgus was of a persuasion that children were not so much the property of their parents as of the whole commonwealth, and, therefore, would not have his citizens begot by the first-comers, but by the best men that could be found; the laws of other nations seemed to him very absurd and inconsistent, where people would be so solicitous for their dogs and horses as to exert interest and to pay money to procure fine breeding, and yet kept their wives shut up, to be made mothers only by themselves, who might be foolish, inform or diseased; as if it were not apparent that children of a bad breed would prove their bad qualities first upon those who kept and were rearing them, and wellborn children, in like manner, their good

> qualities. These regulations, founded on natural and social grounds, were certainly so far from that scandalous liberty which was afterward charged upon their women, that they knew not what adultery meant. (Arthur Hugh Clough, ed., *Plutarch's The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* [New York, NY: Modern Liberty, 1932], p. 61).

Some might object to this and maintain that the Athenians were not given to the practices of Sparta. In answer to this, one need only examine Plato's *Republic* and its belief that the philosopher-kings should have access to all women.

Turning to the Romans, Plutarch reported of Cato the Younger:

> It is thus related by Thrasea, who refers to the authority of Munatius, Cato's friend and constant companion. Among many that loved and admired Cato, some were more remarkable and conspicuous than others. Of these were Quintus Hortensius, a man of high repute and approved virtue, who desired not only to live in friendship and familiarity with Cato, but also to unite his whole house and family with him by some sort or other of alliance in marriage. Therefore he set himself to persuade Cato that his daughter Porcia, who was already married to Bibulus, and had borne him two children, might nevertheless be given to him, as a fair plot of land, to bear fruit also for him. "For," said he, "though this in the opinion of men may seem strange, yet in nature it is honest, and profitable for the public, that a woman in the prime of her youth should not lie useless, and lose the fruit of her womb, nor, on the other side, should burden and impoverish one man, by bringing him too many children. Also by this communication of families among worthy men, virtue would increase, and be diffused through their posterity, and the commonwealth would be united and cemented by their alliances." Yet if Bibulus would not part with his wife altogether, he would restore her as soon as she had brought him a child, whereby he might be united to both their families. Cato answered that he loved Hortensius very well, and much approved of uniting their houses, but he thought it strange to speak of marrying his daughter, when she was already given to another. Then Hortensius, turning the discourse, did not hesitate to speak openly and ask for Cato's own wife, for she was young and fruitful, and he had already children enough. Nor can it be thought that Hortensius did this, as imagining Cato did not care for Marcia; for, it is said, she was then with child. Cato, perceiving his earnest desire, did not deny his request, but said that Philippus, the father of Marcia, ought to be also consulted. Philippus, therefore, being sent for, came; and finding they were well agreed, gave his daughter Marcia to Hortensius in the presence of Cato, who himself assisted at the marriage. This was done at a later time, but since I was speaking of women, I thought it well to mention it now. (ibid., p. 932)

Such a step was not commonplace, but it was logical, given the presuppositions of the classical view of man. It was a view widely present in

the pre-Christian world, apart from the Hebrews. In Henri Frankfort's *Before Philosophy* (1964), John A. Wilson and Thorkild Jacobsen called attention to the fact that the cosmos was viewed in some cultures as a state, with both the gods and men sharing a continuity of being. The implication of this was that a stateless man was in effect a nonperson. Man was defined by his place in this cosmic state.

For Biblical faith, however, man, having been created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26–28), is defined by that image, not by the cosmic state. That image of God in man is knowledge, righteousness or justice, holiness, and dominion (Gen. 1:26–28; Eph. 4:24, Col. 3:10). Man is thus under God and His law.

For non-Christian man, the universe is one continuous being, with gradations of being but no law from above. Cato the Younger, like Lycurgus rules, decided the use of his wife in terms of humanistic ideas. Any Christian or Hebrew would have been governed by God's law.

In either case, the concept of the *person* differs. For the Roman, a person, philosophically is a mask *being* worn at a particular point in time and space. For Biblical faith, a person is a creature of God, created in His image, and subject to His laws.

For the modern humanist, a man can choose his lifestyle in terms of his preferences because no divine law can stand over him nor govern him. He sees himself as, philosophically, an evolutionary product, coming from below, and as a brief *persona* or mask worn by life and evolution. Because he wants freedom from his *persona*, he wants respect for the total environment, including rats, mice, and cockroaches. His environmental regulations protect them: they are manifestations of *Gaia*, mother earth.

The early church took the word *persona* and defined it, not as a mask on an actor, but in terms of *hypostasis* (from *hupo*, under, and *histemi*, to stand). There is one nature (*phusis*), one substance (*ousia*) to the Godhead and three persons. One of the greatest intellectual revolutions in the history of thought had taken place. People were no longer seen as temporary masks of being; persons now were creatures made in the *communicable* attributes of the triune God. A wife or daughter could no longer be legitimately disposed of at will; the law of God was now the source of government over all things.

This was a revolution in thinking that set the Christians against the world. Previously, this reference of all things to a supernatural order had been the mark of a "troublesome" people whom the Romans disliked and found "pestilential." Now the Christians far exceeded the Jews in their challenge to classical thought.

The primary reference of *persona* was now to God, three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. On the created level, man alone possesses personhood or personality in a created and derivative sense, derived from God's creative act.

In Hebrews 1:3, "the express image of his *person*" is in the Greek *hypostasis*, substance or person. Another Greek word to express the Latin *persona* was *prosopon*, used in 2 Corinthians 4:6, "the glory of God in the *face* of Jesus Christ." Almost at once the New Testament was using Greek words (and, by implication, Latin) to express Biblical concepts. (There were, later, disputes between the Greek and Latin churches as to which word, *hypostasis* or *persona*, was more accurate.)

Because of this changed meaning, *person* could no longer mean a mask or an appearance, a temporary expression of things in the stream of life, but rather stood for an act of God, a creature with a calling from God and an eternal destiny, a life in heaven or hell.

Being a *person* in the Christian sense thus meant a great responsibility, and an accountability to God. The new meaning began in the eternal being of the triune God rather than in an accident of evolution (a Greek concept in origin).

As Christianity grew, spread, and prevailed to some degree over Europe, and then in various parts of the world, attempts at redefinition set in. Sadly, some of the redefinition occurred within the church. For example, L. W. Geddes, in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, defined *personality* in terms of the concept of the self, without reference to God (L. W. Geddes, "Personality," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 11 [New York NY: Encyclopedia Press, (1911) 1913, pp. 727–729). Centuries earlier, the church's position had been clearer. The psychological definitions, Catholic and Protestant, were definitions downward, a retreat from the Biblical faith.

Besides the many psychological definitions, there were others, political, sociological, and, in the case of Karl Marx, economic. All these depersonalized man; instead of regarding himself as one created in the image of God, man now saw himself in terms of a Darwinian biology, a Marxist economics, a Freudian psychology, and so on. In all cases, the result was a diminished and emasculated man. Man was being remade into an emotional and psychological eunuch. Both man and history were depersonalized.

Karl Marx was important in this depersonalization. For him, economics was determinative in the making of man, and man's remaking or regeneration would come by economics, by a revolution to create a communist world.

As a consequence of this depersonalization of man, and as a result

of seeing man as an economic rather than a religious creature, Marx was hateful and venomous in his attitude towards Judaism and Christianity. In various essays, he attacked Christianity. In the essays of *A World Without Jews*, he vented his savage hatred of Jews. Both Jews and Christians should abandon their religion and seek, as the ground of human unity, *science* (Karl Marx, *A World Without Jews* [New York, NY: Philosophical Library, 1959], p. 3). Marx wanted a state "professing no religion except its own statehood." (ibid., p. 9) Because for Marx the definition of man did not come from God, his idea of society actually was closer to the anthill and the beehive. The end of alienation for him meant the end of personhood. Man would again be like the animals. Walt Whitman expressed this ideal very clearly:

> I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self contain'd;
> I stand and look at them long and long.
> They do not sweat and whine about their condition;
> They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins;
> They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God;
> No one is dissatisfied—not one is demented with the mania of owning things;
> No one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago;
> Not one is respectable or industrious over the whole earth.
> (Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, "Song of Myself," part 32)

Whitman was a city man; he did not know wild animals. What he is obviously describing are cows, domestic animals cared for by man. And his longing is for the end of personhood.

As men today move in terms of Marx and Whitman, what we see is not the realization of a dream world but a reversion to paganism, to barbarism, and to new depths of savagery.

135

THE FLIGHT FROM RESPONSIBILITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 183, December 1994

In 1957, I read a book by Francis Huxley, then newly published, entitled *Affable Savages: An Anthropologist Among the Urubu Indians of Brazil*. Hopefully, conditions have improved since that time, but, the world over, we see a flight from responsibility comparable to that which Huxley observed.

What these tribesmen did was to avoid all the marks of maturity. Pubic hair was thus an embarrassment. Facial and body hairs were plucked out to evade the marks of maturity. "At least one young man I knew felt so abashed at the responsibility it (pubic hair) implied that he borrowed my razor and shaved it all off" (pp. 152–153). The men, of course, see "being hard" as their cultural goal, i.e., being tough. Huxley observed, "It is difficult to live with a hard man, who continually stands on his rights; and the hard man finds it difficult to live in a world where his rights are always being questioned" (p. 118). *Hardness* is for these people virtue (p. 106).

Enough has been said to suggest the parallels to our time. Young males in our society do much to play the hardness game, but with different forms. For example, earrings on men are an ancient symbol of slaves; since the days of piracy, they have also been signs of a passive homosexual. With a sure instinct for evil, youth in flight from maturity and responsibility have adopted symbols of an evil past.

Adult males of advanced years are guilty of the same evasion of maturity. Old men dress like their grandchildren, act as though shorts make them youthful rather than ridiculous, and act also as though maturity were an evil.

The problem runs deeper than infantile dress and mannerisms. The cultivation of immaturity is an evasion of responsibility. Children are

not responsible for the world's direction; adults are. Children yearn for perpetual play; adults have a duty to leave the world more free than they found it, but they are instead ready to allow a slave state to take over. The older generation, of which I am a member, is extensively responsible for our present evils. A few years ago, many an automobile had this bumper sticker: "We are spending our children's inheritance."

With examples like this, is it any wonder that the younger generation is lawless?

The Bible insists that even animals are to a degree responsible for their deeds (Exod. 21:28). Now our courts are increasingly ready to excuse murderers for their crimes. To deny human responsibility is to give a license to crime. A *response* is an *answer*, and *responsibility* means to be *answerable* or accountable. Our accountability or responsibility is essentially to God, and in God, to men. If men will not be answerable to God, why should they feel accountable to men?

There can be no restoration of maturity and responsibility without a thoroughly Biblical faith. Antinomianism denies the legal foundation of responsibility and therefore undermines society.

Responsibility at times involves confession. To say unequivocally, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight" (Ps. 51:4), requires a sense of maturity and responsibility. It means taking our actions, whether good or evil, seriously. Proverbs 30:20, in James Moffatt's reading, tells us: "This is the way of an adulteress: she gratifies her appetite and calmly says, 'No harm!'"

We regularly see particularly vicious crimes committed by young men who seem to have no remorse. The seriousness of life means nothing to them.

However grim the situation, we can take heart. The way of the irresponsible ones is the way of death. They are suicidal, and they invite judgment. As Proverbs 8:35–36 tells us, "For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death."

136

"EMPTY SUITS"

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 189, June 1995

Claire Sterling, in *Octopus* (1990), gives an excellent report on the global narcotics trade and the controlling criminal group. She tells of one undercover detective who infiltrated this international group, learning of a federal judge who was bought off by an international figure in the narcotics trade, and was then rewarded with a better position (p. 32). The detective's work should have led to an explosive exposure and imprisonment of key criminals. Instead, it led to nothing. Much of this was due to the unwillingness of the important and unimportant to act. The detective's conclusion was that there were too many "empty suits," too many people in high places and low who wanted no risks, nor hard stands, no uncompromising positions, nothing that might in the slightest endanger their comfortable positions. He recognized that the world was full of "empty suits."

I was reminded of a pastor who almost twenty years ago concluded that, where a truly Christian stand was necessary, the United States had 30,000 empty pulpits. Again, a professor made an obvious moral stand and was fired illegally and could not afford the legal process of appeal; the rest of the faculty in the main believed he was right, and told him so, but they dared not make a stand.

We live in a world of "empty suits." This has happened before, with ugly results, and it will be no better this time. Men are everywhere refusing to be men. This may be one reason for the rise in feminism.

On all sides, moral courage is lacking. This should not surprise us. After World War II, statist education was stripped of all traces of Biblical faith. The Ten Commandments were literally abolished from state schools. In one instance, they were actually a part of a building's wall. (At one time, some American state and court buildings commemorated Moses.)

The result was that children were no longer taught, "Thou shalt not steal," nor kill, nor bear false witness, nor enter into sexual immorality, because the living God had His unchanging law over us all. Theft is now a game with too many children; they dare one another to prove how much they can steal without being caught. The result is young gangs, a growing lawlessness in every area of life and thought, and silly experts wondering what has gone wrong.

Without faith in God, men become no more than "empty suits." As moral courage recedes from our world, so too does justice. Justice means the administration of law honestly, to mete out the requirements of God's law without fear and favor to anything but the truth, and to set forth God's standard as against man's sin. But without God, justice becomes an empty, changing, and meaningless concept. Marx held that justice is a class concept, not an unchanging truth. Justice is too often in the courtroom and the juryroom a matter of social prejudices and ugly hostilities rather than godly judgment.

The world of "empty suits" is very much with us. It calls for positivism in law, radical deconstruction in literature, hostility to meaning in the arts, and a reduction of life to sex in our interpersonal relationships. The "empty suits" are men without faith, whose lives are without meaning, and whose hope is "self-fulfillment." Now, self-fulfillment in practice has come to mean, "Let the world go to hell, but I'll get what I feel should be mine."

The "empty suits" hate Christianity, because the Bible requires moral responsibility, and it tells us that God will judge us and require an answer of us. The "empty suits" say to their Lord in the time of judgment, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?" (Matt. 25:44). They refuse to recognize the opportunities for responsibility.

Men commonly surrender responsibilities to other agencies, such as church and state. The "empty suits" described by the detective of whom Claire Sterling wrote were men in places of authority. How can we expect men in high and low offices to exercise their moral courage when we ourselves lack it? Do we not too often see our own vacillation reflected in high places? Are not "empty suits" put into power by men very much like themselves?

There are "empty suits" all around us. What are we?

137

THE DEATH OF GOD AND THE DEATH OF MAN

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 195, November 1995

In one way or another, the death of God has been proclaimed over and over in all of history. Certainly, the Tower of Babel was an aggressive assertion of that belief. In the modern era, the Marquis de Sade was a rigorous exponent of this faith. Moreover, he recognized that, if the Bible is not God's law-word, then there is no sustainable law nor morality.

Immanuel Kant held that the source of morality is not revelation but right reason. Most men were governed by feelings and inclinations, but rational control would bring peace to society. This implied the rule of philosopher-kings. The problem, of course, was that the philosophers did not agree on what reason was or what it decreed, and, with each of them, *right* reason sounded like *their* reason. Men like Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Dewey, and others each had their version of reason.

The Marquis de Sade was ahead of them: abolish Christianity, and everything is permitted: every kind of sexual practice, rape, murder, theft, etc. Dostoyevsky, from another perspective, saw clearly too that if God is dead, there is no law, and everything permitted.

Very early, the Bible tells us, men concluded that, if there is no God, man can do as he pleases. The people of Sodom saw it as a "right" to sodomize whom they pleased (Gen. 19:4–5), as did the men of Gibeah (Judg. 19:22). If the law of God be denied, then no law of man can stand.

Moreover, if God is dead, and His law-word is null and void, how can any law of man then stand? If one doubts God, why not man? To deny God's law is to destroy the standard. If it can be said, "Yea, hath God said?" (Gen. 3:1), then it can be asserted, as did the men of Sodom and Gibeah, that they had a *right* to sodomize whom they pleased. The substitute for God's law becomes man's "right" to do as he pleases. The

modern doctrine of *human rights* is a substitute for God's law, and for man's *duty* to serve and obey God. It is not by accident that God's Word tells us (Rom. 1:21–32) that the burning out of man, the culmination of his apostasy, is homosexuality.

But when God is declared dead, the basis of judgment is undermined. We have, then, the variable words of men as to what is good and evil. Nietzsche saw clearly that, given such a development, the death of man would follow. There would be no law nor criterion, no good nor evil, so that a meaningless world would then appear. His solution was the superman, but the superman would exist only in the void also, so that this answer was a mistake.

We live today in the growing collapse of modern civilization. At best, the nations give minor lip service to God's order. In the United States, God and His law are progressively excluded from the public scene even by churchmen.

Kant had ascribed to man "[a] power of unlimited freedom" (H. W. Cassirer, *Grace and Law: St. Paul, Kant, and the Hebrew Prophets* [1988], p. 83). For Kant, God's grace degrades man and limits his freedom; man's freedom comes from the free exercise of his reason.

As against this, Paul sees our fullness and deliverance only in God's grace. He who made us can only and alone deliver us and make us whole. We are delivered from moral degeneracy into the wholeness of His grace.

God's law is *revealed*; His redemption through Jesus Christ is both *revelation* and *history*. For Kant and for modern man, only through the free exercise of reason can man save himself. This means the assumption, *first*, that man can save himself by reason, and, *second*, that man in all his being, including his reason, is not fallen, dead in his sins and trespasses, and incapable of saving himself. Kant in *Religion Within the Bounds of Bare Reason* (1793) moderated his rationalism somewhat, but he did not replace it with grace.

But it is grace precisely which modern man rejects. Many churchmen speak of grace, but it is not sovereign *grace*, but rather a merited or personally acquired fact. Man becomes the determining factor in his salvation by his *assent*, not God by His sovereign choice.

Because God is the Creator, there is no law nor meaning of any validity in all of creation except that which God determines. All factuality is God-determined factuality. To deny God is to deny life, law, and meaning, and to reduce all factuality to brute or meaningless factuality.

This is why Death of God schools of thought lead to the death of man and of society. No meaning then binds man. Every man then demands his *right* to do as he pleases, to make up his own laws and rules, and to

be justified by his own word. When the law is the creation of man or the state, then man feels free to break what he has created. If men can be antinomian in relation to God and His law, they will be more so with regard to man and the state, towards humanistic law. Many do say, as they break the law of men and the state, "Their say-so doesn't make it right or wrong." They reduce the ultimate determination of all things to self-will. The result is our growing anarchy, and the death of man.

Only a return to a Biblical faith, to the unqualified affirmation of sovereign grace, can bring the death of man to a halt. The twentieth century has been the bloodiest century of all history. A higher percentage of mankind has died because of wars, slave camps, tortures, mass murders, famine, etc. than ever before (see G. Elliot, *Twentieth Century Book of the Dead*).

Only a return to God's sovereign grace and law can alter this trend. Sovereign grace and sovereign law are essentially related. A covenant is a treaty of law. God in His covenant gives us His law as an aspect of His grace. We dare not separate the two aspects of God's covenant, for if we deny either one, law or grace, we deny both.

138

MAN'S HATRED FOR MAN

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 197, January 1996

Two or more years ago, a major California corporation, perhaps the state's major employer, with some 25,000 employees, placed most of them on part-time work, with only a small minority remaining on a full-time status. By thus eliminating vast sums in retirement and sick-leave pay, and a number of other benefits, the corporation went from a shaky position to a highly profitable one. Many other companies, as well as persons hiring only one or two, followed suit. The results have been survival for them, and sometimes grief for employees. Recently, I talked to one man who was dropped entirely, with only two years left to retirement.

I have, in the past two years or more, very often referred to the major corporation's act, and the responses from business and professional persons have been revealing. Many have done the same thing, or taken a like step. In some cases, sons or daughters have replaced outside help; in others, computers have accomplished the same thing, and the employers are relieved.

Why? The answers have much in common. The current labor force is concerned with "rights" and too ready to sue if they are discharged for incompetence, a lack of work, or any other valid reason. Several told me, unless you can get an older woman who knows both how to work and is loyal, you are likely to have trouble.

The employer's freedom to conduct his business or profession as he chooses is challenged by the employee. Some employers who can do so have replaced workers by computers, to their great advantage. Others have reported that even employees who are militantly conservative insist on their "right" to the job on their terms. Without vindicating all employers, we must recognize that something is radically wrong.

One man who had two employees before turning to his family for help,

said that he could correct his daughters and his son without a "right," but an employee somehow had a "right" to the job, and a freedom from correction. We live in an age of "rights," and duties are forgotten, as well as loyalty.

Laws, moreover, increasingly protect the worker as against the employer, not in terms of any moral premise, but in terms of a detailed system of regulations that are open to bureaucratic abuses. Philip K. Howard, not a conservative, has written, in *The Death of Common Sense* (1994), "Making a system of laws where all is set forth precisely, each situation covered in advance, comes directly out of the Enlightenment" (p. 27). The Enlightenment exalted reason rather than regeneration, with devastating results. The salvation of society was now seen as resting on a multitude of rational regulations that would enable everyone to function justly. Instead, men have used the overly precise regulations to their advantage so that the very rich can escape taxes which the poor must pay.

By stressing reason and rational regulations, modern legislators and bureaucrats have obscured the fact that man is a sinner, and he commonly delights in doing injustice in the name of justice. In 1993, a New York City bus was hit by a garbage truck. Within a month, eighteen persons claimed serious injuries in the accident. What they did not know was that the bus was empty, out of service, and parked when hit.

Many years ago, I left a conference half a day early; a conference leader instructed the two of us who left to go to his home in the city, which was *unlocked*, and stay there until time for our flight. Houses are not left unlocked now, as was commonplace when I was young. Theft and vandalism, then rare, are now commonplace.

People are no longer Christian in character. They are increasingly humanistic, tolerant of evil, and intolerant of Christianity. The results are predictable. We see much profession of love for people combined with an actual hatred for mankind. There is a decrease in the sense of community, and there is a growing stress on a forced togetherness. As a result, there is a pulling apart of human relationships. The family is also affected by this, and some parents await with impatience the departure of their children. As one mother said, why should I love a son who threatens to report me if I deprive him of his freedom to do evil?

When the state grows in power, community and society decline. Coercive power replaces voluntary relationship, and both employer and employee view one another with distrust.

The only power ever to alter men and society has been regeneration, not revolution or regulation; but today man believes that the state, not the triune God, is the great force for good in the world. The result is the

growing disintegration of the social order. Men hate mankind, and they draw apart because they know one another too well. Someone has observed that supposedly all men are brothers now by law, when in reality they hate one another increasingly.

The issue is clear-cut. How will men be saved? By regulation? By revolution? By acts of Congress? When will they recognize that only by regeneration are men saved, made whole, and made capable of working together? The prophet Amos said it well: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3).

139

FALSE MORALITY AND FALSE REFORM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 92, December 1987

One of our persistent problems today is that so much "reform," approved by Christians and non-Christians, and liberals as well as conservatives, is simply immoral. An example of such a false perspective is an article in the October 1987 *Reader's Digest*, condensed from *The Wall Street Journal*: Patricia Bellew Gray's "Tobacco Goes on Trial."

Before someone decides to condemn me as an apologist for the tobacco companies, I shall make two things clear. *First*, I am not a smoker; I have never even tried it, and I see it as a foolish habit. *Second*, the tobacco industry does not have a good record as a moral concern! During World War I, a major tobacco corporation worked hard to protect an enemy country, Turkey, because of its contracts for Turkish tobacco; its sympathies and efforts were not with the massacred Christians but with its Turkish partner in business.

The point of Mrs. Gray's article is that people dying, apparently, of tobacco-induced lung cancer, or their families, are suing the tobacco industry for failure over the years to alert users of the dangers in smoking. The defense of the tobacco industry in the legal battles is described as "a lavishly financed and brutally aggressive defense that scares off or exhausts many plaintiffs long before their cases even get to trial." So far, the industry has not lost, but Mrs. Gray has high hopes because of two new cases, in Mississippi and New Jersey.

Let us begin by granting the *medical* case against smoking: it is a dangerous and even suicidal habit. But are the companies liable? Were people ignorant of the dangers of smoking before the warning notices were placed on cigarette packages? Is knowledge of tobacco's threat to health something new?

I am now seventy-one years old, I cannot recall a time when the menace

was not clearly known. In the nineteenth century and well into the depression years of the 1930s, cigarettes were known popularly as "coffin nails." Hygiene classes, athletic coaches, and other authorities regularly warned the young of the dangers of smoking. I was quite young when a Dr. Pearl studied insurance statistics and demonstrated that smokers died earlier than nonsmokers. The young who started to smoke were warned, "It will stunt your growth," "It will kill you," and so on. It was impossible for anyone to grow up without endless naggings and warnings about smoking.

The young would begin smoking as an act of bravado, or to act sophisticated, or out of sheer defiance. In my home town, because the scoutmaster bore down heavily against smoking, all the scouts would leave the meeting to light up cigarettes in gleeful defiance. It was their way of thumbing their noses at authority.

Now, if we say the tobacco companies are then responsible, we deny all godly morality, and we give the right to those who defy well-known facts of health to blame others for their condition. Will farmers be sued next because people who overeat have health problems?

We can be grateful that there were no American courts and judges in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve might then have sued God for creating the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and also for creating the tempter who tempted them! After all, Eve did blame the tempter, and Adam blamed Eve, and he also blamed God for having given him Eve! The suits against the tobacco industry follow the same pattern. They turn the moral universe upside down. They deny the facts of sin and responsibility.

Given this type of lawsuit, what shall we expect next? Will we have suits against call girls and other prostitutes for having given a customer a sexually transmitted disease?

In Concord, California, an antiwar protest group, in violation of the law of trespass, moved in front of a train with munitions, then leaving the Concord Naval Station. One man was hit and lost both legs below the knee. The protesters wanted news and television coverage and had notified the media. They expected to be removed, arrested, and to be on the evening news. After the accident, created by their trespass, they were outraged that no charge was filed against the crew of the train (*The Record*, Stockton, CA, Sept. 24, 1987, p. B-2).

Protesters of various kinds have routinely destroyed and harmed individuals as their fundamental right, but they regard it as "oppression" if any consequences affect them.

Whether we are antiwar, or antitobacco, the moral fact remains the same: when we knowingly do something, we must be prepared to accept

the consequences. We cannot shift the blame onto others. To do so is sin. No matter how just or righteous our cause may be, it cannot justify sinning on our part. If you are struggling for breath because of lung cancer, it is because you did wrong. No one forced you to smoke. When you sue the tobacco industry for your own stupidity, then you really do wrong before God: you deny your own responsibility, and you blame others for what you have done. The fact that the tobacco industry is not a model of Sunday-school deportment does not alter the fact that you are wrong. The other person's sins can never justify your crimes.

The suits against the tobacco industry should not surprise us. They are a part of the spirit of an apostate age. Adam and Eve both denied their guilt: they insisted that they were *victims*. This is the stance of ungodly man: his sin is not his responsibility but a consequence of the environment. Somebody or something else is blamed: "The devil made me do it." This evasion of responsibility is basic to sinners.

In a society of sinners, this means that guilt must be located elsewhere. Criminals have learned the language of psychiatry: they "explain" their offenses by calling attention to their "bad" homes, which is often a lie. Child molesters insist that they were themselves molested as children, and we are supposed to feel sympathetic and understanding as a result. Back in the 1950s, I found instances where even children under ten years of age were excusing their conduct with terminology coming from psychologists.

All the excuses are there, so now we accept them, treat parents, capitalism, society, the church, and other agencies as guilty. The offenders are seen as victims!

Thus far, the tobacco industry has won the cases, but the outlook is not good. Our society is more and more ungodly, and it bases its "morality" on the rationalizations of the fall, not on God nor on His law-word. Our laws increasingly reflect a bias against the Biblical doctrine of sin and responsibility. We should not be surprised that Christianity is increasingly attacked as the evil in society, and the sinner justified in his sin.

We come now to the most deadly implications of this present temper. According to Scripture, God through Christ's atonement justifies the sinner. Christ takes our guilt and sin upon himself and dies in our stead. The Holy Spirit regenerates us and makes us morally new men, new creations. Our justification cost Christ the cross because God's law is unchanging, and sin requires judgment and restitution. Christ righted the legal and moral balance and makes us His responsible and righteous people.

There is, however, a different doctrine of justification in these lawsuits and in much of our current "reform" legislation: *it justifies the sinner in*

his sin. According to the logic of this view, the tempter, rather than Adam and Eve, should have been at the least cast out of Eden, if not killed; the tree of the knowledge of good and evil should have been demoted and sued for creating the possibility of temptation and sin. Is this what you want?

There are two moral realms in conflict, the Kingdom of God versus the kingdom of man. Beware, lest in your foolish sympathies, you align yourself against God.

Incidentally, God created tobacco. One of these days, when we approach it as God-created, we may find a variety of healing uses in its composition which could amaze us. Remember, God made all things good (Gen. 1:31). Our misuse of things cannot alter that fact.

(Note: *Daily News Digest*, August 29, 1990, reported that the antiwar protester who lost both legs when he lay down before a munitions train has received a settlement for $920,000.)

140

THE CULT OF VICTIMIZATION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 71, February 1986

The Romantic movement marked a major change in the world's history and fathered many revolutions. Not only was it a major intellectual force, but it was at the same time a powerful popular movement, affecting all classes. Christianity had earlier been unique in being so great a popular movement and one which reached into all segments of society. Centuries later, the witchcraft cults represented also a great popular movement, and an evil one.

Although the Enlightenment was an antipopular movement, marked by a contempt for the common man and a depreciation of women, it set the stage for Romanticism. By making nature a substitute for God, the Enlightenment paved the way for the Romantic exaltation of the state of Nature. It was Jean-Jacques Rousseau who brought together the various ingredients to unleash the Romantic movement. *First* of all, there was the idealization of Nature as the state of innocence, and the denigration of civilization as the fall of man. (Karl Marx, as a Romantic, simply substituted capitalism for civilization.) Instead of being conformed to and remade by God, man to be saved now simply had to be himself. The "noble savage" and "the simple peasant" gained status as the true people. (Marx converted this into the worker class as the bearers of true humanity, needing freedom.)

Second, because man's salvation now was no longer a second birth in Christ but to recapture the "innocence" of his first birth, egoism was exalted, and the self-centered "hero" became an idol. Byron's poems exalt such men repeatedly. Romantic love has been defined as "the dream of a universe peopled by two alone, where they and time stood still." Love and marriage previously had been a relationship, not only between two persons, but between two families, and it was based on a unity of

faith and life. Now, it became possession, and Faust told Mephistopheles, "Get me the girl." With every man as his own god and idol, the purpose of sex was possession, exploitation, and abandonment. The Romantic poet Shelley saw every girl he desired to possess as a goddess; afterwards, if she wanted an ongoing relationship, she became a witch.

Third, because time passes, the Romantics, as would-be gods, mourned mutability, change, a constant theme in their writings, and sadness became the Romantic posture. All happiness was lined with sadness, because nothing stays the same. The Romantics felt perpetually thwarted. They were the innocent victims of God and time, and they hated both. As a result, people believed at times more in dying for love than living for love, because life is only frustration to the passionate ego. The same is true of love: consummated love for the Romantic begins to perish. The Romantics took a perverse pleasure in frustration. It vindicated their view of life.

Fourth, reason and logic were downgraded and even despised by some in favor of passion and feeling. William Blake expressed such sentiments most plainly. As a result, sentimentality, which had emerged earlier as a reaction against the Enlightenment, began to predominate in literature. The earlier sentimentality was still tied to moral concerns, but increasingly the focus was *feeling*. People became sensitive to their every emotion and feeling, and Western man became introspective on a pathological scale. Novelists devoted books to exploiting the sensitive souls of romantic persons, and the essence of the modern novel, film, and television story is not an intelligent content or point but the exploitation of feelings for their own sake.

Fifth, since Romanticism stressed the ego of individual man, it stressed his remarkable and "divine" uniqueness. At the same time, it stressed the uniqueness of various nationalities, their origins and folklore, and nationalism became a governing force in European life and thought. It was, moreover, a nationalism which displaced Christianity as the focal point of life. Just as for the Romantic hero, the good of the individual is paramount and takes precedence over all other considerations, so for the nation, in the Romantic faith, the good or concern of the nation is the highest good and takes precedence over Christian concerns. National self-interest went hand in hand with a belief in national superiority and self-glorification. Every nation and would-be nation saw in itself a manifest destiny in humanistic terms. In earlier eras, men felt loyal to a lord or a king, not to the nation as such; now allegiance was to a nation state, and many minorities began to agitate for what came to be seen as the only true freedom, a nation state. Napoleon was himself a figure of the Romantic faith but, in establishing a European empire, he ran counter

to the stirrings of nationalism and created a full-blown nationalistic fervor in one area after another. This same impulse for "national freedom" (which is not the same as a free society) has led to the postcolonial states of Africa and Asia, and their tyrannies. In India, national freedom has led to tyrannies and mass killings undreamed of in Mogul and British eras. Thus, while Romanticism stressed at the beginning the individual, it came in time to stress the freedom of the national state, or the worker's state, or a racial state, at the cost of personal freedom.

Sixth, at the same time, the Romantic movement, by requiring impossible and egocentric hopes of men and nations, cultivated an ugly response in men, sadomasochism. Mario Praz and other scholars of the Romantic temper have documented this tradition in literature in the nineteenth century. History has given us the documentation in life in the twentieth century. Its governing impulse is the sense of victimization. Communist revolutions are made possible by creating a sense of being victimized in the people. The result is a sadistic revolutionary destructiveness, and then the even more vicious suppression of the people in the name of the revolution, and a masochistic acceptance. Hitler's National Socialism began with an appeal to this sense of victimization. The world powers, it was held, had cruelly victimized Germany, but, in their own midst, the Jews had been the conniving agents of that victimization. As a result, the Jews had to be punished; when it was over, the Germans were also victims!

The people of the Austro-Hungarian Empire saw themselves as victimized; they have now a much more thorough oppression than they had ever remotely experienced. With more and more peoples, victimization became their version of their past. Ireland was certainly long brutally oppressed by the English, but at the same time it manifested a resistance, a verve, and an inner spirit of remarkable character. With Romanticism, only the bleak aspects of its past became important.

The Jews in Europe were certainly oppressed at times, but they were also vigorous in their development and power during long eras. With Romanticism, the Jewish self-image began to shift from the chosen people to the victim people, and even in America, with freedom and prosperity, this self-concept remains with more than a few.

Similarly, the Armenians, with a remarkable history, and with cities which remained free to World War I, forgot their many triumphs to think instead of their defeats and massacres, real enough, but not their total history.

But this is not all. Amazingly, powerful nations like the United States, Britain, France, and Japan are not lacking in numbers of peoples who are sure that their country has been exploited and abused by other nations.

Before long, at this rate, the school bully will be going to the counselor to cry about being victimized.

All over the world, men and nations wallow in self-pity and a belief that they have been victimized. The cult of victimization is perhaps the most popular religion of our time. Shortly after World War II, some psychiatrists, notably Dr. Bergler, commented on the growing trend on the part of many people to find a perverse pleasure in defeat. The world is then seen as too coarse and evil to tolerate the sensitive and pure soul, and defeat becomes a vindication of one's nobility and purity.

Criminals are prone to the same perspective. They see themselves often as the victims of society. Anyone who has done even a little work with prisoners soon finds that this self-pity and sense of victimization is very prevalent. One police officer with some experience with vice squads said that he found prostitutes and homosexuals uniformly "rotten" and full of self-pity and a sense of victimization to the core of their being.

Worst of all, too many churchmen seem to believe and teach that victimization is a proof of holiness. One could say that for them the more one is willingly victimized, the holier one becomes! I have regularly encountered persons who, while undergoing hellish abuse, found many who seemed to manifest loving concern and friendship. When, however, they took successful steps to deliver themselves from evil, these "Christian" friends turned on them! Several times lately, I have heard from people who have been told to surrender to repulsive evils because they will then be suffering for Christ's sake. This is not Christianity; it is the cult of self-victimization and masochism. It produces an entirely bogus religiosity.

Such a bogus religiosity cannot produce a free people. The world has been moving into slavery because people refuse to recognize that the Biblical word *salvation* means deliverance, health, and victory.

The party of defeat is the devil's party. The devil is the one who sees himself eternally as the victim of God's arbitrary ways. In the temptation of our Lord, the three alternatives offered by Satan all presuppose man as God's victim. If you are truly a son of God, says Satan, how can you let people go hungry? By a miracle, turning stones into bread, solve the economic problem and make work unnecessary. Again, says Satan, walking by faith is painful and difficult for man; use the angels to perform a mighty public miracle so that men may walk by sight, not by faith. Finally, Satan says, worship me, not God; recognize that I am right in saying that God's plan makes man a victim, and that man is not a sinner but a victim of God's harsh ways. Our Lord does not argue: He simply says, "It is written." God has spoken, and His truth prevails. It is reality, not man's self-pity.

The cult of victimization and its sense of self-pity has its immediate roots in Romanticism. Its ultimate origin is the satanic insistence on the will of the creature rather than the Creator. With this began man's fall, and with it continues man's misery.

Salvation is Christ, resurrection, deliverance, health, and victory.

141

HYPOCRISY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 87, June 1987

The word *hypocrisy* is an interesting one with a long history. Our Lord frequently called the Pharisees hypocrites for a variety of reasons.

The origin of the word is the Greek *hypokrites*, which the Septuagint twice translates as "godless." A hypocrite in Greece originally referred to an actor who wore a mask and was not in reality what he pretended to be as an actor. Today the dictionary defines hypocrisy as feigning or pretending to be what one is not, or saying or pretending to one thing while being something else.

James 2:14–17 defines hypocrisy very clearly for us: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." Paul says the same thing in Romans 3:31, and our Lord is emphatic that we can know men by their fruits, their works (Matt. 7:15–20).

The Bible is thus very clear. Hypocrisy is a disparity between a man's faith and his works; it is faith without works.

Hypocrisy is very much with us in all camps. Certainly, it is rampant in the churches. Antinomianism is organized, arrogant, and proud hypocrisy. It denies that faith will inevitably have works or fruits. One major American seminary actually dropped from its faculty a respected theologian who insisted on the link between faith and works. He was accused of denying the orthodox doctrine of justification, of creating a works religion, and much more. The vilification was intense and passionate. Hypocrisy triumphed over sound theology.

Churchmen have no monopoly on hypocrisy; we find it in every camp, and, indeed, it governs most. Take, for example, the libertarians. Much of what they have to say in economics is usually good and often especially telling. Their fellowship is usually one of well-educated and superior minds. Their weakness includes a free-market totalitarianism. They love to impress men by their dedication to the free market, and they insist on a free-market equality and freedom for narcotics as well as for food, and for prostitution equally with marriage. All this gives them a pharisaic edge in claiming superiority over others in their dedication to freedom. But where are the libertarian schools for their children? Here we have an urgent problem. A recent statement coming from the statists themselves, avers that by the year 2000, not far off, two out of three Americans will be functionally illiterate. And where are most of the libertarians' children but in the state schools! This is hypocrisy on a grand scale.

The liberals are amazing masters of hypocrisy. Take Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts, for example. On February 25, 1987, the press reported his "moral" stance on South Africa, calling for stricter sanctions banning South African imports. Moral indignation is hardly becoming to the senator on any subject. On his trip to South Africa, he had to cancel his speaking engagement in Soweto because of black demonstrations against him; the blacks opposed disinvestment and felt Kennedy was against their interests. Kennedy refused Mayor Sol Kreiner of Cape Town when Kreiner invited him to see that apartheid had been dismantled. Although Zulu Chief Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi, and all the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce made clear their opposition to disinvestment, Kennedy, on his return, claimed he "never met a single Black person in South Africa who opposed disinvestment." Much more can be said. Kennedy's qualifications as a moral voice are dubious and hypocritical.

Having said that, it is only fair to add that he is definitely not the worst member of Congress; many are far more hypocritical and far less able than he. (Given the Massachusetts representation in both houses of Congress, would this be grounds for disinvestment in Massachusetts?) The liberals have no lack of disparity between their faith and works, between their moral profession and their moral lives and works.

What about the media? The media supposedly is the source of news, but its concern is more closely tied to commanding instant interest with opening statements which bear false witness. Misrepresentation is routine and is taken for granted. If a man offends the media, his pictures then routinely are in the worst possible form, with his mouth open, in an awkward move, and so on. Handsome and kindly men appear as ogres,

and women as modern witches. (It was a shock for me to meet one senator, a mild-mannered, kindly man, soft-spoken and good-humored, who is regularly depicted as a hard, ugly man and a ranter.) But the media sees itself in a somewhat messianic role, as an elite, and most certainly as champions of the very freedom of expression they resent in others. Here again we are face to face with hypocrisy, with a faith in freedom but not the works thereof, only license.

Conservatives are no less guilty. In the United States, in this century, the conservative premise can be summed up in words, "For God and country." Unhappily, for too many of these men, God does not even come second in their thinking. He is part of a slogan, and, after that, at best an afterthought. Most of them would get more respect from God as honest atheists. To take the name of God in vain is a violation of a basic law, a transgression of the Ten Commandments. To use God's name for political purposes is a sin. We have no right to invoke God unless we, in word, thought, and deed, are radically committed to the rule of God over us and in every sphere of our world. James 2:19 tells us that the very devils believe in God, and tremble. Too many churchmen and politicians invoke God casually, and do not tremble. They are hypocrites with less faith in God than the devil himself.

Churchmen are past masters in the art of hypocrisy. The churches, mainline ones especially, are full of men who profess much and believe in little or nothing. I recall, many years ago as a student, hearing one candidate for ordination declare with laughter in the hallway, "I just affirmed all Thirty-Nine Articles of the faith, and believe none of them." Of course, he arose to high positions and honor in that church, and why not? The church of our Lord's day made it clear to Him that they preferred hypocrisy to the incarnate Son of God, and they crucified Him. The Pharisees and hypocrites are with us still.

Jean-Baptiste Massillon, bishop of Clermont in the days of Louis XIV, was a man who showed, often tellingly, a knowledge of the propensity of man's heart for self-flattery and hypocrisy. When someone complimented him on one occasion for his brilliancy, Massillon replied, "The devil has said the same thing to me already, and more eloquently than you." Massillon recognized that men are not willing to face up to what they are. He remarked, "we all wish to avoid ourselves."

In the early years of the nineteenth century, an American preacher whom some regarded as a national treasure was Edward Norris Kirk of Albany, New York, a Presbyterian leader in his day. Kirk knew the significance of hypocrisy. In preaching on Romans 8:7, "Man's Natural Enmity to God," Kirk declared, "All over the world, and in every period

of human history, men have hated, not the fact here stated, but the declaration of that fact. Men are willing, that it shall be true that they hate God, but they are not willing to read it, nor to hear it." Men, Kirk went on to say, "generally appear to be sincere, in denying that they hate God." In fact, most people in and out of the church will deny that fact, or affirm "with perfect sincerity — No, I love Him."

But, Kirk said, man outside of Christ is in enmity to God, although he may live a good, neighborly life. All the same, his own life is central to him, not God and His Kingdom. Even when converted, this carnal or fallen, egocentric aspect of our being, while juridically dead, is not yet totally mortified.

Kirk singled out three areas as revelatory of our natural enmity to God. *First*, he said, "Man hates the character of God as a Lawgiver." The basic prerogative of God's nature for which God "will contend with the power of His throne, is that of making laws for His creatures." But basic to man's old nature is his desire for his own way, his own will, and his own law. Man, however, masks his enmity towards God's law with all kinds of devices. "This is one great source of deception." Men claim to love God while hating His law. "Let the awful truth be repeated; — man has staked his happiness against the authority of the eternal Lawgiver." Of course, men use, said Kirk, high-sounding and "moral" reasons for setting aside God's law while professing to love Him. One way this is done is "to deny the revealed character of a law so pure, and holy, and difficult, and contradictory to our passions." Another way "is, to admit the existence of the law, but on various grounds to deny the execution of the penalty."

Second, Kirk said, "Man hates the sovereignty of God." It does not please man that all things were made by God for His own purpose and glory. "But what if the plans of a sovereign God require the abandonment of our most beloved objects? Must we then cordially submit? Yes, you must either love, or hate a sovereign God. If you love Him supremely, your chief happiness will be derived from seeing Him accomplish His sovereign will." If our personal hopes and dreams come first, "you must be the enemy of God." (Strong words, these, but it tells us something about America then that Kirk's sermons were widely read.)

It is our disposition, Kirk said, when God denies us our will, to cry out, "O, God! what have these innocent ones done, that Thou shouldest thus tear them from earth's bright prospects? What have I done, that Thou shouldest rob me of more than life?" But the world cannot be ordered for our benefit; it moves in terms of God's purposes, not ours.

Kirk's *third* premise was this: "the carnal mind hates the mercy of God." If man resents or hates God's sovereignty, why should he hate

God's mercy? But mercy is more than the "direct gratification of the wants of men." The purpose of mercy is to further God's Kingdom and His sovereign purpose. God's mercy is not essentially for our sake and purpose, but for His own. "The Israelites were led out of Egypt in mercy; but because everything was not arranged to their wishes, the very plans and achievement and instruments of that mercy perpetually aroused their wrath. The prophets were sent in mercy; but these were stoned and sawn asunder and driven to dwell with wild beasts. At last the Son of God came, the Messenger of mercy. From the cradle to the tomb, he drew forth the rage and malice of men."

How shall we cope with this fact in ourselves? We need to recognize its reality and pray truly God's will be done, on earth and by ourselves, as it is in heaven. Our conscience needs the continual renewing of the Holy Spirit. "God has no other mercy than a holy mercy; no other merciful treatment of thee than to make thee holy. If this please thee not, it is because thou hast the carnal mind, which hates God." So wrote Kirk.

Massillon said that, having known God's mercy and love, we have only one proper response: "Love is the price of love alone." This means loving and obeying God with all our heart, mind, and being, and our neighbor as ourselves. The sad fact is, Massillon declared, that "the three principles which usually bind men to each other . . . are fancy, cupidity, and vanity." Society is constantly in a state of war because "religion and charity unite almost nobody." There is thus, said Massillon, a brittleness to human relations. There is hypocrisy in what passes as good Christianity, because "[i]t is not rightly loving our brethren, to love them only through fancy; it is loving one's self." Our lives as Christians are false and hypocritical, because, "are Christians made to live estranged, and unconnected with each other?"

Hypocrisy is faith without works, which means really no faith at all. A variety of such hypocritical faiths contend on the human scene, and they contend for power, and for control over men.

Our Lord declares that it is the way of the peoples, the Gentiles, to exercise authority or power over other men, "But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:26–28).

Hypocrisy is faith without works, power and authority without performance or service. Christian faith manifests itself in works, in service to God and to man.

The works cited are Edward Norris Kirk, *Sermons on Different Subjects* (1840); and Jean-Baptiste Massillon, *Sermons*, volume 1.

142

DETACHMENT

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 73, April 1986

The French writer, Gide, spoke often to Georges Simenon about the writer's need to remain unattached. Gide held that the writer must not love in depth, must not have children, must not have to worry about money, and must dedicate himself to his art alone.

Gide was also the man who wrote, "Family, I hate you!" The politician Leon Blum, an architect of France's disaster in World War II, had a like view: "Bourgeois, I hate you!" (Georges Simenon, *When I Was Old* [1971], pp. 233, 255).

These comments are an excellent insight into the spirit of the modern age. The two poles go together, i.e., being unattached, and hating. The family, to put it mildly, requires attachment; the true family is an intense, deep, and basic relationship. The family gives birth to life, nurtures and protects it, and is very strongly protective of itself when it is a healthy and vital family unit. If a man hates attachment, he will hate the family, so that indifference becomes impossible. In fact, love furthers unity, cohesion, and life, whereas unattachment breeds distance, hatred, and death.

Dr. James J. Lynch, in *The Broken Heart: The Medical Consequences of Loneliness* (1977), describes a very interesting bit of evidence on this matter. An alcoholic, aged fifty-four, whose life had separated him completely from everyone, had a heart attack. For fourteen days, doctors struggled to restore him to health, giving him "the most intense medical care that could be imagined." He had no visitors, and he had gone into a coma. A nurse took pity on the lonely, dying, comatose patient and held his hand. When she did, there was a decrease in the heart rate and a stabilizing of the heart rhythm. In other words, the touch of another person's hand had a marked effect for life on a comatose man. Attachment is

conducive to life, and unattachment to death. How much more true this is with godly attachments.

Our modern culture is not congenial to true attachments, only to superficial ones. Modern civilization has become very urban precisely at that stage of history when the city is less needed as a concentration point. Before the era of trains, motor cars, trucks, and planes, the city was built at a seaport, i.e., a good shipping point, to facilitate the movement of goods. Such vantage points were not many, and growth in production required a strategic location in terms of shipping. Now, two reasons at least make this markedly less necessary. *First*, from the military point of view, decentralization is an important form of defense. Army and navy bases are dispersed, and so too are production centers, because concentration increases vulnerability. *Second*, hand in hand with this decentralization is a greater ease of travel and shipment. In terms of time and ease of travel, as well as convenience, Los Angeles is today "closer" to New York City than Buffalo was in 1815, and goods can be moved more readily and conveniently now from Los Angeles to New York than could be from Buffalo then.

Cities have grown phenomenally in this century for several reasons, but especially because they supply anonymity, no attachment, and a separation from the family and the small town. In the early years of this century, novelists waged increasing war against both the family and the small town. As for the farmer, once seen as the strength of America, he was now the "boob," "hick" and clod. It became intellectually fashionable to despise Christian familistic culture, and university professors held up such moral requirements as marked Biblical faith to contempt and scorn. A large number of writers made themselves famous giving vent to their hatred of Biblical doctrines of morality and attachment.

Because Biblical charity is personal, it had to be replaced, according to the humanistic intellectuals, by impersonal statist charity. The Bible requires that charity be personal in order to bind together in one community the rich and the needy. The needy are constantly referred to in Scripture as "thy brother," i.e., in family terms, with attachment, not detachment in mind.

The culture of humanistic statism has stressed impersonality and detachment. It should not surprise us that it has fostered cultural, class, and racial conflict. The rise of pornography is one of many consequences. In pornography, the person is depersonalized and rendered into something to be used. Women and children are reduced to a sexual function and are denied their status as persons created in God's image and to be seen and known only under God's law and in His mandate for love and community.

The sexual revolution was against Christian family life and also against attachments. Sex was depersonalized. In group sex, wife-swapping parties, and like activities, the cardinal sin was to express verbally or otherwise any affection for one's partner of the moment. The sexual act had to be totally depersonalized for one to be truly "liberated."

Homosexuals have been central to the realm of detachment. Not surprisingly, the "culture" of detachment produces homosexuals in great numbers. Hatred of the family, of responsibility, of deep and abiding personal and religious ties, and much more marks the homosexual. There is a studied rootlessness as well as a commonly urban orientation, or else an "arty" and rootless colony of social rebels.

Simenon himself reflected this rootlessness and a desire for a "new man" in terms of unattachment. We still see man, he wrote, with all kinds of additions to his "natural state: education, instruction, profession, environment, nationality, etc." He did not include religion and family in his list of "additions" to man because, as a true modern, he had already ruled them out. For Simenon, man heretofore had been "clothed" man, clothed with a variety of affiliations and attachments. He felt that we were now apparently "moving towards the naked man" (p. 69). This new concept of man, he felt, was "apparent in unemployment insurance, social security, old-age pensions, and more or less free medical care, including cures at therapeutic spas and dental prosthesis" (p. 71). For him impersonal charity, detachment, was the mark of the new society for the new man. It would all lead to "a new religion, or a state religion, which amounts to the same thing" (p. 72).

Ironically, at the same time that humanistic statism depersonalizes life and man, it speaks often about "the *brotherhood* of man," a term from family life. This doctrine of brotherhood, however, is an intellectual concept and an abstraction. It has nothing to do with family life, even though the term "the family of man" is often used. This idea of brotherhood refers to the statist integration of races, nationalities, and cultures to form a homogeneous blend in which all the distinctives of each are lost. The God-given personal identities and ways of white, black, Oriental, and other peoples are all offensive to these statists. They seek to create a humanity which has no personal identities but acts, responds, and functions in terms of social revolutionary plans. Theirs is a plan for death, and they call it life.

This goal of detachment is also stressed by scientists as a special merit on their part. The idea of scientific detachment is, of course, a myth, but it is a myth which has passionate believers. Supposedly, truth comes only by detachment, and hence to object to the experiments by fascist

and Marxist tyrannies with human lives, or to object to the use of live aborted babies in experiments, is to despise science and its "necessary" detachment.

The monsters of history have always had a detachment with respect to human life. For scientific practitioners in any field, medical or non-medical, to dignify detachment is revelatory. We should not be surprised that human beings are callously used for experimental purposes. Neither should we be surprised that the figure of the mad and evil scientist has entered into popular literature and thinking. Such detachment is evil, and it is productive of cultural suicide.

Detachment at its worst appears in the life of the people. Our Chalcedon scholar, Samuel L. Blumenfeld, has been speaking from coast to coast on education. He tells his listeners that a simple way to change this country's direction is to change the thinking of the next generation of adults by giving our children a Christian schooling now. He has found, as have others of us, that people want to sit on the sidelines and do nothing. They want somebody's "exposure" of evils to effect an automatic change, as though words can make problems disappear. It makes no difference what their income level is: they say that they cannot "afford" Christian schools. This is another way of saying they cannot afford freedom and find enslavement cheaper.

This proneness of people to do nothing is a form of detachment from life; it invokes cultural death. The continual price of liberty is not only vigilance but also moral commitment and hard work.

A few years back, an able historian called attention to the fact that the old Gary Cooper film, *High Noon*, was a lie. The story tells us that, when three gunmen returned to a town to control it, no man stood with the lone law man. In the frontier era, however, men everywhere stood together to establish law and order. *High Noon* better described this century than the last one. This is the era of detachment and noninvolvement.

Only by the restoration of Biblical faith can we end our suicidal detachment from one another and from life. Christian Reconstruction is not merely a theological concern: it is a matter of faith and life. Our detached world is a hate-filled world. This state of things will not change until men are first in communion with God through Christ, and, in Him, in communion one with another. The parable of the Good Samaritan makes very plain that life in God's family is not determined by social prominence or status but by godly love and faith in action. The humble Samaritan ranks higher before God than pharisaic churchmen and public leaders.

Symptomatic of our age is the conduct of many retired people. As they move into an area congenial to their retirement plans, they do certain

things with their church life. Some refuse to join any church or "get involved" in church life and duties. They become church tramps and visit different churches. Others look for a big church with many members, reasoning that in such a congregation involvement is not necessary, except to that degree which pleases them. Still others, feeling that they must join, insist on being inactive. Very simply stated, this desire for detachment is ungodly. In Scripture, age increases status and responsibility, whereas we insist on diminishing it. This fits in nicely with the popular view of heaven as a place without responsibility. The parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14–30) is a parable about work and responsibility. Those who are responsible "shall have abundance," but those who bury their talents and retire from responsibility and a godly attachment to others in Christ shall have even that which they have taken from them.

The detached man and church face judgment and death.

143

THE DEFINITION OF INSANITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 65, August 1985

The question of insanity has not greatly troubled most people in our time. Many accept the usual psychiatric definitions with their pseudoscientific terminology. These have been ably attacked by another psychiatrist, Dr. Thomas Szasz, who sees insanity as a game people play to evade responsibilities. Except where a physical problem exists, i.e., senility or paresis, insanity is seen by Dr. Szasz as a creation of medical and psychoanalytic practitioners rather than as an actual mental disease. Early in the history of psychiatry, the prevalent "disease" was hysteria, and hysteria became commonplace. When it was debunked, it quickly disappeared as a social problem.

The fact remains, as someone observed recently, that there seems to be many insane people running loose, and not in Washington only! What is the matter with them? Treating such people is a growth industry, and our medical schools are training many psychiatric practitioners. The theories about insanity (or "mental illness") produced by these practitioners are having a major influence on our courts and legislators and are subverting criminal law, among many other things. As a result, it is necessary to think seriously about the matter. If crime is a product of mental illness, for example, the criminal is then seen as the victim, not the victimizer. If alcoholism is a mental illness, then the drunk driver who kills someone is not charged with murder, but the bartender or host is treated as legally liable to pay large sums in compensation to the dead person's family. The Biblical doctrine of responsibility ("the soul that sinneth, it shall die," Ezek. 18:4) is replaced with an environmental premise.

We must therefore insist that insanity is an evasion of responsibility. Even more, it is a flight from reality. It must follow, moreover, that since God is the absolute reality by whom all things were made, to deny the

triune God is irrational and a departure from reality. Atheism is thus insane, and atheists do not think realistically because they think without God. If the Bible is true, then to deny it and to try to think and live without God is insane. To have schools without Christ, politics without the Lord, or anything without the Creator is to forsake reality and to court suicide.

This must be the foundation of our thinking, but we dare not take statist steps in dealing with the problem. This has been done, and the courts regularly confine people as "insane." In the early years of the republic, Warren Chase tells us that a Bostonian was sentenced to sixty days in prison "for publishing in his own paper that he did not believe in their orthodox God" (Warren Chase, *The Life-Line of the Lone One* [1881], p. 23). In 1873, Mrs. E. P. W. Packard wrote a two volume account on imprisonment in asylums for expressing disbelief in certain doctrines of the church (*Modern Persecutions; or, Insane Asylums Unveiled*).

What these and other like actions revealed was a confusion of issues, and of truth and error. For these people who confined others as mad because of their unbelief, conversion had given way to coercion. Instead of relying on the Holy Spirit and the Bible, they relied on their own, humanistic, coercive power. The faith was harmed rather than served thereby. They were right in seeing unbelief and atheism as a departure from reality. They were very dangerously wrong in seeing coercion rather than conversion as the solution.

The Christian has this remarkable recourse: what man cannot do, God can do, i.e., change the heart and nature of men. Coercion is dangerous because, at best, it brings an outward conformity without an inward change. It produces Phariseeism, not Christianity, and the consequences are evil.

Humanism does not believe in supernatural regeneration. It must therefore place its hopes on education and coercion. Its doctrine of education soon becomes a form of coercion with statist controls and regulations. Horace Mann and his successors to the contrary, state control of education has not created the hoped for humanistic millennium, the "Great Community," but rather a decaying and collapsing social order. As a result, humanism's hope for change is now predominantly in statist coercion.

A key part of this coercion in the Soviet Union is psychiatry. Mental sickness is now defined as social deviation from the Marxist regime. Because Marxism is defined as the salvation of man, anyone who opposes the Marxist power is thereby seen as an enemy of man and as mentally sick. In the Soviet Union, such people are committed to prison-like hospitals; their minds are broken down with powerful drugs to make them recant. One Soviet banner in a prison read, "In a socialist state there can

be no social basis for infringement of the law." The dissidents are therefore sociopaths by definition. They have taken leave of their senses and do not comprehend reality. Psychiatrists treat antistate activity as insanity.

It must be recognized, however, that any and every humanistic society will move in the same direction as the Soviet Union because it holds to the same religion, humanism. Here in the United States, one mother, whose husband was a scientist, was called to a state school for consultation. Her son, she was told over the telephone, was manifesting "deviant behavior." This statement left her in a state of shock. She went over every kind of "deviant behavior" she could think of; she was sure her boy was not guilty on all scores. But, then, why was she called to school unless something gross and serious had occurred? Arriving at school sick at heart, she learned that her son's "problem" and "deviant behavior" was an absorption in books when other children were playing! In anger and shock, she called attention to the fact that her husband was a scientist, that she had done some graduate work, and that they were surrounded by books; professors and scholars were commonly guests in their home. Her son's absorption with reading was a natural outcome of his family life; he was a happy child, doing what his aptitudes led him to do. The counselor and teacher were unmoved; for them, social integration was all important. The boy showed no hostility to any race or group, and, in fact, came from a family open to a variety of peoples. This meant nothing to the statist staff members: the boy's behavior was deviant, and, for them, social integration was basic to "education."

Unusual? Not at all. In public discussions as well as in court trials, the point made over and over again by the enemies of the Christian or the home school is that the child may do well academically, or even better, but that the child in nonstate schools is "deprived" of the social integration necessary for his or her development.

The unspoken thesis is that the child who is not in touch with the state school staff and children is not being prepared to face "the real world." (This argument I heard today in a telephone conversation, and it came from a supposedly Christian woman!) For all such people, reality, the basic reality we are all supposed to keep in touch with, is the world of anti-Christianity, of humanism, and immoralism. We are not supposed to "deprive" our children of their time in the sewer.

If God is the key to all reality, then any education or living apart from Him is madness. It is education for disaster and for suicide. If God be God, to act as though He does not exist is death. It means that any godless education, politics, economics, science, entertainment, or anything else is out of touch with reality.

It is not poetry when the psalmist declares, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps. 127:1). We are plainly told that it is futile to plan any national defense if our lives are not grounded in the triune God and His law-word.

The word we have used repeatedly is insanity, a word which, while in popular use, is decried by sociologists and anthropologists. The term they prefer is "mental disease." According to the *Dictionary of Sociology*, "The term insanity is gradually giving place to mental disease, the latter term being more accurate and less socially derogatory and humiliating." In the definition of "mental disorder," we are told: "Whether or not certain mental phenomena are to be considered 'normal' and are therefore not further complicated by social stigma and maladjustment, is largely a matter of definition of situation in terms of the current culture." In other words, the current culture defines what is a mental disease or a mental disorder.

This is a definition from an American work. It is in substance the same as the Soviet Union's definition of insanity. The difference is not in definition but in application. In the Soviet Union, dissidents are taken to prison hospitals and treated as mentally sick. This is not yet routine in the United States; instead, dissidents are treated as "extremists" who represent "the lunatic fringe" of American life.

It is clear, thus, that the definition of insanity is not a trifling or academic matter. It is a matter of life and death.

Jesus Christ, who was most in total harmony with God the Father, and thus with reality, manifested His triumph over the tempter and the fall, when He declared, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). The more we live in Christ and by God's every word, the more we live in terms of reality, with sanity and wisdom as well as grace.

The fall was an act of sin, and as such insanity also. Man, the creature, decided to be his own god and law, determining good and evil for himself and being his own lawmaker (Gen. 3:5). For man to declare his independence from God, and to place himself on the same level as God, was and is insanity and sin. It was and is the supreme act of irresponsibility. Ever since, the world has been under the sway of sin and death.

The remedy for this insanity of sin is not coercion but conversion. Humanism creates a coercive state because it denies supernatural regeneration in favor of statist power and control as the remedy for man's disorder.

The Christian must oppose the coercive state and stress the necessity for regeneration as man's sole hope of salvation and sanity.

144

BIGOTRY IN THE NAME OF TOLERANCE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 104, December 1988

Bigotry in the modern world is viewed with disfavor, and rightfully so. A bigot is defined as, "An illiberal adherent of a religious creed or of any party or opinion." Bigotry is thus no respecter of persons. A bigot can be a believer or an unbeliever, a professor, scientist, politician, or anyone else who views all who disagree with him as stupid, evil, or ignorant. Many evolutionary scientists are intensely bigoted, as are many intellectuals and media men. Like Job's foolish friends, bigots tend to believe that wisdom was born with them and may well die with them (Job 12:2).

Because bigotry is so extensively condemned, when it now manifests itself, it is disguised as truth, or freedom of speech, or First Amendment rights, and so on. In this disguised form, we are asked to tolerate bigotry or else reveal that we are bigots! Thus, we get bigotry in the name of tolerance.

A telling example of this in 1988 has been the film, *The Last Temptation of Christ*. It is for all who believe in Jesus Christ as revealed in Scripture a blasphemous and evil bit of fiction. The proponents of the film insisted that it is a deeply religious film; they accused their critics of intolerance and censorship; they charged them with bigotry.

Who is the best judge of whether or not something is offensive? Should we have asked Hitler if his anti-Jewish speeches and actions were offensive? Were not the Jews who suffered at his hands a better judge of that? Or, if a mob attacks members of some minority group, as is happening in Europe, should we ask the mob about the merits of their acts or words?

Should we justify racist films which attack various segments of the community? There is a vast difference between saying a man has th*e freedom* to do something, and saying it is *morally right* for him to do so.

Anti-Christianism increasingly demands more and more freedom to

attack Christ and Christianity while insisting that any attempt by Christians to protest against such bigotry is wrong. This is a morally dishonest position. It is a denial of freedom to the Christian community.

For these bigots to tell orthodox Christians that the film is a deeply reverent one compounds their sanctimonious hypocrisy. It is like telling someone, after spitting in his or her face, that it was really a kiss! Bigotry in the name of tolerance is doubly evil because it compounds its sin with Phariseeism and hypocrisy.

Such bigotry, however, is the order of the day. Congress routinely passes law after law binding on the people and the administration while exempting itself from the applications of the law, or the criminal penalties for violations thereof. It then attacks administrators and demands their trial for doing what Congress routinely does! A good law should bind all people to compliance. Why have our various guardians of constitutionalism not challenged laws which give the freedom to commit crimes to one group? Is there any justice in such an arrangement?

For any intelligent man to deny that *The Last Temptation of Christ* is a film hostile to any except modernistic churchmen is hypocrisy; it has offended evangelicals, Calvinists, Catholics, and even some others as well. An orthodox rabbi has condemned it as defamatory. It treats an historical person in radical contempt of history. No one connected with the film could have been so obtuse as not to recognize that it would be offensive. In fact, we can with justice ask: Was it not meant to be offensive, as surely as anti-Jewish or anti-black writings are intended to offend? Was it not meant to defame, to ridicule, and to offend? Or are these men more insensitive than KGB torturers and Nazi Storm Troopers?

A little more than a year ago, I was a witness in a trial in the South. The state's attorney charged several pastors with child abuse, not because any such actual case had come up, but because their churches, in their various forms of child care, believed in spanking unruly children, with parental consent. The state's attorney declared the Bible to be a "child abuse manual." A recently published book on satanism absolved Satanists of crime but charged that "fundamentalist Christians" are the main source of child abuse in the United States.

Such persons assume, *first*, that their humanistic views of child care are "scientifically" valid, and the views of Christians are false. *Second*, they refuse to see that they are intensely anti-Christian because they identify themselves with the truth and all Christians as in error, if not evil. Anti-Christianism is the new face of Phariseeism; it claims to be the objective truth, and its opponents to be evil. It is a strident bigotry which pretends to be sweet tolerance personified.

On the church side, too many people have come to believe that it is a greater virtue to tolerate anti-Christianism than to recognize it for what it is and to call attention to its evil. Such people are afraid of the names they might be called, such as bigot, and they live timid and withdrawn lives. They dare not face men with the gospel; how can they ever face God?

By the time of the Renaissance and thereafter, an interesting development took place with respect to death. Prior to that time, the tombs of the mighty stressed God's judgment and the resurrection. Now they began to stress lineage, prestige, and power, not the faith. T. S. R. Boase, in *Death in the Middle Ages* (1972), wrote that the tomb of Count Karl Adam von Lanberg, who died in 1689, has a skeleton raising the lid of the coffin, and the count, "fully periwigged, emerges." The cathedral tomb gives us the count's coat of arms, and various trophies. "Secularism could go no further" (p. 87).

Death for the count was to be a continuation of life in heaven with his same rank and nature. Because such men could not grasp the meaning of Christ, and of death and resurrection, they could not understand the meaning of life, nor live as godly men.

Today, we have a generation of church people who believe that heaven will give them an all-expense-paid vacation where they will continue their secularized and self-centered living. Because they do not understand that Jesus Christ is *life* (John 14:6), they do not know how either to live or to die. They cannot cope with anti-Christianism because they do not recognize the absolute claims of the living Christ.

A very fine black pastor lost his church recently because the people rebelled against his teachings on Christian education and on the evils of welfarism. This congregation, like thousands of others, wanted the form of faith without the power thereof (2 Tim. 3:5). The weakness and cowardice of churchmen gives anti-Christianism a license, so that small groups can deal contemptuously with the faith of millions.

Our Lord is clear that a good tree will bear good fruit; "*Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them*" (Matt. 7:20). James, the brother of our Lord, tells us that faith without works is dead or nonexistent (James 2:14–26). It is an amazing fact that churches now equate faith with easy-believism. Worship, while important, has replaced Christian faithfulness and dominion. As a result, the churches are powerless. "Powerless Christianity" is a contradictory term, because salvation means that the power of God has redeemed us, cleansed us, and is at work in and through us. No man touched by the Holy Spirit can be impotent.

The early church was faced with the same kind of bigotry from the intellectuals and rulers of their day. They were accused of incest,

cannibalism, treason, of being disrupters of the peace, and more. They were also killed in great numbers. They triumphed because, in terms of God's Word, they were His Kingdom and government on earth. They preached the Word; they cared for the sick, the poor, the young, the old, and for captives. They were a Kingdom within a kingdom, and it was their power which prevailed.

Demonstrations change nothing. Regeneration, not revolution, alone leads to Christian Reconstruction. We face strong and vehement anti-Christianism, even within the church. It is "*the gospel of Christ*" which "*is the power of God unto salvation*" (Rom. 1:16). We face bigotry in the name of tolerance now; we face far worse things tomorrow unless we are ready to live and die for Christ. He alone is the true Lord, the only wise God and our Savior.

AUTHORITY

145

FAITH AND LOGIC

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 239
This paper was never published, but was originally numbered as No. 221, 1998

At about the age of sixteen or seventeen, I began to read about and to think in terms of a mature understanding of my Biblical faith. The answers given by rationalistic theologies seemed to have a very great appeal as well as an element of repulsiveness. For me, it was not a question of *doubting* God but of knowing Him. In reading the Bible, two central facts stand out about God. Very clearly, God ordained, decreed, and predestined all things, so that to deny predestination was obviously to deny God. At the same time, this totally sovereign God holds all men, and even animals (Exod. 21:28–36) accountable for their actions. We are clearly responsible creatures. Very early, I dropped the use of the term "free will" because it is unrealistic. It assumes an absolute status which for a creature cannot exist. No man can choose of his own free will his time of birth, his family, color, aptitudes, or any like character. In our time and place, we have moral choices. The use of absolute terms, like free will, seemed to me an aspect of philosophy's absurdity.

Later, as an upper division university student, I audited a course in logic for a week or two, only to be repulsed by its inherent sterility.

Religious rationalism had a certain appeal in its easy assurances, but these rationalists also always repulsed me because what they affirmed seemed to me only superficially a Biblical faith. After all, the Bible is very explicit: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). Nothing was said about logic, and Paul was living in an era of master logicians. Instead of faith, I found in the "Christian" rationalists a contentious and repulsive character.

As a boy, my earliest ambition was to be a farmer: I loved life on our

farm. By the time I was eight, long walks in the evenings with my father led to some elementary instruction about the stars, and my next hope was to be an astronomer. Beginning with an elementary book on astronomy, I quickly read works over my head, but they left an impact on me. Space, some held, was finite yet infinite, and no logic could explain that, nor the fact that many theories could only be set forth mathematically, not logically. The mind of man, and man's logic, cannot comprehend God's Creation, let alone the mind of God. It was not that God is irrational but that He is beyond the feeble scope of man's logic.

One of the great values of being saturated with the Word of God is that the Bible itself then supplies one with the answers, and Deuteronomy 29:29 came repeatedly to mind with a great reassurance: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." Man is not God, but a creature. He must learn to walk by faith that God is what He says He is, and this walk by faith means doing "all the words of the law." I came to recognize that the "Christian" rationalists were and are virtually all antinomians. (I knew of one exception.) And yet our Lord says plainly, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17). As James made clear, faith without works is dead (James 2:17–26), and the rationalists were here far from a living faith.

The "Christian" rationalist has another source of truth and verification than the Bible. He accepts the Bible, as in the case of E. J. Carnell, because it meets the best of his reason and logic. The Bible is the Word of God; Aristotle's logic is not! Man's logic can often be useful, but it is not infallible nor is it a judge over God and His Word. Logic can be a useful tool, but it cannot be more than that, never our master nor our yardstick for judging God and His Word as Carnell and others have held. Logic then becomes a form of idolatry.

It is the Bible that is our God-given word, not Aristotle's logic. It is God's Word that must guide us, not man's reasoning, which can be good or bad, as the case may be. However good man's reasoning, it cannot be used to judge God. As God tells us, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8–9). With this, I am content.

146

PRESUPPOSITIONALISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 230, November 1998

Presuppositionalism is a perspective in philosophy and theology whose origins are in several great Dutch thinkers, notably the Dutch-American Cornelius Van Til. Its essential point is that all man's thinking beings with certain axioms of faith, life, and thought which provide him with the essential framework of his world and life view.

Non-Christian thinking has preferred to see its premises, not as derivative but as created by its own mind and reasoning. Greek philosophy posited God only to avoid an infinite regress; there had to be a beginning, and God provided it and nothing more. "He" was not a person, only a limiting concept, an idea. Man did everything.

Charles Darwin was the logical outcome of such thinking. In God's place, he put time and infinite chance as the source of all creation. Presuppositions were replaced with chance variations over a space of vast and endless time.

Of course, Darwin's world of time and chance was rife with hidden and disguised presuppositions, but the great presupposition, God, was avoided in favor of time and chance.

Presuppositionalism tells us that we are not gods, that all our thinking is derivative and subordinate to certain faith premises. If Christian thinking is not presuppositional, it is not Christian because it begins, then, without God and His Word. If we do not begin with the triune God and His infallible Word, we begin and end with another premise which sooner or later governs us. It is not surprising that, as theologies depart from the primacy of God, they depart from belief in the inerrancy of God's Word to favor men's judgments upon it. The result is a growing collapse in the churches. Man's word cannot replace God's Word without disastrous results. The Bible does not appeal to our rational, judgmental

faculties for assent after considered reasoning, but to our total being to believe and to obey.

The Bible presupposes that we are God's creation, now dead in sins and trespasses, and in need of His life-giving atonement and Word. The Bible speaks to us as recipients, not as judges. It is God's command word, and we are the sheep, not the judges, of His pasture. The Bible tells us that our necessary presuppositions must be that God alone is God, but that, with the tempter, we have chosen to believe that we are gods, with the power to determine good and evil, and all things else, on our own (Gen. 3:5). The basic premise of rationalism is this evil.

If the church is to have a godly future, it must stand on a presuppositionalist faith, one implicit or explicit over the centuries in such men as Augustine, Anselm, Calvin, and others. This has been the faith of the many common believers, a total commitment to God as Lord, and His Word as the all-sufficient word. Today, as church-related colleges and seminaries abandon that faith, we must all the more zealously affirm it.

147

JURISDICTION: BY CHRIST OR BY CAESAR?

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 7, September 1979

Words reveal our faith, tell us about our world, and manifest our presuppositions. A particularly important word is *jurisdiction*. It comes from two Latin words, *jus*, law, and *dico*, say. The one who has jurisdiction is the one who declares the law, whose word is the binding, authoritative word for that area or sphere of life and thought.

Jurisdiction is an essentially religious fact: it tells us who is the god over a particular sphere or area; it reveals to us who declares the law for that domain. In other words, it shows us who is lord.

The whole premise and affirmation of Scripture is that the earth is the Lord's, that, because He made all things, ordained and orders all things, God the Lord is the only Lord and lawgiver over all heaven and earth, over every aspect of creation (Exod. 9:29; Deut. 10:12–14; Ps. 24:1; 1 Cor. 10:26). All creation thus is under God's jurisdiction, Who declares, "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images" (Isa. 42:8). God's jurisdiction is total, and He shares it with none. Men can only exercise valid authority and dominion under God, in faithfulness to His law, and in terms of God's sovereignty and Kingdom. He alone is the Lord. (The most used term for Jesus Christ in the New Testament is in fact *Lord*).

It was the essence of paganism that it reserved sovereignty to man and this world. The gods were powerful spirits who could be used, had to be placated, and could be abandoned if they failed man. For the pagan, the gods were powers to deal with, but the sovereignty, and the choice of gods, remained with man. The state reserved to itself the right to recognize or to abolish gods. The Roman senate thus could make gods at will by acts of senate. Thus, even the gods were under the jurisdiction of the

state, and their legal or licit existence depended upon the state.

It was for this reason that conflict between Christ and the Caesars was inescapable, between the church and the pagan doctrine of the state. It was a conflict waged in Asia, Africa, and Europe. The doctrines of Scripture required and require Christians to declare that Caesar is under Christ's jurisdiction, not Christ under Caesar's.

It is a serious error on the part of scholars that leads them to view the situation in Europe after the fall of Rome as a collapse. It was indeed a collapse of Roman statism, but not of civilization. Rather, it was a movement towards a new foundation. How radical that movement was is apparent in many and virtually all areas. To cite one alone, the family had been under statist law to a far-reaching degree, as Carl C. Zimmerman, in *Family and Civilization* (1947), showed clearly. With the fall of Rome, and the breaking up of European forms of barbarian paganism, a different pattern emerged. As Jean-Louis Flandrin has pointed out, "Christianity seems to have brought about the disappearance of the powers of the State over the child, and thereby increased the responsibilities of the parents as regards their maintenance and education. These responsibilities were, at the same time, shared between the father and the mother" (*Families in Former Times: Kinship, Household and Sexuality in Early Modern France* [Cambridge University Press, 1979], p. 176).

Today, of course, the state claims increasing powers over the family. The children must be state controlled and educated, according to many. The parents must be under state controls, and some even suggest the state licensing of births, and legislation towards this goal has been proposed in two state legislatures. Whereas laws against nonmarital sexual relations are relaxed or abolished, current legislation reaches into the marital bedroom to govern ostensible rape by a husband.

In one area after another, the state advances its claims to total jurisdiction. In Florida, a literacy test required of all high school students in order to get a diploma was ruled out by the courts as discriminatory (it discriminated against illiteracy!) and thus unconstitutional. A federal judge in Detroit, Michigan, in July 1979, ruled that school districts, in teaching English, must recognize the existence of a child's "home language," or ghetto English. Of course, courts have ruled on the length of hair, the kind of clothing students wear, and much, much more.

Clearly, the state increasingly manifests the fact that its fundamental faith is that no limits exist on the jurisdiction of the state other than self-imposed ones. The self-discipline meanwhile grows less and less as the state grows more and more total, or totalitarian, in its claimed jurisdiction. Jeff A. Schnepper, a tax lawyer and professor, gives fearful

examples of this totalitarian jurisdiction in *Inside the IRS: How Internal Revenue Works (You Over)* (Stein and Day, 1978).

Because all heaven and earth are God's creation, and because man is created in God's image, God is the great and inescapable fact; the knowledge of God is inescapable knowledge. When men in unrighteousness or injustice suppress or deny that knowledge, they cannot evade the necessity of God, and so they declare or create new gods in their image, or in terms of their imagination (Rom. 1:18–25). The most powerful, and most deadly, of these new or false gods has, through the centuries, been the state. The state, as a false god, claims total jurisdiction, and it declares itself sovereign or god: it is, in terms of ancient paganism, Hegel, and modern political thought, god walking on earth. Men, having denied the true God, cannot escape having a god, and the modern state is the great Baal (or lord) of modern man. The cry of modern man is a political cry, "O Baal, hear us" and save us (1 Kings 18:26). Here is idolatry, and for too long the church has been silent in the face of it, or has urged its people to submit to Baal in the name of Jesus Christ: to its idolatry, it has added blasphemy.

The question of jurisdiction is thus not only an urgently important one, but a religious one. Before World War I, in *Ruling Case Law*, volume 7 (1915), the editors, working on humanistic premises but with a more conservative bent than the law has today, admitted that perhaps no more difficult question exists in law than the question of the jurisdiction of courts. They grounded the source of jurisdiction in the constitutional form of government in the three departments, legislative, executive, and judicial, plus "certain inherent powers which of right belong to all courts." Thus, law as it emanates from the state is the source of all jurisdiction.

From such a premise, the death of God is a logical conclusion, and the exclusion of all claims by Christians to any freedom from the state in terms of God's Word is a necessary consequence. The humanistic state excludes God from any and all jurisdiction. Any and all liberties permitted to the church, to the Christian school, and to the Christian himself are at the sovereign grace of the state.

Thus, the Internal Revenue Service claims the right to establish, by its rules and regulations, what constitutes a valid church or Christian school. Such a claim is an assertion of jurisdiction; it is an aspect of the totalitarian claims of the modern state.

In one area or another, men claim humanistic "rights" or jurisdiction. The abortionists claim that a woman has sovereign rights over her body and her unborn child; the homosexual claims that, where his action with other consenting persons is at issue, he alone has jurisdiction. In one area

after another, modern man, in defiance of God, claims an independent jurisdiction.

The result is both moral anarchy and impotence. With more and more individuals demanding a moral jurisdiction in defiance of God's law, the social scene becomes increasingly lawless; the family declines, vocations lose their discipline, schools do not educate, churches confirm sinners in their sins, and men are at war one with another. The state gains thereby a strong argument for asserting a protecting jurisdiction over a lawless scene as the working god of society.

But the state's claims to any jurisdiction apart from God are lawless claims, and its laws are godless, lawless laws. As Augustine pointed out, in *The City of God*, without faith in the Lord, the state becomes no more than a larger band of robbers, a super-Mafia. A refugee from the Soviet Union, Yuri Brokhin, in *Hustling on Gorky Street*, dealt with the question, is there a Soviet Mafia? thus: "There certainly is a Soviet Mafia. And it's organized a hell of a lot better than the American mafia. But it has another name. It's called the Communist Party. We wouldn't dream of trying to compete with it."

If God is dead, what is wrong with a Mafia, and its claims to jurisdiction? If God is dead, then we are beyond good and evil, as Nietzsche held, and no one has any moral basis for anything, and thus the state can claim any and all jurisdiction it pleases. This, of course, is exactly what the state is doing. It calls itself "sovereign," or lord, and few object. It claims more and broader jurisdiction daily, and the protests are few, and the resisters are condemned.

All too many churchmen believe that submission to the state's idolatrous claims is a virtue. Chalcedon's leaflet, "Can We Tithe Our Children?,"[1] fell into the hands of one man who reacted with amazement to the statement that the state does not own the child, and that any such claim is paganism. How could any minister think that way? He wrote, "What's this? Another cult?"

Such a reaction is not surprising. God's jurisdiction has been handed over to the world by all too many churchmen, and any idea that Jesus Christ has crown rights over all things, over every area of life and thought, sounds strange in their ears. Christ's jurisdiction is limited to the church, and to the soul of man, and very feebly in both places.

But Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil. 2:9–11); He alone is sovereign: there are no limits to His jurisdiction nor to His law-word. His law and jurisdiction stand as long as heaven and earth (Matt. 5:17–19); indeed, "it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail"

1. See pp. 327–328. — editor

(Luke 16:17), because the triune God is the eternal, the everlasting One, and there is no end to His deity, life, and jurisdiction. To limit the Lord's jurisdiction is to limit Him, which means to deny that He is God.

To believe in the Lord thus requires us to assert His crown rights over all things and the total jurisdiction of His law-word. Our Lord declares, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18). The word translated as power is *exousia*, the right to act, the rightful power, dominion, authority, and rule over all things, i.e., jurisdiction. This power in Christ is absolute and unrestricted; men can only have delegated power, subject entirely to God and His Word. The Lord does not exempt from His jurisdiction any man, any state, nor any area. For us to do so is to deny Him. Indeed, one Greek lexicon gives, as basic to the meaning of *exousia*, the word *jurisdiction*. Our Lord thus says, "All jurisdiction is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

Then, He commands, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matt. 28:19–20). Our calling thus is not only to resist any and all usurpations of Christ's jurisdiction, but to go forth and bring all men and nations, every area and sphere of life and thought, into captivity to Jesus Christ as Lord, as Sovereign. All things in heaven and earth must be placed under His jurisdiction. This includes China, Russia, Britain, and the United States. It also includes you and me. We have no independent life nor jurisdiction. "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. 4:7).

The assured word is this: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15).

Standards (September 1979)

A few ministers wrote recently to express limited appreciation for our stand against state control over Christian schools and churches. However, they advocated "limited" state standards in order to "insure" quality education and to eliminate fraudulent groups. After all, one man asked, do you want another Jim Jones case? This is a statement repeatedly made, other men tell me. State controls are needed to prevent the kind of thing Jim Jones and the People's Temple represented.

The sad fact is that Jim Jones had his work licensed at every needed point, child care, everything! He was a friend of powerful political figures and a believer in state controls. If any state-controlled and cooperating church has existed in California, it was the People's Temple. It produced religion of about the same level and quality as the education in state schools!

The goal of state standards is not quality. It is, *first* of all, state control. In trial after trial, it has been shown that the "uncontrolled" Christian schools are superior, and their students test out far in advance of public school pupils.

Second, the goal of state standards is religious, i.e., the imposition of another religion on Christian schools, the religion of humanity or humanism. Those "Christian" schools which submit to state imposed standards soon become inferior schools educationally and religiously.

The fight against statist controls is thus both a theological battle (to God alone belongs dominion), and a struggle for quality education.

If state standards are so good, why are the state schools so bad? If state standards are so beneficial, why not ask the state to provide standards for the church? Should Jesus Christ have applied for a license before preaching and teaching? Would any Sanhedrin then or now provide an acceptable standard?

148

SOVEREIGNTY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 19, January 1981

In the Ten Commandments, immediately after the command, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," is the prohibition of all graven images. Few commandments are more badly interpreted. All too many read it as a total ban on any religious art. This is clearly not true. God Himself required a variety of carvings in the tabernacle, on the ark, and on various furnishings (but not on the altar), and He Himself called and inspired men to do the work (Exod. 31:1–6, etc.). While depictions of God were forbidden, more is in this law than is often recognized. No graven images, or any forms or likenesses, are permitted as objects to use for worship in the sense of bowing down to them, or serving them. "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them" (Exod. 20:5): these words are the key, and their meaning must be understood in order to obey this commandment.

Paul had this commandment and more in mind when he cried out against the worship the people of Lystra gave him and Barnabas after the healing of a cripple (Acts 14:8–18). The priest of Jupiter was ready to serve them, and the people to bow down to them.

To bow down and to serve is an ancient sign and symbol of the recognition of sovereignty. Because the pagan kings of antiquity claimed lordship or sovereignty, they required all men to acknowledge it on coming into their presence. This meant bowing down before them, sometimes prostrating themselves completely. It also commonly meant bringing gifts, a token of service. Thus, the wise men came seeking the Christ child, the newly born king, whom they knew to be the great Messiah or God-King. They demonstrated this faith by falling down before the child, and worshipping Him; they then presented their gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh, as tokens of their service to Him as Lord and King (Matt. 2:11).

Thus, the law, when it reads, "Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor serve them," has reference to two related facts: *first*, the recognition of lordship or sovereignty; the one to whom we bow is he whom we acknowledge as our lord; *second*, he whom we serve is the one to whom we pay our tax or tithe, and to whom we bring gifts. (Hence, God requires both tithes and offerings, the tax and gifts above the tax, as evidence of our service and love.)

In the Christian era, monarchs revived the pagan doctrine of kingship. They claimed lordship or sovereignty. They promoted the doctrine of their divine rights. In the eighteenth century, both Protestant and Catholic kings disapproved of the use of Mary's *Magnificat* in churches, because of the sentence, "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree" (Luke 1:52). They wanted no Lord Christ who could put them down and scatter them.

The modern state is even worse, far worse. It does not hesitate to claim sovereignty; it presents itself, after Hegel, as God walking on earth. It claims jurisdiction over Christ's church and school as lord, and it demands that we bow down and serve it as sovereign.

This is the meaning of the law: no graven images means no representations of sovereignty or lordship. Neither a man nor an image can represent sovereignty, nor can a church nor a state. God alone is the Lord. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me" (Isa. 45:5). All too many churchmen are balking at a cross over the church (a symbol of Christ's triumph over sin and death), while bowing the knee to Caesar, and serving Him. Alan Stang rightfully and wisely titled his studies of the statist persecutions of the church, *Thou Shalt Have No Other Gods Before Me . . . Including the State.*

The Bible is emphatic that Christians are to render obedience to whom obedience is due. Again and again, this duty of obedience to, and prayers for, all those in civil authority is stressed. Moreover, because the godly way is regeneration, not revolution, Christians are warned against being humanistic social revolutionists (1 Cor. 7:20–23), but they are at the same time to work lawfully to avoid being a slave people, i.e., "the servants of men."

At the same time, the nature of civil (and other) authorities is at all times and in all things limited by the Word of God. Civil authorities are specifically spoken of as *ministers* of God, and the word translated as *minister* is in the Greek our English word *deacon*, meaning servant. *Rulers* are thus to be servants under God, not lords or sovereigns. When the civil authorities divorce themselves from God and His law-word, they become self-styled lords and lawless as well. As Augustine pointed out,

godless civil rulers are no more than bands of robbers, a more powerful Mafia, and a more dangerous one. Being lawless in relation to God, they are lawless and predatory in relation to men.

There is an important aspect to this commandment which is commonly neglected. Of the Ten Commandments, one other contains the promise of particular judgment, and one other of particular blessing. Honoring parents has the promise of life: "Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee" (Exod. 20:12). The promise of judgment is given in Exodus 20:7, "Thou shalt not take the Name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (see Chalcedon Position Paper No. 2, "In the Name of Jesus Christ, or, In the Name of Caesar?"[1]).

Here, in this law, we have the longest promise, and it is of both judgment and blessing: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments" (Exod. 20:4–6).

The judgment here promised is a lingering one: sin has social consequences. Where a false doctrine of sovereignty prevails, there is a radical social disorientation, and all life is warped and placed on false premises. A generation which asserts a humanistic doctrine of sovereignty will so alter life and society, and all the institutions thereof, that the evil consequences will persist for three and four generations. On the other hand, a true doctrine of sovereignty will affect the lives of thousands who do not share it, because it will keep society on a godly foundation.

The prohibition is against any form of idolatry, i.e., any alien or ungodly doctrine of sovereignty. Sovereignty or lordship cannot be located on earth, in the heavens, or in the seas: it is in God alone. Covetousness, indeed sin in any form, is idolatry (Col. 3:5), because sin asserts our will as primary, and our will replaces God's law in all sin.

Sovereignty or lordship is the source of judgment and grace, either directly or by delegation. In Scripture, parents, pastors, civil authorities, employers, and others are instructed as to how to judge and reward faithful obedience and service. Their powers are under God; they are strictly delegated. The Bible recognizes no power independent of God, "For

1. See pp. 323–327. — editor

there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1). For any of these delegated spheres of authority to speak of themselves as powers which are independent from God is rebellion and sin. For courts, the Internal Revenue Service, and other civil agencies to speak of allowing us so many "days of grace" is blasphemy.

Today, however, autonomy is claimed by virtually every civil government, autonomy from God. All see themselves as sovereign, and hence their own source of law and power. We live in an age of statist idolatry, and we have become so blind that we do not see this obvious fact. All too many churchmen will quibble about trifles but fail to see themselves surrounded and ruled by the enemies of God, humanists, and their idol and false lord, the state.

We are ready to entertain the rule of other gods when we ourselves have openly or quietly rejected the true God, or are secretly in quest of "freedom" from the living God. It is a very comforting illusion to tell ourselves that evil men did this to us, or that a conspiracy is responsible for our captivity to false lords or sovereigns. Every conspiracy begins, however, in the human heart as a conspiracy against God. The conspiracies of history, including our time, are all too real, but they make it convenient for all too many of us to forget our own sins. All over the country, I find men retreating into Phariseeism rather than advancing into dominion, and their excuse is a false holiness. No church is good enough for them; granted, the church scene is a sad picture, but will withdrawal improve it? Moreover, are we so holy that we cannot afford to associate with other sinners saved by grace? Again, many refuse to vote, failing to recognize that voting is a means of exercising dominion. Given the faults of all candidates, there is still a choice, *and a duty*. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians that they should discipline and excommunicate a fornicator, warned them against trying to require a like standard of the world, "for then must ye needs go out of the world" (1 Cor. 5:10). They are not to leave the world but to conquer it. "Super-holiness" exalts us, not the Lord.

The law says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exod. 20:3), including ourselves. It is not our will and law but the Lord's which must govern. "Before me" means "beside me," sharing to any degree lordship or sovereignty with me. The relationship with God can only be exclusive.

Moreover, the modern reading of the prohibition of graven images or idolatry in any form is seriously misread if its meaning is limited to worship, or the place of worship. There are all too many today whose idol is Caesar who have no images, symbols, or signs in their plain churches. To have no other gods beside me, beside the Lord God, means that no other

lord has sovereignty over us in any and every area of life. It means that our total way of life is governed exclusively by God the Lord. To limit the scope of the law to what goes on in a church building is to deny the sovereignty or lordship of the living God. The Lord God and His law-word must govern, control, dominate, inform, and regulate every atom of our being and every sphere of life and the world. Anything short of this is idolatry.

There can be no substitute for God in any sphere. Moreover, since any and every created representation of God is banned, it is clear that God cannot be absorbed into or identified with this world and its aspects. He is the eternal God, the Creator, not an item in an already existing universe. The creation cannot define Him: He creates and defines all creation. Man seeks to define and understand all things in terms of his experience, reason, and life; this is at the heart of all idolatry, whether simplistic and primitive, or rational and philosophical. By means of this law, God rejects all man-made efforts to define Him, or comprehend Him. He is to be known only in terms of His revelation. He also makes it clear that the scope of His jurisdiction is total: there can be no other gods beside Him in any sphere of life and thought.

An hour ago, I talked with a pastor whose church rebels against any application of Christ's lordship to anything outside the church, especially to anything in the sphere of the state. I was reminded of one well-known country where, at least until recently if not now, a husband's adultery gives the wife no actionable ground for complaint unless the act or acts of adultery occur in the family home! All too many churchmen have a like view of idolatry: if it does not occur in Sunday morning or evening worship, it does not count.

The key to idolatry comes to the surface in Exodus 20:7, "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain." Umberto Cassuto rendered it thus: "You shall not take up the name of the Lord your God for unreality." To take God's name for a valueless purpose is to treat God as unreality, rather than as Lord and Creator. To limit God's sovereignty and law to the church, and to the inner life and to the "private" morality of man, is to deny His lordship and to treat Him as an unreality. When we treat God as an unreality, we will prostrate ourselves before false gods, including and especially the state, and we will serve them. Man is a religious creature; if he rejects the living God, he will serve other gods. And this God will not tolerate.

The jealousy of God (Exod. 20:5) is grounded in His absoluteness and His universal dominion. The "gods" of paganism were not jealous, because they were not universal. Their jurisdictions were limited to one

nation, state, or people, and to a particular sphere within that realm. They were simply powerful "spirits" seeking to control the weather, or the sea, love, the family, or some like limited sphere. Even within those limits, their powers were faulty and uncertain. Such "gods" could not afford the luxury of claiming a broader sphere: they had enough problems minding their own shop! The God of Scripture is a jealous God, because He has total jurisdiction over all things. "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images" (Isa. 42:8). No other religion has anything comparable to this law prohibiting idolatry.

Gerhard von Rad, in commenting on this same law as it appears in Deuteronomy 5:8–10, noted: "This prohibition of idols must be understood with the purpose of the idols in mind, namely to manifest the deity" (*Deuteronomy*, p. 57). God reserves the power to manifest Himself to Himself. 1 John 3:8 declares that Jesus Christ is God manifest, and 1 Timothy 3:16 tells us also that "God was manifest in the flesh" in Jesus Christ. In all idolatry, physical, philosophical, or institutional, man seeks to determine what God's manifestation shall be. Wherever there is any talk of sovereignty, there is a claim to the manifestation of lordship, or deity.

Paul gives us some telling insights into idolatry. For example, in 1 Corinthians 10:7, he writes: "Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." Paul's reference is to the golden calf incident of the Exodus journey; there were, clearly, fertility cult practices on that occasion; he refers to these in the next verse: "Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed . . ." (1 Cor. 10:8). Thus, Paul separates two kinds of acts on that day; the simple eating and playing, and the fertility cult sexual acts. The word *play* in the Greek text is *paizo*, children's play, harmless play, as it were. Paul's point is that even those who abstained from the fertility cult practices were guilty of idolatry because they agreed with the general dismissal of God and Moses; they were "moral" idolaters. They shared the general feeling, "for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him" (Exod. 32:1). The feasting and playing was in the name of the Lord (Exod. 32:5), but it was in contempt of Him and His authority. In brief, Paul's meaning is that any aspect of life outside of God is idolatry. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23). George Bush was right when in 1841 he wrote of this law that its meaning and spirit are "plainly exceedingly broad" (*Exodus*, vol. 1, p. 263). Churchmen have limited its scope in order to lessen sin.

The time has come for us to confess, in the words of Isaiah 26:13, "O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but

by thee only will we make mention of thy name."

We must renounce and war against all statist and other doctrines of lordship or sovereignty in the name of the Lord. The great baptismal confession of the early church, that "Jesus Christ is Lord," must be our confession and banner now. Jesus Christ is Lord: He is King of kings, and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16). Let the nations tremble before Him.

Sovereignty in Action — Today

In the modern world, sovereignty or lordship has ceased to be the attribute of God and has become the attribute of either man or the state, or shared by both. Even those theologians who talk much about God's sovereignty tend to limit it to salvation, the church, and theology, which means in effect to deny God's sovereignty.

In our world today, the state has delusions of deity, and it sees itself as god walking on earth. As the concomitant of this fact, the state implicitly claims infallibility. (With the Marxists, the dictatorship of the proletariat is the incarnation of the general will and is infallible.) As a result, nothing is more difficult, in dealings with agencies of state, than to get an admission of error. Have human lives been endangered, or lost, or have "private" parties been seriously maligned or damaged by an agency of the state? The state will go to any and all lengths to evade any admission of guilt or error. Is a statist regulation absurd, inappropriate, or irrelevant? No true bureaucrat will admit such a possibility. Near Echo Summit, on U.S. Highway 50, in California, the Vern Sprock family, entirely on their own, developed the Sierra Ski Ranch. In 1978, a day lodge was built on the top of the mountain; it is a model of "advanced" construction ideas, with solar heating panels, and a windmill-powered generator as an alternate energy source. The Sprocks ran afoul of the state law requiring wheelchair adapted toilets for the handicapped in all public places. The bureaucrats refused to consider the fact that the lodge can only be reached by skiing, not an activity for those confined to wheelchairs! Vern Sprock was compelled to add two wheelchair toilets at a cost of $400 each (*Inquiry*, December 8, 1980, p. 2)! The sad part of the story is that it is not unusual; such nonsense is commonplace. In another instance, a small guest ranch hired as employees a couple, the wife as cook, the husband to handle the horses; they shared a small apartment. The "law" required the owners to provide *separate* bathroom facilities for each of them under the requirement that male and female restroom facilities be separate! The sovereign state refuses to recognize the claims of common

sense: all wisdom is incarnate in the state as the new god.

Individuals are no less exempt from this madness. If one is sovereign, then all things are possible. According to Theodore Roszak, "A prominent psychotherapist remarks to me over lunch that people sleep and die only because they have been mistakenly 'programmed' to believe they have to . . . and goes on to suggest how this erroneous programming might be therapeutically undone" (*Harper's*, January 1981, p. 56). Anyone who is a good listener will hear like madness roll out of the mouths of today's products of humanistic education.

All these people, however, have a reason for such beliefs. They are humanists. For them, sovereignty is an attribute of man or the state. The logic of their position leads them to such conclusions, unless they are under the influence of a Christian hangover. What can we say about the folly of those who are churchmen, ministers, and theologians, but who insist on the sovereignty of the state? They not only do so, but they insist on claiming Biblical warrant for their sin. They bleat piously about rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, but they will not render unto God the absolute lordship or sovereignty which is His (Matt. 22:21; Mark 12:17; Luke 20:25). If we render to God the things which are His, then Caesar's only place is in submission to the Lord: Caesar will not be in submission to the Lord if we are not.

Even Bertrand Russell, a militant humanist, understood what Jesus said: "The advice of Jesus to give unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's, is a typical example of this Jewish recalcitrance. Though on the face of it a compromise, it is nevertheless a refusal to recognize the identity of God and Emperor" (*Wisdom of the West*, p. 129). Precisely. I render unto Caesar, unto my neighbor, unto my wife and children, as to all men, whatever is their due under God, but never that which must be rendered unto God.

Very simply defined, sovereignty means a monopoly of power and law. The two are inseparable: power and law are attributes of sovereignty. Hence, Christ as Lord and King of Creation, declares, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." In terms of this sovereignty, the Lord orders the discipling of "all nations," "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:18–20). The word used for "commanded" in the Greek is *entello* (noun, *entole*), meaning to order, to command. *Entole* was once in a while used as equivalent to *torah*, as in the Septuagint of Deuteronomy 17:19, "all the words of the *law*." Thus, Christ sets forth, as basic to His royal requirement, that the disciples recognize that all power is His, and it is His law which must be taught to all, and obeyed by all who are redeemed and baptized "in

the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This is a very plain declaration of sovereignty; it made inescapable the conflict between the church and Rome, between Christ and Caesar. There cannot be two Lords.

Every social order is a system of power in application and in interrelationships; a social order is a power structure and faith in operation. The lord of the social order is the source of power in the system. The ability and authority to dominate men and institutions depends on the faith in a sovereign power. When faith in that lord or sovereign declines, the social order begins to decay and collapse. (Egon Friedell, in his *Cultural History of the Modern Age*, saw the Black Death as the beginning of the collapse of faith in the "medieval" order, and World War I as the terminal point of confidence in the modern culture.) Today, humanism's concepts of sovereignty are decaying; it is mandatory for Christians to set forth Christ's sovereignty and His crown rights.

One of these is His law, Biblical law. Law is a statement of causation and of necessity; it describes the order of being. In natural laws, scientists seek to determine that which uniformly and of necessity occurs. God's law gives God's order of causality and necessity, as witness Deuteronomy 28. Humanism has eroded the doctrines of causality and necessity, and therefore of law; it is thus in disintegration. In the process, God's law, power, and sovereignty are being openly vindicated.

Form and Reality

The death of a culture, its civilization, and its law can be seen as very near when form replaces reality. As the end approaches, various groups begin to sense the coming collapse, and calls resound for a "return" to something. Demands for a return to reason are not uncommon; reason, however, cannot always be equated with reality, and, in a world of Hegelian thought, reason and reality are two very different things. Another common call is for a return to "religion," but the term "religion" can cover a multitude of sins. The decay may well be due to both faulty religion and faulty reason. In other words, these hoped-for returns to our various roots are not necessarily a return to reality.

When form replaces reality, there is a radical departure from the mainstays of life. It is like being content with and preferring pictures of food to food itself. The churches led the way into this retreat from life, from reality to form. By way of illustration, we can focus on the retreat from reality to form in the doctrine of communion. The church has long

been divided on its view of this doctrine: closed communion or open communion; transubstantiation, consubstantiation, or memorial; and so on and on. In the process, the reality which alone gives life and meaning to the form (and prevents it from becoming blasphemous) is forgotten or neglected.

The reality behind the "symbols" has two facets. *First* and paramount is the doctrine of Christ's atonement for sin. The sacrament has behind it an historical event, Christ's atoning death and resurrection, and a legal fact, our deliverance from sin by Christ's substitution and our justification. *Second*, because, with our salvation, we are also made Christ's new humanity and members one of another, we are now a family and a Kingdom. As members of one another, we care for one another. This is the meaning of the parable of judgment, Matthew 25:31–46. All who present themselves before the king call Him "Lord"; they have been outwardly "members" of Him, no doubt faithful at worship and in participation in the sacrament. The king's test, however, is this: "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me" (Matt. 25:45). (Many who have turned their back on men like Lester Roloff, when on trial, will hear this sentence.)

In other words, our Lord's test question is, what about reality? All facing the king in this parable call Him Lord; all are apparently agreed on "sound" doctrine as far as the forms are concerned: our Lord indicts none on these matters. All have the form of godliness but lack the power and the reality thereof (2 Tim. 3:5). In the living church, people are members of one another, not wolves tearing at the flock, or false shepherds, deserting it.

In a dying world, form replaces reality, the theater replaces life, and the actor or entertainer becomes the real person. The more commanding figures of our day are actors and entertainers. Their movements, words, and affairs are momentous matters to millions. Their deaths, as with the cases of Elvis Presley and John Lennon, are front-page stories for days and of worldwide concern. (The death of John Lennon was mourned in both dying Moscow and dying New York, as well as elsewhere, and fittingly so: let the dead bury the dead, Matthew 8:22.)

In politics, we see the rapid and disproportionate increase of the bureaucracy all over the world. The modern state, when confronted with a problem, creates a bureaucracy whose province is that problem. No bureaucracy works itself out of a job! The form of a solution, a law and a bureaucracy, replaces reality. When the people grow weary of the politics of the hour, another group takes over, to substitute new forms for old ones. Meanwhile, realities like inflation, lawlessness, and social conflict

increase and abound on all sides.

At the same time, the candidates and elected officials become more and more geared to presenting a good act before the cameras and press. Politics becomes a form of theater, and legislation a type of theatrical presentation. The public itself seeks new legislation, not by means of reasoned arguments and data presented before legislation committees, but by demonstrations, confrontations, and actions created for the theater of politics. Whatever the route taken to influence and shape legislation and administration, a governing principle is that it must be good theater. The nature of what constitutes good theater varies from year to year, but not the essential fact that form has replaced reality.

All reality begins and ends with the triune God and His law-word. Apart from that, men walk in darkness (Isa. 8:20). C. S. Lewis portrayed the inhabitants of hell as living in a deep and dark world, but insisting that it was merely the grey before the dawn! They had forever forsaken reality.

When men replace reality with forms, they desecrate and dishonor what often are otherwise good and necessary forms, because they cheapen their meaning. A Russian legend of the very early days of Christianization tells us of a lonely priest in a church when pagan Poles invaded the area. One of the Polish warriors invaded the church, dragging a captive woman. The warrior seized an image of the Virgin, threw the captive woman on top of it, and raped her. The priest, from his hiding place, saw this, and he cried out in prayer to God to avenge the desecration of His church, and the violation of the woman. God answered the priest, saying, this sinner will in his time be punished. But why should his sin be worse in my eyes than your sins, your casualness about your calling, and your complacency before me? The priest, in other words, had been faithful to the forms, but he had forgotten the reality of the faith, and his sin was greater.

Judgment begins at the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17); so too must reformation.

149

THE QUESTION OF AUTHORITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 10, March 1980

A major challenge confronts American churches and Christians with the January 1980 proposal by President Carter that a military draft registration be instituted, perhaps for both men and women, a question he left open. Our first duty is to protest such a registration, if framed into law, and then, if instituted, to give serious consideration to resistance.

However, it is important, before reacting to any measure, to know what Scripture teaches. *First* of all, war in the Bible was to be waged only if in defense of justice and to effect godly order. In terms of this, such warfare was called the wars of the Lord (Num. 21:14) and required religious preparation and dedication (Josh. 3:5). *Second*, the soldiers drafted were no younger than twenty (Num. 1:2–3, 18, 20, 45; 26:2), and it was a selective calling of all such, in some cases, a very limited one (Num. 31:4). *Third*, exemption was for the newly married (Deut. 24:5), the Levites, or clergy, teachers (Num. 1:48–49), and for those who had newly built a house, or planted a field (Deut. 24:5), the principle being that production and continuity take priority over defense. *Fourth*, total war was forbidden (Deut. 20:19–20). *Fifth*, defensive warfare was alone legitimate, and, hence, the number of horses (used in military offensives) was severely restricted (Deut. 17:16). More could be added, but, for our purposes, the relevant laws are these. They restrict warfare to a defensive purpose, and *the family* has priority. The basic defense of a country is the protection of the family.

This fact was echoed in the U.S. Constitution, article 1, section 8, which limits the calling of the militia (the older term for a drafted army) to three purposes only: (1) to execute the laws of the union, (2) to suppress insurrection, and (3) to repel invasion. As John W. Burgess pointed out, fifty years ago, foreign wars were not included, and Wilson's draft in

World War I violated the Constitution (John W. Burgess, *Recent Changes in American Constitutional Theory*, pp. 59ff.). Since then, interventionism has been the U.S. policy, intervention in foreign affairs, and intervention in domestic affairs (into the life of the family, the church, economics, etc.). World War I, supposedly a war to make the world safe for democracy, and a war to end all wars, led instead to the bloodiest and most murderous of centuries. Each instance of interventionism since has left the world even worse off. The state is not an instrument of salvation.

The family is God's basic institution. It was established in Eden, and it is prior to both church and state. It is under neither of them but is a separate government which is directly under God.

Moreover, God's basic plan of government in church and state is based on the family, and the head of the household, the man. This is the system of elders (also called captains, bishops, presbyters), first as rulers of the family, then as the rulers in all of society (Deut. 1:13–15). Thus, instead of church or state ruling the family, the family-based leadership is to rule church and state (as well as the school).

But the modern humanistic statism is both anti-God and anti-family. The family is a very powerful institution, with a capacity for survival and revival which has outlasted empires. Nations which work to destroy the family succeed thereby in destroying themselves. The state then perishes, and the family revives.

The state prefers atomism, and encourages social atomism, because an atomistic society may be a more violent and rebellious one, but it is a less successfully resistant one by far. The freedom of the family is thus anathema to the modern state.

However, long before the modern state began its attacks on the family, men had begun a rebellion against the family and the responsibilities thereof. The double standard was a product of this revolt. Scripture makes it very clear that, the greater the responsibility, the greater the culpability. The sins of a man are thus more fearful in God's sight than the sins of a woman, because God has given primary authority to the man. Thus, God declares to the men of Israel, "I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom, nor your spouses when they commit adultery: for themselves are separated with whores, and they sacrifice with harlots: therefore the people that doth not understand shall fall" (Hosea 4:14). Moreover, our Lord says plainly, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Luke 12:48). This means that, *first*, God requires more of any and all who hold positions of privilege and power. Status increases accountability; it does not give exemption

from it. God being the source of all power and authority (Rom. 13:1), all such positions require a greater faithfulness to His law, a closer and more conscientious life and morality, and a greater culpability. The sins of a pastor or president are more culpable before God than the sins of a doorman. *Second*, the sins of a man are more culpable before God than the sins of his wife or daughters. His headship is not ordained for irresponsibility but for responsibility. *Third*, not only God, but all men live by this rule, for "to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Luke 12:48). This is an obvious fact in the political sphere: politicians are rightly judged more severely by the populace than are ordinary citizens.

But men have long been in revolt against the responsibilities and authority of manhood. They have left the training of children, matters of religion, and the government of the family to their wives. By means of the double standard, they for long exempted themselves from the sexual morality they required of their wives. Sexual faithfulness was seen by all such as a necessity for women, not for men. This was the creed of the men's liberation movement.

Not surprisingly, in time, women began to make the same demands, as set forth in the women's liberation movement. All the immaturity, irresponsibility, and freedom to sin long exercised by the modern male was now exercised or demanded by the women. Women's lib was men's lib coming home to roost! Before we condemn women's lib, let us remember that God, faced with a like movement in Israel, condemned rather the irresponsible men, and declared judgment on the whole culture (Hosea 4:14).

Of course, this movement has not stopped with the women. What men practice, their families will readily learn. Women's lib is being logically followed by children's lib. The culmination of such a course is the tyranny of children. Isaiah 3:12 declares, "As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them." As Pastor Gene Breed of Georgia has pointed out, we have a fulfillment of this prophecy in the present occupant of the White House, and, we can add, in all too many other childish leaders of the nation.

What we fear and love most are often closely related. Thus, today many men fear an economic collapse more than anything else; all too often, at the root of such a fear is a love of money, which money an economic collapse would endanger. It is thus important for us to ask what it is that the United States loves and fears on the world scene, and what it desires to protect. Certainly, it is not Christianity which the United States loves and seeks to protect! The United States has in recent years done more for Red China and the Soviet Union than for Christianity. When Carter speaks of

"human rights," he means humanistic rights; the persecuted Christians of Red China and the Soviet Empire mean as little to him as do the persecuted Christian schools and churches of the United States of America. He has been indifferent to the jailing in recent years of men like the Reverend Levi Whisner and the Reverend Lester Roloff. The Afghans, in their treatment of themselves and others, have not been any better than the Soviet Union. Whatever the sins of the shah, Iran still had a better life under him than at any other time in recent centuries. If it is oil we want, why are we selling Alaskan oil abroad? However we add up the foreign policy scene, we cannot see anything but ugly humanistic policies which are designed to further humanistic statism and its power politics.

Moreover, every modern state has demonstrated that its enmity with foreign powers is a transitory and changing thing. Yesterday's and tomorrow's enemies are today's friends, and future friends as well. Each and every modern state has one abiding enemy against whom perpetual warfare is waged, under the façade of concern and "welfare." That abiding enemy of the modern state is its own people, against whom perpetual war is waged in the name of perpetual concern. The foreign enemy is often real, but it is the domestic enemy which is constant.

This should not surprise us. The humanistic state is at war with God. For God's law, it substitutes the state's fiat law. Because the humanistic state is at war with God, it will be at war with every faithful Christian. Even more, it will be at war with man as such, because man is God's image-bearer. Therefore, the state seeks to remake man and to obliterate God's image.

Igor Shafarevich, in Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *From Under the Rubble*, writes on the goal of socialism as not only the withering away of the state but also "the withering away of all mankind, and its death" (p. 61). It works for the death of the family, the faith, the freedom of man, and all things else, because it seeks a universal destruction, like the Marquis de Sade, who described the death of God, the sun, and of all creation, as the great and most to be desired crime.

God asks, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). Hence, He commands through Paul, "Be not ye unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6:14). In terms of this, God's law forbids mixed marriages, i.e., marriages with unbelievers (Exod. 34:12–16; Deut. 7:3). It also prohibits alliances with ungodly nations (Exod. 23:31–33; 34:12–16; Deut. 7:1–4). For a Christian to cooperate with a humanistic state in its humanistic goals is to be unequally and sinfully yoked.

Now, Deuteronomy 22:5 forbids a woman from certain assumptions of male life and declares it to be an "abomination unto the Lord" to do so. In *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (pp. 434ff.), I pointed out that earlier commentators had called attention to the fact that the reference in the Hebrew is not to clothes alone but is general: it refers to things, apparatus, implements, and *weapons*. Thus, Deuteronomy 22:5 clearly is against the drafting of women and the registration of women for such a military draft. Such a draft has, as its practical consequence, the destruction of God's order, and of the family.

Not surprisingly, within hours of President Carter's address, many Christians were resolving to resist such a registration on Biblical grounds. Quite rightly, they saw it as an evil; it involved, *first*, a plain violation of Deuteronomy 22:5. *Second*, it involved an ungodly yoking of Christians to a humanistic state and its law. Nothing could have been clearer to President Carter than that such a measure would be offensive to countless Christians, but he gave priority to non-Christian considerations and left the matter an open question. *Third*, such a registration and draft require submission to an ungodly yoking of men and women.

A significant precedent for opposition was established in a Midwestern state by a state trooper in 1979. Ordered to serve in a patrol car with a female trooper, he refused on Biblical grounds, and won. The hearing was a most significant one. It was admitted that the trooper was one of the most able and honest of all men in the force, a man with an excellent record. The opposition to him from his superiors was motivated, not so much by a pro-feminist perspective on their part, but by their hostility to the idea that any officer would place God's law above their own orders and regulations. Thus, the tacit issue was this: does a man have a requirement to obey his superior officers rather than God, or shall we, must we not rather say with Peter and the other apostles, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29)?

This is one of the key issues of our time. We may be spared the necessity for a decision with respect to registration and the draft, but we are not spared from the issue itself. Who has the command word over us, God or the state? Which of the two must we at all times obey?

The church has long had the luxury of a narrow and limited view of separation. It has been limited to separation from modernist churches. Modernism, of course, is humanism, and at issue is our separation from it also in school and state. The "separated church" which is separated from the modernist church down the street, but is not separated from the humanistic state schools, and from humanistic statism, is not separated to the Lord but to compromise, or to Phariseeism.

It is of the world's humanistic civil order that Revelation 18:4 commands, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." At issue is God's authority and law.

150

THE SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS OF SATAN

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 212, May 1997

It is a misunderstanding of Satan to see him as someone trying to lead people into fornication or adultery, or into cheating, stealing, and like sins. Fallen mankind needs little help to do those things! Of course, it is convenient for mankind to have someone to blame, to say, "The Devil made me do it!"

We are told in John 8:44 by Jesus that the Devil is the father of lies, that he was a murderer from the beginning, and that there is no truth in him. What this means is that by his lie (Gen. 3:5), he brought death into the world. His denial of truth is his denial of God, and his great lie is that man can be his own god, law, and lawmaker (Gen. 3:5).

"Ye shall be as gods" is the great lie: every man as his own god will be beyond God's law and be his own source of law. There is, Satan held, no inherent necessity in God's law; every man can establish his own value system. God's law is therefore suspect. In the temptation in the wilderness, Satan challenged Jesus three times, holding that God's system of justice, law, and morality is defective. In the first temptation, Satan said, "command that these stones be made bread" (Matt. 4:3). With the world's food problems, how can a just God ask for morality when the urgent problem is economic need? By a miracle, solve the problem of hunger, and you will then be man's savior. The second temptation was to make faith unnecessary by a miracle that would automatically compel acceptance. To ask faith of men is to ask too much, Satan held, given the complexities of life. The third temptation was to recognize the righteousness of Satan's rebellion and to acknowledge that his way is better for men than God's, and more realistic.

We see this clearly in the temptation of Job. Satan's argument against Job as a moral man is that God blesses him for his faithfulness. "Hast

thou not made an hedge about him," and blessed and protected him? (Job 1:10). If God smites Job, he will see how shallow such a morality is.

What Satan was championing was every man as his own god *and* as his own moral law. Instead of rewards and punishments, heaven and hell, let virtue, however men define it, be its own reward. Satan was a good humanist who believed that men should make their own laws, live by them, and be free of any "alien" or "outside" law and judgment. In other words, man can be his own universe of law, life, and morality.

If Satan were to reappear to expound his gospel, he might well be honored by some international prize, or rich foundation grants, to promote his message. After all, his faith offers an equal opportunity for everyone to be his own god, and what can be more egalitarian than that? Satan's gospel is very much in tune with the times in its doctrine of victimhood, in that he sees all men as victims of a harsh, uncompromising God whose law is radically divisive, and whose gospel divides men into the saved and the lost. John Dewey, in *A Common Faith*, saw Christianity as radically antidemocratic because of its total commitment to this moral and religious division.

Of course, many churches already advocate this philosophy of Satan, so the battle in the churches is far advanced.

Satan's position is one of self-righteousness, which means self-determined as truly just. All men will be just if each man decides for himself what justice is. Ultimately, this means that every man will in time redefine everything so that every man becomes his own dictionary, his own standard of definition. This will make communication impossible, and the world will become hell on earth, a place without communication, where every man is his own god and universe.

Happily, Satan does not create nor define reality: God does. Therefore, life is a prelude to heaven and not to hell, and the people of the lie die with their lie.

151

THE CRISIS OF AUTHORITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 138, June 1991

Because authority is so commonly despised in our time, men do not appreciate the significance of a loss of it. Legitimacy must undergird authority, or terror will replace it, as the French and Russian revolutions made very clear. Men readily and routinely obey authorities they recognize as valid, but, once authority is challenged and denied, lawlessness replaces it. There is a recourse to violence when faith in the governing authority is gone.

Authority is a religious issue, because men recognize and respect an authority which they believe is religiously and morally right. When a faith is destroyed or is bankrupt, the recourse is violence.

Many of the figures in the French Revolution either served in the French forces assisting Washington, or they knew the American diplomats in Paris, or they followed the events and read the United States Constitution carefully. They foolishly assumed that certain legal documents like a constitution could create an ordered society. They gave no attention to the Christian faith and character of the Americans which was conducive to order, with or without a legal document. This is why these French leaders embarked so readily on a course of revolution which they believed would produce an ordered society like the United States. They had no awareness, on September 22, 1792, when the Convention unanimously abolished the monarchy that the "assembly would shortly begin to cannibalize itself" (George Armstrong Kelly, *Victims, Authority, and Terror* [n.p.: University of North Carolina Press, 1982], p. 80). The leaders set rights before duties (p. 175), and they created a demand society which spelled death for all who frustrated the leaders in their impossible expectations. They acted in the spirit of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who had written, "Let us then begin by setting aside all the facts; for they

are of no relevance to the question" ("Discourse on Inequality," *Political Writings*, vol. 1, p. 14). The Reign of Terror was the logical consequence of the shattering of accepted authority. For many of the French leaders, freemasonry was a substitute religion, but was one incapable of providing order, and the leaders of the Revolution finally could tolerate no rivals and turned against freemasonry.

Total terror replaced authority, as it did in this century for Lenin, Stalin, and their successors. True authority commands our hearts and minds, terror, our bodies.

The twentieth century is ending with a growing crisis of authority everywhere. Churchmen are contributing to this crisis of authority, both modernists and evangelicals, by imitating the lawlessness of the 1960s to gain their ends, whether for peace or against abortion. Pressure tactics cannot replace godly faith and authority.

There is another erosive factor; antinomianism is commonplace among both modernists and evangelicals. The historic definition of law, which still prevailed when the first edition (1771) of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* was published, is still valid: "Law may be defined, 'The command of the sovereign power, containing a common rule of life for the subjects'" (vol. 2, p. 882). A sovereign power is the source of many things (and god of all things), but, in any true or claimed sovereignty, two things are basic: it is the source, *first*, of all law, and *second*, of all authority. Law is the expression of the will and the nature of the sovereign. For Christians, God is the only sovereign and hence the only valid source of law. God's Word is His law-word, the rule of life for all His creatures. Because God is the Sovereign, the Lord, and the lawgiver, He is also the source of all legitimate authority. No God means finally no law and no authority, and this is our problem today.

When authority erodes, the crisis spreads from sphere to sphere. To devalue legitimate authority means ultimately to devalue all things. The state has claimed sovereignty, and the lawmaking power, in the place of God, and its authority is eroding rapidly. Land was once the source of wealth, and, in most of man's history, land has been wealth; this too is being destroyed by taxation. Money replaced land as the key form of wealth, but, in this century, as gold and silver have given way to paper money, to fiat state creations, money too is eroding. In one sphere after another, the collapse of authority is resulting in social crises.

Meanwhile, questioning authority is more popular than ever, and no less destructive. I have seen t-shirts emblazoned with the words, "Question Authority." This is a popular temper. In most powers, in businesses, churches armies, and other areas, many men are as competent in some

spheres as the head man, but, contrary to the current view, this is no reason to question or to subvert authority, although self-styled "superior" men since the French Revolution have thought so. According to Kelly, Jean-Sylvain Bailly (1736–1793) felt that savants and men like himself should guide the French Revolution. Before him, Voltaire had held like views. Bailly became a victim of the Revolution he helped to foster (Kelly, *Victims*, p. 161ff.). So Kelly grimly noted, "Virtue treated reason in 1793 as reason had treated royalty in 1789" (p. 210). The men who had demanded a constitution as the solution to all of France's problems died under the guillotine one after another. No written document could create authority or virtue, nor could law succeed when it was the arbitrary creation of men.

According to David L. Kertzer, Robespierre led others in the belief that ancient rituals of crown and church had to be replaced by "republican festivals" and rites. The culminating ritual was the public execution by the guillotine; it would not do to murder men in their prison cells. The executions had to be seen publicly as the triumph of reason and virtue. While there were those who rejoiced in the executions, this was not true of all. Some were present at various rituals, as well as executions, because it meant a necessary participation in a public rite (David L. Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power* [n.p.: Yale University Press, 1988], p. 156ff.). Just as a few years earlier, good Catholics had attended confession and the mass, now "good" Frenchmen were afraid to abstain from the rites of the new "church," the revolutionary regime.

Is the decline of authority really serious? Are not preachers always harping on present sins and forgetting how bad the past was? True, every era has its sinners and its evils, but history does have its highs and lows. Two small facts which are revelatory came home to me recently. Through the 1950s, California's Highway 101, the old El Camino Real, the mission trail first travelled by the Franciscans, was marked every so many miles by mission bells. In the 1960s, these bells were all stolen. Recently, in another state, I revisited a lovely office, restaurant, and shopping center. There was now only one outdoor park bench left, and it was chained to steel bars sunk deep into concrete! Things have changed, and not for the better. If God's law does not count, why should man's law?

Is it any wonder that we have a crisis of authority? It will not go away until men recognize God as the source of all legitimate authority, the only wise God and Savior, the source of law, and Lord over all.

152

ATONEMENT AND AUTHORITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 42, August 1983

One of the recurring facts of history has been "the revolt of the masses," the intense, unorganized rebellion of peasants, slaves, and serfs against the tyranny of their overlords. In various eras, the tyranny has been very real and very ugly. Basic to this has been a radical contempt for all physical work, for "menial work," and for all those who are engaged in it. The examples of this from various cultures are legion. To cite but one, from seventeenth-century England, Viscount Conway said, "We eat and drink and rise up to play and this is to live like a gentleman, for what is a gentleman but his pleasure?" (James Barbary, *Puritan and Cavalier: The English Civil War,* p. 37). The Royalists looted with such abandon (even plundering their own friends), that the orders of Puritan leaders Sir Thomas Fairfax and Oliver Cromwell that Commonwealth plunderers would be shot swung sentiment to their side. Among the nobility and the Cavaliers, imprudence and improvidence became virtues. When Elizabeth Cavendish (1527–1608), widow of Sir William, died, she left to each of her grandsons 2,000 marks to buy land and establish estates. When one prudent youth put his share into land, Sir Charles said contemptuously, "If any son of mine put money into land before he was twenty, I'd disinherit him." (Geoffrey Trease, *Portrait of a Cavalier: William Cavendish, First Duke of Newcastle*, p. 27). To be provident indicated a nonnoble and middle-class outlook!

This evil outlook was carried into the South by many settlers who sought to be a like aristocracy and had a like contempt for the practical and the provident act. The problem at Jamestown, Virginia, was that too many of the colonists were either "gentlemen" or would-be gentlemen, people who "never did know what a days work was," according to Captain John Smith. As a result, they expected to get rich without working!

Trouble was thus inevitable, and slavery "answered" their social problem some years later (Edmund S. Morgan, "The Labor Problem at Jamestown, 1607–18," *The American Historical Review*, vol. 76, no. 3 [June 1971]: pp. 597, 606). Meanwhile, in Jamestown the results were "idleness and hunger."

This element in the South believed in slavery because it believed in itself as an aristocracy in control of the lower classes. It was marked by pride of blood, pride of place, and a contempt for all menial work and workers, whether black or white. During the war, President Jefferson Davis and his cabinet were treated with disrespect, because they were the newly rich, not the old aristocracy. It took the Yankees to make Jefferson Davis popular with their mistreatment of him!

Historians fail to appreciate the Baptist social revolution in the South after 1865. My first awareness of this came years ago, as a student. A professor from the South, in a passing and extraneous reference to Southern Baptists, treated them as a joke, and he called them "un-Southern" and "low class." By this he meant, of course, that they did not represent "the true South," the old aristocracy. The fact is that power and leadership was passing into new and resented hands in the South, and the older element hated it. The Baptists now defined and led the South, not the older element, whose popularity was now in New York City and its high society. (William Stadiem, *A Class by Themselves: The Untold Story of the Great Southern Families*).

We have touched only on *mild* examples of the arrogance of position in order to keep the emphasis on an *attitude*, not the long history of oppression. The same attitude now prevails among liberals and intellectuals, a new, self-appointed nobility and elite. The fact is that, all over the world, from pagan antiquity to the communist imperial states of this century, rulers have seen the masses of peoples as there merely for their use. The Cavaliers bewailed the death of "merrie olde England," meaning an England in which the common man existed to please his superiors and to bow and scrape before him. Christopher Hill, in *The World Turned Upside Down* (1972), shows us the explosive and radical thinking of the common man which found expression when the Puritan regime removed censorship. In 1642, preachers were quoting the battle cry of peasant revolts in an earlier century: "When Adam delved and Eve span, Who was then the gentleman?"

In the modern age, revolutions in the name of the common man (but led by others usually) began to succeed. No more than in earlier revolutions, such as the Mazdakite triumph of the fifth century A.D., were the results good. They were, in fact, more tyrannical and unjust.

History gives abundant illustrations of the fact that no class has ever ruled wisely or well. History has to a considerable degree been a long trail of tears and a bloody tale of exploitation. Each class in turn has seen itself as the locale of wisdom and authority and manifested with clarity the fact of total depravity, i.e., the infection of sin in every aspect of man's being. Isaiah's judgment stands vindicated: "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" or to be valued (Isa. 2:22).

Whatever his class, or pride of birth and place, man is a sinner, a fallen and depraved creature who is at war with God, with truth, and with reality. At the core of his life is a lie, his belief that he is his own god, able to determine and to establish good and evil for himself (Gen. 3:5). The political, economical, social, and religious orders created by such a man reflect his nature and evil. History cannot escape from this necessary connection between a man's moral nature and his life and society. Every effort by men to devise a social order which will negate this fact has been a failure. Man cannot change himself from an evil to a good man, nor can he give to his social order a character he has not.

This is the reason why the atonement is not only a religious but a political and social fact. The atonement restores communion between God and man, and man is recreated by God's sovereign grace. This fact of communion makes possible community. It does not eliminate social problems, because redeemed men are by no means fully sanctified men. It does mean that there is now a possibility of a solution.

Meanwhile, the problem has grown more complex. As we have noted, throughout the centuries, we have had self-appointed elites lording it over other men, and, at the same time, the revolt of enslaved masses. To complicate and aggravate this tension, in the past two centuries two movements have arisen and made powerful and insistent claims to rulership. On the one hand, we have a new and arrogant elite, the scientific-academic-intellectual establishment, which sees itself as the channel of truth, science, and reason. On the other hand, we have equalitarianism, which was earlier fostered by the new elite, is still given lip service, but is at the same time a threat. The new elite seeks a disguised but still essentially totalitarian authority. The equalitarian spirit challenges all authority.

A few days ago, a public school teacher told me of a disastrous school battle in which she was a trial witness. This large school had eight teachers with administrative credentials, all of whom felt that their own ideas would best govern the school. (Some other teachers felt that they too knew better than the principal.) As a result, the school became a shambles, and education gave way to a power struggle.

This situation is a familiar one. The equalitarian impulse moves people to question authority and to demand that their will be done. The elitist authoritarian impulse leads others to use people to advance themselves and to enhance their own power. The age-old battle for power thus has a newer and more deadly character.

Our Lord called attention to the power struggle and the love of the powerful for exercising authority over men. However, He ordered, "But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:26–28). The fact of the atonement made Christ the great Servant. The great Head and Adam of the new humanity made Himself a servant using His power and authority to minister to His people in terms of God's covenant, covenant law, and Kingdom. Authority in the new creation must be an exercise of grace and service, and so too must be submission. Paul, in stressing this same pattern, says, "for we are members one of another" (Eph. 4:25). The community and communion of Christ's body and Kingdom are broken by both those "above" and "below" when they insist, "my will be done." All authority is from God, and is conditional upon our prior obedience to Him, and all submission must be under God and in terms of our trust in and obedience to Him.

The invasion of the Christian community by elitist and equalitarian motives is creating critical problems and is moving the community from the Kingdom of God to the kingdom of man.

The theme verse of the book of Judges, as stated more than once, is, "In those days there was no king in Israel (i.e., God was not recognized as king): every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judg. 21:25). Apart from the Lord, men in authority and under authority will try to do that which is "right" in their own eyes. The result is anarchy.

A Biblical doctrine of authority and community does not become a reality by affirmation or by negation. We cannot fight it or gain it by demands: we must live it. When Paul says, "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called" (1 Cor. 7:20), he was not advocating passivity but rather ordering believers away from futile and destructive activity. The Kingdom of God comes, not by revolution but by regeneration, and as regenerated men remake every area of their lives in terms of God's law-word.

Not only authority but community and reconstruction come out of the atonement. The modern world seeks community by means of revolution, statist legislation, and the appropriation of tax funds. It creates instead

a conflict society. Neither revolutionary violence nor legislation can convert vultures into canaries, but it is the essence of humanistic statism to attempt to do so.

The atonement restores man into community with God in terms of God's covenant and covenant law. The atonement is a covenant fact. It is the essence of a covenant that both parties bind themselves into a law treaty. Each agrees to be totally faithful to the other, and to be ready to die in faithfulness to the covenant. Man broke the covenant by his sin and rebellion, but God, who in grace gave man a status in His covenant and in grace gave man the covenant law, added the culminating act of grace. God the Son in His incarnation gave His life on the cross to restore man into the covenant, even though, for his rebellion, man deserved to die. The God-man Jesus Christ paid the death penalty for us as very man of very man, and, as very God of very God, revealed the amazing grace of our covenant God.

At the same time, the pattern of covenant authority was set forth by the Son. It was manifested practically and typically by the Son in the foot-washing episode which followed the covenant supper (John 13:1–16). He declared, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15).

Too often, however, modern authority is "Gentile" and lordly, humanistic and non-Christian. Similarly, those in more subordinate positions are rebellious, proud, and critical. Both pay lip service to Christ, and actual service to their own evil being. Both see the mote in the other's eye, but not the beam in their own eye. Our Lord has a summary judgment concerning all such people: "Thou hypocrite" (Matt. 7:1–5)!

The world daily moves deeper into revolution and tyranny. This is the destiny of an arrogant people. The only alternative is Jesus Christ, His atonement, and the authority which flows from that fact.

153

OWNERSHIP AND AUTHORITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 128, December 1990

DEFINITIONS are important; without accurate definitions of words, concepts, and doctrines, communication is weakened, meaning is endangered, and society is seriously affected. A serious educational problem of our time is the lack of teaching on the use of a dictionary. When I was a schoolboy, dictionaries were not an unusual gift at Christmas or on birthdays; now I suspect they would not be welcomed!

One of our current problems is the decline of precision in recent dictionaries. From the first Webster's *Dictionary* (1828) to the most recent one, the decay is very evident. This does not mean that Noah Webster was always as accurate as he should have been.

The word *authority* in recent dictionaries is declared to be the "the right to command and to enforce obedience." This does not tell us what the source of this right is; the religious issue is not dealt with at all. Noah Webster's definition is essentially the same. The important question is not raised. In every time of crisis, however, it is this question which is foremost. In the late medieval peasants' revolt, the challenge to all human authorities was this:

> When Adam delved and Eve span,
> Who was then the gentleman?

In other words, who made kings and bishops man's overlords? By what right did anyone rule over others? The peasants were killed, but they were not answered.

From a Biblical perspective, the problem has a very blunt solution. *Authority derives from ownership, and God, as the Creator and Owner of heaven and earth, and all things therein, is the absolute Lord over all.* We are told repeatedly, "The earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof;

the world, and they that dwell therein" (Exod. 9:29; 24:1; cf. Job 41:11; Ps. 50:12; 1 Cor. 10:26, 28; etc.). Because of His ownership, God commands men and gives them His law. Again and again, the law is declared with the prefix, "I am the LORD," i.e., the Sovereign and Owner. Because authority derives from ownership, God is the absolute authority in every sphere and therefore the only valid lawgiver.

In the modern world, however, we see a culmination of a long process separating ownership from God and giving it to the state. Socialism is the logical outcome of this process. The modern world is made up of states which are in varying degrees anti-Christian. One expression of this is their progressive seizure and/or control over all kinds of property. The goal of socialism is the state ownership of all things. This means replacing God with the state and making the state the source of all law.

For Scripture, man is a steward under God; he is commanded to exercise dominion and to subdue or develop the earth in terms of God's law and mandate. As a steward, man is given responsibility, and he is accountable to the triune God. As a steward, man has a delegated authority, and he is responsible to God for his use of the things God has given him.

That authority is destroyed by socialism. The ownership and authority over all things is transferred to the state; the state's stewards are its bureaucracies. As a result, the people at large are encouraged in irresponsibility. Too often, in fact, they want to be irresponsible and choose socialism.

Where men do not have nor wish to have godly delegated authority under God, they seek after lawless authority and domination. In *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, volume 1, pp. 427ff., I dealt with a text, Leviticus 18:19 and 20:18, with respect to sexual relations during menstruation. I was startled to find how many men and women objected to that text and to any use of it. God's law here establishes boundaries on a man's use of a woman, and a woman's use of herself. The man does not own her, nor does she own herself. They are alike God's property and subject to His law. Not even in the most personal relationships can anyone feel that his thoughts, body, time, mind, possessions, or anything else, are his own. He is God's property and under God's authority.

The issue of ownership and authority confronts us on all sides. About two years ago, an Illinois periodical established a related publication in New York. The New York editor began to dictate policy, or attempted to do so, to the parent publication and to his governing board. He was rightfully fired, whereupon he made all kinds of invidious charges and played the role of a victim. He failed to recognize that neither publication was his property, or that his editorial status did not make him a universal

censor. He had no awareness of the meaning of either ownership or of authority. Somehow he felt that his office gave him immunity from government and control.

Teenagers will argue that they have a "right" to use the "family" car, and any restriction on their freedom is a tyrannical imposition. Since the meaning of ownership is taught by neither church nor school, we should not be surprised.

To the degree that human authorities are not grounded on God and His law-word, to that degree they are coercive. God's law is the least coercive of all; He gives us a little more than 600 laws, a very large percentage of which men cannot enforce because God reserves that power to Himself. Man's law, as it departs from God, becomes more and more pervasive and increasingly coercive and oppressive. Man's law combines a destruction of responsibility in man and replaces it with a growing power, coercion: less responsibility with more coercion.

The late medieval era saw the decline of God's law and the increase in the state's law. The nation-states and city-states began to supplant God's law with their own. As David Nicholas has shown, with respect to Ghent in the fourteenth century, "There was no notion whatsoever that homicide is immoral . . . the city had no statutes forbidding it" (David Nicholas, *The Van Arteveldes of Ghent* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988], p. 6). In fact, "Premeditated homicide was a contract legally enforceable in the courts" (p. 117). Hired "hit men" could go to court if not paid! With the decline of Christian faith, God's law remained valid for the rural and "backward" areas only. God's ownership and authority meant little to these men. As we see abortion and homosexuality prevail legally, we can recognize the same disintegrating forces at work that were then only stopped by the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. If we deny the absolute ownership of all things by God, we destroy valid authority in society.

With the Enlightenment, and certainly in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it became common place for "thinkers" to contrast reason to authority. Reason supposedly had a natural inevitability, and, with education, all men would in due time become rational. This would end the sway of authority, and reason would naturally prevail on all sides. Problems would be readily solved, and the universal prevalence of reason would help eliminate authorities.

One scholar questioned all this to a limited degree. Harald Hoffding (1843–1931), a Danish philosopher, saw authority as inseparable from personality and subordinate to it. Without agreeing with Hoffding's philosophy, we can say that both reason and authority are aspects of the

life of persons. Whatever more they are, they still are manifestations of a person and his life. Supremely, we must say, both reason and authority are most revealed in the Godhead. To separate reason and authority from God and from His image-bearer, man, is to harm both. As Christian theological authority is separated from the person of God, and as reason is made an abstract thing, both authority and reason begin to evaporate. The authority of a secular, humanistic state is unreal, and it decays rapidly, to be replaced by brutal coercion. Reason becomes the object of cynicism steadily replaced by the aggressive will of man. Where the person of God is not the absolute source of authority and reason, both soon disintegrate, and so, too, does ownership.

The continental Hegelians, as well as the British and American, saw the state as the evolving spirit of being and hence of the reason in nature. They thus depersonalized reason and also their new center of rational authority, the modern state. The triumph of modern statism has seen also the triumph of amoralism on the part of the peoples as well as the civil governments of our time. Without a faith in the God of Scripture, the living God, ownership and authority decline. This decline will continue until the crown rights of our King are recognized, for Jesus Christ "is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15).

AUTONOMY

154

AUTONOMY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 223, April 1998

The goal of man in his sin was and is autonomy, to be his own ultimate, his own god. This meant determining, or knowing for himself, what is good and evil in terms of purely personal criteria. This has come to mean a number of things, i.e., power for power's sake; sex for radically experiential reasons without reference to law, morality, or the personality of the other person; speed for the sake of speed; and so on and on. One aspect of this exaltation of autonomy has been art for art's sake. Leo Tolstoy attacked this bitterly but falsely, in that his view was one governed by moral considerations, not by religion, not by theology. However important moral considerations are, in Tolstoy's hands they were separated from theology and were humanistic. We now have science for science's sake, and the theological questions raised about certain types of investigations are seen as intrusive and extraneous. Science as its own justification is now a deeply entrenched practice, and any questions raised against it are held to be ignorant and retrogressive.

Robert R. Preato has observed,

> The exaggerated and distorted form of the Aesthetic doctrine declared that art is *self-sufficient and autonomous, serving no other purpose, be it moral, religious or political. Nor should art be judged according to scientific laws or doctrines*. This was the doctrine expounded by Theophile Gautier in the preface to his novel, *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, published in 1835: "Art may not serve any other values than the aesthetic without damaging its aesthetic value." (Robert R. Preato, "Whistler's Aesthetics and Japanese Design," in Gary Levine, Robert R. Preato, and Francine Tyler, *La Femme: The Influence of Whistler and Japanese Print Masters on American Art, 1880–1917* [New York, NY: Grand Central Art Galleries, 1983], p. 66).

This quest for autonomy is basic to what is known as "modern" art.

It is separated from any association with religion, meaning, coherence, culture, history, and all else. It is the autonomous expression of the artist, and the more autonomous it is, the more successful is the composition.

Art for art's sake is an expression of original sin, of man's insistence on autonomy from God. It is an aspect of the premise, man for man's sake. Not surprisingly, almost all people today expect to go to heaven, if they believe in a heaven at all. After all, by what standard can they be excluded? They may be dissatisfied with themselves, but God has no right to be, because man is an autonomous creation, which means that none in heaven, hell, or earth has any valid ground for rejecting them. One spoiled modern man confessed once when drunk to his wife of his involvement in various evils. She already knew him to be a sadistic torturer and a depraved man. When, later, she reproached him for his evils, his answer was that none had a right to judge him except himself. This is the logic of autonomy. Every man becomes his own god and universe, and no one else has the right to judge him. Jesus Christ requires judgment according to God's law: "judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24), but his requirement that our judgments avoid the personal for the Biblical criterion is passed over and, "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matt. 7:1–2), a requirement that our standard for judgment be not personal, is routinely misused to mean *no judgment*.

Antinomianism is related to this quest for autonomy because God's law is, among other things, a criterion for judgment. The commandments against theft and false witness (Deut. 5:19–20), for example, mean that no autonomy of action is possible. Because there is no autonomy in these spheres, or any other, there is no immunity from judgment.

Autonomy means deliverance from judgment. It also means autonomy, ostensibly, from God. The autonomy of reason from God is basic to rationalism. Both its concepts of reason and God are false. For rationalism, reason replaces God as the judge of all things, and "the bar of reason" gives us a new judgment seat for all things.

Genesis 3:5 makes clear that man's original sin, to be his own god and his autonomous source of determination, is his continuing offense. Romans 5:20 tells us that "the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." As Herman N. Ridderbos observed, the law increases sin in fallen man by bringing out his resistance, fury, and hatred of God:

> The law provokes sin, for sin shoots forth like a bright flame when the law is applied to forbid it. Sin properly manifests itself in its very nature whenever the law raises its voice. Paul discusses this fact in a remarkable way in Romans 7 (RSV): "Our sinful passions [were] aroused by the law" (v. 5), and

> further on in the same connection: "What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! . . . But sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, wrought in me all kinds of covetousness. Apart from the law sin lies dead; I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived . . . For sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and by it killed me" (vv. 7–11). (Herman N. Ridderbos, *When the Time Had Fully Come* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1957], p. 67).

The law exposes the heart of sin, its enmity towards and hatred of God. The sinner is not allowed by the law to live hidden from the light of the law and its exposure, so the law compels man to see that God knows he is a sinner who deserves the death penalty. The law reveals the penalty, but, even more, its words point to the greater power of grace.

Autonomy is a heady doctrine. For Edward Carnell, his autonomous reason meant that all deities and revelations were under his judgment. His rationalism made him god over God.

Cornelius Van Til, in discussing S. U. Zuidema's analysis of the philosophy of William of Ockham, pointed out that Zuidema saw that for Ockham, man was ultimate: "Ockham's god is made in the image of the 'free man,' whose image and whose nostalgia is lawlessness" (Cornelius Van Til, *The New Hermeneutic* [Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1974], p. 183). Because *autonomy* means literally *self-law*, autonomy and antinomianism (meaning against law, i.e., God's law), autonomy is the logical goal of man in his revolt against God. Autonomy is manifest in many ways: in the man's revolt against God, in the woman's revolt against God and men, in children's revolt against discipline and authority, and so on. In every sphere of life and thought, autonomy invites anarchy. Van Til rightly observed that the choice is between autonomy and theonomy, self-law and God's law.

In the twentieth century, churches have succumbed to autonomous spirituality, divorced from God's law on the one hand, and autonomous rationalism. Creatures made by God argue solemnly on the "proofs" of God when the very idea that anything can exist without God is ludicrous. Instead of autonomous man, the sovereign God must be the starting point of all thinking. Autonomous reason ends in irrationalism and blasphemy.

155

REALITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 224, May 1998

Man's lust for autonomy is insatiable. He wants no God who can make a claim on him. In fact, Marcel Duchamp, having redefined art, sought in retirement to create a new language without reference to God, propositional truth, or meaning. The newer dictionaries have weakened definitions by rejecting established and historic meaning and grammar in favor of antiorder urges.

Certainly, redefining *reality* is high among autonomous man's priorities, at least on the intellectual and philosophical levels. The Death of God school of thought redefined the Biblical God as dead because He did not fit into their world, i.e., the physical universe. By doing this, they committed suicide as thinkers. After all, scholastic or academic chairs in religion are commonly funded in universities (where they exist at all), in colleges, and seminaries by the ecclesiastical community; and the thinking of this school of thought would have put such academic areas out of business. Now, the Death of God school did not say, "God is dead," but, "God is dead for us because he is outside reality as we know it." Their position was clearly Kantian.

Klaas Runia well described the current view of reality:

> For modern man, who knows only one reality, namely this universe, there is only one way of thinking and speaking of God; not in terms of height but of depth. God is the ground of our being and of all that is; yes, he is being itself. (Klaas Runia, *The Present-Day Christological Debate* [Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1984], p. 26).

With such a definition of God, theologians and philosophers can, to the end of time, say what they please about God in the self-assurance that He can never contradict them because He cannot speak! Their own

speaking, in their view, is as much God's as man's, or more so.

The real world is this world. Most important in this real world is rationality. Reason incarnates itself, as it were, in experience, and that which does not so realize itself is nothing. The rational experience and reality are coextensive, and this is what God's is: God is real because He is a part of any and all reality, but it is the whole that is real. The incarnation of God and man was for Hegel very important in terms of his perspective, but it was better realized in the Prussian state of his day with its union of state, religion, reason, and more. In a very important sense, for the Hegelian, the death of the Christian God was the birth of reason.

For Auguste Comte, God had to go, for otherwise man would not attain a fully rational society. With God, religious concerns would govern man, whereas without God, rational and political concerns would control him. Without God, man would devote himself to humanistic goals and tasks.

How we define *reality* is thus very important. Unless the triune God of Scripture is the source of our definition, we will logically gravitate to a definition that in time will eliminate God because it begins with man. According to Étienne Borne, basic to atheism is the premise, "There is no God, therefore I am" (Étienne Borne, *Atheism* [New York, NY: Hawthorn Books, 1961], p. 35).

The definition of reality in philosophy from Descartes to the present has been in terms of this world, and, more specifically, the mind of man. "I think; therefore, I am," means that reality is in essence man and man's mind, in particular man's rationality. Reality for modern man does not stray far from his rationality.

Van Til has pointed out that, "The non-Christian idea of faith is faith in reality which is partly incomprehensible to him. The Christian idea of faith is the acceptance by the creature (and now, since the Fall, the sinner) of God's plan set forth in Scripture" (Cornelius Van Til, *A Christian Theory of Knowledge* [Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Theological Seminary, 1954], p. 57).

For fallen man, he is himself the basic reality because he is his own god (Gen. 3:5). As a result, he radically warps his perception of what reality is because to do otherwise means to acknowledge that he is a sinner in need of judgment. He is ready to raise metaphysical questions in order to obscure the moral ones. But all such attempts are failures. Because man is a creature, he can never sever the law-tie to his Creator.

156

KNOWLEDGE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 225, June 1998

The Stoics believed in the natural life; the natural was for them equivalent to the good. For them, the end of life was life in agreement with nature. Nature, instead of being fallen, was for them normative. This premise, nature as normative, marked in varying degrees ancient philosophy. Implicit, therefore, in ancient and modern philosophy was the premise of the Marquis de Sade, that whatever occurs in nature is normal and good, unless it is a contra-nature position such as Christianity. The homosexuality of men like Socrates and Plato therefore should not surprise us. In fact, the homosexual vein in modern philosophy, and much related scholarship, has been extensive, although barely mentioned by scholars. Few conservative are aware of the fact that Adam Smith and David Hume were homosexual lovers (Jay I. Olnek, *The Invisible Hand* [Riverdale, NY: North Stonington Press, 1984]).

Failure to recognize this fact has been very critical. The very real hatred of Christianity by such men as Smith and Hume has been avoided. The great war of the centuries is between God, Biblical faith, and morality on the one hand, and, on the other, the humanistic forces of the tempter, i.e., man's will be his own god. In Genesis 3:5 we see the creature's premise, his demand for equality with God. Credible scholarship, the humanists tell us, must begin on their premises, with their certification and accreditation, as it were. Those who agree to such a compromise, men like E. J. Carnell, still gain no place in the humanistic hall of fame. They quickly fall from view.

For the humanist, thinking which begins with God and His inscripturated revelation is untenable because for them, in effect, man is ultimate, not God. But is knowledge possible in independence from God? Is not, then, all factuality simply meaningless or brute factuality? Without God,

there can be nothing, and instead of knowledge, we have a surd. In a meaningless world of being, no fact has any meaning, and man's mind and reason are simply irrelevant because no meaning is tenable. Albert Camus faced this impasse honestly, writing, "The world itself, whose single meaning I do not understand, is but a vast irrational. If one could only say just once, 'This is clear,' all would be saved" (Albert Camus, *The Rebel* [New York, NY: Vintage Books [1956], p. 27).

What is the court of appeal with respect to knowledge? The opinions are these: *First*, God is the final court of appeal: He and His Word establish the presuppositions of all knowledge. *Second*, man is the final court of appeal; in some manner by reason, or by his reason and his evaluation of his sense perceptions, man can attain valid knowledge. The fall of man, and the invalidity of his rationalism, are not considered. *Third*, all knowledge can be denied, because in a totally meaningless world, meaning and knowledge thereof cannot exist. Few hold to this view. For the Christian, the second and third views are both invalid. The God-ordained meaning in all factuality negates man's efforts to deny it, or to deny the noetic effect of sin. By his sin, man denies his dependence upon God and asserts his independence. Man's sin does not end his moral dependence on God, nor his metaphysical dependence. Sin is man's attempt to sever his dependence on God, but it does not affect his metaphysical status; he remains a created being. His moral or ethical revolt against God has moral consequences because, as God's creature, he is forever under God's law. God is He in whom we live, and move, and have our being (Acts 17:28), so that we can never step outside His law and government.

157

DETHRONING GOD

Position Paper No. 227, August 1998

The religion pages in the newspapers are usually sad reading. On Saturday, January 3, 1998, *The Record*, in Stockton, California (D6) had three pastors write briefly on "Religion and the Family." The minister of a "Spiritual Truth Center" insisted, in answer to the question, "What are your faith's rules for forming families?" that Jesus "was not interested in the rules." The pastor of the Christian Life Center also held, "I don't think we have any particular rules concerning families." This in spite of the fact that four of the Ten Commandments are family-centered! The Roman Catholic priest (St. Luke's Catholic Church) did not like the word "rules" either, but he at least spoke of the family "as a call to a vocation."

These men have gone beyond, as have most of an erring clergy, using the word "law"; now they choke on rules!

Insight magazine, January 5, 1998, page 5, tells us that "Pollsters Find God in American Hearts." The results are similar to those reported for at least half a century. Some 95 percent of those responding to a recent Fox News/Opinion Dynamics poll declared they believe in God; 63 percent believe there is a devil; (59 percent of Democrats believe there is a devil, but 60 percent of Republicans do, whatever that means); 84 percent believe in miracles; and 88 percent believe in heaven.

But this means little or nothing. I have never been to Mexico, but I know it exists some 400 plus miles south of me. Believing that makes no difference to my life. Similarly, to believe in a God who has no rules or laws makes no difference to people's lives, and all too many church members are lawless in any Biblical sense. I have heard people insist that they abstain from adultery, not because it is God's law, but because they respect or love their spouse. In so saying, they have denied God and enthroned their love.

We have become an antinomian people, and, before we blame politicians and criminals for our problems, we had better see how the churches, with their antinomianism, have led the way into lawlessness.

A god without law is no god at all. He has been dethroned and replaced by man. We are a lawless people because we have religiously chosen to be so.

I have become used to people lying about what I believe. In speaking and writing, I have stressed our goal not as coercion but conversion, not revolution but regeneration, and no reporter has ever quoted me on that, nor any religious leader. But when they misrepresent the Word of God, it is nothing for them to represent falsely a man's word!

When we dethrone God in our vain imagination, all of the offenses are simple and commonplace. I was a young man when the meaning of Isaiah 56:10 first struck me with horror: God speaks of His watchmen and shepherds as "all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber." Now at age eighty-two, my horror is no less.

But man's work is vain. God is not dethroned: He reigns in majesty; let His enemies repent and tremble.

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AN INFORMED FAITH

the POSITION PAPERS *of* R.J. RUSHDOONY

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CONTENTS OF VOLUME 3

Heresies

158 Heresy 675
159 The Spirit of Heresy 679
160 Gnosticism 681
161 Modern Gnosticism 686
162 Docetism, the Crippling Heresy 690
163 Docetism and the Mandate for Dominion 693
164 Marcionism 698
165 The Montanist Outlook 703
166 The Carpocratian Heresy 708
167 The Carpocratian Heresy 711
168 The Carpocratians 713
169 The Manichaean Heresy Today 715
170 Monarchianism 720
171 The Heresy of Modalism 722
172 Donatism 726
173 The Implications of Arianism 731
174 Pelagianism 735
175 Pelagianism 738
176 The Cathars 742
177 Pietism 747
178 Pietism Revisited 751
179 The Cartesian Heresy 754
180 Quietism 758
181 The Great Fear and the Great Faith 761
182 The Heresy of Theosis 767

183 Kenosis: The Great Modern Heresy 771
184 Kenoticism, the "Gospel" of Defeat 776
185 The Mystery Religions 781
186 Monergism and Synergism 784

Philosophies

187 Titanism 789
188 Catharsis 793
189 The Myth of Nature 797
190 The Hegelian Revolution 800
191 Invisible Rulers 804
192 Reason and Rationalism 808
193 Descartes and Rationalism 811
194 Rationalism and the Mind of Man 814
195 Rationalism and Heresy 816
196 The Bankruptcy of Rationalism 819
197 Rationalism and History 822
198 Rationalism and Tyranny 825
199 Rationalism and the Chain of Being 827
200 Rationalism and God 830

Liberty

201 Religious Liberty Versus Religious Toleration 835
202 Liberty 840
203 Religious Liberty 842
204 The Changed Meaning of Liberty 847
205 Freedom and Responsibility 852
206 Vouchers, Freedom, and Slavery 857
207 The Nature of Freedom 860
208 Conflicting Ideas of Freedom 864
209 Property, Charity, and Freedom 867
210 The Holy Spirit and Freedom 870
211 Guilt, Atonement, and Freedom 873
212 Guilt 878
213 The Risk-Free Life 880
214 Slavery 885
215 The Privatization of Morality and Social Decay 888

Americanism

216 The Political Illusion 895
217 Noninterventionism as a Constitutional Principle. 899
218 Serbia, The United States, and Christianity 903

Statism

219 The State as the Embodiment of Morality? 907
220 No God, No Law 909
221 The New Tower of Babel. 914
222 Nationalism 917
223 The Open Face of Religion 919
224 Adiaphorism and Totalitarianism 922
225 State Interest Versus Public Interest. 932
226 Taxation 937
227 Morality and Growth 947
228 The Dream of Reason 950
229 The Recovery of Memory 956
230 Aristocracy 960
231 Elitism. 964

Politics

232 The Political Myth 971
233 The Modern State as a False Messiah 975
234 "Politics Is About Evolution" 978
235 Law and Politics 981
236 Law Versus Right 984
237 What Is the State? 987
238 The Myth of Politics 990
239 The Death of Empty Forms. 994

General Index 999
History Index 1069
Scripture Index 1093
Works Cited Index 1103
Position Paper Directory. 1119

HERESIES

158

HERESY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 236
This paper was never published, but was originally numbered as No. 198, 1996

The word *heresy* comes from a Greek word whose central meaning is *choice*, meaning that the person so believing placed his private opinion above that of the accepted authority. Heresy was early seen as *false teaching* as against the orthodox and Biblical word.

Heresy thus means a private opinion based on considerations other than the orthodox faith. It is important to glance at *some* of the strands in heretical thinking over the centuries to appreciate the problem. The New Testament is very blunt on the subject. Heretics are called "dogs" (Phil. 3:2), "accursed" (Gal. 1:8), and their ideas the "doctrines of devils" (1 Tim. 4:1), but these are statements in passing. The basic approach is to counter heresies with the truth.

There have been different kinds of heresies. *First*, in the earliest years, Gnosticism, Manichaeism, and like faiths were essentially anti-Christian. Their resemblances to Christianity were not real, and the purpose of such groups was syncretistic. Syncretism readily joins itself to opposite ideas because it has no use for consistency, and its essential faith is illogical. Attempts to make sense of the extreme Gnostic groups can be very frustrating because they defy logic. Their ideas are so convoluted that the mind boggles at their inherent contradictions. Certainly Occam's razor was unknown to them! The purpose of such groups was inherently pagan; they saw only benefits in combining religions because for them truth was many; it took many strange and illogical forms.

Gnosticism, for example, was a problem in large part because Greco-Roman thought, and some aspects of nominal Judaism, had become radically syncretistic and illogical. If the nature of being be contrary, or

blind, to reason, then man has no need to honor reason and logic.

Gnosticism stressed esoteric thought, and, in this respect, had much in common with subsequent heresies which made the heretic one of the privileged few with a hidden knowledge which the common man could not grasp. Kabbalism and Swedenborgianism are forms of Gnosticism and stress the hidden "revelations."

This type of heresy plagued the early church and haunted its steps. The *second* form of heresy came from within the church, although its premises were often alien. It expressed itself in faulty and dangerous interpretations of the faith, essentially the doctrine of Christ although often implicitly the doctrine of God the Father as well. These errors often destroyed the uniqueness of the incarnation, or its reality. They tended to absorb Jesus Christ into non-Biblical schemes of thought and to compromise either His deity, or His humanity, or both. Christianity was thus levelled to a position comparable to other respectable forms of paganism. Paganism, lacking a Bible, a received and fixed text, made room for original thinkers. There could be simple believers who took the pantheon of gods as real, and sophisticated philosophers who used the idea of the gods as a starting point for their original thinking. The insistence of Christianity on a faithfulness to the Received Text was seen as intolerable, and even many converts found it difficult.

The councils of the early church had to deal with the heresies that arose from creative theologies that sought to fuse paganism and Christianity, Origen's errors in this respect are well known. Gregory of Nyssa was no less bold, perhaps more so, in retaining the façade and altering the meaning. It was a basic premise of Gregory that the Bible as it stood could not mean what it said because such a reading was too primitive.

In the early church and after, mixed premises often led able men into heresy. They were attempting to put the new wine of the gospel into old and pagan wineskins.

Third, some of the heresies concerning Jesus Christ had their roots in pagan doctrines of God. The Greek idea of God was a limiting concept. Without God, there would be only an infinite regress; God was needed to be a first cause and nothing more. Arius of Alexandria, in *Thalia*, has an unknowable God who is essentially relevant only as the first cause. He is the original Monad. Arius's God cannot speak, so that there can be no revelation, nor an incarnation. If God cannot speak, how can He be known by any man, let alone the Son, because the very idea of an ineffable and inchoate God expressing Himself is a contradiction.

A faulty doctrine of God has consequences at all points. It eliminates revelation and also incarnation. The first cause remains no more than

the first cause, a logical necessity to Hellenic thought but not a person nor a knowing being. Arianism was the clearest statement of this kind of heresy.

A *fourth* kind of heresy concerned in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and the major expression of this was the thinking of the Abbot Joachim of Fiore. He divided history into three ages: the Age of the Father, an era of law and justice; the Age of the Son, an era of grace; and the Age of the Spirit, an era of love. Many thinkers, including Hegel and our third-age people, have been influenced by Joachimite thinking.

Joachim's thinking was heretical because it undermined the unity of the Godhead. To give each Person a different plan of salvation and essentially a different nature meant tritheism, not the one God in three Persons. To transcend the Father and the Son in a third age of the Spirit was not Biblical theism. Joachim's thinking was apocalyptic, and apocalyptic thinking where ungoverned by the whole Word of God quickly becomes a separate revelation unconcerned with the historic doctrines of the faith as the apocalyptic expectation replaces theology. Whenever the church has placed undue hope on apocalyptic thinking, theology has receded in favor of great expectations of apocalyptic changes.

Heresy has taken many forms, but perhaps one more can be cited because it is so basic to contemporary churches, primarily the older "mainline" denominations, but not exclusively so. This *fifth* heresy is process theology. A Newman Press introduction to it, edited by Ewert H. Cousins, *Process Theology: Basic Writings by the Key Thinkers of a Major Modern Movement* (1971), is a good introduction. Leading figures in this school of thought included W. Norman Pittenger, Bernard E. Meland, Charles Hartshorne, Alfred North Whitehead, Henry Nelson Wieman, and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.

Process theology has its roots in Charles Darwin's theory of evolution and Einstein's theory of relativity. The evolving "being" of the universe is in process, and this is called God. Neither consciousness nor unconsciousness can be predicated of this God, as Paul Tillich held. We participate in this new being which grows and recreates itself as it evolved forward.

Process theology is totally different from Biblical Christianity. It replaced redemption and then growth in sanctification with process. Its hopes concerning this process are highly optimistic, as witness Chardin, and its view of life radically antinomian, as witness Tillich.

Moreover, process theology replaces theology and ethics with an evolving process which takes care of everything. Change is metaphysical, not moral, so that passive man awaits the developing process. Not

surprisingly, process theology has given us thinkers of often questionable or indifferent morality.

Heresies often have names designating particular movements within church history. These are important, but our survey's purpose has been to relate them to broader theological contexts. Not all varieties have been cited, but enough has been said to relate heresies not merely to persons but to wrong ideas about the Godhead.

159

THE SPIRIT OF HERESY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 205, October 1996

Concerns over heresy are unpopular in our time, and heresy trials are no longer a part of the life of the church. Very often, when charges of heresy and moral dereliction are raised, churches rally to suppress the charges as detrimental to the life of faith. It is commonly assumed that the faith will flourish better if peace is maintained at almost any price.

In the process, of course, truth is sacrificed to a false peace and harmony. In practice, there is an intolerance often greater than any other time in church history, only this time it is leveled against the defenders of orthodoxy. In the name of peace and love, the orthodox are driven out. Heresy is dissent from and antagonism to a fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. The word *heresy* comes from a Greek word meaning *choice*. The heretic is someone who chooses for himself what he will believe, so that neither Scripture, nor the councils of the early church, nor any authority other than his own will can determine the faith for him. Heresy is not limited to defective knowledge. The book of Acts gives us instances where the apostolic fellowship, faced with a new situation such as Gentile believers, had to study prayerfully and Biblically how to deal with the matter.

In the process of understanding the faith, it was necessary to confront various problems. Certainly, moral depravity, and a background saturated with it, has often warped the problem. Intellectually, men have often brought foreign baggage to the faith, as witness the Greco-Roman ideas that at times clouded the minds of many church fathers. Certainly, in our day the modern mindset is not committed to understanding the faith clearly and effectively.

But, most of all, our age is very severely limited by its intense addiction to personal choice. It makes no difference to many that their ideas

are as ridiculous as asserting that two plus two equals five, or, that the moon is made of green cheese. Truth is not for them an objective reality, but it is what they think or believe. Their common attitude is, "*I don't care* what anyone says, *I think* . . ." Truth is not for them a reality beyond man, but is rather their own opinion or conclusion.

Because of this perspective, heresy is very much a basic part of the modern worldview. Hegel, with his view of the development of spirit in history, the evolution of culture and man from one stage of being to another, was a major shaper of the modern mindset. Hegel's perspective shaped much more than secular philosophies. His influence on Roman Catholic and Protestant thinkers has not been given the attention it needs. In Roman Catholic circles, Hegel's Spirit or *Geist* became in some instances the unseen force in a developing concept of tradition. In Protestant schools, Hegel provided justification for doctrinal reinterpretations in this new vein. As a result of Hegel, the demand for the location of scriptural and patristic premises gave way to the spirit of the times. Hegelianism gave the church freedom to redefine itself again and again, and to call this redefinition progress.

Increasingly, at the heart of modern heresy there is a denial that such a thing as *orthodoxy* exists or has ever existed. In earlier years, Jude 3 was commonly cited: "ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." Now the idea of a given deposit of faith, enscriptured and authoritative, is treated as evidence of ignorance and anti-intellectualism. It is held commonly that established norms did not exist in the New Testament church, a view that would have amazed the apostles. The Pharisees had their orthodoxy, but supposedly the New Testament church did not. The Darwinian mythology requires that orthodoxy come only after a long evolution.

Heresy is choice, and the heretic decides for himself in terms of personal criteria what he will believe. The spirit of our time is radically dedicated to *choice* on purely personal terms. As taught in state schools, values clarification means not ascertaining what truth is, but deciding for oneself, in terms of purely personal taste, what values one chooses to live by. It is not a quest for truth but for a simply appealing "lifestyle."

This means that the spirit of heresy very much marks our age. This makes our task a greater one, because we go against the modern grain. It also makes our task an easier one, because this heretical viewpoint is radically bankrupt.

160

GNOSTICISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 74, May 1986

One of the most common of ancient heresies was Gnosticism, which is still very much with us. Gnosticism held that salvation is from the material or physical world, from flesh, and it comes through knowledge. Evil thus was not in man's heart but in some aspect of his world: the flesh, the environment, for many today in technology, and so on. Gnosticism was a development of Greek thought, plus Far Eastern influences, which infiltrated Jewish and Christian thought. Many post-Christian Jewish writings, both mystical and apocalyptic, were influenced by Gnosticism, as was the later classic of Gnostic thought, the Kabbalah. In Christendom, the Gnostic influences continued for centuries and then began to diverge. At first, Gnostics like Jacob Boehme, Swedenborg, and William Blake had a Christian veneer, but subsequently Gnostic thinkers broke with Christianity. In the realms of art and philosophy, the Gnostics have been many. They include G. W. F. Hegel, Søren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Nerval, Rilke, Yeats, Mozart, and others, according to Benjamin Walker in his *Gnosticism: Its History and Influence* (pp. 186, 983).

Gnosticism was "antagonistic to the Old Testament and all that it stood for" (Walker, p. 7). This is a fact of central importance. Over the centuries, virtually all heresies have been hostile to the Old Testament, or have decreed that it is now an ended dispensation, or in one way or another have downgraded it in part or in whole. This has meant antinomianism, a hostility to Biblical law, and hence a vague and sometimes ascetic morality. Downgrading the Old Testament is a way of rewriting the New, because the meaning of the New is destroyed if the Old Testament is set aside in any fashion. As a result, the "New Testament Christianity" of such heretics winds up being no Christianity at all.

Any tampering with the full force of the Bible, either the Old or the

New Testaments, in effect is intended to silence God, to diminish His spoken word. It should not surprise us that the ancient Gnostics held that silence best expresses God because He is a hidden deity (*deus absconditus*) who is unknown and unknowable. Moreover, He is impassible, incapable of emotion, feeling, or passion. (This is, of course, all alien to the God of Scripture.) In fact, many Gnostics held that being or existence could not be ascribed to God, who is also beyond good and evil as well as existence. The modern Gnostic, Paul Tillich, held that neither being nor nonbeing could be ascribed to God. To all Gnostics, Biblical law was and is anathema, for to hold that God requires righteousness or justice of us is to entangle God in time and history.

Because the Gnostics held that God is beyond good and evil, and beyond being, they could not identify God with any one form, i.e., either good or evil, or male or female. Hence, in their writings, God had to be inclusive of both male and female, Father and Mother, while transcending both. The Gnostic overtones in feminism are many.

Gnosticism did not hold Adam accountable for the fall. It was something done to Adam. Modern thought, which looks to heredity, environment, the *id* and *ego*, or some like "cause" for human failure and sin, is alive with Gnosticism. (For many Gnostics, the fall was into matter. Severus, a disciple of Marcion, held that man is divine from the navel up, and the devil's creature from the navel down.) Man's being for Gnostics was tripartite: body, mind, and soul.

Gnosticism has always flourished in secret societies and lodges, most of which are full of Gnostic symbols, rites, and doctrines. It has also espoused secret believing, i.e., making no necessary actions in conformity to one's faith. As a result, Gnostics in the church saw no harm in compromising with state demands by Rome for registration and certification of all churches. For them, the faith was purely a spiritual matter, and compromise and apostasy were routine practices with them. None felt any moral hesitation in submitting to controls and avoiding persecution. One Gnostic woman "saint," a hermit who had been a prostitute, decided to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; she paid her way by plying her old trade as a prostitute; since her faith was a "spiritual" one, what she did with her body was immaterial. Male Gnostics sometimes resorted to castration to humble the flesh. Many Gnostics were strongly ascetic; others went into libertinism to show their contempt for the flesh, often committing flagrant adulteries and other lawless acts to show their contempt for the flesh and the sins thereof.

In all these and a variety of other rites and acts, many of which are fanatically ascetic or sexual, the emphasis was on what man does, not what

Christ has done. This should not surprise us. Its name comes from *gnosis*, the Greek word for knowledge. Salvation comes, not from God's grace, but from man's knowing; it is thus man's doing, not God's. Gnosticism was thus a form of humanism within the church. The first statement in *Humanist Manifesto I*, 1933, reads, "Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created." While Gnostics talked about their god (a nonbeing), and "emanations" from him, their cosmos was essentially a dualistic, evolving, cyclical realm which was self-existing; a nonbeing god cannot create. Hence their hatred of the Old Testament. Man in his cosmos of spirit and matter has an untangling job which is primarily intellectual and secondarily action. In either case, salvation is man's doing by knowledge and then by action. This action is nonmoral. There is no sin in apostasy, compromise, adultery, or any other act *provided* man moves with the knowledge that only our spiritual life matters. Moral passion is as wrong as immoral passion for Gnosticism. We must separate ourselves from all such concerns and concentrate on spiritual knowledge.

Gnostic influence spread into a variety of areas. In Hinduism, the *Bhagavad-Gita* shows Gnostic thought, as does Mahayana Buddhism, and Sufism in Islam, the Hermetics, the Neoplatonists, Manicheans, Cathars, Paulicians, Messalians, the Athingani non-touching sect, the Bogomils, Albigensians, Troubadours, Goliards, and others. It has never lacked defenders, as witness G. Kruger in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*. Faiths which exalt elitist man are usually very popular. Of course, theosophy and like beliefs are current manifestations of Gnosticism on one level of society.

As we have seen, the Gnostic emphasis is on what man does, not on Christ's work. As a result, Gnosticism is a humanistic religion. But this is not all. The doctrine of God in Gnostic religions and philosophies in effect eliminates God. The consequences of this are far-reaching.

Many groups which are not Gnostic in intent have still been influenced by Gnosticism, in their view of God's law, the Old Testament, man's part in salvation, and much, much more. All this leads to a loss of God's immediacy. When I read the law of God, I hear God speak: He makes it clear that my whole life, my mental and physical existence, is circumscribed and governed by His law. I cannot act nor think except within the boundaries of His law without incurring His personal wrath and judgment. At the same time, I am totally surrounded by His grace, love, and providential care. Because I take God's Word very seriously and literally, I realize that God is closer to me than I am to myself. He knows me better than I can ever know myself, and He loves me better than I can ever love myself.

In fact, my relationship to myself must be at all times a mediated one: I can only live my life through Christ, my mediator, and in terms of His enscriptured Word. I can have no direct or one-on-one relationship with anyone, only and always one under God in Christ and through Him. My wife, Dorothy, once told someone very close to her, who was trying to use and exploit that closeness, "You are trying to have a one-on-one relationship with me, but that's impossible. I can only have a relationship that is mediated by Christ and His Word." This explains the nature of modern art: it seeks a direct and autonomous experience between the artist and the person. This experience is unmediated and unique; it is not a shared experience, nor is there a common meaning in the work of art for one and all. Immediacy is totally humanistic and autonomous.

For example, the Bible tells us that man is made in God's image, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, and dominion (Gen. 1:26–27; Col. 3:10, Eph. 4:24). There is thus a law against any worship of a man-made image as a representation of or a substitute for God (Exod. 20:4–6). Only God can set forth His meaning. Modern art rejects this. So John Berger said, in *Ways of Seeing*, "all images are man-made" (1972; p. 9). The older art still saw the world as God-created not man-made. But all that is now ended, these men hold. "The art of the past no longer exists as it once did. Its authority is lost. In its place there is a language of images" (p. 33). These images are "valueless, free" (p. 32), meaning free from God and His realm of law. In terms of the canons of modern art in every sphere, a man cannot be an orthodox Christian and still an artist.

Whether in the world of art, the sexual sphere, or any other realm, modern man wants total immediacy. One writer, himself a part of this world of art, satirized the drive towards immediacy by saying that motion pictures, having attained speech ("talkies"), would go on some day to develop "feelies."

Humanistic immediacy, the Gnostic goal, has replaced the Biblical immediacy of God and the mediated relationship of man with all creation, including other people. One result of this change is that men find the Bible's account of God's immediacy embarrassing. The God of Scripture is too close, too blunt, and too ever-present to suit modern man. One reason why the Holy Spirit is so neglected or wrongly viewed by many is because in the Spirit, the immediacy of God is inescapable. In Psalm 139:7–13, David says: "Whither shalt I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the

darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou has possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb." David praises God for what modern Gnostic man rejects.

But men cannot escape the immediacy of God. They will know Him either in grace, or in judgment.

161

MODERN GNOSTICISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 139, July 1991

Gnosticism was a major problem in the early church, as it is today. The word comes from the Greek, *gnosis*, knowledge, and it describes various movements, religious, and philosophical, which plagued the church from the New Testament era to the fifth century. It then became an underground movement, reappearing in many medieval cults, in the Reformation era, in men like Swedenborg and William Blake, and in newer forms today.

Some of the ancient Gnostics claimed revelations; others were simply philosophical in their approach. Various ideas from India, Egypt, and the Greco-Roman world marked Gnosticism. Jewish thought was also infected with Gnosticism, and Kabbalah and related works are evidence of this; one strict Jewish sect to this day perpetuates such thinking.

In recent years, many early Gnostic documents have been discovered, especially the Nag Hammadi Library, and the Gnostics have their champions among some scholars.

The Gnostics were commonly the intellectuals of their day. They represented the more advanced philosophical and scientific thought of the time. Their perspective was evolutionary, and the universe was something which arose out of chaos and was governed by various inherent forces, such as the demiurges. As the Gnostics moved into the churches, they viewed all those of simple faith as merely alive, while they themselves were "pneumatics" or spirituals, knowing ones. The "ordinary" Christian who took his Bible in its plain meaning was seen as one in the grips of a materialistic blindness, whereas the Gnostics were an elite, knowing, and spiritual people. To believe in Christ's resurrection literally, and to affirm the general resurrection of the dead at the end of history, meant that one was materialistic and simple-minded. For the Gnostics,

the resurrection was a symbol of the union of the soul with the Christ figure. The Gnostics were symbolic theologians; the Bible was a series of symbolic tales embodying great philosophical truths.

The orthodox believers insisted on the plain and obvious meaning of all Scripture, and the unity of the Bible, of both what we call the Old and New Testaments. They opposed the Gnostic hostility to nonintellectuals. For example, the Gnostic false "Gospel of Thomas" has Jesus saying, "Businessmen and merchants will not enter into the places of my Father." This is an example of Gnostic "wisdom" which still survives in some circles. There is evidence from Christians who left Gnosticism that sexual libertinism was practiced to show the meaninglessness of the flesh. The relationship of Gnosticism to medieval Albigensian faith has not been sufficiently explored.

The Gnostics insisted that the deity had feminine attributes and were closely linked to the Roman feminism of their era, although some scholars deny this. It is clear that they believed in androgyny, even in their deity. Thus, while some Gnostics were antifeminist in their philosophy, others clearly were not. Because Gnosticism was a movement rather than an organizationally guided structure, it did have in some areas a diversity of ideas, usually bad. Manichaeism was the most organized branch of Gnosticism.

The forging of the theological premises of the Scriptures, which led to the Council of Nicea, began the declension of the older Gnosticism. Orthodoxy was being clearly defined; the plain meaning of Scripture was being stressed. Gnosticism began to die as Gnosticism.

It returned, however, in false interpretations of the Bible which haunted the church for centuries and are again with us.

Thus, St. Gregory of Nyssa (ca. A.D. 335–395), a third generation Christian, wrote *The Life of Moses*, ca. A.D. 390. He turned the life of Moses, and the whole of the Exodus journey and the law, into symbols meaning esoteric things. He denied the literal meanings of the text. He taught universal salvation and more, but, as far as I know, he has not been unsainted!

He was not alone in this. The Gnostic influence was deep in the church. St. Augustine found Genesis crude unless interpreted philosophically and symbolically. (Roland J. Teske, S.J., has recently translated Augustine's brief and unfinished work on Genesis.) Augustine denied the literal sense of Genesis 1: he tried to wed trinitarian orthodoxy with a very loose view of creation. Thus, he wrote, with respect to, "Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3), that it could have various meanings: "A third kind of light can be understood in creatures, that by which they reason. To this is opposed as

darkness the irrationality, such as is found in the souls of other animals" (p. 5:24 of his *On the Literal Interpretation of Genesis*, hardly a literal one!). This is very good Gnosticism, not Biblical exegesis; Gnosticism had become respectable. Luther observed of Augustine's and Hilary's views on Genesis, that they were "pursing allegories and fabricating I don't know what speculations. However, I am not saying this to vilify the holy fathers, whose works should be held in high regard, but to establish the truth and to comfort us. They were great men, but nevertheless they were human beings who erred and who were subject to error. So we do not exalt them as do the monks, who worship all their opinions as if they were infallible" (*Luther's Works: Lectures on Genesis*, chap. 1–5, p. 121).

It should be clear by now that those who hold loose views of Genesis, as do the "creative evolutionists" in the church, the symbolic theologians and others like them, are modern Gnostics. So, too, are the antinomians. Gnosticism was always and still is a compromise religion: it sought to adapt Biblical faith to current philosophical and scientific thinking. In every sense, it was the Bible that was sacrificed; its doctrines, history, and teaching had to give way to the "enlightened" knowledge of an elite group. In every case also, scorn was and is heaped on every believer who continues to hold to the plain meaning of Scripture. All kinds of abuse are directed against anyone who takes the Scriptures at face value. Just as the early Gnostics read aeons and demiurges into everything, so the modern Gnostics insist that the Bible is not against homosexuality, that it permits and encourages calling God "she," and so on and on. The new Gnosticism is as pretentious and arrogant as the old.

But there has been another direction in the new Gnosticism. Its leader has been Eric Voegelin, who, in *The New Science of Politics* (1952), wrote, "The work of Calvin, thus, may be called the first deliberately created Gnostic Koran" (p. 139). What was his reason for so amazing a statement? Voegelin turned the world of meaning upside down. For him, anyone believing in a God-given, unchanging and absolute realm of truth and meaning was a Gnostic, not a Christian! What led to this conclusion? Voegelin used a term which is Hegelian and evolutionary, and the term is basic to his volumes on *Order and History*. The term is "the leap in being." As history evolves, new "truths" emerge, and new orders are created. Therefore, anyone who believes in an eternal and absolute God with an unchanging Word and a changeless truth is a Gnostic! The new Gnostics believe not only in a changing world, but in changing truths, so that for them the spirit of the age determines the truth of the age. All this comes out of Emerson and the Transcendentalists.

Voegelin's great converts were the conservatives. Men like William

Buckley deeply influenced conservatism with this de-Christianizing and relativistic Gnosticism. Voegelin was hailed as a great conservative when he was in fact one of the most radical thinkers of his day.

His thinking reflected the Unitarian-Transcendentalist thinking of Octavius Brooks Frothingham (1822–1895), who wrote, in *The Religion of Humanity*, "The interior spirit of any age is the spirit of God; and no faith can be living that has that spirit against it; no church can be strong except in that alliance. The life of the time appoints the creed of the time and modifies the establishment of the time" (pp. 7–8). In Frothingham's day, his thinking was not regarded by any means as "conservative"! What Voegelin and his admirers did was to radicalize the philosophies of conservatives. With almost the sole exception of Howard Phillips, the so-called conservatives of our time are pragmatists and human weather vanes.

The new Gnosticism has deep roots in church, state, school, and society. It has a passion for pragmatic practicality because it has no fixed faith, no unchanging truth. Our seminaries and church colleges too often reflect the new Gnosticism.

But the new Gnosticism, like the old, is doomed. John 1:5 reads, "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." One possible translation of this is, "The Light (Jesus Christ, the Word of God) continues to shine in the darkness, and the darkness cannot put it out." No. Never.

162

DOCETISM, THE CRIPPLING HERESY

Position Paper No. 171, January 1994

Recently, Dr. J. Dwight Prade, historian, mentioned to me in a dinner conversation that a major and unrecognized sin in evangelical churches today is Docetism. Even more, as he pointed out, it is an unrecognized sin. What is Docetism?

Docetism is the belief that Christ's humanity was more or less an appearance because His deity, or His supernatural nature, could not be comprehended by flesh. Christ was seen, by the early Docetists, as a spiritual rather than a fleshly being. These Docetists regarded even the apostles as foolish men for affirming the full humanity of Christ. John spoke of the Docetists in these words: "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 John 7; cf. 1 John 4:2).

Very early, Ignatius wrote to the Trallians against this spiritualization. He declared that he possessed "peace through the flesh, and blood, and passion of Jesus Christ." Salvation was not a spiritual work but a bloody sacrifice of atonement. Docetism did violence to the whole Bible. Ignatius said, "'Let no man be called good who mixes good with evil.' For they speak of Christ, not that they may preach Christ, but that they may reject Christ; and they speak of law, not that they may establish the law, but that they may proclaim things contrary to it. For they alienate Christ from the Father, and the law from Christ." In other words, their false spirituality led to a depreciation of Christ's humanity and also of the law. They were too spiritual for flesh and blood, and for law. This, said Ignatius, is the snare of the devil.

At the same time that Ignatius insisted on the reality of the incarnation in flesh and blood, he insisted also that this Christ was fully God, and he spoke of Jesus as "my God" (*To the Romans*, 6:6).

Apocryphal and Gnostic writings routinely depicted Christ in Docetic terms. In fact, Docetism could be called a form of Gnosticism. It found a fully physical Christ repulsive. The idea of God incarnate, or some higher spiritual being, being fully flesh and being subject to all the necessities of a material life seemed to them a coarse and unspiritual belief. This "problem" has haunted many over the centuries. The American Transcendentalist, Margaret Fuller, found it hard to accept bodily functions even in herself! Flesh is so "unspiritual"!

Implicit in Docetism is an opinion which, whether in its Neoplatonic form or as outright Manicheanism, tended to identify the flesh with sin and the spirit with the good. Of course, Satan being a purely spiritual being, this equation is false. Man's problem is not a metaphysical one; it is not his flesh but his sin that is the source of problems. His problem is a moral one.

The horror of Neoplatonic and Manichean thought for physical life is behind the Docetic depreciation of Christ's true humanity. The extreme Docetists in the early church held that Jesus was a mere man whom the Logos had entered into at the baptism and then abandoned at the cross. The humanity of Jesus was an appearance used by the Logos. Tertullian asked the Docetists, "How is it that you make the half of Christ a lie? He was all truth."

From Ignatius on, there were men who insisted that both matter and spirit are the creation of the triune God; both are affected by sin, and both are redeemed by our Lord. The resurrection of the body tells us of God's glorious purpose for us, and the new creation testifies to His love of His physical world.

The church is called Christ's *body*, His new humanity, to stress the fact of God's love of His physical handiwork. We are not angels; more than the angels, we creatures are made in God's image, knowledge, holiness, righteousness or justice, and dominion. To demean the flesh is to demean God and Christ, and also the Spirit, the maker with Father and Son of the physical universe.

B. J. Kidd saw the relationship of Gnosticism and Docetism. Carpocrates, a leader in such opinions, "evinced the tendency to plunge into immorality on principle." His son, Epiphanes (ca. A.D. 130) advocated "a Platonic community of women and goods" (B. J. Kidd, *A History of the Church to a.d. 461*, vol. 1, p. 197). The major heretics were Docetists, as witness Marcion (p. 218). The Docetists often had a surface faithfulness; thus, some affirmed the virgin birth but held that "our Lord's body came 'through' but not 'of' Mary" (p. 226). "Apostolic" writings were forged to promote Docetism (p. 275).

All this was done to "save" the incarnation from the supposed degradation of flesh. The incarnation was thus not a literal union of God and man but a spiritual and seeming union.

By removing Jesus from flesh, the "spiritual" follower of Jesus was also removed from the contaminating world of the flesh and the law. Antinomianism has Docetic roots, as Ignatius saw. Men like Gregory of Nyssa, who strove to be orthodox, still rejected the law as too fleshly. Gregory ridiculed the idea that God's law at any point was truly literal: it was for him a vast allegory, as his *Life of Moses* (ca. A.D. 390), which he wrote to prove that the Mosaic books were not to be taken literally, so clearly shows. Gregory found it impossible to believe that God could actually be interested in history, law, diet, or any such thing.

Because the Docetist, however much he conforms to the *form* of orthodoxy, does not take the incarnation literally, he cannot relate the problems of our world to Jesus Christ and to the Bible. His spiritual Jesus cannot cleanse the Temple; his spiritual religion refuses to accept the law of God. The Docetist turns the church into a retreat from the world rather than a place of empowerment to disciple all nations (Matt. 28:18–20). The Docetist is a retreatist.

John tells us, "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4). The Docetist insists on seeing this victory as something "spiritual," so that the world can go to the devil, but, if in our souls we have peace, we are "victorious." This is nonsense. The word *overcome* in the Greek text is *nikar*, from *nike*; its root meaning is to subdue, to triumph. This takes us back to the creation mandate, to exercise dominion and to subdue the earth (Gen. 1:26–28). This is a task that requires that man, with all his being, body and soul, serve the Lord.

Docetism has crippled the church. Whether it be a theological or a practical Docetism, implicit or explicit, it leaves the church and its people powerless. It takes away Christ our King, the universe's only Potentate (1 Tim. 6:15), and leaves only a pale, bloodless shadow.

O Lord our King, Thy temple needs cleansing again.

163

DOCETISM AND THE MANDATE FOR DOMINION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 49, April 1984

Heresies often disappear in church history to return as false orthodoxies. One such example is Docetism. This concept, a form of Gnosticism, refused to accept the incarnation and union (without confusion) of the human and the divine in Jesus Christ. For the Docetists, Jesus was a spiritual being, a kind of phantom, who had only the appearance of flesh. By means of this doctrine, in Neander's words, "the connection of Christ's appearance with nature and with history" was broken. Christ was "real" only in that He was fully visible and present, but not as actual flesh and blood but as pure spirit. Such a view meant, as Neander saw, the "evaporation" of Christianity.

We have in John a very clear insistence on a total separation from this view in its earliest forms: "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: *and this is that spirit of antichrist*, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 John 4:2–3). Docetism is thus on apostolic authority declared to be of Antichrist; it is anti-Christian to the core.

In the epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans, we have an attack on the Docetists: "They who would make nothing but a spectre of Christ are themselves like specters — spectral men." Such a doctrine made a material and personal stand for the faith unnecessary: "But if these things were done by our Lord only in appearance, then am I only in appearance bound. And why have I surrendered myself to death, to the fire, to the sword, to wild beasts?"

Tertullian also attacked the Docetists, saying, "How is it, that you

make the half of Christ a lie? He was all truth." Again he said, "You are offended when the child is nourished and fondled in the uncleanness of its swaddling-clothes. This reverence shown to nature you despise — and how were you born yourself? Christ, at least, loved man in this condition. For his sake, he came down from above; for his sake, he submitted to every sort of degradation, to death itself. In loving man, he loved even his birth, even his flesh."

This "reverence shown to nature" by our Lord, of which Tertullian wrote, was lacking in the Docetists. For them, the world was divided between two alien and contradictory substances, spirit and matter, a Hellenic division. Salvation for Docetism was essentially from materialism, from matter, into spirituality. For Docetism, the goal of holiness was separation from material things, and their Christ thus could not be truly incarnate, because to be made flesh would make Jesus Christ sinful. For all forms of Gnosticism, the fall of man was essentially a fall into flesh, into matter or materialism, and hence salvation meant becoming spiritual.

However, then as now, whenever men seek this false salvation, their sin increases. When men become "spiritual" by seeking to forsake materiality and flesh, they fall into many material or physical sins. On all sides of the church front, charismatic and noncharismatic, holiness groups and "mainline" churches, wherever people seek a "spiritual" way of life as against a materially relevant one, they fall readily into fleshly sins.

There is a reason for this. Salvation is not from flesh or matter but from sin, a very different thing! God created all things, and He created all things "very good" (Gen. 1:31). To blame what God created for man's fall is morally wrong. To seek salvation from God's creation is sin, and an indictment of God. Sin is not matter, nor is it spirit. "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God," according to the Shorter Catechism, Answer 14. "Sin," says 1 John 3:4, "is the transgression of the law."

Satan is a purely spiritual being and yet totally evil; his evil nature is not due to his spirituality but to his moral choice. Adam was created a flesh and blood man; his fall was not due to his materiality but to his moral decision, his desire to be his own god, determining what is good and evil for himself (Gen. 3:5). In both cases, sin, not flesh nor spirit, was responsible for their fall. To see spirit as necessarily good is not scriptural, nor to see matter as necessarily bad. Both are God's creation; sin is an ethical, not a metaphysical fact, a matter of moral choice, not of being either spiritual or material.

Docetic and Gnostic thinking has become a part of the religious life of the church. People assume spirituality to be good per se: 1 John 4:2–3

tells us it can be demonic. People assume materiality to be bad, which it can be, but it can also be holy. It is sin which renders spirit or matter bad; it is sin, not an aspect of God's creation, which is bad.

One consequence of Docetic thinking in the church has been to undermine the mandate for dominion (Gen. 1:26–28). Psalm 72:8 tells us of Christ, "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." Isaiah 65:20 tells us that, *before* the end of the world, man's longevity will be greatly extended. 1 Corinthians 15:24–27 tells us that, before the end of the world and Christ's second coming, all Christ's enemies shall be put under His feet, as well as "all rule and all authority and power." We are also told that there shall be world peace; "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. 2:4). No man nor nation shall stand against the Lord: "they shall be as nothing; and they that strive against thee shall perish" (Isa. 41:11). In fact, "*the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; those nations shall be utterly wasted*" (Isa. 60:12). Such verses cannot be "spiritualized" away, as Docetism seeks to do. Their meaning is too clear.

The mandate for dominion is, *first*, required by the fact of creation. God having made all things, governs all things and requires His covenant man to rule all things by His law-word. God did not create any part of the universe or earth to be ruled by His enemies. On the contrary, He gives His covenant law to His redeemed people as the instrument for dominion. Law is the key instrument for government. To be antinomian is to be against government by, for, and under God. Docetism wants a separation from matter, law, and government, and in so doing separates itself from the Lord. All forms of Gnosticism do this same thing, from Valentinus to Karl Barth and the "spiritual" evangelicals. The fall was the consequence of sin, of moral dereliction, and salvation is our restoration into moral responsibility, materially and spiritually. The law of God is the way of holiness, the instrument and means for exercising moral responsibility. The law of God is thus the way of dominion whereby redeemed men can subdue the earth and rule it under God.

Second, the mandate for dominion is clearly set forth in the incarnation. God the Son became incarnate; He took upon Himself all the being of man. Had the purpose of His coming been to pull people out of a material world, He would not have been made flesh; He would have come as a Docetic phantom. Jesus Christ is the last and great Adam (1 Cor. 15:45–47); the first Adam fell into sin and could not exercise dominion; the last Adam came to destroy the power of sin and death, and to send forth His people to command all nations for Him (Matt. 28:18–20). The

incarnation tells us that the triune God is working to bring God's creation under God's total government, and hence God in the flesh enters time, history, and matter to redeem it. The incarnation is a material fact. We cannot be Christian and deny the incarnation. John says, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 John 4:15). We must affirm that the totally human Jesus is also totally the Son of God; only those who make this confession are "in God," John makes clear. Without the incarnation, there is no Christianity.

Third, the atonement is an anti-Docetic mandate for dominion. It is anti-Docetic because it has to do with the satisfaction of God's law, and Docetism is antinomian because law, God's law, is concerned with the government and dominion over our very material world. Government and law are forms of dominion, and there can be no dominion without government and law. The atonement tells us that God is the supreme governor and the only true lawmaker. It is the requirement of His law and rule or government which requires atonement, or propitiation and satisfaction. This atonement does not have as its purpose the abandonment of His law but its restoration as our way of life. As a death sentence on sin, the law is a way of death to the unredeemed. When we die to the law as a death penalty, we are then alive in it as the way of life and justice (Rom. 8:4), and as the way of dominion. The atonement frees us from slavery to sin (John 8:24) to make us more than conquerors in Christ (Rom. 8:37), and to be a conqueror is to exercise dominion. There is no dominion in Docetism, because there is no true atonement and no law. Docetic salvation is from matter, not sin. The redeemed in Christ know that the difference between holiness and sin in the realm of sexuality is faithfulness to the law of God. "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4). The atonement and the life of faithfulness make the difference, not a Docetic spirituality. Because of their false spirituality, Docetists and Gnostics are very prone to sexual sins; they seek salvation from their materiality and in spiritual experiences rather than through Jesus Christ and His atoning blood.

Fourth, the doctrine of the resurrection is a mandate for dominion. Our Lord conquered the power of sin and death over His new humanity. The Apostles' Creed declares that Jesus Christ, who "was crucified, dead, and buried . . . rose again from the dead." It also sets forth as an article of faith "the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting"; it is our bodies which shall be resurrected, because Christ is risen from the dead (1 Cor. 15:12–20). Christ rose from the dead as our Adam, "For

since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:21–22). Where Adam failed to exercise dominion (Gen. 1:26–28), and his fallen heirs only worked out the implications of sin and death, we in Christ are required to exercise dominion over ourselves and the world. In the place of the outworkings of sin and death, we have the development in and through us of righteousness, of justice, and life. We are called to be the dominion people, and all things must be brought into a captivity to Christ. His dominion must be from sea to sea, beginning with us.

Dennis Peacocke recently reminded me of the fact that *proletarian* is a word having as its root *proles*, children; the proletariat are the breeders of children whose function it is to breed for the state and to be the tools of the state, its children. The Christian is not called to be a proletarian, but *Christ's dominion man*. The modern state seeks to proletarianize man; we must make of a man a new creation in Christ by being the instruments of His Word and Spirit. The battle lines are now being drawn between proletarian men, the children of the state, and dominion men, the sons of God in Christ by the adoption of grace.

In this battle, the Docetist is irrelevant. He regards interest or activity in politics as materialistic and tainted, and the same is true of economics. He is content to allow the humanistic state schools to educate his children, because he regards Christian schools as too materialistic an activity, and his faith is purely "spiritual" in its concerns. The Docetist deserts Christ for his own spirituality, and he seeks to bring others into his "higher" and "spiritual" way.

The Docetists are often kindly and well-meaning people. They promote their antinomianism and anti-dominionism as the true gospel, which requires them to relegate most of the Bible to some meaningless category. The modern Docetists do not say that Jesus did not come in the flesh; they have sophisticated the argument, as did all the heretics of the early church. For them, Christ came supposedly to make us "spiritual": whereas Scripture tells us that He came and died for us to make us righteous or just before God. John tells us that all such falsity is of Antichrist (1 John 4:1–3); it turns a man into a false prophet.

But we have men and nations to conquer for Christ, who is the "only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15). He must reign in and through us, until all his enemies are put under His feet, and all rule and all authority and powers acknowledge and obey Him (1 Cor. 15:24–26). Only then shall the end come, and the last enemy, death, be destroyed. Before then, the Docetists, the apostles of irrelevancy, will all be gone.

164

MARCIONISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 57, December 1984

Marcion of Sinope was a heretic whose era was near the middle of the second century A.D. Few men have left a more deadly and lasting influence on the church. Marcion had a background of involvement in Stoicism and Gnosticism. His decisive teacher was Cerdon, a Gnostic.

In a general way, Marcion's thinking was this: the Old Testament was the product of a God who was largely evil. This Creator God is the source of law, justice, and hate. The Messiah this God promised the Jews did not come, but another and good God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world. The purpose of this Son was to free men from the world of matter and from the law, in fact, to free them from creation. Since the material world is evil, compromise with it was evil to Marcion. Marriage is one such form of compromise, and Marcion refused to baptize married people because he held it to be a sin to propagate a race which is in subjection to the bad Creator God. Naturally, the Marcionites denied the resurrection of the body.

Given his hatred of the law, Marcion saw the enemies of the Creator God and His law as the true saints of the Old Testament. According to Marcion, Jesus descended into hell to rescue God's prisoners, men like Cain, Esau, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

Besides rejecting the Old Testament, Marcion rejected much of the New as well, because it revealed the old God and His law. He allowed only one gospel, Luke, in an edited version which, among other things, excluded the first four chapters. He only allowed some of Paul's epistles after he had edited and expurgated them to allow only those texts which fitted in with his new dispensation.

For Marcion, the attack on Jesus by the Jews was motivated by the evil God of law. As a result, he cut all references by Jesus to the Creator as His Father. The two dispensations had to be separated totally.

Marcion's father, a bishop, excommunicated his son and refused ever to see him again.

Fundamental to Marcion's position was the separation of law from the gospel and from grace. At this point, Marcion was more logical than many of his followers. He saw clearly that if law and grace come from the same God, there can be no contradiction between them. All that a perfect God expresses must be in perfect harmony: God's law, justice, mercy, grace, love, forgiveness, and wrath cannot be divided in the perfect God. Hence, law had to be the product of an evil God because Marcion's presuppositions saw law and matter as evil. Marcion found the world repulsive. Could a good God make reptiles and insects? Marcion found especially repulsive the "uncleanness" of sex and childbirth, and a good God would seek to deliver a man from such a creation. Marcion applied Luke 6:43 to God, the God of the Old Testament: "For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." The Creator God of the Old Testament had brought forth matter, law, and sex. This made Him for Marcion a corrupt tree, an evil God, and salvation had to be salvation from this evil God's world and law. Marcion felt only hostility towards the "just" and "judicial" God.

Marcion was extremely anti-Jewish; he used Paul as a means of attacking Old Testament faith. In the process of his misinterpretation of Paul, he left ideas in the church which have since colored and falsified men's perspectives on Paul. In his *Antithesis*, Marcion collected verses from the Bible to show how "ugly" the Jewish God was. He also used Christ's words in Matthew 5:17 and had them say exactly the opposite of what our Lord declares. For Marcion, Jesus said, "I am come not to fulfill the law and the prophets, but to destroy them." Marcion's perversion has since become "dispensational truth." In creating a division in the Bible, Marcion was the father of both modernist critics and of dispensationalism.

Marcion was not only against marriage, but also against eating meats (except for fish), and against wine. Thus, in his communion service, only bread was used. Baptism for the dead was sometimes practiced, and women could perform baptism. The Marcionites were quite numerous for some centuries, and were later absorbed into the Paulician movement, and the Cathars in the West.

For Marcion, his Jesus was a spiritual person, not truly man. The Jewish Messiah he regarded as political because of the messianic concern over the Kingdom of God. For him, the true Messiah could not be materialistic and political in his concerns. There was for Marcion no real incarnation, because this would for him have ended Jesus's divinity. Man

needed deliverance from his body, not a God incarnating Himself in flesh.

Quite logically, Marcion viewed the law with horror. How could a good God concern Himself with dietary laws, laws governing sex, property, and so on? How could good men read such a law without embarrassment?

Until Marcion, Christians saw the Bible as one book. Apostolic preaching and writing makes it clear that what we call the Old Testament was used as totally relevant and as coming into its own in Christ. In defending the apostolic writings against Marcion, the church tended to segregate them. Because Marcion had created a false New Testament, the church, in defending the true apostolic canon, segregated it. For us to read the Bible as two books rather than as one unified Word of God is to fall under Marcion's influence.

Under Apelles, a Marcionite leader, the extremes of Marcion's thinking were altered. There was for Appelles one God, but this one God had a different dispensation for the Jews than for the Gentiles. The Old Testament was thus a lower, cruder word for the Jews; there was now a better word for the Gentiles. This development broadened the influence of Marcion, and it continues to this day. It is interesting to note, and Jaroslav Pelikan, in *The Christian Tradition*, vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)* [1971], calls attention to the fact, that Karl Barth saw "remarkable parallels" between himself and Marcion.

The Hellenic roots of so many leaders in the early church made them susceptible to a modified Marcionism. Greek philosophy downgraded the world of matter in favor of the world of ideas. As a result, churchmen who strongly condemned Marcion were still ready to agree with a modified Marcionism. Origen, in *On First Principles*, ridiculed the idea of taking Genesis 1, and much else, too literally; God obviously meant something more spiritual than the Hebrew text indicated. Gregory of Nyssa allegorized the law, because he could not believe that God's law could actually be serious in telling us how to eat (Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Moses*, vol. 2, p. 105).

The result of all this was that, while Marcion was condemned, his thinking, in modified form, gained ground steadily in the church. There was, this modified, dispensational Marcionism held, one God, but He had differing dispensations, one for those primitive Hebrews, and a higher one for the Christians!

A clear result of Marcion's influence has been to limit the effectiveness of Christians and of the church. It would never have occurred to the Old Testament prophets that they should be nonpolitical! They confronted and indicted rulers and kings, as our Lord did in His day. The

Word of the Lord, they held, speaks to all men and to every condition, and not the least of these is the political sphere. The Bible is an intensely relevant book for church, state, school, family, and every other sphere of life. (Marcion held that the family was outside of God, unless husband and wife pledged themselves to refrain from sex permanently!) The basic premise of the prophets and apostles is that the world must be under God's law, and under Christ as king.

Marcionism is very much with us. The church in Christ cannot isolate itself from the problems of life but must apply God's law-word to every area of life and thought. Precisely because Christians are under grace, they are under God's law as their way of life, and grace, their way of sanctification.

The consequences of Marcionism have been deadly. *First* of all, a major consequence of Marcionism has been the separation of faith from the world. Marcionism is always self-defeating because it denies the reliance of its religion to the very real problems of life. The appeal of Marcionism is its easy answers. Marcionite churches grew easily and readily. By denying the validity of Biblical law, they made their faith easy. By separating themselves from politics and the family, they separated themselves from two very prolific sources of human problems. Family life, for example, is a succession of responsibilities and problems, but the blessedness of life in Christ comes from meeting problems in terms of God's law-word and spirit and gaining a victory thereby.

Marcionism places itself on the shelf, or in limbo, by its false view of separation. Biblical faith is a prophetic faith, not a retreatist one. Paul, in speaking of the need for a disciplinary separation (upon excommunication), adds that this separation cannot be from all men who are sinners, "for then must ye needs go out of the world" (1 Cor. 5:10). Marcionism, however, sought precisely that, to take people out of the world.

There was thus a radical separationism in Marcionism. Believers were to separate themselves from the God of the law and justice, from marriage, from meats, from politics, and from all materialistic concerns. Their dispensationalism left them with a very fragmentary Bible, so that their source of guidance was not God's law-word but vaguely spiritual concerns. They were too spiritual for Moses to instruct them, or for the prophets to speak to them. The result was that this dispensational separation led to a very great spiritual pride. To deny God's law means that a man now lives by his own law, the church's law, or some other form of humanistic law. The fact that this antinomian way was called "spiritual" only added to its sin and evil.

Second, as is already apparent, Marcionism changed salvation into

a form of escapism. As I have pointed out in *Salvation and Godly Rule* (Ross House Books), salvation means deliverance into victory, health, and dominion. Jesus Christ gives us salvation by His mighty victory over sin and death. His atonement restores us into God's covenant as His faithful law-keepers, dominion men who are now empowered to be "more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Rom. 8:37).

Marcionism separated men from God because it separated them from God's covenant law. In faithfulness to that covenant and its law, Jesus Christ came as very man of very man to pay the death penalty for our transgression of the law, and, by His atoning death and regenerating power, to restore us to faithfulness, to obedience to that covenant and its law.

By its dispensationalism, Marcionism separated men from the covenant Christ to tie them to his imagined Christ. He wanted no Christ whose office it is to be King of Creation, the ruler over men and nations. As a result, his "spiritual" Christ was no Christ at all.

Third, Marcionism destroyed the unity of God's revelation. The Old Testament is not an obsolete, lower, or inferior revelation. The Word of God is one word; the Bible is a unity, and, to the extent that its unity and its relevancy is denied, the power of the faith is diminished and harmed.

The currents of modified Marcionism within the church must be purged in order to restore the church to power. The Holy Spirit works through His Word, the whole Word. Will you listen?

165

THE MONTANIST OUTLOOK

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 52, July 1984

One of the sadder movements in the early church was Montanism. It was not in purpose a heresy, although it became one in time. Montanism began as a demand for stricter discipline in the church. It wanted a return to the earlier years of Spirit-created acts and utterances; it emphasized spirituality as against "carnal" Christians, and it stressed the belief that the Second Coming would very soon occur. Almost every emphasis made by Montanism was rapidly carried to dangerous extremes.

The founder, Montanus, had himself a background which did not favor his cause. He is said to have been a castrated Phrygian ex-priest of Cybele who was much given to trances and visions. His physical lack of wholeness, according to Leviticus 21:17–23, should have disqualified him from leadership.

The Montanists called themselves "spiritual" Christians; for them, the existing churches were full of "carnal" Christians. The time was the latter half of the second century. The young church had many new converts and thus many problems, since these new Christians were not without their lingering pagan traits. This was no less true of Montanus, and his two prophetesses Priscilla and Maximilla, who left their husbands to proclaim the "true faith."

A strong emphasis by St. Paul in his first letter to Timothy is that a novice or someone young in the faith was not to be ordained as an elder (1 Tim. 3:6). The testing of time and experience is necessary; every faith must be tested.

Montanism substituted zeal for testing and experience. The Montanists, as a result, soon had many churches in an uproar. They believed that their faith gave them instant wisdom. By stressing the *experience* of the Holy Spirit, they assumed that this experience gave them the *wisdom*

of the Spirit. A true experience of the Spirit increases grace and humility; the Montanist experience increased pride and judgement all too often. The great man in the Montanist movement was Tertullian, who was clearly and strongly orthodox. Montanism in the main was faithful to Biblical faith, but it was guilty of the error of "instant wisdom" on the part of novices in the faith, many of whom were fanatical women and ignorant men.

The Montanists believed and stressed the priesthood of every believer: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). This means that we are equally priests before God the Father and have direct access to Him through Christ, whose members we are. This, *however*, does not alter our status among men and in institutions. Status in a family, or in a church, is not altered by our priesthood before God. The Montanist emphasis on the Spirit in the life of man tended to be erosive of authority. This, combined with their belief in the continuation of the Pentecost gifts, made Montanists a problem rather than an asset to the churches.

But this was not all. Montanism was intensely given to stressing the immediate return of Christ. Maximilla said, "After me there is no more prophecy, but only the end of the world." Our Lord, in teaching His disciples to pray, taught them to say, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). This was seen as a mandate to convert the world and to bring it under the dominion of Christ and His law-word. It was a part of the Christian commission to bring all things into captivity to Christ. Now, in the hand of the Montanists, it became simply a prayer for the end of the world.

The results were ironic. Montanism had criticized the church for its lack of zeal, but now Montanism directed Christian zeal into a narrow channel and tended to reduce it to a hope for the end of the world. The result was a stifling of the momentum of the Christian calling to exercise dominion and to subdue the earth.

The Montanists distinguished between "spiritual" and "carnal" Christians, a distinction which has been revived in modern times. They did more. They saw four stages in the development of religion. They did so, not in terms of Scripture, but by analogy to development in the natural world. Thus, despite their zeal, they imported Greco-Roman naturalism into the faith. They held, *first*, to natural religion and the innate idea of God. *Second*, there was the Old Testament revelation of a "legal" religion, of law. *Third*, the gospel of Christ came as the word of grace. *Fourth*, with Pentecost, there was the revelation of the Spirit, His gifts,

and the rise of "spiritual" religion. This scheme bears real similarities to Joachim of Fiore and his three-age thinking. Joachim, the medieval abbot, divided history into three ages: the age of law, the Old Testament; the age of grace, the New Testament; and the final age, the age of the Spirit and of love. We do not know of any influence of Montanism on Joachim; both had, however, a common assumption, a belief in an evolutionary development of religion and of God's way towards men. Where the analogy of nature is applied to God, God develops and changes like His own creation.

Montanism also tended to deny the validity of authorities in the church and to reduce authority to God-possessed utterances by its prophets. The Montanists claimed for their prophets an authority denied to the rulers of the church. Authority was now, to a considerable degree, self-proclaimed as various persons gave utterances to visions. The Montanists condemned the distinction between the clergy and the laity as authoritarian, but they created a new authoritarian aristocracy of visionaries who were above both the clergy and the laity.

The Montanist prophecies had four concerns. *First*, they proclaimed the immediate return of Christ. They had added many beliefs to the Biblical doctrine of the Second Coming as well. *Second*, they prophesied persecutions, which were very real, and only increased. *Third*, they required as law within the church a variety of ascetic practices and fastings to separate the "spiritual" from the "carnal" Christian. *Fourth*, their visions created new distinctions between the various sins.

Tertullian saw the law of God as abolished by Christ. He held it to be wrong that the church saw the Old Testament law and the Gospels as a unity. He said categorically, "the old law has ceased" ("An Answer to the Jews," chap. 6). In his "The Prescription Against Heretics," Tertullian made his famous statement, "What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there between the Academy and the Church? What between heretics and Christians?" (chap. 7). The Montanist Jerusalem, however, was not the Jerusalem of the Bible; their new Jerusalem was to come down on the village of Pepuza in Phrygia. New revelations were creating a new "gospel." Tertullian, in his treatise on "Modesty," listed seven mortal sins, which, if committed after baptism, were unpardonable.

The result was a new legalism. Where men neglect God's law, they do not thereby evade the fact of law. Law is a necessity of life. Nothing can live without, apart from, or outside of law in God's universe. Men deny God's law only to create their own. Montanism became a fertile source of legalism, as it developed rules (from new revelations) to replace God's law.

Tertullian's treatise "On Fasting" is evidence of this. Fasting had become a new law for "spiritual" Christians, and Tertullian had to answer the "carnal" Christian's use of the Bible against Montanism. Tertullian admitted that these people drew their defense of limited or no fasting from Scripture. Tertullian held to very strict ascetic practices concerning fasting, and more. In the course of his argument, Tertullian showed that "appetite," not sin, was for him the evil, the "undermining" cause of spiritual decline. As against the charge of being in violation of Galatians 4:10, etc., of Galaticizing the church, Tertullian said that Paul spoke only of the end of the old ceremonies, not those of the New Testament. In brief, a new legalism had replaced Biblical faith.

The Montanists also courted martyrdom; it was a sign of spirituality to *want* to die for Christ.

Second marriages were condemned; the spiritual life meant even lifelong continence. While Montanism was opposed to Gnosticism, it had imbibed the Gnostic view of the material world. The same spirit undergirded its millennialism; Montanism wanted to see the end of a material order which it regarded as a hindrance to spirituality.

Much more can be said about the errors of Montanism. The Montanists were mainly orthodox in their doctrines of God, the incarnation, and most basic doctrines. Indeed, Tertullian is important in the history of Christian doctrine. Their basic error lay in their implicit denial of history. The Montanists had a doctrine of historical development, but its essential thesis was that the ages now had their culmination, and it was the end time. There was in their view no room nor time for further development. Hence, their demand on *perfection now.* Christian growth and sanctification were replaced by an insistence on the fullness of holiness now. This belief in the end time led to a downgrading of marriage. Tertullian, who had written earlier in praise of godly marriage, came to an ugly hostility to it. Virginity and continence were prescriptions for all, since the end was near.

Moreover, since the Montanists saw their era as the last days of history, they were disinterested in the various Christian efforts to change the world around them and to conquer it for Christ. Tertullian and others were ready to "prove" that the world had to end soon because it was "overpopulated," its natural resources overused, and so on. With their end-time mentality, it was easy for them to locate "evidences" to prove that the world had to end.

But the demand for "perfection now" does not create instant perfection among church members, only instant hypocrisy. Both in Montanist and, later, Donatist circles, hypocrisy proliferated because there was little

patience with weak and sinning fellow believers. Only strength was tolerated. Where growth is denied in favor of instant perfection, weakness only increases under the hypocritical front of strength. In a moment of wisdom, H. G. Wells once said, "Brave men are men who do the things they are afraid to do." We can say that strong men in Christ are men who know their weakness and increasingly rely on the Lord, not themselves.

What Montanism gave to church history was a recurring demand for instant perfection together with a belief that the end time is now. Throughout the medieval era, the Reformation, and to the present, a great deal of Christian zeal and energy has been deflected into sterile channels by this mind-set. Instead of furthering Christ's Kingdom, too often the Montanist temper hinders it.

A pathetic example of this was cited in 1877 by Daniel Steele, in *A Substitute for Holiness; or, Antinomianism Revived; or, The Theology of the So-Called Plymouth Brethren Examined and Refuted*. Steele reported that some of the followers of John Darby (the source for C. I. Scofield), had gone to Jerusalem to await the Second Coming: "A handful of Americans, fragments of families, possessed by this infantile interpretation of Scripture, are eking out an existence in Jerusalem. They have adopted and are called by the name of 'The American Colony.' They are determined to be at the head of the line of office-seekers when the new administration comes in."

Then and now, the Montanist perspective has commanded countless numbers of Christians. Some, like Tertullian, have been and are great and good men. All have been sure, from A.D. 171 to the present, that theirs is the end time of history, and they have had charts and computations to prove it. What they have instead demonstrated is their own irrelevance.

Christ our Lord "is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15). For a Christian to make his faith and his Lord irrelevant to his age and history is to sin surely. No one is more relevant to all things than Christ the Lord, and only the faithful and active Christian can be a relevant man.

166

THE CARPOCRATIAN HERESY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 148, February 1992

To give attention to the Carpocratian heresy in the twentieth century seems highly irrelevant. After all, most of their beliefs have long since been set aside by the church. The Carpocratians, named after Carpocrates of Alexandria, who taught ca. A.D. 117–138, was a Gnostic who had infiltrated the early church and created a considerable following.

The Carpocratians regarded Jesus as religious genius sent by God. Their goal was to resemble Christ and to surpass Him. They had statues in the meeting places of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, and other like men. They believed in the transmigration of the soul. They were very hostile to the Jews and the Old Testament. They taught the community of goods and women, after Plato. They saw themselves as "world builders," and, as an elite in their opinion, had secret societies with a secret mark branded on the back of the lobe of the right ear. They were not Christian, while using the façade of this new, popular, and rapidly spreading faith. Because of their secret character, we do not know how far they spread, but the frequent attacks on their thinking by the orthodox seems to indicated they were for some time a considerable undercurrent.

What makes Carpocrates and his cult relevant to our day? What aspect of their thinking still lingers and even prevails in some quarters? The key is in Titus 1:15, "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." This is a text routinely exploited for non-Biblical ends. With the Reformation, this text was widely used to attack meatless days required by Rome; nothing in this text has any relationship to that. The word *defiled* or *polluted* is the Greek *memiammenois*, a form of *miaino*. Jerome D. Quinn noted that in the Septuagint the "verb applied not only to ceremonial irregularity but also to immoral worship and sexual

conduct" (*The Letter to Titus* [1988], p. 102). When Paul says that "all things are clean" for the clean, he does not refer to all acts, thoughts, or persons as clean. The obvious reference is to Genesis 1:31, "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Paul was not saying that breaking any of the Ten Commandments, or any law of God, was clean; he was not setting aside the dietary laws, nor the order of authority in any sphere of life. He was declaring that all creation has a clean purpose in the plan of God. For the polluted or defiled, all things are unclean: being polluted or defiled, they defile all things. Nothing in Scripture was set aside by this statement. Paul was speaking of ungodly men who perverted the faith, and in some instances substituted man-made rules for God's law-word (Titus 1:10–16).

The Carpocratians did what virtually every heretical group of their day and since has done: *First*, they called themselves Christians and therefore the clean ones referred to by Paul. *Second*, this "freed" them from God's law. Not all have been as radical as the Carpocratians in justifying communism, (in engaging in) "free" sex with any woman, in reading the transmigration of souls into the Bible, in setting aside dietary laws, in creating an elite to replace godly authority, and so on and on. What the Carpocratians and other heretics did was to establish man's "right" to set aside whatever in God's law they chose to disregard and to pick and choose what was valid for their time.

Third, the Carpocratians hated the Jews, and what better way to put down the Jew than by declaring the Old Testament to represent a lesser, fleshly, cruder, and now invalid dispensation? The Jews were thus anathema to the Carpocratians on grounds of their own making. The Carpocratians rejected Jesus Christ in the name of Jesus!

Fourth, not only were the Carpocratians radically antinomian where God's law was concerned, but they insisted on reading the Scriptures as vindicating their immoralism. Thus, they introduced fanciful meanings into Biblical interpretation: Matthew 5:42 reads, "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away," and the marginal references are to Psalm 112:9 and Proverbs 21:26, and also to Deuteronomy 15:8, Psalm 37:26, and Luke 6:33–34. For the Carpocratians, this meant that sexual promiscuity was taught: no woman could refuse any man sex! If this seems fantastic, consider the fact that our modern-day Carpocratians deny the validity of God's laws against debt; they deny His dietary laws; they insist that the laws against homosexuality do not mean what they say, and so on and on.

Fifth, the Carpocratians held that theirs was a higher and holier way. According to Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 1.25, the Carpocratians'

belief was this: "Faith and love constitute the essential thing; externals are of no importance . . . But he who can abandon himself to every lust without being affected by any, who can thus bid defiance to the laws of those mundane spirits, will after death rise to the unity of that original Monad." As William Young noted, the Ten Commandments were treated with especial contempt. The Carpocratian exaltation of faith and love over God's law-word meant setting aside Christ's atonement and God's plan of salvation. In their scheme of things, faith was not the gift of God, nor inseparable from Jesus Christ.

Sixth, Carpocrates, as a good Platonist, despised material things in favor of the spiritual. As a result, the physical acts, whether sexual or otherwise, that a man committed were not immoral if he were not emotionally and spiritually involved. In other words, he called for a stoicism in sinning to avoid sin. For him, the material realm was of little account, and therefore it should not be prized. Communism in this view is spiritual because it has a contempt for material property, whereas private ownership is materialistic. This contempt for material things has been a mark of many heretical groups who at the same time show greed and lust while claiming spirituality.

Seventh, the Carpocratians in effect and in practice identified themselves as gods by seeing their plan of salvation as deification. This should not surprise us. Anyone who trifles with or sets aside any part of Scripture is thereby playing god over God; he is correcting God in terms of his more advanced spiritual knowledge.

Churches, like persons, can manifest original sin; they can play god with their antinomianism, picking and choosing from God's Word. They can do this, like the Carpocratians, in the name of a higher and truer spirituality.

Carpocrates was one of many heretics advocating like ideas, only he was more successful than most. As the early church began to spread, and its power was manifest, many evil groups called themselves "Christian" in order to capitalize on its vitality. These heretical groups were no threat to the Roman Empire because they were ready to recognize its overlordship. The early church thus faced two enemies and two battles. One was with the state, the other with heretics. The Carpocratians compromised with everything, with the faith and also the state. They were too "spiritual" to get involved in the church and state struggle, or against the immoralism of their day. Despite their claims to spirituality, they were not spiritual in any Biblical sense. The Carpocratians are still with us in other forms and names.

167

THE CARPOCRATIAN HERESY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 190, July 1995

Carpocrates (second century A.D.) was an early Gnostic pretender to Christianity; he is usually placed in the reign of Hadrian (A.D. 117–138). The Gnostics were many, and each had his own version of Gnosticism, and, if using Christianity, another innovative reinterpretation of Jesus Christ. The importance of the Carpocratians is that we see in them an early example of heresies which have plagued the church.

The Carpocratians held that if any persons were pure-souled, meaning that they despised the material world, they would thereby excel Christ. They believed that rebirths, the transmigration of souls, had to precede a final release. The continual rebirths had a purgatorial function.

Irenaeus said of these people, "Faith and love constitute the essential thing; externals are of no importance . . . But he who can abandon himself to every lust without being infected by any, who can thus bid defiance to the laws of those mundane spirits, will after death rise to the unity of that original Monad."

The Carpocratian also rejected the Old Testament. Pictures of Christ were common among them, and they were the first sect claiming to be Christian which used such things. Although there were Jewish Gnostics, most Gnostics were hostile to Jews as well as to the Old Testament, which was held to be restrictive and materialistic.

This key aspect of Carpocratian thinking, its hostility to the Old Testament, was a view which marked one heretical group after another. The Gnostics in particular saw themselves as both spiritual and intellectual, and this especially made them hostile to the Old Testament. Had they been honest, they would have shown a like condemnation for the New Testament. Greek philosophy is abstractionist and intellectual, and the Bible is hostile to abstractionism. Instead of "principles," the Bible offers

us concrete things, such as the person of God. We are not given an intellectual vision of the good, the true, and the beautiful, but of God the Creator, the supreme and absolute Being, the Person of the Great King. Instead of truth as an abstract principle, truth is the person of God, revealed to us in God the Son (John 1:17; 14:6). By undermining the authority of the Old Testament, these Carpocratian and other Gnostics were undermining the authority of the New. If the force of law is undercut, then, too, the force of grace is undermined, because grace speaks to the divine order which requires the full weight of the law.

The Carpocratians were accused of immoralities of various kinds. We know so little of them that this charge cannot be confirmed. We do know that they were indifferent to things external and to law. Their goal was a mystical absorption into the original Monad. Their virtues were thus "faith and love." But faith in what or in whom? And love of what or whom? *Faith* abstracted from God, and *love*, separated from ethics, to be made in and of itself a moral system, have no moral content. I know people strong in faith and love towards evil ends. Antinomian faith and antinomian love are alike evil. If you say, the law is not good, you have said that God is not good, because the law expresses His being.

As an organized group, the Carpocratians disappeared very early, but their general temper has remained, a preference for myth over history, and exaltation of antinomianism as "spiritual," and the replacement of God's law with man's love. Together with this is the illusion that such thinking represents a higher way and a moral, holy life. Ancient errors are still with us in newer forms, but the same unchanging enscriptured Word of God confounds them always.

168

THE CARPOCRATIANS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 214, July 1997

MANY times in recent years my mind has turned to Carpocrates and the Carpocratians as one movement or person after another has reminded me of them — Carpocrates lived under the Emperor Hadrian (A.D. 117–138). He was a Gnostic philosopher who was determined to present Jesus as a respectable and intelligent Gnostic thinker. Jesus for Carpocrates was not of virgin birth but was a man of a pure soul who ascended to a high spiritual plane, as might we all. Jesus was for him a religious genius. Hating the Jews, Carpocrates had his Jesus hating them also and rising above their "superstitions." The Carpocratians had statues of Jesus, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, and others in their shrines. Every human soul could rise to the level of Jesus and surpass Him. The Old Testament and its law was rejected by Carpocrates and his followers, and also by a great many other heretical and pagan cults. They were much given to the use of pictures or icons. What Carpocrates and the Carpocratians represented was an attempt to accommodate Jesus Christ to contemporary culture. This meant reshaping Jesus to Gnosticism and Greco-Roman culture. An acceptable and "historical" Jesus was thus created, "historical" in that Jesus was remade to fit into the then-modern world and life view. The result was a Gnostic, Greco-Roman Jesus whose relevance ended as that culture collapsed. It was a silly and a futile effort, but it is the kind of reshaping of Jesus which still marks our culture. Jesus is remade to suit the cultural standards and icons of the day, and for this reason all these versions, from that of Carpocrates to the present, create only a fictitious Jesus for a foolish people. I regularly read of or hear about someone's "revision" of the Biblical faith to make it suitable for contemporary men. The Carpocratians are all around us, and no less confident that their version gives us the truth about the Jesus of history!

No doubt, wisdom was born with them and will die with them. The world and history are continually reconstructed to match men's hopes and beliefs. It's amazing to me how many people who profess to believe only that which is scientifically proven are ready to assert as fact that life exists somewhere on other planets, and that it must exist! Why? Their "reasons" are at base religious assertions that are implicitly hostile to the Biblical faith. Implicit, too, is the belief that contemporary learning has reached the paradigm of truth, that we have now transcended religion and myth to attain the final paradigm. The son of Carpocrates, Epiphanes, who died at the age of seventeen, wrote a book on justice, which he defined as equality. This for him meant a community of goods, and even of women. (One wonders how much he contributed to the very evil fifth-century Mazdakite communist movement.) After his death, Epiphanes was worshipped by some. His idea of equality as justice is still with us, and as deadly as ever. Equality is not justice and has never been so. It is, rather, a leveling that denies justice in favor of equalizing everything, including good and evil. Clearly, from the early years of the second century to the present, we have not learned much. We have Carpocratians all around us as arrogant and as destructive as ever. The answer to the Carpocratians is the unequivocal allegiance to and faith in the whole Word of God and the Christ set forth therein. A people whose "faith" is limited to a ticket to heaven rather than serving the triune God with all our heart, mind and being can do little to counteract our present-day Carpocratians. Only as we serve Him, rather than expecting Him to serve us, can we be effective servants of Christ and His Kingdom. There are too many Carpocratians all around us, and they are, whether they like it or not, implicitly enemies of Christ and His Kingdom (Matt. 6:33).

169

THE MANICHAEAN HERESY TODAY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 51, June 1984

In its origin, Manichaeanism was not a heresy but a rival religion. The religion of Mani arose in the Middle East in the third century A.D. and spread throughout the Roman Empire. The central teaching of Manichaeanism, a religion akin to Zoroastrianism, is that two rival gods exist, the god of light and spirit, and the god of darkness and matter. The identification of light and spirit, and of darkness and matter, may not have been present or fixed in the thought of Mani, but, in time, this was the dualism of Manichaean faith. What is of especial concern to us is that the contrast in Manichaeanism is not between good and evil as moral positions but as metaphysical ones. What this means is that a state of being became the religious goal rather than a state of faith and its moral requirements. A simple illustration will suffice to explain this in part. If a man is born black or white, he cannot change his racial past: it is his state of being. A man can, however, be transformed morally from an evil to a good man. Having said this, we must concede that dualism does permit some degree of change, by forsaking as much of material things as possible, and by becoming as spiritual as possible. This is not, however, a moral change but an attempt to suppress one side of our being, the material, for the other side, the spiritual. This emphasis marked the many medieval Manichaean heresies or cults, such as the Albigensians. Under the façade of a seeming Christianity, these peoples found salvation, not in Christ, but in forsaking fleshly things for spiritual things. By giving one aspect of their being preeminence over the other, they were supposedly saved.

For Biblical faith, salvation is by Christ's atonement and by His regenerating work in us. From being rebels against God, we become members of Christ's new humanity. This conversion makes us a new creation in the moral, not the metaphysical sense.

For Manichaeanism, we have the substance of two rival gods in ourselves, one a good, the other a bad god. Our "salvation" is to side with the one god or substance in our being.

It is clear that Manichaeanism was related to Gnosticism and its various forms of expression, such as Docetism and Kenosis. Old Russia, the origin of kenotic thinking in our time, was also the home of many Manichaean cults. The one best known to Americans (because of the Canadian colony) is the Dukhobors, whom Tolstoy befriended and shared some ideas with, in a rationalistic fashion. Among other things, the Dukhobors believe in the transmigration of souls to pure spirit; they deny that Jesus was of real flesh and blood, and they see the human soul as the image of the true god. As Frederick C. Conybeare, in *Russian Dissenters* (1921), reported, they believe and say, "there is a God, He is Spirit. He is in us, *we are god*." In their spiritual being, men are of one substance with God. Those who forsake the flesh thus concentrate on the good being or nature in them.

This is Manichaeanism as a religion, as a rival to Christianity. It has, however, largely disappeared in the Western world as a rival religion and has reappeared as a heresy within the ranks of Christianity as well as humanism.

The defining mark of Manichaeanism as a heresy is that it defines the issues confronting man, not as a moral antithesis, but as an antithesis of being. If the antithesis is moral, someone clearly needs changing. Christianity thus insists on the necessity of conversion. When a man is born again, he is not another being; he is the same man but with a new heart, with a spirit of faith and obedience, not of rebellion and disobedience.

If the antithesis is one of being, then the prescription for a cure is death, the destruction of all evil being. This prescription is basic to modern Manichaeanism.

A classic example of this faith is Jean-Jacques Rousseau. For Rousseau, the antithesis of being is between the natural man who is good, and civilization, which is evil. This means that "overcivilized" men are hopelessly evil. By changing the nature of the antithesis of good and evil from morality to being, Rousseau ushered in the age of revolution. In terms of Rousseau, and beginning with the French Revolution, men began to dismantle civilization and to exalt salvation by death, the guillotine.

Another example of this faith is Karl Marx. For him, humanity was divided into two classes, one good, the other bad. His solution was revolution and death, and his followers, such as Trotsky, Lenin, and Stalin, became great advocates of total terror, i.e., death for the "enemies" of the working class. This Manichaean heresy solves no problems; rather,

it aggravates them. Having once liquidated the old "ruling class," it continually finds new evidences of this irredeemable evil in its own ranks in all who disagree. The Marxist prescription is not conversion but the slave labor camp and death.

Racism provides another instance of modern Manichaeanism. Evil is seen as incarnate in a particular race, black, white, or yellow; in Jews, or in Gentiles; in their group, not ours. In the liberal version of racism, all men are naturally good (except Christians), and it is the environment of religion and the family which is evil. Much more than a few adherents of Anglo-Israelism are convinced that all who are not members of the "chosen" tribes are "the seed of the Serpent," demonic. This is Manichaeanism.

Because of Manichaeanism, the problems of modern man cannot be solved without a return to Biblical faith. If my enemy can be converted, I can pray for him, be patient with him, and do all that is morally possible to work peaceably with him. I do not make myself his victim, but I do work to evangelize him. However, if a man views reality with implicitly Manichaean premises, as most men now do, not conversion but suppression and death become the solution. For many of our humanistic statists, the evil is Christianity; hence, they work to suppress and destroy it. At the same time, whatever their differences, they sense their essential identity with Marxists and are ready to work with them. For Manichaeanism, peace is a highly selective practice; it is applied only towards those who are on the side of true spirituality or intelligence.

It should be easy for Christians to confront, expose, and convert these Manichaeans. All the weapons in their Biblical arsenal provide them with the most effective means of bringing a saving knowledge of Christ to these peoples. The problem, however, is that too many churchmen are themselves infected by this implicit Manichaeanism.

Within the church, the covert Manichaeanism of modern man takes another form, an older one. Instead of a moral antithesis between faith and obedience to Jesus Christ, ("by their fruits ye shall know them," Matt. 7:20), on the one hand, and man's rebellion against God, and his attempt to be his own god (Gen. 3:5), on the other, these churchmen have another antithesis. This false antithesis is between spirituality and materialism. Many churchmen will object to a doctrinal clarity of faith; they prefer to be general and vague on matters like infallibility and inerrancy, the atonement, and the incarnation, and silent on such things as six-day creationism, predestination, and God's law. They are at the same time very vocal about the need for more "spirituality," a vague term which often means being more church oriented.

In the church today, the word "spiritual" covers a multitude of sins. In some churches, very strong and active members are considered "unspiritual" because they do not attend one of several prayer groups or meetings, but too often these prayer meetings are dominated by pious hypocrites whose long-winded prayers bar newcomers from participation (our Lord spoke of such Pharisees in Matthew 6:5). In his day, Moody put one such person in his place during a public meeting in England.

These "spiritual" Christians are often of no earthly good in dealing with needs among brethren, or in their community, but they are devotees of the forms of religion. I recall one man who could never count on having a meal on time; or clean clothing, because his wife spent so much time at the church; she, in turn, regarded him as very "unspiritual" because he complained!

Much more can be said. The church today is so involved in this Manichaean emphasis on spirituality that it forgets that the Christian calling is to be faithful. Biblical religion is intensely practical. Cotton Mather is very much abused in our day, but that old Puritan summed up the Christian life in the title of one of his books, *Essays to Do Good*. William Wilberforce, in his study *A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians Contrasted with Real Christianity* (1797), denied that religious observances were the sufficient marks of faith. How real a person's faith is becomes evident, Wilberforce said, in how seriously they view the education of their children in the faith. "It cannot be expected, that they who are so little attentive to this great object in the education of their children, should be more so in other parts of their conduct, where less strongly stimulated by affection, and less obviously loaded with responsibility." If in this key area, the family, we do not take our Christian duties seriously, our pretenses at spirituality elsewhere are evil. It is a significant but suppressed fact that one of the most powerful evangelical leaders of this century, who died some years ago, was thoroughly detested by his godly family.

Another form of this false spirituality is a solemn and dour countenance and manner, as though spirituality means a pompous demeanor. The answer to this kind of behavior was beautifully set forth in an old hymn, "Why should the children of a King go mourning all their days?"

What Scripture presents us with is not two gods in endless and eternal conflict, but the one true God who made all things, and made them very good (Gen. 1:31). Things are out of joint, not because matter is evil, but because man has sinned. If matter is the problem, there is no remedy for it, because we live material lives all our days, and face the resurrection of our bodies at the end of history. If spirituality is the answer, Christ's

coming was not necessary, because many religions stressed the need for spirituality. (Socrates and Plato both stressed spirituality and were both homosexuals who saw their vice as a spiritual love).

Manichaeanism has been a governing undercurrent in the Western world. Its influence both within the church and outside of it has been enormous. Denis de Rougemont, in *Love in the Western World* (1939), traced its influence on the idea of romantic love. Because Manichaeanism sees man as being of two substances, the one good and the other evil, for Manichaeanism there is no real solution to man's problem. However "spiritual" he becomes, he still remains a material, a physical being. The result is frustration. Mario Praz called it, in his book of that title, *The Romantic Agony*.

Our Manichaean culture and nations are thus in the grips of an ideology of perpetual war. The deeper the nations become involved in the conflict-of-interests faith, the deeper they fall into the morass of continual battle in a war that cannot end. Manichaeanism posits an irreconcilable conflict of interests. In this conflict, from a Manichaean perspective, suppression and death are both a necessity and a futility. For over half a century, the Soviet Union has been killing off "class enemies," but they seem to arise as fast as they are worked to death in slave labor camps. The Manichaean solution is suppression and death, but it is an unsuccessful solution, because the "enemy" is an equally essential part of being.

The Christian solution is conversion. What we need is a purging of all elements of this covert Manichaeanism from the thinking of the church. Then the power of God unto salvation will be clearly manifest.

170

MONARCHIANISM

Position Paper No. 193, October 1995

One of the persistent problems in the history of Christianity has been the often evasive tactics of heretics in its midst. More or less orthodox terminology is used, or it is used vaguely, to conceal new meanings. Key doctrines are evaded and are undermined by neglect or reinterpretation. Too many evangelical and Reformed churchmen fail to realize that common usage has made them accept language with ancient roots, from Paul of Samosata through the nineteenth-century Unitarians. Thus, when people speak of *God*, they mean the Father, not the Trinity. God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are in effect demoted. Similarly, they can affirm that the Bible is the word of God, again meaning the Father, failing to see it as the work of the triune God. Their common language is implicitly Unitarian rather than Trinitarian.

In Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch from A.D. 260 to 272, we have a curious bit of history. Prior to his elevation, he was a quiet churchman who got ahead apparently by being inconspicuous and quiet, an organization man, it would appear. Once a bishop, his pride and theology came to the fore. He was a Monarchian, and an Adoptionist, by which is meant that Jesus was a mere man prior to His anointing by the Holy Spirit.

Monarchianism is said to have been first espoused in Rome by Theodotus of Byzantium. The *logos* or "word" meant simply the rationality of God. The Holy Spirit Paul of Samosata saw as the manifestation of the grace of God the Father. The Spirit and the Son were simply *modes* whereby God revealed Himself; hence the name "modalism" was given to Paul of Samosata's thinking. There was for him no true union of God and man in the person of Christ.

There have been lengthy analyses of Paul of Samosata's thinking, and a lack of precision has made it difficult for analysts. Paul of Samosata

chose to be vague; imprecision was a routine device whereby theological criticism was made somewhat difficult.

Paul of Samosata was protected by Zenobia, the Queen of Palmyra, but, when the Romans conquered Palmyra, he was successfully deposed. Previously, his own bishops had decreed his unfitness for office.

His view was that no true incarnation took place, but rather there was an ethical union of God and man in Jesus. This was a form of anti-trinitarianism. Coming from the bishop of Antioch, an ancient center of orthodoxy, Paul of Samosata's thinking was a shock to his time. Because he was the viceroy of the queen of Palmyra, he had protection while she ruled.

Paul of Samosata did not deny the virgin birth; he raised no questions about the *historicity* of the gospel record; what he quietly undermined was the *theological meaning* given to those events by the New Testament. He limited himself to the so-called "historical Jesus." By this means, he necessitated an historical meaning as the only valid one. The incarnation had brought together God and man, eternity and history, without confusion, in perfect unity, and a unique link.

A purely historical Jesus soon ends up as a mystery and as no savior. He can be imitated, but He cannot save. Now, Paul of Samosata did not go that far in his statements, but all before and after him who in essence held only to an historical Christ have faded into oblivion. Their thinking negated Christianity. The gospels tell us that the great divide between God and man has been uniquely bridged in Christ. Man no longer need rely on myths and philosophies to explain the meaning of life to him. God had by the incarnation abolished the mythical and philosophical attempts to explain reality. In Jesus Christ, God incarnate, the way, the truth, and the life, we have the fullness of God's revelation, and to seek other means to God means to regress to error. The knowledge comes from God, not from man. Man has no ladder that reaches up into heaven: God comes down to him in Jesus Christ.

Monarchianism was suicidal and regressive. It was a return to the foolishness and pretended wisdom Paul condemned in 1 Corinthians 1:17–31. What we know most about Paul of Samosata was that, once he set forth his position, he was a man of very great arrogance and pride. His thinking was vaguely worded, but his behavior quickly alerted many to his falsity. It had led to foolishness and pretended wisdom.

The church today loves superficial preaching, and thinking pastors replace study with rhetoric; and churches seek to please people rather than the triune God. Is it any wonder that we are seeing the rise of many pulpiteers who see themselves as stars rather than expositors?

171

THE HERESY OF MODALISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 203, August 1996

Modalism, and its earlier form, Monarchianism, were heresies common to the early centuries of Christianity. They are not commonly known in our time because for centuries their existence was rather uncommon. Now, in our time, we are seeing their reappearance, and there is a reason for it.

Many of the converts in the early church were pagan philosophers and thinkers. They saw the Biblical revelation as important and yet limited: their views of God were broader, and the Bible seemed to circumscribe God too much. Arius, for example, in *Thalia*, saw God as unknowable, which meant that the Bible could neither truly nor fully reveal God. Jesus Christ was the greatest of creatures, but not one with God. For Arius, God was really incoherent: "For He is to Himself what He is, that is, unspeakable." God was too great to be expressible.

Behind Arius and the later Monarchians and Modalists was a belief that God is the great and incoherent life force behind all things, not more than marginally knowable and essentially unknowable. He is a changing and evolving force whose nature is beyond our description.

For such a view, the Biblical doctrine of the Trinity, of the God who gives us an enscriptured and unchanging revelation, is anathema. The Biblical God says, "I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. 3:6), whereas this life force says, I change, and no man knows me, nor my name.

This means that we cannot use, supposedly, God's Word to limit God. One prominent evangelist who is hostile to theonomy and a fixed revelation has said that there can be nineteen persons in the Godhead, not merely three. This means a changing God, which implies a changing plan of salvation. Indeed, in the Joachimite tradition, salvation in the Old Testament era was by law, in the New Testament age by grace, and, in the

coming time of the Spirit, by love. This means a changing God and an insufficient revelation. Some new prophet may give us still another stage in God's evolution and progress!

The twentieth century has been a worldwide expansion of the Christian faith. Many new converts bring with them ancient Eastern mystical faiths and vague doctrines of God. Tribal religions also seek to accommodate Christianity to their presuppositions. They see it as their task to "open up" Christianity to their ancient "wisdom." As a result, they object to systematic theology as a limitation on God. Supposedly, systematic theology cannot understand the full revelation of the Godhead nor the meaning of the Trinity, and therefore all such approaches are flawed.

This view sounds respectful and sensible, but it is false. True enough, man the creature cannot have an exhaustive knowledge of the eternal and infinite God, but he can still have a true and faithful knowledge. The triune God is not a vague and changing life force but the supreme and unchanging being. His Word declares Him to be. We therefore can know God truly through His Word even though our knowledge of Him is not exhaustive, because God is consistent in all His Being and never in contradiction to His revelation of Himself. Systematic theology is no deviation but a necessity. Only since Darwin and the shift to a changing, evolving God have we seen this disregard for systematic theology. This in turn has meant a weakness in faith and life within the churches.

In the early church, Monarchianism and Modalism were in effect deviations from the strictness of revelation, and they have been described as monotheistic, a belief in one person in the Godhead, as against trinitarian. This is only partially true. Their forms of monotheism were a reaction against trinitarianism, and they were steps backward into an inchoate and formless god, an evolving force. (It is of interest that modern Unitarianism very quickly became nontheistic.) Some Monarchians saw Jesus Christ as a vague power or force rather than the incarnation of a divine person. Other thinkers in this school reduced Jesus Christ to God the Father, and God the Spirit to manifestations of an essentially unknowable force. The Trinity simply represented modes whereby the unknowable for a time manifested itself.

It should be apparent now why modalism is again very much with us. We have, *first*, peoples of various pagan cultures who have come into the church (sometimes to leave it, claiming to be the one true church) whose implicit doctrine of "God" is a being out there who is beyond our comprehension, or beyond being comprehended more than dimly in the Bible.

Second, we have in the twentieth century a generation of new barbarians who are the products of public education and the humanistic

universities. With arrogance and ignorance, they seek to reinvent Christianity as though wisdom were born with them. As a result, we are seeing a return to ancient and ignorant heresies, and to a blindness born of arrogance and pride.

Third, the hostility of systematic theology means that an unchanging God is denied, because the God of Scripture, who changes not, is the same, yesterday, today, and forever, and therefore true and faithful statements about Him are possible. Although He cannot be known exhaustively, He can be known truly. This means no new revelations, nor new prophets and saviors, because the unchanging God is eternally self-consistent. This is the glory of orthodox faith: it guards us against the pretenders to new revelations, or to the one exclusively true church.

For Modalists, the Trinity may be the "truth" for one dispensation or era of history, but not for others. Truth is replaced with relativism.

Thus, if any group or man tells us that the Trinity is to some degree only partly true, or that systematic theology is not true, we can thereby identify him as espousing another religion, no matter how seemingly Christian his language. He posits a life force behind the Trinity which manifests itself in one era with the Trinity, possibly Mohammed in another, and so on and on.

Modalism *appears* on the church scene as a heresy, and it uses Biblical terms to pass as Christian. It is, however, implicitly another religion.

When it comes from Eastern religious backgrounds, its implicit view of God is of an unknown and unknowable force behind the Christian Trinity. When its origin is modernism, the abandonment of the Biblical forms is more open. The revised view of God born of modernism and Darwinism is of an evolving and changing life force, modalist to the core. Karl Barth, the catch-all of heretics, refused to call God "Almighty." For him, "The 'Almighty' is bad, as 'power in itself' is bad. The 'Almighty' means Chaos, Evil, the Devil. We could not better describe and define the Devil than by trying to think this idea of a self-based, free, sovereign ability." In one sense, Barth is right in associating God's power exclusively with law (Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*, [New York, NY: Philosophical Library, 1949], p. 48). He was wrong, however, in separating omnipotence and the title "Almighty" from God, and he seriously limited God, if a god was at all in his thinking. Having separated Biblical, "holy history," from actual temporal history, Barth reduced God to an idea and a mode of religious expression.

Without the Creator God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and His enscriptured Word, there can be no systematic theology, no unchanging truth.

We are then back to ancient paganisms, many "truths," none of them binding, to a changing God and a changing revelation, new prophets for new days, and an abiding darkness in the minds of men.

172

DONATISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 54, September 1984

Some heresies begin with very noble motives but end in evil; this was certainly true of Donatism. Church historians usually classify Donatism as a schismatic movement rather than a heresy, but there are weighty reasons for seeing it as a heresy despite an outward orthodoxy.

During the times of persecution, especially that of Diocletian (A.D. 245–313), there were varying responses from the church. Some men virtually welcomed martyrdom; others accepted it as a necessary consequence of the battle between Christ and Caesar. Still others took prudent or temporizing steps, and others compromised or abjured the faith. When the persecutions ended, there were bitter feelings between those survivors who had not compromised and had endured persecution and those who had compromised.

The Donatists, named after their leader, called Donatus the Great, wanted no part of the compromisers. They demanded a pure church. They appealed to Constantine, who ruled against them, and they subsequently became bitter enemies of the state. Constantine insisted on liberty of faith and worship, and the Donatists were not touched by him. In a church council of A.D. 330, the Donatists had 270 bishops present. In A.D. 411, at another council, the Donatist bishops present numbered 279, the Catholic bishops, 286. Donatism was no small movement.

The Donatists were separatists who demanded a pure church. The church had to be the community of regenerate saints. In the process of seeking this holy church, the Donatists forgot what the Catholic party knew, that saints can sin, and sinners can repent. Time proved that there was no lack of sin among the Donatists, but there was less ability to face it and cope with it. The issue was at root the doctrine of the church: was it a school for holiness, or the congregation of the holy? The Donatists

were often stern in church action against sinners, less effective as a missionary church.

More important, Donatism strongly opposed the restoration of pastors who had proven to be cowardly under persecution, who had either surrendered church records, or, worse, denied the faith. Such unholy priests were held to be incapable of restoration, and their actions as pastors, and the sacraments administered, *invalid*. The Donatists held that holiness cannot be communicated by the unholy, nor faith received from a faithless man. Such a pastor gave guilt, not faith. As a result, the Donatists held Catholic baptism to be *invalid*.

The results of this position were deadly. If a pastor's acts are only valid if he is personally holy, then no man can be sure if his baptism and communion are valid until the priest dies without falling out of the true faith! This raised other questions also: if a pastor strayed from the faith, and the baptisms he performed were invalid, were the marriages invalid also? The whole Christian life was plunged into uncertainty, and assurance was denied. The Donatist Petilian said, "He who receives the faith from a faithless priest, receives not faith but guilt."

St. Augustine, the great adversary of the Donatists, said, "But Christ is not unfaithful, from whom I receive faith, not guilt . . . My origin is Christ, my root is Christ, my head is Christ. The seed, of which I was born, is the word of God, which I must obey even though the preacher himself practices not what he preaches. I believe not in the minister by whom I am baptized, but in Christ, who alone justifies the sinner and can forgive guilt." With respect to baptism, Augustine said also, "To my mind it is abundantly clear that in the matter of baptism we have to consider not who he is that gives it, but what it is that he gives; not who it is that receives, but what it is that receives."

The Donatists, in their zeal for purity, had come to give too great a role to the pastor and the church. The validity of the faith was made to depend on the validity of the church. Paul, in Romans 10:17, says, "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

The issue was sovereign grace. It is not the church nor the pastor that saves us, but the Lord. In their zeal and passion for the purity of the church, the Donatists had exalted the church to a position far in excess of its appointed place. Salvation was in effect made to depend upon the holiness of men rather than the holiness of God. We are not saved because our pastor is holy and gracious but because God is.

It is not surprising that, ever since then, separatist churches, often rebelling against very great evils and unfaithfulness in their mother church, readily fall into a Phariseeism. They stress the rightness of their church

rather than the grace and mercy of God. It is because of this overemphasis on the holiness of the church that they fall into heresy and slight the sovereign grace of God. Only the church which stresses sovereign grace can avoid this peril.

It is easy to understand the Donatist hostility to church members and leaders who had proved weak under persecution. It is understandable that questions were raised about their restoration to membership or office. Such questions had to be raised. However, it was no solution to bar them permanently from their place in the church. This step placed the validity of church ordinances and of the church itself upon men rather than in Christ. It is not surprising that in time Donatism was under suspicion of Pelagianism. Its doctrines placed an undue reliance on man rather than the Lord.

After some generations, Donatism disappeared as an organized movement and church, but as a faith, temper, and disposition, it lingered, and it has been a problem for all segments of the church. It has been most a problem where men became most zealous for the purity of the church. The path of Donatism leads from a passion for the faith to an undue trust in men and in institutions. In its results, it becomes a form of humanism.

Donatism as a temper in history has been applied far beyond the boundaries of the church. I am regularly asked by modern Donatists who have never heard of Donatism if they are not freed from any duty to obey the state since the state allows abortion, homosexuality, and more. Their zeal for reform in these areas is wonderful; such people are often the activists whose work is of central importance to more than a few causes. (Some, however, react by a pharisaic separation from all reform action.)

Many medieval scholars held that a state could be placed outside the pale and its ruler a legitimate target for "execution." They failed to see that murder cannot restore a civil government to a godly function: much more is needed!

Indeed, we must say that the revolutions of our era are a product of a modern version of Donatism. A great deal of current historiography is modern Donatism: it seeks to justify the destruction of one order after another on the grounds that only a strict and destructive separatism can unleash justice. The church Donatists held that separation would ensure grace; the political Donatists hold that it will ensure justice.

The word *revolution* gained its modern meaning from Copernicus and his work on *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium*. Just as Copernicus radically altered man's view of the universe, political revolutionists believe that justice requires the destruction of old orders in favor of their idea of justice. The ruling class must be overthrown and replaced;

existing social institutions must be scrapped and only approved ones allowed to exist. The goal is to create "a truly human order" in which man remakes man in terms of a revolutionary goal.

Otto J. Scott, in *The Secret Six* as well as in *Robespierre*: *The Voice of Virtue*, gives us accounts of the destructive nature of revolutionary men, men who were by nature Donatists.

Job answered Zophar at one point with bitter irony, saying, "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you" (Job 12:2). This is a telling summation of a temperament common to many people, and certainly to the Donatists. They believe that wisdom was born with them and will die with them. Rather than manifesting grace, they manifest judgment. As St. Augustine pointed out, in *On Baptism, Against the Donatists* (ca. A.D. 400), the Donatists began to separate from one another and to quarrel in their own ranks. Men whose forte is condemnation cannot be the blessed peacemakers! Augustine said, "We exhort them to come to the soundness of peace and Christian charity." Here was a critical weakness of Donatism, the lack of charity. What began as an honest zeal for purity became before long a censorious and uncharitable spirit.

Purity is indeed a legitimate goal of the Christian church. Holiness, too, is basic to God's nature, and to the image of God in man (Eph. 4:24). Priority, however, belongs to grace, to sovereign grace. Every reform movement which does not give priority to grace fails to gain either purity or holiness.

The Donatists held to a theory of purism, and, in the name of purity, fought with the Catholics and then with one another. Had they begun with grace, they would have made a great and lasting contribution to the church. In the name of purity, they became persecutors! In the process, Augustine charged, they distorted Scripture, the word of grace, to become a Donatist word. They had, charged Augustine, become not only schismatics but heretics.

This was not all. Because the Donatists stressed purity and holiness more than grace and forgiveness, they were ready to believe in compulsion. Our political Donatists who want the perfect society now seek by revolution and then by means of revolutionary regimes to compel men to believe, to be "good," and to be loyal.

By their demand for what Augustine felt was an absolute purity of all priests, the Donatists guaranteed two things, *first*, Phariseeism, and, *second*, censoriousness.

We have today many Donatist movements in the church and in politics. That reform is commonly necessary in both realms goes without saying. We must rejoice that many are dedicated to reform if their dedication is

marked by grace, charity, and patience. If these are lacking, such people are a major hindrance to their own cause.

Because of this warped emphasis, the Donatist temper believes with Job's sorry friends that wisdom was born with them and will die with them. The Donatist is harsh, arrogant, censorious, and impatient. He rejoices in the sins and shortcomings of his opponents and responds to them with condemnation, not with grace.

The key issue is grace, sovereign grace. Apart from that, nothing can change. The Kingdom of God comes, not by our nagging, condemnation, nor efforts, but by the sovereign grace of God. That grace God communicates to us through His Word, not ours (Rom. 10:17). Isaiah 52:7 tells us, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

If our God reigns, we are not sour Donatists; we are sovereign grace men bringing good tidings of peace and grace, of salvation and victory through our Lord and Savior, Christ the King.

173

THE IMPLICATIONS OF ARIANISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 129, January 1991

Our Lord is emphatic that "by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20), or, as James says, "faith without works is dead" (James 2:26). It is important to remember that these results are long-term things, not brief nor momentary appearances. In the parable of the seed and the sower, our Lord refers to the fact that often a quick result is also an unfruitful end: it is shallow and soon disappears (Matt. 13:20–22).

Many heresies have in their early days seemed to be the most remarkable manifestations of the faith but have in time been proven to be false and have perished because they are not grounded in the whole Word of God. In the 1930s, Buchmanism, or Moral Re-Armament, was for a time remarkably successful, but its decline was rapid also. Norman Vincent Peale's power of positive thinking is still with us, but its power is beginning to wane.

One heresy, which lingered more than most, for a few centuries, is of particular importance. Like its modern counterpart, modernism, it was an accommodation of Biblical faith to the reigning philosophies of Greco-Roman humanism. Christianity was made "intellectually respectable" by Arius and others by trimming it to fit into the governing humanism of that day. Arianism's basic premises, as Arius and others formulated them, were, *first*, Jesus Christ was a created being, lesser than God, but greater than man. *Second*, He was therefore not eternally existent, and, *third*, He was hence not of the same essence as the Father. Superficially, this made Christianity easier to believe. Many Arians agreed with Scripture on all other points and seemed to be truly evangelical.

A noted example of this was Ulfilas (ca. A.D. 311–ca. 383), a missionary to the Goths who converted great numbers of the Germanic tribes. He translated the Bible into Gothic and may have created the Gothic

alphabet to do so. Ulfilas seemed to be a zealous evangelist. He may, however, have exercised editorial oversight and omitted the books of Kings because of their martial rather than peaceable nature. His success with the Germanic tribes was helped by his Arian view of Christ; many non-Christian cultures accept readily the existence of great supernatural men while rejecting Christ as the *only* begotten son of God. This fact of Christ as the unique and only incarnation gives to Him an exclusiveness and a finality in revealing God.

Many cultures and faiths have a multiplicity of revelations and supernatural heroes; there is always the possibility of some new revelation from heaven, the gods, or whatever great power exists out there. Seemingly, these religions have an "openness" to new or unfolding truths that gives them a great advantage over Biblical faith. In actuality, it is their great handicap because there is for them no final and unchanging truth. Indeed, truth itself gives way to change as the basic fact. There is no abiding word, only endlessly recurring change and chance. Behind all this is an essential meaninglessness; this multiverse that is the cosmos always has new and chance surprises.

This was very true of Arianism. For Arius, Jesus Christ was not the unique and full revelation of the Father. John 1:18 says, "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." The Greek word translated as "declared" in English is *exegesis*: to make known, to reveal. The meaning of God is unfolding in Jesus Christ.

Arius, by denying Jesus Christ as God incarnate, logically held God to be, as the Marcosian Creed stated, "the unknown Father of the universe." For Arius, God was the "Unknown," and, even more, the unknowable. The god of Arius was unknowable even to himself; he was a vague, inchoate being. Arius's god was not fully self-conscious and thus could not give a coherent revelation of himself either in Jesus Christ or in the Bible. In fact, Arius used negative terms to describe his god because there was nothing clearly intelligible or conscious about his existence; he could not even be called existent, only "being." All revelation was as radically undercut by Arius as it was by Charles Darwin, if their presuppositions were correct. An unconscious god, or being in general, or nature, has no clear word.

For the Arians, there was nothing *essential* about God's being, not even being generative, as Rowan Williams has pointed out (*Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*). There was thus no certain word, no certain truth, no assured hope, in Arianism.

Wherever Arian thinking penetrated, the state was the gainer. If God's

incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, and His enscriptured Word, the Bible, are denied, certainty does not leave the world. It is transferred to the state. Man needs truth; he needs certainty. If he does not find it in God, he will seek it in man or the state. As I pointed out in *The Foundations of Social Order*, "Arianism was humanism and statism. It was a popular faith with rulers, in that it made possible the continuation of the pagan exaltation of the state as the divine-human order and politics as the way of salvation."

Wherever orthodox theology prevailed, men had the certain and infallible Word of God as the criterion whereby the state could be judged. They had as King and Lord, Jesus Christ, God incarnate. There was thus for them the Supreme Court of the universe to appeal to, and an assured law-word. This meant that a truly Biblical faith created a strong people who resisted tyranny. Not surprisingly, as Rowan Williams points out, in Rome "Arianism . . . soon penetrated the imperial circle and came to be viewed as basic to that stability."

The implications of all this are very important to us and very relevant to our time. Any theology or philosophy which, like Arianism, gives us an uncertain word from God, and a Jesus who is not very God of very God as well as very man of very man, will thus help create and perpetuate a doctrine of the state as god walking on earth. Darwinism, with its naturalistic mythology, has led to relativism and a replacement of truth with pragmatism. As a result, since 1859, the growth of humanistic statism has been very rapid. Slavery to the state is a grim and worldwide fact.

This should not surprise us. Men need both power and grace in their lives. If they do not seek it from above, they will seek it from below; if they do not look for it in God, they will find it in the devil. In terms of this insight, about sixty years ago, Kenneth Burke, not a Christian, predicted the rise of occultism, "grace" from below.

In *Painted Black*, Carl Raschke (Harper & Row, 1990) discusses the rise of Satanism in our time. It is closely linked to narcotics, the criminal drug trade, the underworld, pornography, racism, heavy metal rock, violence, and so on. "The basic theology of Satanism . . . involves a profession of undying hatred for Christians" (p. 21). In art and life, aggression becomes expression (p. 104). The rationale for this is clearly described by Raschke: "I am corrupt, therefore society is corrupt, therefore I will corrupt it even further because *corruption* is a moral term that has no meaning. Therefore, I will do whatever I like, which is violence and corruption; therefore, I am only reflecting what is going on in society; therefore, I am quite justified in corrupting society" (pp. 176–77). This is the perspective of "the classical criminal mind," of the American intelligentsia, and of "civil libertines." Such thinking finds its norms, not in Christ and His

law-word, but in "social norms," which are bent to suit this wayward mind-set.

This is not all. Gordon Thomas, in *Enslaved*: *An Investigation into Modern-Day Slavery* (Bantam Press, 1990), cites estimates by responsible and conservative authorities that there are now 200 million slaves in the world. Many of these are children, bought and sold for sexual slavery, pornography, snuff films, child labor, and so on. All countries have them. In terms of the reviving paganism and occultism, some are used as human sacrifices in cannibalistic rites. Some hold that "an international network of Satanists" is deeply involved in this (p. 138). Many children are bought to be killed for organ transplants (p. 73ff., etc.), and doctors and hospitals choose to be ignorant of these sources for organs.

Ugly facts, these, but hardly less ugly than what lies ahead unless men and nations turn from their evil ways to Christ as Savior and King. The battle against Arianism fought and won by the early church is a recurring battle. Whenever and wherever the doctrine of Jesus Christ as the unique and full revelation of God is subverted, and His law-word undermined or denied, other gods quickly have dominion over us.

174

PELAGIANISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 180, September 1994

At one time, the church regarded Pelagianism as a particular evil heresy, but, in our time, it is commonplace in most church circles and is regarded as true Christianity.

Its name is derived from Pelagius (ca. A.D. 350–ca. 425), perhaps of English birth and a successful family, Pelagius was a great advocate of free will. His associate, Celestius, was condemned for his ideas, i.e., refused ordination for the following six propositions by a synod at Carthage in A.D. 411. These were, *first*, Adam was created mortal and would have died even if he had not sinned. The correction between sin and death was denied. *Second*, Adam's sin only affected himself, not the whole human race. The covenant was denied. *Third*, children are born as innocent as Adam was. The consequences of the fall were rejected. *Fourth*, the death of people is not the consequence of Adam's fall but of mortality; neither do the redeemed rise corporately with Christ. *Fifth*, salvation is by both the law and the gospel, i.e., either way. *Sixth*, persons without sins existed before Jesus Christ. For these propositions, Celestius was refused ordination at Carthage, but went to Rome and was ordained in A.D. 415. His great opponent was St. Augustine.

Pelagius believed in the possibility of sinlessness, but his modern scholarly defenders insist that this and other questions were still "open" matters in that day, a dubious assertion. Pelagius was related to asceticism, a movement which relied on ascetic practices as a means to perfection.

Over the centuries, Pelagianism has had many a revival in both Catholic and Protestant circles. A common saying in evangelical circles about election ("God votes for me, the devil against me, and I cast the deciding vote") is radically Pelagian. Billy Graham's preaching, as at his 1994 Ohio revival, is plainly Pelagian.

Pelagianism sees original sin as a disorder in man's sensuous nature, not the total taint of his entire being. Holding this view, Pelagians could hold that man can at the least cooperate in his own salvation. There was a heavily Hellenic faith in the power of man's mind or reason. Two further errors have since Celestius's day been added to Pelagianism: *seventh*, the grace of God is not absolutely necessary to lead men to holiness; and *eighth*, grace is given to men in proportion to their merit.

In all these errors, the common fact is a trust in the rational man's power to make a decision for Christ. Pelagians thus stress decision-making by man rather than God's sovereign grace. The Pelagian believes that any sole reliance on God's sovereign grace leads to a lukewarm faith. The Pelagian stress is thus on enthusiasm and revival fervor. A continual excitement marks for him a true and living church. Because the center is shifted from God's sovereign grace to man's free will and decision, emotionalism replaces the solid assurance and power of God's electing grace.

In the early years of Pelagianism, it was largely a contest between the Eastern churches and the Western, Augustinian-influenced churches. In time, however, Pelagianism infiltrated the West. Luther and Calvin were major foes to it.

We easily forget how radical and revolutionary the doctrine of grace was when it entered the Greco-Roman world. Both philosophy and religion were alien to the concept, and it seemed to the pagans to represent a terrible assault on human freedom and intelligence. It was to the Roman world a barbarous assault on the ability of man.

Pelagius brought an appealing "common sense" to the argument. According to F. W. Bussell, Pelagius's formula was a simple one: "If I ought, I can" (*Religious Thought and Heresy in the Middle Ages*, p. 666). Pelagius also began a line of thinking which later found expression in Abelard, and, more recently, in modernism. The atonement was not viewed as a sacrifice of legal satisfaction for the sins of men, but as a pure and holy example for all of us.

As against Pelagianism, the Augustinian and Reformed position is that the will of man is in bondage because man is fallen and depraved in all his being. Therefore, man cannot please God by anything he does. His will is now essentially evil, and he is at war against God.

This means that man cannot be saved by his rationality. No series of proofs that demand an answer can make him a new creation. His whole nature is tainted and rebellious. Man therefore begins with a death sentence against him.

Philip Schaff summed up the difference between Pelagius and Augustine ably in these words: "The soul of the Pelagian system is human

freedom; the soul of the Augustinian is divine grace." Pelagius begins and ends with the natural man and a trust in his ability to make decisions. Pelagius' views were presented as the voice of rationality, but we must remember that zealous Pelagianizing monks broke into a monastery at Bethlehem to abuse the inmates and then set the building on fire.

The Pelagians were insistence personified. Man, they held, is not free until good and evil, life and death, and all moral decisions are placed in his power as a free agent. Freedom for the Pelagians meant a freedom from God's power to choose or reject God at their will. When John Locke insisted that man's mind is a blank paper and totally free of the past, he was plainly Pelagian in that statement. The Enlightenment enthroned Pelagianism in its view of man's mind, and Arminian revivalism accepted it fully. Some Pelagians like Julian used the "noble pagans" as proof of their agreement. Arminianism has baptized Pelagianism and made it a part of the evangelical scene. We see the results in an irrelevant church.

175

PELAGIANISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 187, April 1995

Heresies have a habit of recurring because they express stubborn aspects of man's fallen nature. Man's original sin is his determination to be as God, knowing, or determining for himself, what is good and evil, what constitutes law and morality, and what is right and wrong. To do so in the name of Christianity is to gain an advantage: man's sin is supposedly made a virtue, and an article of belief.

One such heresy is Pelagianism, now so common that only church history books cite it as a problem. In that era, the two great adversaries were Pelagius, a fifth-century British monk, and St. Augustine. To hear some people now, Augustine is seen as more suspect than Pelagius!

Pelagianism saw man as the primary agent in his conversion; God's grace is a helper, an external aid, not the essential cause. In Augustine, salvation is the work of God's sovereign grace through Christ. Man is acted on, rather than acting. Pelagianism thus rejects eternal security because what man has done, man can undo.

For Pelagians, man chooses to be born again, and God approves that decision. For Augustinianism, in terms of Scripture, redemption is God's work. Man does not improve himself: he is born again by God's miraculous and sovereign grace.

As Philip Schaff wrote, "The soul of the Pelagian system is human freedom; the soul of Augustinian is divine grace" (*History of the Christian Church*, vol. 3, p. 787). Our Lord is blunt in stating that the fallen man is a slave to sin, and only the redeemed man is free (John 8:32–34). Thus, freedom is the privilege of the regenerate man in Christ.

In terms of Pelagianism, the natural man merely needs help, not salvation. A logical conclusion, which Dante took, is that "good pagans" can save themselves and wind up in heaven. Schaff spoke of the affinity of

Pelagianism with rationalism, and held, "All rationalists are Pelagians in their anthropology" (p. 789). Augustine rightly saw Pelagianism as the antithesis of Christianity.

Why is Pelagianism so popular today, in the church and out of it? Pelagianism is humanism in the church; it is an affirmation of man's plenary abilities, and a belief that man is the essential agent in his salvation.

Now, ideas do have consequences. As the modern age affirmed the premises of Pelagianism both in the church and out of it, it moved from a trust in Christ's sovereign grace for salvation to a trust in man's power to save himself. This meant a trust in human agencies as salvific.

Among the chief repositories of this trust have been the state, science, and education. The state has entered into education with the belief that educating all children will do more to save them than the church was ever able to do. Men like Horace Mann held that crime, poverty, and prisons would disappear with universal education. Instead, de-Christianized schools have become destroyers of children by their anti-Christian teaching. Science similarly has been seen in a salvific role, held to be capable of solving most human ills. The so-called "social sciences" have been very vocal in this faith. The modern state is, of course, the great purveyor of cradle-to-grave security and salvation.

The twentieth century is ending with the growing collapse of this Pelagian dream of the statists. Unhappily, churchmen are still busily promoting Pelagianism.

An article of faith with Pelagius and his follower Coelestius was the innocence of all children, because these teachers saw no racial consequence in Adam's fall. The Romantics, such as Wordsworth, were dedicated to this same faith in the child's innocence. The Pelagian thus favors allowing the child freedom to express his natural goodness and innocence. To encumber the child with all the beliefs and practices of the past is to warp him. Hence, the Pelagian strongly opposes religious teachings for the child, and also discipline, and certainly punishment. (Our courts today are Pelagian to the core.)

Pelagianism sees man as a victim because man is seen as basically good. It was held, by Coelestius, that before Christ there were sinless men. The corruption of men comes from false teachings, false institutions, and a bad environment.

This should make clear why our era is hostile to Augustine and Calvin!

Pelagianism, as Coelestius's teachings made clear, did not *need* Christ for salvation. He was *a helper*, not *the redeemer*. There were sinless men before Christ, and peoples were saved without Christ.

Pelagianism became very early an important undercurrent in the church.

It was seen as the voice of sweet reasonableness. Death was not seen as a result of sin but as a natural fact, and sin was more a human error or failing than a direct offense against God.

Men like Pelagius gained a reputation for kindliness, and for courtesy in debate, which they usually avoided. The reason was a simple one: they did not feel that the theological debate was that important, so they could approach it with detachment. The orthodox recognized that the faith was at stake.

A few years ago, a professor of theology, openly Pelagian, had no problem in going from one Christian seminary or college to another because none took Pelagianism seriously! Given the fact that he was anti-Calvinist, his status as a "sound man" was assured!

Thus, an ancient heresy has gained respectability, but its time is running out because our age is confirming the validity of the Biblical doctrines. Man's total depravity, and his need of God's sovereign grace, are inescapable facts. Our world's present horrors demonstrate the falsity of the Pelagian premises.

Meanwhile, as it plunges from disaster to disaster, our world political orders are Pelagian to the core. Pelagianism in politics means that, while God's powers are denied, man's abilities are affirmed. Man replaces God as the lawmaker. Instead of, "In God we trust," the implicit premise becomes, "In man and the state we trust." Now what is denied to God accrues to man, and one consequence is the drift into the omnipotent state.

But one result has been consistent failures. The war on poverty, for example, has increased poverty, and the war on illiteracy has seen a rise in functional illiteracy. What happens when omnicompetent man and the state fail?

The new gods cannot be at fault, and so the blame is shifted to the others. Pelagianism demonizes dissident groups. The dissidents and the environment are to blame, and man is their victim. In the past and present, as Pelagianism flourishes, so too does belief in the demonic. (It is worthy of note that Calvinist Geneva did not undergo the witchcraft and satanistic hysteria of other areas. Its doctrine of God prevented this from occurring.)

Because Pelagianism shifts determination and predestination from God to man and the world scene, it exaggerates temporal powers and causes to an inordinate degree. God is reduced to either an advisory or emeritus status, and causality belongs therefore to the temporal scene. If man is not the determiner, he is the victim. (In the Biblical perspective, man is either a sinner or a saved person, not a victim.) The godly will say,

with David, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight" (Ps. 51:4).

"Ideas have consequences," as Richard Weaver pointed out, and the consequences of Pelagianism are destroying the present culture.

176

THE CATHARS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 63, June 1985

One of the most prominent anti-Christian groups of the medieval era, which masked itself as true Christianity, was Catharism. They were a Manichean or dualistic people whose doctrines have deeply influenced and infiltrated into Christianity. In fact, most of the underground forces which earlier and later worked to undermine and destroy Christianity were dualistic.

The *first* article of faith with the Cathari was a belief in two ultimate powers or gods. The good god for them was the source of light and spirit. Being good, he did not create matter, which was bad. The evil god, equally strong, was the creator of the material world as a means of entrapping souls in the snares of evil.

This was a denial of the doctrine of the Trinity and also of Christ's incarnation. For the Cathari, the Word could not have been made flesh without having been made sinful. Christ only took on Himself the shadow or appearance of a man, but He was never truly man.

Again, the resurrection of the body was denied. Since flesh for them was evil, God would not glorify an evil nature by resurrecting it. Salvation for them was deliverance from the flesh, not its resurrection and glorification.

The *second* article of faith for the Cathari was the rejection of Biblical law. They held that "the law of Moses was given by the prince of darkness, that is, by the malignant god, while the law of the gospel was given by the prince of light, that is, by the merciful god." So hostile to the Old Testament were the Cathari that they held that *all* the Old Testament saints, Abraham, Moses, David, and even John the Baptist, were damned because they belonged to the world of the law. Justice and the law belonged for them to the world of the evil god whom Christ came to

repudiate. Salvation for them was deliverance from the flesh.

In Southern France, the Cathari were called Albigenses, after their stronghold in Albi; in Eastern Europe, they were called Bogomils, Bulgari, Bugares, and Bugres, from whence our word "bugger" comes. In the Near East, they were known as Paulicians.

Because of their contempt for the flesh, the Cathari despised sexuality. Marriage was seen as particularly evil because it gave respectability to what they regarded an evil act. To show their contempt for the holiness of marriage, the Cathari sometimes were ready to practice homosexuality as a means of desecration. Well into the modern era, various revolutionary and anti-Christian groups continued this use of homosexuality as a way of desacralizing the body. In Southern France, the Albigensians started their own school systems to undermine Christian teaching.

The Cathari had many sects, but, within their circles, they had two classes of members, the *Perfecti*, and the *Credentes*, or believers. The Cathari ate vegetables and fish; they refused to kill most animals, and they may have believed in metempsychosis, the return of the souls of the dead in the bodies of animals. Being against the law, they were against capital punishment, and they were pacifists of a sort.

In some areas where they were not as strong, the Cathari masqueraded as good Catholics. Historians are usually favorable to heretics and anti-Christians, so much remains to be explored here. We do know that the Cathari despised God's law and Biblical morality, and they did so in word and in deed. We know, too, that some had infiltrated the Catholic Church. It is an open question to what extent these covert Cathari applied their ideas towards corrupting men, women, and children while serving as monks and priests. What we call corruption some of them saw as a moral duty.

Liberals and Protestants have often seen the Cathari as good people persecuted by the medieval church. As a result, they have been unwilling to accept the facts of their doctrine. Recent studies have more than confirmed that the Cathari were what the medieval church said they were. Far from being a happy, joyful people, they were a sour, dirty, and an evil group. They were pharisaical and censorious, and intensely self-righteous. They had redefined Christianity in terms of pagan dualism, and their Christ bore little resemblance to the Christ of Scripture. They were New Testament "Christians" who had denied all of the Old Testament and the meaning of the New.

For the Cathari, salvation was deliverance from the flesh *and* from the law. Moses and the law were an obstacle to salvation, because the law assumed that God gave the law to govern the world He made. The Cathari

denied that the good god made the world or gave a law to govern it.

The Cathari had a catalogue of deadly sins; these were the possession of earthly property, associating with men of this world, war, killing animals other than reptiles, eating animal food other than fish, and sexual intercourse. Suicide was common among the Cathari. The *Perfecti*, who had received the *consolamentum*, their sacrament, could lose their salvation if they sinned after receiving it. To avoid this, they committed suicide or were sometimes put to death by their families.

The Cathari thrived as an adversary group. They were at their best in ridiculing and undermining. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, they became Muslims and worked within Islam.

They left everywhere an evil heritage. *First of all*, they had a joy in perversity. The pleasures of sex for them were in sinning against the Christian God, in polluting and desacralizing marriage. A delight in sexual sin became an undercurrent in Christendom. The pleasure was not in sex, as such, but sex as sin, as an assault of Christian faith and morals. Denis de Rougemont's *Love in the Western World* studied the influence of this aspect of Manicheanism on Western thought and, in particular, on the Romantic movement. Mario Praz's *Romantic Agony* is pertinent to the same fact although its concerns were different. Significantly too, many subversive movements made a virtual ritual out of immorality and, in particular, of homosexuality.

Second, the Cathari hated property, because the ownership of houses, land, and things meant a concern over material things. Dualistic cults, on gaining power, legislate against private property. In fact, the first communist revolution, the Mazdakite revolution in Persia in the fifth and sixth centuries, required the total communization of property, money, and women. It also required incest within families to demonstrate adherence to that dualistic faith. The Christian Armenians resisted, and among the martyrs was Isaac, bishop of the Rushdoonys, and, in the war which followed (A.D. 451), "The Troops of the Rushdoonys" are listed as very active by the ancient chronicler Yeghisheh.

The contempt for property and for material things is contempt for God and for His creation. It is a way of despising His good gifts and the godly uses we are to make of them. It is a rejection of the dominion mandate (Gen. 1:26–28) to exercise dominion and to subdue the earth and make it God's Kingdom. Christians are all too deeply infected by this Manichean strain.

Third, pacifism was advocated by the Cathari. This great profession of being lovers of peace did not make them less active in waging war against Catholics. In the crusade against them in Southern France, they

took a heavy toll of their enemies. By professing to be "peace lovers," they gained credit for pacifism while being ready to wage war. They were strong for the non-killing of all nonreptilian animals, but they were prone to suicide and murder. They had no sound perspective on human life and animal life.

Fourth, their hostility to marriage made them enemies of the basic institution in God's created order, the family. Being married and having children was for them evidence of imperfection and sin.

Europe and the churches did not follow the Cathari prescription concerning marriage, but it is strange that what was in Scripture the key institution has been until recently so little studied by scholars. Our view of culture is warped because it is not family oriented.

Fifth, Catharism placed all the emphasis in salvation on what man does, none on what God has done through Christ. The Cathari were strong "free–will" advocates. For them, all men have the principle of self-salvation in themselves, their souls. Man's soul is good, and man needs only become spiritual by an act of will, by renouncing material things, and he can be saved. Christ came to make men spiritual, because for the Cathari spirituality is by definition good and matter by definition evil. For them, there was no true fall, only a commingling of matter and spirit, and salvation was separation from material things and from all adherence to material or physical things, such as marriage and property.

Six, the Cathari were totally antinomian; they hated and denied Biblical law and declared it to be the work of the evil god of the Old Testament, the creator god. As a result, the Cathari could not create a social order; they were a negative group. By their spirituality, they were by choice irrelevant to life's problems, battles, and victories. The law is God's justice or righteousness, His plan for establishing His Kingdom. The Cathari denied the law of God and the very idea of law because law seeks to order the historical, material world in terms of a religious faith. Our faith determines what kind of law and order will govern and direct society. Islamic faith and law give us one pattern, Hinduism another, Buddhism still another. The Biblical doctrine of order is set forth in God's law. The Cathari were by their faith hostile to all order because they rejected creation, matter, and history. Salvation for them was withdrawal from history.

In this respect, they left a deadly legacy of antinomianism and false spirituality to the church. Catholics and Protestants have often alike been infected by the Catharist retreat from history. When we strip the anti-Christian glamorization from the Cathari, we see them as a sad, retreatist group of people with no real future because of their rejection of history.

Marc Bloch, in *Feudal Society*, cited by Jaroslav Pelikan in *The Growth of Medieval Theology* (*600–1300*), said, "If I were to sum up in two words what I believe is the essential message of medieval thought, I would say: it is the spirit in which it restated tradition; and this spirit is Faith and Joy." A Catholic scholar, Friedrich Heer, in *The Medieval World*, described "the sense of great joy and inward freedom" which marked the early church and many centuries after. As the medieval era progressed, this joy gave way, Heer said, to "feelings of terror and estrangement" and a fearfulness before God. The burden of sin replaced the freedom of forgiveness.

This was not all. The leadership had left the faith. As Heer pointed out, "In the Italian cities of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries it was tacitly accepted that highly respected noblemen and women were 'heretics'; indeed, in Italy at this time *nobile* was synonymous with 'heretic.'"

The Cathari had left an ugly inheritance. Spirituality had come to mean impracticality and retreatism. Christian thinkers were becoming irrelevant, pietistic, and mystical. The same is true again in our time, and its consequences have been deadly.

Christianity is much more than a spiritual religion. It is faith in the Creator and living God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who requires of us that we occupy till He come, and that all things be brought into captivity to Christ the King. The crown rights of Christ the Lord require this of us.

177

PIETISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 162, April 1993

Strictly speaking, Pietism was a movement in German Lutheranism, although it soon spread to the English-speaking world and elsewhere. It had roots in late medieval religiosity, and it quickly revived in post-Reformation Roman Catholicism. Pietism regarded orthodoxy as "dead faith," as rationalist, as "knowledge without life, form without spirit, worldliness under the cloak of religion," and as lacking in spirituality. Censoriousness marked the Pietists to a marked degree. They prided themselves on their emphasis on being born again, but they tended to strip regeneration of any intellectual and doctrinal content. The emphasis was on being born again (with no definition of any precise meaning) and zeal for the Lord.

Because doctrine was regarded with suspicion as intellectual, the stress was primarily on feeling, on an emotional experience. In time, Pietism displaced doctrinal teaching, catechisms, and serious, solidly Biblical preaching with constant emotional appeals to be born again, or to practice various devotional exercises.

The damage to the church was immense. The body of doctrine, systematic theology, a mission to every area of life and thought, and more, all gave way to an insistence on rebirth and emotional experiences.

Not surprisingly, as Koppel S. Pinson's research in the 1930s showed, Pietism weakened the church and strengthened the state. It was, in fact, an important source of nationalism. Pinson pointed out that modern nationalism has two sources. *First,* there was the secularizing force of the Enlightenment, and *second,* Pietism. Because Pietism reduced Christianity from its universal or catholic meaning, it could not contend against the Enlightenment. For the Enlightenment, the state had replaced the church as the catholic institution, and Pietism did not contend against this. It left

to the Enlightenment the hope of a united world order, not in Christ but in a world state. The emotionalism and the enthusiasm which Pietism created were readily transferred to the state. The church became a peripheral institution. The church building began to give way in its permanency to cheap, shoddy buildings, while state buildings became the new catholic palace-churches of the world. The early church had built stone structures because it held the church to be Christ's palace, and the sanctuary, His throne room. The church ceased to be God's governmental center and became rather simply a rescue mission.

At the same time, an assault was launched against doctrine and theology. Zinzendorf actually said that to seek an intelligent understanding of God and the faith made one an atheist. At a later date, Friedrich Schleiermacher wrote, "Religion's essence is neither thinking nor acting, but intuition and feeling." In other words, the faith was reduced to pious gush.

As a result, the nation took the place of the church. "Christianity and nationalism became identical." (Koppel S. Pinson, "Pietism: A Source of German Nationalism," in *Christendom*, vol. 1, no. 2 [Winter 1936], p. 275).

Doctrine gave way to intuition and feeling. Gary R. Sattler could conclude that the belief in the soul's origin in God was "one of the fundamentals of Pietist anthropology." The emphasis shifted from God to man, from God's election to man's preparation of his heart. The soul was "a spark of the divine image." It began to be affirmed that a Christian should allow himself to be killed rather than kill hoodlums who attacked him. After all, the Christian was saved, so he had no problem, but the hoodlum needed time to repent. (Gary R. Sattler, *Nobler than the Angels, Lower Than a Worm* [Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1989], p. 123.) The Pietists also stressed separating the sin from the sinner. They also derided pleasure in this world and life. Heinrich Müller's deathbed statement said in part, "Not I, but my wretchedness and suffering will die. I do not know, that in my whole life I have had a truly happy day in this world" (p. 168). The Pietists refused to enjoy food, sex, or life itself. They were very much in the line of late medieval ascetics and pietists.

Not the glory of God, but the salvation of men, beginning with oneself, was the concern of Pietists. (F. Ernest Stoeffler, *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* [Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1971, p. 55). Systematic and thoughtful Bible study gave way very early to an intuitional and charismatic reading, whereby the reader, a "prophet," could stand up and shout, "Thus saith the Lord to me" (ibid., p. 80). Illuminism was very much a part of Pietism; it had medieval roots, and, in the Reformation was represented by men like the notable Sebastian Castello (p. 176). Having abandoned a God-centered faith, these Pietists gravitated to nontheocentric views,

and rationalism was a key one. Germany, the center of post-Reformation Pietism, was also the first center of higher criticism, rationalism, and modernism.

Some of the Pietists discouraged Bible study (F. Ernest Stoeffler, *German Pietism During the Eighteenth Century* [Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1973], p. 161). In nineteenth-century America, a prominent evangelist held that too much Bible in preaching threw cold water on the congregation.

At the end of the twentieth century, the church is a shambles because of Pietism. It is people-centered rather than God-centered. Congregations actually hold that *they* rather than God should be pleased with the preaching. It will not do to strengthen or stress the institutional church when the need is for a God-centered faith and church.

Pietism from the beginning was implicitly antinomian. It did not want theology nor God's law. It demanded "preaching to the heart," not teaching the believer the whole counsel of God. While there have been exceptions to these generalizations, the fact remains that the center of church life was shifted from the triune God to the heart of man.

There has been another facet of Pietism, Roman Catholic and Protestant alike. All too commonly, Pietism has been all too eager to damn other churches or communions rather than to fulfill our Lord's Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20). It becomes a virtue to see faults in other communions, however true, rather than to bring every area of life and thought into captivity to Jesus Christ.

Pietism leads to the deformation of the Christian life. In one court case, I was called as an expert witness to the defense of some street preachers; my testimony was cited by the judge in his favorable verdict. One of the street preachers, after the hearing ended, began to harangue me as an unconverted person! Why? Well, he said, I had not witnessed to Jesus while on the stand nor tried to convert the judge! I explained that I had only one *legitimate* purpose on the stand, namely, to testify to precedents in history, and to the history of relevant laws, as well as the Biblical and constitutional aspects. He understood not a word of what I said: "head religion" was useless, if not evil, and "heart religion" was alone valid. Sad to say, this street preacher was an intelligent person who had chosen boorishness, loudness, and ignorance as marks of true piety and holiness. His success, I learned later, was minimal, and his censoriousness, maximal.

Pietism, Catholic and Protestant, has given us too many such people. They believe that their Pietism gives them a private pipeline to God. God says to all such persons, "thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine

eyes" (Ps. 50:21).

God will in His own time reestablish His church upon His Son. All other foundations shall fail.

178

PIETISM REVISITED

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 235
This paper was never published, but was originally titled "Pietism" and numbered as No. 187, 1995

There were many who welcomed the return of Pietism after the Reformation. It appeared in German Lutheranism as a protest against a supposedly dead orthodoxy. Like all such generalizations, there were reasons to agree and to disagree with the Pietists' protest. The Pietists held that, while the Lutheran orthodoxy of their day might be correct, the members and clergy regarded it as the necessary belief of the church rather than of persons within the church. They wanted a personal commitment on the part of every member.

On the other hand, Pietism gave a man-centered, experience-centered interpretation to Christianity. Thus, August Hermann Francke (b. 1663), as against Luther, did not make central justification through Christ's atonement but rather stressed conversion and new life (F. Ernest Stoeffler, *German Pietism During the Eighteenth Century*, 1973, p. 16). Thus, the center of the faith was shifted from what God has done in Christ to what we experience. This was a radical change, and, in fact, the end theologically of the works of Luther and Calvin with their God-centered theology to a man-centered emphasis. Virtually all of the Protestantism has since become pietistic, stressing being born again over the judicial act of atonement. This move away from justification has had devastating results for Protestantism: it has made them closer to late medieval Pietism than to Luther and Calvin. It has also drawn them near to the Anabaptist doctrine than to the Reformation, and some now refuse to call themselves Protestants, professing the title Anabaptists.

Although the Anabaptists deny it, they were somewhat Pelagian. For them, the doctrine of salvation was "dealt with only casually." For them,

"although faith alone makes God-fearing, it alone does not save man." "A forensic view of grace, in which the sinner is forgiven and undeservedly justified, is simply unacceptable to the existentialist faith of the Anabaptists" (Robert Friedmann, *The Theology of Anabaptism* [Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1973], pp. 78, 88, 91).

This Pietism in time infected some of the English Puritans. Thus, in the very able and important William Perkins "there was by no means the same preoccupation with the glory of God which we find in the *Institutes*. His central concern was the salvation of man, a shift which is important" (F. Ernest Stoeffler, *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* [Leiden: Brill, 1971], p. 55).

With that shift, Protestantism has steadily eroded. In Roman Catholicism, a like return to Pietism has undermined its theology, and its Tridentine formulations. The shift has created a man-centered church and theology. With such an emphasis, no church can successfully compete with the world, which will always prefer its humanism in an undiluted form. As a result, the church has been declining steadily into irrelevance, and not only into irrelevance but into impotence as well.

Pietism began with the premise that the church was corrupt and that none could cleanse it without a pietistic faith. This was an earnest and zealous faith. However right it was in more than a few cases about the church, it was wrong in assuming that the church is simply a collection of individuals. By neglecting a sound doctrine of the church, it could not effect a sound reformation.

Moreover, by stressing *the person* rather than *the family and the church,* the Pietists helped bring in radical individualism and Romanticism. This meant that a *faithful individual* outweighed *a faithful church*. A shift took place in holiness from the family and the church to the individual. It began to be regarded as an evil to engage in public sports, reading "frivolous" books, dancing, going to the theater, indulging in various pleasures, and so on and on. This meant a disregard for God's love at times in favor of man's mores. It came to mean later that smoking is a sin (it is bad for one's health) but failure to tithe is not! Such attitudes seriously warped people's moral outlook.

In due time, such believers became either unworldly or otherworldly. An eschatology of victory eluded them. They were not interested in world victory in Christ but in winning the inner war against sin as defined by Pietism.

The result was a radical shift in the definition of the Christian life from a battle against the forces of anti-Christ, with an assurance of total victory, to a battle within for a sterile peace and perfection. Holiness was

redefined by Pietism in terms of personal practices such as drinking, and many a godly man was condemned to disrespect as a sinner because he at times he drank beer. Pietism substituted an often harsh moralism for Biblical faith. Pietism has also undermined Protestantism and Roman Catholicism in favor of an ultra-individualistic faith. Its early center in Germany was the University of Halle, which very early became a center for modernism. And why not? Very early, when I was young, I heard of an old-fashioned pastor who could not find a pulpit because he disagreed with the Eighteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (Prohibition). His total faithfulness to the Word of God meant nothing as compared to his unwillingness to shift the responsibility in drinking from the individual and his temperance to the state and its punishment. Pietism has strengthened both modernism and statism (as Pinson's research has shown). It has become a doctrine of retreat from the Reformation.

179

THE CARTESIAN HERESY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 110, June 1989

We are routinely influenced by men whose names we may not know but whose ideas are the axioms of almost all men. The key figure in the modern age in this respect has been René Descartes. The starting point of philosophy in the modern era has been Descartes' *Cogito, ergo sum*, "I think, therefore I am." The autonomous human consciousness and mind were his starting point, and, with this existential premise, Descartes reasoned out to substantiate or prove the existence of the physical world and of God. For Descartes, man's mind or soul was locked up inside one of man's glands and therefore received all knowledge through the senses — secondhand.

Bishop Berkeley applied Occam's razor to Descartes and discarded the physical world: all that a man has are sense impressions of such a world, sent by God. Hume was more logical: we could not know nor demonstrate the reality of either God or the physical universe. All we have is the mind of autonomous man and his impressions. All this made sense, remember, on the premise that man's mind is distinct from his physical being and has only secondhand sense impressions in his mind.

Immanuel Kant resolved this crisis by saying that knowledge is not the congruity of our mind with objects outside of us. Rather, "We must make trial whether we may not have more success in the task of metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge" (Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, "Preface to the Second Edition" [n.p.: 1787], B-xvi). Among the many who saw some of the implications of this was Karl Marx. In his "Theses on Feuerbach," he wrote, "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways: the point, however, is to *change* it." Hegel had said, "The rational is the real," and now Marx and others were determined to make reality become what their mind

conceived to be rational. Sartre and others limited reality also to the autonomous and existential consciousness of the human mind. Instead of being one aspect of reality, man's mind had become reality.

The result is a blindness especially marked in modern man, a refusal to recognize as real whatever is objectionable to one's mind. David Klinghoffer, in "AIDS and 'Just Another Word,'" in the *Wall Street Journal* (January 20, 1989, p. A-17), wrote, "Miss (Susan) Sontag wants to do to AIDS what her admirers in the semiotics department have done to literature, namely, bleed all the meaning out of it."

Reality has become what the self-consciously would-be autonomous minds of scientists and intellectuals will it to be. A recent book by a scientist is emphatic on this point: Bruce Gregory's *Inventing Reality: Physics as Language* (1988). Physics, we are told, is simply a language. It does not give us facts about reality because physics as a language is reality. "There seems to be no already-made world, waiting to be discovered. The fabric of nature, like all fabrics, is woven by human beings for human purposes" (p. 186). Gregory, associate director of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, cites with approval Albert Einstein's comment when someone asked how he would have felt if observations failed to confirm his theory. Einstein answered, "Then I should have felt sorry for the dear Lord — the theory is correct" (p. 10). Einstein also said, "Physical concepts are free creations of the human mind, and are not, however it may seem, uniquely determined by the external world" (p. 189).

There is much more in this vein in Gregory's book. Our concern is to call attention to the fact that this same Cartesian reduction of reality to man's autonomous mind and its sense impressions and ideas also marks theology.

In theology, the Cartesian perspective replaces the Biblical history with ideas. These ideas are called "myths" and "symbols." Because myths and symbols are mental constructs, they are more real, for these thinkers, than are the God-given facts. Like Einstein, if their symbols disagree with God's revealed Word, so much the worse for God!

The liturgy of the church until recently had ancient roots in the Old Testament and in the early church. Now, the old meanings of the various liturgical practices are being replaced with man-made or man-ordained meanings. The reality of the crucifixion and the atonement is replaced by the symbols of the communion. *The historical meaning is replaced by the primacy of the symbol.*

Because these theologians, in speaking to "ordinary" believers, do not try to distress the faithful by denying the reality of the historical, the people do not see what has happened to the historic faith.

Karl Barth was insistent on the centrality of the Virgin Birth to the faith, but he denied that it was an actual historical event. Reinhold Niebuhr said that the resurrection was at the heart of Christianity, but not as something that occurred in the physical world in Jerusalem.

An emphasis on symbolism and the symbols of the faith in this Cartesian sense is now pervasive in all circles: Greek Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant, Fundamentalist and Modernist, Calvinist and Arminian. In one sphere after another, symbols have replaced reality and become the new reality.

Some years ago, an image of pathos and humor was the madman who believed he was Napoleon; what his mind decreed that he was became for him "reality." What in such a person was seen as insanity is now good philosophy! The world of Descartes now holds, in economics, politics, education, theology, and elsewhere, that the rational is the real, that which man's mind decrees to be the valid symbols becomes thereby reality.

The roots of this are in Genesis 3:5 — man's will to be his own god, knowing or determining for himself what constitutes good and evil, reality and nonreality.

Real is a word coming from the Latin *realis*, of the thing itself. The concept once presupposed reality to be something above and beyond man. The supreme and uncreated reality is the triune God; the universe of created things is a subsistent reality (i.e., a reality which subsists or stands under God).

Because of Descartes' presupposition and its effect on modern thought, reality now has either an existential meaning or a pragmatic one. We are told that, for pragmatism, truth or reality is what works; this should be qualified to read, it is what works for me. The ultimate criterion for Cartesianism is the autonomous mind of man.

At one time, the test of reality, truth, and authenticity was, "What say the Scholastics?" or "What are the scientific facts?" or "What says the Bible?" Now, people respond, in any argument, with, "Well, I think," or, "In my opinion," or, "I feel." Every man has become his own version of reality, and he is the test and the standard of all things.

In recent years, some academicians have declared that we are now in a postmodern era. These same people are often advocates of deconstructionist thinking. In either case, their basic position is to demolish the validity of all reality outside the mind of man. They are simply radical and abject followers of the Cartesian model.

The dualism inherent in Descartes is not Biblical. In Scripture, the mind of man, or his soul, is not a something cooped up in a gland, or

anywhere else. Man was created by God "a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). He is fully mind and body, not a half-and-half product!

Descartes made man's central problem to be one of knowledge; the Bible disagrees: man's problem is primarily and essentially sin. As long as man evades his true problem, his sins will increase, and his knowledge will be blighted.

The word *heresy* means a taking for oneself, i.e., determining for oneself what to believe and accept instead of assenting to what God sets forth in His Word. Cartesianism exalts precisely this temper into a philosophy, the mind of man as the determiner of truth and reality.

At present, state schools in the United States boast of teaching values, but the values they teach are self-determined or Cartesian values. The student is taught that it is his choice, that values are to be chosen in terms of one's needs and goals. This is why our humanistic world order is in trouble and is under judgment.

Cartesian self-indulgence is also apparent in churches when people demand that the preaching please them, make them feel good, concentrate on what interests them, and so on. The emphasis is on what the people want, not what God ordains.

The world of Descartes is a dying world, and a mad world. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord" (2 Cor. 6:17).

Walt Whitman said, "Man . . . must become a law . . . unto himself." Ralph Waldo Emerson declared, "Build, therefore, your own world." The result is a nightmare world. To separate ourselves from this mad world of dreams and symbols is an act of sanity and faith.

180

QUIETISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 188, April 1995

REPEATEDLY in the history of Christianity, heresies have become so deeply embedded in the church that orthodoxy has been routinely seen as wrong, sterile, and divisive. The enthusiastic adherents to the new heresy see their position as a higher and more pure spirituality.

One such heresy is *Quietism*. Its original name is not well known now, because it has been so much a part of popular faith. Quietism has some kinship with Pietism, which arose in German Lutheranism, whereas Quietism's origin was in Roman Catholicism, with Miguel de Molinos, Madame Guyon, and others. Quietism was condemned by the church in 1685, but it remained as an underground form of piety, and it seeped into Protestantism. In this century, evangelical bookstores have often carried books on Madame Guyon. Quietism was charged with antinomianism, but its actual position was closer to a radical indifferentism to the problems of this world. It did not deny the law of God as much as claim to rise above material concerns.

The basic premise of Quietism was and is its radical stress on "heart" religion, and a contrast between "head" religion and "heart" religion. This usage has its origin in pagan Greek thought; *kardia* there meant the intellectual *and* emotional center of man in its *metaphorical sense,* but, this union of the "mind" and the "heart" came with Homer. Greek thought had a potentially metaphysical division; its perspective was dualistic and tripartite.

In the Old Testament, the heart is the center of man's spiritual and intellectual life. Moreover, because the Bible sees man, not in a dualistic or tripartite way, mind and body were not divided. The heart is the center of man's being (1 Kings 3:12; 4:29; etc.). The New Testament sees the heart in the same way as the Old. Heart and mind are identical in the

New Testament, as in 2 Corinthians 3:14–15 (see T. Sorg, "Heart," in Colin Brown, gen. ed., *The International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 2 [1967–1971], pp. 180–184).

The separation of heart from mind thus was a return to an earlier Greek view and was anti-Biblical.

But this was not all. Quietism redefined the Biblical word translated as flesh to mean the physical body. Moreover, it was implicitly Manichaean. The flesh was now *the body*, and it was Satan's chosen realm (Fernando Cervantes, *The Devil in the New World* [1994], p. 111). In Homer, *flesh* meant the meat of the body but not the bones. Greek thinkers saw the soul of man as in some measure divine and therefore good, whereas the body (*sarx*) was lustful and given to lawless appetites. (To become "pure," one Hellenic thinker in the early church, later condemned for some of his false beliefs, castrated himself; he soon found that his *mind* was lustful.)

In the Old Testament, *flesh* refers to man as a whole, a created thing. Flesh meant also *transitory*, as in Isaiah 40:6, 8: "All flesh is grass . . ." In the New Testament, *flesh* is used in several senses. Among the more relevant ones, *sarx* can mean the body; it can also mean relationships; kinship; human nature ("according to the flesh"), so that we are told to live no longer in terms of our old Adamic heart or nature, as in Romans 7:5; ancestry, as in Hebrews 7:16, translated as *carnal* but meaning, "but not after a law or *genetic* (or human) commandment" (or, inheritance); a community of life ("they twain shall be one *flesh*," Matt. 19:5); and so on. To reduce *flesh* to a purely physical meaning falsifies many a text.

Quietism, here as elsewhere, by reducing *flesh* to mean body has given a false and dualistic meaning to the Scripture. The Bible speaks, not of any metaphysical conflict in man but a moral battle between good and evil. Sin is in the total man, as is grace and redemption also. Man is not sinless this side of heaven, and, although the redeemed man is subject to sickness and death, he is here and now the heir to the eternal life, and the resurrection of the body completes his salvation.

Quietism does not require a Christology, because it is implicitly open to Hindu, Sufi, and other manifestations. It calls for a "resignation of self" to the divine and a merging with the deity in an essential union. It is implicitly pantheistic. It is also perfectionistic. Prayer is really quietude, not thinking; it is to be self-annihilation and a merging with the divine, without self-consciousness, wishes, or hopes. Quietism regards the physical world as unimportant, and it surrenders history as an irrelevant sphere.

This surrender of the world has become basic to Quietism, and its

adherents regard politics as "a dirty business" to be avoided. Quietists commonly will not vote, let alone hold office or concern themselves with reforms. Its goal is to abstract itself from the world and to become purely "spiritual." Quietism equates spirituality with virtue, forgetting that Satan and his hosts are purely spiritual beings. When Quietism arises in a country, the life of that country is handed over to evil forces because the Quietists refuse to become involved in problems. They will neither fight, nor financially aid deserving groups because they are too "spiritual."

John McClintock and James Strong, in their *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* (vol. 8 [1879], p. 846), summed it up ably: "Quietism becomes mental sleep." Exactly. This is why Christians, who once dominated life and culture, have become irrelevant. In the process, they have ceased to be Christians. The idea of an impotent Christianity is a contradiction in terms. Quietism is implicitly another religion, an Eastern cult that has supplanted Christianity in too many churches. It is another religion, and yet it insists that it is the true faith, "spiritual" Christianity. It is antinomian to the core and has no use for Biblical law, *God's law*, because it sees itself on a higher plane. It is so self-blinded that it sees irrelevance as a virtue. Quietism professes to exalt prayer to a place of centrality, when in reality it trivializes prayer into a man-centered practice of self-improvement and self-exaltation. In true prayer, the servants, soldiers, and family of the Lord seek and gain marching orders from their king, rest and refreshment, and their needs are met and their lives empowered. Quietism surrenders the Christian calling for the delusion of bliss.

THE GREAT FEAR AND THE GREAT FAITH

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 24, September 1981

Otto J. Scott, in *Robespierre: The Voice of Virtue,* calls attention to an all-important phenomenon of the French Revolution, the *Great Fear.* At a certain point, as corrosion began to destroy all forms of social order, wild rumors circulated through all of France. Fears of invasion, of disintegration, and chaos "destroyed the sense of stability and security essential to civilized patterns and orderly ways." Evil seemed to have become incarnate and dominant over history. "There was a general, unexpressed sense that a true diabolism had appeared, an evil that sent a shudder through the land. Men who had long forgotten God began to believe the Devil was real" (pp. 69–70).

The Bastille fell on July 14, 1789; for the rest of that summer, the French people also fell, in their case into the Great Fear, *La Grande Peur.* None of the fears were true, but their content, Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy pointed out, was not the significant fact: "it was this complete paralysis of will and reason, the deep insight that one was no longer safe on land" (*Out of Revolution*, p. 131; Argo Books). It was the sign of disintegration: evil and madness took over, because there was despair concerning any good. France went into the Reign of Terror subsequently, but the terror first began in men's minds with the Great Fear.

According to Rosenstock-Huessy, every revolution begins with a Great Fear; it appeared before the Peasants' Revolt of Luther's day, and it again appeared in Germany in the year 1930, preceding Hitler. Frederick II in 1227 described the Great Fear in his day; so intense was it that he said "the power of love itself, by which heaven and earth are governed, seems now to be troubled, not in its later flowing, but at the very *source*."

The Great Fear marks first the breakup of man's inner being. His way of life is shattered. Man in such eras and now live on borrowed capital,

on the inheritance of the past. They assume old religious standards and values without really believing in them. The old faith of society declines from a religious imperative to a convention and an accepted custom. Then the surface begins to crack, and men are suddenly without the religious resources for crisis. They become fearful and guilt-ridden, and they start at shadows.

The inner breakup precedes the outer breakup. The collapse begins in man's soul and rapidly extends into his society, which begins to disintegrate and go up in flames. Indeed, the flames of destruction become then the only active and potent social force.

In Britain's 1981 summer riots, the rock music groups had a major part in preparing the youth for the enactment of destruction and breakup. Significantly, Johnny Rotten of the Sex Pistols has summed up the "hard rock" view on life: "We are the future: no future" (Christopher Makos, *White Trash*, 1977). Modern youth culture, with its love of rock music and drugs, is determined that there be no future.

The older generation sees this with horror and without faith. The war against the establishment is more than that: it is a war against yesterday, today, and tomorrow, against past, present, and future. Youth sings of belonging "to the blank generation," to a world without meaning or direction.

The Bible also speaks of the end and of the results of the Great Fear: it is death (Prov. 8:36). Our Lord declares that the times shall come when men shall say to the mountains, "Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us," (Luke 23:30), as they seek vainly to escape God's judgment. In Revelation 6:16, we are again given the cry of men in the grips of the Great Fear; they say to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Again, in Revelation 9:6, we read, "And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them."

The Great Fear begins, as Rosenstock-Huessy saw, in the conscience of man. It is a religious fact, and it is a manifestation of man's spiritual state. As our Lord said, "Men's hearts failing them for fear" (Luke 21:26).

There is reason enough for that fear. By their unbelief, men have destroyed the foundations of social order. Their world is crumbling because its moral base is gone; to admit this fully means to repent and to turn to the Lord, which men will not do. As a result, they seek to provide a political, economic, or military justification for their fears. It is usually true that the political scene is an evil one, the economic sphere a decaying one, and the military situation deplorable. To stress these factors can mean covering up the religious breakup behind them. Evading this religious

issue, the collapse of man's faith for living, leads to quackery: easy solutions which deal with the surface sores of the deeply-rooted cancer, or, very popular today, how to profit from world disaster. (Quick! Invest in coffins and cemetery lots! There is a lot of death ahead, and big profits in death-related industries!)

The Great Fear is creeping upon us, and it is in evidence in embryo form on all sides. Occultism and an interest in the demonic are precursors of it. So too, and especially so, is unbelief, and lukewarm religion. The Great Fear means a wild and irrational proneness to believe in anything. This is common to a rationalistic and irreligious age. When men believe nothing they are then most susceptible to believe anything and everything. To believe in God and His infallible Word is to limit all possibilities and beliefs in terms of God and His Word. If we believe in a world of chance, then we believe in a world of total irrationality and in every kind of irrational possibility. The triumph of humanism, science, and anti-God thinking has always marked the rise of superstition and illogical beliefs. In Greece, Rome, the late "Middle Ages," and now, this is true. If God's predestined and absolute order is denied, then man can only believe in a radically irrational and illogical world in which anything goes, except God's order. And man, when he sees himself as a chance product of a blind world of chance occurrences, is on the verge of the Great Fear.

We are on the verge of another and the most extensive Great Fear in history. The corrosive forces of humanism are worldwide in their influence.

The only thing that can counteract and overcome the deadly personal and social effects of the Great Fear is the Great Faith. Faith today has been reduced to easy believism, to a mere assent to doctrine, and to a verbal profession. In fact, one church today is, as it has been for several years, hounding an able theologian whose only offense is to agree with Scripture that, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:17). And why not? Let such a text and position stand, and churchmen might be expected to manifest their Christianity in action!

The Great Faith manifests the power of God in history (John 1:12). It declares, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4). The Great Faith declares, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31). "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Rom. 8:37). The Great Faith is not shopping for Rapture robes but putting on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:10–18).

The Great Fear is preceded, not only by the general meaninglessness of life, but also by escapism. This takes various forms. Certainly alcoholism

and drugs are obvious forms of this escapism which is the forerunner and accompaniment of the end. The end of any age is the death of the faith of that age, and, without faith, man cannot live in either poverty or luxury. The emptiness of life overwhelms him wherever he is and whatever his station.

Empty man tries to find meaning in empty goals and short-term interests. A few years back, a slightly drunk man approached me to unload his random thoughts. (I later learned that he was a man of some means, with a beautiful home in the hills, an alcoholic, and a homosexual.) Life in Berkeley, California (his home), was incredibly dull, he said, enough to drive one to suicide. The only thing that made life bearable for him was the realization that, when things were impossible, he could escape to San Francisco for the weekend. I suggested, then why not move to San Francisco? He looked at me as though I were an idiot and said, before moving on, if I lived in San Francisco, when I got bored, I would have no place fit to go to, and no choice but to commit suicide. Life for him meant having a small goal ahead and no more. But limited and petty goals grow empty also, when man is empty and his world dead of all meaning. This is the prelude to the Great Fear.

It has been said, with some evidence, that the Great Fear was created by conspiracy. Adrien Duport of the Club Breton devised the scheme to demoralize France. Rumors were started all over France to announce the approach of Austrians and English to massacre the people. The result was the breakdown of law and order. The point, however, is that people were ready to believe in anything. There was no hard common sense, not any strong faith, by means of which data could be assessed. One of the most obvious facts of the French Revolution was the sorry performance of the clergy, Catholic and Protestant (Huguenot). Both groups were heavily influenced by the modernism of the day, or too wrapped up in pietism, to be relevant. There was no backbone of faith to resist anarchy. Had Adrien Duport never existed, the Great Fear would have still occurred: it was the product of the breakup of the inner man; his world was collapsing, and he too had collapsed.

Earlier, I cited the words of Johnny Rotten of the Sex Pistols: "We are the future: no future." Rock music openly declares the death of all meaning: it celebrates death, contempt for purposes, and a resolute refusal to be other than suicidal. The war against life and meaning began with the sexual revolution, or, rather, came out into the open then. Henry Miller set the tone in *Tropic of Cancer* when he declared his book to be "a prolonged insult, a gob of spit in the face of Art, a kick in the pants to God, Man, Destiny, Time, Love, Beauty . . . what you will." With the Marquis

de Sade, the modern age says, not, "Let there be light," but, "Let there be universal and cosmic darkness." Now the age has nothing left ahead of itself except the Great Fear. The popular culture around us is empty and suicidal. It is geared to the existentialist moment, because, for all the modern minds, nothing else is real. Man, said Jean-Paul Sartre, is a futile passion, and he well described the existentialist mind. Modern youth is passionate, and it is also futile; its passion is death-oriented; towards life and work, its reaction is one of boredom and retreat.

It is an interesting and revealing fact that in England, Oliver Cromwell and the Puritans are in disrepute. Cromwell's regime, whatever its faults, was England's last experience with a commanding Great Faith. One thing has since been clear: England has been more ready to honor the likes of the Beatles than Oliver Cromwell. As a result, the land of Cromwell is a very central part of the worldwide breakup of the inner man and the outer society.

The Great Faith must be Biblical. It must know and apply God's law-word to the totality of life and thought. God is Lord, not only over the church and man's soul, but over all of life. If He has no word for education, politics, the arts and sciences, and all things else, then He is not God but one of the many limited and local spirits called gods by the pagans of old.

The Bible speaks to all of life. The premise of Scripture and God's law is that "The earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1). As Creator of all, the Lord God is the Ruler of all, and His Word speaks to all things.

The Great Faith lives by the every Word of God (Matt. 4:4), and it applies God's total Word to all of life.

The Image of God in Man (September 1981)

The Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 10, asks, "How did God create man?" and answers, "God created man male and female, after His own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures" (Gen. 1:27–28; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10).

Centuries earlier, the Jewish commentator, Joseph Kimhi (1105–1170), had written: "Image is dominion and likeness is rulership, not a physical image." This interpretation goes back at least to Saadia Gaon's translation of the Torah and is the ancient understanding of the meaning of the image of God.

Fallen man, of course, seeks an ungodly dominion and rule, one in defiance of God and His law. However, the obvious implication of

regeneration is that the man in Christ is renewed in godly dominion and into rule under God. For him to fail to exercise such dominion is a sin.

The ancient interpretation of the creation of man is that Genesis 1:26 says, "And God said, Let us make man in our image (i.e., dominion), after our likeness (rulership): and let them have dominion." Dominion is thus a requirement God makes of us in our very creation. In our regeneration, this requirement is again in force. Just as the judgment of God fell on Adam for a false concept of dominion, so it will fall on us if we deny the dominion mandate.

Our Lord requires it in the Great Commission: we must disciple all nations, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." In this task, we serve the Lord to whom "all power is given . . . in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18–20).

We cannot reject dominion and rule without rejecting our Lord's calling.

182

THE HERESY OF THEOSIS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 163, May 1993

In recent years, there have been defections from the ranks of charismatics, Arminian fundamentalists, Calvinists, and Roman Catholics into Eastern Orthodox churches. Some Orthodox thinkers, such as Alexander Schmemann, have had a major following in various circles. Some of the defectors have gone into Eastern Orthodoxy with full knowledge of what it means; others have been ignorant of the meaning of what they have adopted.

Eastern Orthodoxy has in some areas had a notable history, but it has also had latent, and then increasingly vocal and explicit, a doctrine of salvation as deification, man becoming god.

The roots of this heresy, *theosis*, are in an implicit pantheism, a concept of the continuity of being between God and man. In the fourteenth century, the monks of Athos claimed to have realized, in moments of ecstasy, the divine glory, the uncreated essence of God. They did this by fasting plus concentration on their navel. Barlaam challenged this as ungodly and heretical, but a Synod condemned Barlaam and his party as heretics instead. To this day, on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the Greek Church anathematizes Barlaam as a heretic.

In more recent years, the doctrine of *theosis* has been developed. One version of it, that of V. S. Soloviev, has met with disfavor, partly perhaps because Soloviev supported the union of Orthodoxy with Rome. Soloviev also held to the deity of man's soul prior to its "incarnation" in Adam. Orthodox theologians like the Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky sharply disagreed with Soloviev. This did not prevent Pomazansky from formulating a doctrine of *theosis*, or salvation as deification, although insisting that our deification is the completion of grace.

Others, like Constantine Cavarnos, held that *theosis*, "deification,

. . . is the final end for which man was created" (*Orthodox Iconography*, p. 45).

Cavarnos, like Pomazansky, saw it as the union with God through grace. Icons have their place in promoting theosis.

Panayiotis Nellas, in *Deification in Christ*, expanded the doctrine of *theosis* at some length. Man for him is "a deified animal." Moreover, "he is 'called to be a god'" (p. 15). For this reason, man is, like God, "incomprehensible" (p. 22). The *divine* is a part of man's nature (p. 30). God has chosen to bridge the "absolute and essential" gulf between the created and the uncreated in man (p. 31). "Life in Christ" means deification, *theosis* (p. 39).

Nellas chose to follow Gregory of Nyssa, a Neoplatonic church "father" who regarded the letter of Scripture as unworthy of an intelligent man's attention. For him, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy were symbolic books, never to be taken literally. Gregory of Nyssa was an example of theological pathology rather than wisdom.

Such thinking in Eastern Orthodoxy has led to an emphasis on *mystery* rather than on *understanding*. The center of emphasis in Western Christianity, while varying from church to church, has been on the proclamation of the Word of God, on preaching. Preaching was very important in the more vital eras of the medieval church. Protestantism, especially the Calvinists, gave it an emphasis not unlike the early church.

Now, the appeal of this doctrine of *theosis* to the Western churchmen is a recent fact. One man, among the earliest to join with his friends in an Eastern rite, was ignorant of *theosis* at the time. He quickly found it to be a source of vanity among his fellow priests to his dismay, and he left.

A century and a half ago, another Eastern doctrine moved west, *kenosis*. *Kenosis* holds that Christ emptied Himself of His divine powers in His incarnation. *Kenosis* is a word coming from the Greek and means emptying, or self-divestiture. The emphasis in kenotic thinking is not on Christ as Lord, Christ as King, but on Christ as the totally humiliated and helpless one.

As *kenosis* became a Western doctrine, it led in non-ecclesiastical as well as ecclesiastical thinking to a pacifistic mentality, to an emphasis on surrender as moral. Kenotic thinking began to dominate Christians and non-Christians in the West. The world-conquering Western powers became the world-surrendering nations. Few doctrines have been more devastating than this, and yet less studied. *Kenosis* has become the religion of the West.

On the one hand, Eastern Orthodoxy held to *kenosis*, a doctrine which in effect glorified Christ as the great victim, whom we are to imitate by

becoming victims for Christ, and, on the other, it has taught *theosis*, the divinization of man. Man has been exalted, Christ debased, and both emphases have been false and evil.

We have thus a false gospel of victimhood as both salvation and deification.

The *kenosis* and *theosis* thinking appeals greatly to the masochists in our midst, who are many. Such people feel themselves to be superior to us insensitive clods who want *understanding* when we go to church rather than *mystery*. These champions of the higher pomposity are full of contempt for the simple believers who accept God's Word as God's Word, and who do not see the church as a theotic, a God-making, entity.

The father of the school of *theosis* was Gregory of Nyssa. Gregory, in his *Life of Moses* (ca. A.D. 390), did not see the problem of man as the struggle between good and evil, between sin and salvation by God's grace, but as a struggle between being and nonbeing (p. 60). This is Greek, not Biblical, thinking. It posits God as true being, and all things else as "thin" in being, struggling to achieve being rather than falling into non-being. Such thinking is not Biblical; it is pagan to the core. As Abraham J. Malherbe and Everett Ferguson wrote, in their introduction to Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Moses*, Gregory taught "universal salvation." "The *apokatastasis*, or the return of all things to God, is clearly taught in this treatise" (p. 18).

There is a very great hunger for heresy in our time. How else can we account for all the happy men prancing over such evil doctrines? How else can we explain the defection of otherwise intelligent men into the circles of *theosis*?

In one sphere after another, the "gospel" of fools has the greatest appeal. Men love a lie, and they hate the truth.

Nellas, whose *Deification in Christ* owes much to Gregory of Nyssa, quotes at length from Gregory's *On Virginity*, which holds that "the last stage in our separation from the life of paradise was marriage; our argument suggests to those who wish to be released and to join Christ that they should abandon marriage first, since it is, as it were, their last lodging place. Then they should withdraw from anxious toil in cultivating the land, to which man was subjected after sinning." Gregory of Nyssa went on to summon one and all to abandon everything "worldly," apparently regarding virginity and monasticism as the only valid way of life. Asceticism was Gregory's true philosophy of life. As John Meyendorff wrote, in the preface to *The Life of Moses*, Gregory of Nyssa, in the Greek philosophical tradition, was "open to a syncretistic absorption of oriental religions, but not to the absolute claims of the Mosaic or Christian faiths"

(p. xii). Gregory of Nyssa did not try to make the Bible understandable to Christians, but palatable to educated non-Christian Greeks.

The appeal is still there to like-minded men, and it is still a call to a failure. The defections to the siren call of *theosis* are cleansing Western churches of knaves. Will God have mercy on those who knowingly lead the unknowing into such heresies? For His judgment against them is plain enough: "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matt. 18:6).

183

KENOSIS: THE GREAT MODERN HERESY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 45, December 1983

The doctrine of kenosis is something rarely mentioned in our time, but its evil influence is overwhelmingly pervasive in this century. The doctrine has deep roots in Eastern Orthodox churches, especially Russian. In the nineteenth century, it became influential in Lutheranism through the writings of Sartorius (1832, 1834), of König (1844), and of Thomasius (1845). It then moved into English and American theological thought. Its supposed foundation is in Philippians 2:6–8, where Paul speaks of Christ's great step from the Godhead into the incarnation. This the kenotic thinkers interpreted to mean that Christ emptied Himself of all power and thereby set a pattern for self-abasement by all His followers.

Nadejda Gorodetzky, in *The Humiliated Christ in Modern Russian Thought* (1938), wrote of the "Kenotic mind, mood, or character" of Russian religion and its emphasis on self-abasement, poverty, nonresistance and the submissive acceptance of suffering and death. Gorodetzky commented, "It even seems to us that the main importance of Russian 'kenoticism' lies precisely in the fact that there was no 'doctrine' about it." It had become the true way of piety and life. The life of the redeemed, according to this belief, is one of self-humiliation and self-abasement. The goal is a world without rich men, superiors, or success. The ideal of the medieval begging friars is held out as the goal of all true Christianity. Only of those who are "abandoned by all in poverty and sickness" can it be said that "they alone are sons of Christ and have full right to beg in His almighty name."

As in pre-Marxist Russia, so today in Western Europe and the United States the doctrine of kenosis is no longer a formal doctrine but is equated with the Christian life. The popular assumption is that a Christian should be, as one unbeliever summed it up, "the All-American patsy,"

sucker, or victim. Some years ago, a woman whose life had been dedicated to destroying people, first as a beauty and then as a manipulator, turned on me when I blocked her evil ways, declaring I was obviously not a Christian. Why? Because "[a] Christian is someone who never hurts anyone's feelings." The Christian is expected to be the victim, the ready pacifist in every situation who believes in peace at any price.

This doctrine has penetrated far and wide and has become a part of Western culture, Christian and non-Christian. Its tenets are basic to the so-called peace movement, and they undergird the thinking of R. J. Sider and others like him. The Russian doctrine of Kenosis, as it moved westward, found a congenial soil in Western Protestant and Catholic pietism. Certainly John Wesley, especially in his marital life, displayed the symptoms of kenotic surrender and self-abasement.

The direction of this way of life revealed itself all too clearly in some of the Russian mystical and heretical sects such as the Khlysty and the Skoptsy. The Skoptsy carried the required self-humiliation to the point of castration. Moreover, just as the Sicarii of ancient Judea, if anyone expressed interest in their beliefs, would kidnap him and forcibly circumcise him, so the Skoptsy would kidnap and perform more radical surgery on anyone who appeared friendly, and sometimes on others as well (Frederick C. Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters* [1921], p. 369).

These extreme cases serve as an indicator of the direction of kenotic thinking: it is suicidal. Whereas Christ identifies Himself as "life" (John 14:6), and declares, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10), kenosis offers a retreat from life which is implicitly suicide.

Given the saturation of the Western world by kenotic thought, it should not surprise us that we have today the politics and economics of suicide. Vast sums of money are appropriated by the United States, and loaned by U.S. and European banks to "Third World" countries. These funds do not reach the peoples; they prop up corrupt and evil regimes. They hinder growth and production in those countries, and these funds are creating a worldwide inflation which is destroying economics, money, men, and nations. The press gives us many reports of this worldwide crisis. The result? Suicide! This is the prescription of the sons of kenosis.

Whether in the sphere of economics, politics, international conflicts, or more, this suicidal faith is undergirded by popular religion. Many atheists, modernists, and fundamentalists may disagree extensively on a wide variety of ideas and issues, but they are agreed on one essential point, the need for self-abasement, nonresistance, poverty, and the acceptance of suffering and death.

Indeed, much pastoral counselling of troubled and afflicted people is kenotic. Its one "wisdom" is submission to evil. Is your husband beating you, or is he guilty of incest? Is your wife or husband flagrantly unfaithful? "Your problem is your anger or grief over this. Go back and be more loving and submissive." So runs the counsel of defeat, of surrender to evil.

Suicide is, after all, a form of surrender, and surrender has been ennobled by kenotic thought into a higher way of life. The "real" Christian is someone who lies down to be walked over; the "real" liberal is someone whose trumpet always sounds retreat.

Leo Tolstoy, a great exponent of the kenotic way of life, had a major convert in Gandhi. Gandhi found the doctrine an admirable way of playing on the weakness of the West. He shed his top hat and suit for a loin cloth and pacifism to shame Western liberals with their own tacit religion. It should be remembered, however, that Gandhi also said, "Where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence" (cited by Arthur Waskow, *The Freedom Seder* [1969], p. 52).

Western civilization has so deeply identified itself with kenosis as a way of life that it gives aid, technology, and food to nations bent on its destruction, and does so with a glow of virtue. It rejoices at every opportunity for preparing its own funeral!

The great Russian novelist of the last century, Turgenev, in his *Poems in Prose*, described his stop in a humble village church. Although not a believer, he spoke of having a "vision" of Christ, and Christ looked like a peasant and had "a face like that of all others." The apostle John, however, tells us that, when he saw in vision the ascended Christ, in awe he "fell at his feet as dead" (Rev. 1:17). He was not looking at an ordinary peasant face! It is, however, customary now to portray Christ as a very ordinary person, somewhat more effeminate than most men. All this is forgetting that He is very God of very God; the visual depictions of Christ have for some generations been kenotic. He is not shown as the Lord of Glory but as a plaintive beseecher who wants us to love Him.

The "ideal" kenotic Christian life was sought by St. Tikhon, bishop of Voronezh (Timofey S. Sokolov, 1724–1783, canonized in 1861). St. Tikhon represented the ideal which Dostoyevsky tried to portray in his novels, and Dostoyevsky was not alone among Russian writers in his admiration of St. Tikhon. That Tikhon was concerned with the plight of the poor, sold the silk, velvet, and furs belonging to him as a bishop to give to the poor, lived very, very simply and helped generously, indeed marked him as a Christian man of grace and charity. But St. Tikhon went further. In an argument with a landlord, the landlord, in place of any good response, struck St. Tikhon on the face. Bishop Tikhon fell on his knees, prostrated

himself before the landlord, and asked his pardon for having induced him into temptation! (Gorodetzky, p. 102). Such behavior, in a kenotic culture, gains great admiration; however, it does not change men nor abolish slums.

Moreover, St. Tikhon said, "Christ is begging through the poor" (p. 105). This is a common identification in contemporary liberation theology. *The Body of Christ is identified with the poor, not with the faithful.* The result is a profoundly false distortion of Christianity. That Scripture requires us to be mindful of the poor is very clear; that God regards widows and orphans, and uses our treatment of them as a barometer, is obvious. That Christ in the parable of judgment (Matt. 25:31–46) identifies Himself with His poor, imprisoned, and needy members is most emphatically true, but He does not say that he identifies Himself with poverty as such, or with the poor as such, nor with a masochistic self-abasement.

In approaching men and nations, the spirit of kenotic faith has certain emphases. *First*, there must be a self-abasement. As with St. Tikhon and the landlord, we must see ourselves as in the wrong, and the other person as right. There is a pharisaical pride and virtue in self-abasement. Thus, we and our nation must always be seen as the offenders.

Second, this kenotic submissiveness to evil requires us to downgrade the sins of men and nations. As the Russian leader "Father John" (John Iliytch Sergieff, the predecessor to Rasputin in the Russian court) said, "Love every man in spite of his falling into sin. Never mind the sins . . ." (John Iliytch Sergieff, *My Life in Christ* [1897], p. 95). Or, as a pastor said to a wife whose husband was, to cite his lesser sin, flagrantly adulterous, "Never mind your husband's sins. Let's concentrate on your duty to love him and to be submissive." Neither should we concentrate on or discuss the sins of Soviet Russia; we should only concern ourselves with our own sins. Kenotic submissiveness requires a self-blinding to reality.

Third, again to cite Father John, "Never mind the sins, but remember that the foundation of the man is the same — the image of God" (ibid.). A common humanity is to be stressed, not the fact of sin, nor how to deal with the problems it creates. However, when men obscure the sin, they also obscure the answer. It is sin which is the barrier between men and God, and between men and men. Kenosis depreciates everything it touches, as do all false doctrines.

Moreover, kenosis creates a false antithesis. Every erroneous faith presents men with a false antithesis. We have seen Gandhi's view of the antithesis, cowardice versus violence. The problem is that each produces the other. Moreover, the antithesis to cowardice is courage, not violence! It is a strange mind that sees it as violence, but it is a mind too much in evidence today.

The kenotic advocates of a nuclear freeze and unilateral disarmament present us also with a false antithesis; on the one hand is peace, seen as pacifism and surrender, and, on the other, world destruction. A false antithesis is one which creates false alternatives in order to compel us to choose a preordained course. Such an antithesis fails to note that a large variety of options exist between surrender and world destruction. To see the options as only, "Better Red than Dead," or "Better Dead than Red," is an insanity, and a common one.

Kenosis involves a radical and childish solution to the problems of life. Instead of faith, the works of faith, patience, a slow development over the generations, and the use of as many instruments as possible to solve man's problems, kenosis wants an instant solution by means of surrender, defeat, abasement, and self-inflicted poverty. Faith and work are replaced by dramatic gestures and postures, and intelligence is supplanted by picket slogans.

As the doctrine of kenosis came westward, it merged commonly with Protestant and Catholic pietism. These had prepared the way for kenosis with their emphasis on a mindless religion. In France, Madame Guyon (1648–1717) had been a major source of Quietism. She believed that the essence of true faith is an act of resignation and submission to God in which the believer is without words, without actions, and without any will of his own, and then thereby without sin. The role of such thinking in preparing the way for the French Revolution deserves exploring. An atmosphere of surrender and submission was created precisely in those circles where a strong moral will and resistance were most needed. Certainly, Louis XVI was amazingly derelict in manifesting a stance of unresisting submission to the progressive demolition of France.

Kenosis, as we have seen, is a way of life common to churchmen and to unbelievers, and it is common to a variety of religions in the modern world. Its advocates take various Bible verses out of context to justify their position, but they are substantially and essentially at odds with Scripture. Kenosis has so thoroughly permeated our time that it has ceased to exist as a known doctrine. It is now a part of the intellectual air which all men breathe. That air, however, is deadly, because the kenotic mind-set is suicidal. The kenotic plan of salvation by works of kenosis is a way of death. As Solomon said, setting forth the word of the Lord: "He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death" (Prov. 8:36). God's true antithesis still stands: "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil . . . therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deut. 30:15, 19).

184

KENOTICISM, THE "GOSPEL" OF DEFEAT

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 48, March 1984

The doctrine of kenosis (see Position Paper No. 45) is one of the great hidden influences of our time. It is a hidden influence because it has become so much a part of the intellectual atmosphere that it is commonly taken for granted, as we take the sun, the air, and the ground beneath our feet for granted.

Its immediate Western origins were in old Russia, but its original home was in the Far East. It came westward through Greco-Roman thinkers, but also later it came directly from the Orient. Buddhism in particular has been a fertile ground for such influences, as well as Hindu religions. Some illustrations of such thinking which have passed into Western thought will tell us much.

A Buddhist sect tells of a bodhisattva, a perfected man, who manifested perfect love and knowledge. On seeing a hungry mother tiger with unfed and hungry cubs, the bodhisattva threw himself down the cliff to provide food for the hungry tigers. This act of self-sacrifice is seen as exemplifying holiness. (Marxism, especially in China, is full of like tales to promote its cause.)

Another story, as retold by the chaplain of a "Christian" mental hospital: An old Buddhist holy man, seeing a scorpion about to be swept away by a flooding river current, worked to save the scorpion, but the scorpion only kept poisoning the holy man's hands with his sting, which promised death. When rebuked for his efforts, the holy man said, "because it is the scorpion's nature to sting, why should I give up my nature to care?" The chaplain then compared the holy man to God, who "keeps trying," even when we respond like the scorpion (see my *Institutes of Biblical Law*, *vol. 2*: *Law and Society*, pp. 478–479).

Unitarianism was a major source and influence in the introduction of

kenosis into the United States. Moncure Daniel Conway, in *My Pilgrimage to the Wise Men of the East*, promoted much of this in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Conway was particularly impressed by the example of Kwan-Yin, the Chinese goddess of mercy. Conway wrote, "She is the woman who refused to enter paradise so long as any human is excluded. 'Never will I receive individual salvation,' she said, and still remains outside the gates of heaven" (p. 71).

Kenotic thinking prepared the way for the ready reception of Buddhist and other Eastern religions in the West. The philosophical premise of these religions is world and life negation. The ultimacy of nonbeing and defeat is presupposed, and an essential pacifism and nonresistance to problems, challenges, crises, and evils results. Kenosis and Eastern religions program a man for the acceptance of defeat.

As a result, eschatologies of defeat have become popular. Men program themselves to be losers, to be defeated, and to live with evil rather than to overcome it. As a result, the Western world, despite its marked advantages, is faltering and retreating. The lions are turning cowards before mice.

The basic thrust of kenosis is: submit. The basic faith of Scripture is, that "Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil. 2:11) and Savior (John 3:16), and, in His name, we must "occupy" till He comes (Luke 19:13). The occasional superficial resemblances between kenotic faith and the Bible cannot overcome the vast gulf between the two faiths.

According to the strict form of kenosis in "Christian" theology, Christ in His incarnation laid aside His divine self-consciousness; only gradually and dimly at times was He aware of His divine being. This is plainly contradicted by many texts, such as John 1:14–18; it was His "fullness" that "all we received." His divinity was plainly manifested in His every word, thought, and deed. As for the cross, it was not a kenotic act, but atonement, a very different thing.

Kenosis does not produce a godly morality. (It is of interest that a leading American preacher of kenosis was the famous and notorious Henry Ward Beecher.) Kenosis places the emphasis on a pacifistic submission rather than on faith, and obedience to every Word of God (Matt. 4:4).

Kenotic faith places very great emphasis on *humiliation*. Because Christ's incarnation is seen as a humiliation of His deity, humiliation is seen as the model for Christian morality and behavior. The fallacy of such thinking is that we are not gods, and to be Christian is for us not a humiliation but our glory. The Word of God is a command Word, and it is God's plan and law for victory, not defeat. We are required to believe and obey the Lord, not to be humiliated. One very prominent pastor of some years ago, and a very well paid one, constantly courted

humiliation. Although having a good wardrobe, he appeared at banquets poorly dressed, to the point of being an embarrassment.

There is an affinity between kenosis and psychological masochism. Masochism seeks self-abasement and punishment as ways of making atonement. The masochist does not find his freedom in Christ's atonement; he seeks to pay for his own sins by a variety of actions which bring punishment, shame, and defeat upon himself.

This is closely related to kenotic theory, which often sees victory as meaning defeat. This is apparent in Ronald J. Sider and Richard K. Taylor, *Nuclear Holocaust and Christian Hope* (1982). It is very much in evidence in the Vietnamese classic, *The Tale of Kieu*, written in the early 1800s by Nguyen Du. It pictures a society of victims, punished for crimes and sins they did not commit. The thesis of the tale is that all things in the universe work together for evil, the exact reverse of Romans 8:28. *The Tale of Kieu* is a kind of popular handbook in Vietnam, and it tells us much about that country. The poem tells us that the root of good lies in man, but God is mean and cruel. Basic to its perspective is the doctrine of reincarnation. If people in some previous life committed sins, they must expiate their guilt now. Hence, punishment now must be seen as our fate, and we must undergo humiliation and many horrors to escape the cycle of Karma. We have a "debt of grief to fate."

Here we see the religious roots of kenosis, in reincarnation, a radically anti-Biblical doctrine. The illogical self-humiliation and self-abasement which underlies kenotic thinking has its origin in a non-Christian belief in self-atonement through self-punishment. Believers in *The Tale of Kieu* are programmed for defeat. The infiltration of kenotic thinking into Christendom is also a program for defeat. It is born of defective Christian thinking, and it erodes the life of faith in favor of a life of defeat.

Defeatism is all too much a part of the modern mentality. Some years ago, in a very important study, Samuel J. Warner described *The Urge to Mass Destruction* (1957). His perspective was not Christian, but his work fits best into a Christian context in its implications. Warner noted that many of the living hate all life and seek to destroy all life. Nietzsche was for him a classic example of this. Such people have an essential nihilism, and they promote and counsel courses of action which are absurd and which lead to disaster and death. They seek defeat for themselves and for others and advocate courses which will promote it. Their goal is frustration, humiliation, and defeat, all things Nietzsche invited while professing something else. Such people work against life-preserving values in favor of life-defeating and destroying ones. They may profess a doctrine of love or of power, but they manifest hatred and self-defeat.

Indeed, said Warner, such people seek "victory through defeat," i.e., they seek to equate defeat and destruction with a "moral" victory. What they in fact manifest is an "urge to mass destruction."

Warner's analysis was psychological, not theological. All the same, his study was telling and important. All too commonly, morality and virtue are ascribed to masochistic tendencies and programs which promise only destruction for the West. These programs include inflation, foreign aid, foreign loans by major banks, and much, much more.

Behind all these trends is the doctrine of kenosis, which sees morality, not in terms of obedience to God's Word, but as a self-emptying.

Awhile back, ca. 1967, a godly friend guided a dedicated pastor and his wife in the investment of their limited savings. His counsel was particularly astute and well-informed. In a few years, before they realized what had happened, their assets increased very dramatically. Instead of being glad, the couple was badly shaken and upset. They had expected something only slightly better than bank interest as their returns. Their response? They divested themselves of all their holdings and gave away all their profits in order to regain their kenotic "purity." They thought it shameful and unbecoming to be other than either poor or only modestly well-off. They were insistent to an absurd degree that virtue requires a self-emptying and deprivation. They could not see that the Bible equates virtue with faithfulness to the Lord and His law-word, not self-deprivation.

Kenosis is a recent heresy in the West. Older theological works make no mention of it, because it did not then exist in Western Europe nor in the United States. Pietism and Quietism were in fact providing the seedbed for the receptivity to kenosis when it moved into Germany ca. 1830 and then into other countries. The Reverend Charles Buck (1771–1815) in his *Theological Dictionary*, has no mention of Kenosis. More than a generation later, William Smith and Samuel Cheetham did not list it in their *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*. After that, however, it was not only known but all too readily accepted.

One of the reasons for the ready acceptance of kenosis was the rise of the higher criticism and modernism. The adherents in the church of this new critical thinking found the orthodox Chalcedonian doctrine of Christ much too strong to reconcile with their growing unbelief. A Christ who did not know Himself to be God, having been "emptied" of divinity in His incarnation, was easier for them to accept. Such a Christ had a gradually dawning awareness of His role as He grew in His human self-consciousness. Modernism thus encouraged kenoticism.

There was another facet. In England, Bishop Gore and other high churchmen adopted a form of kenoticism which held that God the Son

voluntarily surrendered certain prerogatives and attributes of God while retaining the ethical properties of truth, holiness, and love. The surrendered attributes were those most commonly linked exclusively with the deity; the retained ones can be shared by all men. Thus, Christians are to stress truth, holiness, and love, while emptying themselves of power, wealth, victory, and other conquering factors. At the same time that Gore and others emptied Christ, they sought to increase the power of the church. However, in emptying Christ of deity, they also hindered His church and His people. They furthered Christian ritual but not power. To lower Christ's status is also to lower man and the church.

Kenoticism tells us that evil is power and Christ is helplessness and humiliation. Karl Barth said, in *Dogmatics in Outline* (1947), "the man who calls 'the Almighty' God misses God in the most terrible way. For the 'Almighty' is bad, as 'power in itself,' is bad. The 'Almighty' means Chaos, Evil, the Devil" (p. 48).

Given such a perspective, with echoes of it in Roman Catholic, Protestant modernist, fundamentalist, and "Reformed" thought, is it any wonder that the church is helpless? It has sought helplessness as though it were a virtue. It has lusted after an unholy impotence as a higher way of life. It has courted defeat as though this were a virtue.

Hymns which speak of victory have been slighted and criticized. Back in my student days, I heard one such ancient hymn of victory ridiculed, a hymn ascribed to St. Andrew of Crete, A.D. 660–732, "Christian, Dost Thou See Them?" After all, St. Andrew's hymn has such lines as, "Christian, up and smite them," and, "Peace shall follow battle, Night shall end in day." Such militant language was held to be in poor taste! The same was true of Charles Wesley's hymn (1749), "Soldiers of Christ, arise, And put your armour on, Strong in the strength which God supplies, Thro' his eternal Son." Wesley's hymn goes on to say, "From strength to strength go on, Wrestle, and fight, and pray: Tread all the powers of darkness down, And win the well-fought day." Winning? A kenotic church wants no such songs! Thus, Wesley's great hymn is not a common one now.

However, as Isaac Watts's better known hymn (ca. 1724), "Am I A Soldier of the Cross?" says, in a verse often omitted, "Sure I must fight if I would reign; Increase my courage, Lord: I'll bear the cross, endure the pain, Supported by Thy word."

George Duffield Jr., in "Stand Up, Stand Up, for Jesus" (1858), declared, "From victory unto victory, His army shall He lead, Till every foe is vanquished, and Christ is Lord indeed."

When the church forsakes kenoticism for Christ, the church too will know victory.

185

THE MYSTERY RELIGIONS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 181, October 1994

In the twentieth century, more than a few scholars began to see links between the mystery religions of Greece and Rome and Christianity. There were parallels that drew their attention. Washing preceded initiation and membership in some of the mystery religions. Of course, ritual washings were common to the law as given by Moses (Lev. 14–15, Num. 19), and Ezekiel 36:25 refers to sprinkling as a sign of a renewed covenant. The rule of secrecy concerning initiation prevailed among the mystery religions. However, the early church, as an illegal body, had a reason for secrecy. The mystery religions offered hope of immortality (for man's spirit) and a blessed life with the gods. Their belief was in a natural immortality, however, whereas the Bible sees God alone as immortal (1 Tim. 6:16), and man being given resurrection from death. A familiar icon in mystery religions was of Isis nursing Horus; this was assumed to be the source of depictions of the Virgin Mary nursing the infant Jesus. To assume this, is to believe that all pictures of nursing mothers echo the Isis-Horus faith, which is nonsense. Some of the mysteries had forms of a communion service, but not only was their nature very different, they were rites of *union* with the divine, not *communion*. The difference is a very radical one.

Other seeming resemblances can be cited, but this is enough. If such things are taken seriously, then we would have to say also that anyone with two eyes, one nose, and one mouth resembles Hitler, or Mussolini, as the case may be.

Those who have sought to establish parallels on such superficial bases have been wrong. Moreover, the real resemblances are not between the New Testament and early church with the mystery religions but between the twentieth century churches and the mysteries.

The early church was deeply involved in the care of the needy (Acts 6, etc.), courts of arbitration (1 Cor. 6), and a host of other activities, not merely as a help to members but as Kingdom functions under Christ the King (1 Tim. 6:15). Rome fought this claim by Christians; the mystery religions were subservient.

The focus of the mysteries was spiritual religion, life after death and a spiritual life in the here and now. They were unconcerned with almost all practical problems because they sought to transcend the world with their spirituality.

It is at this point that twentieth-century churches resemble the mystery cults. A telephone call this morning reported on a new foundation which calls itself Christian. It opposes Christian concern with anything other than soul-saving. Health, education, and welfare supposedly belong to the state, despite the fact that from the Biblical era to the preset they have been the responsibility of God's people. This group condemns any interest in politics as unspiritual. It opposes God's law as belonging to a more "fleshly" era and unfit for Christians. It wants to replace Christian works and action with retreats into spiritual exercises. Any concern by Christians for mundane things like education and medical missions is seen as a materialistic concern and unhealthy for the spiritual man. The calling of the Christian is to refine this inner life and to be a soul-winner.

Such people are annoyed if James 2:15–17, and like texts, are cited: "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone (or by itself)."

Like the mystery religions, too many churches limit faith to words of assent, not to action, not to works which are inseparable from true faith.

The mystery religions retreated from the world. To conquer for Christ is the Christian calling. The mysteries offered myths and rituals; the early church offered history and the King of history. The mystery cults offered an intense experience, whereas the church presented God's revelation. (The experiential stress of many churches links them to the mysteries more than Christ.) The adherents of the mystery religions sought a powerful experience when confronted by the death of a loved one, whereas Christians relied on the revealed Word of God. The mysteries were more interested in heaven and hell as they viewed them, whereas Christians who were faithful were devoted to serving the Lord with all their heart, mind, and being.

Plutarch tells us that few people believed the myths of the mysteries literally. Christians stood on the literal Word of God.

People in the mystery cults hoped for special experiences and revelations, but these were of a mindless sort, whereas the Christians relied on the plain, unchanging Word from God.

The Attis cult required of the most faithful self-emasculation. Biblical faith stressed the whole man, not the castrati, as God's servants.

The mysteries had no fixed moral code. They could be indifferent to abortion and homosexuality because spiritual matters concerned them. (Recently, one major church rejected a measure to register with the president an objection to homosexuality, etc. on the grounds that its tax exemption might be endangered! This is the spirit of the ancient mystery cults.) Because the mysteries had no fixed, revealed moral code, they had no enduring contribution to make to history. An antinomian church is no different, except that it is more offensive to Christ our King.

186

MONERGISM AND SYNERGISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 202, July 1996

This past winter, Andrew Sandlin was interviewed by an important St. Louis, Missouri, radio station about an article in the *Chalcedon Report*. In passing, in the course of his outstanding comments, he referred to the monergism-synergism controversy of earlier years. I realized, as he spoke, how remote we are now to such great and essential questions. What was that controversy about?

Monergism comes from the Greek *monos*, sole, and *ergon*, work. The *syn* in synergism means *together*, so the word means "working together."

The reference is to salvation. Is salvation entirely of God's sovereign grace, with man simply the recipient, or is it the joint work of God and man?

Roman Catholic and Protestant thinkers have often been synergists, but both have also had their monergists; and St. Augustine was emphatically a monergist. The synergists believe that God and man cooperate in man's salvation: they work together. Very early, some of Luther's followers broke with Luther's monergism to affirm a cooperation of God and man in the work of salvation. Modern revivalism is radically synergistic. Synergism tends to stress man's part in salvation as decisive. Man makes the decision to allow God into his life.

A problem, of course, arises at once. If man's decision is decisive, then man's salvation can be lost. The saved man can become a backslider and a hater of God because he is supposedly sovereign and can say "no" to God. In effect, also, synergism transfers sovereignty from God to man; synergists tend to avoid the term "sovereignty" because it raises questions they prefer left unsaid.

Monergism holds that the grace of God is the only essential and efficient cause in man's conversion from beginning to end. Monergists stress

the Pauline affirmation of Romans 1:16–17. Man is saved by God's grace only, but he is lost because of his own depravity, his original sin being to try to be his own God (Gen. 3:5). Calvinists have held that monergism leads necessarily to the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints.

One reason why this controversy is almost unknown today is because synergism has triumphed in seminaries that should not uphold it, and they have relegated the whole subject to a kind of theological museum. Discussions of the subject are very rare because the synergists have triumphed. So thorough has been the obliteration of God's sovereignty that men like C. G. Finney reduced God's role in salvation to next to nothing. Finney replaced the work of the Holy Spirit with the revivalistic techniques by man. It is not at all surprising that pastoral psychology has replaced the ancient cure of souls by the Word and grace of God. The humanistic drift of the twentieth-century church is apparent in hymns, sermons, pastoral psychology, and more. Man's will is now sovereign; it is held that rigorously Biblical preaching will alienate man, the decision-maker.

This is the heart of the matter: who is the true and efficient decision-maker, God or man? If it is man, then revivalists from Finney to Graham are right. If it is God, then we are in need of a new reformation.

What becomes clear is that while synergism begins by affirming the working together of God's will and man's will, it concludes by serving one master, man's will. It affirms a humanistic gospel with man's decision-making as the central and governing power. In effect, it tacitly affirms Genesis 3:5 to make man his own god.

But being one's own god is a very lonely business for man because he was not created for such a calling! When man says, "I will make the decision, for or against Jesus Christ," he declares himself to be god over God.

Many synergists would be horrified at such an idea, but what they fail to realize is that man never stands still, no more than time does. He either grows, or he declines and decays. No more than any man can say, "I believe that age thirty-five is an ideal age, and I will remain at age thirty-five," can he intellectually and spiritually stand still. He will grow in grace, or away from grace. No growth is no life: it is death. There is no standing still in life. Of course, many men and churches try to stand still; the result is that they are dead but not buried.

Synergism ends up denying God's will in favor of man's. As our Lord said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other" (Matt. 6:24).

The "solution" to the problem, said a pastor some years ago, when I raised the problem, is to "drop the idea of sovereignty," and the problem

will go away! (I knew that the problem of headship in his marriage had not gone away by evasion!) Problems do not go away by our inattention. Neither does God.

PHILOSOPHIES

187

TITANISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 75, June 1986

Not all errors and heresies are clearly labelled as such. Some pass as virtues. Titanism is one of them.

The name Titanism comes from Greek religion. The Greek gods were deified men; for example, more than a few cities boasted of their association with Zeus before his death, when he took his place as a spirit god in the upper world. The twelve Titans, six males and six females, were the sons and daughters of Uranus and Gaea. The Titans, led by Cronus, deposed their father and ruled the universe. The Titans were later deposed by Zeus and condemned to Tartarus. Some of the descendants of the Titans have familiar names: Prometheus, Atlas, Hecate, Selene, and Helios. Especially with the Romantic movement, the Titans and their children came to symbolize man's heroic efforts against fate and the gods. Shelley, who said he had "a passion for reforming the world," turned to Prometheus as hero. His *Prometheus Unbound* is full of idealistic bombast against the heavens and glorifies attempts to storm the heavens and defy fate. Titanism thus means glorifying as a virtue all attempts to do the impossible.

Titanism has many faces in the modern world, within the church, in humanistic circles, and among revolutionary youth. It is a continuing source of "cannon fodder."

Our concern is the presence of Titanism within the church. Our Lord places strict limits on what we are to do. We are very clearly told that "with God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26); we are also told that, while faith can move mountains (Matt. 21:21), there are definite limits to what we are allowed to pray for (1 John 5:16). We are forbidden to receive church leaders who teach false doctrine, for to do so makes us partakers of their evil deeds (2 John 9–11). We are commanded to avoid

all who "cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned" (Rom. 16:17).

But this is not all. Our Lord forbids us to waste our time on those who will not hear, and on places where no results are forthcoming. We are to shake the dust off our feet and move on to a place which is more receptive to the gospel (Matt. 10:11–15). This does not mean that God may not convert that person, place, city, or country in his own good time, but it does mean that we ourselves are forbidden to waste time on futile or sterile efforts. We need to remember that while God is omnipotent, we are not. God, in His work, has no limitation of time; we do. God is able "to raise up children unto Abraham" out of the stones of the field (Matt. 3:9), but we cannot regenerate a single man.

To go against God's Word in these things, as all too many do, is Titanism. It may be "baptized" Titanism, but it is still sin. There are limits on what man may do, and can do, and we had better know it.

Some years ago, a very fine missionary worked for many years in a country, now Communist, without results. A brilliant Christian businessman, the missionary's friend, commanded him in Christ's name to come home. To labor in vain, he said, is wrong. Christ commands us to move on, and he cited some of the verses, such as Matthew 10:11–15, that required this. The missionary, a man ready to learn, came home.

Not all are as apt to hear. Last year, a woman told me to give her a list of all the public school textbook publishers whose books are humanistic. She declared that she "always" succeeded in converting anyone she witnessed to. Her plan was to visit each publisher, convert them to Christ, have Christian textbooks, and "solve" the public school crisis! This is Titanism; it is also kind of a moral insanity, whether in the poet Shelley or in this woman. I have had people tell me of their mission to save homosexuals, and I have heard their glowing tales of how many they have "saved." When I ask how many ceased being homosexuals, I get another story and am accused of legalism!

In other instances, where people of incredible evil are involved, I have seen like cases of Titanism. People will say, of some moral monster, "I am going to pray him into heaven." At the same time, their children may be on the road to hell, people around them in need, and their mother in a rest home, but these people want no simple everyday responsibilities, only titanic causes. They assume that, because they have assumed so great a prayer-burden, this fact somehow makes them great also! They are ready to indulge in pious gush about how heroic their prayer life is, but they are failures in routine responsibilities.

There is no modesty about Titanism. As one woman once told me,

"The Lord and I have such a sweet fellowship, and together we have seen such miracles take place." Her speech was always sugarcoated, and never humble. Because of her supposedly "intimate" walk with the Lord, this Titaness had felt it her duty to rebuke "sweetly" a whole succession of pastors. (One thing which Titanism is never converted to is common sense! Whether in the church or out of it, Titanism feels that it has a special calling to defy common sense.)

In this life, the Christian is still not fully sanctified. He shows the habits and failings of the old Adam, however great his growth in grace. Many years ago, I was told of an elderly priest who remarked to his congregation one Sunday that, in his many years of hearing confession, he had never heard anyone confess to being stingy, whereas experience had taught him that this was a failing common to almost all of them!

His point was well taken. No doubt, all the stingy people in his parish and others could describe their stinginess as prudence, providential money management, and so on, in any number of flattering ways. Likewise, the extravagant ones who waste their money have "good" reason for everything they do. Every man marshals more "good" reasons for his sins than he does for his virtues!

Titanism among humanists calls itself a passion for justice, social reform, peace, and so on. Sin loves to cover itself with noble causes. Basic to Titanism, however, is the desire to play god, to be the determiner of things and to take the government out of God's hands (Gen. 3:5). The Greeks called it *hubris*, pride; they both feared it and idealized it; when successful, it made one a god; when a failure, as with the Titans, it was still heroic.

Christians very early saw it as a deadly sin. Whenever and wherever it occurred, they saw it as an evil and as a deadly, corrupting force. With the Romantic movement, Titanism became romantic, heroic, and the indication of superiority. Thus, Lord Byron's *Manfred* rejected both Christian counsel and patience, declaring:

> Patience and Patience! Hence — that word was made
> For brutes of burden, not for birds of prey:
> Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine —
> I am not of thine order.

Manfred saw himself as semidivine and above all moral order, as a bird of prey. He despised "the herd" of common men and saw himself as a lion, or the head of wolves. Facing death, Manfred denied punishment in any future life, for that would be a crime, to punish crime by crime! Byron, Shelley, and the other humanistic practitioners of Titanism had a knack for being losers, victims, and injured. Their failures proved to

them that they were so far above the common herd of humanity that few could appreciate their greatness.

Romantic Titanism has since then been endemic in Western civilization, most of all among the intellectuals, college students, and liberal politicians. It is a fine recipe for losers, because the very fact of defeat and frustration is seen as "proof" that one is a Titan, a visionary whose greatness and cause go unappreciated. For Byron, Lucifer and Cain were heroes, and his Cain declares, "Cursed be He who invented Life that leads to Death!" For life to be good for humanistic Titanism, it must be on the Titan's terms, not God's.

In philosophy, of course, Titanism has held full sway. Nietzsche, with his vision of life beyond good and evil by supermen, was most vocal about it, but it has been no less prevalent in men like Bertrand Russell, Wittgenstein, and others. It has been implicit in philosophy since Descartes and his starting point, "I think, therefore I am." In the United States, the Transcendentalist-Unitarian pastor, Theodore Parker, drew a logical conclusion: "I am, therefore God is." A modestly phrased but strong Titanism was popularized by Ralph Waldo Emerson.

All of this had its influence in theological circles also, and evangelicals absorbed elements of Titanism. Instead of exalting God's sovereign grace in salvation, many began to exalt man's sovereign choice. The order of determination in the universe was reversed, and man was given priority in the order of salvation.

The effect on prayer was dramatic. Recently, I heard one evangelical pastor describe much current praying as "giving God His instructions for the day." Such praying is blasphemy. Prayer is access to the throne of grace, the government center of all creation. The ancient Persians understood the meaning of sovereignty, although they wrongly ascribed it to human monarchs. Prayers to the sovereign could have penalties. As Esther said to Mordecai, "All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, *who is not called*, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live" (Esther 4:11). As Christians, we are called into the King's presence, but our requests must be in His name and according to His law-word. We are forbidden to make a show of prayer, or to use vain repetitions (Matt. 6:2–7), and we are also forbidden to waste our lives and time in vain or futile work (Matt. 10:14). We are not our own; we have been "bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6:20), Christ's atoning death, and hence we cannot waste our lives and time in a parade of "heroic" effort that results in little or nothing. Our calling is not to Titanism but to service.

188

CATHARSIS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 106, February 1989

It was Aristotle who formulated the literary theory of *catharsis*, although, as scholars have admitted, there is no certainty as to what Aristotle meant by it. The Greek word *katharsis* means, literally, a purging. It is related to our meaning of a cathartic, a laxative, something to cleanse the system.

Like everything else in Aristotle, Christians over the centuries have given catharsis a moral meaning. A drama or tragedy must end in a moral resolution and an outcome which gives more meaning to life. Greek tragedy, however, shows that this was not the case; a brutal, meaningless, and blind fate prevailed. In fact, an innocent man like Oedipus was the victim of diabolical coincidences at the hands of the gods. The Greek catharsis meant usually that hatred, evil, and grim fate worked out an ugly conclusion.

Despite its Christian veneer, the concept of catharsis began to revert to its pagan origins. The Renaissance saw its implications. Boccaccio argued that to deprive a person of the sexual freedom to fornicate and to commit adultery would create mental problems. Sexual "freedom" was a form of catharsis.

With the Romantic movement, this idea of catharsis became increasingly strong, and the Romantics pursued the forbidden areas of life religiously as the way of freedom. Revolution became very popular as a means of social catharsis. In time, intellectuals came to a belief that all leftist revolutions are good because of the social catharsis they provide. The violence, brutality, and the mass murders of revolutions were justified as a necessary form of social catharsis. The French Revolution applied the idea of a medical catharsis to society. As Otto Scott wrote of Robespierre, "He demanded a purge; that was his word. Knowing his

precision, it must be assumed he realized it was then a medical term meaning the forced expulsion of feces; he gave it a new meaning that is with us still" (Otto Scott, *Robespierre: The Voice of Virtue*, p. 213.) Since then, the idea of a purge or social catharsis has been generally accepted as a part of revolutionary faith. The feces of society are the capitalists, propertied peoples, conservatives, and, above all, Christians, and they must be purged, it is believed.

This kind of social catharsis has made the twentieth century the most brutal in history, in that a higher percentage of mankind than ever before has been purged or killed in the name of the health and welfare of the people.

The idea of catharsis found expression in many other ways. Many Satanist and occultist groups appealed to people because their ideas and rituals gave an opportunity for people to participate in a cathartic service. Not surprisingly, crimes often resulted. Like the "therapy" of some psychologists, these Satanist and occultist services were forms of psychodrama. Those participating in them were being schooled in the theory of catharsis.

Instead of replacing evil thoughts and destructive impulses with constructive and godly purposes, the culture of the age has favored the expression of those things, not in a holy confession of sin, but in an unholy venting of evil impulses. As the concept of catharsis was stripped of its Christian accretions, it became a justification for revolution, for the destruction of Christian morality, and for anarchistic freedom. The cult of violence and aggression of students and intellectuals in the 1960s was an example of cathartic expression. So too was "the theater of cruelty," the thesis of many novels and films and more. The Marquis de Sade became popular and was hailed by some as a great psychologist because of his insistence on total cathartic expression.

As E. M. Thornton has shown in *The Freudian Fallacy* (1983), the idea of catharsis was basic to Freud's thinking. Insane dreams were a form of catharsis for Freud, as were aberrations in behavior. His "therapy" was not to impose a mental or moral discipline on patients but to encourage their expression of inner drives. Catharsis or healing came through their expression. Hence, Freud refused to condemn various forms of perverse sexuality: they were cathartic expressions. Christians, hence, were the sickest of people for Freud because they behaved with health and morality; obviously, he held, they had escaped a personal neurosis by embracing the cosmic neurosis, God!

Freud's greatest success was in the arts. Painters and writers found in his ideas a congruency with literary theory (Aristotelian) and with

revolutionary ideologies, which also utilized the Aristotelian doctrine of catharsis. The deterioration of standards in the arts has been due to the steady assault on all impediments to cathartic expression. The result has been distortion and contortion in music, painting, literature, and elsewhere in the name of free and purgative expression. Vitality in the arts has come to mean revolutionary and cathartic expression. Robert Pielke, in *You Say You Want a Revolution* (1986), says that the vitality and the appeal of rock music is religious: it represents an alternate religiousness. It represents the essence of the current cultural revolution, which is "the rejection of America's religious heritage and its replacement with something contrary."

In the current faith in catharsis, it is held that mental and social problems are a result of repression. Hence, the way to health is to repress nothing. All kinds of slogans have justified this lawless self-expression since the 1960s: "If it feels good, do it"; "Me first"; "Do your own thing"; and so on and on.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism begins, "What is the chief end of man? Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever." The focus is God, not man. Job, after losing his children and wealth could say, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked I shall return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21). Such a God-centered faith is the antithesis of twentieth-century practice. Man has become the measure, and man judges God in terms of man's requirements. The doctrine of catharsis, stripped of its accretions, has become the doctrine of total self-expression: "I've got to be me"; "Let it all hang out"; and so on.

E. M. Thornton saw the "permissive society" as a result of Freud's teachings. The sexual revolution, the drug culture, abortion on demand, euthanasia, and homosexuality now give evidence of Freud's results, as does "the Pill." The goal of this new culture was to be the happy world of Eros, sexual love. Herbert Marcuse brought Freud and Marx into an intellectual olio in his teachings. It is said that one demonstration's slogan in 1968, "The riot is the social extension of the orgasm," came from Marcuse. However, as Thornton noted, "By the end of the seventies the neo-Freudians had moved on from Eros to Thanatos" (*Love to Death*, p. 252).

The 1980s have seen AIDS show what free catharsis can lead to!

Catharsis cannot save man, nor does Freudian catharsis cleanse a man. Only the grace of God unto salvation can cleanse, purify, and regenerate a man. We are told that the Lord declares, "*Behold, I make all things new*" (Rev. 21:5). Catharsis and revolution after the manner of Aristotle,

Robespierre, Marx, Freud, and others produce death, not renewal and life. Thornton noted, "It is interesting that James Joyce, who suffered from Neurosyphilis, wrote the celebrated reverie in *Ulysses* under the influence of cocaine" (p. 154).

The world of catharsis is the world of self-willed death. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing *and I will receive you*" (2 Cor. 6:17).

189

THE MYTH OF NATURE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 133, April 1991

ALTHOUGH there have been attempts in this century to give profundity and religious status to myth, its basic meaning still remains. However much it is assumed to be historical or real, a myth is fictitious; it is a popular fable which is unrelated to reality. Attempts by some theologians to see Biblical history as mythological have told us more about these scholars than about the Bible.

How can nature be called mythical? After all, we are surrounded by a real world. The mythical element enters when men approach the world around us with false presuppositions and read into it meanings and powers which are not there. The Greek philosophers were very prone to this. For Plato and Aristotle, rightness and justice meant being true to nature. But "nature" is a collective noun, not a single entity. The Stoics summed up morality in a brief precept: "Follow Nature." For them, instead of being a fallen realm, "Nature" was normative and the source of law.

This classical faith was revived by the Enlightenment, and reason was seen as the high point of nature, together with order. The mechanistic philosophies and science of the eighteenth century reflected this view. In time, however, this worship of nature took a new form in Romanticism. The great influences here came from Rousseau, Wordsworth, and Shelley, and, to a lesser degree, from William Blake. Nature was seen as something more than the natural phenomena which surrounds us. It is a force which lies behind them and is inherent in them. For Hegel, this force was *Geist*, or spirit, the world spirit, constantly incarnating itself in the changing forms of nature. This nature-spirit was seen as constantly changing or evolving, so that yesterday's incarnation could not be the spirit of today.

Since nature's expression is constantly changing and evolving, how

can a man know what is right and wrong? In any absolute sense, good and evil in this view do not exist, only temporary forms of good and evil. The sociologist, Emile Durkheim, thus saw the criminal as potentially an evolutionary pioneer, since the criminal is always pushing against the boundaries of the present order.

These ideas concerning nature made Darwin inevitable, and several men came up with the same theory at about the same time. There had to be evolution, because the prevailing myth of nature required it. The myth of nature is implicitly antiscientific, because it demands veneration for things science wants to investigate. It is not surprising that environmentalists and "animal rights" advocates are hostile to scientists, who are confronted with members of their own intellectual family opposing them.

In the late eighteenth century, the logic of the myth of nature was radically developed by the Marquis de Sade. He rejected any transfer of Biblical morality into modern thought. He advocated a world beyond good and evil, beyond morality, and without God. For him, there was only one crime, Christianity, because it opposed to nature the triune God, and because it regarded nature as a fallen rather than a normative realm.

For Sade, every kind of perversion had to be practiced religiously as the fulfillment of nature. Lawlessness was for him an affirmation of nature as against God. Sade dedicated his life and writings to the destruction of Christianity and the Christian man. He has been rightly called by some the most powerful influence in our time.

Sade was not too far out of line with his era. His more vocal statement of what others believed and practiced was what got him into trouble. The Theatre Gaillard practiced what many espoused. Thus, in April 1791, in the Palais-Royal, a public theater had a performance in which two naked players, supposedly savages, went through the act of coition. There were in Paris secret "pornologic" clubs, and, in some instances, Sade was simply recounting with his comments what happened in these establishments. The operators kidnapped poor girls, and the police protected the patrons, according to Dr. Iwan Bloch. The corrupt patrons were highly placed in state, society, and the church. This corruption was not limited to Paris; it existed in Naples especially, in London, and elsewhere.

Depravity had become the new virtue, the expression of nature. Its practice was associated sometimes with enlightenment and intellectual status. Christian morality was for the masses, useful in keeping them in line, or, as Voltaire said, to keep them from stealing from their masters.

In the English-speaking world, this religion of nature suffered a setback, first, with the work of Whitefield and Wesley, and then, in the nineteenth century, with the evangelical revival.

Since Darwin, however, this false religion has spread to all classes. A major expression of this faith came to powerful expression in the several *Kinsey Reports*.

Their thesis is a simple one: whatever exists in nature is right and good. Homosexuality, child molestation, and other sexual acts normally regarded as perverse, are all "natural" and therefore good. If our standards come from nature and not from God and His Word, this is correct; but since God is the living God, and this idea of nature is a myth, then only God's law-word can be our standard.

We are thus faced on all fronts with a religious war, the devotees of nature on the one hand, and the people of God on the other. Sadly, Romanticism long ago infected the church deeply, and the result was pietism. In pietism, the emphasis is on feeling, not on God's law-word. Salvation for pietism is an emotional experience, not the objective fact of Christ's atonement on the cross. To stress feelings or emotions is to rely on nature, not on Christ. One of our men had an encounter with a man who is very hostile to marriage (it is for him legalism), and very habitual in his fornication ("with 'Christian' girls only, as an expression of love"!); he was emphatic that anyone who takes the law seriously is unsaved! This is a form of Baalism masquerading as Christianity.

The natural world, like us, is God's creation. It is, according to St. Paul, in bondage, and it groans and travails waiting for the glorious redemption to be completed in the new creation (Rom. 8:18–23). We can no more look to nature for norms and laws than we can look to ourselves, or to the state.

Yet modern man looks everywhere except to the Lord. As long as man turns aside from Christ, our King and Redeemer, and from His law and reign, so long shall he wander in the wilderness of sin and judgment.

190

THE HEGELIAN REVOLUTION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 126, October 1990

Modern philosophy began with René Descartes, who made the starting point of his thought the autonomy of the human mind. His premise, "I think, therefore I am," meant that philosophy now had as its essential realm and reality the mind of man. Man's mind was his *given* or presupposition; God and matter were things the mind of man had to prove, and whose existence man's mind had to establish. Berkeley soon eliminated the material world, reducing it to sense impressions, so that only the mind and God were real. David Hume then eliminated God. Immanuel Kant, in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, added that there was no need for an objective material world and a God out there. "Hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects. But all attempts to extend our knowledge of objects by establishing something in regard to them *a priori*, by means of concepts, have, on this assumption, ended in failure. We must therefore make trial whether we may not have more success in the task of metaphysics, if we suppose that object must conform to our knowledge" (Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, "Preface to the Second Edition" [n.p.: 1787], B-xvi).

The implications of this were clearly seen by G. W. F. Hegel, (1770–1831), the father of modern thought, political, educational, feminist, and more. The reality of things now rested in the mind of man. Hence, Hegel said, "Reason is the Sovereign of the world"; it is true substance, and also "Infinite Power" (Hegel, *Philosophy of History* [n.p.: P. F. Collier & Son, 1901], p. 52). For Hegel, thus, God had been replaced by reason. For him, "the Natural is the Unspiritual." But "Man . . . is God only in so far as he annuls the merely Natural and limited in his Spirit and elevates himself to god" (ibid., p. 415). Hegel was echoing the Greek dialectic of mind versus matter. Spirit meant the realm of truth, of pure reason. For

Hegel, the rational is the real, so that what a rational elite determines is therefore reality. Man's self-consciousness as a self-contained existence is Hegel's goal: "I am I in the sense that the I which is object for me is sole and only object, is all reality and all that is present" (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind* [London, England: [1949/1961], p. 273). This explains why the heirs of Hegel are oblivious to the disasters and mass murders they perpetrate: their self-consciousness and reasoning is for them the only reality and truth. This truth they embody in the state: "The State is the Divine Idea as it exists on Earth" (*Philosophy of History*, p. 87). Modern philosophy thus has been the triumph of the spirit in this Hegelian sense.

Very few have seen the connection between Hegel and the many anti-Biblical "spiritual" faiths which followed him. Spiritualism was one development, Christian Science was another. Mary Baker Eddy, in *Science and Health* (1875), held that "Jesus was the offspring of Mary's self-conscious communion with God" (pp. 29–30); she initiated the conception by her spiritual state. Humanity thus, through spirituality, could transcend its limitations.

In the medieval era and later, it was believed that women had greater orgasmic capacities and sensuality than men. Now it came to be held that women were more spiritual and less earthy than men. Hegelianism begat not only transcendentalism but also feminism. Hence, feminists began to speak of God as "She" in order to stress God's spirituality, and they promoted themselves as the savior of mankind.

Charles Darwin was one of the "saints" in this Hegelian tradition. Hegel wrote of humanity's cultural evolution towards a higher and spiritual estate, and he saw the state as the incarnation of reason, of spirit. Darwin applied Hegel's evolutionary faith to the realm of biology. All things were for Darwin moving upward out of primeval matter as spirit struggled for freedom. For Karl Marx, this development was from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom, of free spirit. Peter Gardella has called attention to Darwin's success and the reason for it: "Many theologians welcomed Darwin, because he seemed to ratify the vision of life straining upward, out of animal existence and toward the Spirit, which they had been developing for decades before the *Origin of Species* (1859)." (Peter Gardella, *Innocent Ecstasy: How Christianity Gave America an Ethic of Sexual Pleasure* [New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1985], p. 56). For some time Kantian and Hegelian ideas had infiltrated the churches, and, as a result, the churches did indeed receive Darwin readily. It was some years before an effective counter-theology developed.

The stress on spirituality within the churches went hand-in-hand with such things as perfectionism, the Keswick higher life and victorious living movement, and much, much, more. It was very much in evidence in the antinomianism of Mary Baker Eddy and the Campbellites, and antinomian thinking began to appear at old Princeton. "Spiritual" Christianity was stressed, and God's law rejected. This opened the door to humanistic, statist law. Churchmen began to affirm a belief in some kind of vague goodness and law out there and available to all men, and they retreated from politics. Politics, education, science, and more were surrendered to the states while churchmen concentrated on "spirituality." Inspirational books became popular, teaching "spiritual" Christianity. A vast network of summer conferences and camps for church people were created, all fostering spiritual rather than Biblical knowledge, faith, and obedience. The "inspiring" speaker or preacher was now the central figure in popular piety.

Outside the churches, some startling developments took place. Upper-class women, as the "spiritual" leaders of society, distanced themselves from their bodies. Good women, it was held, did not enjoy sex. Between 1870 and 1900, for thirty years, a new operation gained popularity. The clitoridectomy, female "circumcision," was performed to deliver women from "passion" and its "demeaning" effects. (Gardella, p. 69ff.). Twin beds became fashionable after the Civil War to deliver upper-class women from proximity to men's lust. Dr. John Cowan prescribed total abstinence from sex, with one yearly act for conceiving a child (Gardella, p. 59).

Hegel had said that the state is based on religion, religion understood as freedom from necessity. Law speaks of necessities, and the direction of modern law has been to deliver man into freedom from the necessities of moral law, family ties, and all the varieties of social obligations. "Free sex" is thus an aspect of this deliverance; it is "spiritual" in the sense that it does not bind man with any material or legal ties. "Free sex" means casual sex, relationships without ties or obligation. The truest liberation from the kingdom of necessity is freedom from all bonds and obligations. Hence, for this mentality, irresponsible sex is liberating, whereas marital sex is dull and confining, materialistic and unspiritual.

As a result, we have politics without moral order, lawless sexuality, and pious gush in the place of Christianity. Abortion, homosexuality, euthanasia, incest, and more are all advocated in terms of man's liberation.

The goal of all this "liberation" is the salvation of man. Instead of salvation as the regeneration of man, we now have salvation seen as the divestiture of man from Christianity, family, morality, and the past. In the

state schools, it is seen as the teaching of permissive sexual "standards," and a self-created values system.

The differences between Moscow, Paris, Rome, Washington, D.C., and other capitols is one of degree, not of kind. All are to some extent anti-Christian.

The duty of philosophy, according to Hegel, is to establish "a new religion" (Hegel, *On Christianity* [New York, NY: Harper, 1948/1961], p. 38). Hegel insisted on "every man's right to his own convictions and his own will" because for him there was no God-given truth. Hence, "no one has a right to alter what another has chosen" (ibid., p. 91). We see this attitude today in the radical hostility to conversion. To become a missionary, to proselytize, is to infringe on the freedom of other men, in this view.

Of course, "converting" them to atheism or Marxism is seen as simply helping men to be free! For Hegel, religion meant "this self-evaluation of man" (ibid., p. 311).

Hegel wrote, "To consider the resurrection of Jesus as an event is to adopt the outlook of the historian, and this has nothing to do with religion" (ibid., p. 292). Men must not, in Hegel's view, be bound by history nor by law. This reduces him to the kingdom of necessity when his salvation is the kingdom of freedom.

In following Hegel, who followed the Hellenic philosophers, we are aping the Greeks and the Romans and will face the same kind of judgment. We are better at protecting the freedom of criminals in our courts than in protecting their victims. Their victims, after all, demand justice, a relic of Christianity, when the watchword of courts and civil and educational powers is liberation.

However, men and societies who liberate themselves from God liberate themselves thereby from life. We face a time of growing judgment, and there is no deliverance possible apart from the triune God.

> Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. (Isa. 45:22)

191

INVISIBLE RULERS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 95, March 1988

MANY people like to believe that somewhere invisible rulers pull the strings which govern all of us. Such a belief denies that man is created in the image of God and is governed by two basic motives. *First*, Paul tells us, all men know the truth of God, things visible and invisible, because they are written in every atom of our being by our Creator. Men "hold" or suppress these things because of their unrighteousness or injustice. No man anywhere can escape this knowledge (Rom. 1:17–21). For this reason all men are "without excuse." *Second*, all men everywhere, as sons and daughters of Adam, are fallen, and they seek to be their own gods, determining law, morality, and all good and evil for themselves (Gen. 3:5). The strings that pull us come out of our heart and mind.

In the modern age, man has reversed the historic definitions of knowledge. *First*, according to Scripture, to know, love, and fear God is the beginning and essential part of knowledge and wisdom. *Second*, according to classical Greek philosophy, knowledge is gained by ascertaining the abstract universal ideas of the totality of being. *Third*, for science, especially after the Enlightenment, it was knowing the facts. This view is still very powerful, although it has been demonstrated that our presuppositions determine what is for us a fact.

With Kant, a *fourth* view of knowledge came into dominance. Kant, in his preface to the second edition of his *Critique of Pure Reason*, stated the matter bluntly: "Hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects. But all (such) attempts . . . ended in failure. We must therefore make trial whether we may not have more success in the tasks of metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge." In other words, the "real" world is what our mind says it must be.

If you grasp Kant's implication, then you will understand the modern

world, its religion, politics, art, education, and much, much more. The source of truth is no longer, for the modern mind, to be found in God, ideas, or facts, but in our own being, in our rationality, or in our feelings, according to some.

Hegel embraced Kant's thinking and furthered it. In his *The Phenomenology of Mind*, he wrote, "I am I in the sense that the I which is object for me is sole and only object, is all reality and all that is present." The "I . . . is all reality!" For Hegel, the rational is the real; reality is what our reason says it must be. With such a premise, existentialism was inevitable.

I have often called attention to the fact that modern man has a will to fiction. His basic reality is his imagination, and he lives out his life in his imagined world instead of reality. One of the most unpleasant letters I have received (and they are many, often foul-mouthed, from churchmen and atheists alike) declared me to be vicious because I was undercutting the dream world of harmless peoples.

But is it harmless to live a lie? Never before in all of history have people lived so extensively in terms of their dream worlds rather than reality. They watch television by the hours, see movies, read fiction, and they believe that the world of their imagination is better than God's reality. Communists are not what they say they are but what our imagination wants them to be. Politics is going to give us our hopes because we believe in it. Churches too often succeed by preaching smooth things and an easy "gospel." When an artist asked to have permission to paint Cromwell's portrait, Cromwell granted it on the condition of honesty, that he be painted warts and all. No portraitist is likely to hear such a demand in our time. We want to be seen as we imagine ourselves to be. The modern mood was well stated by an early Romantic poet, William Blake, who complained, "Oh, why was I born with a different face?" The "real" face of his imagination was somehow not in place.

Hegel's real world was the world of consciousness, the mind of man. This is the "real" world of too many people now, in the churches and outside of them. A simple and grim evidence of this is that pastors who have congregations of elderly people find them complaining if the pastor talks about the evils of abortion. This, they say, is of no meaning to them, since they are past the childbearing years; they want sermons which are "personally" helpful. When I hear, as I do regularly, of such common comments in our best churches, I am sick at heart and sometimes shiver in horror at God's certain judgment. Such people seem unaware that "our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29). Too many people, I find, in their vain imagination reduce God to a Father Christmas. They use Biblical language with idolatrous purposes.

Yes, we do have invisible rulers, in a sense, in various philosophers and their ideas, but they rule over us because they please us in their insistence on man as his own god. The true ruler of all things is Christ, for the government is upon His shoulder (Isa. 9:6). He warns us against ascribing the government of things to men or to secret satanic conspiracies. In Revelation 2:24, He condemns all who study "the deep things of Satan," i.e., satanic conspiracies. To hold that the creature, or any combination of creatures, can take over control from God is a fearful sin. In Psalm 2, we see that God laughs at all human conspirators against Him, and at their believers.

Because we do not live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4), we are the victims of our sins, and of those who choose to exploit our sins. Too many people, for example, rail against "the international bankers" without stopping to think that their debt-living creates inflation, and the kind of banking we now have. Of course, it is always more popular to talk about the sins of other peoples and not our own! The prerequisites of all blessings from God include the confession of sin, our sins, not other people's sins. The old Office of Compline, which ended the day, had a telling prayer, a general confession: "I confess to Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and before all the company of heaven, that I have sinned, in thought, word and deed, through my fault, my own fault, my own most grievous fault: wherefore I pray Almighty God to have mercy upon me, to forgive me all my sins, and to make clean my heart within me."

When men and nations persist in sin and avoid confession, they become self-righteous and pharisaic. They insist in living in illusions about themselves, i.e., in living a lie, in an insistence that their private fictions are public realities. We have a world today passionately devoted to its fictions.

So deeply ingrained is this will to fiction that several friends who are monetary and market economists regularly find themselves rebuked for stating carefully documented facts: they are told, "It's people like you who create economic disasters by talking as you do." In some countries, it is now a criminal offense to cite the crime rate of any particular ethnic group, even though true. It is called racism to do so. Supposedly, if we ignore a group's sins, they will be better people, and so shall we! This is the will to fiction. It is the belief that the rational is the real; or, in Kant's terms, the real world, the "objective" world, is in our minds, not out there. Thinking will make it so, supposedly. Is this not really insanity?

There is a great chain of people involved in Kantian and Hegelian thinking. Marx was their intellectual heir; so too was John Dewey, and

all political parties from the left to right are infected by Hegelian thought. Our intellectuals, our schools, pulpits, and media echo such thinking all too often. It undergirds antinomianism, because antinomianism finds the idea of God's law, "out there" governing us all, to be anathema. For Hegel, it is the spirit in the universe and man which is the source of all evolving truth.

If we do not take the fall of man and original sin seriously, we will believe that some group of invisible rulers is responsible for our problems. We will then become good Pharisees, denouncing evil in someone else. If we believe in the Fall and man's original sin, his will to be his own god (Gen. 3:5), then we identify the real problem, and we see its locale: *in all of us*. We know the remedy, Jesus Christ, and we know that His will must be done, so that His Kingdom may come. That will of the Lord is set forth in every word of the Bible. That book tells us, "Thou art the man," but it gives us the power to work, as God's new creation, to overcome the powers of darkness.

We are the invisible rulers who will not rule. We find it much easier to blame others.

192

REASON AND RATIONALISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 209, February 1997

One of the common errors in modern thought is the confusion between reason and rationalism. If one is opposed to rationalism, it is mainly assumed that one is irrational, which is similar to saying that, if one is opposed to Romanticism, one is against emotions or feelings. Such an attitude would mean that Shakespeare's works are devoid of emotions.

The simplest definition of rationalism sees it as the foundation and basis of establishing religious truth, that reason is the essential source of religious knowledge rather than revelation and/or sense perception, and that our main source of religious knowledge is reason. On the other hand, reason is simply a sufficient ground of explanation to enable a conclusion or explain a fact. It is the power of comprehending, inferring, or thinking in an orderly way.

To illustrate, we can by faith accept the doctrine of the atonement and then by reason understand its implications. From a *rationalistic* perspective, we would subject the doctrine to the test of satisfying the requirements of rationality before we accept it

From the perspective of the rationalist, John Calvin and Cornelius Van Til were irrationalists because they upheld the primacy of revelation and held God to be understandable and coherent while incomprehensible because the mind of man can never encompass nor comprehend the infinite and eternal being and mind of God.

Another problem in rationalism has been very ably cited by Joseph Braswell:

> The Enlightenment's view of Reason was at bottom *impersonalistic*, positing an absolute rationality of the universe that was person-independent. Human concepts were supposed to conform to the things themselves; the object to be known was itself the norm of truth in a correspondence of propositions to

> objective states of affairs, of mind to thing or subject to object. This proved to be a dead end, as the postmodernists have demonstrated. Correspondence is now seen to be a correspondence of my judgments with the judgments of others within the social context of accredited research communities (or other appropriate groups of potential objectors and critics) who share my research tradition (our paradigm) and sit in peer review of my assertions. (Joseph Braswell, "Christian Epistemology in the Postmodern Age," in *Journal of Christian Reconstruction* [Fall, 1996]: 14, no. 1, pp. 258–259. Braswell's entire article is exceptionally telling.)

This impersonalism goes back at least to Aristotle, for whom God was simply a limiting concept to avoid an infinite regress. His impersonalism was antitheistic in all its implications.

The rationalist seeks to prove the existence of God, failing to recognize that God is the source of all created beings and the ground, not the object, of proof. The arrogance of rationalism is its insistence that man's own reason is the ground of proof! One bumptious churchman who traveled widely after World War II would tell people that he could prove to them that God exists if they would only give him a little time. But St. Paul in Romans 1:17–23 makes it clear that the lack of the knowledge of God is not an epistemological question but a moral one. All men know that God is, for the things visible and invisible "from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by things that are made, even this eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Rom. 1:20). Ungodly men hold (or, hold back) the truth in unrighteousness or injustice (Rom. 1:18). Because of their moral rebellion, they rebel also at the knowledge of God, the Author of the law they hate.

In other words, rationalism substitutes for the *moral* problem that faces all men an *intellectual* problem. This Calvin denied, as did Van Til. Man's problem is his rebellion against God, his war against his Maker. Rationalism thus falsifies the most basic aspect of the faith, namely, that sin, not a failure of knowledge, has created the great divide between man and God. In Psalm 14:1, we are told that, "The *fool* hath said in his heart, There is no God." We are then told that these fools are corrupt, and "there is none that doeth good." The fool is *nabal*, a stupid, impious, wicked, and vile man. His problem is moral, not intellectual.

One of the great evils of rationalism has been to falsify man's religious problem, to try to make it intellectual rather than moral. Theological rationalism opens the door to apostasy. Rationalism is thus hardly a reasonable faith!

It is significant that today rationalism is virtually dead outside of theological circles, where too often eighteenth-century rationalism is alive

and well, and also deadly to the faith. Too often those who claim to uphold the faith and its fundamentals are thoroughly wedded to Enlightenment premises. It is not surprising, then, that colleges and the seminaries they found to preserve the faith end up by undermining it.

193

DESCARTES AND RATIONALISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 210, March 1997

NOTE: This is, in a sense, a continuation of Position Paper No. 209,[1] on "Reason and Rationalism."

RATIONALISM has ancient roots, but, in its modern form, it stems very clearly from René Descartes (1596–1650). Some would object to placing Descartes in the ranks of men whose work was damaging to the faith, but Descartes's formal church adherence is no more conclusive than Ivan the Terrible's obvious allegiance to the Russian Orthodox Church.

J. Hillis Miller, in *The Disappearance of God* (1963) and *Poets of Reality* (1965), called attention to the importance of Descartes to the modern mind. Descartes's starting point in philosophy was *cogito, ergo sum*, I think; therefore I am. Self-consciousness was for him the primary reality. Things exist, Descartes held, simply because I think them. As God said, let there be, and there was, i.e., the universe came into being, for Descartes reality began with his thinking of things. Man is the center, the great subject, and everything else is an object — if validated by man's thinking. God then becomes one object among many, an object requiring validation by man's thinking in order to become real. Man can thus "create" God or will "the death of God." For this reason, the Death of God thinkers of ca. 1970 did not concern themselves with whether or not the Biblical God existed "out there." For them, what was important was the fact that He was no longer real to them, and therefore He was dead.

Immanuel Kant developed Descartes's implications fully and clearly. In the "Preface to the Second Edition" of his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant wrote:

1. See pp. 808–810. — editor

> Hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects. But all attempts to extend our knowledge of objects by establishing something in regard to them *a priori*, by means of concepts, have, on this assumption, ended in failure. We must therefore make trial whether we may not have more success in the task of metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge. (Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Norman Kemp Smith trans., [1934], p. 16)

The logic of this leads to the Hegelian premise that the rational is the real, i.e., the mind is the creator of reality. In this logic, man makes God, not God, man. In Biblical terms, trying to prove the existence of God by reason is like trying to find the sun on a hot, clear summer day by lighting a match.

But, in Cartesian rationalism, man was now the creator and God the created one. In the existentialist development of this rationalism, true knowledge and true existence required the discarding of all knowledge from the past, parents, church, and society, and a pure dependence on the moment. Jean-Paul Sartre could hold, in *Being and Nothingness*, that, between a philosopher-prime minister who was an existentialist, and the town drunk, the drunkard was the better existentialist because he depended on none for his thinking.

Existentialism has stressed *the moment* because nothing else is real. It cuts itself off from the past, and by denying God, it denies consequences because the rationality of man is alone determinative, not past events, nor God. As a result, there is also no future, because self-created man is severed from past and future, from consequence, and lives in the pseudo-eternity of the moment.

Cornelius Van Til often pointed out that rationalism ends in irrationality because it has ultimately nothing left other than man and his self-consciousness, man as the center and subject who decrees the existence of men and things only when he chooses to recognize and "prove" them.

It is interesting to note how many of the prominent philosophers since Descartes have not been married. Marriage is disruptive of the monotheistic isolation of the new god, man as the subject and center. (There are hints from history that Socrates was a very poor husband!)

Herbert Ernest Cushman, in *A Beginner's History of Philosophy*, volume 2 (1911), wrote of Descartes's philosophy, "It spread over Europe in a somewhat similar way to the Darwinian evolution theory in modern times" (p. 80). It was "*obvious truth*" to men, and like Darwin's theory, no proof was needed. Moreover, according to Cushman, Descartes "demanded the same return to an uncorrupted mind for understanding that Rousseau many years later demanded for the heart" (p. 70). Descartes's

view of the mind or reason was of an unfallen entity whose judgments are final, and this is basic to all rationalism and exposes its non-Christian character. Moreover, Descartes changed the definition of reality: "For Descartes reality lies within the Self" (p. 72). While at times Descartes used Christian terms, described God as the only substance, and man as created, the basic direction of his thinking was to place man at the center, and reason or consciousness as the final judge.

We now live in the death throes of Cartesianism, and, sadly, too much of the world, Christian and non-Christian, is Cartesian. Modernists and fundamentalists alike reflect Descartes. To make man, the self, or the soul, the ultimate center of religion and religious activity is to deny our Lord's words in Matthew 6:33 and to forget the Kingdom of God.

The Cartesian influence has stripped both theology and morality of meaning to center emphasis on man's reason, or his soul, or his self, as the case may be. Cartesianism has shriveled the world, as also men's souls. By exaggerating man's powers, it has deformed and limited man.

It is important for Christians to break with Descartes and all forms of rationalism, and to follow the superb Reformation view of Cornelius Van Til.

194

RATIONALISM AND THE MIND OF MAN

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 213, June 1997

One of the great fallacies of rationalism is its failure to take the fall of man seriously. Man's original sin is to try to be his own god, his own source of law, morality, and determination (Gen. 3:5). The Reformed view is that man is totally depraved as a result of the fall, i.e., every aspect of his being is corrupted by his sin. This does not mean that fallen man is not capable of some limited good, but rather that the ruling and overruling premise in his life is his will to be god, to supplant God and to efface His memory.

Now, if the Bible be true, we must agree with St. Paul that "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7). What we are told, *first*, is that fallen man's *mind* "is enmity against God." This certainly applies to the Scholastic view of the mind as well as Protestant rationalism. We are not told that the natural man's mind entertains enmity against God, but that it is enmity against God in all its being. The evidence for this is its refusal to be subject to the *law* of God. Moreover, given the premise of the fall, natural man's mind cannot be other than "enmity against God." The rationalist's premise is that reason can prove God's existence and vindicate His claims to fallen man, an impossible tenet.

We can neither presuppose that fallen man can be convinced of God's existence and law by reason, nor can we assume a neutral stance on his part. But this is precisely what the rationalist tried to do. James Oliver Buswell Jr., in *A Christian View of Being and Knowing* (1960), in criticizing Cornelius Van Til, insisted on the innocence of many unbelievers: "I know many unbelievers who are simply lost, bewildered, and in the dark" (James Oliver Buswell Jr., *A Christian View of Being and Knowing* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1960], p. 175). It is a pity that Buswell

did not notify God that He was in error in His judgments concerning fallen men! The Bible obviously needs revision if Buswell was right.

This is not a trifling matter. If the Bible is true about man, man's knowing is determined not by pure reason, but by his relationship to God. This means that pure reason does not exist, nor can man's reason function without reference to his relationship to God. As against all rationalistic philosophies, certain moral premises precede or undergird and condition all of man's thinking. Is man the thinker at war with God, or is he at peace with Him? The thinking of John Dewey is not the thinking of Cornelius Van Til. We can concede that a non-Christian and a Christian are both good thinkers, but we must recognize that each begins with a different presupposition to argue to a logical conclusion.

The rationalist begins by placing himself outside time and history. His reason is supposedly objective and timeless. Of course, he may be in a chain of development, a Hume, a Hegel, a Dewey, or a Wittgenstein, but, somehow, for the rationalist, a philosophical rationalist transcends time to speak out of the clouds of being as the voice of logic. The rationalist begins with irrational premises about logic and reason.

Moreover, the rationalist insists on placing God Himself under the judgments of man's reason. E. J. Carnell wanted all revelations to meet the test of his reason. The arrogance of the fall is in abundant evidence in rationalism.

The mind of man "is enmity against God" whenever and wherever it seeks to think without beginning with God. Whether they intend to or not, men put first things first, and the rationalist places his reason before God: he begins with reason, not with God.

The starting point of rationalism is more the fall than it is reason. Its pride, arrogance, and neglect of the Biblical revelation is evidence of this. Cite the fall and the noetic effects of sin to a rationalist, and he derides it as not a rational argument while professing to be a Christian.

In recent years, humanistic rationalism has largely left philosophy. At the same time, it has flourished within the church. It is very much an Enlightenment survival and alien to theology in spirit.

195

RATIONALISM AND HERESY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 215, August 1997

The word *heresy* (from the Greek *hairesis*) means choice, a choice made against or contrary to an established faith or practice. Within the context of church history, it means opinions that go contrary to God's revealed Word. The word *rationalism* (from the Latin *ratio*) is defined as "a view that reason and experience rather than the nonrational are the fundamental criteria in the solution of problems." Rationalism seeks a natural as against a supernatural explanation. Within the realm of theology, E. J. Carnell expressed the essence of rationalism in his statement, "Bring on your revelations! Let them make peace with the law of contradiction and the facts of history, and they will deserve a rational man's assent" (*An Introduction to Apologetics*, p. 178). In this perspective, man's reason sits in judgment on God and His revelation instead of working in terms of it. Such rationalism may agree with orthodox theology, but in its basic premise, the sufficiency, right, and necessity of reason to sit in judgment over God and His revelation, it is heresy. It enthrones man's reason as the supreme judge over all things, beginning with God.

Rationalism has insisted on identifying itself with reason, a fallacy, because it represents a misuse of reason. Fallen man's original sin is to be his own god, knowing or determining for himself what is good or evil, right or wrong, or law or morality (Gen. 3:5). It can recognize and approve of the God of the Bible but only as an independent source of judgment and corroboration. Theological rationalism leads in time to humanistic rationalism. Its goal may be a kind of orthodoxy, but its methodology is simply a radical heresy. God created the heavens and the earth, and all things therein, including man and man's reason. The clay cannot judge the potter nor sit as a court to verify the potter's existence. Such a procedure is an absurd arrogance.

Cornelius Van Til repeatedly demonstrated the circularity of man's reason. Man begins on certain given premises to reason to their necessary conclusions. His thinking has a context. He does not approach any subject except from the given context of a given world. Still worse, the philosophers, most obviously the rationalist, refuse to deal with the fact of man's fall and the effect of the fall on man's mind. As Calvin noted, "Thus they imagine that man is always possessed of reason sufficient for the proper government of himself." (John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 1, 1.15.6 [Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1936], p. 213). Calvin continued, "The philosophers, being ignorant of the corruption of nature proceeding from the punishment of the fall, improperly confound two very different states of mankind" (ibid., 1.15.7; 214). Salvation should not confirm man in the priority of his reason but rather make him mindful of its limitations and the sufficiency of God's revelation. Man's intellect, as Van Til pointed out, is not sinless. And when man ignores the Fall, it "is always tantamount to ignoring his creation" (Cornelius Van Til, *An Introduction to Theology*, vol. 1 [Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Theological Seminary, syllabus, 1947], p. 32). As Van Til said further,

> Nature has had a veil cast over it on account of the sin of man, and the mind of man itself has been corrupted by sin. Accordingly, use must not, now that sin has entered into the world, separate natural theology from the theological physics and theological psychology. After sin has entered the world, no one of himself knows nature aright, and no one knows the souls of man aright. How then could man reason from nature to nature's God and get anything but a distorted notion of God? The sort of natural theology that the sinner who does not recognize himself as a sinner makes is portrayed to us in the first chapter of Romans. (ibid., p. 69)

Some of the champions of rationalism will cite man's fall in their theological statements, but not in their philosophies. There the subject is taboo, and their thinking assumes the unfallen purity of reason. How they can do this and still retain their orthodoxy they do not explain. But to disregard the fall of man is to deny the faith: it is heresy, not orthodoxy. Moreover, as Calvin pointed out, such men disregard God's predestination in their reasoning. As for the atonement, the subject never touches their philosophy! Calvin noted, "What God decrees, must necessarily come to pass; yet it is not by absolute or natural necessity" (Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.16.4; p. 231). But the philosophers recognize only absolute or natural necessity, not God's decree, so that, even when they seem to agree with Biblical doctrine, they are totally at odds with it. The constructs of reason give us a god very much like man and the mind of man. To cite

Calvin again, in a statement like so many in Calvin which are ignored by these rationalists in the church, "Hence it happens that so many worthless characters in the present day violently oppose this doctrine, because they will admit nothing to be lawful for God, but what agrees with the dictates of their own reason" (ibid., 1.17.2; p. 234). He added,

> Therefore, since God claims a power unknown to us of governing the world, let this be to us the law of sobriety and modesty, to acquiesce in his supreme dominion, to account his will the only rule of righteousness, and most righteous cause of all things. (ibid., 1.17.2; p. 235)

Statements like this, which are many, are ignored by those philosophers who claim to be Calvinists; the man, the thinker in philosophy, is for them a creature who has never existed, not in Eden, nor in the world since. Their rationalism is a form of heresy, an attempt to combine humanistic philosophies and Biblical faith. Not surprisingly, such rationalism has been especially prominent in Arminian circles, where the departure from the God of Scripture begins in theology. All the same, this heresy has been too common in Calvinistic circles.

196

THE BANKRUPTCY OF RATIONALISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 216, September 1997

Rationalism has often "proven" the existence of God with its use of reason, but the god verified by the rationalist's reason is the god of his imagination, and, for far too many people, this is the only god they know. The living God of the Bible is offensive to the moral sense of fallen men. The rough edges of fallen man's god are smoothed out until he becomes acceptable to reason, and also agreeable to the sinner's idea of what god should be.

The rationalistic philosophers of religion rarely if ever speak of the fall of man, nor of the effects of the fall on man's mind. Somehow, the philosopher is immune to sin! But the noetic effect of sin is very central to a Biblical doctrine of knowledge. Man's reason is not immune to the effects of sin. It is, rather, radically altered by it.

Sin alters man's perspective and warps it radically. Since original sin is man's will to be his own god, his own source of ultimate knowledge, and himself the determiner of good and evil, and law and morality, it follows that original sin is essentially related to man's reason. Man the sinner cannot tolerate the God of the Bible, only a god acceptable to his reason. Hence, the only god he can tolerate is the god of his imagination, one who approves of man's rationalism. The god of the philosophers is a particularly ridiculous idol.

The fall of man is basic to a true epistemology or theory of knowledge because the fall meant the radical warping of reason that constitutes rationalism. Before the fall, God was in communication with man. After the fall, the situation changed. In Van Til's words, "If God was to continue His communication with His creatures, it was either to be by condemnation or by atonement" (Cornelius Van Til, *An Introduction to Theology*, vol. 1 [Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Theological Seminary,

1947], p. 104). Condemnation means the judgment, death, and reprobation of man. Atonement means that Christ's sacrificial death, vicariously dying for his elect, removes us from condemnation to life, from guilt to innocence. Our rationalistic theologians act as if there is no relationship between atonement and epistemology, and such an assumption makes them at best defective Christians, if not indeed anti-Christian.

It is obvious, *first* of all, that man as sinner hates the truth. In this he is logical (and how he loves logic!), because the truth condemns him. It is for him so much easier to go by Aristotle than by the Bible, because Aristotle acknowledges no fall. If no fall is admitted into our theory of knowledge, then one's thinking is flawless, and we have a rational god presiding over rational man, and both are agreed on Aristotle's logic!

Thus, *second*, not only does fallen man hate the truth, he at best warps it when he is faced with the truth. "Man is assumed to be the final or ultimate reference point of predication" in such thinking, which is *univocal* reasoning. "In contrast to this we speak of the form of reasoning employed by the Christian who recognizes that God is the ultimate reference point of predication as *analogical* reasoning" (ibid., p. 97n).

Because man's mind and will have been corrupted by the fall, his ability to think has also been corrupted. Failure to know God as the Lord means failure to know ourselves as creatures. We begin, then, with a false premise about ourselves and our ability to know.

Man's thinking has been corrupted by the fall, *third*, so that he now thinks of himself "as a metaphysically ultimate starting point" with his mind as normal (ibid., p. 92). The key to reality is not the mind of man but the mind of God. Man's mind is fallen and finite and by no means capable of understanding the world apart from God's written revelation. Even apart from sin, unfallen man could only think God's thoughts after Him.

Amazingly, rationalistic theology has saturated the church in all its branches, Eastern and Western, Roman Catholic and Protestant. Too many theologians and religious philosophers assume that, until their rationalism came into play, man was ignorant of God, or knew Him poorly. The arrogance of rationalism is the arrogance of original sin.

To say this is not to depreciate reason. It would be a foolish man who assumed that Abelard was a better thinker than St. Anslem. St. Anslem's premise was, "I believe in order that I may understand," whereas Abelard held that one should understand in order to believe, a rationalistic premise. Abelard's starting point was rationalism, Anslem's was Biblical. Not surprisingly, Anslem's philosophy was centered on the atonement.

Rationalism itself is evidence of the radical effect of the fall in that the world of epistemology, the theory of knowledge, has shifted its center

from God to man. Epistemology is now a semiforgotten branch of philosophy because it is bankrupt. The modern stream of thought from Descartes though Hume, Kant, Hegel, Sartre, Wittgenstein, and others is one of intellectual and moral bankruptcy and a despair of knowledge.

197

RATIONALISM AND HISTORY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 217, October 1997

An important aspect of rationalism is that it is normally nonhistorical in its approach to reality. The perspective of Hellenistic philosophy is a focus on abstract ideas or forms that govern reality, and they are nonmaterial. This is why the prologue to John's gospel is so anti-Hellenic in declaring that, "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). At every point, this statement is a violation of Hellenic premises. The Word is a person; He is made flesh; He is the "only begotten of the Father" and the fullness or incarnation of grace and truth. This for Greek thought was a confusion of ideas and history.

Because of this view of things, philosophy in this tradition bypasses history. Hence the failure to consider the fall and the atonement in philosophy: it simply is not done. Both doctrines are totally anchored on history. In the fall, at a point in man's early history, mankind, in the persons of Adam and Eve, chose to submit to the tempter's thesis that man could be his own god, knowing, or determining for himself, what is good and evil, law and morality, and truth and error (Gen. 3:5).

Similarly, the atonement stands totally rooted in an historical event, Christ's vicarious sacrifice on the cross, paying the penalty of death for the sins of His people, His new human race. The Christian faith and philosophy, theologically and philosophically, is firmly grounded in history. Its holy book, the Bible, is largely history. Greek philosophy and modern philosophy are firmly nonhistorical at best. It is human thought that is determinative for them, not a long history of man's response to God.

Instead of man's thinking being determinative, it is only God's thinking that can be so. Man's thinking at best can establish gods made in

man's image, and this is idolatry. All thinking is presuppositional. If man presupposes himself, his logical conclusion, like Kant's, is that all we can know is our mind. If man presupposes God, then his presupposition is inclusive of all things because the God of Scripture is the maker of all things. Like the sun that gives light to all things else, so our faith in the triune God of Scripture gives light to all possible knowledge.

When St. Paul preached at Athens, as Van Til pointed out in *Paul at Athens*, he did not attempt to prove God nor Christ. He *declared* the reality of the Lord, not of his mind and its reasoning. This was at once offensive. They were ready to debate across the lines of differing rationalistic philosophies, but not against the presupposition of the triune God, nor His revelation in history. They mocked Paul for presenting the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead (Acts 17:32), for confusing purported history and philosophy, and for his very alien presupposition.

Modern man has carried the Hellenic priority of man's mind to its logical conclusion. This has meant, as Van Til has shown, that

> In modern times man has boldly asserted that he can identify himself first before he speaks of God. He will identify God after he has first identified himself. And this is not merely a methodological matter, due to the fact that man must psychologically think of himself first before he can think of God. It is a matter of ultimate metaphysics. It is the idea that man is ultimate. Man as ultimate can and must identify himself in terms of himself. He must therefore also virtually use the law of contradiction as means by which to determine what is possible and what is impossible in reality. (Cornelius Van Til, *A Christian Theory of Knowledge* [Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Theological Seminary, 1954], p. 180).

If man is ultimate, then indeed, God must stand with His revelation at the bar of man's reason, as Carnell demanded. But, if God is ultimate, man's reason must think God's thoughts after Him, not replace the mind of God with his own.

This means that man's ideas of logic and knowledge are precisely that, man's ideas, and limited by the limitations of man's mind. As Van Til wrote:

> Human knowledge can never be completely comprehensive knowledge. Every knowledge transaction has in it somewhere a reference point to God. Now since God is not fully comprehensive to us, we are bound to come into what seems to be contradiction in all our knowledge. Our knowledge is analogical and therefore must be paradoxical. We say that if there is to be any true knowledge at all there must be in God an absolute system of knowledge. We therefore insist that everything must be related to that absolute system of God. Yet we ourselves cannot fully understand that system (Cornelius Van

Til, *The Defense of the Faith* [Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Company, 1955], p. 61).

Was a final system of logic achieved in Aristotle, one binding for all time, and on God? Has not history made it clear that much that man saw as impossible has become possible? To say this does not open the door to unlimited possibilities, because we do not go from Aristotle to chance (a short distance), but to God.

Moreover, we cannot as Christians believe that man's sin affects only his will and not his reason. Clearly, a man is fallen in all his being. The mind is as prone to sin as is man's will. This means that we cannot think Biblically and as Christians and neglect the fact that man is in rebellion against God. This means that man's reason is as totally depraved, as is all the rest of man's being, i.e., total depravity, meaning that all of man is infected by his sin. It is absurd, and a rationalistic error, to assume that the mind does not do more than process information. We can separate ethics and epistemology in the classroom but not in life. Anyone who believes that such a separation exists in practice is a good candidate for buying a gold brick. Scholastic philosophy followed Aristotle in its trust of reason, and Protestant philosophers who are rationalists are in this tradition and alien to the Reformation. The god of the rationalists is an idol made in their own image, a god who meets the requirements of man's reason. Some of these twentieth-century theological rationalists have had serious mental problems, which is not surprising. Playing god over God is a dangerous game.

198

RATIONALISM AND TYRANNY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 218, November 1997

RATIONALISM is both impersonal and nonhistorical in character. In its Greek form, rationalism posited a god as the first cause because its thinking was hostile to an infinite regress of causes, and hence a god as the first cause was required. Beyond that, he had little function. As the first cause, this god was the ultimate idea in that he made unnecessary a blind regression from one cause to another in search of an ever-elusive beginning. This god was impersonal; he was simply a logical necessity as a first cause, not an object of worship nor investigation, but a limiting concept.

In the development of philosophical thought, the idea of an eternal regress lost its threat to reason. One development in the modern era was the insistence by some pragmatic naturalists that, even as Christianity takes God as its given, so naturalism takes the universe as its given. One such professor stated that arguing against creationism was a mistake: one should simply say, "Even as God is your given, the universe is mine." The reaction to his position was not favorable: the students wanted certainty for their view, which science seemingly offered.

Rationalism offers certainty if its basic premise is accepted, namely, that all things are understandable and penetrable by reason. But basic to Christianity is the premise of the incomprehensibility of God. He is far beyond man's comprehension, and He can only be known by revelation. For the mind of man to comprehend God's eternity, infinity, omniscience, omnipotence, and being is impossible. God can be known only by His self-revelation, and then He can be known *truly*, but not exhaustively. This was made clear to Moses by the burning bush. Moses, troubled by God's age-long silence during Israel's Egyptian sojourn, asked, "What is your name?" Names were then definitions, and Moses asked God to

define Himself so that He might be comprehensible. This God refused to do. He simply said, tell them, the people of Israel, "I Am hath sent me unto you" (Exod. 3:14). I am He Who Is, the Eternal One. However, I can be known by my self-revelation, for I am "the Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Exod. 3:15). God reveals Himself: He is not discovered by reason because reason poses as an independent faculty in rationalism and as the definer, not the receiver, of truth.

John Calvin stressed the primacy of God's self-revelation and man's assent to it, and this gave to consistent Calvinists an unrivaled strength. Francis William Buckler observed that in the Reformation era, "Calvinist renegades were rare" (Francis William Bucker, "An Anthropological Approach to the Origins of Protestantism," in Vergiluis Ferm, ed., *The Protestant Credo* [New York, NY: Philosophical Library, 1953], p. 152). To stand on the sovereignty of God and on His revelation is to stand on more than one's rationalizations.

Rationalization always misdefines man. For Aristotle, man was a political animal. For Epictetus, in line with this, man is a member of a city, a *polis*: still a political animal. All non-Biblical definitions of God reduce man to a creature of natural forces, to another kind of animal, to cite Aristotle. Only in his reason does he to some degree rise above himself. It was thus logical to conclude that people, the political animals, should be ruled by philosopher-kings, men whose rationalism had put them in touch with the ultimate (and abstract) ideas. Other men were as cattle and sheep, to be herded into the way that they should go.

According to God's revelation, man is created in God's image, with His communicable attributes, knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures (Gen. 1:26–28; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). In the Platonic tradition, reason is a tool for domination, to be used by the philosopher-kings to control mankind. In the Christian faith, the great sacrament of the Lord's Table is accompanied by a collection for charity.

Rationalism sees itself as a liberating force in history, when in fact it has been a force for tyranny. Plato's followers became the tyrants of Greece, and, with the Renaissance, art and tyranny, both neoplatonic, flourished and brought evils in their wake.

199

RATIONALISM AND THE CHAIN OF BEING

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 220, January 1998

VERY early, a deadly notion from Hellenic rationalism entered into the Christian church, namely, the transfer of the idea of the good from ethics to metaphysics. In terms of this, sin became a thinness of being. In the supposed "great chain of being," sin was at the bottom of the chain. Instead of being *moral* opposites, good and evil were *metaphysical* opposites. Gnosticism carried this notion to strange and fantastic conclusions. In Scholastic philosophy, evil is seen as a thinness of being, and, for Dante, in *The Divine Comedy*, in the last round of the ninth circle of hell, where Lucifer is, all are ice-bound.

There is a world of danger in this view, because the concept of the great chain of being means a continuity of being; it means that both God and man share a common being and therefore are open in their rationality one to another. In terms of Biblical faith, there are two kinds of being, created and uncreated, creation and the God of creation. The mind of God is uncreated, man's mind is created. Because man is a creature in all his being, he bears the stamp of the Creator, even to His image (Gen. 1:26–28). Man's being is discontinuous with God's while imaging it with respect to God's communicable (but not incommunicable) attributes.

To return to the notion that sin and virtue are metaphysical facts, this means that sin leads a person into a thinness of being, and then into virtual or actual nonbeing. This idea is a useful one for those who wish to dispose of hell: those in hell are fading away in their being into nonbeing and are destined to disappear. But sin is not a slenderness of being, but the willful transgression of the law of God. Sin is thus not the metaphysical wasting away of man but his moral rebellion against God and his law. It is a moral, not a metaphysical, declension.

This Hellenic view has important considerations for rationalism. The

rationalist does not self-consciously accept all aspects of his Hellenic inheritance. Being nonhistorical in his approach, he assumes that his reason has all the attributes that philosophy in his day ascribes to it. It is, for example, a shock to read Aristotle *after* Aquinas and to realize that the Aristotle we know is a very different person from the ancient Greek, a somewhat distant relative, in fact.

In either an early or a later form, however, rationalism presupposes a continuity of being between God, or the ultimate ideas or forms, and the mind of man. It is this impersonal continuity of being that is the mainstay of rationalism and its source of truth. The rationalist does not posit a discontinuity, and, with the rare one who might, he does not see this human rationality as fallen. To do so would destroy his rationalism.

Now, if there is a stream of continuity in all of history, that stream will, in its pseudo-Christian forms, absorb the incarnation of Jesus Christ into its continuity. The results of this absorption are startling. The historical Jesus becomes less important than His continuity in some mystical form. This can take several forms. The sacrament of communion can outweigh the historical atonement. Salvation, instead of being from sin, becomes deification, *theosis*. The historical incarnation in the person of Jesus Christ is seen as continuing mystically in His church, and so on and on. In Eastern Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, and Protestantism, we have varying forms of these beliefs. They represent the transmutation of Christianity from a Hebraic to an alien form. The necessity of Scripture gives way to alien and rationalistic premises which insist on the necessity of the church.

In the Greek chain-of-being idea, human autonomy is possible in a way that it is not under the doctrine of creation. Creationism sees the creation of man and of all things else as declaring the total and absolute dependence of all things on God. Having been created out of nothing, and having brought nothing to their making, all creatures are totally dependent on God and totally subject to His sovereign predestinating will. In the great chain of being, all creatures and beings share in God's divinity and are aspects of a common being. Men can rise or fall on the great chain of being, and man's use of reason determines his status. Man is thus essentially autonomous, and he can rise or fall in the chain as his reason determines. The determining force is thus not the personal God, but a common and impersonal reason, available alike to God and to man.

The universe of the great chain of being is open in that there is no absolute and determining God over all. Predestination, then, cannot be a seriously held idea if one is logical. It is an open universe in that man's reason can penetrate all things determinatively. The rational is the real

in this kind of world. But it is a closed world to the God of Scripture, because He is excluded in the name of rationality from the spheres of philosophy and history. Rationalism can "prove" God, but its god is always a dead one, a figment of man's imagination and reason. In the earlier years of modern philosophy, men sought to "prove" the existence of God. The logic of their thinking came into focus with Hegel and after Hegel, the philosopher in his thinking as the actual god of being. Nietzsche clearly saw himself as the new god, but apparently did not like what he saw!

200

RATIONALISM AND GOD

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 222, March 1998

Rationalism is either indifferent or hostile to history, and some historians see history as irrational. This judgment is revealing, because for them all things are divided into either the rational or the irrational, as though the universe could be so divided. Reality, though, is not limited to these two categories, nor is rationality the criterion by which reality is to be judged.

The problem with rationalism is apparent in many scholars, and an example of it is Étienne Borne, a French Roman Catholic scholar. His study of *Atheism* is a curious one in that atheism is discussed in non-Biblical terms. There is thus no discussion of Psalm 14:1, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good." Psalm 14:1 tells us, *first*, that the fool is a vile person, the meaning of *nabal*. He is contemptible in his person and in his thinking. *Second*, the fool is a corrupt man whose works are abominable. For Borne, however, as a professor of philosophy, the atheist is not a fool but a thinker facing valid problems. Paul tells us, "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7). Is the atheist a sinner in theology but an earnest and sincere doubter in philosophy? Can he be God's enemy, despising God's law, and yet a careful and unbiased reasoner in philosophy? Rationalism apparently lacks "common sense"!

Of Hegel, Borne wrote,

> But Hegel did not do what he set out to do. He claimed to be writing a fifth gospel, that of pure reason, substituting the God of the philosophers and the scientists for the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, for the God felt in heart. (Étienne Borne, *Atheism* [New York, NY: Hawthorne Books, 1961], p. 44).

This is as close as he comes to seeing the clear antithesis between rationalism and Christianity. Borne recognized that for men like Auguste Comte, the death of God meant the freedom and true birth of reason (ibid., p. 111). Borne, like modernist Protestantism, assumes the autonomy of reason as the critical judge of all things.

Now, a curious fact accompanies all theories of the autonomy of reason as the judge of all things. Whether in the thinking of Auguste Comte, with his humanistic "church," or with Roman Catholicism, or modernist Protestantism, there must be a strong church because there is at best a very weak "God." For most humanists, their church is the state or the school.

Borne, in discussing St. Thomas Aquinas, noted,

> But for him, the most scientific of theologians, the simple fact of atheism is itself sufficient to establish an important preliminary conclusion: God is not immediately knowable in and for himself, for if God were immediately evident there would be no atheists. A stricter philosophical argument confirms this commonsense inference. (ibid., p. 21)

This is an amazing statement. Psalm 14:1 makes it very clear that the atheist is a base and contemptible person. Psalm 19 tells us of the inescapable knowledge of God, for, as verse 1 declares, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork." St. Paul in Romans 1:18–22 tells us that the knowledge of God is *inescapable knowledge* which men suppress in their unrighteousness, because they are evil. The Bible never argues for the existence of God because it is much more inescapable than the knowledge of the sun.

We must therefore insist, as against the rationalists, that the existence of God is not a matter for proof but the very ground for all proof and for all reason. To begin with rationalism and the "proofs" of God is to substitute an imaginary god for the living God.

But all too many theologians and philosophers bypass the Bible to give us a god that satisfies the criteria of autonomous man and his rationality. They bypass the God of Scripture because He is totally alien to the god of reason. If man is ultimate, and if his reason is the arbiter of reality, a basic premise of rationalism, then man is the judge over all things, and no authority can be claimed for anything contrary to autonomous reason. There is a vast difference between reason under God and autonomous reason. But man is a creature of God, and he is not nor can be autonomous. Moreover, as a sinner, man has a vested interest in making himself autonomous, and his reason the judge. Rather than facing the Judge, man claims to be his own judge! Autonomous man insists that the

God of Scripture does not exist, and he offers the world a better god. The Bible, God's revelation, becomes an account of man's development in his awareness of being. The religious experiences of the prophets of old were supposedly colored by their cultural limitations, and by their lack of scientific and philosophical maturity and knowledge.

Moreover, the rationalist will make no note of the noetic effects of sin. Man can make his own norms and standards, and these are best corrected by man, not by God.

All this means that the religion of the tempter, Genesis 3:5, is replacing the revelation of God Himself. Man prefers his own version of revelation, and he is determined to be judge over God than to be judged by Him.

LIBERTY

201

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY VERSUS RELIGIOUS TOLERATION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 31, June 1982

One of the areas of profound ignorance today is religious liberty and the meaning thereof. The common pattern throughout history, including in the Roman Empire, has been religious toleration, *a very different thing.*

In religious toleration, the state is paramount, and, in every sphere, its powers are totalitarian. The state is the sovereign or lord, the supreme religious entity and power. The state decrees what and who can exist, and it establishes the terms of existence. The state reserves the power to license and tolerate one or more religions upon its own conditions and subject to state controls, regulation, and supervision.

The Roman Empire believed in religious toleration. It regarded religion as good for public morale and morals, and it therefore had a system of licensure and regulation. New religions were ordered to appear before a magistrate, affirm the lordship or sovereignty of Caesar, and walk away with a license to post in their meeting place.

The early church refused licensure because it meant the lordship of Caesar over Christ and His church. The early church refused toleration, because it denied the right of the state to say whether or not Christ's church could exist, or to set the conditions of its existence. *The early church rejected religious toleration for religious liberty.*

Over the centuries, both Catholics and then Protestants often fought for religious liberty. Over the centuries also, the churches too often capitulated to religious toleration, with very evil results. Toleration was productive of fearful evils. *First*, one church was tolerated and established *by the state*, not by Christ, as the "privileged" or state-tolerated institution. This "privilege" called for concessions to the state.

These took a variety of forms. It could mean that the state appointed or controlled the bishops (Protestant or Catholic). It meant that only the state could give permission for a meeting of the church's national convocation or general assembly. In a variety of ways, establishment meant an establishment under the state's control. At its best, the church was turned into a privileged house slave; at its worst, the church was simply a part of the bureaucracy, and the working pastors were rare and alone. Sooner or later, an establishment meant subservience and bondage to the state.

Second, the tolerated church became a parasite, because it was dependent too often on state aid to collect its tithes and dues. It lived, not because of the faith of the people, but because of the state's subsidy. As a result, the state church served the state, not the Lord, nor the Lord's people. (When the states turned humanistic and, losing interest in their captive churches, began to cut their "privileges" and subsidies, revivals broke out in many established churches as a result!)

Third, the tolerated or established church became a persecuting church. It could not compete with its now illegal rivals in faith, and so it used the state to persecute its competitors. Both Catholic and Protestant establishments built up an ugly record in this respect. Meanwhile, their humanist foes could criticize their intolerance and speak of this inhumanity as a necessary aspect of Christianity!

Fourth, religious toleration leads to intolerance, as it should now be apparent. Toleration is licensure; it is a state subsidy, and those possessing it want a monopoly. Hence, intoleration of competitors results, and the church becomes blind to all issues save monopoly. In seventeenth-century England, for example, the blindness of the Church of England under Archbishop Laud, as he fought the Puritans, was staggering. However, when Cromwell came to power, the Presbyterians became a one-issue party, the issue being the control and possession of the Church of England. Had they triumphed, the evils of Laud would have been reproduced. Cromwell balked them; later, the Presbyterians undermined the Commonwealth and helped bring in the depraved Charles II, who quickly ejected them from the Church of England.

In Colonial America, uneasy semiestablishments existed. Technically, the Church of England was the established church for all the Crown realms, including Catholic Ireland. (Ireland was never more Catholic than *after* England imposed an alien church on the land!) Carl Bridenbaugh, in *Mitre and Sceptre* (1962), showed how the fear and threat of a full-scale establishment with American bishops alarmed Americans and led to the War of Independence. Meanwhile, in the colonies, men began to oppose religious toleration in favor of religious liberty. Here, the

Baptists were most important, especially Isaac Backus.

Backus declared, "We view it to be our incumbent duty to render unto Caesar the things that are his but also that *it is of as much importance not to render unto him anything that belongs only to God, who is to be obeyed rather than any man*. And as it is evident that God always claimed it as his sole prerogative to determine by his own laws what his worship shall be, who shall minister in it, and how they shall be supported, so it is evident that this prerogative has been, and still is, encroached upon in our land." (William J. McLoughlin, ed., *Isaac Backus on Church, State, and Calvinism, Pamphlets, 1754–1789* [Harvard University Press, 1965], p. 317) The defenders of establishment or toleration became, Backus said, "Caesar's friend," citing the Pharisees who said to Rome's magistrates about Jesus, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend" (John 19:12). We cannot make the state the definer of man's duty to God, as the establishment-toleration position does. This position, Backus held, takes matters of faith from the conscience of man to the councils of state and thus undermines true faith. Backus saw that the new country would have no unity if establishment and toleration became lawful in the Federal Union. Backus quoted Cotton Mather, who said, "Violences may bring the erroneous to be hypocrites, but they will never bring them to be believers." The heart of Backus's position was this: "Religion (meaning Biblical religion) was prior to all states and kingdoms in the world and therefore could not in its nature be subject to human laws" (p. 432).

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, replacing religious toleration and establishment with religious liberty, was the result of the work of Backus and many other churchmen. It represented a great and key victory in church history.

Now, however, religious liberty is dead in the United States. It only exists if you confine it to the area between your two ears. Instead of religious liberty, we have religious toleration. Now, religious toleration is the reality of the situation in Red China and Red Russia. In both cases, the toleration is very, very limited. In the United States, the toleration is still extensive, and most churchmen fail to recognize that the states and the federal government are insisting that only toleration, not liberty, exists, and the limits of that toleration are being narrowed steadily.

Thus, Senator Ernest F. Hollings of South Carolina has given expression to the position of the regulators and tolerationists, writing (February 19, 1982), "Tax exemption is a privilege, not a right. It is not only proper but Constitutional that the government condition that privilege on the Constitutional requirement of non-discrimination. Religious freedom is a priceless heritage that must be jealously guarded. But when religious

belief is contrary to the law of the land then it is the law, not religion, that must be sustained. The 1964 Civil Rights Act provided there be no discrimination in institutions receiving Federal financial assistance and the courts have interpreted this to mean that no public monies be appropriated directly or indirectly through tax exemption to those institutions that discriminate" (letter by Hollings, in response to the Reagan bill S2024, to control Christian schools).

Senator Hollings has, with many, many other members of Congress, *first*, replaced religious liberty with state toleration. Tax exemption originally meant no jurisdiction by the state over the church, because the power to tax is the power to control and destroy. Now, these humanistic statists tell us it is a subsidy! Tax exemption is called "Federal financial assistance," and the courts hold that controls must follow assistance from the civil treasury. This means a mandate to control churches, and every facet of their existence, including Christian Schools, colleges, seminaries, employees, etc., in the name of controlling federal grants!

Second, Hollings (and others, including many judges) holds that this means that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 must take priority over the First Amendment. The Civil Rights laws forbid discrimination in terms of race, and also a number of other things, *including creed*. The evidence is accumulating that federal authorities believe that they have now the legal *right* to require churches to ordain women, and homosexuals; on January 26, 1982, to a group of us meeting with Edwin Meese and eight or ten Justice Department lawyers in the White House, Meese (a Lutheran layman!) said flatly that this was within the legitimate power of the federal government. This means that the church, in terms of the same laws, can be forbidden to discriminate with respect to creed! This would mean equal time for all creeds, including humanism and atheism, in every church. In the Worldwide Church of God case, the court held that a church and its assets belongs, not to the members thereof, but to all people, all citizens!

Third, the position of Hollings; Reagan; before him, Carter; the Justice Department; the Internal Revenue Service; the Labor Department; the Treasury Department; and the several states is that the only "freedom" that the church can have is that activity which the state chooses to tolerate. Toleration on any and all activities is subject to regulation, controls, and oversight.

This is, of course, totalitarianism. The fact is that religious liberty is dead and buried; it needs to be resurrected. We *cannot* begin to cope with our present crisis until we recognize that religious liberty has been replaced with religious toleration. The limits of that toleration are being

steadily narrowed. If Christians are silent today, the Lord will not be silent towards them when they face the judgment of His Supreme Court. There is a war against Biblical faith, against the Lord, and the men waging that war masquerade it behind the façade of nondiscrimination, subsidies, legitimate public interest, and so on.

All this is done in the name of one of the most evil doctrines of our time: *public policy*. Nothing contrary to public policy should have tax exemption, and, some hold, *any* right to exist. Today, public policy includes homosexual "rights," abortion, an established humanism, and much, much more. The implication is plain, and, with some, it is a manifesto: no one opposing public policy has any rights. The public policy doctrine is the new face of totalitarianism. It has all the echoes of tyrannies old and new, and with more muscles.

What is increasingly apparent is that the triune God of Scripture, the Bible itself, and all faith grounded thereon, are contrary to public policy. Christianity has no place in our state schools and universities; it does not inform the councils of state; every effort by Christians to affect the political process is called a violation of the First Amendment and "the separation of church and state." Our freedom of religion is something to be tolerated only if we keep it between our two ears. A war has been declared against us, and we had better know it, and we had better stand and fight before it is too late.

We may be able to live under religious toleration, but it will beget all the ancient evils of compromise, hypocrisy, and a purely or largely public religion. It will replace conscience with a state license, and freedom with a state-endowed cell of narrow limits. This is the *best* that toleration may afford us in the days ahead.

But the Lord alone is God, and He does not share His throne with the state. If we surrender to Caesar, we will share in Caesar's judgment and fall. If we stand with the Lord, we shall stand in His Spirit and power. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1). At the heart of that yoke of bondage is the belief and fear that the powers of man (and the state) are greater than the power of God. It is bondage to believe that man can prevail, or that man can frustrate God's sovereign and holy purpose. The only real question is this: will we be a part of the world's defeat and judgment, or a part of the Lord's Kingdom and victory?

202

LIBERTY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 194, October 1995

Words have often been battlegrounds as different groups have insisted on new meanings and contents. A key word, one which has been a center of conflict, is *liberty*.

The word *liberty* comes from the name of the main Roman god of viticulture, *Liber*. Since all farming depends on the fertility of the soil and animals, fertility-cult practices were common to rural and urban areas. Such worship meant the public display of images of sexual organs, the male ones especially. These images were often paraded in carts. In Lavinium, an entire month was given to sexual rites by the people. In some if not almost all areas, fertility of the fields was "insured" by having many couples copulate in the fields. Every kind of sexual practice was usually permitted if not required. Sexual restraint during such festivals or carnivals was regarded as antisocial, because the future of man "required" the physical invocation of fertility.

Because of this, *liberty* came to mean sexual promiscuity, and the lawlessness of such festivals as the Saturnalia. Liberty thus did not mean political or religious freedom, nor did it mean security for one's property and money: it meant, as Augustine and others charged, *freedom to sin*. (The word *freedom* has a like origin, but north European, and comes from the name of a goddess, Freya.) For the early church, the pagan concept of liberty was the antithesis of all law and morality and was a demand for the "right" to sin and to be lawless.

As against this, the Biblical witness is eloquent. In Hebrew, the word signifies a happy spontaneity, a purity, unfettered like a bird (*derowr*). It is associated with the jubilee proclamation, "proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" (Lev. 25:10).

It is not a lawless concept because it is at the heart of God's law and an

inescapable expression of it. The pagan view of liberty is tied to sexual license and promiscuity, the Biblical view to God and His law. The brother of our Lord, in James 1:25, speaks of the *necessity* of looking "into the perfect law of liberty," God's law, and "being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work," for faith without the works of obedience to God's law is dead (James 2:14–26). Paul in 2 Corinthians 3:17 is very emphatic: "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," and by this Paul means that the veil which leads to a limited understanding of God's law-word is removed (2 Cor. 3:12–18).

Very clearly, these two doctrines of liberty are totally different things. The pagan view of liberty is lawlessness, beginning with sexual promiscuity, whereas the Biblical view sees God's law as our charter of freedom.

This is why antinomianism is so evil, so pernicious a doctrine. It sides with the pagans and libertines without realizing it. By their extensive preaching for several generations, the antinomian clergy have helped revive paganism in our midst. One evangelical leader, antinomian to the core, has wondered why, *in terms of his own study and conclusion,* evangelical young people are so much like the fallen world in their sexual behavior. If he would examine his own preaching, he would understand why. Ideas do have consequences.

The rites for Liber and other fertility cult gods and goddesses began as once-a-year festivals. But, logically, in time they became more frequent, especially the cults of Cybele Magne Mater, Gaia, and the like. The goddess cults became the most extreme in this regard.

In fact, because their fertility cults were lawless in God's sight, their end was logically death. The cults became suicidal and murderous. With the priests in such groups, self-castration became the supreme sacrifice. It was usually performed during a religious ecstasy, accompanied by intense dancing, with the consequences painfully felt in the cold light of the next morning.

We live today in a civilization which globally has returned to the pagan doctrines of liberty. It has abandoned the Biblical doctrine of liberty and is therefore losing its freedoms in the spheres of education, property, politics, religion, and more, but it believes itself to be free because it is licentious. When its devotees catch AIDS, Herpes II, and other of the twenty-five plus sexually transmitted diseases, its implicit cry is the ancient one of Rome: "The Christians to the lions!" It was an ugly battle, but it was neither the pagans nor the lions who won, but the Christians. The battle today is again a bitter one, but the pagans are again losing: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31).

203

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 12, May 1980

One of the great moments of history occurred at the time of the Reformation, but its significance was too little appreciated then, and its implications were not developed. Frederick III, or, Frederick the Wise (1463–1525), was elector of Saxony (1486–1525). He founded the university, Wittenberg, where both Martin Luther and Melanchthon taught. Luther and the elector may never have met. Although Frederick gradually came to accept certain Lutheran doctrines, he remained a Catholic to the end. His long protection of Luther was not motivated by agreement. What were his motives?

At this distance, it is not easy to say. Certainly, if we limit it to self-interest, we are distorting history. True, there were problems of jurisdiction. The elector's area, Thuringia and Saxony, was a domain one-ninth the size of England. In it were a hundred different monasteries, and parts of six different bishoprics. Five of the bishops lived outside the elector's realm. Thus, a different law prevailed for these ecclesiastical domains. It would be easy to conclude that self-interest led Frederick the Wise to defend Luther: he could then control the church as easily as the state if his were a unified realm.

Such a conclusion presupposes a desire by Frederick to control Luther, something he did not do. Luther was more ready for a magisterial power in the church than was Frederick. Frederick protected Luther; he did not seek to control him. This point is all the more important when we recognize their religious differences.

The protection, however, went both ways. In a letter of 1522, cited by Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, in *Out of Revolution: Autobiography of Western Man*, Luther, at a critical point, offered the elector his protection. He wrote:

> This is written to Your Grace that Your Grace may know I am coming to Wittenberg under a much higher protection than the Prince-Elector's. I have no mind to ask for Your Grace's protection; nay, I hold that I could protect Your Grace more than he could protect me. Moreover, if I knew that Your Grace could and would protect me, I would not come. In this, no sword can direct nor help; God alone must act in this matter, without all care and seeking.
>
> Therefore he who believes most will protect most; and because I feel that Your Grace is still weak in the faith, I cannot by any means think of Your Grace as the man who could protect or save me.

"Protection" was thus made a theological fact. In terms of Deuteronomy 28, it was grounded in God's blessing on faith and obedience. As Rosenstock-Huessy noted so incisively, "Thomas Paine offering George Washington his protection would seem ridiculous." Both the protection and the freedom which concerned Frederick III and Luther had become theological facts. A Catholic prince and a Protestant reformer had come together to establish an important Christian relationship, one with deep Biblical roots, and long strands in church history, which established a fact too little appreciated in the days that followed.

In the United States, the First Amendment to the Constitution represents a development of this faith. This amendment was added at the insistence of the clergy. The amendment reads: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition for a redress of grievances." We miss the point of this law if we fail to note that each of the original ten amendments, as well as subsequent ones, is a single body of thought and law, a unified whole, a single subject. We are not talking about three, four, or five things here (freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, or petition), nor one (freedom). After all, other amendments deal with freedom as well, and, if freedom were the key legal concept, the first five amendments could have been made one amendment.

The unifying fact in the First Amendment is a man's immunity in his faith and beliefs: the freedom to express his beliefs in religious worship, in speech, press, assembly, and petition. This law was framed by colonial men for whom these things were matters of faith and principle. There was therefore for them a necessary unity in this statement: instead of five rights they saw one fact. Their separation today means their diminution. It means also the steady decline of freedom in every aspect of the First Amendment.

Thus, the purpose of the First Amendment was to bar the state from entrance into, or powers over, the principled or religious stand and

expressions of law-abiding men in worship, instruction, speech, publication, assembly, and petition. When Protestant Luther said to Catholic Elector-Prince Frederick III that he, Luther, was Frederick's protection in his (Luther's) free and independent move and expression of faith, and Frederick accepted that fact, and acted on it, a major step was taken. Freedom of religion was then not a privilege created and granted by the state, but rather something radically different. It meant, rather, the protection of the state by the freedom of faith. The stronger and more faithful that free exercise of faith, the greater the protection of the state. As Luther audaciously declared, "he who believes most will protect most." The stronger that free faith is, the stronger the state and society.

This freedom of religion, as earlier Americans understood it, meant that the ministry of grace had a Levitical or instructional duty to set forth the counsel of God for every area of life. The church was separate from the state, but not religion. Through the ministry of instruction, God's law-word concerning every area of life and thought was to be set forth.

Decline set in when the church limited the scope of God's Word to the church, and when the state began to extend its powers over the family, the school, economics, and more. Today, current court cases see claims by state agencies which would entirely eliminate the First Amendment immunities for religion.

The dereliction of the press in this situation is particularly distressing. The press itself has been the target of various court decisions which seriously curtail or limit the freedom of the press, or, at the very least, place it under a cloud. Of course, all these decisions have a "good" purpose; every restriction placed upon freedom claims a good cause, to curtail or restrain abuses. All serve rather as restraints upon good motives, not evil ones. Evil places no value on, nor attention to, restraints; criminal codes already provide a legitimate recourse against the evil misuse of freedom. Attempts to restrain pornography and libel have had minimal results; the lawbreaker is a specialist in circumventing the law, whereas the legitimate publication feels the restraints which the lawbreaker is impervious to.

Moreover, laws seldom are limited to the purpose of the legislators. As Charles Curtis noted in *A Better Theory of Legal Interpretation*, "Language, at any rate in legal documents, does not fix meaning. It circumscribes meaning. Legal interpretation is concerned, not with the meaning of words, but only with their boundaries." Those boundaries are almost always extended to unrecognizable limits. As a result, attempts to eliminate "abuses" in religion or press wind up creating new and worse abuses of power by the state.

The press has been defending itself from the encroachments of statism,

but on weak and limited grounds. It limits its First Amendment concern too often to four words thereof, and it neglects the portion which cites free exercise of religion. All over the United States, churches, Christian schools, and parents and children have been on trial. The attacks have come from a variety of state agencies, especially departments of education, zoning, welfare, and the like. Federal attacks have come from the Internal Revenue Service, the Labor Department, the National Labor Relations Board, the White House, and more. The press has given minimal attention to these things, although they represent a major reversal of American policy. The press has become a commercial enterprise as part of large conglomerate enterprises reaching into a variety of manufacturing areas, all valid efforts, but, in the process, it has forgotten the religious nature of its immunity. The freedom it has enjoyed has not been a federal grant but a religious principle. The change in its status is due to a shift of faith.

If man's faith is in the state, then the state is the protector of man's freedom, and the author thereof. Then, in every area, we are dependent upon the state: the state giveth, and the state taketh away: blessed be the name of the state!

The national favorite of the United States, "America," still celebrates in song an older and theocratic faith. The last stanza of Rev. Samuel Smith's song (1832), declares,

> Our father's God, to Thee,
> Author of liberty,
> To Thee we sing.
> Long may our land be bright
> With freedom's holy light;
> Protect us by Thy might,
> Great God, our King.

Protection, in this theocratic perspective, is not by state controls, but by the might of the "Great God" who is "our King." The brightness of the land is not in regulatory agencies but in "freedom's holy light." This phrase is an echo of the premise which undergirds the First Amendment, the relationship of freedom to faith.

But this is not all. Article 2, section 1, of the U.S. Constitution requires an oath of office from the president. Such an oath is now a meaningless and even blasphemous fact. However, to the framers of the Constitution, an oath was a Biblical fact. To them, an oath was, *first*, a covenant fact, i.e., of a covenant between the state and God, and, *second*, a theocratic fact, an oath of loyalty to the sovereign. In the Constitutional Convention,

an objection was actually made to adding anything to the oath such as, "and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." The fact of an oath, Wilson held, made this addition unnecessary; it was, however, still retained. *Third*, an oath invoked the covenant blessings for obedience, and curses for disobedience, as declared in Deuteronomy 28 and Leviticus 26. An oath thus invokes a judgment from God rather than man as the basic judgment. It sees God, not the state, as the author of all blessings, including liberty.

Today, we are in a time of judgment, because men have sought, all over the world, both freedom and blessings from the state rather than from God our King. As a result, they have gained slavery and curses.

In the humanistic, statist conception of things, freedom is not a privilege and a blessing from and under God, but either a human right, or a state grant. Man the sinner, however, is a slave, and his freedom is in essence a freedom to sin. The love of slavery has more clearly marked human history than the love of freedom. Mankind has largely been in chains throughout history, because men have preferred security to freedom. Men have often rebelled against the limitations imposed by slavery, but even more against the responsibilities imposed by freedom.

Freedom is not a natural fact but a religious principle, and the decline of freedom is an aspect of the rise of false faiths, false forms of "Christianity," as well as other varieties of faith.

This century has seen, moreover, the divorce of freedom from faith, with great damage and decay on both sides.

When Luther offered his protection to the Elector Frederick, he had just come out of hiding at the peril of his life. His reappearance was an act of faith, and one which Frederick matched.

For all too long, those who have believed the most have been Marxists, Keynesians, fascists, and humanists generally. Their "freedom" has been slavery, for "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel" (Prov. 12:10). Now, however, as the faith of Christians strengthens, battles are under way for the freedom of Christian schools, churches, and families. Religious liberty is only a product of religious understanding, growth, and faith. If Christians lose their freedom, they will only have themselves to blame, and their indifference to the Author of true liberty, the Lord our King.

204

THE CHANGED MEANING OF LIBERTY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 53, August 1984

WORDS change their meanings, and people who assume that older meanings still prevail invite deception thereby. It is part of current Marxist ideology to give a new content and an alien meaning to such familiar words as peace, freedom, republic, law, and so on.

New meanings precede revolutions, because the content of human hopes is altered dramatically, and the existing order finds that it cannot satisfy the new meanings. Before the French Revolution, the idea of liberty had taken on a new meaning, a very different one than had previously prevailed. As Frank E. Manuel, in *The Prophets of Paris* (1962), pointed out, "The very term liberty lost its medieval connotation of a privilege and became the right to bring into being what had not existed before" (p. 24). Liberty as a privilege had reference to a religious fact of immunity from civil controls and regulations. Thus, the ancient privilege of the church is its freedom from the state because it is Christ's personal domain and body and hence subject to no controls but those of His law-word. Similarly, the privileges of the family exempted it from various controls. Each area of life had its privileges. We still use the word *privilege* in this older sense when we speak of "privileged communication." A privileged communication, as for example between a priest or pastor and a parishioner making a confession or seeking counsel, or between a doctor and a patient, or a lawyer and a client, is free from the controls or knowledge of the state or of other men and agencies. This freedom and immunity is, moreover, a religious fact. Thus, the older definition of liberty as a privilege and as a religious immunity rested firmly and clearly on a Christian culture. As long as the education and culture of the Western world was clearly Christian, liberty or freedom remained a Christian privilege.

This older meaning survived in the United States as recently as 1868, when the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution declared, "No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States." Unhappily, the federal government did not bar itself from any such infringement of the people's "privileges or immunities." The annotated edition of the Constitution published by the federal government says of this, "Unique among constitutional provisions, the privileges and immunities clause of the Fourteenth Amendment enjoys the distinction of having been rendered a nullity by a single decision of the Supreme Court issued within five years after its ratification" in the *Slaughter-House* cases. The Court at that time began also to redefine the term "privileges and immunities" by declaring them to be, not religiously grounded, but owing their existence to the grace of the federal government. The state had begun to usurp the place of God!

It was the Enlightenment thinkers and the French "philosophes" who began the redefinition of liberty and its separation from the religious foundation which liberty as privilege had enjoyed. The French Revolution greatly advanced the new meaning. Its slogan was, "Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality," and it soon became apparent that all three had new, ugly, and murderous meaning. Not without reason, as Madame Roland in 1793 went to the guillotine, that new symbol of freedom, she cried out, "O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name." All French landlords had to paint on their walls, "*Unite, indivisibilite de la Republica, Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite ou la Mort!*" Death came quickly for many, and for lesser reasons than failing to paint this slogan.

The Declaration of Rights of the French Revolution set forth the new meaning of freedom: "Liberty consists in being allowed to do whatever does not injure other people." If this definition sounds familiar, it is because it has been the premise behind the sexual revolution, homosexual arguments, abortion, and a variety of so-called "victimless" crimes.

Liberty has come far from its earlier meaning of a religious privilege or immunity. The meaning of liberty has changed because the culture has changed, so that it is a part of a vast panorama of new meanings. Liberty, as someone told me last year with all the solemnity of a prophet revealing new truth, means that I can do as I please as long as I do not hurt another person. It was soon obvious that we had differing definitions also of the meaning of "hurt." We also differed on what constitutes a "person." For him, it did include a Soviet KGB officer (as it must for me, since he is like myself a creature made in God's image), but not a Nazi, perhaps not a South African white, not a white racist or anti-Semite, not an unborn child, and possibly not some terminally ill elderly people. Because he was

a humanist and I am a Christian, our meanings differed at every point. Each of us had a different principle of definition because we had different religions.

Karl Marx in 1848, in the *Communist Manifesto*, gave a differing humanistic interpretation of liberty. For him, economic equality was the prior goal and virtue. His doctrine of, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," called for the satisfaction of all the economic needs before the hunger for liberty is satisfied. However, his plan meant also that a dictatorship defined every man's needs as well as the abilities and the productive responsibility of each man! In such a system, the needed food for a man as well as his needed freedom became a statist decision by elite planners.

When freedom lost its Christian definition, man became the new definer. Previously, God's law and sovereignty set boundaries on man's power. Man was not free from flagrant sins and breaches of liberty prior to the Enlightenment, but he knew that in all these things he was a sinner. Now, with humanism, he was a new god finding and expressing himself in his autonomous powers. The modern state, as the collective expression of these powers, was "liberated" to be humanity's new god walking on earth.

Artists began to give expression to this new world and life view. In France, Guillaume Appollinaire (1880–1918), an influential writer of the avant-garde, worked for total liberation from Christianity. Like the decadents and Andre Gide, he sought it in the gratuitous act, "*l'acte gratuit*," as the example of consistent human freedom. Since the free act, liberty, meant liberation from Christianity, only an inversion of morality could make men free. This meant the evil act, *unmotivated evil*, evil for its own sake. It meant "the liberating power of wickedness" (Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years* [1955], p. 304). The purity of the acts of liberation rested in the gratuitousness of their evil.

Within a generation or so after Apollinaire, Lindner, an American, wrote on *Rebel Without a Cause*, a study of juvenile criminals and their purposeless crimes. The assault, murder, and mutilation of innocent persons totally unacquainted with the criminal became increasingly commonplace after 1960. The new doctrine of liberty was being enacted on the streets.

The French Revolution had declared any act legitimate if it did not hurt or injure another person. The French revolutionary leaders quickly saw their enemies as nonpersons and proceeded to kill them. Where God's definition of man is despised, soon man himself is despised and readily killed or victimized. Apollinaire in a novel, had put a prophecy into the mouth of one man: "On my arrival on earth, I found humanity

on its last legs, devoted to fetishes, bigoted, barely capable of distinguishing good from evil — and I shall leave it intelligent, enlightened, regenerated, knowing there is neither good nor evil nor God nor devil nor spirit nor matter in distinct separateness" (Shattuck, p. 253).

When all values are denied except man, every man is free to define his own values and to act accordingly. The state, having greater power, has greater freedom to enforce its own values, and, as a result, the new freedom of humanism ends up in history's most malevolent tyranny and slavery. The new liberty is the old slavery writ large.

The modern world is far removed from the older world of liberty as a religious privilege which required responsibility and accountability to God. Sinning now passes as the new freedom, and the more perverted the sin, the higher ostensibly the manifestation of liberty.

The saddest aspect of all this is the failure of so many churchmen and conservatives to see that, when politicians make promises using the old language of privilege and immunity, they have in mind the newer and revolutionary meanings. William Blake, himself a revolutionary, called attention to the fact that he and his opponents, reading the same thing, read differently: one read black where the other read white. Their presuppositions differed, and hence their reading.

The presupposition of the humanistic doctrine of liberty are anti-God and anti-man. For humanism, the great evil is deprivation. Man is seen as entitled to the fullest liberty to express himself, to gratify himself, and to reach true personhood in self-expression.

An old hymn, once popular, celebrates Christ as King of all creation, and of all things therein. The last two verses read:

> The government of earth and seas
> Upon his shoulders shall be laid:
> His wide dominions shall increase,
> And honours to His name be paid.
> Jesus, the holy child, shall sit,
> High on His father David's throne;—
> Shall crush his foes beneath His feet,
> And reign to ages yet unknown.

When Christians ceased to work in terms of this assured victory, the humanists began to do so. In terms of their plan, it is Christ and His people who are to be crushed beneath the feet of history and humanistic man. Their current power witnesses to the church's default. Wars are not won when men refuse to fight, nor can armies move against an enemy they refuse to recognize exists! Now that the long sleep of the church is ending, the battle begins.

The decline of true Christian liberty began when the enlightenment ideas of natural religion infiltrated the church and replaced the Biblical doctrine with the new ideas of "natural liberty." Previously, theology had, like Thomas Boston in his study of man's *Human Nature in Its Fourfold State*, distinguished between man's moral abilities in the state of innocence, the state of depravity, the state of grace, and the eternal state. Our Lord, in John 8:33–36, makes it clear that true freedom comes from Him alone; it is an act of sovereign, saving grace. It gives us powers and immunities, and it restores us to our calling to exercise dominion and to subdue the earth (Matt. 28:18–20). Our freedom is a privilege and an immunity.

God's act of creation and His providential government establish Him as Sovereign or Lord. His law sets boundaries on man's will and thus gives us privileges and immunities which men and civil governments are forbidden to violate.

At one time, men spoke of their freedom as "ancient privileges and immunities." What was urgently needed was the development of this premise. The concept of sphere laws was early set forth in the church's struggle for freedom from the state. The Puritans, with their affirmation of covenanted spheres of life, advanced this doctrine. Abraham Kuyper, who admired the Puritans, formulated this concept philosophically and theologically.

On this foundation, the Christian community must revive the doctrine of liberty as a religious privilege and immunity. The claims of the state to be the source of freedom are false and evil. The American patriotic song is clearer on the issue when it hymns God as the "Author of Liberty." Those words are no longer sung in most public schools. Both God and liberty are now denied by the humanists. For this bit of honesty, we can thank them, as we work to undo their legacy of slavery.

205

FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 83, February 1987

Some years ago, while at the state capitol of a Southern state, I was asked to speak at the opening session of the House. Earlier, while in the office of the speaker of the House, that man, with some dismay, expressed his fears for the future. Until then, said this elderly man, the legislature had met briefly every two years; now, it was by law meeting annually, and in session most of the year. He felt that both on the state and federal levels a year-round legislature and Congress spelled destruction for this country and any other country adopting it. Any legislature in continuous session would be susceptible and radically vulnerable to the great evil of constant pressure from the largest lobby of all. At that time, it was commonly assumed that the largest lobby was the teachers' lobby, or the labor unions. Not so, he said, "it is the bureaucracy." They are always close at hand, always active, always full of ideas, and more numerous than all other lobbyists. I am glad, said the speaker of the House, that I am too old to live long enough to see the full damage the bureaucracy's lobbies will do to the state and to the country.

He could have added another factor to this danger from a bureaucracy. Every bureaucracy sees itself as the answer to all possible problems. Instead of the free workings of the people, of the marketplace, of the churches, families, and institutions of a society, a bureaucracy sees all solutions in terms of bureaucratic action and control. In terms of this, nothing is more dangerous to a bureaucracy than freedom, and the ideas of a bureaucracy and a free people are mutually contradictory.

Having said this, I must add that bureaucracies arise when a people and their representatives in civil government abandon responsibilities and self-government. It is very easy to rail against various bureaucracies, such as the Internal Revenue Service, the state tax commissions, land

control agencies, and so on, but they exist because people have rejected the responsibility of freedom for license, for irresponsibility. Even more easily comes the excuse that a conspiracy is *responsible* for our plight. Conspiracies exist; they have always existed, but they only flourish when men will not govern themselves, when men seek something for nothing, and when men want a risk-free world.

The risk-free life is slavery. Freedom always means risk, and when men seek to minimize risk, this means minimizing freedom. Controlling evil is justice; controlling risk beyond a minimum means slavery.

Today, we have the moral order reversed. Evil is given status and privilege. Abortion, homosexuality, adultery, fornication, and more all have legal status, and there are demands to legalize incest and other evils. At the same time, risk is termed evil and is punishable. Doctors are required to be perfect, even though the finest surgery involves risks. Our courts are clogged with cases filed by a people who want a risk-free, accident-free world. A non-risk world is a non-free world, and bureaucracies represent the will of the majority in action, creating a world without risks.

The U.S. Congress is the U.S. people writ large (or, perhaps, small). The people delegate powers to Congress, and they then demand, not the execution of justice, but the delivery of privileges, entitlements, grants, subsidies, welfare, and more from Congress. Congress in turn delegates its powers to the bureaucracy, together with the grant of vast sums of money, to give the people what they want: security and a risk-free life. As Ludwig von Mises noted, "delegation of power is the main instrument of modern dictatorship" (Ludwig von Mises, *Bureaucracy*, p. 5) Tax revolts treat the symptoms, not the problem. The problem is the refusal of people to govern themselves. As long as they are in slavery to sin, they cannot be free men. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant (or, slave) of sin" (John 8:34). Only if the Son makes us free are we free indeed (John 8:36).

Freedom requires risk. It means the risk of our money, our property, and our lives. Most people, when they talk about freedom, see it in radically irresponsible terms, as freedom from controls, from taxes, from moral duties and judgments, and so on and on. In effect, they are defining freedom as freedom from causality, and they believe in a fairytale world. I recall some years ago at a college forum where I was one of the speakers, hearing a liberal "economist" speak. He had been important in three administrations as a White House advisor. In his enthusiastic scenario of a liberal agenda, he concluded that, if his vision were adopted, then "we can eat our cake, and have it too!" Such dreaming is now responsible for the world's growing economic nightmare.

To seek the elimination of risks is to eliminate freedom. At the same time that we seek freedom we must enhance responsibility. It is very important that we insist on *the inseparable link between freedom and responsibility.* This is well illustrated in Deuteronomy 22:8, which (in the Berkeley Version), reads: "When you build a new house, you must put a parapet around the roof, lest if someone falls to the ground, you bring bloodguilt upon the house." This law refers to the flat-topped roofs of houses in those days. On warm summer nights, people ate, spent their evenings, and sometimes slept on the rooftop. To have such a roof without a strong railing to prevent falling was irresponsible and incurred, religiously and civilly, bloodguilt. It was and is immoral to expose people needlessly to danger, and hence it was a punishable offense. Freedom means responsibility, not irresponsibility. However, no bureaucracy enforced the building of parapets or railings. Rather, it was the fact that a fall by a friend or guest could lead to a manslaughter charge at least, and heavy restitution, that morally controlled people and led to the routine construction of parapets. Irresponsibility was severely penalized.

In discussing the philosophy of bureaucratism, Mises said that it leads to seeing good embodied in the state, and evil materialized in the "rugged individualism" of selfish men. The state then is always right, and the people always wrong (p. 74).

How can such a condition develop? People must have a god; if they reject the living God of the Scripture, they turn to other sources for the good, to the state, to the free market, to reason, and so on, to a variety of false and homemade gods. When men worship false gods, they falsify their total being. The abler and the more educated they are, the more powerful and effective is the sway of evil in their lives. At this point, Mises's insight was telling: "It is remarkable that the educated strata are more gullible than the less educated. The most enthusiastic supporters of Marxism, Nazism, and Fascism were the intellectuals, not the boors" (p. 108). The problem, however, with these gullible ones was not their education but their lack of a Biblical faith.

We are told, in Psalm 14:1, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good." David does not tell us that such men, infidels, do not believe there is a God. Indeed, as Paul tells us, all men know that God is, but they suppress this knowledge in their unrighteousness or injustice (Rom. 1:18–20). The fool tells himself there is no God to punish him, and, in his corruption, he then acts in contempt of God's law. All such action is *irresponsible.* To be irresponsible is to be irresponsible to the triune God, who made us and who has given us His law to live by.

Irresponsibility is towards God, and therefore towards His creation and other men also. If we deny God, we deny His law, and His moral order. We then refuse to believe there is a heaven, and certainly no hell. If there is no hell, there is no justice, *and no risk*. Hell means that there is a risk in living. People who believe in a hell-free life are commonly prone to believing in a risk-free life. For them, then, a bureaucracy is a good way of working towards a risk-free world. Bureaucracies are modern man's alternative to the providence of God. God's providence is our assurance that a moral order is basic to all creation, and that even a fallen world must move in terms of God's law. Tyrants may rise up, as did Sisera, but, as Deborah declares in her song of triumph, "They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera" (Judg. 5:20).

If men will not obey God's law, they will have man's law, and man's providence in the form of a bureaucracy. If men will not tithe and see themselves as responsible under God for a wide range of duties towards God, and towards their neighbor, they will have an income tax, other taxes, and welfarism. There are no easy "outs" in God's world! As Paul tells us, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). Again, "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23), and, we can add, taxes also!

We cannot have our cake and eat it too. We cannot have a risk-free and tax-free life; the more we try to remove risks from life, the more we create bureaucracies to remove money from us. But, first of all, we surrender freedom for slavery.

There is one thing slaves have usually done well — whine about their slavery. I am weary of whiners.

Piecemeal Destruction (February 1987)

An instructive episode from history is the treatment by the Turkish conquerors of the Near East of their Christian populations, which some scholars have admired. In some respects, the sultans, beginning with Mehmet II, gave more powers to the patriarchal offices of the churches by making them a part of the bureaucracy, giving them administrative duties, and a role in the collection of taxes.

At key points, however, the church was very seriously undermined. Its power to acquire and hold land and estates was largely wiped out, and also the church endowments. The independence and freedom of the church was thus destroyed, and it was all the more a dependent aspect of the imperial bureaucracy.

Another very important power of the church was also almost eliminated, the freedom to maintain schools. Christians within the Turkish Empire had to travel abroad to enter Christian schools and colleges. This had the effect of freezing growth and paralyzing the intellectual and theological life of the churches.

Another deadly control was a virtual ban on the ownership of presses by the church. The patriarch Cyril Lucaris, of the Greek Orthodox Church, was educated in Europe, in Catholic and Protestant centers. He became a Calvinist and set up a press in Constantinople in 1627 to bring the scholarship of the West into the empire. Almost at once the Turks destroyed the press, and Cyril was subsequently murdered.

Every anti-Christian order strikes against these three areas in order to weaken and destroy the church. In the United States today, the freedom of Christian schools is especially threatened, but there are also some restrictions on estates and on the freedom of the Christian press.

206

VOUCHERS, FREEDOM, AND SLAVERY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 113, September 1989

In the early years of the twentieth century, the Fabian Society of England came out strongly in favor of state aid to independent Christian schools. When a board member resigned in protest, George Bernard Shaw rebuked him strongly. Nothing, Shaw held, would more quickly destroy these schools than state aid; their freedom and independence would soon be compromised, and, before long, their faith. Events soon proved Shaw to be right.

In the United States, a remarkable and vigorous Christianity developed early and has had a worldwide impact, in missions, education on every continent, and its development of many charitable and reform agencies. Since World War II, a phenomenal growth of Christian and home schools has taken place which now commands 33 percent of all primary and secondary school children and is growing steadily each year. This movement is one of the most remarkable developments in American life in the twentieth century. It now faces total disaster, and not from the statist's own ranks. A growing number of well-meaning leaders are seeking federal or state aid by various means, notably, the voucher plan.

The fact is that some years ago, the courts established a very firm premise, namely, that wherever state aid goes, there state controls must follow, even if Congress by law declares against such controls. No agency of state can relinquish the necessary civil control over agencies using or receiving tax funds. To receive any state funds whatsoever is to receive state controls.

Thus, to channel statist or taxed income in any way into the hands of Christian or home schools is to surrender their freedom and to exchange it for civil controls. A variety of schemes have been proposed to circumvent such controls, but they are evasions and are not likely to be tenable in court. Many legal precedents, including the Grove City College case,

make it clear that a very remote "cause" is routinely used to vindicate controls. We must remember that not too many years ago, federal control over a restaurant was asserted because the salt in the salt shaker was a part of interstate commerce.

On the practical side, no more inefficient use of money exists than in any statist undertaking. On the other hand, Christian and home schools are financed with usually superior economy and very cheaply. To ask for vouchers or anything else from statist sources is to ask for higher taxes. In one country, homeschooling mothers have asked to be paid as state teachers! The whole drift into a socialist mentality is a startling one.

Today, a remarkable and far-reaching Christian renewal is in evidence in the United States and elsewhere. If our humanists today were as shrewd as G. B. Shaw, they could abort the Christian renewal by giving it state funds.

The Lord's work requires the Lord's tithe, and gifts and offerings over and above the tithe. Nothing better reveals commitment than giving. No commitment means no giving, and little commitment means token giving.

There is a correlation between finances and commitment. In the 1950s, some American Christian schools began to provide free tuition to needy children, only soon to find that virtually all their discipline problems were within this group. When the conditions were altered, and either these needy students had to work out part of this tuition, or else their parents so worked, the discipline problems usually ended. Normally, what costs a child or a man nothing, he treats as nothing.

Christian education is an urgently necessary aspect of Christ's Kingdom and its work. Children and their schooling are the key to a people's future. To make a humanistic state the controlling force in Christian education is a tragic mistake.

But, complain many, we are overtaxed by the state, have heavy family financial burdens, must support the church, and are taxed to support the state schools. It is too much of a burden, then, to pay for our children's Christian schooling! Precisely! It is a burden. But remember, although deer and fish are clean animals, they could not be used in the sacrifices to God. Only those domestic animals could be used which cost a man something in labor or in money. The Lord does not make things easy for us. If we are going to reestablish a Christian society, we are going to pay for it in more ways than one. A responsible people cannot be created without cost.

It is easy to understand the voucher plan by looking at existing examples of it, such as the welfare system, food stamps, and the like. All have the same premise; in the name of need, freedom and responsibility are surrendered, and dependence is called a virtue. The Israelites in the

wilderness longed for the leeks and garlic, the melons and the slavery of Egypt, because slavery removes responsibility and the problems of freedom. God sentenced that generation to die in the wilderness.

If the voucher plan succeeds, all groups, of course, will be eligible: humanists, Muslims, New Agers, any and all who want their own schools. This is legally a logical consequence. But historically it has been Christians who have most thrived under freedom. It is the Christian home school and church school which have grown most dramatically; nothing else compares with them. Christianity has done best where most free of the state and its controls. It will be a sorry day when Christian education becomes another special interest group. There are no Biblical precedents for any such step.

The law of the tithe tells us what we must do. The Levites normally received the tithe (although the tither could administer it himself), and the Levites gave 10 percent of the tithe to the priests for worship (Num. 18:25–26). Ninety percent was for Levitical use. The Levites had broad functions, including the fact that they were the teachers (Deut. 33:10). When we restore God's laws of tithing, we can reestablish the Christian strength in worship, health, education, and welfare, and we will have done it in God's way. I fear that any other solution will bring God's judgment upon us. Remember that God told Samuel that Israel had rejected Him in seeking man's rule and man's laws. Because of this, their sons and daughters would become servants of the state power; they would be heavily taxed, and their property would be expropriated. In time, they would cry out to the Lord in their distress, but, said Samuel, "the LORD will not hear you in that day" (1 Sam. 8:18).

Are we working to place ourselves in a condition where the Lord will not hear us? Are we so covetous of the state's mess of pottage that we will sell our birthright for it? Do we have money for our pleasures but not our children's schooling? Will we in time de-Christianize our home and Christian schools in order to meet federal standards? It amazes me that men who profess to hate socialism want to espouse the voucher plan! But such blindness is common. Businessmen who hate socialism demand various subsidies, as do workers and their unions, farmers, and others. Each group wants socialism for itself only, and so, too, do all too many churchmen now. They want vouchers to free them from financial problems, forgetting that they thereby surrender freedom. They assume that the answer to our problems lies in the state, forgetting how bankrupt morally and financially the state is!

Arise, O LORD; let not man prevail. (Ps. 9:19)

207

THE NATURE OF FREEDOM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 178, August 1994

Freedom has been variously defined in history. All too often, it has meant sexual license, and it has been accompanied by political tyranny. One writer in 1982 held that a belief in Acts 4:12 is racism and totalitarianism. He also held that Christian schools are likewise racist and totalitarian! Obviously, he had his own realm of private meanings.

It will be wise, therefore, to follow the dictionary and define liberty in terms of common usage. The terms *liberty* and *freedom* are used interchangeably, and we will examine both words. *Freedom* is defined as the quality or state of free action, and, a political right. *Liberty* is the quality or state of being free from arbitrary or despotic control, the power of choice, and an immunity.

Note that these definitions imply limits. By clear implication, there are civil, and, one can add, religious, restrictions on freedom. No one has the right to kill or steal at will. Freedom is under law; at the same time, there is a moral element. A drug addict is not a free man; he is a slave to drugs and is unable to alter a suicidal course until some outside control intervenes.

The world of antiquity outside of Israel was unfree. The myth of Greek and Roman freedom is one that obscures a totalitarian civil order, human sacrifices, a radical restriction of choice, and a total control over the citizenry. Every area of life and thought was under the state, and the life of the state took precedence over the life of the people.

The only exception to this in antiquity was Israel. There was no totalitarian state; in fact, only a minimal civil order existed. Its law was God's law, and all men had a duty to enforce it. Instead of power being concentrated in the state or in the "church," it was severely restricted. The civil order had only a small tax permitted to it, the same for all males aged

twenty and older (Exod. 30:11–16). It was called atonement or covering money, for protection. By being limited in its income, the state was limited in its power. The "temple," or the priests and their work, was similarly limited because the tithe was paid to the Levites, who then gave a tithe of the tithe to the priests (Num. 18:25–26). Again, this was a limitation on priestly power. Add to this the fact that no land tax existed, because, "The earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1), and you begin to understand the freedom under God of Hebrew society.

This pattern has been adopted at times in Christian history, as in the colonial era, and only since World War I have we seen the destruction of its remaining traces in the United States.

The early church, by insisting on freedom from state controls, promoted this same doctrine of freedom. Pope Gelasius I (A.D. 492–496) formulated it clearly in a declaration to the emperor. Much later, Calvinists expanded the doctrine by their insistence on sphere sovereignty, or sphere laws. This faith declares that the various spheres of life are directly under God, and no sphere can claim dominion over all the others.

In our time, those who seek to deny freedom to the church, or to Christian schools, home schools, economic activities, farming, and more, are really totalitarians. It is one thing to deal with criminal activities, another for the state to regulate and control all of life; the first is justice; the second is dictatorship.

Freedom is largely gone in our time, and license prevails, an ancient companion of tyrannies. The state has become a god walking on earth, and its slaves see their status as a higher freedom.

The totalitarian believes that the state should regulate and control every area of life and thought, and all institutions and peoples. The totalitarian believes in man-made laws, and in the prior right of the state in all things.

Private property has become state property, which we can retain by payment of a tax. The story of the subversion of property, and the state's entrance into this sphere, was ably told by Prof. Jonathan R. T. Hughes in *Social Control in the Colonial Economy* (1976) and *The Governmental Habit* (1977). Property is not truly ours if we must pay a property tax, an inheritance tax, or any other form of tax to retain it. Property is then the possession of the taxing agent, the state, which can dispossess us for failure to pay our rental fees, taxes. The premise of the tithe is that "the earth is the LORD's," and the tithe is His tax. Failure to tithe can lead to dispossession by the great Landlord in His ordained time.

When men deny the Lord, they then have only the immediate realm

and power, and the state then becomes their lord and master. There is then no law over the state, nor a court over all human courts. Men and states need no encouragement to tyranny; because they represent the fall, man's original sin in action, his will to be his own god and his own source of law (Gen. 3:5), we must say that the natural law of men and nations is sin and tyranny. Men seek freedom *from* God in order to play god over one another.

The Biblical position is simply this: freedom is a moral and a theological fact. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). Immoral men and ungodly societies cannot be free because they have denied the very premise of freedom. Freedom is more than an arrangement of laws; it is a moral aspect of the life of man.

Recently, a few thousand San Franciscans, including the mayor and chief of police, met at a major church to discuss the crime problem. Two children had been murdered recently; some 5,000 acts of violence, said one speaker, had occurred on city buses. Solutions included more police, more education, more counselors, and so on, everything except the necessary moral training. Products of Christian schools are law-abiding; too many of the state school students are lawless at an early age, sometimes viciously so. Can we have moral and disciplined children without a religious foundation? George Washington, in his Farewell Address, warned against expecting a moral society on ungodly foundations.

The Biblical doctrine of freedom cannot be understood apart from Leviticus 25:10, "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family." These are several important facets to this proclamation. *First*, it is God ordained. It is the royal edict of the Great King. The American hymn, "My Country 'Tis of Thee," in its last stanza, echoes the jubilee declaration:

> Our fathers' God, to Thee,
> Author of liberty,
> To Thee we sing;
> Long may our land be bright
> With freedom's holy light;
> Protect us by Thy might,
> Great God, our King, Amen.

God is the "author of liberty," and true freedom is a "holy light" given to us by our "great God, our King." God, as King over Israel, was the Author of Israel's liberty and of all liberty.

Second, the jubilee proclamation freed men from their bondage, from debt, and from all oppression. The Hebrew word for liberty or freedom implies release from slavery. God is our great next-of-kin, our Redeemer. This is a glorious and liberating fact. Redeemer, the jubilee proclamation is on America's Liberty Bell.

Third, the jubilee command is, "and ye shall return every man unto his possession," i.e., to his land, his farm, or his ranch. Freedom in the Bible is not only theological, but it is also land based, property oriented. This is why there was no land tax on property; the absence of such a tax marked the colonial era, and, in many states was absent until the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Fourth, the jubilee stressed the family: "and ye shall return every man unto his family." The Biblical doctrine of freedom is not anarchistic; it does not mean a separation from responsibilities, but a liberty in the context of a mature assumption of duties whereby a man establishes God's order in his life and in the world around him.

Because we have failed to recognize the moral limits of freedom, we are losing our liberties. Because our courts fail to recognize these moral limits, we are seeing the judiciary destroy freedom. Freedom is a moral and a theological fact. Where the state plays god, freedom disappears and tyranny triumphs. Our freedom is disappearing. It will not return without a renewal of a Biblical faith.

208

CONFLICTING IDEAS OF FREEDOM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 156, November 1992

It is a mistake to assume that a word means the same thing for everyone. The very word *God* means a variety of things even within Western countries, and, the world over, has many strange definitions. Man's faith and its culture define meanings. Definition is determined by religion; it is a religious task and has been so ever since God commanded Adam to "name" or define the animals.

The many definitions of *freedom* essentially resolve themselves into two, and it is useless to champion freedom unless we know what it is that we are advocating. The conflict of our time is between, *first*, freedom from the law, freedom as antinomianism and lawlessness, and, *second*, freedom under God and His law.

A while back, an "artist" who saw a copy of the *Chalcedon Report* reacted angrily. We were, he felt, fascists and antifreedom, and he singled out some of us, naming Otto Scott for his article on the Zurich drug-park experiment, because we are anti-"gay," antidrugs, and so on and on. This made us also anti-art! Clearly, for him both art and freedom mean a radical lawlessness and an active promotion of all that is anti-Christian and anti-law-abiding.

The "champions" of freedom are obviously not all in the same camp. Those who believe that freedom means the right to be lawless can damn Christians as hatemongers and spew endless venom in the name of freedom! They sincerely believe that they are defending man's freedom against an evil power!

Over the years, I have known about or heard of professors who have routinely stolen valuable university library books on the grounds that they could best appreciate them. Now, in the June 18, 1992, *World News Digest* (p. 7), there is an account of the troubles of Dr. James Billington,

director of the Library of Congress. He closed the stacks to library employees, "because of the incredible amount of thievery." The union chief told Billington that they were *entitled* to these books. When Billington told the union bosses of his stand, they were especially angry when Billington said that most of the worst offenders were Ph.D.'s. As a result, union leaders "are going after the head of the director, Dr. James Billington."

The right to steal? Well, it is a logical conclusion of the belief in freedom as antinomianism, as freedom from law. Should we be surprised that even pastors and priests are too often guilty of stealing church funds, and of sexual sins?

No society ever stands still. It pursues the logic of its faith to the reasonable conclusion thereof, and an antinomian faith will in time be lawlessness in practice. This is what we are witnessing increasingly. We see the "right" to steal affirmed by scholars and by street gangs and rioters. They are akin in faith, a radical antinomianism, which they define as freedom.

Our Lord, in John 8:33ff., makes clear what freedom means. *First*, men who are lawless are sinners, and they are the servants or slaves of sin. Original sin is the desire of man to be his own god and law (Gen. 3:5), but this sin in fact enslaves man and renders him a helplessly evil person. *Second*, we are made free in Christ, who makes us a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17), enables us to live in obedience, even though not perfectly in this life, and makes us the people of His righteousness or justice (Rom. 8:4). The law of God becomes, then, our way of life, not lawlessness.

For true Christians, the antinomian view of freedom means slavery. The world, by its present policies, is actively courting slavery as its higher freedom. Our politicians talk about freedom as Lenin did, meaning controls and slavery. All who deny God's law are denying the very foundation of our freedom and are therefore to some degree in the camp of the lawless. It is inconsistent and foolish to oppose our homosexual culture, to hate the rapid growth of totalitarian controls, and to bewail the growing immoralism around us, if by our antinomianism we are promoting the world's doctrine of lawlessness as freedom.

The doctrine is marked by perversity and evil. In recent years, someone has defined freedom as "the right to heckle," and this concept has been common to many university students, to whom it means the "right" to silence all with whom they disagree.

Others, while denying that there is any *given* or inherent element in human nature, still insist that freedom is an essential attribute of human nature. We must say that the will to be free of God and His law is basic

to the life and nature of fallen man. John Stuart Mill held that freedom is an end in itself, and it is an absolute and sovereign freedom insofar as it concerns man's own being. The only limit on man's freedom is that he must not harm others. But who says so? Who can restrain a sovereign being? Mill's anarchistic idea of freedom rested on nothing more than his fiat idea. Moreover, Mill's doctrine of freedom in his *Essay on Liberty* (1859) held, "We can never be sure that the opinion we are endeavoring to stifle is a false opinion; and if we were sure, stifling would be an evil still." This means the advocacy of every kind of evil is to be protected: freedom becomes the *only* absolute. The antinomian doctrine of freedom ends up subverting and denying the validity of all law in favor of freedom as an absolute, in effect the only good.

The issue is very clearly freedom from law versus freedom under law, God's law. It is impossible for us to develop a free and godly society unless we see clearly what the alternatives are. Failure to understand what freedom means has cost us dearly. Under the banner of false freedom, people are marching into slavery.

209

PROPERTY, CHARITY, AND FREEDOM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 117, January 1990

An old-country customary law which greatly impressed me as a child had to do with recipes. Every area and sometimes even towns had their own recipes. One might be very partial to a savory dish made by a neighbor from another area, but the recipe was never asked for nor used if known. Each community respected the property rights of all other communities to their recipes. Property rights did not depend upon the state; they belonged to families and communities.

One of the major revolutions of all history came with the new view of property which first became vocal with the Enlightenment and John Locke. Locke's social compact theory made the state the protector and guarantor of all property. Locke's theory witnessed to an important change in the doctrine of property. Previously, family and clan law, the personal grant of a lord or king, or some like origin established property ownership. Now it became the state. For Locke, all lawful government arises from the consent of the people. This theory was in itself a revolution, because it had previously been held that lawful government meant a conformity to God's law and justice. The premise for the Christian position was the belief that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1). Now the state rested on the will of the people, and the state validated property. Locke saw the state as the protector of property, but, once the state became the source of authority, it had the power to shift the ownership of property to the state. John Locke, the champion of property, became a spiritual ancestor to Karl Marx!

Locke's view depersonalized property; it culminated a trend to reduce ownership to a state-issued title rather than a family power over the generations. The depersonalization of property was also the depersonalization

of man. Property became real estate, a kind of medium of exchange and investment. Labor became an independent entity, an abstraction of man into his function. The banker appraises all things in terms of money, and the banker increasingly became the ruler of the new order. While industrialization was basic to the growth of capitalism, it was itself increasingly dependent on the banker. With the rise of limited-liability laws, there was a shift of power from industry to banking.

This new order was able to retain power and vitality wherever Christian premises still governed the relations of men rather than abstractions like "capital" and "labor." There were still evidences of this in the Depression which began in 1929. For example, in Massachusetts, one factory owner told all his workers that he would keep them working and pay them as he was able. All the men agreed, and all were in due time paid in full; the plant survived, and so did all the workers. This was, however, "illegal," and the owner later served time in a federal prison.

Another example: a major Eastern railroad (with a bad record in recent years) kept many of its men off welfare during the Depression by placing all in a pool to work part time and share in whatever work and pay was available. Other like cases occurred.

In the last century, such practices were more common. No scholar now concerns himself with them. People are viewed abstractly, in terms of profit and loss, not in terms of fellow Christians or fellow men with very personal needs.

At one time men met with their workers, ate with them and went to church with them. There was a loyalty impossible in a depersonalized relationship. A Christian employer sees himself as having duties to all those who work for him; an employer whose views have only an economic determination cannot treat them as men.

I have seen mansions once owned by wealthy capitalists built within a block or two of their factory. They were close to their work and workers in more ways than one. When man is reduced to economic man, to an abstraction, he will in time be dissatisfied, no matter how well paid. We are all of us more than a function, and to reduce a man to his function for us is to dehumanize and degrade him, and no high wages can do more than briefly palliate that fact.

To dehumanize "capital" and "labor" means to deny that any personal and Christian relationship is necessary between employer and worker. The connection is then reduced to an economic one; it becomes simply a matter of money. Society, however, cannot exist without care one for another, and if persons refuse to care, then caring is assumed by the state. The result is welfarism, impersonal and destructive care.

Caring, charity, has passed from the individual, from the church, family, and businessman, to the state, and it is proving to be socially suicidal. It is also destructive of freedom and property. The taxes required for statist charity support the bureaucracy better than the poor.

The property owner is no longer the source of charity; the state is in the main.

The property owner is less and less in control of his property, and he pays a ransom for it in taxes. Having surrendered his godly responsibility, he is no longer a free man.

One authority has described property as "a bundle of powers." The state now controls that bundle of powers by taxation and regulation, and the state has become the central power in society.

Many rebel against the state by means of the tax revolt. This is to treat the symptom, not the cause. The people have first rebelled against God and His law; they treat one another as abstractions; they refuse to acknowledge their responsibilities to their fellow men. They are believers in economic man and hence reduce man to an abstraction and the religious and moral apostasy of our time to a question of taxes. They trust, not in regeneration, but in protests and revolution.

We need to see ourselves as God's property; we are not our own: we are the Lord's. Our freedom does not come out of an independence from taxes or anything else, but from our regeneration in Christ, our freedom from sin, and our freedom to care one for another.

John Locke's world is dying all around us. We are not machines, nor economic ciphers, nor are we abstractions. We are God's creation, and we must so regard one another. When God said, "Thou shalt not steal," He did not have in mind Washington, D.C.'s laws but His own. When He commanded us to be mindful of the needs of others, He did not have federal or state welfare in mind. His doctrines of law and property are not those of the state. Remember, "Except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain that build it" (Ps. 127:1).

210

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND FREEDOM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 112, August 1989

Life is the arena of theology. The doctrines of our faith have been and are being made plainer for us by the testings of history. There is a telling sentence in a recent study by Dr. Joel R. Beeke: "Saving faith is rich because it is the pith of doing Christian theology" (*Personal Assurances of Faith, English Puritanism and the Dutch "Nadere Reformatie": From Westminster to Alexander Comrie, 1640–1710* [1988], p. 369). Life is a matter of "doing Christian theology." In one era of church history after another, attacks on one or more doctrines compel Christians to think more seriously of them and to deepen their understanding of Scripture.

In this century, two areas of doctrine are under especial attack: the inspiration and authority of Scripture, and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. As in the past, heresies cluster around neglected or under-thought areas of the faith. Our concern here is the doctrine of the Spirit, not with respect to its formulation but rather its importance, and why errors here are so dangerous.

There have been recurring times and movements of error linked to this doctrine: Montanism in the early church; the many movements originating in the thinking of the Abbot Joachim of Fiore; Quakerism, and more. In part, the heresies have arisen because of the neglect of this doctrine, and in part, to free man from God in the name of God the Spirit.

Our concern here is with the meaning of Biblical thinking with respect to the Holy Spirit. There are very important implications. Life cannot exist without patterns, direction, and controls. Even those who are not Christian sneak in purpose in a disguised fashion. The believers in evolution do not allow the possibility of devolution. Is it not equally logical to affirm that all things are *devolving* as to say they are *evolving*? If you

deny God's order, you must posit some other order rather than to admit universal disorder and chaos.

The question is this: what is the source of order in a universe of chance? Supposedly, that realm of chance has accidentally, by chance variations, produced our remarkable universe of apparent order. Will not change capriciously destroy that order? An answer to this, in print since 1936, is V. Gordon Childe's *Man Makes Himself*. Man can now supply purpose and control to a mindless evolution. Since this was written, we have seen efforts to control man's genes, to control "outer" space, and so on.

It was Karl Marx's keenest insight that he saw the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859 as the assurance of the triumph of socialism. If evolution and Darwin are correct, then there is no God in control. But control, planning (for predestination), and meaning are necessary. If there is no God to supply them, then man must. Practically, this means an all-powerful state; it means cradle-to-grave controls over all of life, and it means that the state must be free from all controls in order to control its realm totally.

As against this, some posited man as the center of all controls. These thinkers, anarchists, were still moving in terms of eighteenth-century premises. They believed that Nature represents an order, and if let alone (*laissez-faire*), would provide man and society with freedom and order. This was, however, simply a watered-down belief in the Biblical God. To affirm such an order without God, and, at the same time to believe in evolution, meant that these thinkers were schizophrenic in their presuppositions.

The rise of evolution meant the rise of totalitarian statism. The modern state claims powers never imagined by the pagan tyrants of old. It is able also to achieve unprecedented kinds of control because of modern technology.

The choice is this: either we are controlled by the power of the Holy Spirit, or we are controlled by the modern pagan state. Either God's providence rules all things, or the state must do so to avert disorder and chaos. This is why the doctrine and the person of the Holy Spirit are so important to man in our time. At issue is the freedom of man. St. Paul states the issue very plainly: "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17).

Where the Spirit of God is denied, then the modern state becomes a substitute spirit, and the goal then is to create out of the state the caring, providing spirit of man. It is not an accident of history that, as the leftist student movement of the 1960s collapsed, its advocates and leaders took two directions. *First*, many became functionaries and bureaucrats

of the state, its schools, and universities. They sought to keep alive the spirit of man in a statist network. *Second*, many others became leaders and shapers of the new charismatic movement of the 1970s on. Having lost faith in the spirit of man, they turned with intensity to the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit. The spirit of man had been everything to them, the answer to all problems; now the Spirit of God was the answer. The mainline churches, to whom the Holy Spirit was mainly an article of the Apostles' Creed, were amazed and then shocked. Old-line Pentecostalism had become church-oriented more than Spirit-governed, and while it gained from the new movement, was often very suspicious of it.

But something had happened; the doctrine of the Holy Spirit had become a matter of importance and of life. The Holy Spirit became a matter of more than an article in the creed to many evangelical churches.

This did not end the problem, but it did create new ones. To illustrate, someone arguing against a friend of ours on Biblical matters insisted that she was right because "the Spirit told me." The answer she received was, the Spirit and the Bible tell me differently.

The Spirit cannot be separated from His written Word. The modern age places its certainties in man, so that people say, "I think," or, "I believe," or, "I know," or, "I feel," and so on and on. The spirit of man replaces the Spirit of God. This is heretical: it frees man from God to himself! You and I, apart from God's Word and Spirit, can be as tyrannical as the enemies of God if we make idols of our spirit or our minds.

The Nicene Creed tells us: "And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son: Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the prophets." Since He is one with the Father and the Son, to neglect Him is to neglect God Himself. To separate Him from His Word is false, and to identify our spirit with Him is idolatry. It is "where the Spirit of the Lord is, (that) there is liberty," and nowhere else.

There is no good future for man and society apart from Him who is "the Lord and giver of Life."

211

GUILT, ATONEMENT, AND FREEDOM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 43, October 1983

Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, in his famous soliloquy, says at one point, "Conscience does make cowards of us all." In this sentence, Shakespeare summed up an ancient awareness of the corrosive effects of a bad conscience. Guilty men pay a price: they lose the power to be free. Being enslaved to sin, they become outwardly slaves as well. As our Lord says, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant (or, slave) of sin." However, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:34, 36).

When the Russian Revolution began, only a very small minority of the people favored the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks, however, led by Lenin, preached envy and hatred on every possible occasion. When their takeover began, many millions were ready to exploit the situation to loot shops and homes. Having done this, they were guilty partners to the revolution and thus had little moral grounds to fight the Bolshevik power. Many years later, an older man said sadly, "We brought judgment upon ourselves."

With World War II, Stalin, fearing more than anything else his own subjects, encouraged the most vicious behavior by his advancing troops. Everything was done to incite them to rape, murder, and looting. The Germans were provoked to brutality in every possible way. As Nikolai Tolstoy says, in *Stalin's Secret War* (1982), "Stalin went out of his way to invite Nazi ill-treatment and later extermination of Russian prisoners-of-war" (p. 261). He knew that the reaction to this would be greater brutality by the Soviet troops.

By so doing, Stalin demoralized his own men. How could they, after the war, fight against the horrors of Stalin and communism when they themselves had been guilty of like brutalities? How could they stand

against Stalin's evil when they themselves had been so readily and brutally evil? A bad conscience had disarmed them.

Guilt has always been a useful and basic tool of tyranny and false power. Over the years, I have encountered situations where a husband or wife try secretly and covertly to push their spouse into adultery. The purpose is to give them a bad conscience which will enable the manipulator to dominate the erring partner. In one case, a wife, failing to push her husband into adultery, became violent and mentally unstable because she had been unable to use guilt to control him.

This power is well known to evil politicians. A guilty people are a more readily controlled people. Hence, such politicians are prone to creating guilt. We have heard much in the past generation about hunger in America, even to "statistics" on the number of the hungry. That this is a myth has been shown more than once, to no avail. We are given horror stories about how exploitive we are, in order to make us more readily exploitable. The purpose of a vast amount of political oratory is to create guilt in the people at large and all who oppose them. Too many "liberals" are people who feel guilty for things they never did while feeling no guilt for unhappy things done.

It is very difficult for a Christian to speak before certain types of audiences without being indicted for things totally unrelated to his subject. To cite one example, one questioner (or indicter) declared that no Christian had a right to speak, given the treatment of the Indians! The fact is that, very often, the only friends the Indians had were Christians. Most of the men on the frontier were lawless men, runaways from the law and from a disciplined society. They were godless men. Does it make sense to blame contemporary atheists for the sins of past atheists? More than a few of the traders and agents who exploited the Indians were Masons. This gives us no moral right to condemn current Masons for anything other than their own sins.

When men are found guilty and convicted, they may or may not face a physical prison, but they most certainly face an inner prison. Their conscience convicts them first of all, and their conscience imprisons them in the barless but far stronger prison of guilt.

Those who work to lay a "guilt trip" on us are simply trying to imprison us and to take away our freedom in order to have the freedom to work their own evil will.

At the least, they seek to put godly men on the defensive, trying to vindicate their innocence rather than to do their work. The answer, thus, to the question about the mistreatment of the Indians is a countercharge: If you believe this country was stolen from the Indians, as a few million

of you do, sell all you have, give your money and land to the Indians, and migrate back to Europe. Until you do that, believing what you do, are you not a hypocrite?

Guilt is the enemy of freedom. It disturbs rest and sleep, and it hinders our work and functioning. Most important, it is a precondition for the enslavement of a people. As I pointed out in *The Politics of Guilt and Pity* (1970), enslavement by guilt is an essential aspect of modern politics. If we are rich, we should feel guilty; if we are middle class, again, we are guilty; if we are lower class, we are somehow subhuman and responsible for it. If we are Christians, we should feel guilty. If we have had a good education, shame on us. If we enjoy our work, or our play, our family, or our friends, we are somehow guilty of neglecting "the big picture" and are vile creatures. Politics has become the art of creating and manipulating guilt in order to increase the powers of the state.

The Bible, too, tells us that we are guilty men, that "there is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10), "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). For Scripture, however, the recognition and confession of sin and guilt is the first step towards absolution. We are told emphatically that sin and death are causally related: death is the consequence of sin and guilt. The whole point of Scripture is that redemption and freedom from sin, guilt, and death are to be had through Christ's atonement. Not only does Christ become our sin-bearer and vicarious atonement, but He remakes us so that we are a new creation. To be free from sin, guilt, and death is to be a new man with a renewed nature. The purpose of salvation is to make us a free people: "Ye shall know the truth (Jesus Christ), and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Only a free people can create a free world.

Thus, the release from sin and guilt before God is the necessary prelude to human freedom.

This is why atonement is so essential to political freedom. In the ancient world, men were aware of the dangers of guilt. Hence, they sought to be free by requiring atonement for all citizens. In Rome, all citizens (except soldiers on duty) had to be present for the annual lustrations, to be washed of their sins. Freedom from guilt was essential to the status of a freeman. All such efforts were futile of course, because the Roman lustrations provided no atonement. It should be noted, however, that Rome did see in its early years the relationship between a clear conscience before the gods and freedom.

Now the recognition is of the power of a bad conscience and guilt in enslaving people. A few years ago, one man told me that he no longer subscribed to a daily paper, because the input from the "news" was, "If I

don't save the world before lunch, I'm a dirty, rotten bastard." More than a few businessmen have withdrawn from social responsibility in a sick disgust: both politicians and their modernist pastors do little more than to "lay a guilt trip" on all businessmen, and they are weary of it. But they are impotent in the face of it without faith. No man escapes from slavery merely by resenting it.

We have spoken of the role of politicians in fostering guilt. It is very necessary to speak also of the role of the clergy. I can never forget the friend who told me of her father, a lifelong member of a fundamentalist church. Every pastor he had ever had was an expert at congregational control through guilt. Every Sunday, that poor man went home feeling wretched because he had "failed" God; he was a miserable sinner, and so on. Instead of empowering the congregation to go forth in the power of the Lord to serve Christ's Kingdom in every area of life and thought, the pastor made one and all feel how sinful they were, and how they had to do more for and give more to their church to be "right" with the Lord.

This is preaching for enslavement, and it is very popular with both fundamentalist and modernist churches. It goes hand in hand with overgovernment. The guilt-laying church no less than the guilt-laying state wants to control people. A church that is very "strict" in church government is not necessarily any more godly than one which is very lax. Many a "strict" church prides itself on its godly severity when what it is really saying is that it does not believe in the power of the Holy Spirit. (Not without reason, Milton wrote, "New presbyter is but old priest writ large.")

Overgovernment allows no room for freedom nor for growth. It allows for one voice in the church, and none other. It furthers centralization of power in both church and state. In brief, overgovernment distrusts the power of God in the life of man. Some of the religious overgovernors seem to believe that, while they were created in the image of God, the residue of men were only created in a partial image and hence need the dictatorship of the elite element. These non-elite ones are to be kept in line with a bad conscience.

Revelation 6:16 tells us of the guilty, as they face God's judgment, that they cry out to the mountains and rocks, "Falls on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

Earlier, we cited the use by Stalin of guilt as a means of enslaving and governing his subject peoples. It must be added that Stalin himself was governed by guilt. He demanded the most fulsome adulation and praise to conceal the truth of his nature; he wanted pictures of himself to mirror

his ideal image and had several portrait painters shot for falling short of his demands. "The desire to humiliate and terrify extended even to his own family" (N. Tolstoy, p. 23), and, with it, an intense fear of all men, including his own carefully selected guards. He had an obsessive belief in the omnipresence of his enemies and went to extreme lengths to protect himself. The one constant factor in Stalin's policy, according to Tolstoy (p. 50), was fear, a total fear that warped all his being. He had made slaves of all the people, but he himself was the continually haunted slave of his bad conscience and his fear of the people.

Since Stalin's day, there has been no essential change in the rulers of the Soviet system. Slave labor is still the lifeblood of the economy, and total surveillance and total fear prevail. The same extreme precautions are taken to protect the present leaders from the people. There is no real or substantial difference between Stalin and Andropov: both represent the enthronement of evil and of evil power. The cowardice of Stalin stemmed from a bad conscience; the same bad conscience governs in the Kremlin today.

Although not to the same degree, the same bad conscience governs most Western heads of states. They wage war, usually covertly, against God and man in terms of a humanistic ideal. They see other men as no more than manure to fertilize the ground of a planned future. They sacrifice men in wars they do not plan to win, and they treat people as instruments to be manipulated.

Like a volcanic ash which covers the entire earth, colors the sun, and becomes a part of the air men breathe, so too a bad conscience is a part of the spiritual air of the twentieth century. It colors the life and thought of most men: it makes cowards and slaves of them.

The world's great and overwhelming need is for freedom, but men reject freedom when they reject Christ. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). That truth is Jesus Christ, who declares, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). This is a political and psychological fact and premise, and even more, it is the religious premise for all things.

212

GUILT

Position Paper No. 201, June 1996

One of the most important facts in society is *guilt*. Although not the subject of much popular discussion in or out of the church, *guilt* is a very important and governing fact. It was not without reason that Sigmund Freud made *guilt* so basic to his theory. Freud's approach was deadly, however, because he made guilt irremovable; he saw it as part of our primordial inheritance, a natural and an ineradicable aspect of our being. His goal was to teach men how to live with guilt, not to eliminate it. Freud saw himself as the leader of a new priesthood. The old order of clergymen offered salvation from sin through Christ, a mythical idea for Freud. He would teach them to live with their guilt.

But, long before Freud, Sir John Denham (1615–1669) wrote, "Fear and guilt are the same thing" (*The Sophy*). This was an overstatement; but it is true that guilty men are fearful, and are more readily controlled. When I was a student, I saw a young man of means, profligate, handsome, and a playboy, fall in love with a calculating virgin. They married, and she used his sense of guilt to control him radically. As a pastor, I encountered situations where a husband or a wife tried to push the spouse into adultery in order to gain freedom and self-justification in the other's guilt. The history of guilt is also a history of fear and control.

A strong, godly, and guilt-free people are not easily controlled. Guilt is a major weapon of control, because all men being created by God, are *responsible* creatures, and, whether they recognize God as their Lord or not, they manifest it in their guilt that they are responsible to Him. Quite rightly, my wife Dorothy has commented that, while no "proof" of God is necessary because nothing is more certain, *guilt* is an eloquent witness to God, because it witnesses to our accountability to Him.

Since Eden, guilty men have hidden from God and have been afraid

of Him. Guilty men also fear all authorities; the guilty child, the parents; and the guilty man, the state's authority. Guilt and fear are closely associated. "Guilt doth make cowards of us all," it has been said. A guilty people are more easily ruled than a population with a strong faith and a clear conscience. When I was very young, I was deeply impressed by a report from a visitor to the Soviet Union. The famine in the early 1920s had taken millions of lives; the people lived on a vastly lower scale than before the Russian Revolution, but there was little rebellion in most of them. They knew themselves to be guilty men. Their conscience tormented them and left them impotent. One man had said, we deserved everything because we were happy for a chance to loot.

The expression often used, "Don't lay a guilt trip on me," is a perceptive one. A "guilt trip" is a paralyzing and blinding thing. I learned, years ago, how deadly it can be. Once, after a sermon, a man came up to me to demand to know how I had learned his guilty secret, and who had told me? He refused to believe me when I earnestly pleaded ignorance of what he was talking about, and he was a problem to me after that.

The power of blackmail is guilt, and we live in an age of guilt because men are either without faith or have so defective a faith that they believe vaguely in God and Christ, but not in the atonement.

Sin requires restitution, atonement. Man cannot make atonement to God; only Jesus Christ can. Man's self-atonement is sadomasochism. In sadism, he tries to lay the guilt on others; in masochism, he tries to make atonement by punishing himself. In either case, his efforts are futile.

Jesus Christ, by His atoning death, makes restitution for us, and by His regenerating power makes us a new creation, a new human race with Him as our new Adam and head. Without Christ's atonement, we remain in our sin and guilt, unfree men to the core of our being. In Christ we become free men.

Guilt makes slaves of us all, slaves to someone or something. The fact of slavery is clear; its forms are optional. Slaves can be recognized because they are in bondage. When someone with a good family, beautiful wife and children, a high income, fine home, and more, became a slave to drugs, many commented, "How could he do that to himself?" But, given the emptiness of his life religiously, it was essentially a question as to what form his slavery would take. The dramatic form it took did not erase the fact that he was a guilt-ridden man, and a slave, prior to his addiction.

Guilt is a matter too great for us to cope with. It requires Christ's atonement, and, in our day-by-day living, prayer and God's grace. Only so can we be free men. In a slavery-marked world, free men will be "more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Rom. 8:37).

213

THE RISK-FREE LIFE

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 86, May 1987

It was shortly after World War II that I encountered the demand for an end to baseball playing by grade-school children. It was too competitive, said some angry women liberals; it was also too individualistic, they complained, and a boy at bat, or catching a fly ball, had too much concentrated and isolated responsibility placed upon him. Such a game, it was said, could have traumatic consequences. The women were also against losing; defeat could be disastrous for some children.

They did not stop to think that there can be no victory where there is no possibility of defeat. It also did not occur to them that the more competitive a group game is, the more cooperation it demands for winning. As for traumatic effects, it is true that defeat can be traumatic for some, but to eliminate the possibility of victory is truly deadly. It is true that the fear of defeat can be traumatic for a coward, but why encourage the coward in us all by eliminating risks? The risk-free life is a victory-free life. It means a lifelong surrender to defeat, and nothing can be more deadly for man and society.

The lust for a risk-free life is all around us. It governs politics all over the world. Its logic leads to the world of Marxism, where the removal of the risks of failure for some means failure for all. An economy guaranteed against failure is an economy ensured against success.

All too often today, men want to start with a guaranteed success, not with risks. As a result, we have in increasing evidence fraudulent successes, i.e., insider trading, artificially inflated stocks, and much, much more. The goal in all these dishonest activities is success without risk.

The risk-free life, however, is a deadly illusion. Freedom always involves risks. Eliminate the risks of freedom and you thereby establish slavery and defeat. But risk is still not eliminated! If the risks of freedom

are banned, the risks of tyranny are ensured. Slave labor camps represent a higher risk in the Soviet Union than do the risks in a free society. But this is not all. The Soviet military intelligence, GRU, for example, has a high risk factor to ensure performance. Anyone entering the GRU knows from the beginning that, if he disobeys or fails in even minor ways, he will be cremated alive in punishment (Viktor Suvorov, *Inside the Aquarium* [New York, NY: Macmillan, 1986], pp. 2–3, 93, 162, 190, 233, 237, 239–240). In every aspect of the "risk-free" life in the Soviet Union, the risks of slavery make pale by comparison those risks which freedom requires.

Unhappily, throughout the Western world, the risks of freedom are highly unpopular. It is not an accident that capitalists and unions alike love monopolies and subsidies: they fear risks. In state after state in the United States, gerrymandering by Republicans and Democrats serves towards ensuring their control of the political machinery and eliminating risks of defeat.

In whatever the sphere of action, those in power are most opposed to risk, because it can bring about defeat for them. The establishment uses its power to lessen risk for itself as a necessary step towards retaining power. After all, revolutions are made by those out of power who are seeking power!

I was a grade-school student when I first read Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and memorized with delight many of the speeches. One which I cannot forget is Caesar's comment:

> Let me have men about that are fat;
> Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o'-nights:
> Yond' Cassius has a lean and hungry look;
> He thinks too much: such men are dangerous.

In other words, power-hungry men out of power are consumed with a lust for power.

But there is more, much more. Those who have the most to lose are those least prone to risks and to bold actions. Remember that the bold, enterprising, and innovative work that went into the birth of computers came from young outsiders. Most of the bold entrepreneurial action of the postwar years has come from newcomers. The major corporations have declined or stagnated, and their "gains" have come from buying out the new men. Bankers favor such loans, because banks invest usually in established success, which means that banks invest in the past.

Today, in the United States and elsewhere, the major political forces are made up of well-established and powerful men. These are men who

have the most to lose and hence the least to venture apart from money. Given the liberal establishment of the United States, it is not surprising that the Democrats command the most wealth in their ranks. The number of wealthy men ready to risk the wrath of the powers that be is very few, and they are under attack. Power always draws the strongest support. The Republicans, however, are no different; power is always concerned with power, not risk. The conservatives also play the same game. In order to create a movement to win the country over to their cause, conservatives create groups of powerful men, and thereby sentence themselves to impotence, because they have created an alliance, council, or organization of men who have too much to lose to be bold. The result is sterility, and such groups become as effectual on the national scene as a ladies' sewing circle. It was no accident that the major political and social impact of recent years came from student movements. These student groups were sometimes chaotic, disorganized, and highly foolish, but their total impact was remarkably great. They had little to lose and hence were ready to lose it. Their causes were far more important to them than any penalties that risks would involve.

In the United States, since Dorr's Rebellion and the Whisky Rebellion to the present, the risk-takers have commonly been foolish and have shown a talent for courting defeat. On the other hand, the established power groups have uniformly drifted into disasters because all their efforts have gone to keeping power, not towards creating a harmonious society.

Elsewhere, the men like Cassius, men of envy, hatred, and enmity, have overthrown by revolution their hated power brokers, only to become far worse instruments of power. They have taken risks, but only for evil ends.

It is thus important to examine the full implications of a risk-free world. Risks are inescapable, and we face either the risks of freedom, or the risks of tyranny. But risks rest on a world order beyond man and society. We are born into a world of risks, because we face the risk of death from the moment of our birth. Men may imagine it, but they cannot abolish the risk of death from this world.

This is not all. There is also the fact of moral risk. From day one of creation, man faced moral risk, and death, if he partook of the forbidden fruit (Gen. 2:17). Risk was built into paradise, and it is certainly very much a part of our fallen world.

To dream of a risk-free world is to imagine a creation without hell, and also without heaven. It means the denial of any moral antithesis in creation. If there is no good nor evil in the universe, then there can be no

heaven nor hell. This involves denying the reality of justice. Justice rests on the premise that it matters to God and to the very being of creation that good prevail and that evil perish. From my earliest days, one of the resounding verses of Scripture for me has been Judges 5:20, from the Song of Deborah: "They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera." Justice is written into every atom of creation, and justice is inescapable. To deny hell is to deny justice. As Emory Storrs observed years ago, "When hell drops out of religion, justice drops out of politics." One can add that, when hell is denied as a reality and place, hell reappears as worldwide injustice and evil. Earth then becomes hell because the reality and finality of justice is denied.

To deny hell is to insist that life must be without moral risks. When churches become antinomian, they quickly then downplay the fact of hell because it emphasizes the ultimacy of God's law and justice. To deny hell is to deny the reality of morality and justice and to affirm a cosmic relativism. The fact of hell is our reassurance of cosmic justice.

But there is more. If we seek to eliminate risk from life and society, and to eliminate hell from eternity, we also eliminate the sabbath rest and heaven. The sabbath rest is meaningless apart from salvation. The sabbath is a covenant fact, a celebration of salvation (hence, the Passover dates the weekly Old Testament rest, and the Resurrection the weekly New Testament rest). If there is no salvation, there is no rest. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (Isa. 57:21).

Paul tells us, that our "labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58). He does not say that it is risk-free. In fact, Paul is able to catalogue the risks he took by preaching the gospel, and the penalties he suffered: imprisonment, beatings, stonings, shipwreck, and much, much more. What he does tell us is that the moral risks have their certainty of reward because God's law and justice govern all creation.

It was after the end of World War II that our child-centered, risk-free culture began to predominate. Today's newspaper carried a story about the growth of criminal activity among children under ten years of age; one police officer expressed his dismay at the evil dispositions and vicious street knowledge of such children. This should not surprise us. Children who have been spared the trauma of punishment are taught thereby that justice does not exist. It is still true, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Prov. 13:24). We teach our children that there is no justice if we do not punish them.

The dream of a risk-free life is an evil dream, because it is in essence a denial of causality; it is an insistence that cause and effect do not exist, and it is a denial that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

It is also a denial of justice, because it rejects the fact that life involves inescapable moral judgments and risks.

The dream of a risk-free life is closely related to the pornographic imagination. Pornography gives man a world which is an imaginary one, one in which moral consequences are totally absent, and a world in which all things revolve around the individual's desires. Real people are lacking in the world of pornography; the evil imagination runs riot and reorders all things to suit itself. Risks are removed from pornography in order to satiate without limitations the evil imagination.

The only risk-free world is in the evil imaginations of men: it has no substance nor reality. It cannot exist in the real world. Those who dream of a risk-free life are, sooner or later, all losers.

214

SLAVERY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 103, November 1988

Slavery has been common to all of history and to all continents and peoples. Ownership of other people, and power over them, has been sought by individuals and by states. In the twentieth century, most countries, in fact virtually all, have banned by law the *private* ownership of slaves, but *state* ownership is increasing, not only in the forms of slave labor camps and the use of prisoners, but also in the increasing statist power over all the citizenry.

Slavery has not been limited to any one people. In the age of exploration and the Renaissance, trade in black slaves became common, but, in other areas, Asiatics, Europeans, and others provided the slave labor.

Although Europe in the modern era has tended to see its imperial history more readily, the truth is that Europeans have over the centuries been perhaps the major source of slaves. The very word "slave" comes from the name of a European people, the Slavs. Before the Mongols, and especially with the Mongols, the Slavs were treated as a slave people to be harvested regularly.

Other Europeans were also enslaved and were common in the slave markets of Greece and Rome. After the fall of Rome, Jewish merchants moved into northern Europe as traders. They exchanged goods with the barbarian tribes for furs and other valuables. Chieftains often sold some of their people in trade. Jewish law required some elementary compliance on the part of slaves with Judaism; in terms of Scripture, those who converted to Judaism became free Jews. This in time meant that most European Jews were of European stock, even as Eastern European Jews were of Asiatic origin. As Irving A. Agus, in *Urban-Civilization in Pre-Crusade Europe* (1965), pointed out, a slave could also gain freedom by converting to Christianity according to the laws of European countries.

As a result, to keep their slaves both as slaves and then as Jewish converts, the Jewish traders were "forced to assume a very warm and human attitude to their slaves" (vol. 1, p. 96). Excess slaves were sold to the Mediterranean slave trade which, with Islam, became a major market.

At first, because the barbarian tribes saw slavery as a normal thing, enslavement was not a problem; in fact, for some it was a step upward materially to be a slave to a Jew.

With the rise of Islam, however, Islamic slavers began to move northward up the rivers of Europe to seize slaves. France was routinely raided. At the same time, the Christianization of the tribes led to a hostility to slavery and to Muslims and Jews. But there was still the fact that slavery was Europe's "best business," to use Michael Wood's expression, in this era. The Muslims were the slavers from the south; the Vikings were the slavers from the north; and, later, the Mongols were the slavers from the east. The Vikings loved especially to raid on Christian holy days and take various peoples, especially the British and most of all the Irish, as slaves. Jewish and Syrian merchants in such places as Verdun processed the slaves, and many of the males were made eunuchs. Wood writes, "A frightened pilgrim in the late ninth century in Taranto saw nine thousand Italian captives being loaded onto ships, making up just one consignment to Egypt" (*In Search of the Dark Ages* [1987], p. 169). Slave trading was very big business indeed.

The result was a resentment towards Jews and Muslims. The early form of the Crusades was pushing the Muslim slave raider-traders out of Europe and converting and civilizing the savage Vikings.

Then, when Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land were attacked and enslaved, the crusade was proclaimed for that area as well. At the same time, the European Christian attitude toward the Jew changed, and the hostility was directed against all, not just the slave traders. Slavery had earlier been an accepted fact of life by all; now it was seen with hostility.

With the Renaissance, and with the revival of classical humanism, the medieval view of slavery was altered to an acceptance. Thus, when a merchant returned from a long trip to find that his wife had given birth to an illegitimate son, he waited until the boy was an adolescent and then took him on his next trip and sold him as a slave (Lucien Febvre, *Life in Renaissance France* [1977], p. xvii). The times were congenial for a return to a massive slave trade, this time with Africans. Over the centuries, however, the major source of slaves has been Europe. Europeans prefer to remember their imperial greatness and power, which has been remarkable, but Europe has been a continent subjected to extraordinary wars, degradations, evils, and conflicts.

Europe has seen over the centuries the most sustained enslavement and also the systematic harvesting by slavers, one unequalled elsewhere except in local settings such as Aztec Mexico. It has also seen the greatest freedom. Europe has moved from a casual acceptance of slavery to a worldwide war against it.

The reason for this has been its Christianization. Those who today are hostile to Western civilization and its Christian heritage should remember that, outside the sphere of Christian culture, the two most commonplace aspects of societies have been slavery and polygamy. To abolish Christendom, as some hope, will in time restore both.

Our Lord tells us that slavery begins within man; the basic slavery is to sin: "*Whosoever committeth sin is the servant (or, slave) of sin . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed*" (John 8:34, 36). This should tell us that non-Christian politics is the politics of slavery because it denies the only valid source of freedom, Jesus Christ.

The world today is moving rapidly into slavery. We cannot be indifferent to the politics of slavery, because it is committed to anti-Christianity. Its victory will mean the enslavement of our children and of their children.

But are not the churches full of people? Are not millions in the United States professing believers? The answer to that was well stated by David E. Rockett, in his monthly newsletter, the *Faithful Steward* (July 1988): "The lack of holy distinctiveness neuters the potency of the Church's voice and its effectiveness in the world. We are not taken seriously by our pagan, secular, countrymen because to their eyes, we are not different from them."

We are Christ's Kingdom, His dominion men, in this world. If we are only slaves or at best bystanders in our day, we have failed Him.

215

THE PRIVATIZATION OF MORALITY AND SOCIAL DECAY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 60, March 1985

One of the errors of the rationalistic temper in our times and earlier has been its depreciation of both religion and history. The assumption too often has been, as with Hegel, that "the rational is the real," i.e., what a man who sees himself as rational conceives to be reasonable has at least a logical inevitability if not an historical reality. To confuse the ideal with the real leads to the brutalities of modern revolutionary history, as men force their rational "realities" onto masses of men.

A rationalistic approach is non-historical. Thus, early Protestants catalogued instances of Catholic persecutions to give a picture of Catholicism which did no justice to history, and Catholics wrote similar works on Protestants. Such approaches have little historical value: they express a bias, not an understanding.

To understand the First Amendment, we must ask why it is a product of Christendom and not of some other religion and its culture. Greco-Roman cultures did not allow the freedoms we take for granted. In antiquity, either the state, the ruler, or the office was seen as divine, as god waking on earth *à la* Hegel. Rome, for example, was the most "liberal" of ancient orders, but Rome saw religion as a necessary social cement and hence to be strictly controlled and regulated. All religions had to be licensed and governed by the state, and the conflict with Christianity was over this issue, the refusal of the church to submit to control. This refusal was born of Old Testament faith. God's realm is to be beyond man's control. The great victory of this faith against an alien power is set forth in Ezra 7, the agreement of the Persian monarchy to refrain from taxing, regulating, or controlling the Temple of Jerusalem, and the practitioners of its religion even to the porters and doorkeepers of the Temple. Later, Rome gave to

Judea substantially the same immunity, although controlling the elections of high priests. The church inherited this immunity until the Jewish-Roman War of A.D. 66–70 and fought for the totality of it thereafter.

During much of medieval history, despite the problems of dealing with newly converted barbarians, this freedom existed to a degree, but the states of Europe, and the Holy Roman Empire, sought to reestablish the pattern of control. We miss the meaning of medieval religion if we fail to see it as a long history of struggle, with the state in the main controlling and using the church.

The statist pattern from pagan antiquity through the centuries and well into the Christian era has been religious toleration. In religious toleration, the state proscribes certain faiths and establishes and regulates others. This was the goal of medieval and modern states. In legal toleration, the state determines which groups will be tolerated. Toleration is also the premise of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, the federal government, and most states. Tolerance and establishment go together, because the act of defining the limits of toleration is the establishment of licit religion.

As against this, the American pattern represented a major break with past civil standards and a return to Biblical requirements. Two things in particular marked the constitutional settlement. *First*, the word *sovereignty* was completely avoided. It was held then and later that sovereignty is an attribute of God alone.

Second, the United States broke with the toleration-establishment pattern to place itself entirely outside the field of religion. Religion was recognized to be an independent sphere from the state, and neither church nor state are to have jurisdiction over one another in federal policy. The First Amendment thus set forth religious freedom, not toleration.

At the same time, however, Enlightenment thought held that religion and morality could be separated, and that nonreligious grounds could be found for moral law. By this they really meant nontheistic grounds, i.e., rationalistic and humanistic grounds. They were thus separating *theistic* religion from morality, not humanistic religion. George Washington spoke against this opinion in his Farewell Address, saying:

> And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

No human freedom is or can be absolute, and the same is true of religious freedom. This fact came into focus in the case of *United States*

vs. Reynolds (98 United States Reports 145), wherein the U.S. Supreme Court said in part concerning the Mormon practice of polygamy in relation to the First Amendment:

> Congress was deprived of all legislative power over mere opinion, but was left free to reach actions which were in violation of social duties or subversive of good order . . . there never has been a time, in any State in the Union, when polygamy was not an offense against society, cognizable by the civil courts, and punishable . . . It is impossible to believe that the constitutional guarantee of religious freedom was intended to prohibit legislation in respect to this most important element in social life — marriage: while, from its nature the sacred obligation is, nevertheless, in most civilizations, a civil contract, and usually regulated by law . . .
>
> Laws are made for the government of actions, and while they cannot interfere with mere religious belief . . . they may with practices . . . Suppose one religiously believed that human sacrifices were a necessary part of religious worship, would it be seriously contended that the civil government could not interfere to prevent sacrifices? Can a man excuse his practices . . . because of his religious belief? To permit this would be to make the doctrines of religion superior to the law of the land; and in effect would be to permit every citizen to become a law unto himself. Government could exist only in name . . . It matters not that his belief was a part of his religion; it was still a belief and a belief only.

This decision recognized clearly the nature and dimensions of the problem. No civil government can exist where there is a total freedom of religion. Among the practices found in some religions are ritual prostitution, murder, human sacrifice, cannibalism, incest, bestiality, and much, much more. All these and other practices have at one time or another been *established* by some civil order, great or small. To grant total religious liberty is to deny the possibility of civil government.

On the other hand, in *United States vs. Reynolds*, the Supreme Court avoided the problem George Washington had called attention to, the false separation of religion and morality. The Court called monogamous marriage "the sacred obligation." But this was Reynolds's contention, that polygamy was for him a sacred obligation. On what ground could the Court limit the sacredness to monogamy? The answer is an obvious one: the court presupposed the validity of Christian morality and saw it as alone having a licit status.

Washington had called attention to an ancient bit of knowledge and wisdom which the eighteenth century had called into question, namely, that all law represents a moral order, and every concept of moral order is a matter of religious faith and expression. Laws proscribe certain kinds

of actions to protect thereby other and licit behavior. Every law, whether it is civil, criminal, or procedural, represents a vision of moral order which the lawmakers and courts seek to approximate and attain. That vision of legal-moral order is a religious vision. Every legal system is thus an establishment of religion, inescapably so. This does not mean the establishment of a church, but of a religion, a very different thing. Such an establishment does not approve of a particular form of theology but simply of the religion in question as the moral foundation of the state. It was this that Justice Joseph Story had in mind when he spoke of Christianity as the foundation of our legal and social order. He held Christianity to be a part of the common law. The sociologist, Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, saw the common law itself as a Christian product. In 1955, John C. H. Wu, in *Fountain of Justice*, commented on this question thus:

> The question has often been asked if Christianity is a part of the common law. It depends on what you mean by Christianity. If you mean a revealed religion, a faith as defined by the Apostles' Creed, it is not a part of the common law in the sense that you are legally bound to believe in it. Christianity as a Faith comes into the courts, not as a law, but as a fact to be taken judicial notice of, on a par with other facts of common knowledge. On the other hand, if you mean by Christianity the fundamental moral precepts embodied in its teachings, it is a part of the common law in the sense that all the universal principles of justice written in the heart of every man are a part thereof.

In this sense, there is a common concern in both church and state. The political scientist, James McClellan, in *Joseph Story and the American Constitution* (1971), held, "At bottom, church and state are forever united; their total separation impossible" (p. 126). Church and state are not united in any institutional or legal sense but in a common concern on common moral premises for a particular form of moral order.

The freedom recognized by the First Amendment serves to enable both church and state to work with greater independence and vigor for that moral order. Basic to that freedom is the belief that sovereignty does not reside in the human sphere but in God alone. It follows, therefore, that no human agency, such as church or state, can claim exclusive or total jurisdiction. Totalitarianism is a consequence of nontheistic doctrines of sovereignty. If God alone is Lord or sovereign, God alone has total jurisdiction over all things.

The absence of a doctrine of sovereignty in the Constitution made the First Amendment possible. The rise of the doctrine of federal sovereignty is now threatening the First Amendment. Only a true doctrine of lordship or sovereignty can turn the present drift into totalitarianism around. Only then can we counteract what Judge Robert H. Bork, in

Tradition and Morality in Constitutional Law (1984), called "constitutional nihilism."

We must remember, however, that constitutional nihilism has its roots in moral nihilism. Gertrude Himmelfarb, in the February 1985 *Commentary* (vol. 79, no. 2), writes on "From Clapham to Bloomsbury: A Genealogy of Morals." The Bloomsbury circle, which included the economist Keynes, Virginia Woolf, Lytton Strachey, and others, derived its premises from the philosophy of G. E. Moore. Moore not only separated religion and morality but implicitly made both unnecessary, so that, as some of his followers soon saw, the problems of society were simply technical and managerial ones. The Bloomsbury group thus viewed their lifestyle in terms of aesthetics, not morality, and they called their "liberated" homosexuality "the Higher Sodomy." For them morality was not a problem because it was irrelevant.

The influence of this circle is quite pervasive in our time. It affects our media, our legislative assemblies, and our courts. It turns the meaning of the First Amendment upside down. That document, instead of setting forth the independent sphere of religion so that it might better govern and inform public faith and morality, is now seen too often as the guarantee for every kind of immoralism and social disorder. The First Amendment was written to give freedom to the expression of religious and moral convictions in the civil sphere in terms of an historic faith that Biblical religion constitutes an independent sphere. It has now become the prop of a philosophy which insists on the irrelevance of religion and morality to social order. The consequence of this religious and moral nihilism is constitutional nihilism.

Judge Bork wrote also of the current "privatization of morality, which requires the law of the community to practice moral relativism." It is this that leads to constitutional nihilism. Behind all this lies a moral nihilism. As a result of an emphasis on appearance which was strong in the Victorian era, people are now judged socially and aesthetically, not morally. A man may be a homosexual, a dedicated adulterer, a dishonest dealer, or more, but, unless there is a public scandal connected with him, he is acceptable if well dressed, well bathed, and aesthetically "right" in his lifestyle, whereas a virtuous man is looked down on. This is the Bloomsbury tradition, although its roots go deeper.

Until men recognize that law, morality, and religion are inseparable, and religion is basic to social order, our decay will continue. The privatization of morality is anti-Biblical, and it leads to moral and social nihilism and death.

AMERICANISM

216

THE POLITICAL ILLUSION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 96, April 1988

It would be absurd to deny the importance of politics, but it is also very dangerous to overrate it. One of the persistent problems of Christendom has been the tendency to overrate both church and state. In Numbers 18:21–26, we see that God orders the tithe to be paid, not to the priests but to the Levites, whose varied functions included education. Thus, worship per se received mainly a tithe of the tithe. At the same time, the civil tax was limited to half a shekel for all males over eighteen, the same amount for all. As a result, both church and state in Scripture are, however important, *restricted* in size and power. The power center is the covenant man and the family.

Michael Kammen, in *A Machine That Would Go of Itself: The Constitution in American Culture* (1986), has shown how modern men since Newton have seen their hope and salvation in machines. The universe was seen as a machine, and politics was seen also as an area where, if the proper machinery of government were once established, all would then go well. Constitutionalism was seen as such a mechanism; once properly established, it would ensure the orderly processes of government and justice. Machine imagery was used well into this century by men like Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Even the critics of the United States Constitution used the same language, saying, "the machinery of government under which we live is hopelessly antiquated (and) should be overhauled." After World War II, as colonies were granted independence, they were also given constitutions which had no meaning in terms of their cultures and laws. Not surprisingly, these constitutions soon became meaningless. Contrary to Western expectations, constitutions guaranteed nothing when the culture of a people was unrelated to the paper rules.

In the 1930s, the New Dealers added a biological character to the "mechanism" of the Constitution. After Darwin, they held that constitutions have also an organic character and thus must evolve into more advanced forms. This mechanistic and sometimes biological theory of law and constitutionalism was the *first* and major form of American (and, often, European) faith concerning political order.

The *second*, stemming from Jean-Jacques Rousseau, held to a belief in the will of the people as embodied in the general will. Phillip S. Paludan, in *A Covenant with Death: The Constitution, Law, and Equality in the Civil War Era* (1975), has shown how the popular will came to outweigh law in many minds. Davy Crockett claimed that the heart of the common man was *at least* the equal of books and the learning of judges. He boasted of having never read a law book and of having based his decisions as a justice of the peace on "common sense and honesty," and of having "relied on natural born sense and not law learning." Thus, the certainty of the "mechanism" of the Constitution was giving way for many to the natural goodness of man's will. Such advocates of man's natural wisdom held that no law or constitution could outweigh the will of man.

Many, of course, tried to combine the idea of constitutions and laws as the mechanism of justice and government with the idea of supremacy of the popular will, the majority, or the democratic consensus. As a result of this union of the two ideas, it became commonplace to use the word "democracy" instead of "republic" in describing the United States. The U.S. Constitution was reinterpreted along democratic lines, as was the British constitution. Will and mechanism had become a unity and an instrument whereby man's problems would be solved. Salvation was now on its way by means of the democratic process in and through civil government.

Church and state have often seen themselves as man's saviors. One of the premises of the states of the ancient world was that a stateless man was no longer a man, that outside the state there was no salvation. A like belief has at times been common to some churches. The Biblical faith, of course, is that there is no salvation outside of Christ. Peter declares: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Our Lord says plainly, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). (Ironically, I have been told by critics more than a few times that to believe in a salvation exclusively through Christ is bigotry. These same people will declare that there is neither hope nor future, no salvation, in other words, for men except through democracy. This is more than bigotry: it is pharisaic stupidity!)

Modern men believe earnestly that their hope of salvation is in and

through politics, through the state. As a result, the capture of the state in order to institute their plan of salvation is an urgent matter to many men and their political parties. Some talk as though the world will come to an end if the opposition party wins the election!

Now, clearly, political parties can do some good, and much harm, but they cannot create the good society, nor a new paradise on earth. Political change is coercive change, not moral transformation. Political power cannot regenerate men. All too often, politics is the art of turning a working society into a disaster. At its best, however, civil government cannot give to a people the character they do not have.

To expect social regeneration by means of politics is to believe in moral shortcuts. It is the belief that men and nations can be made new by legislation. Imperial Germany before and during World War I was very strongly socialistic; every area of life was regulated and controlled: it was an ordered society. After World War I, many liberals believed that freedom from socialist regulations would produce, automatically, a free, liberal economy and society. The result instead was the moral anarchy of the Weimar Republic: it was not productive as the liberals had hoped, but was instead given to lawlessness. In voting for Hitler, many people were voting for a return to order, for a respite from lawlessness, only to find that an ordered society can be a radically lawless one.

Only a moral society can be a truly orderly one, and a moral society requires a regenerate people.

Too often, the churches have followed either one of two equally vain approaches to civil government. *First*, the social gospel faith sees man's hope in terms of civil law. Hence, the control and use of the civil order becomes an essential step to social salvation. Instead of a personal moral commitment to charity and social responsibility, the social gospel churches substantiated political commitment; they are now dying, because a century of social action has produced only minor goods and major ills.

Second, the pietistic churches want no involvement in either society or civil government. For them, the *essence* of the gospel is, "Ye must be born again." They forget that this is *the starting point*, not the essence, for our Lord declares, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness (or, justice)" (Matt. 6:33). Because of this misplaced emphasis, such churches produce at best usually only babes in Christ. They forget that a baby that never grows up is an idiot. It should not surprise us that such churches are marked by social impotence. People can attend them year in and year out and hear nothing either to offend or to challenge them. In effect, such churches give assent to the savior state by their unwillingness to confront it.

Salvation by political action is the ruling religion of our time. It is a form of humanism. It will destroy us in time, if we do not replace it with Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and the wholeness of the Word of God. We have as a people sought salvation through education, "social justice," and also politics. All have failed us. It is time to bring back the *King*.

217

NONINTERVENTIONISM AS A CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLE

Position Paper No. 233, October 1999[1]

The Constitution of the United States is very clearly a noninterventionist document. The noninterventionist premise is apparent, not only in its various articles, but in the doctrine of *express powers* also. Whatever the Supreme Court interpretations of the Constitution may be, it is clear that the intention of the framers, and the language of the document itself, is the language of express powers.

Let us examine, specifically and briefly, some of these aspects of noninterventionism. *First* of all, Amendment IX re-enforces this already implicit concept by explicitly prohibiting federal intervention in the self-government of the people. The premise of this is a concept of government very different from that prevalent today. Government is primarily self-government, and the civil order is but one form of government among the many, which includes family, church, school, society, and voluntary associations.

Second, intervention in the self-government of the states, and, by implication, of their constituent units, the counties, is forbidden in Amendment X. Accordingly, internal improvements were long considered unconstitutional by many presidents and legislators. Amendment XIV has been used to nullify this concept, but the original intent and the language of that amendment were not so construed. The current welfare economy is, of course, interventionist in essence and alien to this constitutional provision.

Third, interventionism in foreign affairs, decried by Washington in his Farewell Address, was written into the Constitution. Article 1, section 8,

1. Reprinted from *This Independent Republic*, Thoburn Press, 1978.

makes possible universal military conscription, but for the stated purposes only. These stated purposes are: (1) to execute the laws of the Union, (2) to suppress insurrections, and (3) to repel invasions. Conscripted men thus could not be used in foreign wars and until 1917, this was the law of the land. This provision was rendered a nullity by the actions of Wilson and the Supreme Court (John W. Burgess, *Recent Changes in American Constitutional Theory* [New York, NY: 1933], p. 59ff.). Nonetheless, if the Constitution be regarded as authoritative, the burden of illegality with respect to subsequent foreign policy rests on the federal government.

Noninterventionism was thus, as we have seen, a constitutional provision with respect to persons, states, and foreign wars. It was, *fourth*, a principle with respect to religious policy, Amendment I being designed to prevent the intervention of the federal union into religious matters, either to establish a federal policy or to interfere in state practices.

Fifth, nonintervention with respect to money was imposed on the states as well as the federal union in Article 1, Sections 8 and 10. The premise of Andrew Jackson's constitutional struggle against the second United States Bank was this belief. Since the Civil War, and especially since the establishment of the Federal Reserve System, this principle has been bypassed. The Constitution had been opposed, before ratification, as a hard-money document. Its opponents saw clearly that paper money had no legal standing or lawful place under it. (George Bancroft, *History of the Formation of the Constitution*, vol. 2 [n.p., n.d.], pp. 132, 291, 313, 380, 408).

Sixth, the Monroe Doctrine, December 2, 1823, made two fundamental applications of this principle of noninterventionism: (1) the nonintervention by foreign powers in the Americas, and (2) nonintervention by the United States in the affairs of Europe. Both aspects are now bypassed.

Seventh, the Polk Doctrine, announced on December 2, 1845, developed this principle further by means of a three-point platform:

> 1. The people of *this continent* have the right to decide their own destiny.
>
> 2. We can never consent that European powers shall interfere to prevent such a union (of an independent state with the United States) because it might disturb the "balance of power" which they may desire to maintain upon this continent.
>
> 3. No future European colony or dominion shall without our consent be planted on any part of the North American continent. (James D. Richardson, ed., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, vol. 4 [Washington, D.C., 1904], pp. 398–399, see also Richard B. Morris, ed., *Encyclopedia of American History* [New York, NY: 1961, rev. ed.], pp. 192–193).

Since the Russo-Japanese War, however, the United States has been extensively involved in balance-of-power politics.

Eighth, interventionism with respect to property has become the rule rather than the exception. In various ways and by many federal agencies, property is subjected to federal intervention daily. One such instance is urban renewal. The Fifth Amendment declares: "No person shall be . . . deprived of . . . property . . . without due process of law, and nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation." Urban renewal condemns private property for private use. In 1954, in *Berman v. Parker*, the Supreme Court made this possible by ruling: "The concept of the public welfare is broad and inclusive . . . The values it represents are spiritual as well as physical, esthetic as well as monetary." Urban renewal, by taking property from some for the profit of others, has thus been conductive to the oligarchic development which the Founding Fathers feared.

The basis of this change from noninterventionism to interventionism in constitutional theory is a sociological approach to the Constitution. Its original intent is supplanted by present demands. As Kik has observed, "The Supreme Court is limited to the intent of those who composed the First Amendment. Otherwise, we are no longer under a constitutional government." (J. Marcellus Kik, *The Supreme Court and Prayer in the Public School* [Philadelphia, PA, 1963], p. 27. See David Leslie Hoggan, *Conflict in 1937: The Supreme Court, The Federal System, and the Constitution*[2]). In terms of this new mode of interpretation, it has been repeatedly noted, we are less and less under the Constitution and increasingly under the Supreme Court.

The roots of this trend must be sought, however, elsewhere than in the Supreme Court, which to a large extent mirrors a cultural phenomenon. Its origins are religious. Even as the origins of the republic were in Christian faith, so its decline is rooted in developments within the life of the church. In the past century, churches have steadily developed a principle of interpretation which, not surprisingly, has taken root in society at large, and in the courts. The Bible and the various creeds have been interpreted, not in terms of their original intent, but in terms of contemporary science, politics, economics, and cultural mores. The original meaning has been clearly suppressed or bypassed to make way for modern requirements. Instead of dropping the creed or Bible, its authority has been used to justify new contents by means of interpretation. The conclusion is a

2. When Rushdoony originally wrote this article, Hoggan's book was, reportedly, soon to be published. However, it apparently has not since that time been released in any form. — editor

simple one: If men deal so with the things of God, why not so with the Constitution? Is there then cause for complaint if the Supreme Court applies modern religious methodology to law? The issue, thus, is basically a loss of character as a consequence of a loss of faith. The Constitution still stands, basically the same document despite certain amendments, and its character has changed little in the past fifty years. The interpretation thereof has changed, reflecting a now deeply rooted revolution in American faith, and the newer approach will certainly be reflected at the polls and in the courts, but it will be settled first of all in the religious decisions of men. Inescapably, history is the outworking of religious commitments.

218

SERBIA, THE UNITED STATES, AND CHRISTIANITY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 231, June 1999

The United States, at its inception, under George Washington's leadership, took what came to be called an *isolationist* stand on foreign affairs. The term *isolationist* position meant a policy on foreign wars, alliances, and politics. But it took a radically different stance on moral and religious issues. As a result, the United States was known worldwide as the land of freedom and Christianity.

With World War I, a shift became apparent. Woodrow Wilson believed in world salvation by political and military force, and hence our entry into World War I and our one-world concerns. This has grown steadily since then, and the United States now seeks to play the role of world policeman and savior.

Serbia and other Balkan states gained their freedom from Turkey between the Crimean War and World War I. The oppressed peoples of the Balkans hoped for one state to include them all, i.e., a Southern Slav country, with a notable Serbian family to provide the king. This would have created a powerful European state rivaling the great powers, and this was anathema to the latter. The various component groups were each persuaded to have their own kingdoms, and funds were provided toward this end, and German princes provided also to be their rulers.

Serbia's continuing independence toward the European great powers led to World War I, when supposed revolutionaries, probably in foreign pay, assassinated the Austrian prince. World War II followed.

After World War II, Tito, a Marxist, gained power in Yugoslavia (including Serbia) with allied help. Meanwhile, the Danube and the Rhine rivers were united by a great canal, making the Danube-Dardanelles waterway the world's most important one. The industrial development

planned by Serbia on the Danube would have made it potentially, perhaps, the world center for commerce, rivaling the European powers, the United States, and Japan. Once again, Serbia became a world villain.

Recent reports from Serbia from people who do not favor Milosevic are grim. Not only they, but other peoples of the area actually regard President Clinton as "worse than Hitler," under whom they suffered much in World War II. America has become to mean something radically different from what was the case before World War I.

This development should cause Americans to reassess their position. The United States has become a leading and crusading force for salvation by politics with guns. Its position is anti-Christian; nothing in the Bible can vindicate its present course.

The concern of the United States for Kosovo is a strange one. The rationale for its stance is an unusual one. The American Southwest has many areas with a very high Hispanic population. What if these peoples seek independence from the United States *à la* Kosovo? Should the majority nationality in New York City have the right to demand independence under a foreign flag? How can we apply arguments to Kosovo and Serbia that we do not allow here at home?

The world is full of conflicts and evils. Are we called to try to save the world by guns and bombs? Have we not developed a pagan and evil plan of salvation radically at odds with Christian faith?

On more than one ground, many Americans are opposed to this and any further foreign salvationist action. For this, too many Americans are abused and slandered. It seems that dissent from the interventionist faith is immoral to these peoples!

Americans abroad at one time were highly regarded as a godly and helpful people. Now it is unwise in many areas to be identified as an American.

The issue in Kosovo is a religious one. It has to do with one's plan of salvation. It is a moral decision we must make, not a political nor a military one. We have done more than renounce Washington's policy: we have rejected the faith on which it was based.

STATISM

219

THE STATE AS THE EMBODIMENT OF MORALITY?

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 207, December 1996

To neglect history is a dangerous thing, because for modern man history and time have replaced eternity as the arena of full determination. This has meant that predestination has been transferred from God to the state. The state gained primarily in the minds of men in the nineteenth century, and Hegel's idea of the state as the embodiment of morality began to command man's mind (Georg G. Iggers, "The Dissolution of German Historicism," in Richard Herr and Harold T. Parker, eds., *Ideas in History* [1965], pp. 292–293). However much confusion this concept may spawn in intellectual circles, it has not been really displaced, and it still commands politics. For Hegel, the state embodies the current status of the Geist, or the developing Spirit of the world, and, as such, it expresses the truth for the time and embodies the moral imperatives for the day. Modern politics seeks to use the state as the moral voice of humanity and to bring about humanity's advancement by the state's moral action.

In Biblical religion, the prophets of God confronted the kings and priests with God's law; God defined morality, and God judged kings and priests for their departure from His law-word. In the new perspective, the politician discreetly challenges the people and the clergy to match its vision for humanity's progress. The locale of Sinai has shifted, and also the lawgiver.

In *The Social Contract*, Jean-Jacques Rousseau had written, "It would take gods to give laws to men." He said gods, not God, and the new gods were soon vocal enough in the French Revolution. The voice of God was now the voice of the people. Morality thus was beginning to be a statist, not a theological, product.

At the same time, another strand of Enlightenment thought was moving towards a related goal. Condorcet's hope was in science and in rationality. For him, measurement is our best source of knowledge, and the scientist the most qualified of men. Karl Marx wanted scientific socialism, which meant expert men ruling for the workers of the world. The power to rule was being transferred from God to the state's experts, and, logically, vast bureaucracies have arisen to supplant the elected rulers.

The medieval era was not interested in utopias, but, for the Renaissance, not the City of God, but a man-made City of Man, a utopia, offered the greatest hope. At the heart of the utopian dream was the will of a self-styled elite minority to impose its ideal commonwealth on the majority.

In the process, a major shift in thinking occurred. For Christianity, man's problem is sin, his willful want of conformity to the law of God. It is *anomia*, lawlessness, or, an antilaw mentality. For the utopian, instead of sin, ignorance is the problem, to be remedied by statist education, so that man might reach his human potential. For the utopian, for the humanist, man's ignorance is heightened by the ostensibly false teachings of orthodox Christianity. This has meant removing education from the hands of the Christians into the hands of the state, where supposedly true education and true morality will flourish.

Even back in the seventeenth century, there were humanistic thinkers calling for a society dedicated to liberty, equality, and fraternity. History was to demonstrate that this liberty was to be from God and the church, not from the state. As for fraternity, it had to be on humanistic, not Christian, terms. Equality meant an equal status as slaves of the state.

But because the state is the embodiment of morality, what the state does is therefore held to be inescapably good. To oppose the state is to oppose the *Geist*, the spirit of the age, in its inevitable march to the "Great Society."

Fraternity in some societies has come to mean living in communal housing under the most wretched circumstances. Because the state's purpose is by definition moral, the failure of collective housing is due to the failure and rebellion of the individuals in such units. The state's goals are by definition rational, whereas, it is held, Christianity is irrational and thus the great enemy of the modern moral state.

We thus have a major battle before us, with the rational, scientific socialist (or fascist) state confronting Christianity as the implicit roadblock to the triumph of man. Those who fail to recognize this conflict will be the victims of it.

220

NO GOD, NO LAW

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 44, November 1983

The German, Carl Schurz, came to the United States after the failure of the revolution of 1848. He found the nature of the United States to be dramatically different from Europe: "Here in America you can see how slightly a people needs to be governed. In fact, the thing that is not named in Europe without a shudder, anarchy, exists here in full bloom" (David Tyack and Elizabeth Hansot, *Managers of Virtue*, p. 19). What Schurz meant was that civil government was at a minimum, especially on the state and federal levels. There was almost no government other than the self-government of the Christian man.

Now, in 1983, the powers of the state are vastly increased. Only in the most nominal sense does the United States have the same kind of civil government it had then. From an almost nonexistent civil government, the United States has moved to a highly centralized, omnipresent power state. From a free republic and a loose federation of states, it has become an increasingly fascist order. (Fascism is that form of socialism which maintains the façade of private ownership and the free market while controlling all things with regulations so as to socialize all things.)

At the same time, "laws" have also increased at a phenomenal rate, man-made laws replacing the rule of God's law. The increase of laws has not led to any increased order. The increase of lawlessness and crime has been phenomenal.

At the same time, the modern state has become humanistic and hence determined to play God. This has meant that its goal has become more and more power and total control. Because the state sees itself as absolute, it recognizes no superior law and no superior being as having any binding power over it. Lin Piao, the Chinese revolutionary leader, expressed the faith of the modern state very bluntly: "Political power is an

instrument by which one class oppresses another. It is exactly the same with revolution and with counterrevolution. As I see it, *political power is the power to oppress others*" (Paul Johnson, *Modern Times*, p. 556). When we read the writings of Marxist and Fascist leaders, it becomes apparent that George Orwell's vision in *1984* was not inaccurate when he described the goal of the humanistic state as power, and the purpose of that power as "a boot stamping on a human race forever."

In such a society, there can be no law. Law assumes a higher order, a justice above and over man and the state which both must serve. Walter Kaufmann, in *Without Guilt and Justice* (1973), was logical: by denying the God of Scripture, he denied also guilt or innocence, and justice or injustice, as invalid; they were simply implications and aspects of faith in God and His higher order. Humanistic man must be beyond good and evil. This means also that humanistic man is beyond law. There can be no higher law governing or binding man.

As Paul Johnson noted, there is no Marxist philosophy of law. Evgeny Pashukanis, a Soviet legal theoretician, pursued the issue logically and declared that in a true socialist society, "Law would be replaced by Plan" (Paul Johnson, *Modern Times*, p. 679). During the 1930s, the Plan led to, among other things, the death of Pashukanis.

He was, however, right. Soviet society is governed, not by law, but by plans. The same is increasingly true in the rest of the world. Most "laws" today are bureaucratic regulations, created by some federal, state, county, or city agency or planning commission. The number of laws enacted by representative legislative bodies is small by comparison. Power is moving from the legislative bodies to the planning agencies which they created.

This leads to a curious fact. The number of lawyers is proliferating, but the traditional practice of law is giving way to bureaucratic law. Law is ceasing to be law in any historic sense.

Recently, the American Bar Association expressed dismay at the bad image lawyers have with the public. That bad image is not unique to lawyers. Politicians are commonly despised; bankers are distrusted; so too are doctors; the clergy are in disrepute; and so on. Virtually every calling is held in contempt or viewed at least with suspicion. Since all have become infected with relativism, all are viewed with distrust.

In law, irrelevant technicalities of form overrule the substantive claims of justice, a condition not limited to law, although especially deadly where justice is the issue.

The Plan is replacing law, and the Plan is a humanistic concept. It represents man's *ad hoc* concept of order, and the Plan allows no disagreement, because no higher law exists, it is believed, to judge the Plan. As

one of Stalin's economists, S. G. Shumilin said, "Our task is not to study economics but to change it. We are bound by no laws" (Johnson, p. 267).

The word *law* in its origin and its still current meaning is that which is *laid*, set, or fixed; it has reference to an established standard. But it is no longer true of law that it gives us a fixed standard; it is at its best a rubber yardstick. Early in the 1970s, a lawyer remarked with disgust that too often he did not know what the law was until he went to court and heard the judge give the law a new meaning. Men no longer seek to conform themselves and their societies to God's higher law, rather, they conform the law to society's demands.

Such an attitude is not new. It has been the goal of tyranny for many centuries. Let us remember that the root meaning of *tyranny* is rule by man's law. W. P. M. Kennedy noted, of Queen Elizabeth I, "The Elizabethan ideal in religion was national unity" (*Studies in Tudor History*, p. 233). Tudor despotism brought even family devotions in private under the spying supervision of Tudor agents. Homes were regularly searched for the slightest evidences of Catholic piety; later, the same interest was shown in discovering Puritan piety. Both Catholics and Puritans refused to recognize the monarch's headship over the church. In Kennedy's words, "It was a dangerous experiment to scorn her Governorship of the Church. She was in a very real sense what Lord North described her, 'Our God on earth,' and a Puritan appeal to Scripture was, in her eyes, political heresy, as it dishonoured the National Church of which she was Supreme Governor. The insult was an insult to the throne — and the throne was a Tudor throne" (pp. 242–243). One can add that law was also to a large degree Tudor law.

The problem was not new. It was an attitude common to pagan antiquity. Darius of Persia at least qualified his power, declaring, "by the grace of Ahura Mazda, I am king," but the Roman emperors made no such qualification as imperial theology developed. Rome's central cult "was the worship of Rome itself" (Michael Grant, *The Climax of Rome*, p. 164).

The persistent tendency of political theology over the centuries has been to make the state absolute (God walking on earth) and the source of law. This objective has never had more eager and more philosophical justification than in the modern era. Especially since the French Revolution, it has become basic to the modern age. It is worthy of note that two basic concepts of this era are totally lacking in the U.S. Constitution. Neither the words *sovereignty* nor *nation* appear in that document.

Sovereignty was held to be an attribute of God alone, and the nation-state was not seen as the standard. Rather, the prevailing concept of the American framers was of a freedom and justice state. Today the U.S.

Constitution has a radically different meaning, and it has been reinterpreted and rewritten in effect to include federal sovereignty and nationhood.

At the same time, life has been politicized. To live under the rule of law is one thing, but to live under the rule of politics and planning emphatically something else. John Lukacs has summed it up very clearly: "The administrator rather than the producer has become the typical (and respected) American occupation" (John Lukacs, *A New History of the Cold War*, p. 295). The triumph of the administrator is a triumph in every sphere, in politics, industry, the church, education, and elsewhere. It is the triumph of planning over law, because the administrator's goal is not a given order but the control of all factors in terms of his plan.

So far has this emphasis on man-made planning gone that Nobel laureate Sir Francis Crick has said that man's planning should establish what is human: "no newborn infant should be declared human until it has passed certain tests regarding its genetic endowment and . . . if it fails these tests it forfeits the right to live" (T. Howard and J. Rifkin, *Who Should Play God?*, p. 81). Crick is not alone in this opinion: it is shared by others. One aspect of it is abortion. The champions of abortion refuse to recognize any law of God over them. For them, the essential question is whether or not the unborn baby fits into their plan.

We have state planning because we have personal planning which is in defiance of God's law. Where men can choose their forms of sexual expression in defiance of God's law, take the lives of unborn babies at will, and assume the prerogative of directing their lives without God, there will be no hesitation to apply the same principles of humanistic planning in the realm of the state. Law gives way to planning.

The tragic fact in this process is that lawyers, who should be champions of the law, have become extensively advocates of planning. Charles Moraze traced this change back to the era before the French Revolution. The old regime badly needed accountants, "while what she had was lawyers," not lawyers with any real sense of law but lawyers whose heads were full of plans. They talked, therefore, of the rights of man and proceeded to execute men to achieve their planned society (Charles Moraze, *The Triumph of the Middle Class*, pp. 113ff.). The plans could be described as "good intentions," but the good intentions of fallen, sinful men have a crippling and evil effect on social order.

The great superstition of the modern age is a political superstition: it is the belief that more power in the hands of the state can lead to a better Plan and to man's triumph under the Plan. In terms of this superstition, man will eliminate poverty, prejudice, war, and a host of other evils by means of the Plan. Hence, more power to the State!

The Plan supplants law, God's law. The Plan denies justice or righteousness. It recognizes only the supremacy of the power state and the philosopher-kings (or "scientific" planners) thereof. Because justice, God's justice, stands always above and over man and man's plan, the Plan works to exclude God's law or justice, and it therefore wages war against Biblical faith. If there is no God, there is no law, only man's Plan.

The Plan, in fact, must work to disassociate itself from justice because it seeks to separate itself from God. Kaufmann derided the concept of justice as a Biblical hangover. Albert Camus said, "Since God claims all that is good in man, it is necessary to deride what is good and choose what is evil" (*The Rebel*, p. 47).

The modern humanistic state has done exactly that. Its course is self-consciously humanistic. The U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion and, in the process, avoided any consideration of a Biblical position. All kinds of premises were examined but not that of God's law: no transcendent law order was given any attention. Law was replaced by the humanistic Plan.

Elections, however important, cannot change the mind and heart of man. Law is in essence a religious question. When even churches are indifferent to God's law, the state will be also. But to be indifferent to God's law is to deny that God is God, and that His law-word alone is sovereign, like Himself. But, if there is no God, then there is no law, and no justice.

221

THE NEW TOWER OF BABEL

Position Paper No. 146, December 1991

Because the language of the Bible, as well as its imagery, is ancient and sometimes alien to us, we often miss the implications thereof. The builders of the Tower of Babel were honest about their purpose. *First*, they began the construction of a tower to be the governmental center of the world and a city round about it. Their goal was a united humanity, a one-world new order for all the ages. *Second*, the tower's top was "to reach unto heaven," i.e., to rival and supplant God's government, law, and control. There was a resentment for the ways of God, and this new order was to signify man's declaration of independence from God. Man's own planning and control would provide a humanistic and statist form of predestination to replace God's. *Third*, the tower was, we know from archeology, a stepped pyramid. Each successive floor of this world-center building was smaller than the preceding one, until the top story was a single, large room. Each floor represented a degree in the ascent to power in this world order. The Hebrew word used in Genesis 11:4 and translated as *name* is *shem*, meaning authority, power-center. In Genesis 9:26–27, Noah blesses Shem as the one through whom authority shall come; the descendants of Canaan will serve Shem, and those of Japheth will dwell in "the tents of Shem," under his protection. This is one of the early predictions of the Messiah, the Shem or ultimate authority and power. The builders of Babel, by saying, "let us make a name" for ourselves, were saying, let us be our own authority and savior. We do not need God to provide us with His appointed one: we appoint ourselves.

Again and again, from antiquity until now, men have attempted to build their "new world order," their new Babylons. Not believing in the triune God of Scripture, they believe in man and primarily in themselves.

They hope and plan to build a "new world order" which will meet every human need by controlling every facet of life.

It is very important to recognize, whether we view a head of state or a minor bureaucrat, that these people believe that their plans are for mankind's greatest benefits. It is they who can best provide for the general welfare; indeed, only they can.

As a result, while talking much of freedom, freedom is their enemy. If man is allowed freedom, he may well reject their enlightened rule and authority. Some feel that, for environmental "reason," the automobile must be outlawed for the "common" man: it gives him too much freedom. George Orwell's vision of *1984* is rapidly becoming a reality. The changes in the Soviet Union have not hindered the dream of "one-world order"; they may have furthered it by disarming the minds of countless peoples.

Man has two great enemies. *First*, because of his fallen estate, man the sinner works against himself. "But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death" (Prov. 8:36). Men are usually their own worst enemies but refuse to acknowledge that fact. They are surprised to find that the wages of sin are always death (Rom. 6:23). They somehow expect God to see them as they see themselves!

The *second* great enemy of man is the modern humanistic state. Its faith is not in God nor God's law, but in its own authority (*shem*) and law. But, because it is godless, the state is at enmity with God, and therefore with man. To play god, it must subdue men to itself, and this means waging war against man and man's freedom. Humanistic taxation is the power to destroy, and it is so used.

St. Paul, in Romans 13:3, makes it clear that the purpose of the state under God is to be "a terror . . . to the evil," but the "praise" of good men. The term "praise" here means, as John Murray pointed out in *The Epistle to the Romans*, "The praise could be expressed by saying that good behavior secures good standing in the state, a status to be cherished and cultivated" (vol. 2, p. 151).

This is hardly true today! The "rights" of criminals exceed those of victims. Prominent politicians and members of Congress usually retire with a very generous pension even after committing crimes, if they are at all forced to retire.

Consider this, in New York City: some twenty armed men enter a Dan's Supreme Supermarket on Hillsdale Avenue in Queens. They wear bullet-proof vests and are gun-carrying, radio-equipped members of the sheriff's department. They enter the store and hold the manger hostage until $16,900 is paid in cash for a supposed littering violation. But how can a store control that paper discarded on the sidewalk by passersby?

One man, who testified that these "sanitation agents" come to his neighborhood "at least four or five times a day," testified that one such agent "followed a piece of paper from store to store and gave three stores tickets for the same piece of paper. It took him half an hour to wait for the piece of paper to move from store to store, but he waited." Meanwhile, the city has cut back on street cleaning! This is all a part of Mayor Dinkin's new policy. At the same time, the infrastructure of the city decays (Carolyn Lochhead, "Big Apple Takes Bite from Its Own Future," *Insight*, September 16, 1991, pp. 26–29).

In varying ways, the same story can be told from coast to coast and around the world. Godly and productive people are the targets of repression, control, taxation, and evil measures, while criminals are less and less punished. The modern humanistic state is at war with its best citizens because they have money which can be taken from them, and because they represent the state's enemy, the realm of godly freedom. Ungodly freedom, a license to kill by abortion, homosexuality, and now sometimes euthanasia, is treated with statist favor. The new world order is a war against God and against the freedom of godly and responsible citizens.

What will the church today do? Pronounce a blessing on the building of this new Tower of Babel? Keep silent and preach a "spiritual" gospel? Embark on church growth programs that do nothing but add self-satisfied people to the rolls? God's wrath against every Babylon in history is written in all of Scripture.

The Word of God is clear: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4). The fall of Babylon the Great in Revelation 18 is portrayed as beginning with a worldwide economic collapse (Rev. 18:11–21). The new Tower of Babel, the "new world order," will meet the fate of its predecessors over the centuries. Earlier in this century, Hitler proclaimed his "new world order," with environmental concerns, animal rights, tree rights, and more; and its end we know. The end of the new effort will be no better.

An old proverb says, "There are more dusty Bibles than dusty books of pornography," or, we can add, than dusty television sets. Another proverb says, "The man who drowns, no longer has to learn to swim." It may soon be too late to learn swimming.

> Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. (Isa. 55:7)

222

NATIONALISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 206, November 1996

One of the problems to the modern intellectual is nationalism. It is a disturbing phenomenon to the modern mind because it is an irrational idea. Most modern national states are all made up of very different groups. Thus, a few European countries have substantial Celtic minorities whose desire for freedom is a real one. The Spanish Basques are intense in their insistence on freedom, and so on and on. Marxism is strongly opposed to nationalism, but the Soviet Union became an incubator for many nationalistic causes on the part of various minorities.

Intellectuals have long promoted internationalism, a one world order, but it seems as though efforts in that direction are counterproductive. Not only nationalism but localism is in resurgence.

Now, nationalism is indeed irrational. Few countries have "natural boundaries." Even island countries have differing groups. Britain has the English, the Scots, and the Welsh, not the most harmonious of fellowships. Japan has, under the surface, very ancient and differing groups. Mexico has Indians, Spanish, and Mexicans.

Despite these problems, the modern nation-state survives and reasserts itself. In the face of a growing internationalism, we have seen such breakups as Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia. Others may soon occur.

At the same time, the drive for a one world order is very great. Intellectuals and "liberals" see it as the intelligent and inevitable solution to mankind's problems. The formation of the modern state was, after all, in most cases the union of various states of differing characters. France was once a collection of nations, and Germany, well into the eighteenth century, was an array of very many states, great and small. Even now, many "Germans" prefer to identify themselves as Hessians, Pomeranians, Bavarians, and so on and on.

Our purpose is not to defend nationalism nor to criticize internationalism, but to call attention to a modern fallacy. To call nationalism irrational does not mean that it is contrary to reason, but it can mean that it is not a rational need. Rather, it can be a product of intelligent historical developments and necessities. Again, to call internationalism a rational idea does not make it a necessity. The world is too much influenced by Hegelian ideas which see the world-state as the logical development. However, history is not the outworking of reason, nor Hegel's *Geist* or spirit. Its goals and developments are not determined by what philosophers see as rational. Far from it!

The attempt to reduce history to a rational order and goal is a product of humanism from at least Plato (if not the Tower of Babel) to the present. But the "reason" governing history is not man's, but God's: it is His sovereign purpose and decree. Its meaning is not to be found in man's reason, but in God's eternal plan.

The goal of a one world order in the Tower of Babel was to establish determination and control not in God, but in man. The "good" society was to be created and determined by man, and its reason was man's idea of truth, and freedom from God. Nationalism has been a roadblock to man's efforts to play god. The confusion of tongues serves to divide men for whom division, not sin, is the evil.

Nationalism does not necessarily mean "natural" and good divisions into nation-states, but it at least provides a limited insurance against world tyranny. Precisely because the various forms of tyranny are growing, so too will the divisions. Marxism, the triumph of reason (usually bad reason) over history, will continue to beget more nationalism. China may well see a return to various actually free realms within a united front, in effect, a return to the old regional warlords. There is a rush to divide as the pressure grows to unite.

The intellectuals are so convinced of the rationality of their one world state that they fail to recognize that the world does not move in terms of their rationalistic imagination. Contemporary attempts to determine the future of man rationally are doomed to fail because they have no roots in history nor in man's hopes for his future.

223

THE OPEN FACE OF RELIGION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 158, December 1992

Dr. Thomas Schirrmacher has shown clearly that what we now call *religion* was once called *law*, i.e., the Christian law, the Mohammedan law, Shinto law, and so on. Religions are essentially systems of law, doctrines of good and evil, of morality, and of how mankind must act to be in harmony with reality, however it is defined.

The open face of religion is its system of laws. Every legal system is an establishment of religion; the laws of a people reveal their religion. Law is simply the expression of the will of the sovereign, and the sovereign is the god of the system.

In the era since the Enlightenment began, ca. 1660, and especially in the twentieth century, men have worked to confuse the meaning and origin of law. An example of this is Daniel J. Boorstin, in *Hidden History* (1987). According to Boorstin, for mankind the idea that man could make his own laws was "burdensome." Men found it easier to believe that "a misty divinity" provided all the laws men needed. It was, Boorstin held, a painful step for mankind to make its own laws (p. 160). For a man who has been an historian, and the librarian of Congress, it is hardly a sensible conclusion. What makes matters worse is that Boorstin is apparently Jewish; how can he think that the God of the Bible is "a misty divinity"?! Has he ever read the Bible?

Moreover, the Bible tells us very clearly that the reason for man's fall was that he sought to usurp lawmaking power from God. The tempter's statement in Genesis 3:5 was that man should be his own god or lawmaker, "knowing" or *determining* for himself what is good and evil, i.e., making his own morality and law as the prerogative of his "sovereignty"! This is original sin. Mankind never hesitated over the centuries as to the source of law. They insisted on making their own laws, or creating a

façade of gods, as did Rome, while the senate made law and also decreed who would be called a god.

Boorstin began his comments by citing the common dictionary definition of law: "The rules of conduct established by the authority, legislation, or custom of a given community or other group." This is a humanistic definition.

The first *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1771) defined law more simply and accurately: "Law may be defined: The command of the sovereign power, containing a common rule of life for the subjects."

If God is our Sovereign or Lord, then His Word is our law. If the state is sovereign, then the state makes the laws. If man is sovereign, as some hold, then every man is his own god and lawmaker. We have a growing anarchy in the streets because of this belief. Our state schools teach us that every person has the "right" to create his own value system. Is it any wonder that such students believe they can do what they please, kill at will, and despise all moral standards with impunity? The remarkable fact is that more of them are not doing so. I have found that many students and adults are now moral anarchists. Many are restrained from a more open practice of their beliefs only because they realize that there are still some consequences to the logic of immoralism. The rage of some over the fact of AIDS is startling. They seem to believe that AIDS is some kind of Christian plot against freedom!

The open face of religion is its system of laws. Its character is plainly revealed thereby. The humanistic laws of our time tell us that humanism is suicidal.

Basic to humanism's view that laws are a human invention is the belief that only an elite group are truly human (the rest of us are still animalistic), and this elite group should rule and make all the laws. This premise of an elite ruling power is basic to socialism and positivism. According to C. H. Haring, in *Empire in Brazil* (1958), "Comte's ideal was a dictatorial republic, ruled by an elite" (p. 140). Haring states it with admirable brevity and succinctness. Comte's own statement can provoke less able and less kindly a description. The Positivists in Brazil brought about a revolution (not a popular one), and created a new social order (but not a good one), because, they believed that their philosophy provided the only valid basis for law and society.

To some degree, virtually every country now has a positivist and a socialist legal system. Worse yet, the churches for the most part, Catholic and Protestant, modernist, evangelical, and ostensibly Reformed, are antinomian. They have junked God's law in favor of man's law, which means they are either only nominally or marginally Christian. The

restoration of society cannot take place until the churches again believe in the whole of God's law. They must recognize the sovereignty of God and His sole authority as lawgiver.

But a pastor of a sizable church, a man I barely knew, went out of his way on one occasion to tell me, "When I hear talk of the sovereignty of God, it makes my flesh crawl." It should have that effect on intelligent humanists.

The Bible defines sin as the transgression of the law of God (1 John 3:4). The law sets forth God's way of righteousness or justice. Sin turns man into the way of injustice and death. It makes man guilty before God, and it debases his nature and is a spiritual death. Our justification by Christ is the change of our legal status before God; by regeneration, we are then enabled to believe and to heed God's law. Our sanctification is our "moral transformation," to use Francis L. Patton's term; we now try with all our being to obey God's law, because our religion is no longer the attempt to become god, but the happy determination to let God be God, to rejoice in Him, and to love and obey Him.

Law is the open face of religion, and what men recognize as true law will tell you who their god is.

224

ADIAPHORISM AND TOTALITARIANISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 17, November 1980

One of the more important but neglected controversies of church history has been the struggle over adiaphorism, i.e., over "things indifferent." Essentially, the controversy has been over the realm of things which stand outside the Word of God, over what is and is not legislated. Obviously, at the heart of this concept of adiaphora is a doctrine of God, and the nature and extent of His government and law. However, for most theological traditions, the argument over adiaphora is an old and settled one, and the issue is not seen as a very lively one in our time.

On closer examination, however, it becomes apparent that the issue is far from settled, and that the concept of adiaphora is anything but Biblical. The *concept* in fact comes from the ancient Cynic and Stoic philosophers, and its presence in church history is evidence of a pagan infiltration.

It is thus important to review briefly the Cynic and Stoic views. For the Cynics and Stoics, man existed in an essentially meaningless material cosmos. Value, meaning, and morality had no meaning in that material world; they were, rather, personal and spiritual or mental concerns and concepts. In brief, value and meaning are derived from the self and are virtually identical with it. The moral goal is thus self-sufficiency, and the wise and moral man is absolutely self-sufficient and recognizes that the material world is a world of morally indifferent things. In such a view, which Diogenes held in dramatic form, there is no law nor meaning outside of man; all things physical are indifferent. Only man's mind makes the difference in its attitudes, which are the source of values.

This view first entered the church as a heresy. Carpocrates and his followers saw nothing evil by nature (or, for that matter, good), with the only values being *faith and love*, attitudes of the self. The Nicolaites were very precise in stating the extent of things indifferent: adultery was for

them a matter of indifference.[1] Of the doctrines of Carpocrates, Irenaeus reported that he held that, "We are saved, indeed, by means of faith and love; but all other things, while in their nature indifferent, are reckoned by the opinions of men — some good, and some evil, there being nothing really evil by nature."[2]

Very early, too, these Hellenic ideas of adiaphorism entered into the apparently orthodox tradition of Christian thought. Clement of Alexandria held, "Fit objects for admiration are the Stoics, who say that the soul is not affected by the body, either to vice by disease, or to virtue by health; but both these things, they say, are indifferent."[3] Clement's point here is not an attack on environmentalism but an assertion of the separate beings of mind and body, and the necessity to cultivate the independence of the mind or soul from the morally indifferent realm of matter. For Clement, "a good life is happiness, and . . . the man who is adorned in his soul with virtue is happy." For Clement, virtue is to be defined in Hellenic terms; Greek philosophy for him paved the way, and Christianity simply added to that structure the incarnate truth, the Son of God:

> Although at one time philosophy justified the Greeks, not conducting them to that entire righteousness to which it is ascertained to cooperate, as the first and second flight of steps help you in your ascent to the upper room, and the grammarian helps the philosopher. Not as if by its abstraction, the perfect Word would be rendered incomplete, or truth perish; since also sight, hearing, and the voice contribute to truth, but it is the mind which is the appropriate faculty for knowing it. But of those things which cooperate, some contribute a greater amount of power; some, a less. Perspicuity accordingly aids in the communication of truth, and logic in preventing us from falling under the heresies by which we are assailed. But the teaching, which is according to the Savior, is complete in itself and without defect, being "the power and wisdom of God"; (1 Cor. i:24) and the Hellenic philosophy does not, by its approach, make the truth more powerful; but rendering powerless the assault of sophistry against it, and frustrating the treacherous plots laid against the truth is said to be the proper "fence and wall of the vineyard."[4]

For Clement, the true and Christian gnostic withdraws from the indifferent world of material things to commune with God and to approximate God's impassibility by his own indifference to external things:

1. Bernard J. Verkamp, *The Indifferent Mean: Adiaphorism in the English Reformation to 1554* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1977), pp. 21–22.

2. Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," bk. 1. chap. 25.5, in *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, vol. 5, The Writings of Irenaeus, vol. 1 (Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1874), p. 96.

3. Clement of Alexandria, "The Miscellanies," in ibid., vol. 12, *Clement of Alexandria*, vol. 2, p. 148.

4. Ibid., bk. 1, chap. 20; in ibid., vol. 1 pp. 419–420. of vol. 4 in series.

> When, therefore, he who partakes gnostically of this holy quality devotes himself to contemplation, communing in purity with the divine, he enters more nearly into the state of impassible identity, so as no longer to have science and possess knowledge, but to be science and knowledge.[5]

Given such a perspective, it is easy to see why the church moved, *first*, into asceticism. An indifference to material things was seen as a mark of morality. The material world itself was now, in Cynic fashion, seen as adiaphora, as a thing of indifference to true religion and morality. *Second*, the Old Testament was no longer seen as on the same plane as the New, and the New Testament was viewed in Hellenic terms and as the "spiritual" book in contrast to the "materialism" of the Old. The apostolic preaching had been from Old Testament texts, which were viewed as more "alive" and relevant than ever with the coming of Christ. Now, the Old Testament was regarded as a lesser, more primitive, and hence materialistic revelation. God's law was thus seen as belonging to a lower era of revelation and hence now less relevant, if at all so. This view, then and now, has led to antinomianism. *Third*, as with the Cynics, morality was now reduced also to a mental attitude. Since things material are morally indifferent, then only man's spiritual states can be moral. Logically, the Cynics, and also Carpocrates and the Nicolaites, saw now evil in material acts, in adultery, homosexuality, and the like. On the whole, despite periodic lapses, the church worked to avoid such a conclusion, however logical. This opinion did remain as an undercurrent, as Boccaccio witnessed. In the concluding paragraph of his *Decameron*, he states flatly that he was writing the truth about friars (and others). In the "Seventh Story of the Third Day," a lover tells a married woman, whose refusal earlier had driven him into exile, "For a woman to have converse with a man is a sin of nature; but to rob him or slay him or drive him into exile proceedeth from malignity of mind."[6] In other words, adultery is a lesser sin than deliberately depriving a lover, because sins of the mind are more important than sins of the flesh. In the "Eighth Story of the Third Day," an abbot convinces a woman that adultery with him is not a serious matter:

> The lady, hearing this, was all aghast and answered, "Alack, father mine, what is this you ask? Me thought you were a saint. Doth it beseem holy men to require women, who come to them for counsel, of such things?" "Fair my soul," rejoined the abbot, "marvel not, for that sanctity nowise abateth by this, seeing it hath its seat in the soul and that which I ask of you is a sin of the body."[7]

5. Ibid., bk. 4, chap. 6, in Clement, vol. 2, p. 157.

6. Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, John Payne trans. (New York, NY: Triangle Books, 1940), p. 163.

7. Ibid., p. 171.

This is a mild form of an opinion which has in the twentieth century become more common among Protestant antinomians and modernists. It was in the early 1940s when I first encountered a pastor of some prominence who held that any sexual relationship, as long as it was *truly personal and loving*, was valid and moral. He was quite insistent that this was "the true spirit of the gospel" and that my perspective was legalistic and unloving.

Peter Abelard was a strong champion of adiaphorism. According to Verkamp, he "suggested that apart from the intention of all human actions, considered in themselves, are indifferent."[8]

The problem of adiaphora became confused in church history because it represents an alien religious premise transposed into a Biblical faith. The concept of adiaphora presupposes, *first*, a dialectical and/or a dualistic worldview. It assumes that there are two kinds of being, matter on the one hand, and spirit, mind, or idea on the other. Of these two, matter is seen as either morally indifferent or relatively far less important. Such a view of being is clearly anti-Biblical. Scripture sees mind and matter as alike one kind of being, created being. The contrast is rather to the uncreated Being of God. *Second*, the universe of the Cynics and of adiaphorism is explicitly or implicitly a meaningless realm of brute, or meaningless and unrelated, factuality. There is no god whose eternal decree gives total meaning to all things. Adiaphorism presupposes an area or realm of indifferentism and neutrality.

The arguments used to defend this realm of neutrality go something like this: no morality is involved in a simple walk through the countryside, or a pleasure drive in one's automobile on a Saturday afternoon. The answer is that, because this is totally God's creation and a moral universe, we can never step outside the moral realm into an indifferent one. Our driving is either responsible and hence moral, or it involves a contempt for the life and property of others, a moral fact. Our walk can be an enjoyment of life and the world around us, a moral fact, or it can involve trespassing, playing the Peeping Tom, discarding paper trash, and so on, all moral facts. In one presbytery, in an argument in favor of adiaphorism, a pastor declared, "Paul probably travelled at times by oxcart. Are we bound to do the same?" The *means* are thus indifferent, he held; we can travel by cart or car without any moral connotation involved. But is travel morally indifferent? A young man, a student, who answered an advertisement offering a free ride from coast to coast in return for driving, found himself in a vehicle with two thieves and two prostitutes, more or less a captive, and having reason to believe that the car was a

8. Verkamp, *The Indifferent Mean*, p. 23.

stolen one. We can never step into a morally neutral realm. To assume that, because no problems arise, a situation is therefore morally neutral is a serious fallacy.

Third, adiaphorism presupposes that morality is only a mental outlook, i.e., that it is essentially a matter of love. Feminists have argued (as have others) that a wife's sexual relations with her husband can be moral or immoral, depending on whether or not it is a loving act or a reluctant duty; the same is held to be true of any other sexual relationship, adulterous or homosexual: its morality is determined by the presence of love.

Fourth, as is already apparent, the universe being totally God's creation, nothing is outside His government and law. There is nothing, thus, which is morally indifferent. The classic text used by adiaphorism is Titus 1:15, "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." Supposedly, this verse reduces morality to a mental state. On the contrary, it does not presuppose the morally neutral world, and meaningless universe, of the Cynics, but God's creation, which is totally good in origin (Gen. 1:31). Fallen man perverts even the pure things to make them impure. If "all things are pure" and good, then nothing can be called adiaphora, and if to "them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure," again we have excluded adiaphora. *Since all things are made by God, there is no neutral relationship to anything.*

However, adiaphorism in church history has presupposed a universe belonging to the Cynics rather than created by God.

Not only so, but adiaphorism has been a catch-all for several kinds of problems in church history. *First*, with respect especially to the forms of worship and church order, the argument has been between those who declare that only that which is specifically required and permitted is binding, and those who hold that whatever is not forbidden is permitted. This argument has been further confused by the fact that usually both sides have gone only to the New Testament, or mainly so, to determine what is permitted. Augustine early complained that the yoke of the Pharisees was being surpassed by church traditions, which were legislating in areas of supposed permission.[9]

Second, as already indicated, the question was, what is the scope of the binding word? Is it the whole Word of God, the Old and New Testaments alike, the law, prophets, and gospel, or is it only "the law of Christ," something supposedly abstracted from the New Testament?

Third, there was the developmental view, as in Joachim of Fiore, and

9. Philip Schaff, ed., *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd series, vol. 1, Letters 54, 55 (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), pp. 300–316.

at the Reformation in Sebastian Franck. From this perspective, the Old and New Testaments alike spoke to babes, and to the infancy of mankind. Such Spiritualists held that forms, sacraments, and law represented outworn and weak elements, useful for the infancy of the faith but due to be discarded in the age of the Spirit. All dependence on such materialistic externals was termed by Franck as a reliance on "the dregs of Satan," the inference being dualistic, i.e., that the realm of law, forms, and matter belong to Satan, and that God seeks to wean us from it.[10]

Fourth, still another problem was incorporated into the issue of adiaphora, the problem of the weak and the strong. The Pauline argument was thus again altered. The strong were now seen as those who knew that the things which troubled the weak were indifferent things. As with Titus 1:15, the presupposition imported into Romans 14:1–15:4 and 1 Corinthians 8:1–13; 10:25–33 is of a morally neutral universe. Paul, however, tells the weak and the strong that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof" (1 Cor. 10:28), an entirely different presupposition.

It should be clear now that adiaphorism is a concept which has no place in Christian thought. Unhappily, the concept is used, and, in some works, Christian morality is discussed, not from the perspective of God's infallible law-word, but from the perspective of adiaphorism.[11]

The problem, moreover, is not simply an antiquarian one, but of very great significance for church and state. Church and state alike cannot be confined to their God-given realms and limited spheres unless adiaphorism is dropped. *First*, because adiaphorism holds to a morally indifferent universe, or, in modified forms, to areas of moral indifference, the sovereign power of God is limited, and the powers of man (or of man's agencies, such as church and state) are accordingly extended. Man then has areas of life wherein he can legislate and act independently of God and His Word. At certain points, life and the universe become open to man's imperialism, to man's legislation and freedom. Sunday morning religion is a natural outcome of adiaphorism. God's legitimate concerns are in practice limited by Sunday morning religion to a limited spiritual realm. Churches which teach adiaphorism have no legitimate ground for complaining that their members limit the scope and jurisdiction of their faith. Adiaphorism is a denial of the sovereignty of God and an affirmation that, in given areas at least, man is a free agent and his own lawmaker.

Second, as Augustine pointed out, the church very early created a burden of laws and traditions as rigid and more so than the yoke of the

10. See Verkamp, *The Indifferent Mean*, pp. 79ff., 163.

11. Theodore Graebner, *The Borderland of Right and Wrong* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, [1938] 1954).

Pharisees. Adiaphorism gives vast powers to the church. Both Protestantism and Roman Catholicism have used the concept of adiaphora to enlarge ecclesiastical powers; both have seen the "evils" of one another but not the fundamental issue. If any area is morally indifferent in terms of Scripture, it can then be an area of moral indifference to men, *or an area of legislation by man, or by church and state.* It is a "free" area for man's imperialism, a place where supposedly God has no jurisdiction, or exercises none, and man is free to do so. Thus, some years ago, I was charged with a fearful offense, namely, teaching the Bible outside the church on the Lord's day without permission. I asked where, apart from presbytery's will, this was forbidden, demanding Biblical warrant. The answer given was that 1 Corinthians 14:40, "Let all things be done decently and in order," was a warrant from God to the church to govern in such areas in order to ensure that all things be done decently and in order! Paul's sentence, however, is not a general warrant for any kind of ordering but specifically a summation requiring that his precise requirements for the order of particular meetings be kept. Paul was speaking against, not in favor of, any independent powers on the part of a church or congregation to order its worship and or affairs.

Third, adiaphorism not only hands the church vast powers uncontrolled by Scripture, but the state also. The state thus sees itself as its own lawmaker, and hence its own god, because lawmaking is the prerogative of a god; it is an attribute of sovereignty and deity. The church having declared that Biblical law is now a matter of adiaphora, the state (as well as the church) is free to play god walking on earth and to legislate at will. The modern state is the result of adiaphorism. As long as the doctrine of adiaphora is retained, man will have a problem with totalitarianism in church and state. It will allow the modern state every freedom to expand its powers, because adiaphorism withdraws the sovereign claims, powers, and government of God from one area after another, leaving finally very little to the Kingdom of God other than a weak and simpering love, an antinomian religion of love.

Adiaphorism is at the roots of antinomianism, and it is basic to the decline of the power of Christianity. True, the doctrine is an old and venerable one; but then the tempter's doctrine (Gen. 3:1–5) has even greater venerability! Long ago, Jerome stated the thesis of the doctrine in its ecclesiastical form: "That is indifferent which is neither good nor evil; so that, whether you do it or do it not, you are never the more just or unjust thereby."[12] Using the freedom granted by this concept, Rome justified the

12. *The Second Helvetic Confession*, chap. 27, "Of Rites, Ceremonies, and Things Indifferent."

Mass and images, and Protestantism justified a variety of church rules, while each condemned the other! This is not surprising. Once the premise of adiaphorism is accepted, men are free to define for themselves the realm of the indifferent. God's powers of definition and lawmaking become then the prerogatives of men, and we have Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran, and Anglican doctrines of adiaphorism, and now no less the statist doctrines as well. After all, the U.S. Supreme Court transferred abortion to the realm of adiaphora. The Soviet Union and Red China have done even better! Adiaphorism means that, for vast areas, the rule which governs is simply this: let man's will prevail.

The Humanistic Doctrine of Infallibility (November 1980)

In my study of *Infallibility: An Inescapable Concept*, I pointed out that every system of thought has, if not an open, at least a hidden and implicit doctrine of infallibility. The locale of infallibility will vary; it can be man's autonomous reason, the aesthetic experience, the state, a ruler, and/or a variety of other things. Men may ridicule an alien doctrine of infallibility, but it will be only to vindicate their own.

In the modern era, the most popular doctrine of infallibility comes to us from Rousseau through Kant and Hegel. Infallibility rests in man, not individual man, but in the general will of all men, which is held to be by nature unerring and good. This general will is not ascertained by majority vote, but by its expression in the elite rulers of the state, who embody or incarnate the general will. Over the years, this infallible general will has had a variety of names and incarnations. Two popular ones of recent years have been the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the democratic consensus. The new name is public policy.

In the name of *public policy*, a variety of evils are being promoted today. Increasingly, in the name of equality and rights, freedom of speech is being denied to Christians, because Biblical faith requires that sin be condemned, whereas humanism increasingly insists on equal rights for sin. Thus, a very prominent and forthright Texas pastor has been denied the freedom to continue broadcasting his Sunday morning sermons on television. In a sermon, he condemned homosexuality as a sin; this was seen as against public policy, and his freedom to preach was curtailed. In California, sixty three churches have lost their tax exempt status and face sale of their properties for refusal to pay taxes; their troubles began when a stand was made against homosexuality. To speak out against this and like matters is now against *public policy*, the new "law."

Similarly, many courts are assuming that a children's "bill of rights" like Sweden's has been made law here because of "public policy." Christian parents, routinely administering either discipline or chastisement to their children, have been taken to court.

Moreover, *public policy* is redefining the family, as the recent White House conference made clear. The Biblical definition of the family has been rejected. The true family is now seen as "the voluntary family." This can be a group of homosexuals, runaway youths, or a sexual commune. *Public policy* seeks to give it the protection once given the covenant family.

These trends are becoming known to more and more people, but the reaction is too often one of religious idiocy: the idea is to pass a law to correct these evils. These evils, however, are not so much a product of legislation as of a religious faith in the state and its saving power. To turn to the state for relief is to aggravate that very evil.

Moreover, there is a grim fact too seldom appreciated by "reformers." Virtually all new laws, whether good or bad, have as their consequence the increase of the state's bureaucracy. Thus, the one usual and predictable result of a new law is greater power for the bureaucracy, and an increased growth. Reform laws are hence seldom a problem to a bureaucracy; the reformers legislate new laws, appropriate money for their enforcement, and the rest is up to the bureaucracy.

But this is not all. No law is likely to mean in execution and in results what it meant in purpose and passage. When a new law is enacted, its meaning and enforcement become the province of the bureaucracy and the courts. Since legislators, good and bad alike, are not at the same time in law enforcement, they cannot predict or foresee all the practical problems which the application of law creates. This very real and important function the bureaucracy and the courts discharge. The predictable result is the growth of the bureaucracy.

Add to that bureaucracy (and to the courts) the doctrine of *public policy*, and the law is immediately subject to a radically different meaning. The U.S. Constitution, thus, has been "amended" and altered more often by the varying faith and expectation of the American people than by Congress and the states. The Constitution today means not what the framers meant, but what public policy today dictates.

A key tenet of this humanistic public policy doctrine is the "equality" of good and evil. In fact, however, no such equality exists. If evil cannot be condemned, then righteousness is condemned. If a Christian pastor cannot speak out on television against homosexuality, it means that homosexuality has the freedom to condemn and silence Christianity. Such

a doctrine of equality is another name for the suppression of the freedom of Christianity.

Public policy today is another name for humanistic morality and its mandatory status. Humanistic morality governs our bureaucracies, our state schools, the press, films, television, and more, and it is promoted from Washington, D.C., down. Public policy is beginning to declare that free speech by the church must be punished. Is the Catholic Church against abortion? Move to revoke its freedom and tax-exempt status. Have Protestant churches spoken out against homosexuality? Their tax exemption must be revoked, and their freedom curtailed.

Public policy today means humanistic policy. For this reason, every attempt by evangelical pastors and churches to revive a concern for social order among their congregations, to encourage them to vote as *Christians*, and to seek to command the political processes for Christ's cause, is greeted with hypocritical wails of dismay; supposedly all this represents a revival of Nazi faith. But it is these public policy advocates who are the architects of our new fascism, an economic and political fascism which retains the forms of freedom but uses them as a façade for state socialism. These people see themselves as the incarnation of the general will and the infallible voices of today and tomorrow. They identify their will with public policy, and the rest of us with evil. Theirs is a false faith. The only answer to it is the Biblical faith, and its application to every area of life and thought.

STATE INTEREST VERSUS PUBLIC INTEREST

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 38, March 1983

In a recent trial in a federal court, questions by the state attorney gave me an opportunity to enter into the records some thoughts which would otherwise have been objected to by the state. Constant reference had been made about the "compelling state interest" which ostensibly made state intervention into the life of the church and its schools a necessity. The most compelling state interest should be *freedom with justice*. As a matter of fact, in my earliest school days, this was stressed. The climax of the Pledge of Allegiance states the purpose of the United States, of the federal union, as "liberty and justice for all."

Now, however, a "compelling state interest" means *controls*. The obvious fact in these trials is that Christian schools are providing markedly superior teaching in both moral training and in academic disciplines. The state schools are usually a nightmare of lawlessness and ignorance and have given the United States its highest rate of illiteracy in its history. The "compelling state interest" of which the state attorneys speak is the power to control. A century ago in France, Leon Gambetta made it clear that equality was more important to the state than freedom, and that both equality and liberty had to give way to fraternity, which for him was force. He said, "Force is an indivisible element in the grandeur of races." Basic to fraternity and force for him were state schools. For him too morality was to be derived from the politics of the state, not the church. (E. M. Acomb, *The French Laic Laws, 1879–1889* [New York, NY: Octagon Books, 1967]).

This was nothing new. When Diocletian further centralized power *over* the people, and began the savage persecution of Christians, he spoke about power *to* the people. The publicity theme of his coinage was

"Genio Populi Romani," i.e., he deified the Roman people even as he enslaved them! The cult of Rome and the Roman people went hand in hand with the enslavement of Rome and of all the people (Michael Grant, *The Climax of Rome* [Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1968]).

The state has long had a habit also of using every occasion to do a little good as an opportunity to advance a great deal of evil. Thus, in late eighteenth-century Austria, Joseph II used the same goals as the French Revolution to centralize his power. The serfs were freed to break the feudal power and strengthen the monarchy. As Beloff noted, "Both liberty and equality were devices by which the State could be strengthened." Instead of various levels of feudal power, all citizens were made *equally subordinate* to a central power and bureaucracy and equally taxable. The age of the French Revolution saw in France and elsewhere temporary or illusory freedoms accompanied by great increases of centralized state power. The illusion was that increased state powers would eliminate ancient evils, when in reality they created greater ones. As a result, the "age of absolutism" ended only to see the beginnings of a new and greater one in the twentieth century. (Max Beloff, *The Age of Absolutism, 1660–1815* [New York, NY: Harper, 1962], p. 127, etc.).

For a time, the free market extended liberties, but the growing powers of the central state in time suppressed these freedoms. The state as the new god was asserting its sovereign powers. This had religious consequences.

Bismarck in Germany made the state paramount over all things. He was pragmatically a conservative and a liberal, whichever served the state best at the moment. Theodor Fontane, who described himself as Bismarck's greatest admirer, once said, in another context, "Bismarck was the greatest despiser of principle that ever existed." (Fritz Stern, *Gold and Iron: Bismarck, Bleichroder, and the Building of the German Empire* [New York, NY: Alfred Knopf, 1977], p. 280). For Bismarck, the state interest could not be subordinated to any other interest. This is the mark of the statist, whether he calls himself a liberal, conservative, fascist, or radical. All things must be subordinated to the interest of the state. Our rising American fascism clearly manifests this premise in its attack on the freedom of religion. Even Theodor Mommsen was an exponent of such statism. He appealed to deracinated Jews to join the church because, he explained, the nation-state hates all vestiges of particularism. Much later, the Nazis added to this hatred not only the Jews but all churches. Rosenberg, in *The Myth of the Twentieth Century* (1931), declared, "All German education must be based on the recognition of the fact that it is not Christianity that has brought us morality, but Christianity that owes its enduring values to the German character." The churches were therefore

attacked for opposing the compelling state interest. The Catholic bishop of Berlin, von Preysing, held, to the contrary, "Justice is not derived from the will of the society . . . There is an eternal right outside man's will and guaranteed by God." By the end of 1938, however, the Nazis had suppressed all church schools in Bavaria, Wurttemberg, Baden, Saxony, Thuringia, Oldenburg, the Saar, and large parts of Prussia and Austria. Religious publications were also suppressed (in the United States in 1983, not only are Christian schools under attack, but also religious publishing houses, as witness the case of the Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Company). In Germany in the 1930s, it was declared that children are to be trained "as though they had never heard of Christianity" (M. Searle Bates, *Religious Liberty: An Inquiry* [New York, NY: Da Capo Press, 1972], p. 31). In the United States, such education has long been the reality of statist education, with humanism as the established religion of the state schools. Now the attack has been launched against Christian schools.

The Nazi goal was uniformity. Hence, all particularism was attacked and suppressed: Jews, Christians, Gypsies, all alike were anathema. The Jews were identified with hated causes, i.e., communism and capitalism, and the same applied to the churches at the time.

The same has been even more true, and with unequalled barbarism and savagery, in the Soviet Union. There, the old revolutionary ideal of liberty, fraternity, and equality is mocked by reality. There is neither fraternity nor liberty, and the only equality is in slavery. The statist road to the old liberal goals has proven to be the road to hell.

The state has insisted upon identifying the state interest with public interest. This means that the state is equated with the people. Such an identification ensures totalitarianism, because the state then is the voice and even the incarnation of the people. To oppose the state means to oppose the people, and dissenters are classified as "enemies of the people." No private concern nor any public concern can then exist. To oppose the state interest is to oppose the will of the people. Because the state interest is at the same time identified with justice and moral concern, a most arrogant Phariseeism ensues.

This is presently the position of most bureaucracies the world over. It is certainly the stance in the United States of state and federal attorneys as they confront churches and their functions. It is they who speak as the voice of justice and morality, as the guardians of the "public interest." All too often, as history makes clear, the state interest has been the enemy of the public interest.

The statists see a compelling state interest in the control of the spheres of education, economics, religion, and more. Once having assumed the

sovereignty or lordship of the state, there is then logically no limitation on either the jurisdiction or the power of the state. Sovereignty or lordship means total and ultimate authority. Those who acknowledge the lordship of Jesus Christ can then withhold no area of life and thought from His dominion. Given the sovereignty or lordship of the triune God, it follows of necessity that law must proceed from God, because lawmaking is an attribute of sovereignty. Antinomianism is a denial of God's sovereignty and an implicit affirmation of the state's lordship.

Sovereignty has been very briefly defined as "complete power." Clearly, complete power can only be an attribute of the triune God. Every state claiming sovereignty, however, logically seeks to gain complete power over all things, especially the mind and bodies of men. Such an effort leads to totalitarianism and tyranny. To gain surface compliance to its claim to sovereignty, such a state resorts to measures designed to subjugate man. To this, there are two approaches. The *first*, so ably described by Roland Huntford in *The New Totalitarians*, is by controlling education. Only state-controlled and state-approved instruction which meets the state's needs for conformity is approved. Since the church is a teaching ministry, this means control of the churches in all aspects of their ministry. The New Totalitarians are consummate hypocrites in their war against Biblical faith. They mask it with a multitude of bureaucratic concerns: zoning regulations, the need for supervision and regulation, the compelling state interest in all such matters, and so on and on. The Marxists openly persecute Biblical faith; the New Totalitarians do it by indirection.

Second, Marxist totalitarianism relies only secondarily on education and primarily on total terror. By means of torture, slave labor camps, fear, and suppression, the Marxist dictators strive for the total compliance of their peoples.

The psalmist (Ps. 115:3) tells us that God the Lord is unlike all false gods: "But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased." God's sovereignty is undivided: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD" (Deut. 6:4). God therefore requires an undivided allegiance: "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut. 6:5). These words by Moses are the mandate for obedience to God's law. Because He is the Lord, the Sovereign, the ultimate One, He must be totally obeyed with all our love in all our being. Our Lord, in repeating these words of Deuteronomy 6:5, thereby reconfirmed the sole sovereignty of God and the full authority of His law (Luke 10:27).

Significantly, Mohammed, while departing from the Biblical premises

at many points, retains this one, the sovereignty of God: "There is no god but God." It was this premise which gave Islam power.

Religions which deny the sovereignty of their "god" become polytheistic. It is logically impossible to ascribe sovereignty to any being other than God and still retain a god in one's system. The transfer of sovereignty to the state means that lawmaking and lordship are transferred to the state. The power to make laws is the power to declare things to be good and evil. Since Aristotle's state, in his *Politics*, is the source of law, his state was also the source of morality. Nazi Germany was emphatic that morality came from the state, not from the Bible. The state schools of America (and other countries) also see morality as a man-created or state-created thing. Value-education is established by these educators on humanistic, statist foundations.

All over the world, "sovereign" states are manifesting their tyrannies. The great tyranny, Soviet Russia, brutally and ruthlessly manifests its tyrant power against Christianity and against all dissent in any form. The Western democracies are, in varying degrees, replacing the God of Scripture with themselves and are, in many instances, infringing on or suppressing Christian liberties. Israel, indignant at Arab hostility, is repressive of Arab and Christian dissent, while the Arabs are repressive towards Jews and Christians. All self-righteously assert their right to do as they please in terms of compelling state interests.

Compelling state interests are essentially and ultimately hostile to God as their rival and to man as a dissenter. We must assert that there is a compelling theological interest in freedom. To acknowledge the sovereignty of and predestination by the triune God is to deny the sovereignty of the state and predestination (i.e., total planning and control) by the state. Sovereignty and predestination are exclusive attributes. If God is the Lord, if there is no god but God, then neither man nor the state can be the sovereign or lord. If essential and ultimate determination, planning, and control belong to God alone, then no man nor state can assume such a prerogative unto itself. Men and nations then must acknowledge God's sovereignty, and men and nations must seek to know their place and calling in God's plan. There is then a compelling public interest to know, obey, and serve God, for "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to serve Him forever."

226

TAXATION

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 21, May 1981

One of the most prevalent of myths is that vast properties across the land escape taxation because they are church-owned. The tales are endlessly repeated as fact: church-owned businesses, farms, and properties which by subterfuge are removed from the tax rolls. As one critic of tax exemption for churches said, ominously, a few days ago: "Nobody knows just how extensive this kind of thing is." The fact is that any and every business activity, whether privately, corporately, or church owned, is taxed, and the tax men are eager always to ferret out and tax new sources of revenue. If any such activity is untaxed, we can be sure of this: it is, like Jim Jones's People's Temple, a tacitly established "church," receiving state or federal funds, and serving some statist purpose. It is not true of legitimate churches.

There are, of course, vast untaxed lands, as much as 90 percent in at least one Western state. These lands are often exploited. In at least one state, one of the country's most powerful publishers long had, and may still have, very extensive grazing rights therein, while owning very little land himself; he is thus a cattle baron at minimal cost. Small ranchers get no such preferential treatment. These vast untaxed lands are federal and state lands. The myth holds that only such lands as the civil government holds can be protected from exploitation and abuse. The fact is that the much abused lumber "barons" take far better care of the forests they own than do the federal or state governments; if they did not, they would soon be out of business.

By what right is the state entitled to hold vast properties, and to hold them tax exempt? The answer to this question is a religious one: we are told, "The state is sovereign," i.e., the state is lord. Who made the state into a god or lord, and gave it the right to play sovereign over man?

According to Scripture, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1; see also Exod. 9:29; Ps. 50:12; 1 Cor. 10:26; etc.). On this fact rests God's right *to govern, to legislate, and to tax*. The sovereign or lord is the source of government, law, and taxation. The prophecy concerning Christ was that "the government shall be upon his shoulder" (Isa. 9:6), and the most common title applied to Jesus in the New Testament is Lord, or Sovereign. *The tithe is simply the confession that the Lord is indeed our Lord*. The state in Scripture is allowed only the head tax, and no more (Exod. 30:11–16; see Arthur J. Zuckerman, *A Jewish Princedom in Feudal France, 768–900* [Columbia University Press, 1972], for a later history of this tax). *To refuse to tithe is to deny Christ's lordship, government, and law.*

For this reason, the early church refused to pay taxes to Rome or any other power, or to allow any licensure, regulation, or control. The church as Christ's realm cannot allow any other power to claim the right of legislation, taxation, and government over it. To do so is to deny the Lord.

For this reason, too, as the church gained freedom from persecution, it encouraged the accumulation of land and properties for Christ's Kingdom; this included also the subjugation and development of new areas. The amount of land held by church agencies in the medieval era is commonly and greatly exaggerated; humanistic propaganda colors our picture of these properties and greatly distorts it. The fact is that these properties were governing agencies. Their receipts or production provided for the care of the poor, for health services and hospitals, and for education. All the basic social services were thus cared for.

When Henry VIII seized church properties and gave some of them to his henchmen, and used the rest to fatten the crown, one immediate result was a social crisis. There was no longer any agency to care for the basic needs of society. Some years later, Thomas Lever, in his St. Paul's *Sermons* (1550), dealt with this problem. The rich had become richer, and the poor had become destitute, because of the impropriations of church properties. Here was a strong Puritan attack on impropriations, and a remedy proposed shortly. A great outpouring of funds to set up foundations and charities to revive what Henry VIII had ended soon followed. Quite naturally, the Tudor monarchs, with their claims to be sovereign, heads of the church, and with divine rights, were militantly hostile to this revival of "medievalism." The Puritans, they felt, had to be suppressed. (No accurate history of the Puritans can omit the impropriations issue.)

By 1660, however, both the Reformation, and the Counter-Reformation, had been defeated and controlled by the monarchs of Europe. The monarchs could resume the course of pagan statism, of the various

medieval monarchs, and of the Holy Roman Empire, i.e., the assertion of state sovereignty or lordship. With Hegel, the state was plainly defined as god walking on earth. The present and working god of society had become the state; the God of Scripture was exiled to heaven.

The government, said the modern state, is upon our shoulders; sovereignty is the prerogative of the state. The state alone is lord, and hence the taxing, governing, and lawmaking power.

In terms of this lordship, the state said, the earth is the state's, and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein. Earlier, the papacy had, in Christ's name, rightly or wrongly, divided the newly discovered American continents among the nations. Now the nations claimed the earth for themselves. Previously, it had been church lands that were tax-exempt; now, those lands were steadily limited, and state lands gained the privileges of lordship.

There was a very grave difference, however. Church lands paid no taxes, but they provided a vast variety of social services. The lands were productive, and they were usually productively used. These, together with tithes and offerings, provided a growing and important government for Christ's people. True, there were abuses, but these were pale compared to current statist abuses. When Henry VIII seized church properties, he justified it by indicting relics, and by charges of immorality leveled against the monks, more than a little of it invented. Not even Henry VIII could deny the validity of their charitable works and ministries.

The states, having seized the church lands, and the whole earth, ostensibly for the general welfare, made no such use of these properties, except as national or state parks. Instead, it turned on the people, to tax them with ever-increasing taxes, to take care of needs once provided for by the tithe and by church lands. Today, taxation has become expropriation, and the greedy power state, owning most of the earth, hurls charges of special privilege against the meager church properties, almost exclusively limited now to churches and schools.

To add insult to injury, the claim is now openly and loudly made that tax exemption is a subsidy from the state! Nothing could be a more flagrant and blasphemous lie. The conflict with Rome by the early church was over this issue: who is the lord, Christ or Caesar? If Christ is the Lord, He cannot pay taxes to, or be controlled by, Caesar.

The church fought for and gained exemption from taxation as a *paroikia*, a foreign power, an embassy of the King of kings. Christians are ambassadors of Christ (2 Cor. 5:20; Eph. 6:20). Our English words *parish*, and *parochial*, come from *paroikia*. The church is an embassy whose duty it is to conquer the whole world, and to make all nations, peoples,

tribes, tongues, vocations, and areas of life aspects of Christ's parish. The embassy is under God's sovereignty, law, and taxation. The early church, as a part of its mission, took in the abandoned babies of the pagans. (If a woman could not, in those days, abort her baby successfully, she had it abandoned at birth. In Rome, the babies were abandoned under the bridges, where wild dogs could speedily dispose of them. The Christians collected these abandoned babies, passed them around among church members, and reared them in the faith, as a step in the Christian conquest.) Another aspect of the early church's mission was the care of the sick, aged, and needy in its own midst, and, as far as possible, among their pagan neighbors. These ministries were resented by Rome, which regarded them rightly as a form of government.

Rome saw the early church as a revolutionary and tax dodging organization. Tax dodging is in the eyes of the state a most serious offense; money is the lifeblood of the state, and to threaten the state's source of taxes is to threaten its life. Everything was done to defame these "tax dodgers": they were called cannibals and sacrificers of human beings. (The communion service, the slander held, involved eating the flesh of the babies the Christians rescued, and drinking their blood.) They were accused of the sexual crimes which actually marked the Romans. (The Christians obviously loved one another, and the Romans could not dissociate love from lust, and they hence concluded that sexual rites marked the life of the church.) On and on, the defamation went, seeking to discredit the church and its work.

Today we have the same process at work. The churches, we are told, are rich, and the pastors rolling in money. The fact is that, in 1980, the average pay of church pastors in the United States was $10,348 a year. (In 1976, federal authorities called everything below $15,000 poverty.) Fourteen percent of all pastors earned less than $6,000 and had to support themselves through other jobs; only 5 percent earned more than $15,000. In the same year, truck drivers averaged $18,300, electricians $18,000, lawyers $25,000, and dentists over $40,000. The "rich" clergy is not so rich! (Because many are provident and thrifty, they are mistaken for rich because they make a little go a long way.) But what of the rich television and radio preachers? *Penthouse*, *Playboy*, and like publications have been outspoken in their attacks on all this "wealth." Little is said, however, of the high costs of such communications, and the normally very careful use of all funds received. The abusers are few, and, as compared with misuse of public funds by statist officers and agencies, a comparative rarity.

Charges of financial abuse, however, are commonplace. It is the stock in trade of various statist agencies and their running dogs in the press to

accuse any enemy of tax fraud, financial manipulations, and the like. It is a usually successful way of discrediting churchmen, and of drying up their funds. Who wants to give to a cause charged with fraud?

The modern power state is also hostile to critics in its own ranks. When Senators Edward V. Long and Joseph Montoya began investigations of the Internal Revenue Service, the IRS leaked data to the press to imply dishonesty on their part; this was enough to defeat them at the polls (Blake Fleetwood, "The Tax Police, Trampling Citizens' Rights," *Saturday Review*, May 1980, pp. 33–36). Congressman George Hansen had like treatment, but was able to get reelected (George Hansen and Larrey Anderson, *To Harass our People*, pp. 27–35). J. A. Schnepper has given us a long chronicle of such tyranny and oppression (J. A. Schnepper, *Inside the I.R.S.* [Stein and Day, 1978]). It is not, however, simply the IRS; it is the whole apparatus of the supposedly sovereign state. To claim sovereignty is to claim lordship, divinity, prior and ultimate right and power over all things. Although the U.S. Constitution deliberately avoided all claims to sovereignty, the modern United States claims it, and seeks to exercise it. Sovereignty by the state is assumed by every bureaucrat and agency; it occurs to none of them, however much some may claim to be Christian, that only God is sovereign. "I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me": thus saith the Lord God to the modern state.

To single out one agency of the federal government as the offender is to miss the point. The offender is the state in the totality of its being.

The issue is coming into focus today because of federal claims to the power to determine what is or is not properly a part of the church and its ministry (i.e., a Christian school, a ministry to delinquent children, etc.), and its claim to be granting a subsidy with the "grant" of a tax-exempt status. In the *first* instance, for the state to claim the power to declare what is or is not a church is to claim the right to establish religion. This is a violation of the First Amendment. Prior to World War II, no such power was claimed, and abuses were rare. Is it not time to examine the question as to why the entrance of the state into an area seems to lead to abuses in that area? In the *second* instance, a tax-exempt status is not a subsidy from the state but a recognition by the state of its limited jurisdiction. Only if we accept the premise that the state is sovereign or lord, god walking on earth, and that the state has total jurisdiction over every area of life and thought, can we call any area of exemption or abstention a subsidy or a grant. In his own day, King Canute wisely ridiculed the idea that he had total jurisdiction: he commanded the waves, which paid no attention to him! Canute thereby illustrated the limitations of his power and jurisdiction. The modern states (and NASA) show no such humility.

We must not forget that the word Baal simply means lord, owner. Baal worship was any and every kind of human activity and religion which acknowledged a lord other than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The modern state is simply a modern Baal. Molech worship was king worship, Molech, Melek, or Milcom meaning king. Modern statism is Baalism.

Tax exemption is thus not a gift of the state; it rests on Christ's sovereignty or lordship. Moreover, the state itself must be no more than what God decrees that it should be, a diaconate or ministry of justice (Rom. 13:4, 6). For the state to claim to be more is to claim to be god.

The tax-dodge allegation is thus a fraud; it rests on a false and blasphemous claim to lordship or sovereignty, and it denies the lordship of Jesus Christ. This is not to deny that tax-dodging is not commonplace: it is. Every man who does not tithe to the only true Lord and God is a tax-dodger and is therefore liable to far more severe penalties than the state can impose (Mal. 3:8–12).

Moreover, such tax-dodgers cannot complain if the Baal-state whom they worship oppresses them. People having rejected God's tax now pay 40 percent of their income to the state, and they cry vainly for relief, because it is relief rather than the Lord they want (1 Sam. 8:10–18).

The very status granted to the church as a tax-exempt organization is insulting. It is classified, when exempted, as a 501(c)(3) operation. This is a classification for a wide variety of charitable trusts. It can include a humane society, and a pet cemetery, a lodge, or a local charity. The federal government claims increasingly the right to govern all these 501(c)(3) agencies as public trusts which are to be required to conform to public policy and to use all funds, assets, and properties for the general public. The federal and state governments are steadily claiming jurisdiction over all 501(c)(3) organizations; the assumption is that they are creatures of the state, and their lives are totally under the governance of the state.

The claim of Scripture is that all of life is religious. Because God the Lord is Maker of heaven and earth and all things therein, all things are under the triune God. All things live, and move, and have their being in Him (Acts 17:28), and, therefore, all things are under His jurisdiction, His government and law. For this reason, all life is religious. The Kingdom of God cannot be reduced to meat or drink (Rom. 14:17), nor can it be reduced to purely spiritual concerns: it is total in its jurisdiction. Paul could therefore say, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, *or whatsoever ye do*, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31).

The present attitude of the statist-humanists is that all of life is political and hence under the jurisdiction of the state. Supposedly, it is the

state in whom we live, and move, and have our being; certainly, it is the goal of the modern state to bring this to pass. The state seeks to govern our eating and drinking, and to control our families, vocations, and the totality of our lives.

The state holds that it is the focal point of power and intelligence in history, and therefore it must govern all things. The intellectuals, being humanists, agree, and hence they seek to control the state. Groups like the Council on Foreign Relations, the Trilateral Commission, and others have certain common premises. *First*, they bypass or reject Christianity as the means to the good society; implicitly or explicitly, they are all humanists. *Second*, they hold to the perfectibility of man by man. Their presuppositions are derived from the Enlightenment and from Rousseau, not from Scripture. Man's problem is not sin and the fall, but a failure in problem-solving. *Third*, a true world order is possible on statist premises. The modern states, working together, can solve all of earth's problems. This may mean a world state, or it can mean an informal interlocking by means of money and commerce. By uniting the world economically, there can be an implicit political unity. Such a step, however, requires the prior subordination to political goals. Present-day departments of state are thus deeply involved in international politico-economic goals. Foreign loans and politically governed foreign trade become basic tools for this goal of a humanistic and statist world order.

Fourth, the architects of this new order are philosopher-kings and more. To Plato's dream another element has been added: the banker and the industrialist. The student revolts of the 1960s were in part directed against this interlocking establishment of the state, the university, the banks, and industry, with "Big Labor" as sometimes a very minor partner. (Charles Levinson, in his thorough study, *Vodka Cola*, does not deal with the role of labor.) The modern university, state or private, is today subsidized by the federal government and is an ally in the state's claims to and exercise of the prerogatives of sovereignty. Elitism is basic to the new world order dream, in Marxist and non-Marxist versions. There is infighting as to which of these elitists are to take priority, but all four groups tend to agree on elitism. Neither a democracy nor a republic are to their taste: the form is honored, not the substance. Lip service is paid to equality, but elitism prevails.

Fifth, the façade of benevolence is maintained. Human good and human rights are the professed goals. The elite rulers bring together tax funds and large foundation funds for their use; all men thus tithe to them as the new lords of creation, and the Lord's tithe as an agency of nonstatist government is never considered. The reason is obvious. The tithe

creates a noncoercive, grassroots government under God; the state tax, with big foundation money, creates a statist rule from the top down.

Yet we are asked to believe that the church represents vast wealth which goes untaxed! The state owns more land than perhaps all the people combined, pays no taxes, grows fat off the people, and it asks us to regard the church as a rich tax evader! As we have seen, the average pay for 1980 for the American clergy was $10,348. The average pay for Christian school teachers was (and is) dramatically lower. All too many Christian school teachers can only survive if the wife teaches school also, and one or both hold summer or night jobs. The burden on these Christian schools and teachers is increased by the cost of litigation, because they are now an especial target of the statist tyrants. (A *tyrant*, let us remember, in its ancient and original meaning is anyone who rules without God. Whether or not the people like him makes no difference; a tyrant is one who rules without God, and tyranny is godless rule in any area of life. The word *tyrant*, Greek in origin, means, like *Baal*, lord, or sovereign. A tyrant or a Baal is some human agency or person who claims lordship or sovereignty. In our very use of the word *tyrant* we witness to God! Apart from Him, all rule is evil.) We live in an age of tyranny, an era in which the modern state declares, I am the lord or sovereign, and the earth is mine, and the fullness thereof.

Theology has been replaced by political doctrines, which are the new theology. The gospel of humanistic statism is seen as man's hope rather than the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When Moses asked God for His name, he was asking God to define Himself. Names in the Bible classify and define. Adam's calling to name the animals (Gen. 2:19) was a scientific task: he was asked to understand the animals in terms of God's order and to classify them. The command and the guidelines came from God, the Creator. Because God is the Creator of all things, He is the only source of all true definition and interpretation. Since God is the Creator and Definer, He Himself is beyond definition. A definition limits; it calls attention to boundaries. God declared to Moses that He was beyond definition: "I Am that I Am," or I am He Who Is (Exod. 3:14). He is knowable, not by man's definition, but by self-revelation. He is "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Exod. 3:15–16). All things are to be defined in terms of Him and His revelation.

Now, however, newspaper stories tell us of federal efforts "to define religious activity," or to define the church, and so on. All these attempts by statists at definition have a common purpose. They seek, *first*, to make religion a creature of the state. If the state is god, then this is a most

logical step, and a necessary step. Otherwise, it is a dangerous and tyrannical activity.

Second, the purpose of these efforts at definition are tax-oriented. The money-hungry state wants to increase its taxing power and its tax resources. A greedy and evil people assent to this. "Tax the rich" has become a reality, but now the income and inheritance taxes hurt virtually all the people, perhaps least of all the very rich. Envy is a great weapon, used over the centuries, to enslave men; if envy can be used to create laws to harm those we resent, then the same laws can be used to harm us, and will be so used. Let us remember that, when the Sixteenth Amendment was under consideration, the idea that the income tax would ever be applied to any but millionaires was ridiculed as impossible in a free country. Those who today want to see the churches taxed are forging the chains and bars for their own enslavement. The death of the First Amendment is not too far distant, if the present trend continues. It will also be the death of freedom.

Slaves see freedom as license; freemen see freedom as responsibility. The less free Greece and Rome became, the more they granted sexual license. The fools of the day believed themselves to be free because license had been granted, explicitly or implicitly, to a wide variety of sexual sins. Then as now, for all too many, freedom means the right to be irresponsible, and the right to penalize, tax, and harass the responsible. Romans grumbled about the growing powers of the state, but they saw themselves as more free because sin was favored and even subsidized.

St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 6:1–8, as B. T. Viviano, in *Study as Worship* (1978), has shown, argued for Christian courts and Christian judges and lawyers to handle cases involving Christians. Because Jesus Christ is Lord, Christians are to live in terms of His government and law, and create courts, and agencies to adjudicate and govern their problems.

Through God's tax, the tithe, they are to establish God's reign in every area of life and thought (see E. A. Powell and R. J. Rushdoony, *Tithing and Dominion* [Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books]). Through their self-government under the Lord, they are to become a walking law sphere and government. The family, as God's basic institution, is fundamental to God's free society and realm.

Only by the self-government of the Christian man under God and His law can the forces of the tyrant state be pushed back and overcome. Only by God's tax, the tithe, can we finance God's Kingdom. Everyday, in every way, we choose whom we will serve. This choice cannot be a matter of words only. It is a matter of faith and life, of action and money. You have made a choice already. Is it Christ or Caesar?

"Faith Without Works" (May 1981)

James, the brother of our Lord, tells us very emphatically that "faith without works is dead" (James 2:26). I thought of this recently when I heard an older man speak of the "old days" when silver dollars were the only kind of money in circulation in this area, and good men refused to take paper dollars in change. Such paper money was despised as "funny money" and as likely sooner or later to lose value. This attitude was commonplace when I was a boy; farmers, ranchers, and miners carried deep leather pouch purses in their jeans to hold "decent" money, silver change and silver dollars.

Then I asked my one and only question of the old man: did you save some of those silver dollars? His answer was brief: "Nope, sure wish I had. They're worth a lot of money these days." He went on to say that he had known all along that silver dollars were real money, and paper money would "belly up."

But did he? I thought of him two nights later, as I read James 2:26. His "faith" in silver was worthless, and his paper assets are steadily depreciating; he was grumbling about how much harder it is to make ends meet financially. Scripture is right: faith without works is dead and worthless.

To say we believe in the Lord, and to continue living as though the world is governed by statism, money, or evil, is to profess a dead faith. Too many people who profess to believe in the Lord act as though the living God does not govern the world, or that He is not both Savior and Lord.

A faith *with* works moves in terms of Joshua 1:2–9. In the confidence of God's Word and victory, it moves out to possess the land for the Lord, in the bold confidence that His Word is true, when He says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13:5–6).

227

MORALITY AND GROWTH

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 109, May 1989

A very serious error many churchmen are guilty of is to assume that non-Christians share common moral values and standards with Christians. All that is supposedly needed is to add Christ to their lives. This means overlooking the fact that the unbeliever is at enmity with God (Rom. 8:7; James 4:4). The fact of enmity may be concealed, but it is all the same very real. "Evangelism" based on this error presents Christ as a plus, an asset to be added to one's existing life to make it complete, whereas what the Lord requires is the total remaking or regeneration of man.

A second serious error, especially important in our time, is to assume that, because we view life morally, other people see things like we do, as a conflict between good and evil, right and wrong. But the essence of modern thought is to deny that such a distinction is valid. If man's problems are environmental, educational, or inherited, morality is not the issue.

A retired American general, a man of particularly high character and ability as well as Christian faith, questioned the nature of U.S. State Department policies to some leaders there. Recognizing his Christian stand, they immediately discounted his remarks, calling them "the devil theory of politics." By this they meant that it is wrong to speak of evil political movements, like Marxism. The problem is not evil but a matter of understanding and assistance.

The classic formulation of this perspective on an international basis was the work of President John F. Kennedy, who, in terms of the thinking of Daniel Bell, declared that our national and international problems are not moral but technological ones, to be solved by scientific experts. Kennedy's presidency brought into the open, and into power, a long-developing tendency to abandon the Christian and moral perspective for a sociological one. Christians may continue to view political problems

moralistically, and politicians may continue to use moral language, knowing that it appeals to the people, but, in the halls of Congress, the administration, and the courts, the moral dimension is largely gone.

We see this in foreign affairs with especial clarity. World peace is going to be attained, it is believed, by world trade and by foreign loans. By making the nations interdependent, they believe, the nations will of necessity live in peace, hence, foreign loans. Morality is no longer a consideration of state except as a means of appealing to "backward" voters who are still governed by Biblical "mythology." For these enlightened ones, Christians are about as irrelevant as the flat-earthers.

We do not abolish the sun when we become blind. Neither can our unbelief abolish God or abrogate His laws. They remain as a judgment against us. One consequence of trying to abandon Biblical moral premises is hypocrisy. Because man is created by God, every atom of man's being is inescapably governed by religious and moral premises, and for man to deny this fact is to go against his own being. If man denies good and evil in life and mankind, he puts on a false front, and "hypocrisy" means a mask, a false front. One of the most telling books of recent years was by Tung Chi-Ping and Humphrey Evans, *The Thought Revolution* (London, England, 1967). Tung Chi-Ping's account of life in Red China gives us an Orwellian picture. He wrote, "One aspect of Communist ideology concerns the theory that human nature can be altered by changing the environment. Under the environment of the preceding social orders, people were motivated by self-interest. Under socialism, however, the individual would begin to act in response to the best 'interests of his community'" (p. 97). In brief, man's "character" is a product of economic determinism, not moral choice. In practice, however, the new economics did not change anyone. During a time of food shortages, the pigs were fed human feces to keep them alive and fatten them. University students were taken out of their classes to collect and feed the latrine contents to the pigs. This repulsive cargo was carried in a barrel slung from a pole carried on the students' shoulders. From time to time, the pole would break and the contents spill over the young man or woman carrying the barrel. What the Communist party chief wanted to hear at the testimonial sessions was hypocritical joy over the task. What Tung Chi-Ping told Mi-Mi, a girl who had a barrel's contents wash over her, was this: "On your next one (testimonial time), you must mention this incident. Make it sound as bad as you can. Then say that in the days of the previous regime, you would have been unspeakably embarrassed. Now, however, while your distress is equally great, it is due entirely to your regret that some of the people's precious pig fodder has been wasted" (p. 102).

Success was assured by this strategy, because it meant that all such persons were not thinking moralistically but pragmatically, not in terms of good or evil but rather political opportunism. It was recognized that such people were essential to the revolution. Moral people are critical; pragmatists are subservient.

A generation ago, Harry Ironside wrote on holiness, the true and the false. He called attention to the fact that doctrines of holiness which call for perfectionism lead to serious mental and moral problems. A pious front replaces moral strength; a pretense of holiness replaces day-by-day growth in grace. The results become either hypocrisy or mental breakdowns.

We live in a moral universe. We are converted out of a conscious or unconscious enmity to God and His law. When we are born as infants, we must grow into maturity. When we are reborn in Christ, growth is again a necessity. For this reason, St. Paul warned against the hasty promotion into leadership of a new convert (1 Tim. 3:6). A novice in the faith is not ready for leadership (1 Tim. 3:6). (James Moffatt's rendering of 1 Timothy 5:22 is very telling: "Never be in a hurry to ordain a presbyter; do not make yourself responsible for the sins of another man — keep your own life pure.")

An age which denies either the necessity of a moral perspective, or which denies the need for moral growth, for sanctification, is in deep trouble. It has blinded itself to the light of the sun, and it insists that the sun does not exist.

We live in a moral universe, and in a realm that requires growth in every sphere. The sovereign grace of God through Jesus Christ removes us from the no-growth world of sin and death into the world of grace and growth. There are neither problems nor growth in the grave. Given our need to mature in Christ, our world of problems are a challenge to growth and to victory. We need to hear from the pulpits what parents once routinely said: "Stop complaining and grow up!"

By rejecting morality for technological standards, the world of John F. Kennedy is doomed to die. The regenerating power of Christ unto salvation gives life, and God's law as our moral order gives us maturity or growth.

228

THE DREAM OF REASON

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 13, June 1980

Western Europe, since the beginning of the Enlightenment, has been given to one cultural fad after another. For example, the Deists, with their myth of a natural religion, common to all men, and humanistic in nature, saw old China as the actual embodiment of such a faith. The result was a long-standing delight in things Chinese for reasons unrelated to the actual life of China.

One of the most enduring and curious of these cultural fads was the interest and delight in things Turkish. Even Turkish furniture became very popular for a time, however great the discomfort; we have a relic of this fad in the continuing use of the term "ottoman" for a type of backless chair or sofa.

Historians also have been a part of the adulation, very often. The Turkish armies were inferior to Western ones, and, when strong resistance was made, hastily assembled and poorly equipped armies in the fifteenth century under Hunyadi, Skanderbeg, and Stephen of Moldavia defeated major Turkish armies. Usually, the European forces were divided; some were ready to see the Turks defeat their enemies, and others were indifferent. The Turks usually overwhelmed their enemies with dramatically larger forces and a prodigal use of men.

The Turks could usually count on most Europeans to be their friends. The father of Abdul Hamid II ("the Damned") once ordered his son to kiss the hand of an elderly Christian visitor. When the young boy refused something he found "absolutely revolting," his father angrily declared, "Do you know who this gentleman is? It is the English Ambassador, the best friend of my house and my country, and the English, although not belonging to our faith, are our most faithful allies." According to Abdul Hamid, "Upon this I reverently kissed the old gentleman's hand. It was

the Boyuk Eltchi, Lord Stratford Canning." The reason for the English position was power politics, which made them not pro-Turkish but pro-English, as Abdul Hamid later found out.

All the same, there was a cultural predisposition to work with the Turks. Western romantics had long idealized the Turks, and musicians loved to title various pseudo-oriental compositions as Turkish Marches, and the like. Marx, too, shared in this favorable view of the Turks. As Nathaniel Weyl points out, "Marx's comments concerning the Christian peoples of the Balkans were invariably harsh, contemptuous, caustic and unkind. But when he came to the Turks, he viewed them with a benevolent eye (when, that is, he wasn't including them as subjects of Oriental despotism)" (N. Weyl, *Karl Marx, Racist*, p. 128).

Since 1918, because of the Armenian massacres, the old Turkish order is not as openly idealized, or else its last days are seen as a "decline." This is done despite the fact that the Young Turks and Kemal Ataturk were more bloody by far than Abdul Hamid II.

Why is there so much dishonest history with respect to the Turk? Why is the old Turkey still seen through rose-colored historical glasses, despite the fact that its long history had been a vicious one? A further question is necessary: why did some late nineteenth- and even a few early twentieth-century liberals view Abdul Hamid II as a great liberal? An example of a very kindly view can be found in the two-volume memoirs of Arminius Vambery, professor of Oriental languages in the University of Budapest, *The Story of My Struggles* (1904). By 1904, the Sultan had come to dislike Western liberals and to regard himself as more enlightened than they. Vambery gave a portrait of an unfortunate and suffering monarch: "Indeed, the man had deserved a better fate. He is not nearly such a profligate as he is represented to be. He is more fit than many of his predecessors; he wants to benefit his land, but the means he has used were bound to have a contrary effect. I have received from Sultan Abdul Hamid many tokens of his favour and kindness, and I owe him an everlasting debt of gratitude. It grieves me, here, where I am speaking of my personal relations with him, to have to express opinions which may be displeasing to him" (vol. 2, pp. 389–390).

However, for the truly great love of Turkey, we need to turn to the earlier regimes to find the reason for Turcophilia. In 1952, a Harvard scholar made observations on Mohammed II, the conqueror on May 29, 1453, of Byzantium and Constantinople, which give us the key: "As a result of the innovations introduced by Mohammed II, the structure of the Ottoman state almost conformed to Plato's ideal republic" (Myron P. Gilmore, *The World of Humanism, 1453–1517* [1952, 1962], p. 7).

In old Turkey, we see our futures as some would have it. A rigid educational system was set up, to produce a class of military and administrative guardians to run the state. The sultan or philosopher-king was at the top. He himself, however, was expendable. To prevent wars of succession, brothers and relatives of the succeeding ruler were killed off, or else held in prison, in reserve, if the reigning philosopher-king should prove incompetent. The incompetent ruler was then executed and replaced.

To provide for the guardians, Turkish and Christian children were taken. The Christian children were taken at an early age, brought up as Mohammedans, and trained for the Turkish state. A regular levy of children was the required tribute of the subject Christian peoples every five years.

Most of the tribute boys were trained for military purposes. These were the famous Janizaries, the main and core group of the Turkish army. The Janizaries were kept separate from other peoples and lived for one purpose, the service of the Turkish state. They were under the very strictest of discipline, and were brought up to regard themselves as an elite corps. Their prestige was so great, that by 1600 Turks were bribing their way into the Janizaries. In the seventeenth century, membership became hereditary, and the Janizaries declined into an unruly group. In 1826, they were dissolved by a standard Turkish practice, total massacre.

The ruling class and bureaucracy were similarly formed. A palace school was created to train superior children for the service of the state. These children again were from subject peoples and had been forcibly taken from their parents at an early age. Native Turks or Osmanlis had no more part in their civil government than did subject Christians, although as Muslims the Turks had a favored place before the law.

The free Muslim families provided the recruits for the learned classes, scholars, priests, teachers, and jurisconsults.

The life of the Turkish state was everything; the life of the subject peoples was as fuel for the state. The lives of Turks were not more highly regarded, on the whole, and even the life of the sultan was expendable by execution if he were an impediment. The sultan could be as abominable personally as he chose, but he could not be a detriment to the empire without risking execution.

Now we come to the heart of the matter: The Turkish Empire was constructed to be a rational order, on the order of Plato's so-called republic. Its rule was to be the rule of reason, and all peoples, from sultans to subjects, were to be put in their place in terms of a governing order. Even at the top, the dreaded execution by strangulation with a bowstring was accepted as a horrible but necessary resolution of problems. The ruled and the rulers were alike subservient to the state.

Abdul Hamid II saw himself as an enlightened and rational ruler. The rational solution to problems was to eliminate the problem: hence the systematic massacre and deportation of Armenians, begun under him, and completed by his successors. When Abdul Hamid was deposed, he expected to be executed: it was the logical solution. His execution did not occur because his successors recognized that too drastic a break at that point was unwise.

The Platonic and Turkish ideal of a rational state has long been a dream of Western man. The French Revolution was a classic example of it: the revolutionaries debated as to what would be an ideal population for France, and then began to exterminate people to reduce France to the desired status. Unwanted peoples and classes were similarly executed.

The Russian Revolution gives us the same ideal. From top to bottom, men are expendable at the altar of the ideal order. Classes are liquidated; Christianity is made the target of obliteration, and mass murders made a policy of state. A number of writers have given us an account of this dream of order, notably of late Alexander I. Solzhenitsyn in the three volumes of *The Gulag Archipelago*, and in the essays edited by him on *From Under the Rubble*. Much earlier, Dostoyevsky had depicted the same dream or nightmare in *The Possessed*. All things are to be destroyed, to make way for the "rational" and planned society.

This same goal is very much with us. It is basic to the thinking of virtually every modern state. For this reason, the modern state is at total war with its peoples: they are its real enemies, who must be remade, and, if they refuse, destroyed in one way or another, economically, if not physically.

The means to the goal are twofold. The older version, as in the Soviet Union and Red China, holds to total terror as the main instrument in attaining the dream of the golden age of Reason. The more "advanced" humanists of the West have an improved version of the dream, and the classic demonstration model of this new order is Sweden. The Swedish model is in force virtually everywhere in the non-Marxist world. Instead of total terror, this new model relies on the control of education, economics, and technology. The great study of this new model is Roland Huntford's *The New Totalitarians* (1971). Sweden's planners regard the Russian effort as a failure (p. 85). Huntford noted: "It is probably correct to say that Sweden has been dechristianized more efficiently than any other country, Russian not excepted" (p. 219).

In this dream, efficiency requires that the slaves of the philosopher-kings be educated to love their slavery and to regard it as freedom. (George Orwell, in *1984*, saw this as a goal of the new order.) Man must

become a happy cog in the machinery of the state, and reason, with its tools of technology, must rule over all men. Solzhenitsyn, in *Gulag*, volume 3 (pp. 522, 525), calls attention to what has become of law in the Soviet Union. The law has ceased to be a transcendent standard of justice: it has been made a tool of state policy. Hence, he declares, "There is no law." In Sweden, this change is openly set forth as an advantage. Carl Lidbom, formerly a judge of appeal, a cabinet minister, and a Social Democrat theoretician, has said: "The purpose of the law is to realize official policy . . . It is one of the instruments of changing society." A legal official told Huntford, "it seems natural to me that the law is there to put the intentions of the bureaucracy into practice" (Huntford, p. 122).

If this sounds familiar to Americans, Canadians, and others, it is with good reason so. It is all a part of the same rationalistic dream of a scientifically planned order by philosopher-kings. These philosophers now have added science and behaviorism to their repertoire; they have moved from a rigidly planned to an existentially planning order, but their goal is the same. The methodology has been refined.

Instead of a regular five-year draft of a limited number of boys for the Janizaries and the bureaucracy, we now have an annual call-up of all five-year-old boys and girls for the state school system and its humanistic indoctrination. Military service for all is in the offing. All this is done in the name of the public welfare and as a manifestation of the general benevolence of the state. Christian social deviants who insist on educating their own children in Christian schools are made the targets of civil and criminal charges. The state being the rational and the good order by presupposition (the "Great Community"), the church, Christian school, and Christian family become the obstructionist, evil, and irrational elements in society. (We have now forgotten what a radical and revolutionary step the French Revolution made in recruiting by law all its citizens for its armed forces, as its Janizaries.)

Justice has now become, not the righteousness and law of God, but the law and interests of the modern and humanistic state. As Huntford said of the Swedish judiciary, "Justice to them means upholding the interests of the State, not primarily guaranteeing fair play to the citizen" (p. 123). This is increasingly true of every modern state. The triumph of Plato and Turkey is everywhere near!

This course of events should not surprise us. When men despise God's law and its requirement of very severely limited civil and human powers, they will create their own dreams of order. If we deny God's law, we will choose man's law; if we deny God's predestination or plan, we will substitute a man-made plan or decree of predestination. The dream of

reason, a nightmare reality, will be with us as long as we deny God's law and government.

The words of Joshua still stand: "choose you this day whom ye will serve . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Josh. 24:15).

229

THE RECOVERY OF MEMORY

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 80, November 1986

MEMORY is basic to the life of man. The loss of memory is basic to senility and is a sad fact whenever it occurs. Some years ago, I knew briefly (in his old age) a gracious gentleman whose family history went back to the colonial era; an important founding father was among his forbears. Although otherwise in good health, this man lost his memory. It was a while before people became aware of it. A cultured, widely travelled man, he could provide interesting conversation on many subjects, even when he was not sure of his name; he picked up readily on the subjects being discussed. He spoke several languages, including Mandarin Chinese, and, on one occasion while on a walk, asked a Chinese couple whom he met for directions, in Mandarin, to his one-time residence in Peiping. Because he was so well schooled in good manners, courtesy, and intelligent small talk, it took time even for his wife to realize that he did not know her name or his. The loss of memory strips us of much of our life and abilities.

Most people think very little of the importance of memory, either personal or cultural. Existentialism has left us indifferent to the importance of the past to life and knowledge. Our present-oriented culture is sometimes even contemptuous of personal memory and history. But history is simply a religious memory of the past. In our history, we remember the faith, men, and events which we recognize as basic to our lives. When men despise history, they are on the road to barbarism, because to despise history is to reject Biblical faith and to reject meaning and purpose in life in favor of gratification in the moment. People who have no past have no future. They represent cultural senility.

Few have appreciated more the role of memory than the Marxists, and the liberals who are neo-Marxist. For the systematic thinkers in this

tradition, it is memory that makes us human. Without agreeing with that opinion, we can recognize the deadly effects of a loss of personal memory or of a distorted social memory or history. In the nineteenth century, as a result of Enlightenment thinking and groundbreaking, historians began the systematic rewriting of all history. The Marxists later were especially zealous in this task. To create the new man in the Marxist model, the memory of socialist man had to be remade by rewriting all of history. In this task, the Marxists were not alone. In every country, humanistic historians began to create a new past for man, and a new past for their country. In the 1930s, many attacked Germany's Nazi education as a school for barbarians. They should have added that all humanistic educational philosophies and schools have become schools for barbarians. Their role model is "the naked ape," not God's incarnate Son, Jesus Christ.

Barbarism is thus the logical product of modern education. It is a necessary and logical consequence of humanistic schools. This barbarism will only increase until all the world is enveloped in its savagery, or until Christians see to the conversion of men, send them forth to exercise dominion, and work earnestly for the reconstruction of all things in terms of God's law-word.

The greatness of the task is seldom appreciated. More people are alive today than have ever died in all of history. Most people now alive have been born since 1940. They have little or no knowledge of the world prior to that time. The social sciences have replaced and rewritten history, so that our cultural memory has been warped and reshaped. Things were bad enough before 1940, but there was a better awareness of the past and a respect for the meaning of the ritual of a Christian civilization.

The word *barbarian* has an interesting history. It comes to us through the Latin from the Greek, *barbaros*, meaning originally rude, and brutal, and *barbarismos*, a slave. The word in time came to mean even in Greek simply an alien, but its original implication of brutality and savagery has since returned. As the Greeks first used it, the word referred to anyone lacking the knowledge and culture of Greece; as it is now used, it means anyone outside of culture and civilization and destructive of it.

In this sense, we can say that not only our state schools and humanistic universities are schools for barbarians, but that our humanistic press and other media train for barbarism as well.

Too often also, the churches follow in their wake. From time to time, I hear of devout and godly pastors, who, in addition to all the regular services and study groups of their congregation, attempt to start a class in church history and doctrine. The response is often either indifference or hostility. This is barbarism.

Meanwhile, Christendom is suffering from a loss of memory, and the nations have an altered memory of their past. In the 1960s, I met an American veteran's bride, a young woman whom the veteran had met soon after the end of World War II, in the Netherlands. Living in a bombed-out city through the war years, she knew nothing of her country's history. Since I had, as a very young man, read Motley's marvelous histories of that country, I was interested in discussing them with her. I found that she knew nothing of her motherland's history. Because of the war, during the key years of her life, she had been without schooling. The bombed-out schools and the life of deprivation had meant no schooling, and hence no past as a Hollander. She knew about as much of her country's history as she did of Libya's, and she frankly confessed her ignorance.

The loss of historical memory in her case was war-created. Wars have brought much dislocation and major separations from the past. One man from Central Europe told me that he had lived, without changing his location, under six flags. With each change of rule came a new version of the past.

In the United States, we must say that we have done it to ourselves. To submit to what normally is imposed by foreign conquerors, and to view it as progress, is the startling fact about American statist education.

Earlier, I cited the Marxist premise that it is memory that makes us human, and the necessary step towards remaking man and society is to reshape man's memory. Joseph Stalin was fully aware of the implications of this, and so too was George Orwell, who presented it as basic to the world of *1984* and its totalitarianism.

History is social memory, and, for this reason, humanists of all varieties began early to replace history in schools with "social science," which is, *first*, the reduction of history to a naturalistic science, one purged of God and His purpose. *Second*, since history is man making himself, science is basic to this task. Man must make society into a social experiment towards attaining humanistic goals.[1]

For us as Christians, history cannot be a social science because it is a theological science. It is God, not man, who is the Creator and Determiner of all things. We must approach all things in terms of the triune God and His Word. As David tells us, "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light" (Ps. 36:9). The French philosophers wrote about "the omnipotence of criticism," exalting themselves and their critical reasoning. For us, the determining fact is the omnipotence of the Lord God of Hosts. Therefore, hear ye Him.

1. See R. J. Rushdoony, *The Philosophy of the Christian Curriculum* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, [1981] 1986).

Western civilization, Christendom as it once was, now suffers from amnesia, a loss of memory, from senility, which is the harbinger of decline and death. This loss of memory is far gone, and the pundits of humanism feel free, therefore, to make increasingly outrageous statements about the past and history. Both within the church and without, George Orwell's Newspeak and Doublethink confront us on all sides. A loss of memory means a loss of direction, and most peoples have lost their sense of direction.

A recovery of memory begins with conversion, with Jesus Christ and the Bible. Then we understand man's past and present, his fall, his depravity, and his regeneration in Jesus Christ. Then we know both the beginning and the end of man, and all man's histories are then seen in perspective and true focus.

The purpose of stripping men of their past is to reshape them into whatever form their elite rulers choose. The result, however, is not a new man, but a lost and dying man, not the new Soviet man nor the member of the "Great Community" of John Dewey and others, but a barbarian, a slave. Only Jesus Christ, our great Adam and our Redeemer, can restore man to his rightful place and right hand. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

The Family as Treasure (November 1986)

Matthew 6:21 declares, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." This reverses our natural expectation: in fact, many people wrongly quote this verse as, where your heart is, there will be your treasure also. This renders it, if true, impossible to know what a man treasures, whereas our Lord makes it clear that we know a man's heart by his works: "by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20).

In terms of this we know what men are, who, despising the centrality of the family in Scripture, and prizing extra money, or material advantages, insist that their wives work rather than continuing their proper duty as mother and housewife. In all too many cases, where there is no urgent need, men insist that their wives give priority to working for money rather than working for the family as the mother and wife. Such a perspective means placing present advantages above the enduring welfare of the family. It means that a man's treasure is in material things, not his family in Christ.

230

ARISTOCRACY

Position Paper No. 124, August 1990

The word *aristocracy* comes from the Greek, *aristos* (the best) and *kratia* (rule), and it means "rule by the best." Of course, the definition of "the best" has varied from culture to culture, and even within a particular civilization. Socrates and Plato, with an aristocracy of philosopher-kings, were at odds with other Athenians.

In some societies, the aristocracy has been limited to the king, his family, and friends; no hereditary titles of nobility existed in such realms. Titles and positions were totally dependent on the king's will.

A hereditary aristocracy of noblemen developed out of feudalism. The local lord provided security against enemies and protected the peasants. His price for such protection was sometimes, though by no means always, a high one; but lords, being warriors, had a shorter life expectancy than the peasants. Hence, they married young in order to provide a continuity of sons and protectors or lords.

As monarchs gained power and usurped the independence of the lords, the usefulness of the nobility decreased. In France, Louis XIV deliberately separated the nobility from their lands and attached them to the court. The nobles ceased, then, to be an aristocracy: they were neither the best men of the realm, nor the rulers. The ministers of state were increasingly taken out of the middle classes.

In England, with the eighteenth century, the aristocracy came to be the country gentlemen. As Sir Arthur Bryant observed, "The ruling principle of English society was the conception of a gentleman. Good breeding was not merely a mark of social distinction but a rule for the treatment of others" (Sir Arthur Bryant, *Protestant Island* [London, England: Collins, 1967], p. 156). As long as the country gentleman retained his standard towards all, he was respected by the people, and the populace

followed to a degree his code of conduct. A true aristocracy rules by influence, by setting the standard which others respect and follow. Bryant noted, "A man's reputation as a gentleman was looked on as his most valuable possession." His code stressed honor, and an obligation to be generous (p. 157).

Since World War I, the old aristocracies have lost power in most countries. In some, as in Russia, they were systematically killed. In part this was due to the decline in many countries of the ability of the old aristocracy to rule and to serve. It was also extensively a result of generations of envy and hatred fomented by the Left.

The Marxist dictators who gained power in many instances were rulers, and brutal ones, but hardly an aristocracy, the rule by the best; instead, too often they represented the worst in society, men full of hatred, envy, and venom. The Irish proverb often used by Otto Scott's grandmother fits the Marxist elite: "Put a beggar on horseback, and he'll ride you down." Countless millions have been ridden down, brutally murdered, by these socialist beggars on horseback.

Aristocracy means, as noted, rule by the best. Not all or even a majority of history's aristocrats have been "the best." Men, furthermore, have not always wanted the best. Again and again, men have chosen the worst to rule over them because, being themselves evil, they prefer evil men.

The historian Jules Michelet believed in the infallibility of the people. Roland Barthes called this faith a part of the "classic credo of the liberal petit-bourgeois around 1840" (Roland Barthes, *Michelet* [New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1987], p. 11, cf. p. 185ff.). We are now suffering for their false belief.

In the English-speaking world, the decline and fall of the gentleman as aristocrat has not led to the abandonment of the idea of aristocracy. Very commonly, a true aristocracy is not seen as such; rather, it is a respected and "necessary" part of society. When an aristocrat is seen as such, his day will soon be over: he has passed from a seeming, if unquestioned, status as a necessity to the role of a luxury.

In terms of their power and role in contemporary life, the aristocrats of our time are such people as film and television "stars," sports "heroes," rock musicians," and the like. They "bless" national causes by their presence: a nationally televised drive to raise money for crippled children, an environmental cause, a political party rally, and so on. They appear at times before legislative bodies to testify for causes they sometimes know little about. They function as a modern, if sorry, aristocracy.

If aristocracy means "rule by the best," who are the best? And how should they rule?

One culture after another has given an answer to that question. One answer which is very remote to modern man was one which appeared after the fall of Rome, rule by "saint." Of course, the saints in question were monks, and the lives of monks were very popular. Pilgrimages to the tombs of monks were for centuries a major fact in European life. The rule of these "saint" aristocrats was so highly regarded that, even after death, their power effected miracles among those who came to their tomb-shrines. Nobles and royalty, and commoners as well, at times, left the world in imitation of the monks, or, when dying, put on monastic garb because of their desire to share in the virtue and power of a saint's profession. The many saints' tales and legends which arose are an eloquent witness to the fact that the saint was seen as the locale of power and rule: he was "the best." Kings did homage to the bones of saints.

A fact most feminists neglect is that the saints include both men and women. Holiness was equally obtainable by both sexes; there was in this respect more "equality" than ever before or since. Women "saints" at times rebuked kings and popes. These saints were an aristocracy both alive and dead, and some grew more powerful in their influence after their death.

What this tells is that an aristocracy can rule without trying to rule, simply by its moral force. In fact, the strongest aristocracies have not needed troops nor guns.

Thomas Jefferson was responsible for a major development in the concept of an aristocracy. His hope was that the United States would provide the setting for a development of an aristocracy of intelligence and talent. There was already an American precedent for such a group in the New England Puritan clergy. Jefferson broadened the concept.

The influence of Jefferson's concept on American life needs careful tracing and no small research. It suited the American temperament and was regarded as one of the glories of the young republic. Jefferson's dream became a nightmare when those who were to be his aristocracy came to be, in a century, a clerisy, a literati, an insolent and self-isolating group which despised all others. Artists and poets began to produce for themselves; no one else was worth speaking to! Intellectuals and professors began to regard the people as stupid brutes, and H. L. Mencken's cynicism was greeted by great delight. Apart from themselves, the world was made up of "boobs."

Such contempt towards others usually marks the decline and fall of an aristocracy. It renounces leadership and influence in favor of a repressive contempt. It ceases to be an aristocracy, rule by the best, to become the worst in a society. As its contempt for the people increases, its influence wanes.

What Jefferson rightly wanted was a "natural" aristocracy, i.e., not one created by birth or wealth but by ability and social utility. We can amend his idea to say that we have a rule by the best when such men serve God and man most faithfully, when in terms of God's law-word they serve the cause of God's grace and justice best.

The Renaissance strands of thinking which came into sharp focus in the thinking of Machiavelli have long given us the modern concept of an aristocrat: a leader who is opportunistic, amoral, ambitious, and a wielder of power. The twentieth century especially has been an era of Machiavellian "aristocrats" in the persons of dictators, presidents, and political leaders great and small. Their day is now waning. When I was a child (I am now seventy-four), no one spoke disrespectfully of persons in authority without outraging people. An incident remembered and spoken of for years occurred in 1917 when a man in town spoke with angry contempt and disrespect for President Woodrow Wilson for taking the United States into World War I. Perhaps most of the men present agreed that we should not be in the war; almost all were Republicans and unhappy with a Democrat as president. Their outrage was not in disagreement over the man's views but his disrespect for the presidency. The police officer led the man away.

Such a scene is hardly thinkable now. Contempt for politicians is routine. "Rock stars" have their following, but an increasing number of people detest them and speak of them as "human vermin" for what they have done to their children.

"Rule by the best" is gone, because in one sphere after another, *including the church*, the worst are at the top. Belief in progress is largely gone because few leaders believe in progress; their faith is in power.

We cannot have "rule by the best" where people revel in the worst and are themselves evil, full of contempt, and heedless of moral responsibilities. We have what we deserve, and we face judgment for it.

We ourselves must be ruled by the Lord in all our ways; we must be a people under His authority before we can exercise the freedom of responsibility and rule ourselves and our particular sphere. We need to pray with Isaiah: "O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name (or, we will now acknowledge only thy name and authority)" (Isa. 26:13).

Until then, we will get more of the same, rule by the worst.

231

ELITISM

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 67, October 1985

It is a significant fact that Karl Marx championed equalitarianism while being an elitist. The two go together. Honest men know the limitations of all men and that equality and inequality are myths. They are essentially mathematical terms which cannot do justice to the diversity of life. You and I may excel in doing certain things and feel totally incompetent in other areas. A man can be a mathematical genius and also incompetent in simple household repairs. If we were all equal, we would all be omnicompetent and would not need each other. This is why equalitarian regimes are so murderous: they see all men as readily replaceable and readily disposable, except for the elite few, the philosopher-kings.

The great sourcebook for elitism is Plato's *Republic*. Its doctrine of justice is humanistic to the core: "Everyone ought to perform the one function in the community for which his nature best suited him. Well, I believe that principle, or some form of it, is justice." This justice means that society must be ruled by philosopher-kings. Under them are the guardians: soldiers and public officials. Most people must make up the masses; they are the slaves, and their virtue must be temperance, meaning self-restraint and obedience.

For such a "republic" to work, Plato felt that two factors which make for individualism had to go: property and the family. Private property must be abolished, and childbearing must be regulated and strictly controlled.

But this is not all. Basic to the ideal "republic" or elitist state is the state control of all education. This means also the control of books, music, and popular entertainment.

Later elitists refined the controls. Sir Thomas More, one of the uglier figures of the Renaissance era, a man who lived badly but died well,

added to Plato's communism the control of money. Gold should be used only for making slave chains and chamber pots. Lenin was pleased with the latter part of this plan by More and adopted it. Much later, Edward Bellamy, in *Looking Backward* (1888), wanted state-issued credit cards to replace money. (This would enable the state to starve dissidents into submission.)

Chad Walsh, in *From Utopia to Nightmare* (1962), cited the principle articles of faith held by utopians. Four of these are of concern to us. *First*, man is basically good. The doctrine of original sin is anathema to elitists, because it places all men on common ground before God; it is perhaps the only valid form of equalitarianism. *Second*, man is plastic man; he has no fixed nature and can be readily molded to suit the goals of the philosopher-kings. The doctrine of evolution is an elitist myth which "vindicates" the elitist worldview. It means that the elite can remake man and the world after their image. Much science is devoted now to such goals. *Third*, individual happiness is only possible in any true sense if society is served and flourishes; to seek happiness in separation from the goals of society is subversive and is not true joy. Hence, in the Soviet state, the workman who surpasses the work goals is the happy man, because he sees his good and joy in terms of social goals. *Fourth*, man is a rational being who can become more systematically rational. Society will flourish as reason and science flourish. Hence, the philosopher-kings, as reason incarnate, must guide the state and the masses into the life of reason. The implication in all such elitist orders is that submission to the state and its elite is submission to pure reason, and revolt against the elite is irrationalism.

Thus, in every elitist social order, the elite holds this as a fixed premise: think as we do, and you are a sane and rational man; if you disagree with us, you are a social deviate with a serious mental problem.

Almost all nations are now ruled by elitists. When men depart from Christianity, they abandon hierarchy, which means sacred rule in terms of God's law-word, for man's rule by elitists. These elitist rulers have more in common one with another than with their own peoples. Elitists love elitists, or at the least prefer them. Our elitists in the United States have made us allies, in effect, of Red China and the Soviet Union, but not of the Republic of South Africa. Although the Republic of South Africa has many points in common with them, economic controls for one, it still smacks too much of the old order of Europe and must be destroyed. Red China has the world's most murderous abortion laws, and extensive state-created famine, but no one proposes disinvestment in Red China, except a few students. The Soviet Union has its slave labor camps and

planned genocide, but where are the demands for disinvestment in the Soviet Union?

Elitists love other elitists; they profess to love the masses and are militant equalitarians in legislation and snobs in person. The elitist loves "exclusive" places; he will patronize with delight a fine restaurant if few know about it, but, let it become too popular, and it is "spoiled." He loves out-of-the-way places to travel to and rhapsodizes over them, but let a few "common people" begin to enjoy the same place and he sees it as "commercialized" and spoiled.

The elitist hates the free market because it gives in its own way a good form of democracy. In a free-market economy, most men, if they want them, can earn enough for an automobile, television, and their own house. In this way, they pass out of the servant class ("It's so hard to get good servants these days") into the middle class, and this means an independence from the elite. The great evil of Puritanism and of Cromwell to the English elite was that "Merry England" was "destroyed," since now no large class of servitors were bowing and scraping before them. For some ever since, the restoration of such an order has been a dream, whereas their ex-servitors in many cases want to hurt "the ruling class" even if it destroys the country in the process.

Elitism is common to all spheres. Its origins are commonly in Plato, for whom the true universals are abstractions, or ideas, or principles, not the concrete universal, the triune God. Recently, on a trip, one earnest person, who knew the Bible well, asked me in some bewilderment, "I know my Bible, I know Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, and I try to live by God's Word, but what are these principles our school principal keeps talking about?" Neither Christ nor the Bible can be reduced to a *Greek* abstraction or principle: there is never anything abstract about Scripture. Theft, murder, adultery, false witness, and more are forbidden, not because of some abstract principle, but because God says so. Tithing is required, the sabbath rest is mandatory, and short-term debt and more is the law of God, not because of some abstract principle, but because we are God's creation and property, and He commands us. Principles lead us to another religion; faithfulness leads us to the Lord.

Elitism takes other forms as well in the church. The Bible gives us legitimate and God-ordained types and symbols which are specific and concrete: they refer to Christ, our salvation and sanctification, and the like. Biblical typology is open to all believers; it is not esoteric. Symbolic theology is elitism. Who but those scholars who know fertility-cult religions and have studied under one or two esoteric seminary professors will ever see, in the plain words of Scripture, the hidden and esoteric meanings in

the conflict between Moses and Zipporah over circumcision? And what believer, reading the account of the first Passover in Egypt, could even imagine that the sides of the door represented a woman's legs, the top her pubic area, and the blood of the lamb a woman's hymeneal blood on her wedding night? When the Bible tells us that Christ is God's Passover lamb, what believer will look for an abstract symbol or principle?

Elitism governs the academic community of our time. In the seminaries, professors tend to look down on those students who intend to be pastors; the favored students are the potential professors. For them, religion often is something to dissect and discuss, not marching orders from the Lord God. For this reason, most seminaries tend to do their students more harm than good. It is of significance that today the fastest growing churches are those which do not require seminary training.

Colleges and universities are schools of elitists. They are often hostile to true scholars, as well as to most students. The theory held by intellectuals is that their intelligence sets them apart and makes them distinctive. However, as one professor, a true scholar, once remarked to me, few places are more governed by the mores of a wolf pack than the university. It is not intelligence that makes men strong and independent, but rather faith and character.

As we have noted, elitism stresses education, but it is humanistic education. Such schooling does not breed freedom nor independence but an emphasis on the group. Peer pressure then governs people. When a child begins to attend a state school, that child very soon is governed by his peer group, the other students, and the directions given to the peer group come from the statist educators. The result is a growing breach between the child and his home.

Elitism is, moreover, very prone to styles, fashions, and fads. These can be with respect to clothing, foods, ideas, recreations, and more. There are continual changes in what is acceptable, because the elite want to be different, and the imitating masses want to follow their trends. It is ironic that for elitism, the consent of the governed, according to Plato, is "where the desires of the inferior multitude will be controlled by the desires and wisdom of the few." Now that the elite set the trends for the masses, they long to be different, and they alter their styles and tastes to show their difference.

As we have seen, for Plato (and Socrates), justice is an elitist doctrine. It means that all people do what the elite feel is best for them to do. In Plato's words, "we have laid down, as a universal principle, that everyone ought to perform the one function in the community for which his nature best suited him. Well, I believe that principle, or some form of it,

is justice." Notice that Plato, the elitist, lays down a principle, a rationalistic premise. Disagree, and you go to a slave labor camp or to execution. God instead gives us commandments and laws which we are to obey. These are not ideas to discuss and try to understand, but marching orders for life. God's laws are more intelligent than all the intellectualism of Plato and every elitist since then, because God's law-word sets forth the way of life, of faith, and of understanding. We are plainly told, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Prov. 1:7). Again, "For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding" (Prov. 2:6). This is not a principle: it is a fact of life. It presupposes that God made the world and all things therein, and all creation is governed and judged by Him. Elitism presupposes a self-created world; it has thrived on the myth of evolution. In that world of brute factuality, there is no law-word of God. Man therefore fashions ideas or principles with which he proposes to govern and rule the world. When Christians try to combine God and principles, they try to join what cannot be joined.

In earlier years, I felt that the Hellenic concept of ideas or principles was too deeply enmeshed in our thinking for eradication. I have since come to the conviction that it is wrong to compromise with such thinking, or attempt to use and direct it, as I did earlier. Our duty is to be faithful; the results are in the hands of God.

POLITICS

232

THE POLITICAL MYTH

Position Paper No. 123, July 1990

In a review written in 1954, historian A. J. P. Taylor, not himself a Christian, said of socialism that it assumed the perfectibility of man by man, and "an indefinite expansion of productivity." However, "Once admit that human wickedness and natural hardship are inevitable, and Socialism would have no sense" (A. J. P. Taylor, *Politicians, Socialism and Historians,* p. 16 [New York, NY: Stein & Day, 1982], p. 16).

Given the Augustininian-Calvinist (Biblical) doctrine of man, it follows that socialism cannot work; man cannot remake man. The supernatural regenerating grace of God is required.

The antithesis seen so clearly by Taylor was not new to him. Other scholars had also seen it. The Romantic French historian Jules Michelet wrote to Victor Hugo on May 4, 1856, that the two salient opposing forces were "Christianity and the Revolution" (Roland Barthes, *Michelet* [New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1987], p. 76). Hugo himself had naturalistic answers, among them the love of nature, for man's salvation. In his poem, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," he wrote:

> And yet I ask sometimes in wonder,
> As I wander the meadows among,
> Can brother for brother feel hatred
> As he hears the lark's musical song?

The rise of the modern state has deep roots in pagan antiquity. Now as then, the state seeks to provide, not God's justice, but humanistic salvation. The state has grown in power because man's hunger for redemption without the triune God has necessitated that some agency minister to man's demand for salvation.

Barthes, in a significant footnote, said of Michelet that any historical

study of his thought "should pay the closest attention to the Gnostic halo around his thought" (p. 155n).

Gnosticism has been very much with us in modern dress in the past few centuries in such men as William Blake in poetry, Emanuel Swedenborg in religion, and G. F. Hegel in philosophy. While ancient Gnosticism had an involved mythology, its basic premises were that (1) *gnosis* or knowledge is the key to life; (2) only the elite can grasp this knowledge; (3) the Bible, if used, had to be read as a vast symbolic document meaning something undreamed of by the common man, and the Old Testament was to be discarded.

These elements are basic to modern Gnosticism. The knowledge possessed by the philosopher-kings is man's only hope. The façade and forms of democracy and religion are retained but are given a new content and direction which is understood by the elite. A contemporary manifestation of this ideology is apparent in the myth of politics. According to the myth of politics, man's salvation requires a powerful and even totalitarian state. The state and its schools alone have the key to human redemption and regeneration. Those who oppose the myth of political salvation are thus seen as enemies of the people, as fascists, racists, or whatever else in the way of ugly terms that can be dredged up. The opponents of political salvation are viewed as the demonic forces against man's hope and future. Increasingly, orthodox Christianity is seen, in such terms, as evil.

A few years ago, in a church trial, the state's attorney waved a Bible at me and called it "a child abuse manual." (It did not seem to upset the few ministers present, and I was told that she came from "a fine family" which included a past governor.) For humanistic "saints," it is Christianity, the Bible, and Christians who are the great evil. To all of this, most church members are indifferent. Christ is being crucified afresh, but they are more interested in television, sports, and their miscellaneous interests.

About a century and a half ago, Coleridge wrote that religion is "the centre of gravity in a realm." That center of gravity is now humanistic statism, not Christianity.

Ironically, both the revolution and its followers on the one hand, and too many churchmen on the other, expect salvation as a miracle ending history. As Taylor noted, "The British Left believed as confidently as Lenin had done in 1917 that Socialism could be made in twenty-four hours . . . The only problem was to win a majority: then socialism would follow of its own accord" (p. 183). This was the Left's dream of an automatic rapture into a Socialist utopia on earth! The church too has had many dreams of a rapture and an escape from history. (Not too long ago, a U.S. State Department official predicted the almost immediate end of

history! A book should be written about the absurdities of humanistic rapture faith. A remarkable example of this can be found in the revered works of William Godwin — and also in writings of some contemporary feminists.)

A false doctrine of salvation is a deadly faith, because it warps life and society and creates expectations which cannot be met. President John F. Kennedy spoke glowingly of the fact that men everywhere were being caught up in a rising tide of expectations. Now the disillusionment and bitterness has set in. Politics, which was to have given man a paradise on earth, is giving him hell instead. Moreover, as the state began to damn the people as polluters, the facts were leaking out slowly that the greatest polluter by far is the state, in its mismanagement of sewage, water, garbage, forests, and more. At the same time, the state's taxation has become more and more oppressive, so that men now feel the need of being saved from their political leaders. But the answer is not another set of men.

The state, which under God is to be a ministry of justice, has become instead man's sovereign and savior. It has become a great and evil power because men have willed it so. It had seemed good to have a god-state which man could control by his votes, but that god-state is out of control now, and it is controlling men and steadily confiscating their freedom, families, land, wealth, and more.

Men cannot expect politics and the state to change unless they first are changed. They cannot indict the state with any moral standing for claiming all powers in all spheres when men have limited God's claims on themselves and their possessions.

It is not surprising that ours has been called a drug culture. It is silly to expect the state to be successful in combating drugs. The lure of drugs is a quick and unearned peace and happiness, a sense of fulfillment; this is a costly illusion, but a prevalent one. The lure of political salvation is similar: elect certain men to rule over us, and there will be solutions to the problems of poverty, social conflict, ignorance, racism, and more. We can at least say that there is some improvement on the political scene from the extreme expectation of statist salvation affirmed by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Johnson, an immoral man, expected the state to produce a moral society! The political myth is remarkable for its absurdities as well as its essential profanity

In a remarkable article (1966) on H. G. Wells, Taylor called attention to the fact that Wells, in his novels, relied on naturalistic miracles to solve all problems. Taylor described it as "the need for miracles" (p. 136). Science was Wells's hope, but "the word science was simply used as an

incantation" (p. 138). Knowledge was Wells's golden calf, as of many people today; and he believed that men could be saved by a vast, ordered encyclopedia of fact and thought for its Bible" (p. 142). Given enough facts, the solution would naturally emerge. But Wells did not believe that man is a sinner; therefore, salvation for him could not come from the triune God; it had to come out of man's efforts.

Michelet was right. In essence, the two opposing forces are revolution and Christianity, change by man's destruction of the past, or change by Christ's regenerating power. As long as humanism with its myth of politics prevails, its hope in revolution will prevail. This means the destruction of the family, the church, freedom, old loyalties, and more. Salvation by destruction has been a ruling force in the twentieth century, and the end is not yet.

> Be wise now therefore . . . ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him. (Ps. 2:10–12)

THE MODERN STATE AS A FALSE MESSIAH

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 122, June 1990

In an editorial in the February 5, 1990, *U.S. News & World Report*, editor-at-large David R. Gergen addressed President Bush, saying, "Come Home, George." Drop the primary emphasis on foreign policy and take care of matters at home. Which matters? Well, Gergen quoted a letter from a father in Canton, Ohio, "mourning the death of his son from cocaine," who said that, with his city having fallen under a major crack epidemic, with no help from the federal government, he wanted his president to lead the war against drug use. Of course, the federal government has been spending much money in precisely that war, with a "drug czar" and a high-level meeting with other heads of state on the subject of drugs.

But can statist action save people from drugs? Is it indeed an "epidemic," or is it not rather a moral problem? Is not the current use a result of the de-Christianization of our society, schools, and states by federal court action? How can a law or law enforcement supply character to those who lack it?

In the same issue of *U.S. News & World Report*, Art Levine writes on "America's addiction to addictions." Americans, we are told, are seeking help for "everything from promiscuity to excessive shopping." Cures are sought for overeating, gambling, spouse-beating, debt addiction, and much, much more. The solutions are sought medically, not morally, nor religiously. A professor, Harvey Milkman, argues, "The disease concept may be applied to the entire spectrum of compulsive problem behaviors." As against this, Stanton Peele says, "Creating a world of addictive diseases may mean creating a world in which anything is excusable." Exactly! This is the kind of world being created around us. If all addictive and criminal behavior is in time reduced to a medical problem, then a major revolution is completed. The medical model replaces the moral model in

dealing with all offenses, and a custodial, caretaker state becomes the controller of all society. The state and its remedial concept of government then replace God and His moral law. Medicine replaces morality.

On February 3, 1990, the English *Spectator*, in an editorial on "Death and Taxes," asked: "The question is, does this Government favor the family? Does it favor saving? Does it favor the creation and not the dissipation of wealth? If it does favor these things, rather than merely profess to do so, then it should, in Mr. John Major's first budget, abolish inheritance tax." One can guess that Parliament, like Congress, and most state governments, favors the increasing power of the state at the expense of families, savings, or the creation of wealth. They are certainly vigorous enough in draining society of its freedom and resources in order to increase the powers of the state.

The sin, of course, begins with the people. For the most part, they want Jesus Christ, if at all, only as their great fire and life insurance agent, not as Lord. The state has become their lord, and the awareness is growing that the state is a false messiah.

The god of this age is the modern state, and its two great associates and allies are state schools and science. Science is now in varying degrees a department or an agent of state. It draws funds for its often mindless research in the serene confidence that it represents humanity at its highest.

Scientific research today is often highly questionable in its "results." When not questionable, it is often useless and even silly. To illustrate, the *American Journal of Public Health* (vol. 80, no. 2 [February 1990]: p. 146ff.), has a report on "Fecal Contamination of Shanty Town Toddlers in Households with Non-corralled Poultry, Lima, Peru." Seven scientists worked on this research. The number of poultry per house was calculated; their number of defecations per twelve hours; the number of toddlers' hand contacts with poultry feces per day; the number of hand to mouth contacts, and so on and on. There was nothing in this study previously unknown to anyone with an elementary knowledge of hygiene. If the seven scientists had cleaned up the shanty town, they would, however briefly, have done much more good! But that would have been a moral gesture and an act of compassion, not science.

The modern state taxes people in the name and façade of compassion in order to accomplish its salvation of all men by legislation, controls, and science. People have long believed in statist salvation, and they have looked to the state to solve problems, moral problems, that they themselves refuse to acknowledge as their responsibility. One of my more vivid memories of this came with the 1971 earthquake in California's San Fernando Valley in Los Angeles. I heard someone in a check-out line of a

supermarket complain about the earthquake and earthquakes in general, and ask, "Why doesn't the government do something about it?"

Impossible tasks have been asked of the state, and the state has failed again and again. As a false savior, it is increasingly the target of the people's bitterness. The crisis will only worsen, and the evils experienced by peoples and states will intensify, until they recognize that the state is not god, nor is its power to do good equal to what man can do under God.

The religion of social service by the state is a faith in deep trouble. It rests on a belief in the benevolence of the state. Few faiths have less evidence in their favor than this belief in the natural goodness of the civil government which is democratic. Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. was a devout and pious believer in the goodness of democratic law. He wrote, in *The Common Law* (1881), "The first requirement of a *sound* body of law is, that it should correspond with the actual feelings and demands of the community, *whether right or wrong*" (p. 41, italics added). In the long run, such laws were for him best. But this was a belief, not a fact. After all, Hitler was validly elected, as have been other evil men. An evil man will seek evil laws, and, in all too many countries today, we have a growing number of voters whose preference is for evil.

Anthony M. Platt, in *The Child Savers* (1969), cited a statist agency which called for "the salvation of all the children who are in need of a savior" (p. 136). Such statist reformers trust, Platt pointed out, "in the benevolence of government" (p. 165). This is the key to a major problem of our time, the belief in the natural goodness or benevolence of man, or the state, or the church, or anything else. Our Lord makes it clear that "there is none good but one, that is, God" (Matt. 19:17). All things on the human scene must be viewed as fallible, subject — even when Christian — to the fact of sin, and of necessity all men are required by Scripture to place their trust in God and His Word, not man. Modern statism is the key expression of humanism; its faith is in man and his works, in statist providence, not in God. Those who live in terms of faith in the state will die because of that faith.

Day by day, our problems increase because of the false solutions offered by statism. The growing dissolution of society adds to our problems. The cynicism of men with regard to politics and politicians is sterile. Cynics have never been builders. It is still true that, "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps. 127:1). The Lord does no building for the builders of Babel in any age, including ours, nor for the people thereof. Babel has changed its name many times, and it is still with us, and around us. Its end is still confusion and ruin.

We must be members and workers for another city, the city of God.

234

"POLITICS IS ABOUT EVOLUTION"

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 184, January 1995

In 1987, Walter Truett Anderson's *To Govern Evolution: Further Adventures of the Political Animal*, declared on the first page that the world has changed, and we cannot understand "what it means to govern," unless we grasp this fact: "Politics is about evolution" (p. 1).

This statement sounds bizarre to those reared in a traditional setting who see politics in constitutional terms. There can be, however, no true grasp of our contemporary world apart from Anderson's analysis.

What does evolution have to do with politics? Everything. According to the evolutionary mythology, chance and time brought about the development of this vast and manifold universe. The theory, of course, presupposes trillions of miracles, beginning with the coming into being of the first atom, of life and something out of nothing, and all the vast changes from nothingness to everything. Even Charles Darwin admitted that the development of the eye was not explicable by his theory.

It is, however, an article of faith with these militant new pagans that evolution did happen. Until now, it has been a blind and mindless process, but it need no longer be so. Man, intellectual, scientific man has arrived, and he will now guide evolution to a desired end. This means that politics is now about evolution, guiding its future course. The Nazis abused that power, but, despite their drift into racism, it is held by some that with their elimination of mental defectives by sterilization and by selective breeding of the "superior" human stock, they supposedly started well.

Currently, a major debate is again between those who champion heredity as against environmentalists. Many IQ studies correlate a low IQ with poverty, crime, welfarism, and the like. Such statistics are without much value because they get what they test for. In any slum area, or

prison, in any city in the world, with peoples of any race, a like result is likely.

These tests are invalid because they never include determining characteristics, the presence or absence of religious belief. Historically, the determining forces of faith and character are not considered, nor the character of the family.

Over the years, I have seen vividly, in more than one racial and national group, how important these factors are. Early in the 1920s, near a playground, I sat and visited with a boy who was obviously "backward" as it was then called. Later, I wondered what would happen to him as he grew up. The "backward," boy was Jewish. Another boy, also Jewish, dismissed my concern: "Don't worry about him; he's orthodox, and his family will take care of him." In later years, I saw again and again persons who were "backward" become good, functioning members of society because their religious and family background provided total support so that they became functioning and law-abiding members of society. I came to know one older man who had so absorbed Biblical and proverbial wisdom that he was in fact a wise if simple man.

The evolutionists, of course, see things materialistically, and thus they fail to note the decisive effect of faith, character, and family.

How is politics all about evolution? I have heard it argued that homosexuality and abortion are "good" because they keep the birth rate down; this is a strange argument, because so does murder!

Once we recognize that politics is indeed about evolution in our time, we can understand such things as the Chinese population policy, the Cairo Conference on population, etc., and the growing hostility to any truly Biblical stance. Creationism and evolutionists are totally at odds.

Anderson lists some of the evolutionary/political undertakings which have already been implemented: "The Earth restoration project. Eugenics, controlled or 'directed breeding,' sperm banks. Limits on population growth. Attempts to create new forms of life, speed up mutation and the development of new species," and so on (p. 350).

Anderson stated, "Population is arguably the predominant global issue of our time, connected with all of the other questions that arise in the context of world politics" (p. 358).

Anderson stated also that "the decades ahead will be dominated by the Biological Revolution. Men will intervene to control natural processes in man, such as parenthood. This will mean 'bioshock' for many (p. 4). (In 1935, I recall an elderly printer who viewed Washington, D.C., with horror and would say, very graphically, "Those concerned idiots will wind up going after our testicles!")

For Anderson, history's most important change is rapidly overtaking us, the total control of man by man, i.e., by means of the state, the incarnation of man.

Not surprisingly, Anderson is hostile to creationism. He is also hostile to mankind because people are not eager to be subjected to the radical planning, remaking, and controls he calls for. He says, "Homo sapiens is the only species that evolves reluctantly" (p. 25). Men are "afraid of knowing" about the future politics is planning for them. He cites arguments in favor of protecting plants, and he tells us, "In some countries it is even illegal (punishable by a fine of 400 Pounds Sterling in Great Britain) to plant varieties not listed in the official seed catalog" (p. 73).

Human evolution must be controlled; Anderson believes (p. 148ff.). He expects various countries to "launch deliberate eugenics programs" (p. 183).

In brief, Anderson is correct in stating that politics today is about evolution and therefore about the total control of man by man. Creationism, on the other hand, is about man, created in the image of his Maker, finding salvation and freedom in Jesus Christ.

The doctrine of creationism is both true and centrally important. It is basic to freedom. Unless churches stress the important of freedom under God, and *creation* and *redemption* by our Lord, they will soon have no freedom to teach anything.

235

LAW AND POLITICS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 186, March 1995

We face in our time a crisis in law and politics. The defeat of one party in the November 1994 elections has not removed the problem, nor can it. The issue is only partially the need to replace discredited men with new ones, nor is it a matter of strategy.

Legislative bodies routinely make laws, and the laws are designed to correct or remedy some problem in society, and it is here that the problem exists. What premise lies behind the laws? Most of what we see is *ad hoc* legislation; *ad hoc* is Latin for "to this," i.e., meaning a particular problem is addressed with the means at hand. No long-term or morally true premises are involved: a problem is met in the most convenient and the easiest way. A problem of major dimensions may arise later on, but the *ad hoc* legislation usually remains as a permanent answer. *Ad hoc* legislation means quick and popular answers, not sound ones.

We cannot understand the meaning of law unless we recognize that law is a religious and moral fact. Law tells us what is basic to life in community, and it is simply an enactment of morality. The morality represented by the law can be Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu, Shinto, Christian, humanistic, or something else, but law is always a theology in action, a religion applied to daily life.

When, however, men simply take an *ad hoc* attitude, they do not cease to be religious thereby. Much of the current legislation of the major states is simply existentialist, pragmatic, instrumentalist, or the like, all interrelated philosophies of law which deny fixed and eternal moral premises in favor of changing ones. Basic to the current view is Émile Durkheim's *Rules of Sociological Method*, wherein the criminal is seen as potentially an evolutionary pioneer who is exploring the frontiers of moral possibility. Such a view gives the criminal an edge, at

times, over the law-abiding man, who can be seen as past-bound and nonprogressive.

One serious problem we face today is that in the state schools, the values taught are simply subjective; every child is taught to establish his or her own moral values and to live by them. Unless they harm others, they are said to be valid. The fallacy here is that if each person chooses his own values, why should he show concern for other persons? The Marquis de Sade, the father of modern morals, insisted on the right to kill, steal, rape, and harm others at will. At the basis of the modern values systems is this Sadean premise, every man as his own god and lawmaker.

As a result, we see a growing moral and legal anarchy. Every man is his own determiner of good and evil, and no man has a "right," it is held, to impose a moral standard on others. I have received mail from people who are convinced that it is a violation of the First Amendment to the Constitution to impose any kind of law on others. Such people insist that Christians, and especially theonomists, do not believe in and are hostile to the First Amendment. Their premise is that every man is free to do as he pleases. We see this faith in action all around us, and it is basic to the disintegration of our world and its men and nations.

Parliaments and congresses routinely pass their fiat laws while perplexed that, with more money than ever spent in fighting lawlessness, crime continues to increase. The intellectual premises of our time, both with non-Christians but also with antinomian churchmen, are guaranteed to further a disregard for the law. The best defense against crime is a sound moral and theological foundation for a people.

Ad hoc law has as its premise expediency in confronting problems. The disregard for law and morality begins in the very nature of modern law and politics. Legislation has as its purpose meeting the demands of the electorate, or some segment thereof, not in establishing a moral basis for society.

The dismantling of the modern state begins in its lawmaking bodies. The objective being the satisfaction of the demands of the people, there is a progressive decline as morality and justice give way to satisfying pork-barrel politics. Morality decreases, and deficits increase. Without a return to God and His law, there can be no sound moral foundation to any society. We have destroyed the foundation to any society. We have destroyed the foundations, and we expect the building to stand. We expect morality while denying the validity of moral law.

I was pleased last week to hear a congressman say, at a friend's home, that the new Congress has perhaps one hundred congressmen ready to grab the third rail to defend moral premises and financial integrity. The

"third rail" in commuter and subway trains is electrified and kills people on contact. This imagery represents the uncompromising commitment of these men, ready to lose at the next election rather than to compromise.

The question now is how many similarly dedicated men are in the churches, in business, and elsewhere? We can no more depend on their courage to improve our condition than we can rely on our neighbor's health to heal us.

236

LAW VERSUS RIGHT

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 191, August 1995

Both in church and state, and certainly in society at large, the importance of law has steadily receded, to be replaced by the doctrine of *rights*. Early in the 1800s, the poet William Blake emphasized man's rights in the face of God. In his version of the Lord's Prayer, Blake wrote: "Give us the Bread that is our due & Right, by taking away Money, or a Price, or a tax upon what is Common to all in thy Kingdom" (J. Bronowski, *William Blake and the Age of Revolution*, p. 116). When men could assert their "rights" against God, it was logical for them to demand their "rights" from men.

The doctrine of "rights" is essentially antilaw, because it asserts that man is governed not by a duty but by a "right" he ostensibly possesses. Law restrains us and requires that we conform to a moral standard, which we believe to be God's law. "Thou shalt not kill" (Exod. 20:13) limits our power to exact vengeance; it requires us to respect life as God-given and to be taken only in conformity to His law. We have a duty to protect and further life. "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Exod. 20:14) not only bars illegitimate sexual activity but requires respecting the family life of others. "Thou shalt not steal" (Exod. 20:15) condemns theft, direct and indirect, by man, or by church, state, or any other agency, and it mandates that we protect property, as well as life and family. The law, in its every precept, imposes a God-ordained duty upon us. As against self-centered living and thinking, the law requires us to think God's thoughts after Him. Antinomian thinking in the church is humanistic because it removes the God-centered discipline from life. When the church becomes antinomian, society becomes lawless. Desperate measures by the state cannot correct the absence of a God-centered faith such as the law creates. God's law compels us to think God's thoughts after Him, to be

mindful of our fellow men, to live in terms of God's will, not ours, His Kingdom, not our rule, and in terms of justice, not license.

The language of rights is radically anarchistic. Its requirement is special privileges for my class, my race, and myself, and it is insistent that justice is not to be defined by God but by individuals in terms of their demands. The doctrine of rights creates social conflict because each group insists that its will must be done. Its concept of society is static. If the world were certainly arrested in its tracks, and its wealth divided, there would not be much to go around. In a world of duty and work, charity, trade, agriculture, and commerce recycle the existing wealth a millionfold, but the "rights" advocates want an arrested world.

History has seen both the rich and the poor insist on their rights as against all others, and the results have been disastrous. Greed, injustice, and class hostilities then prevail and govern society.

As against this, God declares in His law, "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor" (Lev. 19:15; cf. Exod. 23:2–3; Deut. 1:16–17, 16:19; Ps. 82:2; Prov. 24:23; James 2:9). The doctrine of "rights" leads to a respect of persons, and God then convicts us as lawbreakers, as transgressors (James 2:9).

The doctrine of "rights" is anti-law and anti-God. The United States, like some other countries, has a problem here, in that, despite its Christian origins, it early imbibed the doctrine of man's "rights." Men like Thomas Jefferson were wedded to the concept, and this "rights" heritage has been one of class conflict.

The word *right* is in origin a good word, meaning "straight, stretched out." The word *rights* goes back to the French Revolution, and its meaning is very different. Rights are supposedly "inalienable" properties of all men which somehow have been seized from the common man by evil, conspiratorial groups of men. These "inalienable rights" having been alienated, the role of the masses, the oppressed classes, the workers, the underclass, various races, and so on and on, is to fight to regain these "inalienable rights." The "rights" doctrine leads to a class warfare society. Marxism was and is only one form, albeit very brutal, of the "rights" doctrine. It is basic to every form of politics in the modern world. The language of "rights" is the language of class conflict because it tells everyone that his "problem" is that some other group is trifling with his rights. It turns whites against blacks, blacks against whites, the rich and the poor against one another, and so on.

This is why Biblical law, theonomy, is no academic matter, nor simply a matter for theologians. It is basic to social order. As the modern age

abandoned God's law, it adopted the "rights" doctrine and embarked on a sea of conflict. The world will flounder in wars and rumors of war as long as it pursues the illusion of "rights." Men will be strongly motivated to demand what they want instead of working for it.

The language of "rights" is the language of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, whose philosophy has governed the world for two centuries. Rousseau was an evil man, radically irresponsible, and totally pharisaic. He has been producing, with his ideas, millions after his own image.

We need a generation remade in the image of the last Adam, Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:45ff.), faithful to the law-word of the triune God, and obedient to its duty to obey God in all things and in all spheres. Then and only then will it come to pass, as David said, "All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name" (Ps. 86:9).

237

WHAT IS THE STATE?

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 179, August 1994

DEFINITIONS are necessary, but a problem that faces us is that things change their meaning. The word "silly" once meant "beloved"; "chaste" in Shakespeare's day was "honest," i.e., an honest woman was sexually chaste. This fact of changing meanings is a matter of importance. If we think in terms of old meanings when others use newer ones, we are in trouble. In our century, so many things have been redefined that many people are deluded because they assume old meanings where newer ones prevail.

For example, a *public school* meant one thing in 1900, and a radically different thing in 1990. Its function and goals have changed from the Three Rs, reading, writing, and "rithmetic," to social change. Failure to recognize this change is to delude oneself.

Perhaps one of the most useful revolutionary instruments is this fact of changing meanings. One area of important change is in the definition of the church, another is the family, still another is marriage, and so on and on. At times these changes in definition are legal, at other times, not so. At present, some are trying to redefine marriage legally to mean same-sex unions, i.e., homosexual relations. The courts are regularly redefining things to the dismay of many.

We regularly need new editions of dictionaries because meanings change. Now we also have the systematic efforts to make revolutionary changes, to redefine institutions and practices.

One area of dramatic and revolutionary change has been with respect to the meaning of *the state*, i.e., the definition of *civil government*. To a very great extent, our understanding in this area has been governed by the Bible. The state in antiquity was a radically different institution. Christianity redefined the state in terms of both the Old and New

Testaments. One of the great victories of Biblical faith in this area is the rescript of Artaxerxes to Ezra, in Ezra 7:11–26. Because of this redefinition, very early the coronation ceremonies of kings included oaths to the triune God to abide by His law and to rule in terms of it. Currently, we have a survival of this in the presidential oath of office, originally taken in terms of Deuteronomy 28, which invited blessings for faithfulness to God's law, and curses for disobedience. (This fact tells us of the liabilities United States has incurred.)

The purpose of the state, in terms of Biblical faith, is to be a *ministry of justice*. Paul's statement in Romans 13:1ff. is simply a summation of God's law. The powers that be are ordained by God to be His agents for justice. They are to be a terror to evil doers and the protection of those that do good. To resist such a ministry is to resist God. It is a ministry of God, a ministry of justice.

This is the Biblical doctrine of the state. No less than the Ahabs of old, many rulers in Christendom over the centuries have despised God's law and ruled in terms of their own will, with disastrous results. All the same, the Biblical standard has prevailed, and it has judged rulers and states. The norm remained, and it was God's law. The state was an agency of God's law. The state was an agency of God to protect and further God's order among men.

In the twentieth century, the state has been redefined, and God's definition has given way to a humanistic and salvific understanding of it. God's ministry of justice has given way to *the therapeutic state*. Just as pastor and priest have been replaced in the prevailing culture by the therapist, psychiatrist, psychologist, or sociologist, so, too, God's ministry of justice has been replaced by a humanistic one.

The therapeutic state sees itself as man's savior in every sphere. Its planning and control will reorder all spheres of life and bring in a humanistic Garden of Eden. Instead of sin as man's problem, requiring God's Savior, man's problem is in the environment. This means the total reorganization of all of life, family, school, church, society, and nature, in order to create the salvific community and environment.

The ministry of justice deals with *persons* who have broken God's law. It is protective of society against the depredations of criminal individuals. Its action is against persons, not society.

The therapeutic state is implicitly or explicitly totalitarian because its plan of salvation requires the reorganization of the total environment. This is why, whether in the French, Russian, Chinese, or German National Socialist revolutions (or Mexican, or any other), a primary move is against the Bible, against Jews, and against Christians. Such peoples

represent the old order, a view of the state the new regimes oppose.

In every continent, the therapeutic state is therefore at war against Biblical faith. The therapeutic state can tolerate no savior except itself. There are those who oppose the therapeutic state on traditional grounds: they love the old order without sharing its faith and premises. But the conflict between the two orders is a religious one. The therapeutic state and its ruling caste recognize this; hence their hostility to "the religious right," which, however dimly or even foolishly at times, still is aware that a dramatic shift has taken place in the meaning of the state.

Such a change has taken place. It cannot be altered except as it was done in the early centuries of the Christian era. It requires a return to the whole Word of God, to the Old and New Testaments, to a recognition that God's ministry of justice means that justice is defined by the law-word of God.

Anything short of this will see our citizenship redefined into slavery.

238

THE MYTH OF POLITICS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 143, September 1991

The priority of politics as a social concern is an indication of a coming slavery and death for that society. The political order may be democratic, republican, fascist, socialist, monarchist, or anything else, but its future becomes bleak whenever and wherever the dominating force in a society is political.

A political or politicized social order is always very impressive: it concentrates on the monumental. This may mean pyramids and palaces; it can mean great civil and statist monuments, buildings, centers, and statuary, all calling attention to the greatness of the state. The monumental is the statist style, in architecture and in everyday practice.

As statism develops and begins to command society, its two main expressions of power are lawmaking and coercion. Taxation is basic to both, and it continues to grow as the power of the state becomes the people's faith and hope.

The state's solution to problems is to pass a law. Now God, by His fiat word, can declare, "Let there be," and creation comes into existence (Gen. 1:1–31). The state has no such power to create, but this does not restrain it in its desire to play god. Original sin is man's desire to be his own god, knowing, or determining, good and evil, right and wrong, and all law and morality for himself (Gen. 3:5). Man institutionalizes his original sin in many ways, but supremely in the state. He seeks thereby to create a new world order, bypassing God and issuing decrees to resolve all human problems. Because statist man bypasses God, he also bypasses success and ensures turning his society into hell on earth.

The state in revolt against or in separation from God offers its own plan of salvation for man, cradle-to-grave, or womb-to-tomb, security. Politics succeeds by promises of security, which is another way of saying

slavery. Political campaigns are usually waged in terms of offering the most credible increases in security and protection. The risk-free life is promoted, but the people are not told that a risk-free life means slavery, and death is most risk-free.

A slave's vision is of security. Slaves have repeatedly revolted throughout history, but their revolts have been simply against particular conditions of slavery. They demand security without the burdens of slavery. This is a worldwide problem today, and it will not end until men seek true freedom in Christ. Men simply turn from one candidate to another, always demanding what politics can never deliver, salvation from their problems.

The myth of politics is the belief that life's problems can be solved politically. It is the worship of Caesar. Given the right political leader, the social problems will be solved and disappear.

Whenever Christian faith wanes, the political myth flourishes because men need and want salvation. With the rise of the myth of politics, God's law is derided and the state's law exalted. There is a close relationship between the rise of antinomianism in the churches and the rise of statism in a society. Law is justice expressed in a body of laws. If we lose interest in God's covenant, we lose interest in His laws and look to a human covenant for law. The social contract theory of John Locke and others replaced God's covenant steadily, and the Western world moved from the rule or canon of God's laws to the canon of statist law. Man's law became sovereign because man through the state was now the new lord and sovereign over creation. Sir William Jones insisted that law is a science, and man's law moved him to poetry:

> And sovereign law, that state's collected will,
> O'er thrones and globes elate
> Sits Empress, crowning good, repressing ill;
> Smit by her sacred frown
> The fiend, Discretion, like a vapor, sinks;
> And e'en the all-dazzling Crown
> Hides his faint rays, and at her bidding shrinks.[1]

Not God but man's law is sovereign, and it is "the world's collected will." Now, since man's will is fallen and depraved, any law "the collected will" produces will become progressively more evil as man departs further from the triune God. Before the sovereign power of "the world's collected will," according to Jones, all other forces "hide" and "shrink." Notice, too, that the word "sacred" is transferred from God to "the world's collected

1. William Jones, "Ode in Imitation of Alcæus" (1781)

will." The church has made itself irrelevant and peripheral to society by its antinomianism. As McKnight said with respect to this outlook, as it manifested itself in Boccaccio, "The sacred does not disappear; there is still concern for salvation, but salvation seems to have little to do with everyday life."[2] There is a grim irony in the fact that churches now would disapprove of the risqué tales of Boccaccio's *Decameron* while fully accepting the antinomianism he promoted in that book. Father Boccaccio now lives in most pulpits!

Hans Sedlmayr wrote that, "Sin is a cutting of oneself off from the divine life." Today, sin is limited to some areas of moral offenses, when in reality it means separating any area of life and thought form God and His law order. It is "a disturbance in the cosmos of man." Sedlmayr cites Theodore Haecker's words: "In sins we are all autonomous."[3] If any area of our being or our society is separated from the law of God, and from Christ our King, we are in sin because autonomy means literally self-law, as against *theonomy*, God's law. We live in an age of militant autonomy in church and state. As a result, the omnipotent state has replaced God. It is no improvement if we replace the state with the omnipotent individual or the omnipotent church.

The summum bonum or highest good was once a matter of philosophical discussion. It is a concern now forgotten in most circles. The pagan state was the highest good in antiquity, and we have returned to paganism and its myth of politics.

The pagan state fought bitterly against the challenge to its priority. The state and its politically correct scholar-prostitutes hounded their Christian rivals. Thus, Justin Martyr, a philosopher, on converting to Christianity and writing as a Christian, was beheaded at the instigation of a rival and pagan author, Crescens. Crescens was Cynic philosopher close to the emperor, Aurelius. Because Justin Martyr had made a telling critique of a comment by Crescens, he paid with his life for his insight.

Such incidents were common to Greece, Rome, and other pagan states. All power rested in a single order, the state, and its power was total. Power, then and now, becomes terror in action, a fact boldly asserted by Robespierre. He held that in a revolution, the driving force must be "both virtue and terror: virtue, without which terror is destructive; terror, without which virtue is impotent."[4] But what is virtue in all this? It is simply what the state says it is, and the state can change its mind. The state's

2. Stephen A. McKnight, *Sacralizing the Secular: The Renaissance Origins of Modernity* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), p. 32.

3. Hans Sedlmayr, *Art in Crisis* (Chicago, IL, Regnery, 1958), p. 183.

4. Rupert Christiansen, *Romantic Affinities: Portraits from an Age 1780–1830* (New York, NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1988), p. 14.

mind changes, but its coercion, uncontrolled by Christian faith, remains.

Henry James Sr., a Swedenborgian, a utopian, and a socialist, more than a century ago, held that "the kingdom of man is at hand."[5] He was right, but not in the happy sense he had imagined. The myth of politics has led the world into slavery, some areas more rapidly than others. Politics cannot by its fiat laws create a new paradise, only a growing hell on earth.

But, if there is no God and His law above and over every state, person, area of life, and institution, then men will hold, or even declare as Napoleon did on November 4, 1804, "My mistress is power." Again, on August 13, 1805, he said, "I want to create in France a lay state," meaning a secular one.[6] This has been the goal of the Western world and of socialists everywhere. The results have been tyranny and devastated economies. The state is not god; it cannot create, and it is a voracious consumer. As the surviving areas of freedom continue to produce, the state moves into all of them to control and govern them to death.

The word of the Lord remains: "Thou shalt have none other gods before me" (Deut. 5:7), the state is a false god, an idol God will smash. Will you be smashed with it? The Lord our God, He alone is God and Sovereign over all.

5. Alfred Kazin, *An American Procession* (New York, NY: Random House Vintage Books, [1984] 1985), p. 29.

6. T. G. Barnes and G. D. Feldman, eds., *Rationalism and Revolution, 1660–1815* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1972), pp. 210–211.

239

THE DEATH OF EMPTY FORMS

Chalcedon Position Paper No. 101, September 1988

Men through the ages have commonly trusted in some political form, religious ritual, or social organization as the hope of mankind. Rome believed that simplification and centralization would solve the problems of state, and thereby Rome made the empire unwieldy and unworkable. The early centuries after Rome's fall saw a marked decentralization, the feudal era. This also created problems, while solving some; and the "solution" was sought in a strong Holy Roman Empire and a strong papacy. The empire was to provide protection against the coming of Antichrist. We still have the symbol of the Holy Roman Empire with us, the dollar sign, the two vertical strokes representing the pillars of Hercules and the wavy bank a scroll. The empire was a faith in the necessity for holy power and the mastery of nations. The papacy centralized power in itself to provide an international court of appeals for justice. For a time, both church and empire served their purposes but became themselves the targets of reform. The conciliar movement aimed at a broader church authority, and the national states undermined imperial power. The Reformation also sought to broaden the basis of power and authority within the church.

In the Puritan Commonwealth era in the seventeenth century, both in church and state the desire for decentralization was strong. This was a hope strongly shared by Christians and humanists. It was basic to the Independents, Presbyterians, Anabaptists, and others. One man, Henry Marten, a wealthy man who championed unpopular causes (the Irish, the Levellers, prisons for debt, and others), said of the monarchy, "I do not think one man wise enough to govern us all." Certainly, Charles I lacked that wisdom. Marten's solution was a republic, which for him meant an honest civil government. His reason for this hope he clearly stated: "The

People have this advantage in their choice, that they are incapable of being bribed" (C. M. Williams, "The Anatomy of a Radical Gentleman, Henry Marten," in Donald Pennington and Keith Thomas, eds., *Puritans and Revolutionaries* [Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1978, 1982], pp. 118–138).

Marten's faith in the people was naïve. Like kings and nobles, they *could* be bribed. In contemporary U.S. politics, votes are purchased by subsidies to virtually every group in society, corporations, labor, the "senior" citizens, minority groups, and so on and on. Theories about the infallibility of the people, i.e., Rousseau's doctrine of the general will, are now appearing to be as invalid as the divine right of kings. In the late fifteenth century in Russia, the Josephite doctrine of the Tsar was developed; it held that "the Tsar was similar to humans only by nature, but by the authority of his rank similar to God; he derived his authority directly from God, and his judgment could not be overruled by that of any prelate" (Arthur Voyce, *Moscow and the Roots of Russian Culture* [Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964], p. 16). Rousseau's thinking about the general will gave a like authority to the democratic expression, or the democratic consensus, as many call it now.

Michael Kammen has shown, in *A Machine That Would Go of Itself: The Constitution in American Culture* (1986), how Americans have commonly had a blind trust that the constitutional form would preserve freedom and justice.

No thought was given to the fact that man's depravity can turn any form, monarchy, republic, democracy, or anything else, into an instrument of tyranny. We have seen tyranny triumph repeatedly in history, whatever the legal safeguards or the forms of government. All the well-devised hopes and schemes of men are destroyed by the fact that man is a sinner. Without Christ, he will corrupt any and all forms of civil and ecclesiastical polity.

This trust in forms is equally prevalent in the church. Jeremiah spoke of the false trust of Jerusalem in having "*The temple of the Lord*" (Jer. 7:4). An apostate people trusted in the sacrificial system, i.e., in atonement as ritual rather than a faith with works, and Hosea condemned this, declaring, "*For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice; And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings*" (Hosea 6:6); our Lord twice cites these words of Hosea (Matt. 9:13; 12:7), yet I am often assured by churchmen that their particular forms and observance of baptism and communion assure the purity of their church. They forget that their observances can also ensure their damnation (1 Cor. 11:29ff.). Such "celebrations" are frightening.

This does not mean that forms in civil and ecclesiastical policy, or in rituals and sacraments, are nothing. It does mean that, just as faith without works is dead (James 2:14–26), so too works, forms, rites, polities, and governments without faith are dead also. The modern faith is strongly in the forms.

One of the shapers of the twentieth-century United States was Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. He openly questioned whether, "if cosmically an idea is any more important than the bowels," or "if man is any more significant than a baboon or a grain of sand." He denied God emphatically, and man also. Of pacifism and a concern for human life, he said: "All 'isms seem to me silly — but this hyper-ethereal respect for human life seems perhaps the silliest of all" (Rocco J. Tresolini, *Justice and the Supreme Court* [Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott, 1963], pp. 67, 72).

In such a perspective, man being nothing, truth and justice are nothing. All that remains is the power state. All this is a prescription for tyranny. The best constitution in the world is worthless if justice is meaningless. The forms are no protection if men are without faith. Antinomianism is finally antilife and pro-tyranny and death.

Repeatedly in history, as empty forms replace faith and works, and as fame takes precedence over character, every area of life and thought is affected adversely. John Pearson has called attention to the fact that the modern temper has affected the British monarchy and is "a phenomenon of immense importance to the future of the monarchy." This, he points out, has been "the virtual extinction of the cult of human greatness, which had been steadily succeeded by something rather different, the cult of the celebrity" (John Pearson, *The Selling of the Royal Family* [New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1986], p. 193). Whether in the sphere of popular music, politics, the church, or the arts, celebrity has replaced greatness. This has been very sharply in evidence in such cases as Andy Warhol, rock-and-roll groups, and so on.

The very word "celebrity" is a curious one. It comes from "celebrate" and "celebration," the root idea of which is in Latin a good, well-traveled road, a way to a place. Its historic reference has been extensively ritualistic, that is, to celebrate marriage, the celebration of communion, or of the mass, or of baptism, and so on. The focus is religious, communal, or ritual. *With "celebrity," however, there is a radical shift from a people united in a common act to a focus on an individual.* It is now the celebration of an individual, a "celebrity." One can perhaps suggest that the modern ritual is the elevation of the individual, the celebrity, instead of the bread and wine, i.e., the body and blood of Christ. The word reveals a climax of emptiness.

When the faith is removed, the forms collapse. Institutions and constitutions then become empty and meaningless, and justice gives way to celebrities, and to political briberies. Nothing works, because our world does not depend upon mechanical forms in church and state but on a living faith, a faith with works.

When so influential a judge as Holmes regarded man as worth no more than a baboon or a grain of sand, and respect for human life as the silliest of illusions, is it any wonder that murder, rape, abortion, and euthanasia are increasing? Indeed, baboons and criminals are often given a better status before the law than godly men.

Forms have their place, but forms cannot save us. The people who trusted in "the temple of the Lord" went into captivity, even as we now are doing, because our trust is in something other than the Lord of history. United States Justice Wiley B. Rutledge expressed his faith in 1947 in *A Declaration of Legal Faith* thus: "I believe in law. At the same time I believe in freedom. And I know that each of these things may destroy the other. But I know too, that, without both, neither can long endure . . . justice too is a part of life, of evolution, of man's spiritual growth . . . Law, freedom, and justice — this trinity is the object of my faith" (Tresolini, *Justice and the Supreme Court*, p. 134). Rutledge was a kindly man, and he had his moment of greatness in the Yamashita case, but his faith was a weak one; he coasted on his religious background and added nothing to it; rather, he lived off the moral capital of his past. Rutledge's earthly trinity has proven to be empty without the triune God.

Wherein is your hope, and on what ground do you stand?

GENERAL INDEX

501(c)(3), 942

A

Aaron, 568
Abdul Hamid II, 950–951, 953
Abel, 393
Abelard, Peter, 129, 736, 820, 925
Abiram, 698
abortion
  abortionists
    Nathanson, Bernard M., M.D., 42
    Wichita clinic (George Tiller), 237
  anti-abortion activism, 86–87, 95–96, 225–226, 318, 343, 542, 649, 940
  and the family, 171, 178–179
  and God's Law applied to nations, 534
  promoted by the state, 552, 839, 916, 931, 965, 979
  research, 607
  result of antinomianism, 281, 428, 431, 445, 503, 533, 570, 571, 658, 783, 802, 848, 913
    evasion of responsibility, 8, 11, 15, 34, 43, 60, 280, 294, 310, 389, 392, 552, 728, 795, 805
    inversion of values, 93, 178–179, 237, 340, 512, 848, 853, 940, 997
    love of death, 40, 42, 43, 60, 93, 283
    will to be god, 42, 44, 252, 625–626, 912, 929
  statistics, 179, 465
Abraham, 160, 186, 195, 197, 203, 234, 323–324, 742
  "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," 323, 826, 830, 942, 944
  "raise up children unto Abraham," 790
  "The God of Abraham Praise" (hymn), 272
abstractionism
  and antinomianism, 401–403, 711–712
  and dualism, 715–719, 742–743, 760, 769, 922–929, 966 (*see also* dualism)
  vs. personal ethics, 332, 403, 606, 868–869, 966
  and pietism, 401–405, 462, 512, 701, 799, 923–924 (*see also* pietism)
abuse. *see also* oppression
  bullying, 112, 597
  in the church, 83, 368, 382, 527, 597
    bureaucratization, 365, 427, 836
    misusing authority, 83, 406, 427, 876, 927–928, 939
    molestation of children, 83, 153–154, 362, 382, 395, 406, 504, 527, 605–606
    protecting abusers, 362, 371–374, 406, 597, 626, 773
    totalitarianism and abuse, 276–278, 537, 545, 838, 876, 927–928, 939, 994
  false examples of abuse, 355–356, 420, 591, 614, 972 (*see also* class and social warfare)
  molestation of children, 36, 153–154, 395, 406, 504, 605–606
    in the church, 83, 362, 382, 406, 527
    and evasion of responsibility, 362, 592
    false examples, 355

abuse
molestation of children *(cont'd.)*
and liberalism, 6, 36, 174, 592
result of antinomianism, 3–4, 6, 306, 382, 406, 445, 504, 527, 605–606, 734, 798, 799
rape, 15, 164, 420, 430, 445, 504, 526, 565, 584, 624, 639, 873, 982, 997
of wives, 54–55, 196, 201, 202, 362, 406, 407, 507, 575, 576, 577, 605–606, 773, 774
adultery and counseling, 372, 407, 448, 633, 774 (*see also* adultery)
husband abuse, 874, 878
"accreditation" (etymology), 337
accreditation and certification, 337–342, 410, 668
Achan, 177, 358, 568
activism. *see* specific movements
ad hoc (Latin), 981
Adam
common descent, 21, 22
and the covenant of grace, 454, 456
and dominion, 487, 695, 697, 766
environmentalism and victim mentality, 119, 133, 355, 591, 592, 593, 682 (*see also* environmentalism)
the first antinomian, 200, 486–487
first marriage, 200
freedom to sin, 491
and heresy, 682, 694, 735, 739, 767
naming the animals, 864, 944
original sin and depravity, 103, 133, 135, 200, 351, 418, 423, 435, 445, 486–487, 492, 528, 694, 695, 697, 735, 739, 759, 791, 804, 822
Second (Last/New) Adam, 351, 423, 435, 486, 654, 695–697, 879, 959, 986
"When Adam delved and Eve span…," 652, 656
Adams, John, 462
Adams, John Quincy, 321–322
addiction, 277, 305, 356, 428, 860, 879, 975–976. *see also under* drug and alcohol abuse
adiaphorism, 922–931
adikia (Greek), 326
Adler, Polly, 65
Adoptionism, 720
androgyny and Gnosticism, 682, 687
adultery, 356, 500, 646, 874, 878
in classical society, 575–576
divorce and counseling, 372, 407, 448, 633, 774
evasion of responsibility, 11, 54–55, 146, 581, 646
and Gnostic dualism, 682, 683, 922, 924
humanist inversion of values, 11, 146, 793, 853
Law of God, 150, 508, 526, 533, 538, 566, 576, 696, 774, 966, 984
and natural law, 526, 530, 533
result of antinomianism, 527, 530, 562, 892, 922–923, 924, 926
Afghans, 106, 643
Africa and Africans, 23, 24, 72, 112, 239, 378, 596, 600, 624, 848, 886, 965
agape (Greek), 486
Age of Exploration, 885
agnosticism, 512
agrarianism, 233–234
agriculture, 230, 253, 487, 490, 591, 605, 861, 937, 965, 985
Agrippa, 352
Ahab, 202, 338, 339, 341, 434, 988
Ahmanson, Howard, 104
Ai, 133
AIDS, 15, 407, 486, 523, 755, 795, 841, 920
aion (Greek), 82
Alabama, 111, 174
Alaska, 53, 72, 643
Albania, 111
Albany, New York, 601–602
Albigensians, 683, 687, 715, 743. *see also* Cathari; Gnosticism
alcohol abuse. *see* drug and alcohol abuse
Alexander I, 340, 953
Alfred the Great, 470
aliens, 293–294, 297, 299
ambition as evil, 496–497, 654, 789–792, 963
Ambrose, 379, 397–398
America. *see* United States of America
American Bar Association, 910
American Indians, 132–133, 139, 329, 382, 874–875, 917
American War for Independence, 224, 321–322, 836
Americas, the, 22, 239, 257, 288, 900
Amish, 64
Amos, 135, 235, 427, 454, 457, 589, 643
Anabaptists, 64, 365, 426, 751–752, 994
anarchy
antinomianism results in, 144, 187, 452, 509, 524, 586, 626, 648–650, 654, 664–665

autonomous reason results in, 9
catharsis and, 794
of Christians, 55, 86
education and, 307, 920, 982
failure of church and, 764
family and, 178
insubordination (*see under* authority)
vs. mature self-government, 50, 179–180, 863
Freud's anarchistic *id,* 357
modern threat, 54, 227, 408
and revolution, 54, 187, 209, 248, 452, 458
"rights" and, 985
as social theory, 115, 451–452, 457, 866, 871, 897
free Christian society called "anarchy," 538, 909
Anderson, Walter Truett, 978–980
Andrew of Crete, 780
Andropov, Yuri, 877
angels, 27, 134, 188, 289, 393, 433, 473, 597, 691
Anglicans and Anglicanism, 375, 377, 403, 929
Anglo-Israelism, 717
"animal rights," 29, 40, 121, 581, 743, 744, 745, 798, 916, 997
Anno Domini (A.D.), 435–436
anomia (Greek), 493, 908
Anselm, 31, 129–130, 622, 820
anti-abortion activism. *see under* abortion
Antichrist, 690, 693, 697, 994
anticonstitutionalism, 451. *see also* constitutionalism
Anti-Defamation League, 28
antinomianism, 399, 430–432, 454–459, 460–464, 481, 677, 722
and atonement, 103, 217, 406, 408, 431, 456, 562, 592, 696, 702, 710, 799
and the atonement of Christ, 103, 217, 406, 408, 431, 456, 562, 592, 696, 702, 710, 799
in the church, 395, 406, 525, 566–567
corruption, 83, 381–382
cultural impotency, 93, 311, 404, 432, 540, 697, 746, 783, 841, 920–921, 992 (*see also* church as irrelevant and impotent)
false love of God, 62, 150, 395, 400, 602
grace separated from law, 455, 466, 562
Holy Spirit's "leading," 12, 397
limiting Christ's lordship, 56, 392, 395–400, 432, 441–445, 670–671, 697, 921
origins of,
abstractionism, 401–403, 711–712
with Adam, 200, 486–487
creationism compromised, 432
in Gnosticism, 681–683, 688, 690–692, 695, 698–702, 709–710, 742–746, 922, 924
indifference, 280
rationalism, 620 (*see also* rationalism)
severing Old and New Testaments, 271, 460–464, 698–702, 924
and pietism, 710, 712, 749, 758, 760 (*see also* pietism)
theonomy as historically normative, 294
total obedience to the state, 102–104
unconditional love, 145–147, 153, 399, 407, 485, 486, 491, 501, 538, 712
and dispensationalism, 461–464, 681, 698–702, 699
and Hegelianism, 807
as legalistic, 408, 455–456, 491, 538, 542, 543, 544–547, 553, 599, 614, 705–706, 709, 743–744, 752–753, 799, 802, 807
a main theme in history, 487
and natural law, 430, 526–530, 814
results in the culture, 142, 305–306, 311, 441–445, 464, 491, 502–503, 524, 535, 581, 625–626, 743–744, 802, 982, 984
adultery, 527, 530, 562, 892, 922–923, 924, 926
divorce and counseling, 372, 407, 448, 633, 774 (*see also* adultery)
anarchy, 144, 187, 452, 509, 524, 586, 626, 648–650, 654, 664–665
birth rate, 428
child molestation and abuse, 3–4, 6, 306, 382, 406, 445, 504, 527, 605–606, 734, 798, 799
crime, 110, 155, 430, 445, 519, 526, 546, 581, 733, 798, 848–849, 862, 909, 982

antinomianism
results in the culture *(cont'd.)*
debt, 79, 208, 215–216, 221–222, 258, 485, 709, 806
drug and alcohol abuse, 110, 226, 428, 512, 795, 864
fatherlessness, 180
murder, 5, 34, 444, 584, 658, 744–745, 841, 862
abortion, 281, 428, 431, 445, 503, 533, 570, 571, 658, 783, 802, 848, 913
euthanasia, 795, 802, 848, 916, 997
killing children, 444
suicide, 5, 428, 744, 841
occultism, 428, 472, 734
paganism, 11, 72, 178–179, 503, 734
freedom and paganism, 11–12, 171, 174, 178–179, 274, 277, 503, 625–626, 736–737, 793, 840–841, 889, 890
in intellectualism, 11, 288
problem youth, 73, 226, 305, 538, 581, 583
student movement, 862, 865, 920
reconciliation without restitution, 372–373, 569
sexual crimes and perversions, 110, 311, 381–382, 430–431, 458, 464, 503, 527, 566–567, 584, 799, 841, 865, 924–925
adultery, 527, 530, 562, 892, 922–923, 924, 926
bestiality, 171, 430–431, 890
homosexuality, 11, 171, 237, 280, 307, 381–382, 389, 392, 428, 430–431, 503, 527, 533, 584–585, 688, 709, 783, 799, 802, 865, 892, 924, 926
incest (*see* incest)
molestation of children, 3–4, 6, 306, 382, 406, 445, 504, 527, 605–606, 734, 798, 799
necrophilia, 431
pornography, 40–44, 110, 346, 445
rape, 445, 584
slavery, 6, 392, 471, 539, 597, 734, 798
statism, 102–104, 424, 444–445, 464, 535, 625–626, 802–803, 935, 982, 984–986, 991 (*see also* statism)
theft, 102–103, 207–208, 221, 226, 284, 287, 445, 527, 583, 584, 588, 650, 864–865, 892, 976, 982
natural law, 430, 526–527
sin nature, 500, 646
theological ignorance, 381, 415–416, 468, 483, 513
violence, 583, 733, 744–745, 862
rape, 445, 584
worldwide injustice, 146–147, 457, 458, 501, 519, 548–552, 563–565, 568–572, 584–586, 883
Antiochus, 436
antiwar protest, 332, 591, 593, 640–641. *see also* international relationships, world peace
Apelles, 700
apocalyptic eschatology, 677, 681, 704, 706, 972. *see also* eschatology
apokatastasis (Greek), 769
Apollinaire, Guillaume, 849–850
Apollos, 370
Apostles' Creed, 27, 49, 124, 390, 696, 872, 891
appearances and form replacing reality, 19–20, 190–194, 637–639, 892, 994–997
Aquinas, Thomas, 227, 532, 828, 831
Arabs, 22, 106, 564, 936
architecture, 63–66
church buildings, 378–380, 384, 517, 748, 937, 939
of fast food chains, 238
of statist orders, 378, 519, 860, 990
Arianism, 280, 676–677, 731–734. *see also* Arius of Alexandria
Aristides the Just, 250
aristocracy, 10, 18, 64, 390, 391, 399, 575–576, 651–652, 705, 746, 960–963, 995. *see also* elitist rule
nobile synonymous with *heretic*, 746
aristocracy (etymology), 960
aristos (Greek), 960
Aristotelianism, 129, 303–304, 364, 405, 469, 533, 570, 620, 793–795, 797, 809, 820, 824, 826, 828, 936
Aristotle, 471, 569, 708, 713
catharsis, 793, 795
influence on other philosophers, 79, 405

logic and rationalism, 620, 809, 820, 824, 826, 828 (*see also* rationalism)
natural law, 527, 528, 531–533, 797
statism, 303–304, 570, 936
Article 1. *see under* Constitution of the United States
Article 2. *see under* Constitution of the United States
Arius of Alexandria, 676–677, 722, 731–732. *see also* Arianism
Arizona State University, 43
Armenia and Armenians, 48, 105, 112, 124, 270, 319, 596, 744, 951, 953
Arminianism, 91, 279–282, 311, 347, 366, 375, 377, 397, 442, 533, 737, 756, 767, 818. *see also* free will of man
Arminius, 376
art. *see also* culture
architecture (*see* architecture)
Christian, 63–66, 112, 296, 325, 394, 403, 442–443, 629, 793
music, 270–272
classical, 271, 275, 793
humanistic, 10–11, 13, 14, 32, 48, 68, 88, 117–118, 143, 146, 149, 184, 191, 271, 275, 290, 358–359, 411, 413, 428, 521, 583, 595, 604, 605, 613, 614, 663, 666, 681, 684, 733, 764–765, 793–795, 805, 849, 864, 951, 962, 996
Duchamp, Marcel, 32, 68, 666
literature, 289–290, 583, 802, 805
Artaxerxes, 988
asceticism, 364, 367, 682–683, 705–706, 735, 748, 769, 924. *see also* pietism, perfectionism *vs.* holiness
Asia, ancient, 349, 370, 378
Asia and Asiatics, 45, 47, 99, 106, 112, 124, 239, 257, 368, 370, 407, 596, 624, 885
Asia minor, 24, 378
Asklepios, 470
"assembly" (English translation), 364
Ataturk, Mustafa Kemal, 951
Athanasius, 338, 382
atheism, 56, 430, 457, 472, 489, 507, 511, 526, 530, 601, 609–610, 667, 748, 809, 830, 831, 838, 854–855, 874, 948
Athingani, 683
Atlas, 789
atomistic family, 202–204, 448–449
atonement
by Christ
and antinomianism, 103, 217, 406, 408, 431, 456, 562, 696, 702, 710, 799
beginning of the Kingdom, 55
celebrated in communion, 32–33, 638, 755, 828
covers sin not evil, 499–500
and dominion, 55, 521, 696, 702
and freedom, 103, 217, 333, 500, 546, 696, 778, 873–877, 879
moral regeneration and sanctification, 58, 210, 333, 351, 456, 499–500, 521, 571, 696, 702, 715
necessary for salvation, 85, 103, 217, 304, 408, 431, 546, 562, 622, 819–820
Old Covenant Law, 568, 569, 995
and philosophy, 817, 819–820, 822
and society, 85, 333, 431, 546, 653–655, 873–877, 879
sovereign grace, 85, 388, 412, 653, 736
civil covering, 517, 561, 861
false atonement (*see also* false gospels)
charity and guilt, 36, 244
confessing sins of others, 165, 168, 361, 363
faith in sacrificial rituals, 995
false doctrines of the cross, 736, 777
Karma, 214, 217 (*see also* Karma)
sadomasochism, 61, 406, 408, 778, 879
sinless perfection, 500
and statism, 256
replaced by
Deism, 477
easy-believism and faith in faith, 388, 411, 710
mental therapy, 372
rationalism, 817
"spirituality," 690, 696, 715, 717, 751, 799, 828
Attis cult, 783
Augustine, 31, 129, 367, 470, 622, 784, 840
and Christianity, 687–688, 727, 729, 926, 927
City of God and city of man, 383, 393, 435
and Pelagius, 735–739
and the state, 539–540, 626, 630–631
Augustinianism, 539–540, 626, 630–631, 687–688, 727, 729, 735–739, 784, 840, 926, 927
Augustus, Caesar 100
Aurelius, Marcus, 92, 992

Australia, 72
Austria and Austrians, 299, 764, 903, 933, 934
autarkia (Greek), 416
authority
  Biblical hierarchy, 99–104, 152–153, 186–187, 191, 195–198, 321, 324, 367–368, 396–398, 400, 441–445, 549, 627, 630–632, 636–637, 641–642, 648, 654, 655, 656–659, 704, 962–963, 965 (*see also* covenantalism)
    conditional obedience to men, 152–153, 186–187, 191, 195–197
  in the church (*see* church, authority and discipline)
  in the family (*see* family, authority and headship)
  in humanism, 13, 18–19, 29, 51, 100, 101, 124–125, 152–153, 166, 185–187, 191, 195–198, 203, 365, 395, 397–398, 432, 434, 536–539, 548–552, 582–583, 603, 623–628, 629–639, 651–655, 963
    equalitarianism (*see* equalitarianism)
    strength in numbers, 136–137, 395–400, 413, 509
  insubordination, 143, 144, 187, 306–307, 397, 648–650, 653, 704, 728 (*see also* anarchy)
  and the name of God, 125, 157, 160, 324–328, 944
  and paganism, 178–179, 198, 277 (*see also* paganism, and statism)
  in the state (*see* civil government)
"authority" (various definitions), 656
autocracy and dictatorship, 18, 124, 523, 570, 853, 920. *see also* totalitarianism
"autonomy" (defined), 665, 992
'avah (Hebrew), 493
'aven (Hebrew), 493
Azerbaijan, 105–108

B

"Baal" (meaning), 942, 944
Baal and Baalism, 139, 518, 625, 799, 942, 944
Baal-shalisha, 278
Babel. *see* Tower of Babel
Babylon, 506, 914, 916
Backus, Isaac, 837
Bacon, Francis, 520
Baghdad, 124
Bahá'ís, 111
Bailly, Jean-Sylvain, 650
Balaam, 99–100, 369
Ball, William Bently, 110
bankers and wealth, 881–882. *see also* economy
baptism, 995. *see also* sacraments
  baptismal regeneration, 353–354
  and Baptists, 353, 460
  continuity between Old and New Testaments, 460–464
  creed, 534
  forced baptisms, 271
  and heresy, 698, 699, 705, 781
  infant baptism, 50, 352, 354, 460
  and the Lordship of Christ, 320, 353–354, 390
    citizenship, 348–352
  mode, 353
  into one body, 433 (*see also* church, as the Body of Christ)
  and peace, 457
  validity of, 353–354, 727
Baptists, 134, 347, 353, 460, 509, 652
Bar Kochba revolt, 273
barbarian (etymology), 957
barbarism and rootlessness, 67–70, 72, 117, 143, 162, 226, 239, 248, 258–260, 284, 290, 294–295, 356, 425, 512–513, 579, 581, 606, 723–724, 849, 956. *see also* individualism; society when humanistic
barbarismos (Greek), 957
barbaros (Greek), 957
Barlaam, 157, 767
Barnabas, 629
Barth, Karl, 382, 695, 700, 724, 756, 780
Barthes, Roland, 961, 971–972
basil (meaning), 378
Basil the Macedonian, 379
basilica (meaning), 378, 379
Bastille, 418, 761
Bavaria and Barvarians, 16, 917, 934
Baxter, Richard, 280
Beatles, 765
Becket, Thomas, 551
Beecher, Henry Ward, 366, 777
Beeke, Joel R., 870
"Before Christ" (B.C.), 435–436
Belgium (Ghent), 658
Bell, Daniel, 947
Bellamy, Edward, 285, 965
Berkeley, California, 764
Berkeley, George, 754, 800
Berman v. Parker, 901

bestiality, 171, 430–431, 890
Bible. *see also* Old and New Testaments
the book of the covenant, 154, 454
and oaths, 456, 988
closing the canon, 461
criticism, 371, 396, 420, 469, 470, 566, 620, 684, 722, 749, 779, 816
ignorance of, 31, 91, 149, 294, 373, 387, 388, 412, 413, 415–416, 474, 482, 831, 916
immutability of, 712, 826
infallibility of, 23, 313, 431, 717, 733, 763, 914
interpretation of, 535, 541–542, 544–547, 688, 707
as divided, 460–464, 699–700 (*see also* Old and New Testaments)
fundamental premises, 528
humanistic, 23–24, 83, 150, 382, 396–397, 461, 687, 709, 770, 775, 832, 901–902, 966
mythological character, 16, 401, 686, 797
as "poetic," 478
symbolism, 401–405, 686–688, 692, 700, 754–755, 768, 966–967, 972
key to history, 295, 822, 959, 987–988
Parables of Christ (*see* Parables of Christ)
pietist replacement, 748–749, 872
statist opposition, 310, 344, 542, 564, 583, 614, 733, 839, 936, 972, 988–989
sufficiency of, 528–530, 534, 541–543, 544–547, 610, 620, 621–622, 817
superiority of, 62, 63, 139, 215, 226, 313, 442, 534, 711–712, 765
translations, 23–24, 31–32, 319, 332
dynamic equivalence theory, 23–24
Biblical Law. *see* God's Law
bigotry, 26, 28, 59, 299, 506, 613–616, 850, 896
Billington, James, 864–865
Biological Revolution, 979
birth control, 542, 795
birth rates, 53, 123, 428, 979. *see also* population control
Bishop of Sodor and Man, 497
Bismarck, Otto von, 933
Blacks, 23–24, 25–26, 72, 143, 165, 167, 293–294, 309, 361, 452, 504, 600, 614–615, 885–886
Blake, William, 448, 491, 595, 681, 686, 797, 805, 850, 972, 984
blessings from God
children, 327
and confession of sin, 361, 631, 806
and covenantal faithfulness, 62, 160, 234, 295, 327, 435, 450, 456, 457, 502, 562, 631, 843, 846, 988
civil disobedience, 101
God's Law as a blessing, 236, 549, 571–572
life defeating death, 475, 500, 586, 697 (*see also* resurrection)
the Sabbath, 290, 554, 555, 559, 883
toward peacemakers, 565, 729
in trials, 162, 647
wealth, 241, 244–245, 261–262
work as a blessing, 495
expected despite sinfulness, 109, 138, 145, 186, 198, 222, 235, 328, 382, 562, 781
as framework for understanding history, 290, 463
and God's sovereignty, 492, 545, 846
grace, 412–414
and prayer, 109, 145
Bloomsbury Circle, 892
Blum, Leon, 604
Blumenfeld, Samuel L., 310, 607
Boccaccio, Giovanni, 793, 924, 992
Body of Christ, church as. *see* church, as the Body of Christ
Boehme, Jacob, 681
Bolsheviks, 229–230, 873. *see also* Russian Revolution
Bonaparte, Napoleon, 143, 418, 595, 756, 993
Book of Common Prayer, 271
Booth, William, 113, 366, 367–368
Borden, William Whiting, 555
Borne, Étienne, 667, 830–831
Borromeo, Charles, 204, 412
Bosanquet, Bernard, 570
Boston, Thomas, 851
Boston and Bostonians, 180, 299, 610
Brahmanism, 214
Britain. *see* Great Britain
Brokhin, Yuri, 626
Buchmanism, 731
Buck, Charles, 478, 779
Buckler, Francis William, 826
Buckley, William, 688–689
Buddhism, 111, 214–216, 243–244, 343, 457, 474, 745, 776, 777, 981
Karma, 214–218, 243–244, 555–557, 778 (*see also* Hindus and Hinduism)
Mahayana Buddhism, 683

Buddhism *(cont'd.)*
reincarnation, 214, 215, 244, 373, 555, 778
Buffalo, New York, 605
bugger (etymology), 743
buildings. *see* architecture
Bulgaria, 418
Bulgars, 569
bullying, 112, 597. *see also* abuse; oppression
bureaucracy, government by, 45, 46, 63, 102, 124, 125, 175, 178, 198, 220, 364–365, 366, 379, 501, 518, 549, 565, 588, 635, 638, 657, 836, 852–855, 869, 871, 908, 910, 915, 930–931, 933–935, 941, 952, 954
Burke, Edmund, 419
Burke, Kenneth, 472, 733
Bush, George (Biblical scholar), 634
Bush, George H. W., 46, 48, 293, 564, 975
business. *see also* economy; work
agriculture, 230, 253, 487, 490, 591, 605, 861, 937, 965, 985
agrarianism, 233–234
capitalism (*see* capitalism)
and conservation, 120–122, 937
consumerism, 242–243, 369
corporate giving, 246–248, 869, 879 (*see also* giving and charity)
and covenantal faithfulness, 112, 193, 354, 983
decapitalization, 237–239
economics (*see* economics)
entrepreneurship, 13–14, 198, 881 (*see also* risk)
and envy, 13–14, 238
failure in, 191, 192, 218, 626
family business, 68, 175–176, 198, 264, 265, 318, 462–463, 587–588, 605
Fortune 500 companies, 262–263
free market (*see* Capitalism)
incorporation, 433–437
Industrial Revolution, 241–242
investments, 223, 242, 265, 779, 868, 881
labor, 116, 257, 281, 497
vs. Capital, 91, 208, 228, 229–230, 330, 551, 594 (*see also* Marxism)
dehumanizing workers, 38, 868
insubordination, 144, 587, 649–650
labor despised by aristocrats, 651–652
worker "rights," 220, 551, 587–588, 596, 985
child labor, 314, 734
minimum-wage, 216, 293–294
nepotism, 175–176
slavery (*see* slavery)
Social Security, 223 (*see also* Social Security)
unemployment, 5, 227, 257, 291, 314, 606
unions, 38, 192, 253, 356, 852, 859, 865, 881, 995
"Big Labor," 943
unskilled workers, 59, 310, 314
marketing, 192, 240, 369, 553
monopolies, 53, 881
personal relationships, 38, 868
and pietism, 687, 779
the press as commercial enterprise, 845
and Sabbath rest (*see* Sabbath)
statist control, 116, 229–230, 490, 858, 943, 985 (*see also* economy, statist involvement)
subsidies (*see* subsidies)
success, 37, 77, 557, 880, 881
evil ambition, 496–497, 590, 789–792, 963
tithing (*see* tithing)
wealth (*see* wealth)
Bussell, Frederick William, 71, 736
Buswell, James Oliver Jr., 814–815
Buthelezi, Mangosuthu, 600
Byron, George Gordon, 594, 791, 792
Byzantium and Byzantines, 175, 379, 720, 951

C

Cagney, James, 511
Caiaphas, 269
Cain, 172, 178, 698, 792
Cairo Conference on population, 979
California, 40–41, 72, 101, 109, 137, 298, 587, 628, 929
Berkeley, 764
Concord, 591
Echo Summit, 635
Los Angeles, 605
San Francisco, 764, 862
calling, vision, and vocation, 187–188, 192, 244, 253, 278, 408, 427, 436, 495–498, 508, 518, 602, 766, 789–792
Callistus, 390, 391
Calvin, John, 78, 131, 189, 201–204, 339, 412, 476–477, 481, 496, 622, 688,

736, 739, 751, 808, 809, 817–818, 826
Calvinism, 271, 279–282, 347, 375, 376, 397, 442, 461, 462, 481, 532, 614, 740, 756, 767, 768, 785, 818, 826, 856, 861. *see also* predestination
Cambodia, 265, 496
Cambridge, 45, 271, 279, 375, 403
Campbell, Alexander, 463
Campbellites, 802
Camus, Albert, 669, 913
Canaan, 233, 563–564, 914
Canada and Canadians, 65, 445, 954
cannibalism, 11, 616, 734, 890, 940
Canning, Stratford, 951
"canon" (defined), 534
"canon law," 534–535
canoni (Greek), 534
canonos (Greek), 534
Canute the Great, 941
capitalism (free market), 453, 497, 881, 934. *see also* business; economics
and character, 116
and conservationism, 120–122, 937
fascist façade, 909
free-market idolatry, 600, 854
laissez-faire, 871
opposed by statists, 229–230, 242, 548, 549, 933, 966
progress in history, 71–72, 241–242, 868, 933
and social stability, 224
viewed as source of evil, 37, 79–80, 105, 120, 121–122, 208, 229–230, 242, 356, 548, 592, 594, 794
Capone, Al, 298
Caracalla, 391
Carlyle, Thomas, 419
Carnegie, Andrew, 252
Carnell, E. J., 620, 665, 668, 815, 816, 823
Carpocrates and Carpocratians, 691, 708–714, 922–924. *see also* Gnosticism
Carter, Jimmy, 640, 642, 644, 838
Cartesianism and Descartes, 190, 333, 667, 754–757, 800, 811–813, 821
Cassius, 881, 882
Cassuto, Umberto, 633
caste system, 13, 216, 390–391, 966, 989. *see also* class and social warfare; elitist rule
Castello, Sebastian, 748
castration, 759, 772, 783, 841, 886
Castro, Fidel, 173–174
catechisms
Heidelberg Catechism, 118
systematic theology, 723, 724, 747
teaching ministry of the church, 416, 747
Westminster Larger, 185, 311, 477, 503
Westminster Shorter, 11, 62, 79, 185, 188, 272, 358, 372, 481, 493, 765, 795
youth, 368, 703–704, 841 (*see also* youth)
Cathari or Cathars, 683, 699, 742–746
catharsis, 793–796
"catholic" (etymology and meaning), 390, 392–393
catholicity or universality, 45, 274, 390–394, 441–442, 535, 747–748
statist imitation, 392, 394, 441–442, 445, 535, 747–748
Cato the Younger, 576–577
Cavaliers (in the English Civil War), 651, 652
Cavarnos, Constantine, 767–768
Cavendish, William, 651
"celebrity" (etymology), 996
celebrity (star) system
in the church, 356–357, 367–370, 409–411, 721
in culture, 366, 368–370, 400, 961, 963, 996
in politics, 369–370, 639, 996–997
Celestius, 735, 736
Celts, 297, 917
Cephas, 370
Cerdon, 698
"certification" (etymology), 337, 341
Chalcedon, Council of, 422, 423, 424, 779
Chalcedon Foundation, 137, 248, 277, 310, 369, 607, 626
Chalmers, James, 496
Chalmers, Thomas, 412
Channing, William Ellery, 461, 463
Chardin, Pierre Teilhard de, 677
charis (Greek), 412
charismatic churches, 347, 365, 368–369, 694, 704–705, 748, 767, 872
charity. *see* giving and charity
"charity" (etymology), 412
Charles I, 525, 994
Charles II, 279, 282, 376, 377, 836
Chateaubriand, François-René de, 419
chatha (Hebrew), 493
chayil (Hebrew), 241
Chicago, 298
child molestation. *see* abuse, molestation of children
childbearing, 495, 542, 699, 795, 964. *see also* children

Childe, Vere Gordon, 871
children, 495, 964. *see also* family
abortion (*see* abortion)
adoption, 225, 455
birth certificates, 436
birth control, 542, 795
as a blessing, 327
discipline, 739, 883, 930
education (*see* education, and the family)
failure of parents, 360–361, 490, 588, 592, 600
fatherhood (*see under* family)
fatherlessness and antinomianism, 180
and the future, 327–328, 407, 462–463, 575–576, 580–581, 604, 698, 887, 952
incorrigible sons, 544
inheritance (*see* inheritance)
as innocent, 739
molestation of children (*see under* abuse)
motherhood (*see under* family)
ownership of, 327, 624, 626, 697, 935, 952, 954
weddings, 19, 70
children's liberation movement, 174, 191, 307, 642, 930
China and Chinese, 72, 105, 418, 627, 979
ancient, 125, 285, 288, 290, 950
Chinese revolution, 418, 988
communist (Red) China, 43, 444, 447, 482, 642–643, 776, 837, 918, 929, 948, 953, 965
Chinafication, 125
Chi-Ping, Tung, 948
"Christendom," 284, 408, 434, 461, 681, 744, 778, 887, 888, 895, 958, 959, 988. *see also* society when Christian
Christian responsibility. *see* responsibility of Christians
Christian schools. *see under* education in Christianity
Christian Science (cult), 801, 802
Chrysostom, John, 398
church
as the Body of Christ, 365, 366, 423, 425, 433–437, 691, 774, 828 (*see also* communion, of the saints)
abuse in (*see* abuse, in the church)
catholicity or universality, 45, 274, 390–394, 441–442, 535, 747–748
statist imitation, 392, 394, 441–442, 445, 535, 747–748
continuity through OT and NT, 271, 317–318, 346, 365, 392, 433, 460–464, 467, 494, 524, 755
a corporation, 365, 433–437
corruption of, (*see* church as corrupted)
disunity in, (*see* disunity in the church)
parachurch ministries, 276, 367–368, 437 (*see also* specific organizations)
sacraments, 638, 727, 995–996 (*see also* baptism; communion)
and social order, 7–8, 224, 367–368 (*see also* Lordship of Christ, as foundation of social order and freedom)
jurisdictional boundaries, 276–278, 321, 339, 443, 521, 561–562
liturgy, 270–271, 319, 345, 375–377, 378, 381, 496, 755, 926
music, 270–272, 294, 338, 517, 518
persecution of (*see* persecution of the church)
preaching (*see* preaching)
and the state (*see* religion and state)
through service, 939, 940, 962
tithing (*see* tithing)
use of images, 375, 929
welfare ministry (*see* welfare, private, the church)
to widows and orphans (*see* widows and orphans)
and youth, 277, 368, 494, 539, 658, 703, 841
"church" (meaning), 317
church as corrupted
abuse (*see* abuse, in the church)
bad theology
false antinomies (*see* false antinomies)
heresy (*see* heresy)
hostility towards facts (*see* pietism, anti-intellectual)
hostility towards truth, 361, 464, 512, 957
man-centered faith
masochism, 406, 408, 597 (*see also* masochism)
pietism, 397, 432, 510, 710, 712, 749, 758, 760, 764, 801–802, 897 (*see also* pietism)
purism, 729–730 (*see also* pietism, perfectionism *vs.* holiness)
rationalism, 281–282, 621, 688, 809–810, 814–815, 818, 820, 824, 831
theological ignorance, 373–374, 381, 415–416, 468, 477–478, 483, 513
wealth as evil, 250, 261, 940

clergymen
evil clergy, 527, 670–671, 743, 770, 865
lack of vital preaching, 263, 373–374, 415–416, 477–478
latitudinarianism, 279–282
liberal or compromising clergy, 189, 341, 355, 369–370, 464
as men-servers, 189, 218–219, 373–374, 415–416
"rich clergy," 250, 940
due to antinomianism, 83, 381–382, 461–464, 633, 649, 688 (*see also* antinomianism, in the church)
pride, 703–704, 724, 726–730
esotericism, 401–405, 427, 966–967
overrating man's work, 133, 280, 377, 404, 412, 423, 426–428, 509, 718, 727–730, 736, 740, 745, 749–750, 752, 780, 828, 831, 872, 895, 927–928, 994
promoting humanism (*see also* syncretism)
abortion, 280, 389
anti-church within, 381–383, 395–396, 462 (*see also* heresy)
counseling and psychological heresies, 371–374, 500, 578 (*see also* counseling; psychiatry and psychology)
evolution, 389, 431–432, 688
feminization, 189, 280, 355, 397–398, 402, 688, 801 (*see also* women, role in the church)
guilt-manipulation, 876
homosexuality, 280, 381, 389, 527, 688, 838
idolizing churches, 427, 510
ignoring Christianity, 512–513
liberation theology, 23–24, 85–86, 263, 449, 774
man-centered faith, 282, 373–374, 395–400, 578, 585, 647
modernism, 110, 280, 381, 395–400, 447, 585, 688–689, 764, 831, 957
moral pluralism, 381, 633, 647 (*see also* antinomianism)
pagan syncretism, 138–140, 157, 277, 384–385, 392, 422–424, 426, 434, 461, 626, 703, 722–725, 733, 736–737, 738, 758, 767–770, 793, 887
racism, 22, 90, 271
statism, 110, 341–342, 350, 625, 916
superficiality, 632, 634, 747, 839
compromise for membership, 136–137
"easy believism," 388, 413, 416–417, 509, 615, 701, 757, 763, 790, 805
false confessions, 362
false spirituality, 717–718, 916
forms replacing service to Christ, 14, 134, 194, 367–370, 409–411, 538, 603, 615, 637–638
indifference to the faith, 279–282, 398, 512, 607, 972, 995–996
limiting the Lordship of Christ, 385, 387–389, 408, 442–445, 475, 510, 630, 691, 721, 723, 927
in preaching, 8, 373–374, 415–416
pretending Christians, 16, 114, 193, 235, 249, 280, 397–398, 400, 413, 462, 468, 512, 599, 601, 638, 846
star (celebrity) system, 365–366, 367–370, 409–411, 721
totalitarianism and abuse, 276–278, 537, 545, 838, 876, 927–928, 939, 994 (*see also* abuse, in the church)
church as irrelevant and impotent, 89, 90–91, 93, 113, 146–147, 192–193, 199–200, 265, 278, 279–282, 326–327, 341, 364, 367–370, 373, 376–377, 387–389, 395–400, 403, 419, 420, 427, 432, 443, 503, 510, 513, 520, 571, 615, 625, 639, 692, 693, 697, 701, 707, 710, 737, 747–748, 752, 758–760, 764, 780, 850, 887, 972
and antinomianism, 93, 311, 404, 432, 540, 697, 746, 783, 841, 920–921, 992 (*see also* antinomianism, results in the culture)
and Christian education, 341–342, 346–347
and pietism, 764, 897 (*see also* pietism, results in the culture)
surrender of authority, 442–445
church buildings, 378–380, 384, 517, 748, 937, 939
church government
authority and discipline, 83–84, 87, 100–101, 107, 144, 154, 276–278, 282, 319, 333, 337–342, 365, 394, 395, 396, 427, 430, 534, 631, 632, 641, 642, 704, 705
bureaucratization, 365, 427, 836
courts, 679
of arbitration, 378–380, 384, 534, 782, 945

church government *(cont'd.)*
organization, 281, 317, 364–366, 384, 426, 427, 468, 545, 705, 789, 949
diaconate, 225, 384
majoritarianism, 381
military exemption of clergy, 563
nepotism, 175
totalitarianism and abuse, 276–278, 537, 545, 838, 876, 927–928, 939, 994 (*see also* abuse, in the church)
church history, 276–278, 317–322, 375–377, 388, 425, 434
early church (*see* early church)
medieval church (*see* medieval era, church)
in Rome (*see* Rome)
Church of England, 279–282, 344, 375, 376, 836, 911
Churchill, Winston, 18, 264
Cicero, 275
circumcision, 19, 197, 352, 457, 460, 772, 967
female circumcision, 802
citizenry
abuse of, (*see also* slavery of the masses)
controlled by state, 490, 549, 575, 860, 885, 933, 941, 954, 989
slavery of the masses (*see* slavery of the masses)
youth, 46, 198, 497
murdered by state, 467, 482, 496, 564, 650, 953
opposed by state, 467, 482, 497, 564, 610, 626, 643, 717, 719, 740, 873, 915–916, 934, 972, 992
tortured by state, 177, 210, 568–572, 586, 935
class warfare (*see* class and social warfare)
failure of, 54, 278, 509, 995
will to be god manifest in statism, 261, 659, 852–855, 901–902, 912, 961, 973, 977, 991–992, 995
freedom of, (*see also* freedom)
social contract (*see* social contract theory)
in U.S. Constitution, 848
loyalty to state, 199–200, 274, 303
statism (*see* statism)
voting and elections (*see* voting and elections)
citizenship, 235, 255–256, 348–352, 391, 875
in the Kingdom of God, 254, 274, 393
city life, 287, 557, 605, 901, 915–916. *see also* agrarianism
"City of God," 255–260, 287, 383, 393, 407–408, 435, 977. *see also* society when Christian
civil government, 378–380. *see also* statism
citizenry (*see* citizenry)
decentralization, 48, 172, 193, 994
elections and voting (*see* voting and elections)
establishment of religion (*see under* religion and state)
forms of civil government
aristocracy (*see* aristocracy; elitist rule)
bureaucratic (*see* bureaucracy)
communism (*see* communism)
constitutionalism (*see* constitutionalism)
democracy (*see* democracy)
dictatorship and autocracy, 18, 124, 523, 570, 853, 920 (*see also* totalitarianism)
fascism (*see* fascism)
feudalism, 13, 211, 532, 933, 960, 994
libertarianism, 517, 600
Marxism (*see* Marxism)
monarchy (*see* monarchy)
Muslim governments, 106, 123–125, 952
oligarchy, 901
pluralism, 329–333, 381, 890
republic, 549, 896, 909, 920, 943, 990, 994–995
constitutionalism (*see* constitutionalism)
socialism (*see* socialism)
theocracy or Biblical civil government, 517–522, 845, 862
decentralized, 193
involvement in economics (*see* economy, statist involvement)
jurisdiction, 987–989 (*see also* law)
boundaries, 100–101, 171, 177–178, 338, 443, 452–453, 508, 518, 536, 549, 561–562, 942 (*see also* statism)
capital punishment, 60, 93, 444, 519, 544, 563, 569, 743
courts (*see* courts)
executive, 625 (*see also* specific presidents)

presidential oath of office, 845–846, 988
as institutional, 434
legislatures, 53, 78, 102, 111, 166, 171, 179, 210, 392, 501, 523, 588, 609, 624–625, 639, 844, 852, 890, 892, 899, 910, 930, 961, 981–983 (*see also* specific bodies)
legitimate authority abdicated with statism, 191, 193, 379, 435, 790–791
as ministry of justice, 100, 115, 178, 220, 275, 325, 452, 517, 561, 630–631, 642, 861, 915, 932, 988
to serve the Lord, 326–327, 340, 358, 394, 396, 403, 442–443, 534, 539–540, 631, 973, 988
victims of crime, 803, 915 (*see also* crime)
when minimal, 115, 909
law enforcement (*see* law enforcement)
military (*see* military)
nepotism in, 175
obedience of Christians to, 78, 86, 99–104, 155, 340, 352, 400, 625, 626, 629–639, 728, 837 (*see also* Rome, clash with Christianity)
patriotism, 290, 299, 411, 419, 510
police (*see* law enforcement)
civil rights. *see also* freedom
1964 Civil Rights Act, 838
anarchy and language of rights, 985
catalogue of rights, 251, 584–585, 587–589, 590–593, 648, 984–986
definition of *right,* 985
Civil War (American), 35, 123, 167, 258, 376, 564, 652, 802, 900
class and social warfare, 25–29, 35–39, 54, 91, 105–108, 176, 203, 208–210, 220, 237–239, 240, 249–254, 261–265, 284, 355, 361, 452, 503, 507, 523, 570, 583, 605, 613, 716–717, 875, 938, 945, 953. *see also* Marxism
anti-alien ideology, 233–236
bigotry, 26, 28, 59, 299, 506, 613–616, 850, 896
caste system, 13, 216, 390–391, 966, 989 (*see also* elitist rule)
communication gaps, 18, 30–31, 38, 330, 444
vs. communion of the saints (*see* communion, of the saints)
conflict of interests as essential, 329–333, 356, 444, 461, 481–483, 549, 550, 626, 654–655, 918, 985
elitism (*see* elitist rule)
equalitarianism (*see* equalitarianism)
minorities (*see* minorities)
racism (*see* racism)
classical philosophy and culture. *see also* Greece, ancient; Rome; specific philosophers
abstractionism, 804 (*see also* abstractionism)
the arts, 271, 275, 793
asceticism, 364 (*see also* asceticism)
caste system, 471
and Christianity
clash with Christianity, 45, 273–275, 364, 469–471, 736 (*see also* Rome, clash with Christianity)
influence on Christianity, 364, 401–405, 470, 534–535, 679, 704–705, 731, 776, 922–924 (*see also* Gnosticism)
dualism, 401, 469–470, 822 (*see also* dualism)
externalism, 19
and Gnosticism, 686, 713 (*see also* Gnosticism)
Greece (*see* Greece, ancient)
hedonism, 59
immorality, 503, 575–576
impotency and irrelevancy, 92–93, 156–158
influence on the West, 7, 285, 797, 886
on Christianity, 364, 401–405, 470, 534–535, 679, 704–705, 731, 776, 922–924
mythological characters (*see* specific names)
Rome (*see* Rome)
and statism, 29, 570, 575–577, 888 (*see also* elitist rule, philosopher-kings)
law, 534–535, 569–570
Stoicism, 92, 364, 533, 668, 698, 710, 797, 922, 923
view of god, 467, 469–470, 676–677, 825
view of nature, 531, 533
Clement of Alexandria, 923–924
Clinton, Bill, 904
Coelestius (Celestius), 735, 736, 739
coexistence, 446–450. *see also* society when humanistic
Cold War, 407
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 972

colleges. *see* universities and colleges
common grace, 481, 484, 527, 947
commonwealth
in Christianity, 350
in humanism, 575–576, 908
meaning of the word, 350
Puritan Commonwealth era, 651, 836, 994
communicatio (Latin), 30
communication gaps, 18, 30–31, 38, 330, 444. *see also* class and social warfare
communio (Latin), 30
communion
and communication, 30–34
and community, 30–34, 49–50, 285, 331, 424, 455, 653–655 (*see also* society when Christian)
with God, 32–33, 50, 137, 140, 145, 185, 187, 191–192, 193, 399, 423–424, 450, 455, 478, 491, 509, 578, 607, 653, 654, 690
and humanism, 446, 448, 455, 564, 643 (*see also* society when humanistic)
communion with sin and death, 32, 34
isolation, 30, 34, 604 (*see also* individualism)
pagan communion, 139, 781, 801
sought in a world order, 27, 29, 32, 654–655 (*see also* Great Community)
between light and darkness, 446, 448, 455, 564, 643
meaning and etymology, 30, 49, 423
the sacrament, 30, 376, 637–638, 699, 755, 826, 828, 995, 996
celebration of atonement, 32–33, 638, 653, 755, 828
Roman slander, 226, 940
validity of administration, 354, 727
of the saints, 25–29, 32–33, 37–39, 49–50, 137, 186, 187, 224–225, 283–286, 331, 332, 365, 370, 390, 392, 423–424, 433, 437, 444, 455, 607, 638, 653, 654, 996
communism, 5, 116, 123–125, 136, 173–174, 289, 357, 540, 549, 596, 626, 710, 790, 805, 873, 934, 948. *see also* Marxism
"Better Dead Than Red," 775
communist cults, 744
communist nations (*see* specific nations)
in history, 182, 463, 691, 708–710, 714, 744, 908
community
in Christianity (*see* society when Christian)
in humanism (*see* society when humanistic)
Comte, Auguste, 667, 831, 920
Concord, California, 591
Condorcet, Nicolas de, 908
"confession" (translated), 358
confession of sins
and blessing from God, 361, 631, 806 (*see also* blessings from God)
Christian responsibility, 137, 164–166, 168, 358–359, 371–374, 506–508, 568, 581, 791, 794, 806
of others, 164–166, 168, 285–286, 360–363, 372, 398, 413, 426, 506–507, 546–547, 590–593, 806
confirmation, the rite of, 50, 392–393, 494, 497
conflict of interests. *see under* class and social warfare
Connecticut, 298
conscription (draft), 640–641, 644, 900, 954
conservation (environmentalism)
and business, 120–122, 937
Christian stewardship, 60, 119, 264
humanist and evolutionary, 40–41, 119–122, 143, 331, 798, 915, 916, 937, 979
and statism, 973
U.S. policies, 40–41
conservativism, 4, 5, 15, 18–19, 78, 81, 89, 216, 418–419, 449, 453, 512–513, 526, 601, 625, 688–689, 794, 809–810, 882, 989
documenting evil, 95, 285–286, 472, 474, 504–505, 506
conspiracies, 504–505, 632, 764, 804, 806, 853
Constantine, 270, 367, 378, 379, 534, 726
Constantinople, 319, 856, 951
Constitution of the United States
1st Amendment, 343–347, 436, 837, 839, 843–846, 888, 889–890, 891–892, 901, 941, 945, 982
5th Amendment, 178, 569, 901
9th Amendment, 899
14th Amendment, 848, 899
16th Amendment, 345, 945
18th Amendment, 753
Article 1, 640–641, 899–900
Article 2, 456, 845–846
constitutional nihilism, 892, 895–896, 996
and evolution, 896, 978
faith in, 648, 895, 995–996
feminist equal rights amendment, 355

freedom for individuals, 848
freedom of religion, 109, 749, 890, 891
a hard money document, 900
noninterventionism, 899–902
oath of office, 456, 845–846
Preamble, 141–142, 156
reinterpreted, 542, 546, 896, 899–902, 930
and social contract theory, 451–452 (*see also* social contract theory)
and sovereignty, 321–322, 889, 911–912, 941
constitutionalism, 321, 451, 614, 648, 650, 978, 995
and anticonstitutionalism, 451
nihilism (meaninglessness), 892, 895–896, 996
reinterpretation, 542, 546, 896, 899–902, 930
contextualization, 23–24, 446. *see also* evangelism
continuity of Old and New Testaments. *see* Old and New Testaments
conversation (Biblical English), 350
conversions. *see* evangelism
conviction
of criminals (*see* courts, court procedure)
personal convictions, 124–125, 280, 339–340, 373, 388, 509, 858
Conway, Edward, 651
Conway, Moncure Daniel, 148, 777
Cooley, Charles Horton, 183
Cooper, Gary in *High Noon,* 607
Copernicus, 9, 728
Corinth, 370, 632
corporation, doctrine of, 365–366, 433–437
"corporation" (etymology and meaning), 433
Council of Chalcedon, 422, 423, 424, 779
Council of Nicea, 687
Council of Trent, 534
Council of Whitby, 340, 375
Council on Foreign Relations, 943
counseling, 362–363, 371–374, 407, 416, 474, 500, 518, 773, 774, 785. *see also* discipleship; psychiatry and psychology
counterfeit gospels. *see under* humanism
courts
basilicas, 378–379
and Christianity
church courts (*see under* church government)
churches and the civil court system, 3, 78, 101, 109, 437, 443, 838
civil action by Christians, 86–87, 88, 347 (*see also* politics, and Christian duty)
parents and educators on trial, 78, 111, 138, 152, 327, 346, 347, 420, 463, 611, 739, 857, 930, 932
court procedure
confession, 568–572
conviction, 536, 568–570
jury, 329, 583
lawsuits, 306, 590–593, 853
lawyers, 193, 342, 458, 512, 847, 910–911, 912, 945
plea bargaining, 372, 570
testimony, 177–178, 180, 749
torture, 177, 568–572, 935
and the U.S. Constitution, 346, 542, 844, 848 (*see also* Constitution of the United States)
victims of crime, 803, 848, 849, 915 (*see also* abuse)
crime (*see* crime)
as humanist establishments, 4, 110, 256, 325, 343, 392, 482, 512, 552, 561, 581, 583, 625, 632, 658, 739, 803, 838, 863, 911, 932, 948, 987, 996
justice of God, 553, 571, 733, 839, 862
and law, 445, 458, 625, 891–892, 911, 930, 932, 987 (*see also* law)
God's Law, 193, 536, 539, 568–572, 803, 945 (*see also* God's Law)
U.S. courts, 178, 223, 231, 233, 305, 346, 504, 591, 609, 610, 624, 625, 632, 739, 838, 857, 892, 975 (*see also* Supreme Court)
covenantalism, 145–147, 153–154, 233–236, 339–340, 412, 446–450, 451–453, 454–459, 463, 549, 555–557, 586, 845
and the atonement, 217, 393, 655, 702, 781, 819–820, 883
and blessing (*see* blessings from God, and covenantal faithfulness)
causality, 6, 214–217, 555, 637, 740, 853, 883
judgments (*see* judgment of God)
and oaths, 456, 845–846
Old and New covenants, 393, 433, 460–461, 463, 586 (*see also* Old and New Testaments)
the rainbow, 290, 457
vs. unconditional love, 145–147, 153, 269, 399, 407, 485, 486, 491, 501, 538, 712
unequal yoking, 564 (*see also under* marriage)

covenantalism *(cont'd.)*
view of man, 185, 332, 339–340, 530, 735 (*see also* man in Christian view)
authority, 654–655, 895, 991 (*see also* authority)
community, 226, 244, 433–437, 654, 851 (*see also under* society when Christian)
and dominion, 197, 392, 517, 521, 556, 695 (*see also* Dominion Mandate)
priesthood of all believers, 140 (*see also under* responsibility of Christians)
Cowan, Dr. John, 802
creationism. *see* science, Creationist
credo (Latin), 337
Crescens, 992
Crick, Francis, 912
crime
among youth, 444, 583, 849
and evasion of responsibility, 310, 546
and law, 504, 614, 739, 798, 803, 844, 861, 862, 981–982, 988, 997
antinomianism, 406, 581
court procedure (*see under* courts)
enforcement of, 541, 568–572, 915–916
increasing crime with increasing law, 444, 519, 849, 909, 916
restitution, 569, 571
result of antinomianism, 110, 155, 430, 445, 519, 526, 546, 581, 733, 798, 848–849, 862, 909, 982
victims, 803, 915
Crimean War, 903
criminals
depersonalization of sin, 448, 502, 581, 592, 658
as evolutionary pioneers, 511, 798, 981
trial of, (*see* courts, court procedure)
as victims, 592, 597, 609
criticism of Scripture, 371, 396, 420, 469, 470, 566, 620, 684, 722, 749, 779, 816. *see also* Bible, criticism
Crockett, Davy, 896
Cromwell, Oliver, 152, 279, 375, 376–377, 393, 450, 651, 765, 805, 836, 966
Cronus, 789
Crusades, 886
Cuba, 90, 112, 173–174, 496
cults. *see also* specific cults
attack on, 231
falsely defined, 231, 384
kidnapping and deprogramming, 347
Communistic, 744
fertility cults, 634, 840–841, 966
medieval, 686, 715
mystery religions, 384–385, 392, 432, 470, 781–783
the occult (*see* magic and the occult)
pagan, 713
Roman, 911, 933
culture
antinomianism in, (*see* antinomianism, results in the culture)
architecture (*see* architecture)
Christian
the arts, 63–66, 112, 296, 325, 394, 403, 442–443, 629, 793
growth *vs.* instant gratification, 77–81, 84, 90–91, 92–93, 161–163, 166, 191–192, 495, 547, 985
love of life, 43–44, 60, 62, 191–192, 604–607
music, 270–272
practicality, 64–66, 130, 241, 718
Protestant work ethic, 37, 65–66, 72, 130, 191–192, 224–225, 554, 608
classical (*see* classical philosophy and culture)
humanistic
the arts, 10–11, 13, 14, 32, 48, 68, 88, 117–118, 143, 146, 149, 184, 191, 271, 275, 290, 358–359, 411, 413, 428, 521, 583, 595, 604, 605, 613, 614, 663, 666, 681, 684, 733, 764–765, 793–795, 805, 849, 864, 951, 962, 996
catharsis, 793–796
celebrities, 366, 368–370, 400, 961, 963, 996 (*see also* celebrity (star) system)
classical (*see* classical philosophy and culture)
decadence (*see* decadence)
drug and alcohol abuse (*see* drug and alcohol abuse)
entertainment as central, 7–8, 10, 15, 16, 161–162, 295, 397, 762, 916, 972, 996
spectator sports, 191, 972
and evangelism (*see* evangelism, confronting culture)
indulgence in fashion, 11, 13, 64, 191, 250, 365–366, 580–581, 967

instant gratification *vs.* growth, 53–54, 77–81, 158, 295, 314, 473, 487, 489–492, 597, 607, 706, 850, 884, 973, 981, 985–986
contempt for work, 651–652
literature, 289–290, 583, 802, 805
love of death and suicide (*see under* death)
the press, 180, 344, 844–845, 957
and public schools (*see* education in humanism)
results of rejecting God's Law (*see* antinomianism, results in the culture)
impotency of the church (*see* church as irrelevant and impotent)
and pietism (*see* pietism, results in the culture)
television and radio, 8, 162, 237, 293, 343, 356, 366, 369, 397, 511, 520, 613, 614, 684, 794, 805, 972
Cuomo, Mario, 534, 535
cursings, 234, 450, 456, 457, 463, 484, 499, 502, 536, 549, 562, 571–572, 586, 631, 846, 988. *see also* covenantalism, causality; judgment of God
Curzon and Curzonization, 18–20
Cybele, 703, 841
cynicism
and aggression, 482, 659
and the future, 5, 100
and history, 287
legal, 4
philosophical, 307, 659, 962
political, 356, 977
Cynics, 174, 922, 924, 925, 926, 977, 992
Cyprian, 353

D

daiva (Iranian), 216
Dante, 738, 827
Danube-Dardanelles waterway, 903
Darby, John, 707
Darius of Persia, 911
Darrow, Clarence, 120
Darwin, Charles, 329–330, 482, 489, 533, 621, 677, 723, 732, 798, 799, 801, 871, 896, 978
Origin of Species, 801, 871
Darwinism. *see under* science, humanistic, evolution
Dathan, 698
David, 81, 86, 160, 165, 405, 454, 549, 551, 685, 742, 850
Davis, Jefferson, 652
de Sade, the Marquis. *see* Sade, the Marquis de
deacon (translation), 365
death
the Black Death, 637
destroyed by Christ, 697
as feared, 52–57, 61, 92–94, 761–762, 764
inheritance and death taxes, 3, 69, 183, 212, 250, 263, 861, 945, 976
life after, 244, 615, 782, 791 (*see also* heaven; hell)
love of death and suicide, 58–62, 92, 428, 607, 764–765
and abortion, 40, 42, 43, 60, 93, 283
drug and alcohol abuse, 60, 61, 358, 428, 762, 860
as entertainment, 92, 275, 419
in the French Revolution, 418, 716, 849
and Kenosis, 775
and racism, 482
and Romanticism, 595
"of god," 399, 444, 502–503, 511, 537, 567, 584–586, 625, 666–667, 811, 831
as savior, 716, 744, 974
taxes (*see* taxation, types of taxes, inheritance and death taxes)
"urge to mass destruction," 55, 75, 579, 586, 596, 643, 716–717, 719, 762, 778–779, 801
wages of sin, 145–147, 445, 455, 463, 473, 481, 484, 486, 491, 503, 513–514, 684, 696, 735, 740, 820, 875, 883, 915, 921
Deborah, the song of, 203, 883, 885
debt, 868
and covetousness, 215
encouraged by statists, 485
inflation (*see* inflation)
interest, 207, 223, 262, 485, 542
"lenders not borrowers," 234
loss of property, 69–70
modern lifestyle, 69–70, 258, 262, 264
"moral debt," 208–210
national debt, 220–222
result of antinomianism, 79, 208, 215–216, 221–222, 258, 485, 709, 806
and the Sabbath, 214–218, 554
six-year limit, 215, 554, 966
and slavery, 207–210, 215, 485, 862–863

debt *(cont'd.)*
tithing as debt to God, 209, 861
decadence, 125, 258, 289, 757, 764
consequences of, 54, 305–308, 430, 590, 651–652
effect on America, 65–66, 305–308, 651–652
and entertainment, 7–8
and Roman decline, 4–5, 59
sin as a freedom, 502–503
decentralization, 48, 172, 193, 994
and Christian society, 124, 172, 193, 198, 276–278, 284, 605, 630, 944, 994
Declaration of Independence, 322
"declaration of independence from God," 472, 914
Declaration of Rights of the French Revolution, 848
Deconstructionism *vs.* Reconstruction, 92–93, 142, 756. *see also* death, "urge to mass destruction"
defiled (translated), 708–709
Deism, 281, 376, 460, 462, 477, 533, 950
Delhi Durbar, 18
democracy. *see also* voting and elections
Christianity as antidemocratic, 395–400, 415, 647
as a façade, 107, 136, 252, 369, 530, 943, 972
problems with, 246, 452–453, 457–458, 503, 523, 853, 995
salvation by, 63, 71, 203, 232, 263, 452–453, 518, 641, 896
and social contract theory, 452–453 (*see also* social contract theory)
strength in numbers, 136–137, 395–400, 413, 509
vox populi, vox dei, 404, 415, 530, 907, 929, 961, 977, 995
Democrats, 22, 420, 487, 540, 670, 881, 882, 954, 963
Denham, John, 878
denominations. *see* disunity in the church; specific denominations and groups
depersonalization, 38, 47, 65, 124–125, 174, 199, 204, 214–219, 405, 448, 491, 500–501, 502, 513–514, 557, 570, 578, 605–607, 621, 659, 663, 677–678, 687, 711–712, 732, 808–809, 825, 828, 849, 867–868, 869, 895–898, 965, 976, 979, 996, 997
depravity. *see* original sin and depravity
Depression, the Great, 26, 314, 868
derowr (Hebrew), 840
Descartes and Cartesianism, 190, 333, 667, 754–757, 800, 811–813, 821
destiny (etymology), 216
destroy (translated), 473
determination. *see* predestination
Detroit, 624
deva (Sanskrit), 216
Dewey, John, 4, 125, 257, 307, 309, 399, 415, 584, 647, 806, 815, 959
diaconate, 225, 384. *see also* church government
diakoneo (Greek), 365
diakonia (Greek), 365
dico (Latin), 623
dictatorship and autocracy, 18, 124, 523, 570, 853, 920. *see also* totalitarianism
diet, 692, 699, 700, 709
dietary laws, 692, 700, 709
dike (Greek), 539
Diocletian, 726, 932–933
Diogenes of Sinope, 922
discipleship, 367–370, 373–374, 376–377, 387, 559, 988. *see under* church
antonyms for sin, 493–494
confirmation, 50, 392–393, 494
counseling, 362–363, 371–374, 407, 416, 474, 500, 518, 773, 774, 785
disinvestment, 600, 965–966
dispensationalism, 698–702. *see also* Old and New Testaments
and antinomianism, 461–464, 681, 698–702
discontinuity and heresy, 271, 677, 681–682, 683, 687, 698–702, 705, 708, 709, 711–712, 713, 742–743, 745, 924, 926–927, 972
dispensational premillennialism, 90, 271, 707
early forms, 148
Rapture, 89–91, 95, 385, 388, 406, 420, 524, 763, 972–973
"retreat," 444, 462, 464, 692, 701, 745, 781–783, 802, 850
disunity in the church, 346–347, 375–377, 381–383, 387–389, 420, 424, 426, 442–443, 465–468, 509, 510, 537, 545, 626, 637–638, 644, 679, 687–688, 726–730, 749, 784–786, 790, 835–836, 870, 888, 922, 926, 928
Donatism, 706, 726–730
ecumenicism, 347
heresy (*see* heresy)
separatism, 726–730
Docetism, 690–697, 716. *see also* Gnosticism

domination, 105–108, 249–254, 331, 357, 434, 491, 697, 765, 826, 908. *see also* totalitarianism
vs. Christian Reconstruction (*see* Reconstruction)
Dominion Mandate, 55, 96, 154, 185, 233, 692, 693–697, 744, 765–766, 826, 957
and the atonement, 55, 521, 696, 702
individual responsibility, 766, 895 (*see also* individual responsibility)
as instruments of God's order, 112–113, 115, 117, 125, 147, 188, 322, 357–359, 363, 369, 391, 403, 408, 421, 425–427, 432, 442–443, 466, 487, 491, 492, 503, 521–522, 559, 765–766, 863
and marriage, 197, 199 (*see also* family, basic to social order)
process of growth and maturity, 158, 160, 487
Reconstruction *vs.* domination, 105–108, 125, 195–200, 218, 359, 697, 702 (*see also* Reconstruction)
servant ministry, 107–108, 412–414, 428, 437, 471, 491, 518, 603, 607
Donatism, 706, 726–730
Donatus the Great, 726
Donne, John, 27, 133
Dooyeweerd, Herman, 471
Dorr's Rebellion, 882
Dostoyevsky, Fyodor, 6, 31, 147, 584, 773, 953
Douglas, Ann, 189, 396, 397, 398
Doxology, 269–272
draft (conscription), 640–641, 644, 900, 954
drug and alcohol abuse
addiction, 277, 305, 356, 428, 860, 879, 975–976
as an illness, 609, 975
disillusionment and indifference, 294, 356, 358, 762, 764
escapism, 294, 763–764, 812, 879, 973
lack of communion, 34, 604
suicide and love of death, 60, 61, 358, 428, 762, 860
Joyce's *Ulysses* produced under influence, 796
libertarian view, 600
and the occult, 733
and politics, 582, 610, 973, 975
Prohibition, 490, 753
in public schools, 36, 226, 305–306, 310
result of antinomianism, 110, 226, 428, 512, 795, 864
solving the problem, 277, 305, 310, 973, 975
statism and drugs, 582, 610
tobacco, 542, 547, 590–593
and victim mentality, 356, 358, 362, 609
Dryden, John, 330
dualism, 157, 364, 384–386, 392, 401–405, 422–424, 442, 444, 461, 469–470, 510, 520, 534, 681, 682, 686–687, 690–692, 697, 698–702, 705, 706, 709–712, 715–719, 742–743, 745, 748, 753, 760, 769, 771–775, 800–801, 822, 828, 922–929. *see also* Gnosticism
and pietism (*see* pietism, mysticism and dualism)
Duchamp, Marcel, 32, 68, 666
Dudevant, Aurore, 143
Dukhobors, 716
Duncan, Isadora, 180–181
Duport, Adrien, 764
Durkheim, Emile, 511, 798, 981
Dutch, 134, 344, 621
Dutch Reformed Churches, 134

E

early church
catholicity, 390–392 (*see also* catholicity or universality)
faith and work of, 364–365, 615–616, 748, 781–782
and abortion, 87, 225–226
charity and education, 225, 318–319, 384–385
clash with Rome, 45, 63–64, 99–100, 180, 225–226, 269, 273–275, 277, 318, 321–322, 325, 338, 348–350, 364, 378–380, 390–391, 549–550, 624, 835, 861, 889, 938, 940
problems in
heresy, 401–405, 422, 533, 679, 703
Jewish conflict, 270
teachings of, 239, 273–275, 577, 768
God's Law as fully valid, 524, 534, 569, 748
Easterlin, Richard A., 441
Eastern cults and religions, 157, 723, 724, 760, 768, 777. *see also* specific cults and religions
Eastern Orthodox Church, 318, 365,

Eastern Orthodox Church *(cont'd.)*
401, 426, 543, 578, 736, 756, 767, 768–769, 771, 820, 828, 856
Eastern states of America, 299
East-West Schism, 402, 578
"easy believism," 388, 409, 413, 416–417, 509, 615, 701, 763, 790, 805. *see also* evangelism
Ebionites, 270
ecclesia (Greek), 317
ecclesiology. *see* church
Echo Summit, California, 635
Economic History Association, 441
economics. *see also* economy
Biblical, 207, 396, 403, 443, 472–473, 487, 597, 611, 646
Christian neglect as deadly, 117
crisis, 264, 408, 642, 762, 772, 806, 916
decline, 199
depression, 93, 95, 291, 293–294, 314, 868
free market, 933, 966 (*see also* capitalism)
laissez-faire, 871
libertarian, 600
Industrial Revolution, 241–242
Keynes and Keynesianism, 52, 59, 215, 503, 846, 892
money (*see* money)
poverty, 35–39, 79, 208–209, 225, 240, 241, 261–262, 265, 287–292, 384, 385, 437, 471, 472–473, 501, 560, 588, 605, 740, 764, 771, 773–774, 779, 912, 938, 973, 985
homeless ministry, 413
scarcity, 265, 331, 490, 706
statist involvement (*see under* economy)
wealth (*see* money)
economy. *see also* economics
banking, 881, 943
debt (*see* debt)
inflation (*see* inflation)
interest, 207, 223, 262, 485, 542
business
Industrial Revolution, 241–242
monopolies, 53, 881
technology, 71, 162, 208, 242, 257, 262, 285, 289, 310, 487, 681, 871, 947, 949, 953–954
insurance, 223–224, 501, 591, 606
International, 333
limited liability laws, 868
statist involvement, 47, 53, 116, 158, 192, 208, 258, 263, 265, 490, 519, 521, 578–579, 588, 849, 853, 861, 868, 904, 909, 912, 934, 937, 965 (*see also* communism; socialism)
and conservation, 120–122, 937
consumerism, 242–243, 369
inflation (*see* inflation)
militarization, 229–232
national banks, 264–265
national budget and debt, 220–222
protectionism (mercantilism), 257–258
social planning and money, 208, 212, 221, 250–251, 264–265, 490, 501, 521, 560–561, 571, 624–625, 649, 654, 838, 853, 869, 881, 939, 940–941, 965, 976
state-made famine, 965
subsidies (*see* subsidies)
wealth (*see also* wealth)
debt (*see* debt)
decapitalization and envy, 237–239, 250, 261–265, 463, 985
investments, 223, 242, 265, 779, 868, 881
edah (Hebrew), 317
Eddy, Mary Baker, 801, 802
edify (English), 7–8
education in Christianity
Biblical education, 317–318, 325, 394, 396, 403, 413, 442, 517, 561, 641
Christian schools, 47, 49–51, 55, 78, 81, 101, 111, 112, 138, 152, 171, 176, 177, 183, 260, 277, 303, 309–310, 313–314, 317–322, 324, 337–342, 384, 395, 410, 413, 420, 435, 464, 494, 518, 562, 607, 611, 627–628, 644, 697, 838, 845, 846, 856, 857–859, 861, 862, 932, 934, 938, 939, 944, 954
failure of churchmen, 341–342, 346–347
tax exemption, 838
trials, 3, 78, 111, 152, 177, 349, 420, 611, 614, 628, 653, 843, 932, 972
Christian syncretism, 16, 55, 125, 172, 235, 304, 308, 327–328, 395, 615, 644, 697, 782, 857–859
Christianity in public schools, 109–111, 582–583, 790
and the family, 5, 31, 54, 56–57, 112, 162, 172, 173, 176, 178, 179, 182–183, 199, 277, 318, 327–328, 352, 356, 369, 395, 494, 600, 611, 624, 626, 718, 739, 790, 967

homeschooling, 47, 49–50, 78, 111, 112, 138, 173, 176, 183, 277, 303, 309–310, 314, 420, 464, 611, 858, 859, 861
historically
Christian foundations, 437, 519, 520, 537, 562
literacy and Christianity, 59, 109, 117, 260, 310, 313–314, 319, 624, 932
medieval schools, 129
origins in Levite schools, 226, 317–320, 338, 346
seminaries, 16, 263, 294, 319, 381, 382–383, 410, 599, 622, 666, 680, 689, 740, 785, 810, 838, 856, 967
education in humanism
abstractionism, 403, 824, 967 (*see also* abstractionism)
accreditation and certification, 337–342, 410, 668
public schools, 173, 540, 689, 800, 872, 934, 953
Christianity in schools, 109–111, 582–583, 790
historical revisionism, 287, 289, 956–959
Nazi schools, 933, 934, 957
pagan origins of state education, 303, 327, 624, 625
state boards, 303
subsidies, 943
Turkish schools, 952
vouchers, 857–859
and social order, 4, 31, 34, 46–48, 49–51, 91, 173–174, 183, 226, 231, 252, 304, 309–312, 321, 343, 396, 399, 406, 431–432, 441, 449, 463, 482, 501, 521, 653, 739, 757, 851, 872, 953, 954, 964
anarchy, 307, 920, 982
and drug and alcohol abuse, 36, 226, 305–306, 310
dumbing down the masses, 294–295, 307, 314
ill-equipping students, 5, 15, 50–51, 53–54, 59, 109, 117, 162, 173, 216, 239, 257, 289, 294–295, 307–308, 310–311, 313–314, 360–361, 600, 610, 624, 626, 628, 658, 723–724, 740, 756, 862, 932, 957
morality, 11, 40, 79, 90, 109, 117, 238–239, 257, 305–308, 311, 395, 458, 481, 582–583, 680, 862, 920, 931, 932, 933, 967, 982
replaced by entertainment, 7–8, 10
sex education, 198, 310–311, 803
state ownership of children, 327, 624, 626, 697, 935, 952, 954
messianic education, 46–47, 85, 117, 158, 183, 257, 298, 303–304, 309, 396, 441, 520, 540, 610, 611, 739, 757, 831, 898, 908, 947, 972, 973–974
sex education, 198, 310–311, 803
suicide of students, 5, 305–306, 590
universities and colleges (*see* universities and colleges)
egalitarianism. *see* equalitarianism
ego (Freud), 357
Egypt, 217, 234, 270, 288, 402, 558, 559, 603, 634, 686, 825, 859, 886, 967
Egypt, ancient, 139, 285, 290
Eighteenth Amendment. *see under* Constitution of the United States
Einstein, Albert, 677, 755
ekdikesis (Greek), 258, 539
elderly
conduct of, 607–608
euthanasia (*see* euthanasia)
elders. *see* church government
elect of God, 56, 354, 748, 820
elections and voting. *see* voting and elections
Eli, 354
Elijah, 139, 338, 341
Elisha, 156, 160
elitist rule, 9–12, 18, 30, 39, 41, 45–48, 85, 90, 120–121, 124, 125, 187, 208, 220, 255, 321, 364, 427, 428, 432, 444, 482, 524, 531, 584, 652, 653, 849. *see also* bureaucracy, government by; statism
divine right of kings, 64, 152, 340, 434, 525, 532–533, 548, 630, 911, 938, 995
growth of bureaucracy, 930 (*see also* bureaucracy, government by)
and heresy, 676, 680, 682, 686–688, 705, 708, 709, 781
hypocrisy and myths, 874, 876–877
immunity of rulers from law, 549, 614
pensions, 915
philosopher-kings, 42, 549, 576, 826, 943, 951–952, 954, 960, 964, 965, 972
esotericism, 717
rationalism, 333, 826, 831
and Plato, 42, 549, 576, 826, 943, 960, 964–968

elitist rule *(cont'd.)*
representation of God, 304, 396, 434
star (celebrity) system, 356–357, 367–370, 409–411, 721
Elizabeth I, 911
elohim (Hebrew), 473
Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 419, 461, 688, 757, 792
emotion, 120, 150, 270, 361, 486, 682, 710, 808
emotionalism, 271–272, 395–400, 504, 594–595
cheapening of the church, 8, 395, 397, 398
depersonalization of man, 578
and free will of man, 736
Holy Spirit replaced with emotion, 148, 397, 398, 461, 486, 546
hypocrisy of, 164–166, 237, 395
introspection, 595
vs. maturity, 162–163
and pietism, 282, 402, 747, 748, 751, 758, 799
surface faith, 193
employment. *see* business, labor
enduo (Greek), 408
Engel v. Vitale, 111
Engels, Friedrich, 208
England, 178, 194, 204, 271, 279, 279–282, 299, 340, 376, 403, 430, 444, 497
Gloucester, 468
London, 283, 284
English Civil War, 376, 651
Enlightenment, 595, 804, 919, 950
antinomianism, 432
elitism, 45–46, 594
false liberty, 848–849, 851
humanism of, 10–12, 46, 78–79, 309, 430–431, 511, 588, 658, 889, 943
influence of classical philosophy, 285, 797
natural law, 47–48, 430–431, 524, 532, 594, 851
one-world order, 46–47
and paganism, 284
rationalism and reason, 808, 810, 815, 889, 908 (*see also* rationalism)
statism of, 45–48, 68–69, 430, 452–453, 747–748, 867
view of man, 357, 737
entertainment, 295, 972
in the ancient world, 225, 259, 503
and detachment, 191, 607
and the family, 605, 752
and the future, 289, 762, 764
glorifying sin, 511, 567, 583
and godlessness, 611
the modern aristocracy, 37, 368, 961, 996
replacing education, 7–8, 10, 368, 595
statist control of, 40, 48, 964
entrepreneurship, 13–14, 198, 881. *see also* business
environmentalism. *see also* responsibility in humanism, evading responsibility
abortion and population control, 331
Christian view of evil environment, 473
conservation of the earth (*see* conservation)
counterfeit gospel, 119–122, 309–312, 592–593, 594–598
humanist doctrine of man, 85–86, 90, 143–144, 263, 502, 520
victim mentality, 355–359, 594–598
Adam, 119, 133, 355, 591, 592, 593, 682
blaming conspiracy, 504–505, 632, 764, 804, 806, 853
blaming education, 149, 309, 947, 988
blaming God, 119–120, 472–473, 480, 501, 591, 595, 597, 647, 694, 739
blaming heredity, 557, 978–979
blaming ignorance, 757
blaming Karma, 557
blaming mental illness, 609
blaming parents, 149, 501, 502, 947, 988
blaming Satan, 133, 239, 289, 473, 501, 592, 646, 682, 740
blaming the state, 216, 261, 263, 291, 509, 561, 762, 977, 978–979
confessing sins of others, 164–166, 168, 285–286, 360–363, 372, 398, 413, 426, 506–507, 546–547, 590–593, 806
drug and alcohol abuse, 356, 358, 362, 609
and Gnosticism, 681
and racism, 596
statist promotion of, 357
Epictetus, 826
Epiphanes, 691, 714
Episcopalians, 134, 161
episkope (Greek), 365
equal (Biblical English), 332
equalitarianism (egalitarianism), 11,

36, 249–254, 306–307, 452, 647, 653–654, 704, 964, 966. *see also* class and social warfare
"Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality," 27, 848, 908, 932, 934, 971
and revolution, 186–187
equality, 714, 908, 929, 930–931, 932, 933, 943, 962
equal in Biblical English, 332
Erasmus, 279, 281, 376
ergon (Greek), 784
eros (Greek), 486
Esau, 69, 535, 698
escapism
and addiction, 294, 763–764, 812, 879, 973
and cultural death, 763–764
irrelevancy of Christians (*see* church as irrelevant and impotent; pietism)
salvation as, 702 (*see also* Rapture)
eschatology
Antichrist, 690, 693, 697, 994
apocalyptic, 677, 681, 704, 706, 972
pessimistic, 52–57, 60, 80–84, 89–91, 92–94, 95–96, 215, 216, 218, 357–358, 408, 447, 506, 597, 752, 761–766, 771–775, 777–779, 821, 945
dispensational premillennialism (*see* dispensationalism)
Marxist takeover, 123–125, 289
Rapture, 89–91, 95, 385, 388, 406, 420, 524, 763, 972–973
"retreat," 444, 462, 464, 692, 701, 745, 781–783, 802, 850
postmillennialism (*see* postmillennialism)
Second Coming of Christ, 80–81, 89, 300, 703, 704, 705, 707
superficial progress, 125, 198–199, 216, 256–257
"the whore of Babylon," 506
utopian humanism, 46, 89–91, 108, 121, 124, 155, 184, 193–194, 199, 229, 231–232, 239, 256–257, 285, 357, 400, 429, 447–448, 462, 489, 490, 571, 572, 595, 610, 729, 739, 850, 870–871, 896–897, 908, 915, 918, 953, 965, 972–973, 978–980, 988, 990–991, 993
Esther, 792
eternal security. *see* perseverance of the saints
Ethiopia, 135, 427
Europe and Europeans, 71, 167–168, 172, 174, 177, 215, 239, 241, 257, 263, 264–265, 284, 296, 297, 368, 378, 404, 418, 425, 462, 885. *see also* specific places
euthanasia, 11, 15, 68, 179, 310, 795, 802, 848, 916, 997
evangelism
casting out devils, 474
confronting culture, 23–24, 55–56, 256–257, 284, 329, 367, 379–380, 384–386, 408, 425–427, 431, 442–443, 497, 521–522, 534, 615, 627, 701, 766, 790, 803, 957
contextualization, 23–24, 446
conversion not coercion, 716, 717, 719, 728–729, 837, 869, 897, 962
forced baptisms, 271
peaceful *vs.* violent, 54, 331, 347, 435, 482, 508, 519, 565, 610, 612, 615–616, 630, 654, 671, 717
as a "dialogue," 446
"easy believism," 388, 409, 413, 416–417, 509, 615, 701, 763, 790, 805
cheap forgiveness, 165
syncretism, 731–732, 947, 968
foreign missions, 31, 284, 790
the missionary, 496
funding mission work, 562
the Great Commission, 497, 559, 766
healing and giving ministry, 412–413, 500, 727
liberation theology, 23–24, 85–86, 263, 449, 774
local missions, 31, 72, 367, 379
to aliens, 233–236, 385, 508
replacing glory of God as focus, 748–749, 782
Eve, 119, 200, 355, 486–487, 591–593, 822
"When Adam delved and Eve span…," 652, 656
evil, 499–503. *see also* specific evils
the occult (*see* magic and the occult)
Satan (*see* Satan)
sin (*see* original sin; sin)
evil (meaning), 499
evolution. *see under* science, humanistic
exegesis (Greek), 732
existentialism, 24, 52–57, 58–62, 92, 142, 203, 295, 752, 754–755, 756, 765, 805, 812, 954, 956, 981
exousia (Greek), 627
extraterrestrial life, 714
Ezra, 888, 988

F

Fabian Society of England, 857
Fairfax, Thomas, 651
faith, 387–389
  and action, 166, 188, 367–370, 385, 388, 403, 413, 437, 491, 497, 513–514, 520, 521, 559, 607, 620, 702, 731, 760, 763, 782, 945
  "can move mountains," 789
  Christian faith as authoritative, 400, 637
  false faith, 193, 474–475, 599–603, 667, 711–712, 714, 731, 922, 996
    easy-believism and faith in faith, 388, 411, 615, 710, 763 (*see also* "easy believism")
    emotionalism (*see* emotionalism)
    man-centered faith, 282, 373–374, 395–400, 578, 585, 647
  and hope, 163 (*see also* hope)
  impotency indicated by violence (*see* violence, sign of impotent faith)
  loss of and social crisis, 194, 432, 509, 637
  and pietism, 752
  in protection, 842–845
  too difficult, 473, 597, 646
  trust in God, 553–556, 620, 782–783, 875
    anxiety, 95–96, 118, 554–555, 556–557, 760
    rejoicing, 718, 921
false antinomies, 465–468
false gospels, 95, 114–118, 361, 398, 714, 799
  antinomianism, 46, 79 (*see also* antinomianism)
  the arts, 117–118, 411
  catharsis, 793–796
  church as savior, 896 (*see also* church as corrupted, pride, overrating man's work)
  constitutionalism, 648, 895, 995–996
  death as savior, 716, 744, 974
  deification, 710, 769 (*see also* great chain of being)
  democracy, 63, 71, 203, 232, 263, 452–453, 518, 641, 896 (*see also* democracy)
  easy believism, 388, 409, 413, 416–417, 509, 615, 701, 763, 790, 805
  economic solutions, 116–117, 209, 227
  environmentalism, 119–122, 309–312, 592–593, 594–598 (*see also* environmentalism)
  free market, 854
  immoralism, 802–803
  law as savior, 102, 544–547, 546, 587–589
  love as redeemer, 149, 486, 710, 971
  man finding God, 273–274
  media bias, 601, 613
  messianic education, 46–47, 85, 117, 158, 183, 257, 298, 303–304, 309, 396, 441, 520, 540, 610, 611, 739, 757, 831, 898, 908, 947, 972, 973–974 (*see also* education in humanism)
  psychiatry, 80, 102, 120, 227, 282, 357, 371–374, 402, 444, 484, 500–501, 505, 554–555, 556–557, 570, 578, 592, 597, 609–612, 636, 785, 794–795, 953, 988
  reason, 472–473, 854 (*see also* rationalism)
  revolution, 80, 121, 418–421, 430–431, 482, 716–717, 869, 974
  Romanticism, 79, 594–596, 789, 791, 793, 799, 971
  science as savior, 193–194, 280–281, 285, 739, 908, 973–974, 988 (*see also* science, humanistic)
  social gospel, 282, 298, 392, 538, 791, 897 (*see also* social planning)
  spiritualism, 694, 697, 701–702, 715–716, 718–719, 745, 759–760, 782, 801
  state as savior, 85–88, 89–90, 95, 100, 102, 110, 115, 280–281, 282, 285, 297–298, 394, 483, 487, 489–492, 540, 572, 610–611, 733, 739, 740, 805, 852, 854, 895–898, 944, 948, 971–974, 975–977, 988–989, 990–993 (*see also* statism)
    prisons as reformatories, 490
    worldwide policing, 903–904
  utopianism (*see* utopian humanism)
  works as savior, 252, 269, 455–456, 539–540, 599, 775, 977
family
  authority and headship, 50, 67, 107, 144, 152–153, 171, 172, 179, 185–189, 193, 194, 394, 399, 448, 490, 562, 614, 631, 665, 786, 847
    male abdication, 180, 190–194, 199, 201, 641–642
    in marriage, 185–187, 191, 195–200, 307–308
    patriarchalism, 201–204
  basic to social order, 7–8, 40, 49–50,

65, 67–70, 79–80, 171–174, 175–176, 177–181, 182–183, 187, 188, 197, 198, 211, 333, 399, 508, 640, 641, 701, 802, 863, 867, 895, 945, 959, 979
atomistic, 202–204, 448–449
education (*see* education, and the family)
jurisdictional boundaries, 172, 178, 179, 182, 984
nepotism, 175–176, 587–588
property control, 172–173, 178, 179, 182–183, 198, 211–212, 265, 448, 867–869
trustee family, 202, 233–234, 434, 718, 959
welfare, 173, 178, 179, 182–183, 224, 226
widows and orphans (*see* widows and orphans)
business (*see* business, family business)
children (*see* children)
dysfunction, 356, 406, 407, 443, 588, 886
failure of parents, 360–361, 490, 588, 592, 600
fatherlessness and antinomianism, 180
idolizing, 510
male abdication, 180, 190–194, 199, 201, 641–642
family of God, 455
fatherhood, 50, 154, 172, 176, 178, 187, 192, 194, 198, 240, 251, 360, 362, 463, 575, 620, 624, 631
grandparents, 199, 295, 363, 519
the home, 43–44, 65, 67–68, 112, 162, 191–192, 265, 325, 495–496, 551, 701
hospitality, 203
honoring parents, 154, 165, 176, 187, 198, 543, 545, 562, 631, 790
love and rejoicing, 181, 185–186, 200, 517, 594–595 (*see also* life, love of)
marriage (*see* marriage)
motherhood, 178–179, 187, 198–199, 406, 575, 588, 624, 858, 959
childbearing, 495, 964 (*see also* children)
and paganism, 174, 178–179, 198, 624
supplanted and destroyed, 50, 91, 112, 171–174, 176, 177–181, 182–184, 194, 198–199, 264, 265, 277, 284, 298, 306, 364, 399, 420, 428, 434, 462–463, 485, 521, 538, 552, 566–567, 575–576, 600, 604, 605, 624, 626, 641, 643, 644, 670, 698, 744, 745, 752, 799, 802, 911, 930, 959, 964, 967, 973, 976
statism and social planning, 182–184, 198–199, 364
"voluntary family," 930
transformed by Christ, 112
family business, 68, 175–176, 198, 264, 265, 318, 462–463, 587–588, 605
Far East, 167–168, 776
farming. *see* agriculture
fascism, 18, 59, 78, 111, 496, 548, 570, 606–607, 846, 854, 908, 909, 910, 931, 933, 972, 990
fashion, 11, 13, 64, 191, 250, 365–366, 580–581, 967
fasting, 157, 705, 706, 767
Father God, 148, 157, 210, 450, 466, 486, 524, 561, 612, 676, 677, 682, 690, 691, 698, 704, 720, 723, 731–732, 822, 872. *see also* God
fatherhood, 50, 154, 172, 176, 178, 187, 192, 194, 198, 240, 251, 360, 362, 463, 575, 620, 624, 631. *see also* children; family
fear
of death, 52–57, 61, 92–94, 761–762, 764
of God *vs.* fear of man, 19–20, 50–51, 106, 107, 368, 395–396, 409–411, 449, 484–485, 509–510, 518–519, 877, 967
of God *vs.* fear of Satan, 474–475, 761, 806
the Great Fear, 761–766
and guilt, 878
and statism, 485, 490, 508–509, 546, 564–565, 568–572, 610, 658, 761–766, 877, 935, 953, 990, 992–993
Federalists, 258
fellowship (translation), 424
feminism. *see under* women
Ferdinand II, 271
Ferguson, John, 92–93
Ferraro, Geraldine, 534, 535
fertility cults, 634, 840–841, 966
feudalism, 13, 211, 532, 933, 960, 994
Fifth Amendment. *see under* Constitution of the United States
films, 7, 8, 40, 41, 162, 237, 295, 343–344, 356, 511, 613, 614, 684, 734, 794, 805, 931
Finney, Charles G., 785
First Amendment. *see under* Constitution of the United States

"flesh" (translation and meaning), 759
Florida, 624
Fontane, Theodor, 933
Ford, Henry, 241–242
foreign relations. *see* international relationships
foreigners, 293–294, 297, 299
form and appearances replacing reality, 19–20, 190–194, 637–639, 892, 994–997
fornication, 100, 340, 533, 632, 634, 646, 793, 799, 853
Forrester, W.R., 495, 497
Fortune 500 companies, 262–263
Fourteenth Amendment. *see under* Constitution of the United States
Fox News/Opinion Dynamics poll, 670
France, 61, 64, 108, 430
  French Revolution (*see* French Revolution)
  Paris, 648, 798
  Versailles, 10, 64
Franciscans, 650
Franck, Sebastian, 927
Francke, August Hermann, 751
Frederick II, 761
Frederick III, 842, 843, 844, 846
free market. *see* Capitalism
free will of man, 129, 269, 399, 427, 477, 489, 619, 683, 736, 745, 748, 792
  Arminianism, 91, 279–282, 280, 311, 347, 366, 375, 377, 397, 442, 533, 737, 756, 767, 818
  Pelagianism, 142, 526, 728, 735–737, 738–741, 751
  to sin, 489, 619
  sinless perfectionism, 141–142, 500, 735, 739
freedom
  Christian foundations of, 366, 385, 391–392, 453, 536–539, 544–547, 548–552, 571, 613–614, 630, 746, 839
    in America, 321–322, 343–347, 749, 843, 888, 889, 903–904
    of assembly, 843–844
    of communications, 847, 856
    division of powers, 333, 517–522, 520, 841, 851, 860, 861, 891, 895, 899, 918, 944
    of petition, 843–844
    of the press, 346, 844–845, 856, 929
    of publication, 843–844, 934
    of speech, 346, 613, 843–844, 865, 929, 931
    in the U.S. Constitution, 848
  and the atonement, 103, 217, 333, 500, 546, 696, 778, 873–877, 879
    freedom from sin (*see under* Lordship of Christ)
  Holy Spirit, 204, 333, 414, 546, 870–872, 876
  and the Lordship of Christ (*see* Lordship of Christ, as foundation of social order and freedom)
  privileged communication, 847–848
  a religious principle, 846, 847, 851, 855, 860–863, 936, 980, 989
  as responsibility, 945 (*see also* responsibility of Christians, self-government)
    faith and action, 561
    imposes duty of instruction, 844
    knowing history, 959
    necessitates risk, 490
  theocracy, 517–522, 845, 862
in humanism, 108, 399, 453, 484, 486, 489, 511, 537, 548, 551–552, 567, 571, 595–596, 600, 601, 663–665, 684, 800–803, 826
  anarchy (*see* anarchy)
  catalogue of rights, 251, 584–585, 587–589, 590–593, 648, 984–986
  illusory, 933
  lost due to decline of faith, 846, 847, 901–902, 915, 997
  redefined, 847–851, 853
  as right to sin, 840–841, 846, 864–866, 945
  rights above duty, 984
  slavery preferred to freedom, 846, 852–856, 858–859, 861, 880–881
and paganism, 11–12, 171, 174, 178–179, 274, 277, 503, 625–626, 736–737, 793, 840–841, 889, 890
and risk, 853–855, 880–884, 991
and self-government, 538, 909
freedom (etymology), 840
freedom (meaning), 860, 864
freemasonry and Masons, 649, 874
French Revolution, 564
  Ancién Regime, 183
  evils of, 345, 716

the Great Fear, 761, 764
Reign of Terror, 47, 90, 418, 432, 530, 649, 761
revival of paganism, 284
statism, 550–551, 911–912, 933, 953, 954, 988
Jacobin Club, 90
Louis XVI, 775
Napoleon (*see* Bonaparte, Napoleon)
Paris, 648, 798
philosophy of, 80, 452, 775, 847–848, 849, 907, 985
Enlightenment influence, 46–47, 69, 89–90
"Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity," 27, 848, 908, 932, 934, 971
the Philosophes, 427
revolution as a theater, 10
Robespierre, Maximilien, 90, 650, 729, 761, 793, 794, 796, 992
Freud, Sigmund, 58, 59, 66, 183, 306, 357, 371, 444, 794, 795, 796, 878
Freudianism, 66, 183, 290, 357, 371, 578, 794, 795, 878. *see also* psychiatry and psychology
Freya, 840
Frothingham, Octavius Brooks, 689
Fuller, Margaret, 691
fundamentalism, 78, 87, 149, 318, 527, 537, 756, 772, 780, 813
future. *see also* eschatology
and children, 327–328, 407, 462–463, 575–576, 580–581, 604, 698, 887, 952
and Christian dominion, 181, 187–188, 207, 217–218, 260, 284, 295, 300, 351, 380, 435, 450, 495, 554–556, 558–559, 763
and cynicism, 5, 100
and entertainment, 289, 762, 764
history proceeds from, 296–300
not man-made, 290
trust in God, 555–556, 620, 782–783, 875
anxiety, 95–96, 118, 554–555, 556–557, 760

G

gahal (Hebrew), 317
Gaia (Gaea), 577, 789, 841
Gale, Medora, 298
Galileo, 9
Gambetta, Leon, 932
Gandhi, Mahatma, 773, 774
Gardella, Peter, 801, 802
Garden of Eden, 84, 401, 487, 489, 490, 492, 534, 546, 591, 593, 641, 818, 878, 882, 988
Geist (German), 680, 797, 907, 908
Gelasius I, 861
gender issues
androgyny, 682, 687
homosexuality (*see* homosexuality)
masculinity (*see* masculinity)
transvestism, 536
war of the sexes, 91, 185–189, 203, 330, 356, 507, 540 (*see also* class and social warfare)
women (*see* women)
General Motors, 262–263
Genet, Jean, 290
Geneva, 201–204, 704
genocide, 966. *see also* citizenry, abuse of, murdered by state
Gentiles, 185, 482, 603, 655, 679, 700, 717
George I, 444
Georgia, 101, 642
Georgia (country), 48
German Lutheranism, 25, 747, 751, 758
German Reformed churches, 134
Germany and Germans, 264, 283, 297, 299, 403, 731–732, 873, 897, 903, 917, 933
Nazi Germany (*see* Nazi Germany)
Wittenberg, 842, 843
Gertrude of Helfta, 402
Ghent, 658
Gibbon, Edward, 287–288
Gibeah, 584
Gide, Andre, 604, 849
giving and charity, 35–39, 49, 150, 204, 225, 243–245, 246–248, 250–253, 263, 277, 352, 367–368, 384–386, 412–414, 437, 519, 562, 603, 605–606, 630, 729, 826, 857, 867–869, 879, 897, 938, 939, 942, 985. *see also* welfare
Gloucester, 468
Glykon, 470
gnorizo (Greek), 341
gnosis (Greek), 683, 686, 972
Gnosticism, 675–676, 681–702, 706, 708–714, 716, 827, 923–924, 972. *see also* heresy
and antinomianism, 681–683, 688, 690–692, 695, 698–702, 709–710, 742–746, 922, 924
adultery, 682, 683, 922, 924

Gnosticism *(cont'd.)*
in Augustine, 687–688
Calvin accused of, 688–689
pagan origins, 470, 676, 713, 743
and statism, 689, 691, 708, 972
view of creation, 470
God
as absolute, 422–424, 441–445, 447–448, 449, 477, 711–712
omnipotence, 56, 91, 93, 133, 313, 314, 321, 323, 724, 790, 806, 825, 958, 992
omniscience, 9, 323, 825
fear of
vs. fear of man, 19–20, 50–51, 106, 107, 368, 395–396, 409–411, 449, 484–485, 509–510, 518–519, 877, 967
vs. fear of Satan, 474–475, 761, 806
heretical views of, (*see* heresy, view of God)
holiness of, 134, 157, 159–160, 408, 416, 423, 427, 432, 477, 547, 727, 729, 826, 839
humanistic view (*see also* humanism, view of god)
hatred of God, 602–603, 665, 809, 814
unconditional love, 145–147, 153, 399, 407, 485, 486, 491, 501, 538, 712
immediacy, 291, 683–685, 701
infallibility, 314
judgment of (*see* judgment of God)
as mindful of man, 357–359, 571–572, 693–694
mercy of, 602–603
revelation of Himself, 323–324, 387, 404, 416, 470–471, 528, 633, 634, 676, 722–723, 732, 808, 816, 817, 825–826, 832
ignorance of theology, 381, 415–416, 468, 483, 513
knowable, 416, 722–723, 732
names of, 445, 825–826 (*see also* authority, and the name of God)
self-conscious and personal, 314, 416, 658–659
sovereignty of (*see also* sovereignty of God)
Law of God (*see* Law of God)
not "the Great Bureaucracy," 366
ownership over all things, 233, 417, 656–659, 669, 765, 861, 867–869, 938, 942
providence of, 331, 476–478, 555–557, 855, 871
transcendence, 454, 528, 620, 808, 825–826, 827
discontinuity with creation, 422, 827
incomprehensibility, 825–826
infinite, 323, 416, 528
self-existent, 416, 422, 528
the Trinity, 272, 354, 376, 545, 687, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 742, 746
Father, 148, 157, 210, 450, 466, 486, 524, 561, 612, 676, 677, 682, 690, 691, 698, 704, 720, 723, 731–732, 822, 872
Holy Spirit (*see* Holy Spirit)
one and the many, 403, 422–424, 577–578, 720
Son (*see* Jesus Christ)
unity, 416
unchangeable, 152, 285, 304, 313, 416, 477, 688, 712, 722–724
God's Law. *see* Law of God
Godwin, William, 973
gold and silver standard, 208, 212, 215, 264, 649, 900, 965. *see also* money
Goliards, 683
Gorbachev, Mikhail, 46, 48, 80
Gore, Bishop, 779–780
Gospel
counterfeit gospels (*see* false gospels)
evangelism (*see* evangelism)
grace, and law (*see* grace and law)
Lordship of Christ (*see* Lordship of Christ)
postmillennial hope (*see* postmillennialism)
salvation (*see* salvation)
Gospel of Thomas, 687
Goths, 731–732
grace
common grace, 481, 484, 527, 947
God's judgment as, 478, 491–492, 513
and God's sovereignty, 85, 388, 412, 585–586, 653, 736 (*see also* salvation, and God's sovereignty)
and law, 39, 102–104, 145–147, 148–151, 165, 202, 217, 236, 251–252, 282, 286, 305, 333, 339–340, 351, 387, 406, 407–408, 412–414, 423, 446, 451, 454–459, 465–468, 472, 478, 485, 486, 490, 491–492, 493–498, 526, 539–540, 562, 566–567, 585–586, 599–603,

631–632, 655, 664–665, 684, 696, 699, 712, 726–730, 733, 735, 736, 785
Graham, Billy, 735, 785
Gratian, 531, 533
Gray, Patricia Bellew, 590
Great Britain, 18–19, 89, 165, 264, 418, 996
  the Crown, 434, 551, 836
  Parliament, 279, 321
great chain of being, 108, 404, 422–424, 467, 532, 577, 713, 716, 721, 767, 767–768, 815, 827–829
Great Commission, 497, 559, 766. *see also* evangelism
"Great Community," 27, 28, 29, 257, 458, 610, 954, 959. *see also* society when humanistic
Great Depression, 26, 314, 868
Greece, ancient
  arts, 271, 793
  death of, 52, 289
  ethics of, 174, 945
  language of, 578, 758, 957
  law, 569, 571
    natural law, 526, 528, 531, 532, 797
  medicine, 132
  philosophy (*see also* classical philosophy and culture)
    abstraction, 822, 966
    and humanism, 763
    influence on religion, 469, 621, 676, 677, 679, 681, 700, 759, 769, 923
    influence on the West, 22, 471
    and knowledge, 804
    and music, 271
    natural law, 526, 528, 531, 532, 797
    in opposition to the Bible, 711
    rationalism, 800, 803, 825–826, 827–828 (*see also* rationalism)
    and statism, 152, 570, 860, 992
    Stoicism, 92, 364, 533, 668, 698, 710, 797, 922, 923
  religion, 64, 467, 470, 770, 781, 789
  slavery in, 885
  and statism, 29, 152, 570, 860, 992
Greece, modern, 390, 471
Greek Church. *see* Eastern Orthodox Church
Green, Thomas Hill, 570
Gregory of Nyssa, 401–402, 403, 405, 676, 687, 692, 700, 768, 769, 770
Gregory the Great, 471
Gregory VII (Hildebrand), 270
Grotius, 376
Grove City College case, 857
GRU (Soviet intelligence), 881
Guatemala, 165
Gurnall, William, 403
Guyon (Madame), 758, 775
Gypsies, 934

H

Hades, 530
Hadrian, 711, 713
Haecker, Theodore, 992
hairesis (Greek), 816
Halevi, Jehuda, 270
hamartia (Greek), 493
Hamburger, Michael, 114
Hannah, 328, 354
Hansen, George, 941
happiness and joy, 44, 66, 200, 218, 285, 289, 295, 349, 352, 430, 506, 595, 602, 746, 748, 795, 840, 921, 923, 948, 965, 973. *see also* blessings from God
harems, 125, 462, 463
harmony of interests, 330. *see also* society when Christian
Hartshorne, Charles, 677
Harvard, 45, 410, 461, 951
Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, 755
health and medicine
  abortion and medical research, 607 (*see also* abortion)
  and antinomianism, 464
  Church's responsibility in, 284, 338, 384, 385, 413, 437, 471, 517, 520, 782, 859, 938
  destructive habits, 58–59, 60, 590–592, 752, 975–976
  drug and alcohol abuse as illness, 609, 975
  illness as result of evil, 473, 499, 501, 875
  medical model, 373, 975
  organ transplants, 734
  in paganism, 132–133
  and personal detachment, 604–608
  psychological, 373, 556–557, 570, 609, 794–795 (*see also* psychiatry and psychology)
  and salvation, 597

health and medicine *(cont'd.)*
sin as healthy, 42–43, 60
and statism, 171, 226, 325, 490, 606, 782, 853
synthetic foods, 241–242
tobacco, 542, 590–593
heaven, 33, 130, 138, 166, 350, 393, 448, 578, 608, 615, 647, 664, 684, 782, 855, 882–883
Hebrews, 272, 456, 460, 463, 551, 554, 558, 577, 700, 861. *see also* Israel; Jews
Hecate, 789
hedonism, 59
Heer, Friedrich, 9, 746
Hegel and Hegelianism, 46, 148, 261, 332–333, 403–404, 428, 434–435, 461, 502, 550, 561, 570, 584, 625, 630, 637, 659, 667, 680, 681, 688, 754, 797, 800–803, 805, 806–807, 812, 815, 821, 829, 830, 888, 907, 918, 929, 939, 972
Heidelberg Catechism, 118
Helios, 789
hell, 27, 33, 153, 399, 400, 408, 413, 432, 445, 448, 467, 491, 492, 578, 639, 647, 664, 684, 698, 782, 792, 827, 855, 882–883, 934, 990, 993
Henry V, 15–16, 194
Henry VIII, 340, 344, 468, 938, 939
Herbert, George, 495
Hercules, 275, 994
heresy, 83, 189, 347, 353–354, 362, 364, 383, 385, 392–393, 422, 461–462, 465–468, 491, 534, 621. *see also* specific heresies
abstractionism and dualism, 715–719, 742–743, 760, 769, 922–929, 966 (*see also* dualism)
addressed in Scripture, 675
and baptism (*see* baptism)
countering, 675, 712
dividing Old and New Testaments, 271, 677, 681–682, 683, 687, 698–702, 705, 708, 709, 711–712, 713, 742–743, 745, 924, 926–927, 972
esotericism and elitism, 676, 680, 682, 686–688, 705, 708, 709, 781
Gnosticism (*see* Gnosticism)
metempsychosis, 743
mystery religion, 721, 781–783
process theology, 677–678, 680, 683, 686–689, 704–705, 801, 807, 815, 832, 926–927
spirit of, 675–680, 711–712, 716–719, 720, 722, 723, 724, 738, 757, 769, 775, 816–818, 870
syncretism, 675, 769–770
trials, 679
universal salvation, 687, 769
view of God, 682, 698–699, 759
beyond being, 682
deity of Christ, 676, 708, 716, 720–721, 722, 731, 733, 742, 768–769, 771–775, 777, 779–780 (*see also* Docetism)
the Father, 676
the Holy Spirit, 677, 870–872
modalism, 720, 722–725
the Trinity, 676, 720, 724, 742
view of man, 682, 708, 758
heresy (meaning), 757
Hermeticism, 683
Herodias, Mallarme, 290
Hessians, 917
hierarchy. *see* authority
hierateia (Greek), 365
Higher Life (Keswick) Movement, 368, 802
Hilary of Poitiers, 688
Hildebrand (Gregory VII), 270
Hillel the Elder, 318
Hindus and Hinduism, 26, 243–244, 555, 556–557, 683, 745, 759, 776, 981
Karma, 214–218, 243–244, 555–557, 778 (*see also* Buddhism)
Hispanics, 904
histemi (Greek), 577
historical revisionism, 46, 232, 284, 287–292, 293–295, 297, 319, 329, 403–404, 418, 469, 537, 607, 842, 888, 938, 950–951, 957, 958
in public schools, 287, 289, 956–959
history, 902. *see also* The History Index
antinomianism a main theme, 487
a long tale of exploitation, 653, 985
celebration of, 32
communism in history, 182, 463, 691, 708–710, 714, 744, 908
and cynicism, 287
of education (*see* education in Christianity, historically)
frameworks for understanding,
Bible as key to, 295, 822, 959, 987–988
Biblical view, 295, 403, 413, 435–436, 485, 487, 822, 918, 958, 959
culmination of, 82, 100 (*see also* postmillennialism)

God's blessings, 290, 463
God's sovereignty, 300, 555
past proceeds from the future, 296–300
past-bound focus, 124, 214–219, 244, 296–300, 357, 555, 881
borrowing virtue from, 168, 296, 299, 997
rejection of, 31, 46, 54, 67–70, 80, 120, 143, 199, 272, 287–292, 293–295, 306, 391, 404, 451, 706, 712, 745, 749, 755, 762, 822–824, 825, 828, 830, 907, 956–959
due to disappointment in, 285
myth preferred to truth, 293–295, 297, 712
by perfectionists, 143–144
revisionism, 46, 232, 284, 287–292, 293–295, 297, 319, 329, 403–404, 418, 469, 537, 607, 842, 888, 938, 950–951, 957, 958
stewarding heritage, 251–254, 262, 271–272, 289, 294, 295, 318, 380, 391, 425
Hitler, Adolf, 19, 22, 46, 432, 482, 596, 613, 761, 781, 897, 904, 916, 977
Hodge, A.A., 449
Hodge, Charles, 152, 195–196
Hoffding, Harald, 658
holiness
Christian, 125, 156–160, 193, 202, 325, 339–340, 373, 399, 408, 416, 553–557, 559, 644–645, 694–695, 752, 760, 795–796, 921, 949
of God (*see* God, holiness of)
vs. perfectionism, 141–144, 156–160, 217, 443, 466, 500, 538, 543, 706, 726–727, 728, 744, 752–753, 759, 802, 949 (*see also* legalism)
Hollanders, 299, 958
Hollings, Ernest F., 837–838
Holmes Jr., Oliver Wendell, 4, 5, 895, 977, 996, 997
holos (Greek), 390
Holy Roman Empire, 434, 889, 939, 994
Holy Spirit
contempt for, 238, 684
blasphemy against, 42–43
denial of, 545
gift of God, 352
and liberty, 204, 333, 414, 546, 870–872, 876
and Lordship of Christ, 350, 423, 473, 592, 603, 702
Pentecost gifts, 704–705
potency of, 39, 44, 56, 87, 96, 134, 332, 403, 414, 508, 615–616
and unity, 365
and heresy, 677, 870–872
experience *vs.* wisdom of, 703–704
false leading and antinomianism, 12, 397
replaced with human emotion, 148, 397, 461, 486, 546 (*see also* emotionalism)
replaced with human power, 610, 785
home life, 43–44, 65, 67–68, 112, 162, 191–192, 265, 325, 495–496, 551, 701. *see also* family
homeless ministry, 413
Homer, 758, 759
homeschooling. *see under* education
homosexuality, 15, 34, 36, 38, 248, 324, 343, 407, 448, 512, 523, 580, 606, 625–626, 728, 764, 790, 795, 839
and antinomianism, 11, 171, 237, 280, 307, 381–382, 389, 392, 428, 430–431, 503, 527, 533, 584–585, 688, 709, 783, 799, 802, 865, 892, 924, 926
and God's Law, 534, 566
inversion of values, 283, 307, 340, 411, 420, 572, 668, 719, 743, 848, 853, 930
of Plato, 667, 719
promoted by church, 280, 381, 389, 527, 688, 838
promoted by state, 552, 916, 979, 987
honoring parents, 154, 165, 176, 187, 198, 543, 545, 562, 631, 790. *see also* children; family
Hooper, John, 468
Hoover, Herbert, 453
hope, 43, 86, 96, 100, 163, 188, 197, 443–444, 492, 559, 602, 704, 732, 759, 997
of Christian triumph (*see* postmillennialism)
of humanist triumph (*see* utopian humanism)
Horace, 89
Horus, 781
Hosea, 995
hospitality, 203
hubris (Greek), 791
Hugo, Victor, 971
Hugo Grotius, 378
Huguenots, 255, 764
humanism. *see also* philosophy, humanistic
authority doctrine (*see* authority, in humanism)

humanism *(cont'd.)*
in the church (*see* church as corrupted, promoting humanism)
classical humanism (*see* classical philosophy and culture)
immorality of, (*see* immorality of humanism; morality in humanism)
progress, 125, 198–199, 216, 256–257
religion of, (*see also* heresy)
blessing expected despite sinfulness, 109, 138, 145, 186, 198, 222, 235, 328, 382, 562, 781
false gospels (*see* false gospels)
Karma, 214–218, 243–244, 555–557, 778
man as god (*see under* man in humanistic view)
statism (*see* statism)
utopianism (*see* utopian humanism)
and responsibility (*see* responsibility in humanism)
in society (*see* society when humanistic)
view of god, 382, 395–400, 403–404, 417, 422, 427–428, 441–445, 469, 625, 633, 666–667, 722, 724, 754, 778, 811, 813, 815, 817, 819, 824, 828–829, 830–832, 831
agnosticism, 512
atheism, 56, 430, 457, 472, 489, 507, 511, 526, 530, 601, 609–610, 667, 748, 809, 830, 831, 838, 854–855, 874, 948
depersonalization, 405, 491, 621, 711–712, 732, 825, 828 (*see also* depersonalization)
chance as god, 274–275
Deism, 462, 477, 950
God as limiting concept, 621
great chain of being, 108, 404, 422–424, 467, 532, 577, 713, 716, 721, 767–768, 815, 827–829
hatred for God, 602–603, 643, 914
death of god, 399, 444, 502–503, 511, 537, 567, 584–586, 625, 666–667, 811, 831
hatred of Creation, 69
hatred of God's Law, 11, 120, 174, 306, 418, 430–432, 526 (*see also* antinomianism)
persecution of Christians (*see* persecution of the church)
impotent, 776
limited, 633–634
love as god, 148–151
subject to human reason, 529, 633, 665 (*see also* rationalism)
view of man (*see* man in humanistic view)
Hume, David, 190, 668, 754, 800, 815, 821
Huntford, Roland, 935, 953, 954
Hunyadi, 950
hupo (Greek), 577
hurt (meaning), 848
Huxley, Aldous, 285
Huxley, Francis, 580
hypocrisy. *see* responsibility in humanism, evading responsibility, dishonesty
hypocrisy (etymology), 599
hypokrites (Greek), 599
hypostasis (Greek), 577, 578

I

id (Freud), 357
Ignatius, 349, 392, 690, 691, 692, 693
Illinois, 657
images in the church, 375, 929
immaturity, 161–162, 190–194, 472–473, 494, 580–581, 595, 764, 775
immigration, 233–236, 293–294, 297, 299
immorality of humanism, 281, 295, 472, 526, 889–892, 930–931. *see also* antinomianism
and culture (*see* antinomianism, results in the culture)
evading responsibility (*see under* responsibility in humanism)
and moral relativism, 446–448 (*see also* morality in humanism)
and public schools, 11, 40, 79, 90, 109, 117, 238–239, 257, 305–308, 311, 395, 458, 481, 582–583, 680, 862, 920, 931, 932, 933, 967, 982 (*see also* education in humanism)
sexual immorality (*see* sexual crimes and perversions)
statist promotion of sin, 930–931, 945
abortion, 552, 839, 916, 931, 965, 979 (*see also* abortion)
euthanasia, 916
homosexuality, 552, 916, 979, 987
victim mentality, 357
incarnation, 403, 408, 422–424, 428, 469–471, 482, 635, 667, 676, 690–692, 693–697, 699–700, 706,

717, 721, 732, 742, 767, 797, 801, 822, 828, 980
incest, 182, 306, 511, 512, 526, 615, 853, 890
result of antinomianism, 430, 445, 526, 744, 802, 853, 890
sexual abuse (*see* abuse)
income tax. *see under* taxation, types of taxes
incorporation, doctrine of, 365–366, 433–437
Independent denominations, 994
India, 29, 161, 548, 596
India, ancient, 261, 285, 288, 290, 686
individual responsibility. *see* responsibility in humanism; responsibility of Christians
individualism
and barbarism, 54 (*see also* barbarism and rootlessness)
destruction of family and community, 50, 67–70, 178–180, 485, 604–608, 641, 701, 752–753, 802, 812, 964
destruction of the church, 398, 419, 608, 752–753, 922
and egoism, 593–594, 996
elitism, 962, 966
and evasion of responsibility, 15, 43, 203, 583, 606, 608, 641, 647, 802, 812
and immediacy, 684
isolation, 27, 31, 33, 187, 289, 604, 605, 701
and moral relativism, 458
Indonesia, 72
Industrial Revolution, 241–242
infallibility of Scripture, 23, 313, 717, 733, 763
infant baptism. *see under* baptism
inflation, 58, 67, 93, 207, 212, 215, 221, 258, 263, 264, 284, 291, 501, 553, 554, 638, 772, 779, 806
inheritance, 65, 67–70, 164, 173, 176, 178, 179, 198, 224, 240, 249–254, 264, 295, 363, 434, 462–463, 581
inheritance and death taxes, 3, 69, 183, 212, 250, 263, 861, 945, 976
iniquity, 326. *see also* sin
Inquisition, 271, 443
insane asylums, 610–611
insanity (meaning), 612
instant gratification *vs.* growth, 53–54, 77–81, 158, 295, 314, 473, 487, 489–492, 597, 607, 706, 850, 884, 973, 981, 985–986
insubordination, 143, 144, 187, 306–307, 397, 648–650, 653, 704, 728. *see also* anarchy
insurance, 223–224, 501, 591, 606
insurance, "Gospel" as merely, 31, 83, 406, 976
intellectualism, 11, 288, 512, 968. *see also* abstractionism; rationalism
interest (financial), 207, 223, 262, 485, 542
Internal Revenue Service, 540, 562, 625, 632, 838, 845, 852, 889, 941
international relationships, 43, 46, 105–108, 146–147, 191, 209, 331–332, 407, 446, 448, 449, 454–455, 496, 563–565, 612, 642–643, 947
Council on Foreign Relations, 943
foreign aid, 248, 258, 264–265, 643–644, 773, 779, 948
immigration, 293–294, 297, 299
isolationism *vs.* interventionism, 899–902, 903–904
vs. nationalism, 917–918
one world order, 32, 46, 106–108, 124, 147, 183–184, 914, 917–918, 943
United Nations, 441–442
world peace, 117, 183, 226, 331, 565, 695, 948 (*see also* postmillennialism; society when Christian)
interpretation of Scripture. *see* Bible, interpretation of
interventionism. *see* international relationships
investments, 223, 242, 265, 779, 868, 881
Iran and Iranians, 106, 111, 124, 643
Ireland and Irish, 25, 297, 367, 368, 596, 836, 961, 994
Irenaeus, 534, 709–710, 711, 923
Irish church, 284, 296, 367
Ironside, Harry, 949
Isaac, 69
Isaiah, 158–159, 327, 549, 653, 963
Ishmael, 69
Isis-Horus mystery religion, 781
Islam (Mohammedans), 105–108, 111, 123–125, 167–168, 332, 343, 683, 724, 744, 745, 886, 952, 981
Mohammed, 19, 332, 724, 935–936
Mohammedan law, 919
Muslim revolution, 123–125
Sufism, 683
isolationism *vs.* interventionism. *see under* international relationships
isolationist policy (meaning), 903
isos (Greek), 332
Israel. *see also* Jews
Anglo-Israelism, 717
Church as "Israel of God," 269–272, 433 (*see also* Old and New Testaments, continuity of the church)

Israel *(cont'd.)*
as Covenant People, 233–234, 433, 559, 568, 603
Jacob, 69, 234
modern, 936
Old Testament Israel, 233–234, 433, 458, 474, 493, 549, 558, 559, 564, 568, 641, 642, 825, 826, 858–859, 860–861 (*see also* Old and New Testaments)
Italian Fascist Party, 18, 19
Italy and Italians, 19, 299, 361, 746, 886

J

Jackson, Andrew, 900
Jacob, 69, 234
Jacobin Club, 90
James, 145, 406, 467, 615, 731, 841, 946
James, Henry, Sr., 993
James, William, 415
James I, 152, 436, 532, 572
James II, 321
Jamestown, 651–652
Janizaries, 952, 954
Japan, 71, 72, 165, 596, 901, 904, 917
Japheth, 914
Jefferson, Thomas, 115, 258, 462, 542, 962–963, 985
Jehoshaphat, 338
Jeremiah, 149, 995
Jerome, 367, 928
Jerusalem, 269–270, 277, 349, 364, 365, 888, 995
erroneous doctrines, 153, 682, 705, 707, 756
fall of, 517, 558
"the Heavenly Jerusalem," 393, 433
Jesuit Order, 47, 532
Jesus Christ. *see also* Lordship of Christ
atonement of, 103, 408, 651–655, 696, 710, 715, 717, 736, 751, 755, 777–778, 817, 819–820, 822, 879
Author of all of Scripture, 385
church as Body (*see* church, as the Body of Christ)
ending ceremonial law, 317 (*see also* Old and New Testaments)
ending predictive prophecy, 338
false versions of, 417, 691, 693, 708, 709, 711, 712, 713–714, 716, 720–721, 723, 731, 732, 742, 743, 759, 801
God's Passover lamb, 967
historical life, 300, 403–404, 409, 412, 467, 486, 507–508, 646, 721
prayer made in His name, 134
proof of the love of God, 118
resurrection of, 696–697, 756, 803, 823 (*see also* resurrection)
as second Adam, 654, 695, 879, 959, 986
two natures united, 422–423
Jews, 28, 90, 176, 361, 390, 434, 469, 471, 482, 494, 497, 507, 508, 551, 681, 686, 765, 919, 936, 988. *see also* Israel
Anglo-Israelism, 717
anti-Semitism, 26, 168, 271, 298, 460, 506, 512, 578–579, 596, 613, 614, 698–700, 708, 709, 711, 713, 848, 886, 933, 934
fall of Jerusalem, 270, 517
Gnostic Jews, 711
Jewish Christians, 269–272
Jewish-Roman War, 269, 273, 364, 889
Judaism (*see* Judaism)
Judaism and Christianity, 269–272, 392–393
Judaizers (*see* Judaizers)
Orthodox Jews, 979
"spiritual Semitism," 271
Joachim and Joachimites, 148, 677, 705, 722–723, 870, 926
Job, 94, 144, 613, 646–647, 729, 730, 795
John, 469, 690, 692, 697, 773, 822
John the Baptist, 742
Johnson, Lyndon B., 331–332, 973
Johnson, Paul, 910
Johnson, Samuel, 175, 176, 295
Johnstown, Pennsylvania, 519
Jones, Jim (and the People's Temple), 627–628, 937
Jones, William, 991
Jonson, Ben, 572
Joseph II, 933
Josephus, 318
Joshua, 133, 218, 358, 405, 568, 955
Jowett, John Henry, 218
joy. *see* happiness and joy
Joyce, James, 796
jubilee, 233, 554, 840, 862–863
Judah, 69
Judaism, 541, 579, 675, 885. *see also* Jews
Judaizers, 540
Judas, 225
Judea, 238, 269, 364, 409, 560, 772, 889
Judeans, 269, 378

judging, 193, 279–282, 308, 426, 613–616, 664, 726–730, 985
judgment of God, 349, 363, 397, 846, 876
begins in the house of God, 639, 766, 770
cleansing and disinheritance, 67, 68, 72, 82–84, 100, 104, 112–113, 135, 216, 234, 235, 236, 252, 262, 327, 337, 366, 373–374, 381–383, 385, 407–408, 456, 458, 513–514, 562, 639, 692, 750, 757, 861
forthcoming judgment, 6, 12, 44, 70, 79, 93, 147, 227, 248, 260, 265, 292, 311–312, 327, 381–383, 400, 408, 420–421, 449, 458, 491–492, 642, 734, 762–763, 803, 805, 916, 963, 993
as grace, 478, 491–492, 513
Last Judgment, 82, 100, 209–210, 571, 583, 839
patient forbearance, 39
and statism, 873, 997
"Supreme Court of the universe," 571
wages of sin is death, 145–147, 445, 455, 463, 473, 481, 484, 486, 491, 503, 513–514, 684, 696, 735, 740, 820, 875, 883, 915, 921
witness of Christians, 379, 393
Julian of Eclanum, 737
Julianus Pomerius, 188
Jupiter, 467, 629
jurisdiction (etymology), 623
jus (Latin), 623
justice
and law, 178, 524, 583, 954, 989, 991 (*see also* law)
"social justice" (*see* class and social warfare; Marxism)
and the sovereignty of God, 39, 62, 563, 571, 583, 698, 699, 883, 913, 963, 989
atonement of Christ (*see* atonement, by Christ)
Christian duty, 44, 58, 188
Lordship of Christ (*see* Lordship of Christ, as foundation of social order and freedom)
and the state, 100, 932, 954, 971 (*see also* civil government, jurisdiction; courts)
antinomianism and worldwide injustice, 146–147, 457, 458, 501, 519, 548–552, 563–565, 568–572, 584–586, 883
defined by the elite, 967–968
equality *vs.* justice, 714
lost in humanism, 13, 87, 114, 399, 524, 571, 583, 647, 861, 883–884, 910, 913, 954, 997
vengeance, 259–260, 539, 984
justice (English), 258, 524
justification. *see* atonement, of Christ
Justin Martyr, 270, 383, 992

K

Kabbalah and Kabbalism, 676, 681, 686. *see also* Gnosticism
Kansas, Wichita, 237
Kant and Kantianism, 333, 584, 585, 666, 754, 800, 804–805, 806, 811–812, 821, 823, 929
Kantorowicz, Ernst H., 434
kardia (Greek), 758
Karma, 214–218, 243–244, 555–557, 778. *see also* Buddhism; Hindus and Hinduism
kata (Greek), 390
katharsis (Greek), 793
Kaufmann, Walter, 288, 502, 523, 910, 913
Kennedy, Edward, 534, 600
Kennedy, John F., 331–332, 947, 949, 973
kenosis, 716, 768–769, 771–775, 776–780
Keswick (Higher Life) Movement, 368, 802
Keynes and Keynesian economics, 52, 59, 215, 503, 846, 892
KGB, 107, 614, 848
Khlysty, 772
Khosroes Anosharvan II, 182
Kidd, B. J., 691
Kierkegaard, Søren, 681
Kimhi, Joseph, 765
King, Martin Luther, Jr., 143
King, Rodney, 293
King Phillip's War, 329
Kingdom of God, 390–394. *see also* Lordship of Christ
begins with redemption, 55, 449–450, 518, 654
and Christian duty, 50, 112–113, 137–139, 142, 157, 159, 166, 188, 373, 488, 521, 559, 603, 707, 730, 945, 985 (*see also* Reconstruction)
as the common good, 39, 244
conflict with the kingdom of man, 593, 654
covenant citizenship, 348–352, 654 (*see also* society when Christian)
decentralized and missionary, 124, 436, 508

Kingdom of God *(cont'd.)*
progress through history, 78, 80–81, 82–84, 93–94, 172, 260, 262, 616, 695, 730, 745, 782 (*see also* postmillennialism)
superior to all states, 63–64, 109, 274, 378–380, 623–628, 928, 942, 945
Kinsey Reports, 36, 799
Kirk, Edward Norris, 601–603
koinonoi (Greek), 423–424
König, J. L., 771
Korah, 698
Korea, 72
kosmos (Greek), 82
Kozol, Jonathan, 59, 117
kratia (Greek), 960
Kreiner, Sol, 600
Kuehnelt-Leddihn, Erik von, 22, 481
Kulaks, 210, 497
kurios (Greek), 354
Kurios Kaisar (Greek), 350
Kuyper, Abraham, 851
Kwan-Yin, 148, 777 (Chinese mythology)

L

labor. *see under* business; business
labour (in translation), 495
Lanberg, Karl Adam von, 615
land tax. *see under* taxation, types of taxes
Laodiceans, 513
Las Vegas, 242
Latin (Western) Christianity, 402, 426, 578
latitudinarianism, 279–282
Laud, William, 375–376, 836
Laurel and Hardy, 8
Lavrov, Peter, 208–210
law, 523–525
Christian view, 171–172, 178, 378–380, 396, 527, 549, 623–628, 695, 910, 919
common law, 891
as foundation of society, 39, 47–48, 102, 111, 406, 451–453, 454–459, 457, 481, 523–524, 548–552, 583, 607, 631, 637, 649, 745, 981, 984
as higher order, 907, 934, 985
necessarily moral, 343–344, 919–921, 981, 991
and sovereignty of God, 935
theonomy, 294, 523, 526–530, 542, 665, 722, 985, 992
classical, 534–535, 569–570
and crime, 448, 502, 504, 541, 592, 597, 609, 614, 658, 739, 803, 844, 861, 981–982, 988, 997 (*see also* crime)
accidents, 132–133
increasing crime with increasing law, 849
law enforcement (*see* law enforcement)
outlaws, 255
restitution, 569, 571
as higher order, 910
humanistic and statist, 113, 166, 343, 430–432, 457, 470, 472, 526–530, 625, 646–647, 740
autonomy, 527–530, 612, 663–665, 800–803, 847–851, 901–902, 908, 910, 948, 982, 988, 992
vs. God's Law, 102–103, 189, 207, 325, 337–342, 378–380, 399, 415–417, 428–429, 430–432, 441–445, 446–450, 451–453, 455, 466, 523–525, 531–535, 536, 538–539, 548–552, 568–572, 583, 584–586, 637, 644, 649, 656–657, 658, 860–861, 909, 935, 954–955, 982, 985–986
defined by the state, 46, 48, 115, 171–175, 179, 258, 265, 321, 325, 378–380, 431–432, 446, 452–453, 457, 458, 464, 519, 523, 526, 548, 623–628, 643, 802, 844–845, 907, 932–936
in paganism, 171–172, 534–535, 550, 570
and emergencies, 103, 519, 564
legal positivism, 4, 583, 844, 852–853, 920
prohibition, 490, 753
public *vs.* private realm, 171–174, 534, 577, 839, 888–892, 934
regulations, 179, 263, 485, 490, 552, 587–589, 635, 909, 935
gun-control, 158, 490
increasing crime with increasing law, 849
public policy, 929–931
Shinto law, 919
as transient, 451–453, 649–650, 899–902, 911–912, 997
ad hoc laws, 981–983, 990, 993

false laws, 524
immunity of elite, 549
as respecter of persons, 106, 535, 551, 614, 985
as a social contract, 48, 451–453, 458, 550, 907, 991
social planning replacing law, 263, 910, 912–913, 954, 967–968
vox populi, vox dei, 907, 961, 977, 995 (*see also* democracy)
lawmakers, 550, 907, 919–921, 928, 938, 982
natural law, 47, 48, 401–402, 430–432, 461, 513, 524, 526–530, 531–535, 797
law (defined), 649, 920
law (etymology), 919
law (meaning), 911
Law, John, 208
law enforcement, 51, 115, 258, 293, 305, 342, 547, 644, 862, 915–916, 930, 963
Law of God
antinomianism (*see* antinomianism)
as a blessing, 236, 549
dietary laws, 692, 700, 709
fundamental premises, 167, 177–178, 189, 193, 246, 252, 333, 339–340, 403, 454–458, 493–498, 500–501, 508, 510, 519, 523–525, 538, 544–545, 553, 566–567, 568, 665, 709, 712, 840–841, 966
inferences, 541–543, 544–547
limits man, 536–540, 556
as "natural law," 531–532
Ten Commandments, 468, 530, 535, 582, 601, 629, 631, 670, 709, 710
1st commandment, 632, 823
idolatry, 134, 264, 382, 387, 426–427, 428, 445–450, 510, 518, 620, 625, 633, 819, 824, 854, 872
loving God totally, 416
sovereignty of God, 941
2nd commandment, 629–634, 684
images in the church, 375, 929
3rd commandment, 631, 633
blasphemy, 42–43, 133, 538
God's Name, 323–328, 601
4th commandment
Sabbath observance, 217, 290–291, 457, 553–557, 558, 883, 966 (*see also* Sabbath)
5th commandment, 631
financial support of parents, 543
honoring father and mother, 165, 176, 198, 224, 545, 562
obedience conditional, 154, 187
6th commandment, 60, 508, 523, 562, 583, 984 (*see also* murder)
7th commandment, 508, 562, 566, 984 (*see also* sexual crimes and perversions)
adultery, 150, 508, 526, 533, 538, 566, 576, 696, 774, 966, 984
fornication, 533, 984
homosexuality, 534, 566
monogamy, 890
protection of the family, 984
8th commandment
defined, 60
land ownership in Israel, 233–234
property, 984
theft forbidden by God's Law, 452, 508, 553, 583, 664, 966, 984 (*see also* theft)
vandalism, 588
9th commandment
false witness, 372, 467, 508, 588, 966
manipulation, 465, 467, 542
political lies, 600
reputation, 252
10th commandment
covetousness, 631
debt, 215
envy, 237–239, 240, 241, 249–254, 945
the heart, 508
Decalogue forgotten, 468
theonomy, 294, 523, 526–530, 542, 665, 722, 985, 992
lawyers, 193, 342, 458, 512, 847, 910–911, 912, 945
legalism. *see also* Pharisees and Phariseeism
and antinomianism, 408, 455–456, 491, 538, 542, 543, 544–547, 553, 599, 614, 705–706, 709, 743–744, 752–753, 799, 802, 807
perfection *vs.* holiness, 141–144, 156–160, 217, 443, 466, 500, 538, 543, 706, 726–727, 728, 744, 752–753, 759, 802, 949
legislatures, 53, 78, 102, 111, 166, 171, 179, 210, 392, 501, 523, 588, 609, 624–625, 639, 844, 852, 890, 892, 899, 910, 930, 961, 981–983. *see also* specific bodies

Leigh, Benjamin Watkins, 451–452
Lenin, Vladimir, 105, 107, 121, 123, 208, 230–232, 649, 716, 865, 873, 965, 972
Lennon, John, 638
Lent, 282
Leo the Great, 423
Leon, Daniel de, 121
Levellers, 994
Lever, Thomas, 938
Levite schools, 226, 317–320, 338, 346, 859, 895
Levites, 278, 317, 319, 338, 561, 640, 859, 861, 895
"Christian Levites," 384
Lewis, C. S., 15, 639
liability, 132, 215, 590–591, 609, 868, 988
Liber, 840–841
liberation theology, 23–24, 85–86, 263, 449, 774
libertarianism, 517, 600
liberty (meaning), 860
"Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality," 27, 848, 908, 932, 934, 971
Liberty Bell, 863
Library of Congress, 865
Libya, 496
licensure, 436, 753, 861. *see also* social planning
Lidbom, Carl, 954
life. *see also* reality
after death, 244, 615, 782, 791 (*see also* heaven; hell)
in Christ, 8, 17, 33, 56, 114, 162–163, 210, 275, 289, 290–292, 305, 351, 377, 380, 382, 408, 435–436, 474–475, 538, 775, 820, 896, 949, 959 (*see also* salvation)
defeating death, 475, 500, 586, 697 (*see also* postmillennialism; resurrection)
eternal life, 58, 145, 147, 499, 696, 759
Lord of life, 17, 34, 43, 58, 62, 108, 428, 765, 772 (*see also* Lordship of Christ)
love of, 43–44, 60, 62, 191–192, 604–607
meaning of (*see* Lordship of Christ, provides meaning to life)
sanctity of, 60, 121, 178–179, 252, 563, 575–579, 607, 984, 996–997 (*see also* murder)
Lin Piao, 909–910
Lincoln, Abraham, 365–366
Lindner, Robert M., 849
literacy and Christianity. *see under* education
literature, 289–290, 583, 802, 805
liturgy in the church, 270–271, 319, 345, 375–377, 378, 381, 496, 755, 926
Livy, 283
Lloyd George, David, 221
local missions. *see under* evangelism
localism, 917–918
Locke, John, 79, 520, 737, 867, 869, 991
Lofton, John, 311, 420, 534
London, 283, 284
Long, Edward V., 941
Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth, 148–151
Lord (meaning), 349
Lordship of Christ, 15, 17, 24, 27–29, 32–34, 39, 43, 44, 50, 55–57, 62, 66, 69, 72–73, 85–86, 96, 99–104, 454–458, 486, 506, 773. *see also* Jesus Christ
and Christian duty, 188, 204, 207, 210, 218–219, 244–245, 248, 254, 275, 285, 297, 319, 322, 325, 327, 337–342, 346, 351, 357, 359, 367–370, 378–380, 384–386, 389, 399, 400, 403, 405, 408, 417, 421, 429, 437, 464, 488, 491, 495, 497, 499–500, 507, 518, 562, 615, 621–622, 692, 696–697, 702, 707, 746, 749, 760, 763, 765, 777, 782, 792, 869, 898, 986 (*see also* individual responsibility, Christian)
as comprehensive, 112–113, 114, 157, 189, 210, 281–282, 285, 324–328, 349, 354, 358, 379, 385, 390, 393, 396, 403, 408, 441–445, 456–457, 497, 510, 520, 527, 534, 536, 540, 563, 601, 623–628, 629–639, 669, 701, 748, 806, 850, 922, 931, 942 (*see also* God, sovereignty of, ownership over all things)
destruction of death, 697
and evangelism (*see* evangelism, the Great Commission)
as foundation of social order and freedom, 3–6, 9–12, 108, 110–113, 145, 149, 157, 172–173, 174, 178, 180, 184, 186–187, 189, 194, 198, 203, 226, 227–228, 281–282, 283–286, 308, 309–312, 318, 332, 333, 384–386, 397, 406, 427, 431, 445, 449–450, 451, 453, 463, 464, 509, 524, 534, 566–567, 650, 655, 659, 853, 862, 869, 872, 890–891, 912, 921, 974, 985–986 (*see also* freedom; law)

and freedom from sin, 165, 188, 203, 210, 213, 217, 227–228, 252, 255, 274, 332, 333, 340, 359, 372, 387–388, 411, 412, 424, 427, 431, 432, 435, 445, 446, 456, 473, 481, 483, 486–487, 495, 499–500, 505, 518, 538–539, 546, 558–559, 561, 585, 588–589, 592, 598, 682–683, 696, 738, 853, 869, 873, 877, 879, 887, 896, 991
myth of neutrality, 383, 443, 520, 529, 536, 602, 737, 922–931, 942
opposed by the church
antinomianism, 56, 392, 395–400, 432, 441–445, 670–671, 697, 921
provides meaning to life, 114, 162–163, 289, 290–292, 377, 380, 382, 435–436, 959
as purely spiritual, 699–700 (*see also* pietism)
Los Angeles, 293, 605, 976
Louis XIV, 10–11, 64, 601, 960
Louis XVI, 775
love, 634, 761, 764
commanded by God, 37, 385, 607
for God, 254, 485, 556, 603, 631, 773, 804
antinomian false love of God, 62, 147, 150, 154, 280, 395, 400, 466–467, 486, 602, 712, 928
love of Christ, 43, 159, 189, 210, 339
love of God's Law, 157, 189, 460, 496
obedience as love, 159, 497, 508, 630, 921, 935
God's love, 450, 510, 603, 683, 691, 699, 702, 752, 763
Christ as proof of, 118, 185, 188, 470–471, 694, 879
"God is love," 387
in heresy, 460, 711, 776, 778, 780, 922–923, 926
"era of love," 677, 705, 723
love as an idol, 148–151, 244, 486, 670, 710, 971
of life, 43–44, 60, 62, 604–605
of children and family, 107, 180, 185, 197, 198, 456, 594, 670, 883
of others, 37, 159, 188, 189, 207, 217, 225, 253, 340, 486, 497, 508, 603
of enemies, 202
false trust in human nature, 158
"hate the sin, love the sinner," 500–501, 774
"love for people, hatred for mankind," 588
of the poor, 265
of the state, 392, 411, 989
unconditional love, 145–147, 153, 155, 399, 407, 485, 486, 491, 712
ungodly love
false love in the church, 538, 679
love of corruption, 341
love of elitism and power, 473, 654, 965, 966
love of guilt, 878
love of money, 211–213, 240–241, 413, 642
love of offensiveness, 356
love of slavery, 846, 953
love of two masters, 785
sexuality and promiscuity as love, 174, 182, 184, 290, 486, 575, 594–595, 719, 795, 799, 940
Lowell, James Russell, 491
loyalty to the state, 199–200, 274, 303. *see also* citizenry
Lucaris, Cyril, 856
Lucian of Samosata, 470
Lucifer, 792, 827. *see also* Satan
Ludwig of Bavaria, 16
Lukacs, John, 457, 912
luo (Greek), 473
Luther, Martin, 179, 477, 495–496, 688, 736, 751, 761, 784, 842, 843, 844, 846
Lutheranism, 313, 747, 751, 758, 771, 784, 838, 842, 929
Lycurgus of Sparta, 575–576, 577
Lynch, James J., 604
Lystra, 629

M

Machiavelli, 963
mafia, 626, 631
magic and the occult
and antinomianism, 428, 472, 733–734
control without work, 92, 472–473, 487, 973–974
and drug abuse, 733
medicine men, 132–133
and prayer, 138–140
preceding judgment, 763
and Romanticism, 594
Satanism, 614, 733–734, 794 (*see also* satanism)
witchcraft hysteria, 740
Magna Carta, 551
Mailer, Norman, 290
Maimonides, 470

Malaysia, 72
man
institutional, 434–435, 446, 508, 521–522, 538, 544, 728, 990
as limited, 49, 441, 489–492, 521, 536–540, 544, 546, 620, 789–792, 813, 817, 823–824, 828, 851, 941, 964
relationships defined, 457
society (*see* society when Christian; society when humanistic)
man in Christian view
covenantal, 185, 339–340, 735 (*see also* covenantalism)
created in image of God, 21–22, 28, 36–39, 62, 111, 174, 185, 189, 251, 304, 331, 357, 431, 473, 508, 533, 571, 577, 622, 625, 684, 757, 765–766, 816, 826, 827, 828, 848, 876, 926, 948, 979, 980
enmity with God, 602–603, 947 (*see also* original sin)
evil environment, 473
freedom of the individual, 189, 492 (*see also* freedom, Christian foundations of)
responsibility of, (*see* responsibility of Christians)
self-respect, 508
totalitarian by nature, 544–547, 600, 881, 928, 995 (*see also* authority, in humanism)
man in humanistic view
redefined by man, 185–189, 199, 303–304, 357
classical view, 41–42
evolutionary, 21–22, 34, 38, 80, 120, 252, 288, 306, 332, 357, 371–374, 482, 570–571, 575–579, 614
depersonalization, 570, 578, 606–607, 849, 965, 976, 979 (*see also* depersonalization)
extinction of mankind, 447
freedom of, (*see* freedom, in humanism)
fundamental goodness of man, 107, 142, 184, 232, 309–312, 357, 482, 532, 594–598, 778, 802, 830, 896, 929, 961, 965
heretical view, 682, 708, 758 (*see also* Gnosticism)
man as god, 46, 63, 64, 78–79, 100, 121, 382, 395–400, 414, 419, 426–427, 445, 520, 533–534, 537, 550, 556–557, 679–680, 710, 754–755, 785, 791, 806, 812, 814, 824, 829, 832, 849, 884 (*see also* original sin)
and dualism, 800–801 (*see also* dualism)
great chain of being, 108, 404, 422–424, 467, 532, 577, 713, 716, 721, 767–768, 827–829
incarnation of man, 404, 933, 980
incarnation of the general will, 929, 931
lust for respectability, 409–411
reason as sovereign (*see* rationalism)
redefining words, 847
totalitarian by nature, 544–547, 600, 881, 928, 995
as measure of all things, 922
as political animal, 303–304, 490, 575–579, 826, 896, 920
the elite, 461, 676, 680, 682, 686–688, 705, 708, 709, 781
as tools of the elite, 471, 490, 652, 697, 876, 877, 953, 964, 965, 978
psychology (*see* psychiatry and psychology)
rationalistic, 131, 813, 826 (*see also* rationalism)
Enlightenment view, 357, 737
responsibility of, (*see* responsibility in humanism)
Romantic view, 142–143, 208–209, 511 (*see also* Romanticism)
as a victim (*see* environmentalism)
Manichaeanism, 491, 675, 687, 715–719, 742, 744, 759. *see also* Gnosticism
Dukhobors, 716
manipulative people, 772, 874. *see also* politics, manipulation
Manley, Seon, 358
Mann, Horace, 117, 257, 298, 309, 313, 610, 739
Mao Tse-tung, 447
Marcion and Marcionism, 271, 682, 691, 698–702
Marcosian Creed, 732
Marcuse, Herbert, 795
Marlborough, 444
marriage
abuse of husbands, 874, 878
abuse of wives, 54–55, 196, 201, 202, 362, 406, 407, 507, 575, 576, 577, 605–606, 773, 774 (*see also* women, and abuse)
across classes, 390
adultery (*see* adultery)
authority and headship, 185–187, 191, 195–200, 307–308

centrality of the woman, 195–200
confessing sins of spouse, 507
divorce, 153, 179–180, 201, 406, 448
and counseling, 362–363, 372–373, 407, 448, 633, 774
and dominion, 197, 199
at early age, 314
homosexual marriages, 448
invalid due to unfaithful clergyman, 354, 727
love and rejoicing, 181, 185–186, 200, 594–595
and military exemption, 563, 640
one flesh, 187, 196–198
polygamy, 890
harems, 125, 462, 463
and sex, 182, 275, 508, 566–567, 624, 701, 926
in Christian marriage, 186, 657, 696, 698, 706, 743, 744, 745, 748, 802
spousal testimony, 177–178
and statism, 182–184, 521, 987
unequal yoking, 446, 448–449, 454–456, 564, 644
United States vs. Reynolds, 890
as unspiritual, 698, 706, 718, 744, 745, 769
"voluntary family," 930
Mars, 100
Mars Hill, 349
Marshall, John, 542
Marten, Henry, 994–995
martyrs. *see* persecution of the church
Marx, Karl, 35, 86, 121, 208, 263, 265, 419, 428, 446, 467, 524, 531, 575, 578–579, 583, 584, 594, 716, 754, 796, 801, 806, 849, 867, 871, 908, 951, 964
Marxism, 518, 550, 771, 854, 903, 943, 947, 953
as an enslaving force, 43, 95, 106, 123–124, 230, 265, 452, 524, 570, 610–611, 717, 846, 847, 935
class partialities, 551–552, 985
class warfare (*see* class and social warfare)
communism (*see* communism)
destruction of families, 462
dictatorship of the proletariat, 446, 570, 635, 929
idolatry, 428
mass murders, 112, 210, 283, 482, 496, 570, 641, 961
perpetual class conflict, 333
philosophy of, 4, 23, 38, 90, 209, 263, 356, 446, 447–448, 578, 607, 635, 776, 803, 880, 910, 917, 918, 956–957 (*see also* class and social warfare)
religious persecution, 112
socialism (*see* socialism)
Mary (mother of Jesus), 630, 691, 781, 801
Mary, Queen of England, 271, 468
Maryland, Baltimore, 461
masculinity, 185–189, 190–194, 202, 397, 398, 578, 580–581, 582, 641–642, 703, 773
castration, 759, 772, 783, 841, 886
masochism, 406, 408, 596, 597, 774, 778, 779, 879. *see also* kenosis; sadomasochism
Masons and freemasonry, 649, 874
Massachusetts, 600, 868
Boston, 610
Massillon, Jean-Baptiste, 601, 603
Mather, Cotton, 181, 718, 837
maturity
Christian responsibility (*see* responsibility of Christians)
and growth, 109, 141–144, 161–163, 185, 191–192, 295, 399, 427, 466, 472–473, 494–495, 703–704, 706–707, 775, 785, 791, 792, 949
vs. instant gratification, 77–81, 84, 90–91, 92–93, 161–163, 166, 191–192, 495, 547, 985
holiness *vs.* perfectionism, 141–144, 156–160, 217, 443, 466, 500, 538, 543, 706, 726–727, 728, 744, 752–753, 759, 802, 949
immaturity, 161–162, 190–194, 472–473, 494, 580–581, 595, 764, 775 (*see also* responsibility in humanism, evading responsibility)
Maximilla, 703, 704
Mazdakites, 182, 462, 463, 652, 714, 744
McClellan, James, 891
McGuire, Al, 51
McKnight, Stephen A., 992
meaninglessness, 290, 306, 583, 585, 697, 763, 793, 849, 997
among youth, 356, 360–361, 428, 665, 762, 764–765
constitutional, 892, 895–896, 996
and evolutionary humanism, 59, 120, 611, 732, 755, 763, 871, 922, 925, 968
media bias and propaganda, 5, 14, 17, 48, 111–112, 209, 293, 418, 600–601, 845, 892, 931, 940–941, 957
Medicare, 68, 258

medicine. *see* health and medicine
medieval era, 637, 656, 658, 707, 715, 728, 742, 751, 762, 801, 886, 908
  church, 15–16, 109, 137, 157, 161, 171, 243, 255, 258, 296, 318, 361, 402–403, 405, 412, 441, 468, 477, 492, 524, 743, 746, 747, 748, 768, 889, 938
  cults, 686, 715
  "the dark ages," 283–286
Mediterranean, 24, 367, 886
Meese, Edwin, 838
Mehmet II, 855
Melancthon, Philip, 842
Meland, Bernard E., 677
Melek. *see* Molech
memiammenois (Greek), 708–709
Mencken, H. L., 512–513, 962
Mennonites, 64
men's liberation movement, 642
mental disease (meaning), 612
mental disorder (meaning), 612
mercantilism (protectionism), 257–258. *see also* economics
Messalians, 683
Messiah, 226, 269, 473, 629, 698, 699, 914. *see also* Jesus Christ
metempsychosis, 743
Methodists, 148, 344, 509
Mexico and Mexicans, 41, 47, 887, 917, 988
miaino (Greek), 708–709
Micaiah, 339
Michelet, Jules, 961, 971, 974
Michigan, 342
Milan, 204, 398
Milcom, 942. *see also* Molech
military, 18, 46, 51, 124, 231, 310, 329, 561, 563–565, 640–641, 950, 952
  conscription (draft), 640–641, 644, 900, 954
  de-Christianized, 564, 762
Milkman, Harvey, 975
Mill, John Stuart, 866
Millay, Edna St. Vincent, 146
Miller, Henry, 486, 764
Milton, John, 31, 502, 876
mind as fallen, 131, 425, 481, 526–530, 533, 592, 625, 669, 679–680, 757, 804, 809, 814–815, 816–817, 819–821, 822, 824, 828, 830–832. *see also* original sin and depravity
minimum-wage, 216, 293–294. *see under* business
minister (translation), 630
minorities, 25, 26, 37, 107, 220, 232, 253, 258, 260, 330, 356, 452, 595, 613, 873, 908, 917, 995. *see also* class and social warfare
miracles, 16, 130, 186, 389, 473, 560, 597, 646, 670, 791, 962, 972, 973, 978
Mises, Ludwig von, 242, 853, 854
Mishnah, 569
missions. *see* evangelism
Mississippi, 590
Mithradates, 436
mitzvah (Hebrew), 493–494
modalism, 720, 722–725
modesty and dress, 146, 162, 202, 536, 537–538, 644
Moffatt, James, 408, 581, 949
Mohammed. *see under* Islam
Mohammed II, 951
Molech worship, 327, 942
molestation of children. *see under* abuse
Molinos, Miguel de, 758
Mommsen, Theodor, 933
Monad, 676, 710, 711, 712
Monarchianism, 720–723
monarchy and divine right of kings, 64, 152, 340, 434, 525, 532–533, 548, 630, 911, 938, 995. *see also* specific monarchs
monergism (etymology), 784
monergism *vs.* synergism, 784–786
money, 67–68, 192, 207, 211–213, 241, 242, 366, 561, 642, 868, 881–882. *see also* wealth
  debasing coins, 553
  gold and silver standard, 208, 212, 215, 264, 649, 900, 965
    U.S. Constitution a hard money document, 900
  paper money, 208, 212, 215, 264, 291, 649, 900, 945, 965
  reflects heart, 114, 221, 858, 945, 959
  social planning and money, 208, 212, 221, 250–251, 264–265, 490, 501, 521, 560, 561, 571, 624–625, 649, 654, 838, 853, 869, 939, 940–941, 965, 976
  tithing (*see* tithing)
  vs. true wealth, 208, 211–213, 240, 244, 264, 649
Mongols, 885, 886
monopolies, 53, 881
monos (Greek), 784
Monroe Doctrine, 900
Montagu, Edward, 375
Montanism, 703–707, 870
Montanus, 703

Montoya, Joseph, 941
Moody, D. L., 718
Moonies, 347
Moore, G. E., 892
moral attributes of God, 416. *see also* Lordship of Christ
Moral Re-Armament (Buchmanism), 731
moral regeneration and sanctification, 58, 210, 333, 351, 456, 499–500, 521, 571, 696, 702, 715. *see also* responsibility of Christians
morality in humanism
common grace, 481, 484, 527, 947
defined by state, 907–908 (*see also* statism, god walking on earth)
state as fundamentally moral, 115, 415, 427, 428, 467, 482, 490, 519, 570, 635, 801, 934, 936, 954, 977, 992–993
false gospels (*see* false gospels)
inversion of values, 40–44, 188, 289, 470, 503, 511–514, 526, 591
absolutizing the relative, 152–155, 261, 426–428, 571, 866
aesthetics over morals, 892 (*see also* culture, humanistic)
anti-man, 28, 40, 42, 121, 174, 357–359, 430–432, 447, 482, 530, 546, 568–572, 575–579, 581, 584–586, 587–589, 643, 848–850, 996, 997
abortion, 93, 178–179, 237, 340, 512, 848, 853, 940, 997 (*see also* abortion)
death penalty opposed, 512
depersonalization, 124–125, 174, 204, 659, 663, 677–678, 867–868, 996, 997 (*see also* depersonalization)
love of death, 93, 283, 447, 849
murder, 982, 997
decadence over spiritual strength, 54, 65, 69, 72 (*see also* decadence)
instant gratification *vs.* growth, 53–54, 77–81, 158, 295, 314, 473, 487, 489–492, 597, 607, 706, 850, 884, 973, 981, 985–986
theft, 982
envious "charity," 243–244
immorality on principle, 691
meaninglessness, 290, 306, 583, 585, 697, 763, 793, 849, 997
moral debt to the people, 208–210
Phariseeism, 614, 743
primitivism *vs.* progress, 41, 90, 119–122, 143, 162, 192, 256–257, 290, 296, 306, 447, 511, 594, 606, 716, 958
risk-free life, 880–884
sexuality over love, 290, 340, 583, 594–595, 848
adultery, 11, 146, 793, 853
euthanasia, 997
fornication, 853
homosexuality, 283, 307, 340, 411, 420, 572, 668, 719, 743, 848, 853, 930
incest, 511, 526, 853 (*see also* incest)
pornography, 884
rape, 420, 526, 982, 997
total liability, 853
victimizing children, 93, 174
abortion (*see* abortion)
capital punishment contested, 93, 563
sexual abuse, 6, 36, 174, 362, 592
Mordecai, 792
More, Sir Thomas, 182, 964
Morecraft III, Joseph, 86
Mormons, 890
Moscow, 283
Moses, 318, 401, 454, 474, 549, 558, 687, 701, 742, 781, 825–826, 935, 944, 967
Mosley, Sir Oswald, 18
Mother Teresa, 43
motherhood, 178–179, 187, 198–199, 406, 495, 575, 588, 624, 858, 959, 964. *see also* children; family
Motte-Guyon, Jeanne-Marie Bouvier de la, 758, 775
Mount Carmel, 139
Mount of Olives, 486
movements and activism. *see* specific movements
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 271–272, 681
Müller, Heinrich, 748
Munatius, 576
murder
6th commandment (*see under* Law of God, Ten Commandments)
cannibalism, 616, 890
civil conflict
mass murders of 20th century, 112, 210, 283, 570, 641
in revolution, 418, 462, 570, 586, 595–596, 848
by state, 467, 482, 496, 564, 650, 953, 966

murder *(cont'd.)*
hatred, 482, 588, 604
human sacrifice, 425, 890
neglect, 854
purposeless, 849
result of antinomianism, 5, 34, 444, 584, 658, 744–745, 841, 862
sanctity of life, 252, 563, 575–579, 607, 984, 996
abortion (see abortion)
euthanasia (*see* euthanasia)
suicide (*see* suicide)
vengeance, 984
Murray, John, 915
music
celebrity star system, 368, 961, 996
in the church, 270–272, 338, 517, 518
humanistic, 428, 762, 764, 795, 951, 964
Muslims. *see* Islam (Mohammedans)
Musset, Alfred de, 142–143
Mussolini, Benito, 18, 19, 570, 781
mystery religions, 721, 781–783
mysticism, 157, 422, 424, 434, 681, 712, 723, 746, 772, 828. *see also* pietism
mythological character of Scripture. *see* Bible, interpretation of

N

Naaman, 156, 160
nabal (Hebrew), 830
Naboth, 202, 234, 434
name (meaning), 350
names, 323–328
Napoleon Bonaparte, 143, 418, 595, 756, 993
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), 941
Nathan, 81, 549, 551
Nathanson, Bernard M., M.D., 42
National African Federated Chamber of Commerce, 600
National Educational Association, 310
nationalism, 105–106, 124, 297, 595–596, 747, 748, 917–918. *see also* international relationships
Native Americans. *see* American Indians
natural law, 430–435, 525, 526–530, 531–535
and adultery, 526, 530, 533
and antinomianism, 430, 526–530, 814
and classical philosophy, 526, 528, 531–533, 797
and cultural evolution, 461
and the Enlightenment, 47–48, 430–431, 524, 532, 594, 851
and Gnosticism, 401–402
God's law called, 531–532
and morality
adultery, 526, 530, 533
and rationalism, 526–530, 531–535
and science, 524, 526–530, 637
and theft, 430, 526–527
natural law (meaning), 531–535
natural religion. *see under* science, humanistic
Navaho, 382
Nazi Germany, 4, 22, 308, 419, 496, 550, 570, 596, 614, 854, 873, 933–934, 936, 978, 988
Adolf Hitler, 19, 22, 46, 432, 482, 596, 613, 761, 781, 897, 904, 916, 977
public schooling in, 933, 934, 957
Nazirite vow, 524
Neander, 693
necrophilia, 431
Nellas, Panayiotis, 768, 769
Neoplatonism, 156–158, 364, 470, 683, 691, 768, 826
nepotism, 175–176, 587–588
Nerses IV, 270
Nerval, Gerard de, 681
Neurosyphilis, 796
New Agers, 859
New Deal, the, 512, 519
New England, 64, 117, 297–298, 326, 551, 962
New Jersey, 590
New York, 638, 657
Albany, 601–602
Buffalo, 605
New York City, 14, 53, 284, 605, 652, 904, 915
New Zealand, 72
Newton, Isaac, 895
Nicanor, Parra, 32
Nicea, Council of, 687
Nicene Creed, 872
Nicholas I, 569
Nicholas of Cusa, 532
Nicolaites, 922, 924
Niebuhr, Reinhold, 756
Nietzsche, Friedrich, 288, 357, 415, 419, 502, 511, 537, 584, 585, 626, 681, 778, 792, 829
nihilism
constitutional nihilism, 892, 895–896, 996
nikar (Greek), 692
nike (Greek), 692

Ninth Amendment. *see under* Constitution of the United States
Noah, 454, 456, 914
Nobel laureate Sir Francis Crick, 912
nobile, 746
Nock, Albert Jay, 519
noetic effects of the fall. *see* mind as fallen
Norman Conquest, 375
North, Edward, 911
North, Gary, 395
Novak, Michael, 262, 357–358
novels, 161, 289, 290, 472, 474, 595, 605, 663, 764, 773, 794, 849, 973
Noyes, John Humphrey, 182, 184
nudity, 180–181. *see also* sexual crimes and perversions

O

oath of office, 456, 845–846
obey (meaning), 400
Occam's razor, 675, 754
occultism. *see* magic and the occult
Oedipus, 793
office (translation), 365
Office of Compline, 168, 362, 806
Ohio, 735
Ohio v. Whisner, 341, 643
Old and New Testaments
  continuity of the church, 271, 317–318, 346, 365, 392, 433, 460–464, 467, 494, 524, 755
  discontinuity and antinomianism, 271, 460–464, 465–468, 698–702, 924
  discontinuity and heresy, 271, 677, 681–682, 683, 687, 698–702, 705, 708, 709, 711–712, 713, 742–743, 745, 924, 926–927, 972
  dismissal of the Old Testament, 396, 460–464, 698–702, 972
  era of the Old Testament, 426, 462
    atonement and Old Covenant Law, 568, 569, 995
    circumcision (*see* circumcision)
  New Testament era, 559, 680, 686
  Old *vs.* New Testament, 681, 698–702, 704, 709, 711–712, 713–714, 722–723, 742, 924
  Temple of God, 83, 224, 270–272, 324, 398, 409, 427, 692, 861, 888, 995, 997
  unity of the Old and New Testaments, 700, 711–712, 926
oligarchy, 901
omnisufficientia (Latin), 416
one world order. *see under* international relationships
Oneida Colony, 182, 184
Operation Rescue, 542
oppression, 21, 297, 941. *see also* abuse
  of the clergy, 189
  false claims of, 591 (*see also* class and social warfare)
  freedom in Christ, 863
  and patriarchy, 202
  and political power, 910 (*see also* statism, destruction of society)
  utopian abolishment, 79, 90, 105, 251, 591
Orientals, 606, 769, 951
Origen, 401, 403, 404, 676, 700
original sin and depravity, 180, 203, 211, 239, 355–359, 371–374, 430–431, 458, 481–492, 529, 664, 814–815, 919. *see also* sin
  and Adam, 103, 133, 135, 200, 351, 418, 423, 435, 445, 486–487, 492, 528, 694, 695, 697, 735, 739, 759, 791, 804, 822
  as autonomous and antinomian
    and abortion, 42, 44, 252, 625–626, 912, 929
    iniquity, 326
    in judging God and His Word, 710, 816 (*see also under* rationalism, reason as sovereign)
    and Phariseeism, 120–121
    totalitarianism, 107, 536–537, 545, 862, 990, 995
  common depravity, 115–117, 227–228, 351, 484, 504–505, 807, 814, 965
  and common grace, 481, 484, 527, 947
  common judgment, 445
  denial of, 78–79, 89, 107, 108, 119–120, 142–143, 232, 481–483, 489, 531–532, 735–737, 807
    fundamental goodness of man, 107, 142, 184, 232, 309–312, 357, 482, 532, 594–598, 778, 802, 830, 896, 929, 961, 965
  doctrine of total depravity, 142, 481–482, 484, 653, 740, 785, 824, 851
  evading responsibility, 133, 193
  God's purpose in, 492
  "hate the sin, love the sinner," 500–501
  heresy and false religion, 114, 118, 694, 735–737, 738, 816
  and humanistic community, 28, 32–33, 330, 485–486 (*see also* society when humanistic)

original sin and depravity *(cont'd.)*
and incorporation, 435
mind as fallen, 131, 188, 425, 481, 526–530, 533, 592, 625, 669, 679–680, 757, 804, 809, 814–815, 816–818, 819–821, 822, 824, 828, 830–832
natural man, 418, 423, 526, 785, 814, 817, 865–866
salvation by works, 103, 472–473, 487, 500–502
will to be god
and abortion, 42, 44, 252, 625–626, 912, 929
Orthodox Church. *see* Eastern Orthodox Church
Orwell, George, 59, 285, 411, 453, 910, 915, 948, 953, 958, 959
1984, 910, 915, 953, 958
Otis, James, 551
Otto, Bishop of Freising, 82–83
Ottoman Turkey. *see under* Turkey
ousia (Greek), 577
overcome (translation), 692
Ovid, 275
Oxford, 19, 45, 71, 279, 321

P

pacifism, 158, 347, 406–407, 597, 717, 744–745, 768–769, 771–775, 776–777, 780. *see also* kenosis
paganism
and authority, 178–179, 198, 277 (*see also* paganism, and statism)
death and impotency, 59, 61, 89, 125
environmentalism, 331
and the family, 174, 178–179, 198, 624
man-made religion, 138–140, 156–157, 273–275, 384, 623, 633–634
Christian syncretism, 138–140, 157, 277, 384–385, 392, 422–424, 426, 434, 461, 626, 703, 722–725, 733, 736–737, 738, 758, 767–770, 793, 887
in Gnosticism, 470, 676, 713, 743 (*see also* Gnosticism)
sovereignty of man, 132–133, 274, 550, 623–624, 630, 633–634, 736, 738 (*see also* sovereignty of man)
overcome by Christianity, 45, 172, 233, 273–275, 379, 471, 534, 550, 624, 840, 940
and personhood, 579
result of antinomianism, 11, 72, 178–179, 503, 734
freedom and paganism, 11–12, 171, 174, 178–179, 274, 277, 503, 625–626, 736–737, 793, 840–841, 889, 890
in intellectualism, 11, 288
and statism, 276, 284, 340, 435, 518, 521, 550, 570, 579, 623–626, 652, 733, 871, 911, 938–939, 971, 978, 992
attack on the family, 174, 624
divine right of kings, 340, 434, 630, 938
foreign policy, 904
law defined by state, 171–172, 534–535, 550, 570
public education, 303, 327, 624, 625
in Rome, 379, 385, 390–392, 521, 534, 570, 623–624, 911, 940
welfare, 385 (*see also* welfare, statist)
Paine, Thomas, 843
paizo (Greek), 634
Palais-Royal, 798
Pan-Turanism, 105–108, 124
Parables of Christ
Good Samaritan, 607
Judgment, 638, 774
Seed and the Sower, 731
Talents, 408, 608
Unclean Spirits in the House, 159–160
Wedding Feast, 352
Wheat and the Tares, 82–84
Widow and the Judge, 136
parachurch ministries, 276, 367–368, 437. *see also* specific organizations
parish (etymology), 939
Parker, Theodore, 792
Parliament, 279, 321
Parmenides, 469
parochial (etymology), 939
paroikia (Greek), 939
Pashukanis, Evgeny, 910
Passover, 217, 402, 558, 883, 967
vs. the Resurrection, 883
Patrick of Ireland, 367
Patton, Francis L., 921
Paul of Samosata, 720–721
Paul the Apostle, 16, 19, 86, 87, 95–96, 166, 211–212, 277, 349–350, 370, 379, 411, 427, 448, 461, 467, 481, 485, 524, 585, 619, 629, 634, 698, 699, 709, 799, 804, 809, 823, 883, 925, 927, 928

peace
blessed peacemakers, 565, 729
of Christian individuals, 33, 154, 485, 557, 653, 717, 730, 772
of Christian nations, 226, 236, 564
false peace, 145, 331, 467, 679, 692, 729, 744–745, 752–753, 973
and God's covenant, 290, 333, 449–450, 456–457
humanistic ideals, 145–146, 158, 330, 414, 446–449, 514, 584, 649, 791, 815, 948
from war, 27, 78, 86, 99–100, 117, 226, 333, 563, 565, 695, 775, 948
Peacocke, Dennis, 697
Peale, Norman Vincent, 731
Pearl, Dr. Raymond, 58, 591
peasants' revolts, 651, 652, 656, 761
Peele, Stanton, 975
Peirce, Charles S., 415
Pelagianism, 142, 526, 728, 735–737, 738–741, 751
Pelagius, 735–739, 740
pensions, 223–224, 501, 606, 915
Pentecost, 349, 704–705
Pentecostalism, 872. *see also* charismatic churches
people. *see* man; specific names
People's Temple and Jim Jones, 627–628, 937
perfect (English), 141–142, 156
perfectionism *vs.* holiness. *see under* pietism
Pergamos, 99, 370
Perkins, William, 752
persecution of the church, 137–138, 280, 339, 341, 343, 378–379, 426, 511, 603, 616, 682, 705, 706, 794, 836
by the church, 836
modern, 3, 72–73, 78, 101–102, 105, 111–112, 115, 121, 231, 311, 341, 346–347, 349, 418, 420–421, 432, 463, 464, 512, 552, 564, 590, 592, 613–616, 630, 643, 717, 749, 803, 845, 846, 929, 930, 988–989
church and school trials, 932, 954, 972
in Nazi Germany, 934
in revolutions, 80, 390–392, 463, 532, 794
in Rome, 59, 99–100, 255, 322, 349, 364, 390–391, 726, 728, 781, 841, 932–933, 938 (*see also* Rome)
stealing from, 80, 340
wives by husbands, 202 (*see also* abuse, of wives)
perseverance of the saints, 738, 744, 785
Persia and Persians, 10, 182, 285, 744, 792, 888, 911
person (etymology), 575
person (meaning), 577, 848
persona (Latin), 575, 577–578
personality (defined), 578
Peru, 976
pesha (Hebrew), 493
Peter, 86, 160, 162, 196, 251, 311, 350, 351, 400, 426, 467, 560, 644, 896
Petilian, 727
Petronius Arbiter, 5, 89
Pharisees and Phariseeism, 149, 407, 409, 443, 507–508, 540, 610, 632, 644, 680, 718, 727, 729, 837, 926, 928, 934
legalism and antinomianism, 408, 455–456, 491, 538, 542, 543, 544–547, 553, 599, 614, 705–706, 709, 743–744, 752–753, 799, 802, 807 (*see also* legalism)
phersu (Etruscan), 575
Philip, 277
Philistines, 135
Phillips, Howard, 689
philos (Greek), 486
philosophy
classical (*see* classical philosophy and culture)
and politics, 403, 530, 638–639, 756, 800, 805, 895–898, 966
and predestination, 763, 817
rationalism (*see* rationalism)
reality (*see* reality)
philosophy, Christian
and the atonement, 817, 819–820, 822
continuity, 434–435, 460–464
mind as fallen, 131, 425, 481, 526–530, 533, 592, 625, 669, 679–680, 757, 804, 809, 814–815, 816–817, 819–821, 822, 824, 828, 830–832
presuppositionalism, 129–130, 131, 403–404, 526–530, 619–620, 621–622, 665, 668–669, 804, 808, 809, 813, 815, 816–817, 820, 822–824, 825–826, 831, 927, 968, 984
reality, 36, 191–192, 403–404, 611, 722–725, 820, 968
strength of, 733, 826, 870
syncretism, 818, 922–929
view of man (*see* man in Christian view)
philosophy, humanistic
classical (*see* classical philosophy and culture)

philosophy, humanistic *(cont'd.)*
dualism, 531, 756–757 (*see also* dualism)
the Enlightenment (*see* Enlightenment)
French Revolution (*see* French Revolution, philosophy of)
Marxist (*see* Marxism, philosophy of)
mind as fallen, 131, 425, 481, 526–530, 533, 592, 625, 669, 679–680, 757, 804, 809, 814–815, 816–817, 819–821, 822, 824, 828, 830–832
naturalism, 825
chance, 476, 732, 763, 824, 871
depersonalization, 808–809, 828, 997 (*see also* depersonalization)
evolutionary (*see* science, humanistic)
nihilistic, 778–779, 892
philosophers (*see* specific philosophers)
postmodernism, 756, 763, 809
New Age, 148
rationalism (*see also* rationalism)
empiricism, 130
relativism, 125, 446, 458, 724, 733, 754, 800, 804–805, 806, 808–809, 811–812, 883, 892, 910, 922–931, 930–931, 982
existentialism, 24, 52–57, 58–62, 92, 142, 203, 295, 752, 754–755, 756, 765, 805, 812, 954, 956, 981
mental problems, 756, 763, 824, 874, 978
pragmatism, 142, 298–299, 307, 308, 372, 415–417, 689, 733, 756, 825, 933, 949, 981
instrumentalism, 142, 308, 446–448, 465, 485, 933, 981
utilitarianism, 142
Renaissance, 155, 282, 284 (*see also* Renaissance)
Romanticism (*see also* Romanticism)
Titanism, 790–792
syncretism, 273–274, 818
transcendentalism, 792
view of god (*see also* humanism, view of god)
great chain of being, 108, 404, 422–424, 467, 532, 577, 713, 716, 721, 767–768, 815, 827–829
pantheism, 422, 434, 532, 759, 767
polytheism, 198, 273, 443, 715, 731–732, 765, 936
view of reality, 36, 47, 51, 190, 294, 403–404, 415, 431–432, 447–448, 462, 467, 609–612, 633, 637, 647, 656–659, 666–667, 668–669, 689, 774, 797–799, 800–801, 804–807, 812–813, 820, 884
abstractionism, 333, 606, 659, 667, 754–757, 756, 804, 822, 830, 867–869, 892, 895, 918, 966
evil as ultimate reality, 36, 611, 761–762
phusis (Greek), 577
pietism, 747–750, 751–753, 758, 772, 779, 799. *see also* kenosis; Quietism
and abstractionism, 401–405, 462, 512, 701, 799, 923–924 (*see also* abstractionism)
anti-intellectual, 717–718, 747, 748, 749, 752, 775, 783
and antinomianism, 710, 712, 749, 758, 760 (*see also* antinomianism)
and emotionalism, 747, 748, 751 (*see also* emotionalism)
evasion of personal responsibility, 157, 158, 172, 192–193, 281–282, 327, 384–386, 392, 406, 407, 432, 464, 466, 597, 632, 695, 697, 701, 752, 764, 782, 790, 802, 897
pacifism and anti-armament, 158, 347, 406–407, 597, 717, 744–745, 768–769, 771–775, 776–777, 780
and impotency of the church, 764, 897
mysticism and dualism, 157, 384–386, 392, 401–405, 422–424, 442, 444, 461, 470, 510, 520, 534, 681, 682, 683, 686–687, 690–692, 697, 698–702, 705, 706, 715, 742–744, 748, 753, 756, 758–759, 771–775, 828, 925, 927 (*see also* dualism; Gnosticism)
perfectionism *vs.* holiness, 141–144, 156–160, 217, 443, 466, 500, 538, 543, 706, 726–727, 728, 744, 752–753, 759, 802, 949 (*see also* legalism)
results in the culture, 317, 373, 392, 407, 420, 432, 682, 688, 746, 747–749, 764, 802 (*see also* antinomianism, results in the culture)
self-absorbed, 137–139, 142, 157, 180, 382, 388, 398, 402, 406, 416–417, 432, 445, 518, 632, 718, 748–749, 751–752, 760, 782–783, 802, 805
solemnity, 718

Pilate, 87, 238, 525
Pill, the, 795
Pittenger, W. Norman, 677
Pius XII, 271
Plato, 943
  abstractionism, 405
  ethics of, 527
  and the family, 462
  and the Gnostic Carpocretians, 708, 713
  homosexuality of, 667, 719
  humanism, 331, 918, 964
  natural law, 528, 531, 533, 797
  philosopher-kings, 42, 549, 576, 826, 943, 960, 964, 965 (*see also* elitist rule)
    elitism, 965, 966, 967–968
  rationalism of, 952
  "Republic," 41–42, 172, 549, 576, 964
  statism, 41–42, 172, 304, 549, 576, 826, 954
  view of man, 41–42
Platonism, 403, 527, 528, 531, 533, 549, 576, 691, 710, 797, 826, 953, 964
Playboy, 179, 180, 286, 940
pleasure principle, 65–66, 357
Pledge of Allegiance, 932
Pliny the Elder, 274
Plutarch, 575–576, 782
Poland and Polish, 264, 418, 639
Pole, Cardinal Reginald, 271
police, 51, 115, 258, 293, 305, 342, 547, 644, 862, 915–916, 930, 963
polis (Greek), 826
politeuma (Greek), 350
politics. *see also* civil government
  and Christian duty, 520, 701, 760
    regarding statism, 96, 337–342, 378–380, 392, 394, 397–398, 421, 442–445, 518, 530, 560–562, 561, 624, 629–639, 630, 733, 931, 945, 973, 980
    in voting and elections, 78, 88, 326–327, 338–339, 464, 632, 760, 931, 983
  and drugs, 582, 610, 973, 975
  embracing evil, 249–250, 487, 512, 560
  manipulation, 252, 331, 465, 875, 877, 941
    gerrymandering, 881
    guilt-manipulation, 485, 594–598, 873–877, 878–879
    lies, 600, 610–611
    peer pressure, 509–510
    by war, 565–566
  parties, 453, 540, 560, 990 (*see also* Democrats; Republicans)
  and philosophy, 403, 530, 638–639, 756, 800, 805, 895–898, 966 (*see also* Hegel and Hegelianism)
    conservativism (*see* conservativism)
    Left, 961, 972
    salvation by, 483, 487, 805, 990–993
  politicians
    bigoted, 613
    higher culpability, 642
    star (celebrity) system, 369–370, 639, 996–997
Polk Doctrine, 900
polluted (translated), 708–709
Polycarp, 348, 392
polygamy, 887, 890
Pomazansky, Michael, 767, 768
population control, 52, 60, 331, 624, 912, 953, 964, 978–979
pornography, 7, 40–44, 102, 110, 346, 445, 605, 733–734, 844, 884, 916
  result of antinomianism, 40–44, 346, 445, 733, 884
Posner, Vladimir, 5
postmillennialism
  basic to historical Christianity, 92, 124–125, 157, 271, 616, 747, 850
  and death of the old order, 73, 260, 297, 689
  duty of the church, 125, 157, 260, 300, 385, 429, 445, 616, 627, 695, 697, 839, 850
  and the faults of the church, 425–427
  and the Lordship of Christ, 93–94, 95–96, 300, 359, 478, 627, 695, 697, 763, 839, 850 (*see also* Lordship of Christ)
  overcoming evil on earth, 260, 689, 695, 697, 747–748, 763, 839
  overcoming paganism, 45, 172, 233, 273–275, 379, 471, 534, 550, 624, 840, 940
  and the Sabbath, 218, 556, 558–559
  triumph of the resurrection, 218, 691
  as "unspiritual," 60, 780
poverty, 35–39, 79, 208–209, 225, 240, 241, 261–262, 265, 287–292, 384, 385, 437, 471, 472–473, 501, 560, 588, 605, 740, 764, 771, 773–774, 779, 912, 938, 973, 985
power. *see also* authority
  division of powers, 333, 517–522, 520, 841, 851, 860, 861, 891, 895, 899, 918, 944

power *(cont'd.)*
evil ambition, 496–497, 789–792, 963
of Holy Spirit replaced by man, 610, 785
to oppress, 909–910
ultimate power as "evil," 724, 780
practicality, 64–66, 130, 241, 718
praise (translation), 915
praxis (Greek), 365
prayer, 132–135, 136–140
and fasting, 706
and God's blessing, 109, 118, 145
and God's Law, 144
improper, 759, 789, 792
humanistic, 984
substitute for obedience, 109, 133, 137, 158–159, 196, 399, 466, 639, 718, 790
trivialization of, 759, 760
Lord's Prayer, 138, 139–140, 468, 487–488, 603
for magistrates, 104, 138, 145, 304
and man's freedom, 879
in schools, 109–111
Praz, Mario, 596, 719, 744
preaching
attacked by statists, 929 (*see also* persecution of the church, modern)
boldness, 379, 388–389, 474
centrality of, 375–377, 768
doom and gloom, 79–80 (*see also* eschatology, pessimistic)
enslaving with guilt, 876
esoteric, 404
exegetical, 373, 415–416
neglected subjects, 198, 239, 373, 387–389, 747
popular preaching, 8, 77, 161, 282, 373, 387–389, 395–396, 415–416, 721, 735, 757, 785, 805, 841
revival and revivalism, 638, 735, 747, 784–785, 798
submission to committees, 14
TV evangelism, 137, 929, 930, 940
by women, 402
Preamble of the U.S. Constitution. *see under* Constitution of the United States
predestination. *see also* providence
by chance, 432
by God, 274, 313, 476–477, 619, 740, 936 (*see also* Calvinism)
election (*see* elect of God)
history flows from the future, 300, 555
and hope, 184, 936
and the modern church, 717
monergism *vs.* synergism, 784–786
Providence (*see* providence, of God)
and salvation (*see* salvation, and God's sovereignty)
by man, 432, 461, 509, 586, 740, 792, 828–829, 871, 954–955 (*see also* free will of man)
and original sin, 814
by the state, 274–275, 432, 540, 740, 871, 907, 918, 936
and philosophy, 763, 817 (*see also* philosophy, Christian)
Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Company, 934
Presbyterians and Presbyterianism, 25, 134, 365, 377, 463, 509, 836, 994
presbyters. *see* church government
Presley, Elvis, 638
press, the, 180, 344, 844–845, 957
Preysing, Konrad von, 934
priest (English), 317
Princeton, 203, 802
Princeton Seminary, 387
prisons, 146, 490, 511–512, 612, 885, 979
ministry to prisoners, 277, 437
private property, 233–236, 867–869. *see also* wealth
Biblical view, 233, 984
church property, 80, 340
control by family, 172–173, 178, 179, 182–183, 198, 211–212, 265, 448, 867–869
inheritance (*see* inheritance)
fascism as façade of private ownership, 909
hated by heretical cults, 710, 744 (*see also* communism)
statist theft or control, 47, 80, 183, 298, 327, 856, 861, 867–869, 901, 909, 964, 973, 976 (*see also* taxation)
privilege (meaning), 847
process theology, 677–678, 680, 683, 686–689, 704–705, 801, 807, 815, 832, 926–927
profanity, 323–328
progress
of the Gospel (*see* postmillennialism)
superficial progress of humanism, 125, 198–199, 216, 256–257
Prohibition, 490, 753
proles (Latin), 697
proletarian (meaning), 697
proletariat, 105, 446, 548, 570, 635, 697, 929. *see also* Marxism

Prometheus, 789
promiscuity, 606, 642, 663, 682, 696, 945. *see also* sexual crimes and perversions
  public copulation, 283, 512, 798, 840
  selfishness, 275, 802
  sexuality *vs*. love, 290, 340, 583, 594–595, 719, 848, 940
prophecy, 338, 642, 704, 705, 938. *see also* eschatology
prosopon (Greek), 578
prostitution, 65, 171, 420, 591, 597, 600, 682, 890
Protagoras, 142
protectionism (mercantilism), 257–258
Protestant Reformation, 157, 201–204, 271, 282, 318, 319, 402, 403, 415, 444, 476, 658, 686, 707, 708, 740, 751, 753, 824, 826, 842, 927, 938, 994
  Counter-Reformation, 444, 658, 938
Protestant work ethic, 37, 65–66, 72, 130, 191–192, 224–225, 554, 608
Protestantism, 157, 176, 263, 276, 279–282, 347, 353, 365, 371, 382, 387, 391, 397, 403, 423, 426, 442, 449, 508, 509, 526, 527, 533, 535, 537, 543, 545, 578, 630, 680, 743, 745, 749, 751, 752, 753, 756, 758, 764, 768, 772, 775, 780, 784, 814, 820, 824, 828, 831, 835, 836, 843, 844, 856, 888, 920, 925, 928, 929, 931
providence
  of God, 185, 217, 243, 287, 331, 476–478, 555, 557, 561, 683, 851, 855, 871
  living providentially, 554–556, 651
  statist providence, 225, 977
psychiatry and psychology, 23, 36, 46, 65–66, 80, 102, 120, 183, 203–204, 227, 282, 357, 357, 371–374, 402, 442, 444, 484, 500–501, 505, 554–555, 556–557, 570, 578, 592, 597, 609–612, 636, 785, 794–795, 953, 988
public school (meaning), 987
public schools. *see under* education in humanism
Puritans, 64–66, 130, 255, 279, 280, 296, 297–298, 299, 313–314, 319, 338–339, 375, 376, 377, 393, 403, 460, 463, 468, 554, 651, 652, 718, 752, 765, 836, 851, 911, 938, 962, 966
  Protestant work ethic, 37, 65–66, 72, 130, 191–192, 224–225, 554, 608
Pythagoras, 271–272, 708, 713

Q

Quakers and Quakerism, 64, 870
Quietism, 758–760, 775, 779, 782
Quintus Hortensius Hortalus, 576

R

racism. *see also* class and social warfare
  Anglo-Israelism, 717
  anti-alien ideology, 233–236
  and bigotry, 26, 28, 613–614
  and class warfare, 39, 331, 356, 605, 985
  vs. communion of the saints, 27–29, 332 (*see also* communion, of the saints)
  confessing sins of others, 164–165, 167–168, 361, 717, 806, 848
  in education, 23, 24, 26, 72, 309–310, 624
  and God's law, 28, 39, 90, 107, 234–235, 407, 481–483, 504–505, 510, 551
  in liberalism, 105, 512–513
  and man's law, 548
  and politics, 143, 298–299, 482–483, 570, 973
  product of Darwinism, 21, 330
  and Satanism, 733
  "seed of the Serpent" theory, 717
  social amnesia, 293–294
  victim mentality, 596
Rad, Gerhard von, 634
radio, 8, 369, 520
rainbow, 290, 457
rape, 3, 15, 164, 420, 430, 445, 504, 526, 565, 584, 624, 639, 873, 982, 997
Rapture, 89–91, 95, 385, 388, 406, 420, 524, 763, 972–973
Rasputin, 774
ratio (Latin), 816
rationalism, 808–832. *see also* philosophy, humanistic
  and antinomianism, 620
  in the church, 281–282, 510, 621, 688, 749, 809–810, 814–815, 818, 820, 824, 828, 831
    in judging God and His Word, 402–403, 620, 664, 754–757, 816–818, 823, 825–826, 829, 830–832
  in classical humanism, 800, 803, 825–826, 827–828

rationalism *(cont'd.)*
and elitist rule, 333, 826, 831
and the Enlightenment, 797, 808, 810, 815, 889, 908
god defined by man, 11, 130–131, 489, 792
chain of being, 827–829
depersonalization, 405 (*see also* depersonalization)
and natural law, 526–530, 531–535
origins of, 129, 811–813
philosophers
Aristotle, 620, 809, 820, 824, 826, 828 (*see also* Aristotle)
Hegel (*see* Hegel and Hegelianism)
Immanuel Kant, 11–12, 190, 754 (*see also* Kant and Kantianism)
Plato, 826, 952 (*see also* Plato)
René Descartes, 754, 811–813 (*see also* Descartes, René)
reason as savior, 79, 287, 405, 430, 441, 444, 584–585, 588, 736–737, 738–739
reason as sovereign, 282, 664, 756, 797, 800–801, 805, 808–810, 813, 822–824, 958
failure of reason, 306, 443, 637, 650, 658–659, 819–821, 824, 830, 888, 918
in judging God and His Word, 402–403, 620, 664, 754–757, 816–818, 823, 825–826, 829, 830–832 (*see also* rationalism, in the church)
in morality, 90, 221
vs. presuppositionalism, 621–622, 659, 814–815, 816–818, 831
and statism, 520, 588, 650, 658–659, 667, 801, 826, 918, 952–955
rationalism (defined), 816
Reagan, Ronald, 4, 59, 81, 420, 838
real (meaning), 756
realis (Latin), 756
reality
Christian view of, 36, 191–192, 403–404, 611, 722–725, 820, 968
mythologies abolished by Christ, 721
humanistic view of,
evil as ultimate reality, 36, 611, 761–762
false antinomies
and guilt, 874, 876–877
lies and myths preferred to truth, 293–295, 297, 712, 769, 806, 880–881
myth as higher form of reality, 16
in philosophical humanism, 36, 47, 51, 190, 294, 403–404, 415, 431–432, 447–448, 462, 467, 609–612, 633, 637, 647, 656–659, 666–667, 668–669, 689, 774, 797–799, 800–801, 804–807, 811–813, 820, 884
abstractionism, 333, 606, 659, 667, 754–757, 804, 822, 830, 867–869, 892, 895, 918, 966
media bias and propaganda, 5, 14, 17, 48, 111–112, 209, 293, 418, 600–601, 845, 892, 931, 940–941, 957
reason as sovereign. *see* rationalism
reconciliation without restitution, 372–373, 569
Reconstruction, 37, 44, 55, 77–81, 104, 125, 166, 252, 260, 295, 513–514, 654–655, 730, 957
basic premises, 130, 262, 499, 508, 527, 607, 615–616, 671, 713–714
of civil arena (*see* politics, and Christian duty)
vs. Deconstructionism, 92–93, 142, 756 (*see also* death, "urge to mass destruction")
dominion, 359, 702 (*see also* Dominion Mandate)
vs. domination, 105–108, 125, 195–200, 218, 697
theonomy (*see* theonomy)
and youth, 72, 519–520
"redeeming the time" (meaning), 295
Reformation, Protestant. *see* Protestant Reformation
Rehnquist, William, 4, 5
Reign of Terror. *see under* French Revolution
reincarnation, 214, 215, 244, 373, 555, 778
religion and state
antinomianism and statism, 102–104, 424, 444–445, 464, 535, 625–626, 802–803, 935, 982, 984–986, 991 (*see also* statism)
Bible opposed by statists, 310, 344, 542, 564, 583, 614, 733, 839, 936, 972, 988–989
church-state issues, 109–113, 317–322, 375, 630

church as free embassy of Christ, 304, 321, 348–352, 391–392, 437, 835, 837, 861, 889, 939–942
conditions of obedience, 78, 86, 99–104, 155, 340, 352, 400, 625, 626, 629–639, 728, 837
pacifism, 158, 347, 406–407, 597, 717, 744–745, 768–769, 771–775, 776–777, 780
separation of church and state, 100–101, 109–113, 180, 304, 321, 338, 343–347, 398, 436, 551, 839, 844
state control of church, 180, 318, 337–342, 344–347, 348, 375, 391–392, 436, 460, 537, 627–628, 630, 682, 710, 835–839, 855–856, 857–859, 911, 935, 937, 938, 941
state's need for the church, 110, 112, 338, 345, 432, 435, 510, 551, 843, 844, 891, 908
supplanting church with state, 430, 835–839
taxation (*see* taxation, churches and taxes)
theft of church property, 80, 340 (*see also* theft, by the state)
defeating statism (*see* politics, and Christian duty)
establishment of religion, 891, 919–921
exploitation of religion by state, 399, 404, 436, 446, 467, 486, 521, 570, 623–624, 627–628, 732–733, 747–748, 753, 775, 798, 835, 855–856, 873–874, 888–889, 911, 919–920, 933–934, 937, 948
divine right of kings, 64, 152, 340, 434, 525, 532–533, 548, 630, 911, 938, 995
rulers as ultimate representatives of God, 304, 396, 434
freedom of religion, 115, 152, 171, 177, 180, 279–282, 325, 343–347, 391–392, 842–846, 847, 890, 933 (*see also* freedom, Christian foundations of)
myth of religious neutrality, 109–113, 180, 255–256, 324, 343–344, 482, 510, 548, 888–892, 919–921
sins promoted by state (*see* immorality of humanism, statist promotion of sin)
toleration of religion, 47, 109–112, 180, 274, 364, 391, 835–839, 889
Renaissance, 155, 284, 444, 503, 615, 793, 826, 885, 886, 908, 963, 964
republican government, 549, 896, 909, 920, 943, 990, 994–995. *see also* constitutionalism
elections and voting (*see* voting and elections)
Republicans, 230, 294, 420, 487, 540, 670, 881, 882, 963
research, abortion, 607
respectability, lust for, 409–411
response (meaning), 581
responsibility (meaning), 581
responsibility in humanism
absolute and total liability, 132–133, 853
evading responsibility, 28, 78–79, 92, 142–143, 190–194, 283, 526–530, 582–583, 601, 609–612, 762–764, 800–803, 804–807, 869 (*see also* environmentalism)
cowardice, 246–248, 281, 485, 580–581, 582–583, 615, 761–762, 764, 773, 777, 877, 880, 882
crime, 310, 546
theft, 583, 646
cultural suicide, 5, 243, 296–300, 428–429, 519, 585, 607, 610, 764–765, 920
depersonalization (*see* depersonalization)
dependence, 278, 485, 897, 976, 983
and loss of freedom, 852–856
slavery, 580
statism, 283, 490
welfarism, 546
dishonesty, 583
hypocrisy, 599–603, 948–949
proxy religion, 367–370, 413, 509–510, 512
role-playing, 190–194, 227–228, 512, 580–581, 582–583
escapism
drug and alcohol abuse, 34, 36, 60, 61, 310, 763–764, 795, 812, 879, 973
individualism (*see* individualism)
living in the past (*see* history, past-bound focus)
pietism, 395–400, 466, 701, 749
the Rapture, 406
suicide, 34, 60–62, 305–308, 358, 505, 764

responsibility in humanism
evading responsibility
escapism *(cont'd.)*
feminism, 8, 280, 356
the Pill, 795
immaturity, 161–162, 190–194, 472–473, 494, 580–581, 595, 764, 775
instant gratification *vs.* growth, 53–54, 77–81, 158, 295, 314, 473, 487, 489–492, 597, 607, 706, 850, 884, 973, 981, 985–986
lust for perpetual youth, 162, 192
indifference, 280, 307, 398, 420, 512, 581, 607, 634, 758, 924, 957, 972
intellectualism, 11
lust for respectability, 409–411
by males, 190–194, 397, 580–581
murder, 583
abortion, 8, 11, 15, 34, 43, 60, 280, 294, 310, 389, 392, 552, 728, 795, 805
euthanasia, 11, 15, 68, 310, 795
suicide, 34, 60–62, 305–308, 358, 505, 764
world wars, 34
Phariseeism, 8, 146, 164–166, 168, 361, 443, 507–508, 610, 647, 774, 806, 807
perfectionism, 141–144, 156–160, 728, 744, 752, 759 (*see also* pietism, perfectionism ***vs.*** holiness)
psychology, 36, 46, 80, 183, 203–204, 371–374, 402, 442, 444, 555, 557
guilt and self-hatred, 36, 120, 139, 164–166, 168, 240, 243, 358, 371–374, 444, 485, 502, 505, 555, 601, 762, 771–775, 776–780, 779, 873–877, 878
reconciliation without restitution, 372
redefining sin, 159, 165, 307, 497
dividing heart from actions, 120, 146, 282, 372, 397, 419, 500–501, 502, 600, 701, 710, 712, 748, 758–759, 774, 922–925
labeling sin "disease," 975–976
sin as metaphysical not ethical, 330, 532, 677–678, 682, 691, 694, 696, 701, 706, 715–719, 742, 759, 769, 827
retirement, 608
sadism and masochism, 8, 61, 430–432, 523, 526, 596, 643, 664, 765, 769, 771–775, 778, 794, 798, 879, 982
scapegoat politicians, 53–54, 115, 963
self-expiation, 139, 214, 244, 269, 280, 388, 431, 455–456, 778
masochism, 406–408
self-abasement, 771–775
self-expression
and catharsis, 793–796
sour attitudes, 718, 730, 743
sexual perversions, 310, 583
adultery, 11, 54–55, 146, 581, 646
AIDs, 15
child molestation, 36, 362, 592
fornication, 646, 799
homosexuality, 11, 15, 34, 36, 280, 389, 392, 407, 523, 552, 580, 606, 728, 764, 795
pornography, 605
sex revolution, 61, 552, 795
victim mentality (*see* environmentalism)
responsibility of Christians, 392–393, 583, 619, 657
dominion, 766, 895
centrality of the family, 718
duty, 985, 986
and the future, 181, 187–188, 207, 217–218, 260, 284, 295, 300, 351, 380, 435, 450, 495, 554–556, 558–559, 763
growth and maturity, 109, 141–144, 161–163, 185, 191–192, 295, 399, 427, 466, 472–473, 494–495, 703–704, 706–707, 775, 785, 791, 792, 949
solving problems, 252–253, 278, 284, 286, 299, 314, 373, 405, 437, 471, 701, 706–707, 775, 792, 858–859, 868–869, 897, 949
stewarding heritage and circumstance, 251–254, 295, 297, 322, 380, 391, 408, 413, 425, 478, 488 (*see also* history, stewarding heritage; inheritance)

vision, calling, and vocation, 187–188, 192, 244, 253, 278, 408, 427, 436, 495–498, 508, 518, 602, 766, 789–792
enemies, 407, 473
self-defense, 60, 227, 373, 406–407, 408, 563, 605, 748
priesthood of all believers, 137, 140, 339–340, 390, 704
communion with God (*see* communion, with God)
confession of sin, 137, 164–166, 168, 358–359, 371–374, 506–508, 568, 581, 791, 794, 806
faith and action, 367–370, 385, 388, 403, 413, 437, 497, 513–514, 520, 521, 559, 607, 702, 760, 763, 945
holiness, 125, 156–160, 193, 202, 325, 339–340, 373, 399, 408, 416, 553–557, 559, 644–645, 694–695, 752, 760, 795–796, 921, 949
personal conviction, 124–125, 280, 339–340, 373, 388, 509, 858
a walking law, 339–341, 342, 385, 389, 400, 403, 421, 445, 464, 466, 471, 492, 520, 527, 546, 627, 945, 985
self-government, 66, 112, 116–117, 125, 185, 235, 333, 369, 473, 489–492, 508, 509, 517–522, 541–543, 546, 549, 571, 592, 624, 852–856, 899, 909, 963
conduct of the elderly, 607–608
costly, 858
division of powers, 333
dying to self, 518
financial, 221, 223
freedom, 116–117, 125, 189, 204, 207, 341, 349–350, 357, 363, 373, 445, 485, 495, 538, 561, 571, 578, 597–598, 607, 846, 877, 879, 887, 909, 945, 963, 980 (*see also* freedom, Christian foundations of)
restitution, 372
tithing (*see* tithing)
self-respect, 508
trust in God, 555–556, 620, 782–783, 875
anxiety, 95–96, 118, 554–555, 556–557, 760
rejoicing, 718, 921
restitution, 363, 519, 571, 592, 854, 879
reconciliation without restitution, 372–373, 569
resurrection, 58, 217, 218, 248, 349, 351, 447, 494, 558–559, 562, 598, 615, 638, 686–687, 691, 696–698, 718, 742, 756, 759, 781, 803, 823, 883
Resurrection Day (Easter), 558
Revere, Paul, 241
revival and revivalism, 638, 735, 784–785, 798
revolution. *see also* war; specific revolutions
20th century mass murders, 570
Age of Revolution, 69, 79, 110
and anarchy, 54, 187, 209, 248, 452, 458
as catharsis, 793–794
counterrevolution, 418–421, 458, 538, 595, 910
environmentalist view of man, 85–86, 90, 143–144, 263 (*see also* environmentalism)
equalitarianism, 186–187 (*see also* equalitarianism)
and the establishment, 458, 462, 881, 943
extremism, 35, 38–39, 78–79, 87–88, 612
and the family, 173, 182, 183
the Great Fear, 761–766
hippy movement, 148, 184
instant gratification, 77–78, 795, 972–973
order from chaos, 461, 482, 648
and perfectionism, 728–729
power to oppress, 909–910
preceded by redefined terms, 847, 850, 902, 987
rejection of Biblical thinking, 155, 208–210, 248, 256
resentment of elitist control, 47–48, 51, 550–551, 980
and Romanticism, 594
statist growth, 229–231, 564, 606
student revolution, 309–312, 314, 356, 649, 789, 794, 871–872, 882, 943
terrorism, 106, 209, 285, 496–497, 648–650, 873, 935
theatrics, 10, 14, 639
violence sign of impotent faith, 54, 100, 258, 435, 444, 467, 482, 508, 581, 615–616, 641, 648–649, 658, 671
revolution (meaning), 728–729
Revolutionary War. *see* American War for Independence
Rickles, Don, 8
right (definition), 985
rights. *see* civil rights
rights (meaning), 985

Riker, William, 465
Rilke, Rainer Maria, 681
Rimbaud, Arthur, 290
risk, 116, 218, 490, 582, 853–855, 880–884, 991. *see also* security
Robespierre, Maximilien, 90, 650, 729, 761, 793–794, 796, 992, 992
Rockefeller Foundation, 23
Rockett, David E., 887
Roe v. Wade, 913, 929
Roland, Marie-Jeanne Phlippon, 848
Roloff, Lester, 43, 341, 520, 638, 643
Roman Catholicism
  division in the church, 375–376, 442, 506–508, 835–836, 888
  and God's Law, 534, 535, 537, 670
  origin of, 391
  problems in, 545
    antinomianism, 381–382, 920, 928–929
    bureaucratic rule, 276, 365
    derelict clergy, 527, 764
    heresies, 680, 726, 727, 729, 743, 744, 745, 746, 752, 753, 758, 767, 772, 775, 780, 784, 820
    latitudinarianism, 279–282
    liberation theology, 263
    loss of nations, 297, 650
    "nepotism," 175
    pharisaical influence, 543
    pietism, 747, 749
    psychological definitions, 578
    rationalism, 828, 831
    saint worship, 962
  state persecution, 835–836, 911
Romanticism, 78–79, 142–143, 511, 533, 594–598, 719, 739, 744, 752, 789, 791–792, 793, 797, 799, 805, 808, 951
Rome, 59, 89, 96, 405, 413, 503, 560, 720, 721, 733, 763, 781, 782, 841, 875, 885, 920, 933, 945. *see also* classical philosophy and culture
  calendar, 558
  clash with Christianity, 45, 63–64, 99–100, 180, 225–226, 269, 273–275, 277, 318, 321–322, 325, 338, 348–350, 364, 378–380, 390–391, 549–550, 624, 835, 861, 889, 938, 940
  concept of the corporation, 433
  Fall of Rome, 121, 172, 258–259, 283–284, 289, 296, 379, 519, 624, 885, 962, 994
  as governing body, 212, 269, 318, 349, 390, 391, 392, 433–434, 441, 637, 682, 708, 767, 837, 911, 938, 939
  Caesar, 100, 624, 632, 636, 637, 835, 837, 839, 939, 991
  "Eternal Rome," 378
  pagan statism, 379, 385, 390–392, 521, 534, 570, 623–624, 911, 940
  people of Rome, 467
  religion, 100, 431, 432, 840, 911, 933
  Roman Catholicism (*see* Roman Catholicism)
Rome, modern, 803
Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, 18, 230, 264, 453, 512, 519, 895
rootlessness and barbarism. *see* barbarism and rootlessness
Rosenstock-Huessy, Eugen, 761, 762, 842, 843, 891
Rotten, Johnny, 762, 764
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 89–91, 120, 121, 232, 309, 453, 511, 530, 550, 594, 648–649, 716, 797, 812, 896, 907, 929, 943, 986, 995
Royalists, 280, 651
Rushdoony, Dorothy, 179, 684, 878
Rushdoony, Isaac, 463, 744
Russell, Bertrand, 636, 792
Russia, 123–124, 210, 283, 340, 418, 482. *see also* Soviet Union
Russian Revolution, 46, 80, 187, 208, 229–230, 341, 491, 564, 648, 873, 879, 953, 988
Russo-Japanese War, 901
Rutledge, Justice Wiley B., 997

S

Sabbath, 134, 185, 218, 553–559
  and blessing, 290, 554, 555, 559, 883
  command to rest, 217, 290–291, 457, 553–557, 558, 883, 966
  command to work, 553–554, 557
sacerdos (Latin), 384
sacraments, 638, 727, 995–996
  baptism (*see* baptism)
  communion (*see* communion)
Sade, the Marquis de, 42, 430–431, 432, 511, 523, 526, 584, 643, 668, 764–765, 794, 798, 982
sadism, 8, 432, 596, 664, 879, 982
sadomasochism, 61, 406, 408, 596, 778, 879. *see also* masochism
saints. *see* specific names
sales tax. *see under* taxation, types of taxes

salvation
false gospels (*see* false gospels)
and God's sovereignty, 85, 388, 412, 585–586, 653, 736
monergism *vs*. synergism, 784–786
predestination (*see* predestination)
universal salvation, 687, 769
salvation (meaning), 597
Salvation Army, 367–368
Salvian, 15, 283, 405
Samaria, 277
Samuel, 354, 859
San Francisco, 284, 361, 764, 862
Sandburg, Carl, 415
Sandlin, Andrew, 130, 784
Sanhedrin, 269, 317, 410, 524, 628
Sarah, 186, 195, 197
Sartorius, 771
Sartre, Jean-Paul, 53, 290, 755, 765, 812, 821
sarx (Greek), 759
Sassamon, John, 329
Satan, 472–475, 646–647
and antinomianism, 103, 428, 472, 822, 832
blaming Satan for sin, 133, 239, 289, 473, 501, 591–593, 646, 682
casting out demons, 409, 474
and dualism, 691, 694–695, 742, 759, 927
evil ambition, 496 (*see also* ambition as evil)
fear of evil, 474–475, 761, 806
Lucifer, 792, 827
in Milton's *Paradise Lost,* 502
pietistically leaving world to Satan, 327, 760
and racism, 717, 733
"seed of the Serpent" theory, 717
statism as satanic, 99–100, 103–104, 194, 351, 472–473, 496
temptation of Christ, 472–473, 597
and ultimate power, 724, 780
satanism, 614, 733–734, 794. *see also* magic and the occult
Sattler, Gary R., 748
Saturnalia, 431, 840
Saudi Arabia, 564
Saul (who became Paul), 277. *see also* Paul the Apostle
Saul, King of Israel, 86, 405
Saunders, John, 428
Savonarola, Girolamo, 366
Schaeffer, Francis, 463
Schaeffer, Franky, 463
Schirrmacher, Thomas, 919
Schleiermacher, Friedrich, 748
Schmemann, Alexander, 767
Schnepper, Jeff A., 624–625, 941
Scholasticism, 756, 814, 824, 827
Schopenhauer, Arthur, 190
Schurz, Carl, 909
Schweitzer, Albert, 121
science
conservation (*see* conservation)
"dawn of freedom and science," 71, 90, 280
natural disasters, 93, 132, 234, 237, 408, 478, 499, 500, 501, 519, 546, 556, 570, 586, 977
"natural law," 524, 526–530, 637
outer space, 714, 871, 941
physics, 755
technology, 71, 162, 208, 242, 257, 262, 285, 289, 310, 487, 681, 871, 908, 947, 949, 953–954
universe as infinite, 11
science, Creationist, 325, 389, 396, 422, 431, 432, 442–443, 476–478, 487, 521, 532, 620, 623, 656–657, 717, 825. *see also* science
Adam naming the animals, 944
stewardship and conservation, 60, 119, 264
view of man, 21–22, 28, 36–39, 62, 111, 174, 185, 189, 251, 304, 331, 357, 431, 473, 508, 533, 571, 577, 622, 625, 684, 757, 765–766, 816, 826, 827, 828, 848, 876, 926, 948, 979, 980
view of nature, 290, 331, 431, 442, 477, 526, 528, 585, 593, 620, 691, 694–695, 718, 799, 823, 831, 925, 926
conservation, 60, 119, 264
view of progress, 500
view of property, 233
science, humanistic, 46, 47, 431–432, 524, 581, 613, 663
blind causality, 557
and Christianity
latitudinarianism, 279–282
process theology (*see* process theology)
view of Genesis, 688, 700, 801
conservation, 40–41, 119–122, 143, 798, 915, 916, 937, 979 (*see also* conservation)
evolution
Darwinism, 35, 203, 332, 461, 473–474, 482, 489, 578, 677, 680, 724, 733, 798, 801, 812
Hegelian-Darwinian mythology, 431

science, humanistic
evolution
Darwinism *(cont'd.)*
and racism, 21, 330
Social Darwinism, 252, 461
god as evolving, 404, 722, 797
society as evolving, 896, 954, 958, 981–982, 997
and the U.S. Constitution, 896, 978
extraterrestrial life, 714
"natural religion," 279–282, 404, 430–432, 441, 442, 444, 472, 474, 491, 526–530, 532–533, 594, 668–669, 797–799, 825, 851, 871, 896, 950
chaos as source of order, 431, 621, 686, 763, 870–871
criminal as pioneer, 511, 798, 981
faith in miraculous origins, 130, 431, 470
meaninglessness, 59, 120, 611, 732, 755, 763, 871, 922, 925, 968
modern mythology, 431–432, 606–607, 733
salvation by science, 193–194, 280–281, 285, 739, 908, 973–974, 988
utopianism, 80, 89, 285, 870–871
science fiction, 285
and society
and social conflict, 35–36, 38, 203, 329–333, 356, 482, 489, 533
social planning, 231, 285, 421, 501, 653, 871, 908, 913, 947, 954, 965, 968, 976, 978–980, 991
eugenics, 252, 462, 571, 575–576, 978–980
genetic engineering, 193–194, 871, 979
murderous, 482, 912
Social Darwinism, 252, 461
society as evolving, 896, 954, 958, 981–982, 997
theory of relativity, 677, 755
view of man, 21–22, 34, 38, 80, 120, 252, 288, 306, 332, 357, 371–374, 482, 570–571, 575–579, 614
abortion research, 607
behaviorism, 954 (*see also* psychiatry and psychology)
depersonalization, 570, 578, 606–607, 849, 976, 979 (*see also* depersonalization)
extinction of mankind, 447
science fiction, 285
Scofield, C. I., 707
Scotland and Scots, 25, 161, 365, 917
Scott, Otto, 13, 25, 35, 90, 164, 307, 412, 428, 542, 546–547, 729, 761, 793–794, 864, 961
Scottish church, 280
Scripture. *see* Bible
Second Coming of Christ, 80–81, 89, 300, 703, 704, 705, 707. *see also* eschatology
security, 226–228, 235, 255–258, 285, 287, 324–325, 450, 523, 545, 588, 880–884, 915, 960, 990–991
faith and protection, 842–845
perseverance of the saints (*see* perseverance of the saints)
risk, 116, 218, 490, 582, 853–855, 880–884, 991
of slavery (*see* slavery, preferred to freedom)
Social Security (*see* Social Security)
social stability (*see under* society when Christian)
welfare (*see* welfare)
security (English), 227
Sedan, 271
Sedlmayr, Hans, 992
Selene, 789
Seminarians for Peace, 447
seminaries, 16, 22–23, 263, 294, 320, 381, 382–383, 387, 410, 509, 599, 622, 666, 689, 740, 785, 810, 838, 967
separation of church and state. *see under* religion and state, church-state issues
Septuagint, 599, 636, 708
Sergieff, John Iliytch ("Father John"), 774
Seven Churches of Asia, 407
Severus, 682
sex education, 198, 310–311, 803
Sex Pistols, 762, 764
sexual abuse. *see* abuse
sexual crimes and perversions. *see also under* antinomianism, results in the culture
adultery (*see* adultery)
bestiality, 171, 430–431, 890
fornication, 100, 340, 533, 632, 634, 646, 793, 799, 853
homosexuality (*see* homosexuality)
incest (*see* incest)
libertine Gnosticism, 687, 696, 700, 709–710, 711, 743, 744
necrophilia, 431
pornography (*see* pornography)

promiscuity, 606, 642, 663, 682, 696, 945
vs. love, 290, 719, 940
public copulation, 283, 512, 798, 840
selfishness, 275, 802
prostitution, 65, 171, 420, 591, 597, 600, 682, 890
rape, 3, 15, 164, 420, 430, 445, 504, 526, 565, 584, 624, 639, 873, 982, 997
statism and deviance, 182–184, 512, 798
sexual revolution, 174, 185, 187, 192, 381, 431, 486, 503, 567, 764, 795
and evasion of responsibility, 61, 552, 795
sexuality. *see also* reproduction
as a biological not moral issue, 304
castration, 759, 772, 783, 841, 886
catharsis, 793–796
and individualism, 684
vs. love, 290, 340, 583, 594–595, 719, 848, 940
nudity, 180–181
sex as "unclean," 183, 699, 743, 744, 769
sex education, 198, 310–311, 803
sex in marriage, 275, 701, 926 (*see also* marriage)
Christian, 186, 657, 696, 698, 706, 743, 744, 745, 748, 802
and women, 709, 714, 801, 802 (*see also* women)
and youth, 117, 174, 930 (*see also* abuse, molestation of children; sex education)
sexually transmitted diseases, 464, 499, 591
AIDS, 15, 407, 486, 523, 755, 795, 841, 920
Shafarevich, Igor, 42, 643
Shakers, 182
Shakespeare, William, 31, 808, 873, 881, 987
Sharpe, Shelby, 420
Shaw, George Bernard, 50, 857, 858
Shelley, 595, 789, 790, 791, 797
Shem, 914
Shem (Hebrew), 323, 914
Shinto law, 919, 981
Shnorhali, Nerses, 270
Shumilin, S. G., 911
Sicarii, 772
Sider, Ronald J., 772, 778
Sierra Ski Ranch, 635
Simenon, Georges, 604, 606
sin. *see also* original sin and depravity
antonyms for, 493–494
communion with sin and death (*see under* communion, and humanism)
confession of, (*see* confession)
in the culture (*see* antinomianism, results in the culture)
depersonalization of sin, 448, 502, 581, 592, 658
depravity (*see* original sin and depravity)
dividing over, 38, 234, 235, 332, 370, 381–383, 390, 427, 454–458, 481–483, 647 (*see also* society when Christian)
evasion of responsibility (*see* environmentalism)
freedom from sin (*see under* Lordship of Christ)
freedom to sin
free will, 489, 491
as a "right," 502–503, 619, 840, 846, 864–866, 945
glorification of, 511, 567, 583
iniquity, 326
original sin (*see* original sin and depravity)
pride of man
blessing expected despite sin, 109, 138, 145, 186, 198, 222, 235, 328, 382, 562, 781
evil ambition, 496–497, 590, 789–792, 963
slavery to, 738, 853, 873–877, 879, 887, 945
statist promotion of sin (*see under* immorality of humanism)
wages of sin is death, 145–147, 445, 455, 463, 473, 481, 484, 486, 491, 503, 513–514, 684, 696, 735, 740, 820, 875, 883, 915, 921
sin (defined), 499, 503
sin (Hebrew words for), 493
Sinai, 907
Sisera, 203, 855, 883
Sixteenth Amendment. *see under* Constitution of the United States
Skanderbeg, 950
Skoptsky, 772
Slaughter-House cases, 848
slave (etymology), 885
slavery, 167–168
and debt, 207–210, 485, 862–863
emancipation by the state, 933
history of, 167–168, 885–887
in the Bible, 193, 234, 580
Christian and Jewish treatment of slaves, 885–886

slavery
history of *(cont'd.)*
Christian hostility to, 886–887
in paganism, 132, 390, 391, 580, 885–886
in the South, 31, 164, 167, 651–652
people as property, 40–42, 471
women property of men, 41, 182, 186, 575–577, 594–595, 605–606, 691, 714, 744 (*see also* women, and abuse)
preferred to freedom, 846, 852–856, 858–859, 861, 880–881
private ownership, 885
result of antinomianism, 3–4, 392, 471, 539, 597, 734, 798
to sin, 738, 853, 873–877, 879, 887, 945
slave labor camps, 717, 719, 877, 881, 885, 935, 965, 968
the slave trade, 35, 167–168, 886
slavery of the masses, 847–851
abortion, 42
education, 935, 953
financial, 116, 561, 607, 855, 880–881, 945, 948–949, 953
by law, 997
love of death, 428
love of slavery, 846
politics, 399, 826
pornography, 41–43
religion, 885
science and technology, 908, 953
social amnesia, 959
to the state, 552, 571, 630, 733, 880–881, 933, 948–949, 953, 964, 989, 990–991, 993
revolt of the masses, 653
through fear, 877
Slavs, 885
Sloane, Eric, 64, 65–66
Smith, Adam, 668
Smith, Captain John, 651
Smith, Justice Theophilus, 298
Smith, Reverend Samuel, 845
soap opera religion, 397, 398
social contract theory, 48, 451–453, 458, 550, 907, 991
social planning, 256–257, 274, 489, 501, 852, 907, 910–913, 988
change through warfare, 564–565
and conservation, 973 (*see also* conservation)
controlling money, 208, 212, 221, 250–251, 264–265, 490, 501, 521, 560, 561, 571, 624–625, 649, 654, 838, 853, 869, 900, 939, 940–941, 965, 976
dumbing down the masses, 294–295, 307, 314
and the family, 182–184, 198–199, 364
licensure and control, 436, 753, 861
population control, 52, 60, 331, 624, 912, 953, 964, 978–979
predestination by the state, 274–275, 540, 740, 871, 907, 936
promoting sins, 930–931, 945
abortion, 552, 839, 916, 931, 965, 979 (*see also* abortion)
euthanasia, 916
homosexuality, 552, 916, 979, 987
victim mentality, 357
replacing work and morality, 284, 519, 588, 945, 976
resentment of, 47–48, 51, 550–551, 980
scientific, 193, 231, 252, 421, 501, 871
urban renewal, 901
welfare (*see* welfare, statist)
Social Security, 53, 61, 68, 223–228, 606
socialism
and economics, 116, 264–265, 948
education under, 327, 859
enemies of, 467
and fascism, 909, 931
in Germany, 897 (*see also* Nazi Germany)
vs. God's Law, 44, 327, 540, 561, 657
humanism of, 280
imperialism and, 496, 961
and Karl Marx, 356, 908 (*see also* Marx, Karl)
love of death, 42, 643, 990
and mental health, 610–611
peoples' desire for, 78, 278
political salvation, 972
and science, 853, 908
and Social Darwinism, 252
socialization
through coercion (*see under* society when humanistic)
through education (*see* education in humanism, and social order)
society (English), 255
society when Christian
"Christendom," 284, 408, 434, 461, 681, 744, 778, 887, 888, 895, 958, 959, 988
"City of God," 255–260, 287, 383, 393, 407–408, 435, 977
community, 211, 331, 521, 604–608
based on common Creation, 21,

36–37, 185, 188–189, 203, 252–253, 289, 530
aliens, 233–236, 508
based on common enemies, 347, 506
based on covenant, 446–450, 454–458, 550, 564, 655, 684
and the atonement, 85, 333, 431, 546, 653–655, 873–877, 879
communion (*see* communion, of the saints)
covenant citizenship, 235
dividing only over sin, 38, 234, 235, 332, 370, 381–383, 390, 427, 454–458, 481–483, 647
decentralization, 124, 172, 193, 198, 276–278, 284, 605, 630, 944, 994
dominion, 154, 185, 233, 697, 826 (*see also* Dominion Mandate)
as instruments of God's order, 112–113, 115, 117, 125, 147, 188, 322, 357–359, 363, 369, 391, 403, 408, 421, 425–427, 432, 442–443, 466, 487, 491, 492, 503, 521–522, 559, 765–766, 863
process of growth and maturity, 158, 160, 487
servant ministry, 107–108, 412–414, 428, 437, 471, 491, 518, 603, 607
social stability, 37, 39, 198, 226, 284, 554, 655
allegiance, 506–510
harmony of interests, 330
society when humanistic, 255–260, 261–264, 273–275, 284, 351, 383, 435, 603, 794, 914–916
city life, 287, 557, 605, 901, 915–916
class and social warfare (*see* class and social warfare)
culture (*see* antinomianism, results in the culture)
domination, 331, 357, 434, 491, 697, 765, 826, 908 (*see also* totalitarianism)
and envy, 249–254
through terror, 105–108
individualism (*see* individualism)
international relationships (*see* international relationships)
social instability, 183, 194, 221, 222, 226–228, 305–308, 452, 610, 626, 631, 655, 761, 882, 938
and aggressive de-Christianization, 110–113, 284, 588, 637, 975, 982–983
barbarism and rootlessness, 67–70, 72, 117, 143, 162, 226, 239, 248, 258–260, 284, 290, 294–295, 356, 425, 512–513, 579, 581, 606, 723–724, 849, 956
birth rate, 123–124
class and social warfare (*see* class and social warfare)
cultural suicide, 34, 58–61, 72, 88, 110, 174, 184, 187, 189, 275, 325, 648–650, 772
revolution and anarchy, 54, 187, 209, 248, 452, 458 (*see also* anarchy; revolution)
role-playing, 191 (*see also* appearances and form replacing reality)
socialization through coercion, 32, 39, 49–51, 107, 110, 173–174, 183, 325, 332, 395, 399–400, 445, 446–450, 552, 579, 587–589, 611, 654–655, 838, 912, 932, 954, 973
coexistence, 446–450
"Great Community / Society," 27–29, 257, 458, 610, 954, 959
international relationships (*see* international relationships)
patriotism, 299
unity over diversity, 303–304, 359, 422–423, 441–445, 490, 606, 918, 933, 934
welfare (*see* welfare, statist)
toleration of religion (*see under* religion and state)
Socinianism, 280, 376, 377. *see also* Unitarianism
socius (Latin), 255
Socrates, 668, 719, 812, 960, 967
Sodom, 584
Solomon, 58, 138, 150, 160, 218, 427, 491, 775
Soloviev, V. S., 767
Solzhenitsyn, Alexander, 42, 643, 953, 954
Sontag, Susan, 755
Sorokin, Pitirm, 250, 293
soteriology. *see* salvation
South Carolina, 837
Southern states of America, 35, 134, 258, 297, 299, 420, 452, 512, 614, 651, 652
sovereignty
and taxation, 173, 179, 265, 861, 869, 933, 938, 941–942, 990

sovereignty *(cont'd.)*
and the U.S. Constitution, 321–322, 889, 911–912, 941
sovereignty (meaning), 935
sovereignty of God, 427, 476–478, 555–556, 623–628, 629–639, 727–728, 730, 738, 784–786, 792, 826, 828, 889, 891, 918, 921, 927, 935, 940, 941
blessing, 492, 545, 846
and history, 300, 555
and law, 935
Lordship of Christ (*see* Lordship of Christ)
predestination (*see* predestination)
in predestination (*see* predestination)
and salvation, 85, 388, 412, 585–586, 653, 736
monergism *vs.* synergism, 784–786
vs. statism, 340, 936, 938, 954–955
and suffering, 602
sovereignty of man
in paganism, 132–133, 274, 550, 623–624, 630, 633–634, 736, 738
pagan statism, 276, 284, 340, 435, 518, 521, 550, 570, 579, 623–626, 652, 733, 871, 911, 938–939, 971, 978, 992
in predestination (*see* predestination, by man)
statist claim, 321, 435, 436, 441, 452, 927, 933–935, 937–945, 988–989 (*see also* statism)
Soviet Asia, 105–108, 123–124
Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan, 105–108
Soviet Union, 19, 43, 80, 111–112, 121, 123–124, 136, 178, 229–232, 239, 264–265, 308, 340, 399, 407, 428, 444, 452, 496, 626. *see also* Russia
Bolsheviks, 229–230, 873 (*see also* Russian Revolution)
Gorbachev, Mikhail, 46, 48, 80
GRU, 881
KGB, 107, 848
Lavrov, Peter, 208
Lenin, Vladimir, 105, 121, 123, 208, 230–232
Stalin, Joseph, 19, 264, 357, 876–877
sowing and reaping, 12, 77–81, 100, 192–193, 214–219
Spain and Spanish, 80, 105, 258, 270, 299, 917
Spencer, Herbert, 533
Spiritualism, 801
sports, 37, 191, 314, 368, 525, 752, 961, 972
sports, spectator, 191, 972
Sprock, Vern, 635
St. Louis, 784
Stalin, Joseph, 19, 149, 230, 264, 357, 432, 482, 649, 716, 873–874, 876–877, 911, 958
Stang, Alan, 630
Stanley, Charles, 86
state
citizenry (*see* citizenry)
civil government (*see* civil government)
elections and voting (*see* voting and elections)
politics (*see* politics)
social planning (*see* social planning)
statism (*see* statism)
statism. *see also* religion and state
abdication of true authority, 191, 193, 379, 435, 790–791
and architecture, 378, 519, 860, 990
and Christian duty, 96, 337–342, 378–380, 392, 394, 397–398, 421, 442–445, 518, 530, 560–562, 561, 624, 629–639, 630, 733, 931, 945, 973, 980 (*see also* politics, and Christian duty)
authority of Christ, 325–327, 337–342, 518, 936, 938, 954–955
destruction of society, 519, 965
coercion and cultivating fear, 485, 490, 508–509, 546, 564–565, 568–572, 610, 658, 761–766, 935, 953, 990, 992–993
armament, 110, 124
police state, 258, 284, 597
as criminal agency, 435, 467, 518, 519, 523, 539–540, 548–549, 582–583, 626, 631, 635, 915–916
drugs and statism, 582, 610
dumbing down the masses, 294–295, 307, 314
the economy (*see* economy, statist involvement)
exploitation of religion (*see under* religion and state)
prison system (*see* prisons)
promotion of sin (*see* immorality of humanism, statist promotion of sin)
theft or control of private property, 47, 80, 183, 298, 327, 490, 856, 861, 867–869, 901, 909, 964, 973, 976
use of war, 501, 563–565

welfare (*see* welfare, statist)
god walking on earth, 10, 339, 391–392, 434–435, 441–442, 518, 561, 625, 635, 733, 845, 849, 861, 909, 911, 928, 939, 941, 973
elitist rule (*see* elitist rule)
human sacrifice, 275, 860, 877, 950, 952, 953
execution for political incorrectness, 968
mass murders, 953, 961, 964, 966
Molech worship, 327–328, 942
and paganism (*see* paganism, and statism)
revolutionary claim to sovereignty, 321, 435, 436, 441, 452, 927, 933–935, 937–945, 939, 941, 988–989
vs. sovereignty of Christ, 340, 936, 938, 954–955
salvation by the state, 46–47, 63, 102–103, 179, 204, 239, 303–304, 331–332
remaking man, 173, 357, 490, 578–579, 643, 655, 728–729, 943, 957, 958, 971
revealing hearts of individuals, 261, 659, 852–855, 854, 901–902, 912, 961, 973, 977, 991–992, 995
state as fundamentally moral, 115, 415, 427, 428, 467, 482, 490, 519, 570, 635, 801, 907–908, 934, 936, 954, 977, 992–993
Towers of Babel, 32, 83, 147, 256, 584, 914–916, 918, 977
will to be god, 9–12, 79, 90, 100–101, 103–104, 166, 173, 184, 261, 264, 274, 396, 415, 445, 464, 508, 550, 862, 907, 980, 990
hypocrisy and myths, 5, 10–11, 13, 16, 18–19, 107, 115, 184, 212, 227, 229, 239, 252, 293–294, 297, 299, 415, 435, 446, 467, 518, 615–616, 909, 948, 953, 972, 973, 990, 994
social planning (*see* social planning)
and treason, 538, 616
STDs. *see* sexually transmitted diseases
Stephen I, 353
Stephen of Moldavia, 950
Sterling, Claire, 582, 583
Stevens, Justice John Paul, 111
Stirner, Max, 288, 419, 511
Stoicism, 92, 364, 533, 668, 698, 710, 797, 922, 923
Storrs, Emory, 883
Story, Justice Joseph, 891
Strachey, Lytton, 503, 892
student movement, 78, 143, 309, 314, 356, 794, 871, 882, 943
subsidies
for education, 943
private, 246
and Rome, 364, 945
and slavery, 193, 881
statist, 253, 257–258, 521, 836, 838, 853, 859, 881, 939, 941, 943, 995
subsidizing evil, 407, 945
suffering, 52, 269, 597, 602, 748, 771–775. *see also* masochism
and God's sovereignty, 602
sufficiency of Scripture, 620, 817
Sufi, 759
suicide
cultural suicide, 34, 58–61, 72, 88, 110, 174, 184, 187, 189, 275, 325, 648–650, 772
evasion of responsibility, 34, 358, 505, 764
cultural irresponsibility, 5, 243, 296–300, 428–429, 519, 585, 607, 610, 764–765, 920
and love of death (*see under* death)
result of antinomianism, 5, 428, 744, 841
of students, 5, 305–306, 590
summum bonum (Latin), 416, 992
superego (Freud), 357
Supreme Court
abortion rulings, 86–87, 913, 929
and conscription, 900
interpretation of Constitution, 542, 546, 848, 890, 899, 901–902
law and morality, 4, 890, 996, 997
prayer in schools, 109–111
sanctity of life, 996
voiding the NRA, 230
Sweden and Swedish, 25, 47, 306, 344, 444, 930, 953, 954
Swedenborg and Swedenborgianism, 676, 681, 686, 972, 993
Swett, John, 298
Swift, Jonathan, 430
Symmachus, Aurelius, 273
syn (Greek), 784
synagoge (Greek), 270, 317
syncretism, 273, 675, 769–770

syncretism of Christians
in education, 16, 55, 125, 172, 235, 304, 308, 327–328, 395, 615, 644, 697, 782, 857–859
in evangelism, 731–732, 947, 968 (*see also* evangelism, "easy believism")
with paganism, 138–140, 157, 277, 384–385, 392, 422–424, 426, 434, 461, 626, 703, 722–725, 733, 736–737, 738, 758, 767–770, 793, 887
in philosophy, 818, 922–929
synergism *vs.* monergism, 784–786
Synod of Whitby, 340, 375
synods. *see* specific Councils
Syria and Syrians, 124, 135, 156, 284, 886
systematic theology, 373, 512, 723, 724, 747
Szasz, Thomas, 609

T

Taiwan, 72
taxation
Biblical, 277–278, 517, 521, 561, 571, 860–861, 938
churches and taxes, 101, 345, 436–437, 783, 836–838, 855, 888, 929, 931, 937–945
501(c)(3), 942
destruction of society, 283, 284, 453, 485, 501, 518, 649, 915, 973
blaming taxation for evil, 115
decapitalizing businesses, 263, 264, 501, 915–916
and poverty, 11, 250, 588
robbing widows and orphans, 3, 250, 263
theft through taxation, 3, 69, 183, 212, 221, 250, 263, 287, 490, 861, 867–869, 945, 973, 976, 984
Internal Revenue Service, 540, 562, 625, 632, 838, 845, 852, 889, 941
misuse of public funds, 940
redistribution of the wealth, 490, 654–655, 858
result of man's irresponsibility, 852–855, 858, 869
and sovereignty, 173, 179, 265, 561, 861, 869, 933, 938, 941–942, 990
tax-dodging, 942
tax-revolt, 86, 560–561, 853, 869
types of taxes
income tax, 250, 345, 436, 453, 501, 855, 945
inflation as a tax, 501
inheritance and death taxes, 3, 69, 183, 212, 250, 263, 861, 945, 976
land tax, 861, 863, 937
local, 453
sales tax, 501
Social Security (*see* Social Security)
Taylor, Richard K., 778
technology, 71, 162, 208, 242, 257, 262, 285, 289, 310, 487, 681, 871, 947, 949, 953–954
teleios (Greek), 141–142, 156
television, 40, 163, 237, 343, 356, 366, 369, 520, 805, 972
Temple of God, 83, 224, 270–272, 324, 398, 409, 427, 692, 861, 888, 995, 997. *see also* Levites; Old and New Testaments
terrorism, 106, 209, 285, 496–497, 648–650, 873, 935
Tertullian, 275, 353–354, 691, 693–694, 704–707
Tetzel, John, 77
Texas, 929
Thanatos, 795
Thatcher, Margaret, 418
theft. *see also* private property
from the church, 80, 340
execution of children, 284, 444
and the family, 284, 318, 964
forbidden by God's Law, 452, 508, 553, 583, 664, 966, 984
failure to tithe, 536, 553
inflation, 207–208, 284, 553
legitimately acquiring wealth, 37, 250–252, 318, 651
by the state, 221, 984
result of antinomianism, 102–103, 207–208, 221, 226, 284, 287, 445, 527, 583, 584, 588, 650, 864–865, 892, 976, 982
natural law, 430, 526–527
sin nature, 500, 646
and security, 226, 287, 588
by the state
control or confiscation of property, 47, 80, 298, 327, 340, 856, 861, 867–869, 901, 964, 973
fascism, 909
via taxation, 3, 69, 183, 212, 221, 250, 263, 287, 490, 861, 867–869, 945, 973, 976, 984
forbidden by God's Law, 183, 221, 984

theocracy (meaning), 517–522
Theodotus of Byzantium, 720
theology. *see* God
theonomy, 294, 523, 526–530, 542, 665, 722, 985, 992. *see also* God's Law
  fundamental premises, 167, 177–178, 189, 193, 246, 252, 333, 339–340, 403, 454–458, 493–498, 500–501, 508, 510, 519, 523–525, 538, 544–545, 553, 566–567, 568, 665, 709, 712, 840–841, 966
theosis, 767–770, 828
Third World, 23, 143, 772
Thirty-Nine Articles, 601
Thomasius, 771
Thompson Jr., William Hale ("Big Bill"), 298–299
Thomson, James, 430
Thornton, E. M., 794, 795, 796
Tibet, 111
Tikhon of Moscow, 773–774
Tiller, George (Wichita abortionist), 237
Tillich, Paul, 513, 677, 682
Timothy, 703
Titanism, 496, 789–792
Titans, 789, 791
tithing
  administration of, 277–278, 338, 437, 517, 518, 521, 857–859, 945
  church usage of tithe, 338
  debt to God, 209, 861
  failure to tithe, 215, 752, 855, 861, 942
    revolt against, 222, 560–562
  function of, 125, 520, 945
  neglecting, 215, 222
  and obedience, 400
  offerings, 353, 630
  poor tithe, 225, 338, 413
  requirements of, 236, 327–328, 536, 545, 560–562, 858–859, 895, 938, 966
  and state tax, 857–859, 938, 943–944
tobacco, 542, 547, 590–593
Tocqueville, Alexis de, 246
todah (Hebrew), 358
Tolstoy, Leo, 31, 663, 716, 773
Tolstoy, Nikolai, 873, 877
Torquemada, Tomas de, 271
torture, 177, 210, 568–572, 586, 935
total depravity. *see* original sin and depravity, doctrine of total depravity
totalitarianism. *see also* authority, in humanism; statism
  in the church (*see* church government, totalitarianism and abuse)
  coercion and cultivating fear (*see under* statism, destruction of society)
  nature of man, 544–547, 600, 881, 928, 995
  power to oppress, 909–910
Tower of Babel, 32, 83, 147, 256, 584, 914–916, 918, 977
Transcendentalism, 688–689, 691, 792, 801
transmigration of the soul, 708, 709, 711, 716
transvestism, 536
travail (in translation), 495
treason, 538, 616
Tremellius, John Immanuel, 271
Trent, Council of, 534
trials and God's blessing, 162, 647
trials in court. *see* courts
Trilateral Commission, 943
Trinitarianism, 272, 354, 376, 687, 720, 721, 723. *see also* God, the Trinity
Trinity College at Cambridge, 43
Trotsky, Leon, 230–232, 716
Troubadours, 683
Troy, ancient, 290
trust in God, 553–556, 620, 782–783, 875. *see also* faith
  anxiety, 95–96, 118, 554–555, 556–557, 760
  rejoicing, 718, 921
trustee family, 202, 233–234, 434, 718, 959. *see also* family
Turgenev, Ivan, 773
Turkey, 105, 112, 124, 125, 180, 855–856, 951, 952
  Ottoman, 71, 106, 950–951
Turner, Charles, 326
Twain, Mark, 329, 543
tyranny (meaning), 911
tyrant (meaning), 944

U

Ukraine, 210
Ulfilas, 731–732
Ulysses, 796
unconditional love, 145–147, 153, 399, 407, 485, 486, 491, 501, 538, 712
unemployment, 5, 227, 257, 291, 314, 606. *see also* Social Security
Unitarianism, 117, 148–149, 155, 280, 298, 366, 376, 397, 461, 462, 463, 689, 720, 723, 776–777, 792
United Nations, 441–442

United States of America, 165, 174, 297–298, 331–332, 367, 407, 627, 757, 881–882, 904, 909, 958, 962
Chinafication, 125
civil government
Congress, 166, 178, 204, 209, 223, 224, 235, 263, 298, 571, 589, 600, 614, 838, 852–853, 857, 890, 915, 948, 976, 982
court system, 178, 223, 231, 233, 305, 346, 504, 591, 609, 610, 624, 625, 632, 739, 838, 857, 892, 975 (*see also* Supreme Court)
Department of State, 947
federal government, 180, 221, 263, 321, 337, 343, 345, 436, 453, 504, 537, 889, 891, 900, 975
House of Representatives, 326
president, 263
state government, 321, 326, 337, 345, 453, 537, 852, 889
Supreme Court (*see* Supreme Court)
U.S. Government Printing Office, 542
the White House, 420, 642, 838, 845, 853, 930
Constitution (*see* Constitution of the United States)
Federal Reserve System, 900
Marxism in, 230–232, 263
military, 564
Pledge of Allegiance, 932
policies, 436, 452–453, 456
conservation, 40–41
foreign policy, 448, 640–641, 642, 772, 899–902, 903–904, 965, 975
foreign aid, 264–265, 331–332
Medicare, 68, 258
the New Deal, 512, 519
pornography, 445
politics and politicians, 191, 192, 487, 995 (*see also* politics)
taxation in, 837–838 (*see also* taxation)
Internal Revenue Service (IRS), 180, 263, 289, 337, 342, 345, 436, 485, 490, 540, 562, 624–625, 632
tax revolt, 560, 562
United States Bank, 900
Washington, D.C., 167, 196, 283, 609, 803, 869, 931, 979
the White House, 420, 642, 838, 845, 853, 930
United States v. Reynolds, 889–890
unity
in Christ (*see* communion, of the saints)
and humanistic socialization, 303–304, 359, 422–423, 441–445, 490, 606, 918, 933, 934
universality or catholicity. *see* catholicity or universality
universities and colleges. *see also* specific institutions
academic freedom, 319
capitalization of, 262–263, 265
elitism in, 72, 203, 967
faculties and professors, 554, 605, 666, 825
peer pressure in, 20
reliance on past greatness, 299
seminaries (*see* seminaries)
statism in, 572, 838, 871–872, 943
students, 45, 68, 314, 356, 494, 723–724, 865
University of Budapest, 951
University of California, 263, 503
University of Halle, 753
Uranus, 789
urban renewal, 901
Urey, Harod Clayton, 130
utopian humanism, 46, 89–91, 108, 121, 124, 155, 184, 193–194, 199, 229, 231–232, 239, 256–257, 285, 357, 400, 429, 447–448, 462, 489, 490, 571, 572, 595, 610, 729, 739, 850, 870–871, 896–897, 908, 915, 918, 953, 965, 972–973, 978–980, 988, 990–991, 993
Uzziah, 338

V

Valentinus, 695
Vambery, Arminius, 951
Van Til, Cornelius, 51, 130, 143, 416, 468, 469, 471, 527–530, 621, 665, 667, 808, 809, 812, 814, 815, 817, 819, 823–824
Van Til, Henry, 330
vengeance, 259–260, 539, 984. *see also* justice
veterans of war, 224
victim mentality. *see under* environmentalism
victims of crime. *see under* crime
victorious living, 802. *see also* responsibility of Christians

Vietnam and Vietnamese, 25, 78, 331–332, 778
Vikings, 886
violence. *see also* pacifism; war
  abuse (*see* abuse)
  result of antinomianism, 583, 733, 744–745, 862
  sign of impotent faith, 54, 100, 258, 435, 444, 467, 482, 508, 581, 615–616, 641, 648–649, 658, 671
virgin birth, 389, 469, 691, 713, 721, 756
virtue (English), 183
vocation, vision, and calling, 187–188, 192, 244, 253, 278, 408, 427, 436, 495–498, 508, 518, 602, 766, 789–792
Voegelin, Eric, 688, 689
Voltaire, 288, 432, 650, 798
"voluntary family," 930
voting and elections
  bribing the people, 995
  in "children's rights," 174
  and Christian duty, 78, 88, 326–327, 338–339, 464, 632, 760, 931, 983 (*see also* politics, and Christian duty)
  democracy (*see* democracy)
  for evil, 428, 453, 977
  as a formality, 136, 369, 452
  judging candidates, 192, 326–327, 365, 369, 392, 453, 462, 509, 518, 897, 977, 983
  salvation by, 81, 897, 913, 973, 981
  social contract (*see* social contract theory)
vouchers for education, 857–859
vox populi, vox dei. see under democracy

W

Wallace v. Jaffree, 109, 464
war. *see also* revolution; specific wars
  20th century mass murders, 570, 586
  antiwar protest, 60, 78, 331–332, 591, 593, 640–641 (*see also* international relationships, world peace)
  Biblical warfare, 60, 563–565, 612, 640–641
  class and social warfare (*see* class and social warfare)
  and economics, 264
  and God's judgment, 146–147, 408
  hinders education, 318, 958
  lack of communion, 34 (*see also* class and social warfare)
  localizing evil in enemy, 505
  nuclear warfare, 60
  and statism, 501, 563–565 (*see also* revolution, statist growth)
  terrorism, 106, 209, 285, 496–497, 648–650, 873, 935
  veterans, 224
Warhol, Andy, 996
Warner, Samuel J., 55, 778, 779
Washington, D.C., 167, 196, 283, 609, 803, 869, 931, 979
  the White House, 420, 642, 838, 845, 853, 930
Washington, George, 345, 648, 843, 862, 889, 890, 899, 903, 904
  Farewell Address, 862, 889, 899
Watts, Isaac, 780
wealth, 240–264, 435–436
  acquiring, 37, 250–252, 318, 651
  bankers and wealth, 881–882
  as a blessing, 241, 244–245, 261–262
  as "evil," 250, 261, 940
  fiat prosperity, 79, 208, 244, 263, 264, 291, 487, 649, 756, 880
  intangible wealth, 258–260, 290, 403
    relationships, 211
  land as, 649
  vs. money, 208, 211–213, 240, 244, 264, 649 (*see also* money)
  private property, 233–236, 710, 744, 867–869, 909
    Biblical view, 233, 984
    control by family (*see* family, basic to social order, property control)
    statist theft or control, 47, 80, 183, 298, 327, 856, 861, 867–869, 901, 909, 964, 973, 976
  rich people, 35–39, 213, 241, 245, 250, 252, 261, 287, 409, 560, 588, 605, 764, 938, 945, 985
  static view of wealth, 121, 985
  trust in, 264
wealth (Hebrew words for), 241
Weaver, John, 101–102
Weaver, Richard, 329, 741
Webster, Noah, 656
weddings, 19, 70
welfare
  private, 868, 979 (*see also* giving and charity)
    the church, 243, 277, 318, 338, 365, 367, 370, 384–386, 412–413, 437, 471, 508, 517, 518, 519, 616, 782, 790, 826, 938, 939, 940

welfare
private *(cont'd.)*
the family, 173, 178, 179, 182–183, 224, 226 (*see also* family, basic to social order)
statist, 173, 183, 204, 216, 224, 225, 258, 262, 325, 361, 385, 413–414, 427, 467, 546, 605, 615, 845, 853, 857–859, 868–869, 899, 915, 939, 995
Social Security, 53, 61, 68, 223–228, 606
widows and orphans (*see* widows and orphans)
Wellhausen, Julius, 396, 524
Wells, H. G., 285, 707, 973–974
Welsh, 25, 917
Wesley, John, 772, 798
Western Church, 365, 426. *see also* East-West Schism; specific denominations
Westminster Confession of Faith, 134, 311, 388, 477
Larger Catechism, 185, 477, 503
Shorter Catechism, 11, 62, 79, 185, 188, 272, 311, 358, 372, 481, 493, 765, 795
Whiskey Rebellion, 882
Whisner, Reverend Levi, 341, 643
Whitby, Council of, 340, 375
White House, 420, 521, 642, 838, 844, 845, 930
Whitefield, George, 280, 798
Whitehead, Alfred North, 677
Whitehead, John, 443
whites, 482, 497, 606, 717, 848, 985. *see also* racism
Whitman, Walt, 579, 757
Wichita abortion clinic, 237
widows and orphans
robbing of, 3, 201, 263, 265
welfare of, 173, 224–225, 385, 413, 508, 774
Wieman, Henry Nelson, 677
Wilberforce, William, 718
Wilde, Oscar, 289, 307
Wildmon, Donald E., 142
Wilkins, John, 279–280, 282
William of Ockham, 665
William the Conqueror, 13
Williams, George Hunston, 276
Wilson, "Flip," 133
Wilson, Governor Pete, 293
Wilson, James, 846
Wilson, Thomas, 497
Wilson, Woodrow, 105, 203, 230, 640–641, 903, 963
Witherspoon, John, 280
Wittenberg, 842, 843
Wittgenstein, Ludwig, 792, 815, 821
women
and abuse
adultery and counseling, 372, 407, 448, 633, 774
defined in terms of men, 185–186
distrust of, 142–143
female circumcision, 802
harems, 125, 462, 463
husband abuse, 874, 878
as property of men, 41, 182, 186, 575–577, 594–595, 605–606, 691, 714, 744
wife abuse, 54–55, 196, 201, 202, 362, 406, 407, 507, 575, 576, 577, 605–606, 773, 774 (*see also* women, protected by God's Law)
childbearing, 495, 542, 699, 795, 964 (*see also* children)
dress and modesty, 146, 162, 202, 536, 537–538, 644
"enlightened" clubs, 165, 209
feminism, 45, 189, 191, 194, 195–200, 202, 203, 280, 355–357, 396–397, 434, 504, 582, 642, 644, 665, 682, 687, 688, 800, 801, 926, 962, 973
equal rights amendment to U.S. Constitution, 355
in Rome, 687
women's liberation movement, 191, 195–200, 434, 642
ministry to
unwed mothers, 413
widows and orphans (*see* widows and orphans)
protected by God's Law, 186, 195–200, 201–204, 406–407, 577, 605–606, 641–642
daughters given inheritance, 67
from the military, 644
role in the church, 195, 199–200, 396–397, 402, 699, 703, 718, 838, 962
silence in the church, 319
role in the home, 718, 959 (*see also* family, authority and headship)
childbearing, 495, 542, 699, 795, 964
and sexuality, 709, 714, 801, 802
Woolf, Virginia, 892
words

defined (*see* specific words or phrases)
importance of defining, 847–851, 864, 901–902, 944, 987
translated (*see* specific words or phrases)
without meaning, 666
Wordsworth, William, 143, 533, 739, 797
work. *see also* responsibility; individual responsibility
as a blessing, 495
commanded in Sabbath Law, 553–554, 557
contempt for work, 92, 472–473, 487, 651–652, 973–974
growth *vs.* instant gratification, 77–81, 84, 90–91, 92–93, 161–163, 166, 191–192, 495, 547, 985
instant gratification *vs.* growth, 53–54, 77–81, 158, 295, 314, 473, 487, 489–492, 597, 607, 706, 850, 884, 973, 981, 985–986
Protestant work ethic, 37, 65–66, 72, 130, 191–192, 224–225, 554, 608
public schools and labor (*see* education in humanism, and social order)
replaced with social planning, 284, 519, 588, 945, 976
vision, calling, and vocation, 187–188, 192, 244, 253, 278, 408, 427, 436, 495–498, 508, 518, 602, 766, 789–792
workers. *see* business, labor
world peace. *see under* international relationships
World War I, 590, 596, 963
Christendom, 284
post-era, 105, 112, 641, 861, 897, 961
pre-era, 71, 368, 625, 637, 640–641, 904
reasons for, 903
World War II, 873, 904
indifference to Christianity, 18–19
piracy of the Soviet Union, 264
post-era, 297
anti-Semitism, 271
child-centered culture, 880, 883
Christianity in, 80, 110, 368, 809, 857
cult of victimization, 597
dislocation from history, 958
financial practices, 69–70, 242, 485
foreign relations, 209, 903–904
meaning of inheritance, 67
meaningless constitutions, 895
statism, 314, 345, 582
pre-era, 284
Worldwide Church of God case, 383, 838
worldwide injustice and antinomianism, 146–147, 457, 458, 501, 519, 548–552, 563–565, 568–572, 584–586, 883
Wright, Frank Lloyd, 66
Wycliffe, John, 39

Y

Yale, 555
Yamashita case, 997
Yeats, William Butler, 9, 297, 681
Yeghisheh, 744
youth, 174, 307
Christian Reconstructionists, 72, 519–520
and the church, 277, 368, 494, 539, 658, 703, 841
inheritance (*see* inheritance)
problem youth
crime and gangs, 444, 583, 849, 862, 920
disillusionment and meaninglessness, 356, 360–361, 428, 665, 762, 764–765
suicide, 5, 305–306, 590, 765
and humanistic education, 117, 239, 257, 307–308, 314, 658, 723–724, 862, 957
rebellion and barbarism, 50, 54, 61–62, 68, 72, 258–259, 330, 538, 591, 762, 764–765, 865, 883, 920, 930, 957
and sex, 117, 174, 930
willful immaturity, 580 (*see also* immaturity)
state ownership of, 46, 198, 497
student movement, 78, 143, 309, 314, 356, 794, 871, 882, 943

Z

Zenobia, 721
Zeus, 64, 467, 789
Zinzendorf, Nicolaus, 748
Zipporah, 967
Zophar, 729
Zoroastrianism, 715
Zulu, 600

HISTORY INDEX

Ancient World (Creation–A.D. 300)

Garden of Eden, 487
Fall of man, 119, 133 , 355, 486, 492, 592, 822,
Noah, 454, 456, 914
Sodom, 584
Balaam, 99–100, 369–370
Elijah, 139, 338, 341
Elisha, 156, 160
657: Byzantine Empire, 175
550–480: Persian Empire, 285, 792
522–486: Darius of Persia, 911
465–424: Artaxerxes, 988
c. 470–399: Socrates, 668, 719, 812, 960, 967,
c. 468: Aristides the Just
    Ostracized from Athens 250
c. 428–c. 347: Plato, 304 331, 405, 668, 918
    Rationalism and natural law, 531, 533, 797
    Writes *Republic*, 41–42, 172, 549, 964
    At odds with Athenians as intellectual aristocracy, 960, 966, 967
412–323: Diogenes, 922
384–322: Aristotle, 405, 828
    View of god as a limiting concept, 304, 809
    View of man, 79, 820, 826
    Rationalism and natural law, 531, 533, 569, 570, 797, 824
    Formulates literary theory of catharsis, 793, 795
    Writes *Politics,* 303, 936
    Influence of (see Aristotelianism in the General Index), 532, 708, 713
c. 85–42: Gaius Cassius Longinus, 882
65–8: Horace, 89
43–c. 17: Ovid, 275
24 B.C.–14 A.D.: Augustus Caesar
    9 B.C.: Dedicated the altar of peace on the Field of Mars, 100
Philip, 227
Greece
    Anti-God thinking leads to superstition, illogic, 763
        Platonic influence in, 826

Dualism in, 758
Coins term "natural law," 531
Pagan practices in, 470
Doctors usually slaves, 132
Use of torture in, 569
Sexual license grows as Greece loses freedom, 945
Origin of the term "hypocrite," 599
Death of ancient Greek civilization, 52
Rome 104, 276, 434, 550
Worship of the emperor and state, 378–379, 467, 911
Recognizes no authority above itself, 349, 364, 391
Religion in, 441, 521, 623–624, 911, 940
Christian justice recognized, 534
Deification of the emperor, 100
Deification of the people, 933
Roman slave state, 99, 933
Centralization in, 994
Welfare in, 385, 412, 225
Use of torture in, 569
Persecution of Christians, 392, 940
Abortion in, 940
Fall of, 283, 284, 624, 885,
Antinomianism in,147
Anti-God thinking leads to superstition, illogic, 763
Esteems virtue of the soul, not in practice, 93
Desire for entertainment, distraction, 92
Romans dying for the sake of art, 275
Sexual license grows as Rome loses freedom, 945
Sexual freedom as prerogative of Roman nobles, 503
Sexual festivals in, 840, 841
Family
Intermarriage of classes illegal, 390
Wives used for breeding purposes, 575

Early Church (1st–4th centuries)

14–37 A.D.: Tiberius Julius Caesar, unjust ruler, 86
23–79: Pliny the Elder, 274
26–36: Pontius Pilate, 87, 238, 525
27–66: Petronius Arbiter, 5, 89
30–325: Early Church, 318, 348,365, 391, 755
Tax revolt in Judea against Rome, 560
Christianity and Rome, 45, 100, 103, 104, 378
Regards religion as a public concern, seeks to control it, 521, 888
Intolerance of exclusive religions in, 273, 274, 275, 325
Christians refuse to submit to state regulations, 277, 318, 322, 338, 348
Blames consequences of sin on Christians, 841
Persecution of, 391, 615, 616, 781
Clash with statist Rome, 103, 109, 277, 318, 322, 325, 378
Provides social welfare, 225, 384, 782, 940
Church buildings in, 63, 745
View of man, 351, 390, 577
Philosophy in, 11, 364
Heresies as foundation for antinomianism in, 460

Gnosticism in, 686
Montanism in, 870
Nicolaism in, 922, 924
Missions to Europe, 24, 425
300: Litigation primarily left to church courts, 534
c. 35–c. 108: Ignatius, 349, 392, 690, 691, 692, 693
Cynics, heresy of, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926
37–100: Josephus, 318
54–68: Nero, 86
55–135: Epictetus, 826
66–70: Jewish-Roman war, 269, 889, 364, 273
69–155: Polycarp, 348, 392
Sicarii (Jewish extremist group), 772
70: Fall of Jerusalem, 517
c. 85–c. 160: Marcion of Sinope, 698
c. 132–c. 136: Bar Kochba revolt, 273
117–138: Emperor Hadrian, 711, 713
c. 117–c. 138: Carpocrates of Alexandria, 708–714, 713, 922, 923
Teacher of gnosticism in early church, 691, 708, 711
c. 130: Epiphanes, 714
c. 150–c. 215: Clement of Alexandria, 923
c. 155–c. 240: Tertullian, 275, 353–354, 691, 693–694, 704–707
161–180: Marcus Aurelius, 92
100–165: Justin Martyr, 385, 992
185–254: Origen, 401, 403, 404, 676, 700
220: Callistus made bishop of Rome, 390
248–258: Cyprian, 353
253–257: Stephen (Roman bishop), 353
256–336: Arius of Alexandria, 676, 722, 731–732
260–272: Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch, 720–721
284–285: Diocletian, 726, 932–933
c. 296–373: Athanasius of Alexandria, 338, 382
300: Litigation primarily in church courts, 534
306–337: Constantine, 270, 367, 378, 379, 726
306: gives all bishops status of Roman magistrates to give official status to governing courts 534
311–383: Ulfilas, missionary to Goths, 731–732
325: First Council of Nicea, 687
c. 331–c. 396: Gregory of Nyssa, 401–402, 403, 405, 676, 700, 770
390: writes *Life of Moses*, 687, 692, 699, 768
Teaches universal salvation, 769
c. 340–397: Ambrose, 397–398
c. 347–420: Jerome, 367, 928
c. 349–407: Chrysostom,398
c. 350–c. 425: Pelagius, 735, 738
354–430: Augustine, 31, 367, 626, 630–631, 840
City of God and City of Man, 383, 393, 435
Gnosticism in, 687
As an example to the church, 622
Postpones entering the church for ten years, 470
Opposer of Celestius and Pelagius, 735. 736, 738–739
Opposer of Donatism, 727, 729
As a monergist, 784
Opposes pharisaic church tradition, 926–927
c. 355: Donatus the Great, 726

Theodotus of Byzantium, 720

Medieval Era (5th–15th centuries)

Medieval Era
Philosophy
God as highest priority for intellectuals, 11
Gnosticism, 686
Montanism, 707
Catharism, 742
Wealth defined as power over men, 241
Use of the term 'natural law' 524, 531
Freedom of religion in, 889
Disinterest in utopias, 908
Church in, 109, 246, 402, 415
Church architecture, 255
Providing welfare, 243
Providing education, 318
Affirmation of the doctrine of predestination, 477
Regard for saints in, 962
Decline of Christianity
Change of ranking system from achievement to hereditary caste, 13
Church and state assumes jurisdiction from family groups, 220
Decline of God's law, increase of state law, 658
The Crown as corporation, 434
Changes in architectural emphasis from churches to palaces, 64
Thinkers stress uncritical acceptance of status quo, 152
Triumph of anti-God thinking leads to superstition, illogic, 763
Christian joy gives way to fear and terror, 746
Man's house is his castle, 551
Belief that women are more sensual than men, 801
Slavery in, 886, 887
400–429: Salvian (Presbyter), 15, 283, 405
408–476: Fall of Rome, 259, 283, 284 285, 379, 405
Decadence
Material comfort blinds Romans, 4, 5
Emphasis on entertainment, 7, 59
Complacency, 296
Fear of overpopulation, 52, 121
Rome at war with its own people, 48
Burning of Trier, 15
Change in Europe from totalitarianism to decentralization, 172, 624
Jewish migration to northern Europe post-Fall, 885
410: Sack of Rome, 259
Barbarian Europe, 177, 284, 624, 885, 887
Holy Roman Empire, 434, 889, 939, 994
Celestius, 735, 753
Mazdak Revolution overthrows Persia, 182, 463, 652, 744
St. Patrick, 367
451: The Council of Chalcedon, 422, 423
492–496: Pope Gelasius I, 861
c. 497: Julianus Pomerius, *faith is the foundation of justice*, 188
570–630: Mohammed, 19, 332
590–604: Pope Gregory I (Gregory the Great), 471

644: Synod of Whitby, 340, 375
660–732: St. Andrew of Crete, 780
680–691: Sixth Ecumenical Council in Constantinople, 319
Norman Conquest of England, 375
865: Pope Nicholas I forbids use of torture, 569
878: Byzantine emperor Basil the Macedonian redefines basilica to king's court and law, 379
1033–1109: Anselm, 31, 129, 130, 820
c. 1135–1202: Joachim of Fiore, 148, 677, 705, 722–723, 870, 926
1073–1085: Pope Gregory VII
Ascribed Jewish descent, 270
Montanus, 703
1079–1142: Peter Abelard, 129, 820, 736, 943
1100–1517: Emergence of lay spirituality in the West, 402
1066–1087: William the Conqueror, 13
1105–1170: Joseph Kimhi, 765
c. 1148: Gratian, 531
1162–1227: Genghis Khan, 108
1166: St. Nerses Shnorhali, 270
1215: Magna Carta, 551
1220–1250: Frederick II, 761
1225–1274: Thomas Aquinas, 227, 532, 827, 830–831
1256–1302: Gertrude of Helfta, 402
1265–1321: Dante Alighieri, 738, 827
1300s: Monks of Athos believe fasting, concentration help realize essence of God, 157, 767
1340–1341: Synod called to condemn Barlaam of Seminara after he opposed them, 157, 767
1313–1375: Giovanni Boccaccio, 924, 992, 793
1381: Peasant's Revolt, 761
1383–1826: Janizaries (Turkish core army group), 952, 954
Age of Exploration, 885
c. 1400–1464: Nicholas of Cusa, 532
c. 1406–1456: John Hunyadi, 950
c. 1407–1457: Lorenzo Valla, 502–503
1413–1422: King Henry V (England), 15–16, 194
1420–1498: Tomás de Torquemada, Grand Inquisitor, 271
1432–1481: Mehmed II (Ottoman Empire), 855
1439–1515 Joseph Volotsky, 995
1443–1468: Skanderbeg, 950
1444–1446, 1451–1481: Mohammed II, 951
1452–1498: Girolamo Savonarola, 366
1453: Fall of Constantinople, 951
1457–1504: Stephen of Moldavia, 950

Reformation and Resistance (16th–17th centuries)

Renaissance
Originates in humanism, 155
Revives paganism and statist tyranny, 284
Literature and immorality in, 503
Tombs stress lineage and power, not Christianity, 615
Neoplatonic art and tyranny, 826
Implications of catharsis in, 793

slavery in, 885, 887
Views humanistic utopia as hope for man, 908
Influence on Machiavelli, 963
1458–1603: Tudor period (England), 178, 572, 911, 938
1463–1525: Frederick III, Elector of Saxony,843, 844, 846
1502: founds University of Wittenberg 842
1465–1519: Johann Tetzel, 77
1466–1536: Desiderius Erasmus, 279, 281, 376
1469–1527: Niccolò Machiavelli, 963
1473–1543: Nicolaus Copernicus, 728
1475–1504: King Ferdinand II of Aragon (Spain), 271
1478–1535: Sir Thomas More, 182, 964
1483–1546: Martin Luther, 179, 688, 842–843, 844, 846
God-centered theology of, 751
Taught at University of Wittenberg, 842
Opposes pelagianism, 736
1525: writes *On the Bondage of the Will*,
Strong proponent of Calvinism, 477
1499–c. 1543: Sebastian Franck, 927
c. 1500–1555: John Hooper (Bishop), 468
1509–1547: Henry VIII (England), 340, 344, 468, 938
1509–1564: John Calvin
Protects women, 201–202
Views man's conscience as having a noetic function, 131
Understands Biblical charity, 412
On man's need for a calling, 496
Holds to total depravity of man, omnipotence of God, 817–818
Stresses primacy of God's self-revelation, man's assent to it, 826
Opposes pelagianism, 736
God-centered theology of, 751
Seen as irrational by rationalists, 808–809
1534: Break from Rome (surrenders benefices), 153
1536: Publishes *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 339, 476
The law is a silent magistrate, and a magistrate a speaking law, 339
. . . man is . . . possessed of reason sufficient for the proper government of himself, 817
Influence on Puritanism, 130
1510–1580: John Immanuel Tremellius, a converted Jew, 271
1517–1685: Protestant Reformation, 15, 157, 271, 318
Geneva, 201–204, 704
Emphasizes, acts on importance of Christian charity, 246
Opposed to rationalism, 824
Men of Reformation hold God as obvious priority, 11
Explosive results of stressing the Bible in its historical, doctrinal meaning, 402
Systematic preaching in, 415
Seeks to broaden basis of power, authority within the church, 994
Used Titus 1:15 to attack meatless days of Rome, 708
Gnosticism during, 686
Development of Spiritualism in, 926–927
Christian energy deflected into sterile channels by montanism,707
Illuminism, part of pietism, represented by Sebastian Castello, 748
Pietism after, 751
Defeated, controlled by monarchs of Europe, 938
1527: Spanish sack of Rome, 258
1530–1584: Ivan the Terrible, 811

1539–1604: Faustus Socinus, 376
French Huguenots, 255, 764
1549: First publishing of the Book of Common Prayer, 721
1553–1558: Mary I (England), 468
1558–1602: William Perkins, 752
1558–1603: Elizabeth I (England), 911
1560–1609: Jacobus Arminius, 376
1561–1626: Francis Bacon, 520
1563: Heidelberg Catechism written, 118
1564–1584: Charles Borromeo, 204, 412
1564–1616: William Shakespeare, 31, 873, 881, 987
1564–1642: Galileo, 9
1571: Tatar invasion of Russia, 340
1572–1638: Cyril Lucaris, 856
1575–1624: Jacob Boehme, 681
1580–1631: Captain John Smith, 651
1583–1645: Hugo Grotius, 376
1596–1650: René Descartes, 756, 757, 811–813
  Founds modern philosophy, 190, 333, 800, 821
  1637: *I think, therefore I am,* 667, 754,792, 800, 811

Puritan and Commonwealth Era (17th century)

El Camino Real (California), 650
1600–1750: Baroque Period, 11
Puritans and Puritan Commonwealth Era, 279, 296, 468, 554, 652
  Architecture, 64, 65, 255
  On the work of holiness, kingdom building, 157
  View whole Bible as binding word of God, 460
  Fights for the crown rights of Christ, 393
  Strong desire for decentralization, 994
  Hatred of Puritans by elitists, 966
  Royalists, 280, 651

Colonial America

American Puritans, 130, 313, 338, 297
1607–1776: Colonial American Period, 321, 889
  1607: Jamestown Colony founded in Virginia, 651–652
  Pilgrim Fathers, 329
    1620: arrived in America, 321
    Architecture in, 64, 66
    Wealth seen as land, 241
    Meaning of the word 'home' 65
    Honoring parents imperative for children 20
    Uneasy semi-establishments in, 836
    Limitation of civil power, 861
1663–1728: Cotton Mather, 181, 718, 837
1675–1678: King Phillip's War, 329

England

English Puritans, 375, 376, 403, 752, 938
1603–1625: James I (England), 152, 436, 532, 572
1603–1714: Stuart Period (England), 178
1608–1674: John Milton, 31, 502
1612–1671: Thomas Fairfax, 651
1614–1672: John Wilkins, 279–282
1615–1669: Sir John Denham, 878
1616–1679: William Gurnall 403
1625–1649: Charles I, 525, 994
1632–1704: John Locke, 79, 520, 737, 867, 869, 991
1633–1640: Archbishop William Laud, 375–376, 836
1642–1651: English Civil War, 376
  1628–1658: Oliver Cromwell, 279, 375, 376–377, 393, 966
    Opponent to divine right of kings doctrine, 152, 836
    Orders Commonwealth plunderers would be shot, 651
    Grants portrait painting only if artist depicts his blemishes, 805
    1655: writes letter to son-in-law, 450
    Disparaged in modern England, 765
  1643: Parliament orders destruction of graven images in chapels, 375
  1646: Westminster Assembly writes Westminster Confession of Faith, 134
1649–1660: House of Stuart, 572
1650–1691: Richard Baxter, 280
1660–1685: Charles II, 279, 282, 376, 377
1671–1729: John Law, 208
1676–1732: Thomas Boston, 851
1685–1688: James II, 321
1685–1753: Bishop Berkeley, 754, 800
1688: The Glorious Revolution, 430, 376
1697–1755: Thomas Wilson (Bishop), 497

France

1627–1628: Siege of La Rochelle
  1628: Surrender of the city to the Catholics, 255
1643–1715: King Louis XIV, "The Sun King" (France), 601, 960
  1680: Construction of Versailles, 10, 64
  1715: Persian Embassy to, 10
  1706: Dismissal of Maréchal Vauban, 11
1648–1717: Madame Guyon, 758, 775
1663–1742: Jean-Baptiste Massillon, Bishop of Clermont, 601, 603
1694–1778: Voltaire, 288, 432, 650, 798

Other Western Countries

1628–1696: Miguel de Molinos (Spain), 758
1663–1727: August Hermann Francke, 751
1685: Quietism condemned as heresy by the church, 758
1688–1772: Emanuel Swedenborg (Sweden), 681, 686, 972

Awakening and Enlightenment (18th century)

Age of Enlightenment 849, 950
Goal of, 47
Grand opera in, 10
Law
Origin of social contract theory, 451–452
Derives law from nature, 524, 797
Men work to confuse meaning of law, 919
Redefines liberty, 848
Rationalistic Philosophy
Inspired by Greece and Rome, 285
Logical outworking Aristotelian revival, 532
Rejects history and past in favor of reason, 46, 430, 957
Thinkers contrast reason with authority, 658
Views scientific facts as knowledge, 804
Impersonal view of knowledge, 808
Humanistic rationalism influence in the church, 815
Exalts reason rather than regeneration, 588
Finds hope in science and reason 907
Sentimentality as a reaction against, 595
Social Revolution
Rejects history and the past in favor of reason, 46, 957
As countermovement against Christianity, 69, 511
Men demand personal autonomy, 12
Views stability and family as something to be attacked, 68
Affirms man as answer to problems, denies need of growth, 78, 79
Contempt of common man and depreciation of women, 594
Brings to focus the rift between classes, 444
Statism
Promotes centralization of government, 221
State replaces church as catholic institution, 747
Influence on modern leaders, 45
Sees education as man's savior, 309
Protestant and Catholic kings oppose Mary's "Magnificat," 630

Colonial America

Bostonian sentenced to sixty days for denying the orthodox God, 610
1703–1791: John Wesley, 772, 798
1723–1794: John Witherspoon, 280
1724–1806: Isaac Backus, 836–837
1734–1818: Paul Revere, 241
1732–1818: Charles Turner, 326
1730s–1743: First Great Awakening, seen as origin of War of Independence, 344
1760–1820+: Industrial Revolution, 241–242
1775–1783: American War of Independence, 321, 344, 836
1789: Pension plan for veterans established, opposed by Christians, 224
1787: signing of U.S. Constitution, 343
1789–1797: George Washington, 224, 321, 648, 903
1781: Farewell Address, 345, 862, 899
. . . let us . . . indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. 889
1791: Whiskey Rebellion, 882

1792–1875: Charles G. Finney, 785
1796–1859: Horace Mann, 117, 257, 309, 313, 610, 739
1859: *Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity,* 298
1797–1801: John Adams, 462
1797–1878: Charles Hodge, 195, 196

England

1707–1754: Henry Fielding, 31
1714–1727: George I (Great Britain), 444
1714–1770: George Whitefield, 280, 798
1724: Isaac Watts, "Am I A Soldier of the Cross?" (hymn) published, 780
1729–1797: Edmund Burke, 419
1737–1794: Edward Gibbon, 287–288
1757–1827: William Blake, 448, 491, 595, 681, 686, 797, 850, 984, 972
1803: *O! Why was I born with a different face?* 805
1804–1820: writes "Jerusalem", 491
1770: Isaac Smith, "Soldiers of Christ, Arise" (hymn) published, 780
1770–1850: William Wordsworth, 143, 533, 739, 797
1788–1823: Lord Byron, 594, 791, 792
1792–1822: Percy Shelley, 595, 789, 790, 791, 797

France

1712–1778: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 89, 90, 91, 120, 121
Views ignorance as the greatest enemy, 309
Endorses forcible assent to the general will, 453
Idealizes outlaw as one who represents a true state of nature, 511
Views antitheses of being as between the natural man and evil civilization, 716, 812
Worship of nature, 79
Views the state, "Nature," the general will, voice of the people, as infallible, 530, 550, 896, 929, 995
Facilitates the Romantic movement, 594
View of "rights," 986
1755: publishes *Discourse on Inequality*
. . . [set] aside all the facts; for they are of no relevance to the question, 648
1762: publishes *The Social Contract*
The general will is always right and tends always to the public good, 550
It would take gods to give laws to men, 907
1740–1814: Marquis de Sade, 42, 430, 432, 511, 794, 798
Radical intellectual challenge to "Thou shalt not kill", 523
Natural law basic to his thinking, 526, 668
Exponent of the Death of God faith, 584
Promotes a universal and cosmic darkness, 765
Insists on the right to kill, steal, rape, harm at will, 982
1743–1794: Marquis de Condorcet, 908
1759–1798: Adrien Duport, 764
1764–1790: Joseph II, 933
1774–1791, 1791–1792: King Louis XVI, 775
1789–1815: French Revolution, 427, 452, 912
Ancién Regime (France), 183
Quietism as a foundation of, 775,
Weakness of clergy in, 764

Primary move against the Bible, Jews, and Christians, 988
Intent to restore man to primitive grace, 89–90
As expression of Enlightenment, 46–47
As the inauguration of the age of revolution, 69
Viewed as introduction to a new, better age, 89–90
Rise of total war, 564
Believes destruction can free man from bondage, 80, 716
Influence on modern thought, 419
Temporary illusory freedoms with greater centralization of the state, 933
Redefinition of liberty in, 847, 848, 985
Revolutionaries exterminate non-ideal population, 953
Revives paganism, makes it common, 284
As theatrical performance, 10
Applies catharsis in, 793
The voice of the people as the voice of God, 907
Idealizes the state to a degree unknown to the Western world, 550
The state as God on earth, 911
Recruits all citizens by law for armed forces, 954
Used as example by Washington of dangers of a secular state, 345
Connections to Washington and American colonies, 648
1789
Storming of the Bastille, 418, 761
The Great Fear, 761
Many believe that a new and better age had arrived, 89
Jean-Sylvain Bailly holds he should guide the Revolution, 650
Jacobin movement (founded), 90, 849
Declaration of Rights of Man and the Citizen, 848
1791: Public coition on stage of the Palais-Royal (public theater), 798
1792: Proclamation of abolition of the monarchy, 648
1793–1794: Reign of Terror, 47, 90, 418, 432, 530, 648–649, 761
1793–1794: Maximilien Robespierre, 90, 650, 729, 793–794, 796, 992
1798–1857: Auguste Comte, 667, 831, 920

Other Western Countries

1711–1776: David Hume (Scotland), 190, 668, 754, 800, 815, 821
1717–1831: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (Germany), 815, 918
Philosophy
Enlightenment thought, 46
Kantianism, 805
Advancement is man becoming center of the world, 209
Defines own version of "reason," 148, 584
Incarnation, 667
Gnosticism, 681
Influence of Joachim of Fiore, 677
Life as conflict leading to synthesis, 35, 332, 333, 680
Statism
State as embodiment of truth and morality, 428, 561, 570, 630, 907
Pantheistic doctrine of the state, 434
Influence
Founder of modern thought, 800,
Despairing influence on modern thought, 821
Modern doctrine of infallibility, 929
Pantheistic doctrine of the state, 434

Walter Kaufmann, 502
Modern spiritual religions, 801, 830
Biblical studies of Ferdinand Christian Baur, 461
1797: publishes *On Christianity*
Posits that the duty of philosophy is to establish a new religion, 802
To consider the resurrection of Jesus . . . has nothing to do with religion, 802
1807: publishes *The Phenomenology of Mind*
I am I in the sense that the I which is object for me is sole and only object, 801, 805
1820: publishes *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*
What is rational is real; And what is real is rational, 754, 888
1837: publishes *Philosophy of History*
Reason is the Sovereign of the world, 800
The State is the Divine Idea as it exists on Earth, 801
1723–1790: Adam Smith, 668
1724–1804: Immanuel Kant (Germany), 190, 333, 800, 821, 823, 929
c. 1766: *rules of morality proceed from a special, eponymous feeling,* 584
1787: publishes *Critique of Pure Reason*
We [may] have more success in . . . metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge, 754, 800, 804, 812
1784: *[man] enjoys an unlimited freedom to use his own reason,* 585
1756–1791: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Austria), 271–272, 681
1768–1834: Friedrich Schleiermacher (Germany), 748
1780–1847: Thomas Chalmers, 412
1785–1832: Romantic Period, 10, 78, 79, 594, 595
Strengthening of the idea of catharsis in, 793
Worship of nature, 797
Begins by stressing the individual, ultimately stresses the freedom of the state, 596
Romanticism,142, 143, 511, 533
Cultivates introspection, victimized mindset throughout history, 596, 598
1795–1881: Thomas Carlyle (Scotland), 419
1797–1895: Ernst Sartorius (Germany), 771

Eastern Countries

Skoptsy (Russian kenotic cult), 772
Khlysty (Russian kenotic cult), 772
1724–1783: St. Tikhon, bishop of Voronezh, 773–774

Modernism (19th — 20th centuries)

Church, 161, 191, 749, 771
Fight against state control of church, 109
Antinomianism in, 406
False confession becomes widespread, 361
Social Revolution
Loyalty of culture and family erodes, 175, 176
Rise of occult, inordinate interest in the demonic, 473, 733
Humanistic moralism and liberal fervor, 288
Turmoil in China, Russia, Poland, and Bulgaria, 418
Philosophy
Reversal of the historic definition of knowledge, 804
Anti-God thinking leads to superstition, illogic, 763

Dukhobors, 716
Law
Religion and morality begin shift from public to personal spheres, 171
Statism
Fight against state control of church, 109
Control of children increasingly claimed by state, 172, 173
State claims total sovereignty as God walking on earth, 630
Rise of total war, 564

United States of America

Unitarianism's profound influence in, 148, 149
Slavery in, 167
New England influence shifts from Christ to politics for hope of salvation, 298
1800–1882: John Darby, 707
1801–1809: Thomas Jefferson, 258, 462, 542, 962, 963, 985
The best government is the least government, 115
1813: *The selecting the best male for a harem of well chosen females . . . would doubtless improve the human,* 462
1823: *. . . the object is worth rivers of blood, and years of desolation,* 462
1811–1882: Henry James Sr., 993
1811–1886: John Humphrey Noyes, 182, 184
1812–1845: Justice Joseph Story, 891
1819–1892: Walt Whitman, 579, 757
1821–1910: Mary Baker Eddy, 801, 802
1835–1910: Mark Twain, 329, 543
1829–1837: Andrew Jackson, 900
1841–1842: Dorr Rebellion, 882
1850–1898: Edward Bellamy, 285, 965
1858: George Duffield, "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus" (hymn) published, 780
1863–1947: Henry Ford, 241–242
1878–1967: Carl Sandburg, 415
1879–1955: Albert Einstein, 677, 755
1895–1987: Cornelius Van Til, 143, 471, 527
As founder of Presuppositionalism, 130, 621
Seen as irrational by Rationalists, 808, 809
Rushdoony's commendation of, 813
Criticized by James Oliver, 814
Contrasted with John Dewey, 815
On the effects of sin on man's intellect, 817
On the effects of the fall on God's communication with man, 819
On Paul preaching at Athens, 823
1824: Henry Dwight Sedgwick, *when the law shall have become thoroughly conformed to the spirit of the age, authority will become of double value and efficacy,* 155
1801–1835: Chief Justice John Marshall, 542
1801–1870: David G. Farragut
Staff
William Hale Thompson Sr.
Father of "Big Bill" Thompson, Chicago's most notorious mayor, 298
1802–1874: Edward Norris Kirk, 601–603
1803–1882: Ralph Waldo Emerson, 419, 688, 791, 792
1836: Publishes "Nature," 757
1838: Delivers commencement address to seniors at Harvard Divinity School, 461
1807–1882: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 148–151

1812: Benjamin Watkins Leigh propounds social contract theory, *no man can be bounded by laws to which he had not given his assent,* 451–452
1813–1887: Henry Ward Beecher, 366, 777
1819: William Ellery Channing preaches ordination sermon for Jared Sparks, attacks Calvinists, promotes dispensationalism, 461
1820–1903: Herbert Spencer, 533
1823: Monroe Doctrine, 900
1825–1829: John Quincy Adams, 321, 322
1830–1913: John Swett, 298
1832–1907: Moncure D. Conway, 777
1833–1835: Davy Crockett, 896
1835–1919: Andrew Carnegie, 252
1837: United States Magazine and Democratic Review, *Democracy is the cause of Humanity,* 132
1839–1914: Charles S. Peirce, 415
1842–1910: William James, 415
1845: Polk Doctrine announced, 900
1857–1938: Clarence Darrow, 120
1858: proslavery extremists reopen slave trade, 35
1859–1952: John Dewey, 125, 257, 309, 815
Views education as way of salvation for man
Sees truth as pragmatic and instrumental, 307, 415
Views Christianity and the family as antidemocratic and aristocratic, 399, 647
Defines own version of "reason," 584
Heir of Kant and Hegel in thinking 805
1861–1865: Abraham Lincoln, 365–366
1861–1865: The Civil War, 35, 258, 802, 900
1862–1865: Jefferson Davis, 652
1864–1929: Charles Horton Cooley, 183
1868: Fourteenth amendment to the Constitution adopted, 848
1868–1944: William Hale "Big Bill" Thompson, 298, 299
1873: The Slaughter-House cases and the Fourteenth Amendment, 848
1877–1927: Isadora Duncan, 180, 181
1880–1936: Oswald Spengler, 496
1880–1956: Henry L. Mencken, 512, 513, 962
1882–1941: Virginia Woolf, 892
1886–1965: Paul Tillich, 513, 677, 682
1886–1968: Karl Barth, 382, 756, 780
1889: Johnstown Flood, PA, 519
1891–1980: Henry Miller, 486, 764
1892–1971: Reinhold Niebuhr, 756
1893–1978: James Bryant Conant, 399
1894: *Harvard Law Review*, *The idea of absolute property forever in any particular owner . . . is a fiction . . . ,* 233
1897–1993 Kenneth Burke, 472, 733
1901–1985: Eric Voegelin, 688, 689
1902–1932: Associate Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. (Supreme Court), 4, 5, 895, 977, 996, 997
1903–1950: George Orwell, 59, 285, 453, 910, 915, 958
1906–1961: Henry Van Til, 330
1910s–20s: common usage of term edification, 7, 8
1911–1974: Jack Benny (comedian), 8
1913–1921: Woodrow Wilson, 105, 230, 903, 963
1866: *We will have to kill some of those snobs [at Princeton] before they will learn prudence,* 203

1917: signs Selective Service Act to authorize federal drafting of citizens, 640–641
1914–1982: Lester Roloff, 43, 341, 520, 638, 643
1914–2004: Daniel Boorstin, 919
1917: Man detained by police for speaking disrespectfully of President Wilson, 963
1918–present: Billy Graham, 735, 785
1919–2006: Otto Scott (historian), 13, 164, 542, 546, 864, 961
On Robespierre, 90, 793–794
And the descent of a people into decadence, 307
On God's sovereignty, 412
On humanistic man as suicidal, surrenders to Soviet Union, 428
Literacy methods shift, statist educators begin to oppose phonics and traditional education, 310
1920–1933: Prohibition, 753
1920s–30s: Ethnic jokes common and enjoyed by ethnic groups, 25
1921–1980: Walter Kaufmann, 288, 502, 523, 910, 913
1922: Los Angeles Riots over the Rodney King case, 293
1923: Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution proposed, 355
1923–2006: Richard Gilman
1975 writes *Decadence* and calls the concept the refuge of *the shallow, the thoughtless and imitative, the academically frozen: monkey-minds,* 307
1923–2007: Norman Mailer, 290
1925–2008: William Buckley Jr., 689
1925–2008: Joshua Lederberg, 193, 194
1927–2015: Samuel Blumenfeld, 310, 607
1928–1987: Andy Warhol, 996
1929–1933: Herbert Hoover, 453
1929–1954: C. S. Lewis, 15, 639
1929–1968: Martin Luther King, Jr., 143
1930s: Koppel Pinson's research showing Pietism's effect on the church and state, 747
Prayer seen as a means to manipulate God, 138
In American Indian tribes, 139
1931–1950: Laurel and Hardy (comedians), 8
1931–1978: Jim Jones, 627–628, 937
1933–1945: Franklin D. Roosevelt, 18, 512, 895
1932: wins election against Herbert Hoover, 453
1933: Establishes National Recovery Administration, 230, 264
1933–1938: New Deal, 519
1933–present: Walter Truett Anderson, 978, 979, 980
1954: Berman v. Parker, 901
1939: The Great Depression, 230, 293, 314, 387, 591, 867, 868
1935–1977: Elvis Presley, 638
1941–2014: John Lofton, 311, 420, 534
1943–1949: Justice Wiley B. Rutledge (Supreme Court), 997
1945–present: Jeremy Rifkin, 28

Western Europe

1802–1875: Gottfried Thomasius (Germany), 771
1804–1815: Napoleon Bonaparte (France), 143, 418, 595, 756, 993
1804–1876: Aurore Dudevant (George Sand), (France), 143
1805–1859: Alexis de Tocqueville, (France), 246
1806–1856: Max Stirner (Germany), 288, 419, 511
1806–1873: John Stuart Mill (England), 866
1808–1855: Gérard de Nerval (France), 681

1808–1874: David Strauss (Germany)
1835: Publishes revolutionary book *The Life of Jesus*, 403, 404
1809–1882: Charles Darwin (England),19, 36, 46, 243, 288
Replaces Christianity with Darwinism, 329, 330
Racism of, 482
Natural law, 533
Holds time and chance in the place of God, 621
Process theory's roots in Darwinian evolution, 677
Radically undercuts revelation, 732
Philosophies leading up to Darwinian theories,798
Influence on modern views of depravity as an expression of nature, 799
As a saint of Hegelian tradition, 801
Admits that development of the eye is inexplicable in his theory, 978
Contributes to the disregard for systematic theology, 723
1859: publishes *On the Origin of Species*, 871
1810–1857: Alfred de Musset (France), 142
1813–1883: Richard Wagner (Germany), 22, 16
1815–1855: Søren Kierkegaard (Denmark), 681
1815–1898: Otto von Bismarck (Prussia), 933
1818–1883: Karl Marx, 575
Influenced by,
Product of Romanticism, 594
Heir of Kant and Hegel, 805, 807
Spiritual descendant of John Locke, 867
Anti-Christian,
More radical than Emerson and Carlyle, 419
Hates Judaism and Christianity, 579
Hates Christians and favors Turks, 951
Evolutionary Thought
Favored Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* as key to socialist triumph, 871
Darwinism and class conflict, 35
Evolution of society from necessity to freedom, 801
Desire for scientific socialism, 908
Philosophy
Formulates own definition of reason, 584
Manichaeaism of, 716
Ideological enemies as evil, 467
Definition of self and recreation of man, 577, 579
Champions equalitarianism while being elitist, 964
Economics
Anti-Capitalism, 356
Poverty-inducing, 265
Tax revolt concept advocate, 86
Statism and Law
"Justice" as merely class power, 524
Echoing natural law, 531
Desires a state professing no religion outside of itself, 579
Utopianism, 121
Influenced
Peter Lavrov, 208
1845: *The philosophers have only interpreted the world . . . , in various ways: the point, . . . however, is to change it*, 754
1848: writes the Communist Manifesto, 849
1820–1895: Friedrich Engels (Germany), 208
1822–1896: Edmond de Goncourt (France), 290

1829–1912: William Booth (England), 113, 366, 367–368
1830: Kenosis moves into Germany, 779
1835: Theophile Gautier (France), *art may not serve any other values than the aesthetic,* 663
1837–1901: Victorian Era, 7, 892
1837–1920: Abraham Kuyper (Netherlands), 851
1838–1882: Léon Gambetta (France), 932
1841–1901: James Chalmers (Scottish missionary to New Guinea), 496
1844: Johann L. König (Germany) publishes his book *The Incarnation of God*, 771
1844–1900: Friedrich Nietzsche (Germany), 357, 415, 419. 502, 511, 584
Imagines the superman as the solution to the death of man by the death of God, 585
As notable Gnostic, 681
Promotes defeat while professing something else, 778
Sees himself as the new god, 829
Philosophy of Titanism, 792
1886: Publishes *Beyond Good and Evil*, 288
1848: Revolutions of 1848, 909
1853–1856: Crimean War, 903
1854–1891: Arthur Rimbaud (France), 290
1854–1900: Oscar Wilde (Ireland), 288, 307
1855–1927: Houston Stewart Chamberlain (England/Germany), 22
1856: Jules Michelet (French) writes that the two salient opposing forces were *Christianity and the Revolution,* 971
1856–1939: Sigmund Freud (Austria),58, 59, 183, 306, 357
Anti-Christian therapeutical approach to guilt, 371, 444, 878
Catharsis thinking fundamental in, 794, 795
1856–1950: George Bernard Shaw (Ireland), 50, 857, 858
1858–1917: Émile Durkheim (France), 511, 798, 981
1863–1923: John Henry Jowett (England), 219
1864–1886: Ludwig of Bavaria, 16
1865–1939: William Butler Yeats (Ireland), 9, 297, 681
1866–1946: H. G. Wells (England), 285, 707, 973–974
1867–1900: Ernest Dowson (England), 289
1867–1935: George William Russell (Ireland), 297
1869–1951: André Gide (France), 604, 849
1870: Jules Ferry, French minister of public instruction, *when humanity appears . . . no longer a fallen race, stricken with Original Sin . . . then we have won our liberty, for we are free from the fear of death,* 108
1872–1970: Bertrand Russell (England), 636, 791
1875–1926: Rainer Maria Rilke (Austria), 681
1875–1965: Albert Schweitzer (France/Germany), 121
Irish Nationalism, 297
1880–1918: Guillaume Apollinaire (France), 849
1882–1941: James Joyce (Ireland), 796
1883–1946: John Maynard Keynes (England), 52, 59, 215, 503, 892
1887–1968: Marcel Duchamp (France), 32, 68, 666
1889–1951: Ludwig Wittgenstein (Germany), 791, 815, 821
1890–1896: Cecil Rhodes (England), 496
1890–1922: Lloyd George (England), 221
1894–1963: Aldous Huxley (England), 285
1894–1977: Herman Dooyeweerd (Holland), 471
1896: F. W. Bussell (Oxford, England), *we are about to inaugurate a regimen of severest coercion,* 8
1898–1979: Herbert Marcuse (Germany/America), 795
1905–1980: Jean-Paul Sartre (France), 53, 290, 755, 765, 812, 821

1907–1993: Étienne Bornem (France), 830–831
1911–1919: Bishop Charles Gore (England), 779–780
1912–1913: The Balkan Wars, 903
1916–2004: Sir Francis Crick (England), 911
1922–1943: Benito Mussolini (Italy),19
1936: Spanish Revolution, 80
1936–1986: Panayiotis Nellas, 768, 769
1940: John Lennon, 638

Soviet and Pre-Soviet East

1801–1825: Alexander I (Russia), 340, 953
1818–1883: Ivan Turgenev, 773
1821–1881: Fyodor Dostoyevsky
Recommended reading for student to be challenged, enriched by history, 31
Asserts without God, all things are possible, permitted, 147, 502, 584
Admirer of kenotic bishop Tikhon, 773
All things to be destroyed to make way for the new 'rational' society, 953
1823–1900: Peter Lavrov, 208–210
1828–1910: Leo Tolstoy, 31, 663, 773, 716
1853–1900: Vladimir Solovyov, 767
1888–1988: Michael Pomazansky, 767, 768
1891–1937: Evgeny Pashukanis, 910
1897: John Ilitch Sergieff's book *My Life in Christ* translated, 774
1901–1985: Nadejda Gorodetzky, 771
1904: Russo-Japanese War, 901
1905–1924: Vladimir Lenin, 649, 716, 865, 972
Assumes mankind's future is in internationalism during WWI, 105,
Belief in world domination,107
Believes revolution will bring utopia, 121
Muslims are nationalists and mostly strongly Islamic, 123
Influenced by Engels, 208
Turns to Trotsky to provide a solution for the coming economic collapse, 230
Leader of the Bolsheviks, 873
Adopts Thomas More's philosophy of communism, 965
Pan-Turanism, 105–108, 124
1917: Russian Revolution, 46, 80, 90, 187, 341
Bolsheviks, 105, 230, 229, 873
Rushdoony calls historic forms of revolution no longer viable, 564
Terror replaces legitimate authority, 648
Supported at first by a very small minority, 873
Men seen as expendable tools, 953
Primary move against the Bible, Jews, and Christians, 988
1918–1925: Leon Trotsky, 230–232, 716
1918–2011: Constantine Cavarnos, 767
1920–1921, 1923–1938: Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, 951
1922–1991: Soviet Union 428, 643, 917
1922–1952: Joseph Stalin, 149, 264, 432, 649, 716, 911
Clashes with Trotsky and wins, 230
Opposed to Christianity,19
Views man as a tool for building society, 357
Demoralizes people to protect himself and his communism, 873
Uses guilt to enslave people, is governed by guilt himself, 873, 876–877
Historical revisionism, 958

Modern man and Stalin, 432, 482
1939: German-Soviet Credit Agreement, 264
Law
Carries the pagan doctrine of state supremacy to its logical conclusion, 340
Subjective and humanistic definition of law and order, 444, 445
Law as a tool of state policy, 954
Religion
Hatred and persecution of Christians, 936
Religious toleration in, 837
Economics
Definition of wealth borne by hunger, not prosperity, 265
Famine of the early 20s, 879
Economist S.G. Shumilin, *our task is not to study economics, but to change it. We are bound by no laws,* 911
Military, 308
Political commissars in the military, 231
Soviet military intelligence (GRU), 881
Advancement of the "One World Order," 915
Allies and Associations
Associations with Pan-Turanism, 106, 107
Nationalist Muslims in, 123
Predominantly Muslim (In Asiatic Russia), 123, 124
America as an ally of, 965
Recapitalized annually by aid of the United States, 264
Slavery of the masses
As history's greatest slave state along with Red China, 43
No freedom for capitalists, 548, 549
Militarization of all labor, 230
Relegates religious liberty to inside one's head, 112
The mockery of elections in, 136
Psychiatry used as tool of coercion, 610, 612
Communist party as a mafia, 625
Anti-Man
World's lowest birthrate in, 123,
As one of history's bloodiest powers, 496
Demoralization of the people by Stalin, 873, 879
Transfers abortion to the realm of adiaphorism, 929
Uses total terror as main instrument of control, 953
Collapse of the Soviet Union, 407

Elsewhere

Brazilian Positivist revolution, 920
1869–1948: Mahatma Gandhi (India), 773, 774
1876–1909: Abdul Hamid II (Ottoman Empire), 950, 951, 953
1899–1905: George Curzon, Viceroy of India 18, 19
1910–1920: Mexican Revolution, 988
1927–1949: Communist China,43, 444, 837, 929, 948, 953

The World Wars

1914–1918: World War I, 368, 596, 625, 896
Shift in world order, 71,

Wilson and Lenin assume nationalism is mankind's future, 105
President Wilson's unconstitutional draft, 641

Shift from isolationism to world-control, 903
A major tobacco corporation protects Turkey because of trade contracts, 590

Weimar Republic as result of political hopes in Germany, 896
Meaning of America changes after, 904
State limitation wanes after, 861
Marxist states slaughtered millions since, 112
Aristocracies lose power in most countries after, 961
1930: The Great Fear in Germany
As prelude to WWII, 761
1933–1945: Nazi Germany
Scientific development of racism, 22
Education in, 308
Justice becomes racial, 570
Socialist Revolution of, 988
Instigated by Stalin, 873
Hatred of Jews and churches, 933,
Suppression of church schools, 934
Goal of uniformity, 934
Holds that morality comes from the state, 936
Evolutionary eugenic beliefs, 978
1930s: many attack Germany's Nazi education as school for barbarians, 957
1934–1945: Adolf Hitler, 613
Opposes Christianity, 19, 22
Speaks of a "new world order," 46, 916
Modern fascination with, 432
Modern man's similarity to, 482
Hitler's National Socialism begins with appeal to victimization, 596
The motive of those who voted for him, 897
1939–1945: World War II 80, 136, 284
Britain and US led by men indifferent to Christianity, 18, 19
Germany, Soviet Union, and Italy led by men opposed to Christianity, 18, 19
American foreign policy infected with Lavrovian thinking, 209
Nullifies laws restricting land ownership to certain groups, 235
State encourages debt, gives tax benefits to those who go into debt, promoting slavery, 485
Stalin incites Soviet troops to commit atrocities to demoralize them, 873
Follows the assassination of an Austrian prince, 903
Destruction of schools in the Netherlands leads to ignorance of the nation's history, 958

After World War II

20th Century
Christianity in
Humanism of churches, 785
Dynamic Equivalence in Bible translation becomes common, 23, 24
Warping of the word *faith*, 387
Holocaust of Christians across the world, 418
Persecution of religions in, 111, 112,
Recession of Christian influence and rise of humanistic science, 21

Decadence and Fantasy
Rejection of God and pursuit of fleshly lusts, 11
Shift of emphasis from maturity to entertainment, 7, 8, 162, 295
Novelists increasingly wage war against family and community, 605
Bloomsbury Group abandons morality, views life in terms of aesthetics, 892
Modern age seen as theater, fantasy, 15, 17
Statism
Abandonment of God's law, embracing of humanistic law and justice, 457
Government schools producing illiteracy in the United States, 59
Slavery increasing, 885
Use of torture in, 570
Racism, 21
In Europe and America, 22
in seminaries, 22
Islam in, 123, 124, 125
1930s
Buchmanism, 731
1939–1958: Pope Pius XII, 271
1939–present: Julius Lester, 309, 311
1945–1976: Mao Tse-tung, 447
1946: Post-WWII era, 368
Lawlessness
Constitutions rapidly lose meaning, 895
Shift in culture
Change in American South and West, 297
Shift in meaning of inheritance, 67, 69, 70, 173
Shift in comedy, 8
Increase in victim mindset, 597
Child-centered, risk-free culture begins to predominate, 880, 883
Shift in economics
Rapid development of an anticapitalist mindset 242
Increase in taxation, 264
IRS actively claiming right to establish religion, 345
Shift in education, 880
Statist education stripped of all traces of Biblical faith, 582
De-Christianization of schools leads to social instability, 110
Dilution of American school curriculum, 314
Child-centered, risk-free culture begins to predominate, 883
Growth of Christian and home schools, 857
1946–1947: Leon Blum, 604
1947–1991: Cold War, 418
1949: Chinese Communist Revolution, 988
1951: Camus, *Since God claims all that is good in man, it is necessary to deride what is good and choose what is evil,* 913
1951–1955: Winston Churchill (Prime Minister, England), 18
1951–1981: Communist Party of Kampuchea (Cambodia), 496
1952: *High Noon* (film), 607
1953–present: Mangosuthu Buthelezi (South Africa)
Opposed Edward Kennedy's disinvestment, 600
1953–1959: Cuban Revolution, 90
1953–1980: Josip Tito (Yugoslavia), 903
1955–1975: Vietnam War, 331
1956–present: Johnny Rotten (rock singer), 762, 765
1957: California Supreme Court, claims state has total jurisdiction, 101
Sexual Revolution, 61, 174, 486, 503, 552, 606

Women's liberation movement, 191, 195, 200, 355, 642
1962–1965: Second Vatican Council, 381
1963–1978: Pope Paul VI, 381
1964–1971: Marshal Lin Piao, 909, 910
1964–1977: Senator Joseph Montoya, 941
1968: "A Proposal for a Poor Children's Bill of Rights," 307
1971: Earthquake in San Fernando Valley, Los Angeles, 237, 976
1971: LGBT demands legalization of sexual perversions, 6
1976–2008: Fidel Castro
1960: *To live in a Communist society is to live without selfishness,* 173–174
1977: Sex Pistols release punk rock song "God Save the Queen"
We are your future . . . no future, 762, 764
1978–2005: Pope John Paul II purges pedophilic priests from Catholic church, 382
1979–1990: Margaret Thatcher, 418
1981: Summer riots in England, 762
1982–1984 Yuri Andropov, 877
1982: Senator Hollings (SC), *Tax exemption is a privilege, not a right,* 837, 839
1984: Several nominal Catholics (Cuomo, Kennedy Ferraro) deny relevance of God's law to the state, 534–535
1985: Franky Schaeffer is disrespected by Pietists, 463
1988–1994: Artsakh Liberation War, 106
1988: *The Last Temptation of Christ* (film), 613, 614
1992: Rhine-Main-Danube Canal completed, 903
1993–2001: Bill Clinton, 904
1999: Kosovo War, 904

United States of America

1948: Carnell, *An Introduction To Apologetics,* 816
1950s
Peer pressure becoming governing force in universities instead of honor to parents, 20
Children under ten years old excusing their conduct with psychologist terminology, 592
1950s–*present*: Don Rickles (comedian), 8
1953: United States v. Reynolds, 889–890
1957: Warner, *The Urge to Mass Destruction* published, 55, 778, 779
1957: Rockefeller Foundation establishes Theological Education Fund, 23
1960s: 78, 356, 793, 871
1960
High popularity of entertainment through radio, films, etc, 7
Rise of television, 7
Buswell, *A Christian View of Being and Knowing*, *I know many unbelievers who are simply lost, bewildered, and in the dark,* 814
1960–1968: Senator Edward V. Long, 941
1961–1963: John F. Kennedy, 331–332, 947, 949, 973
1962: *Engel v. Vitale*, U.S. Supreme Court ruling against prayer in public schools, 111
1961–1963, 1963–1969: Lyndon B. Johnson, 331–332, 973
1966–1989: *H. L. "Bill" Richardson, California state senator, 518*
1967–2009: Senator Edward M. Kennedy, 534
1987: Press reports on his "moral" stance on South Africa, calling for stricter sanctions banning South African imports and demonstrates hypocrisy on his trip to that country, 600
1969: Statist agency calls for *the salvation of all children who are in need of a savior,* 977

1959: *Revolutionary Notes* by Julius Lester published, 309
1970: Professing Christians number at least one fourth of the population, but are impotent, 464
1971–1975: Jimmy Carter, 642, 643,
1980: proposes the plan of registering women for the military draft, 640, 644
1973
Roe v. Wade, 913, 929
General Motors' interest cost of 36 cents of every dollar of net profits, 262
1976: *Ohio v. Whisner*, 341, 643
1979
Proclaimed "International Year of the Child," 174
49 states issue pronouncements attacking Biblical doctrine of the family, 174
Interest costs are 93 cents of every dollar of net profit, 262
State trooper refuses orders to serve in a patrol car with female trooper on Biblical grounds, wins case, 644
Federal judge rules that schools must recognize ghetto language in English class, 624
Thornton, *Love To Death*: *By the end of the seventies the neo-Freudians had moved on from Eros to Thanatos,* 795
1980s, 104, 257
1980: Richard A. Easterlin gives presidential address to the Economic History Association
humanity ultimately took up a new "religion of knowledge" whose churches are the schools and universities of the world…, 441
1981–1989: Ronald Reagan, 59, 81, 420
Supreme Court nominations
1986: William Rehnquist, 4, 5
1985
Wallace v. Jaffree U.S. Supreme Court ruling against prayer in the public schools, 109
Newsweek calls attention to STD epidemic which infected 1 in 4 Americans, 464
1986: *USA Today* article on the 'crack' epidemic and proposed solutions through education, 305
1987
Uproar at high school over offense taken at anti-bigotry joke, 26
Antiwar protest group trespasses tracks in front of a train with Munitions at Concord Naval Station, one man hit and loses legs, consequently receives $920,000 settlement, 591
The Bible called a "child abuse manual" in court, 614, 972
1988: Christians employ lawless demonstrations at abortion clinics, 86
1989: Michael McLaughlin writes about prison life from the guards' perspective, describes debauchery practiced and protected there, 511, 512
1989–1993: George H. W. Bush, 293, 564
1989: Malta Summit with Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev, 46, 48
1990: *U.S. News & World Report* editorial calls Bush to drop emphasis on foreign policy, deal with domestic troubles, 975
1991: Tenth Annual National Christian Prayer Breakfast, 153
1992: Dr. James Billington under pressure for opposing theft at the Library of Congress, 865

SCRIPTURE INDEX

Genesis
1 . . . . . 401, 700
1:1–31 . . . . . 561, 990
1:3 687
1:26. 766
1:26–27. 684
1:26–28. . . . 39, 62, 107, 158, 174, 197, 199, 304, 357, 473, 487, 521, 577, 692, 695, 697, 744, 826, 827
1:27. 185
1:27–28. . . . . 185, 765
1:28. . . . . 233, 522
1:31. . . . . 593, 694, 709, 718, 926
2 401
2:7 757
2:17. . . . . 214, 882
2:18. 186
2:19. 944
2:20–24. 199
2:23–24. 197
2:24. . . . . 177, 196, 200
3 529
3:1 . . . . . 486, 584
3:1–5 . . . . 158, 211, 311, 372, 928
3:4ff. 133
3:5 . . . . . 27, 32, 51, 62, 103, 113, 114, 180, 193, 445, 458, 464, 466, 472, 484, 497, 500, 502, 520, 527, 529, 533–534, 545, 612, 622, 646, 653, 664, 667, 668, 694, 717, 756, 785, 791, 804, 814, 816, 822, 832, 862, 865, 919, 990
3:7 214
3:10. 484
3:12. 119
3:16–19. 495
3:19. 435
3:20. 196
6:5 41
9:1–17 . . . . . 456, 521
9:17. 457
9:26–27. 914
11:4. 914
11:6. 147
16:5. 195
18. 203
18:27 134
19:4–5 584
21:9–10. 186
21:9–13. 195
21:12 . . . . . 186, 195
46:27 234
47:27 234
49:33 434

Exodus
book of 768
1:15–22. 101
2:1–10 101
3:13–15. 323
3:14. . . . . 826, 944
3:15. 826
3:15–16. 944
9:29. . . . . 623, 657, 938
12:38 234
19:5. 233
19:6. 339
20:3. . . . . 134, 426, 510, 632
20:4–6 . . . . . 631, 684
20:5. . . . . 629, 633
20:7. . . . . 323, 631, 633
20:8–11. . . . . 553, 559
20:11 556
20:12 . . . . . 154, 198, 562, 631

20:13 . . . . . .60, 984
20:14 984
20:15 . . . . . 553, 984
21:28 581
21:28–36 619
22:1–4 563
22:21 234
23:2–3 985
23:9. 234
23:31–33 . . . . . 446, 454, 564, 643
24:1. 657
24:6–8 456
25–40 (building of tabernacle) . .404
30:10–16 561
30:11–16 . . . . . 861, 938
30:16 . . . . . 517, 518
31:1–6 629
32:1. 634
32:5. 634
32:26 . . . . . 265, 327
34:12–16 . . . . . 446, 454, 564, 643
34:14 387

Leviticus
book of 768
4 541
5:5 568
11:44 408
14–15. 781
16:21 568
19:2. 408
19:13 145
19:15 985
19:18 37
19:33 234
19:35–36 554
20:26 157
21:17–23 703
25:10 . . . . . 840, 862
25:23 233
26. . . . . 536, 846

Numbers
book of 768
1:2–3 . . . . . 563, 640
1:18. . . . . 563, 640
1:20. . . . . 563, 640
1:45. . . . . 563, 640
1:47. 563
1:48–49. 640
5:7 568
11:16 317
18:21–26 895
18:21–28 338
18:24–26 561
18:25–26 . . . . . 859, 861
18:26 278
19. 781
21:14 640
26:2. . . . . 563, 640
26:4. 563
27:5–11. 67
31:4. 640
35:30 . . . . . 177, 536

Deuteronomy
book of 768
1:13–15. 641
1:16. 234
1:16–17. 985
1:17. 39
5:7 993
5:8–10 634
5:11. 323
5:12–15. 559
5:15. . . . . 217, 559
5:19–20. 664
6:4 935
6:5 . . . . . 340, 935
6:6 449
7:1–4 . . . . . 454, 564, 643
7:3 643
7:3–4 446
8:3 341
8:18. . . . . 241, 253
10:12 340
10:12–14 623
10:18 234
15:1–6 . . . . . 207, 554
15:4–5 262
15:8. 709
15:11 253
16:19 985
17:6. . . . . 177, 536
17:16 640
17:19 636
19:15 . . . . . 177, 536
20:1. 563
20:5–8 563
20:10–12 563
20:19–20 . . . . . 563, 640
21:1–9 569
21:15–21 67
21:18–21 . . . . . 224, 544
22:5. . . . . 536, 644
22:8. 854
23:6. 457
23:7. 234
24:5. . . . . 563, 640
24:14 234

24:14–15 145
24:16 167
25:4. . . . . 544, 545
26:5. 125
26:10 125
28. . . . . 234, 456, 457, 502, 506, 536, 562, 843, 846, 988
28:1–14. 234
28:12 39
28:15–68 234
28:23-24 39
29:12 456
29:29 620
30:6. 340
30:15 775
30:19 775
31:9–13. 457
32:17 474
32:35 . . . . . 259, 539
32:41 539
32:43 539
33:10 . . . . 226, 278, 317, 338, 346, 561, 859

Joshua
1:1–9 521
1:2–9 946
1:3, 5 218
2 101
3:5 640
7:10–11. 133
7:19. . . . . 358, 568
7:20–23. 177
24:15 955

Judges
5:20. . . . . 203, 855, 883
17:6. 457
18:1. 457
19:1. 457
19:22 584
21:25 . . . . 449, 452, 457, 509, 654

1 Samuel
1:27–28. 328
1:28. 354
2:6 56
8:10–18. 942
8:18. 859

2 Samuel
12. 551
12:1–14 (indirectly). 549
12:7. 81
19:10 . . . . . 377, 453, 458–459

1 Kings
3:12. 758
4:29. 758
8:27. 427
18:26 625
19:10 341
21. . . . . 202, 234
21:3. 434
22:6–7 338
22:8. 339

2 Kings
4:42. 278
5:18–19. 156
23:3. 455
23:24 455

2 Chronicles
7:14. 138
17:7. 338
19:8. 338
26:16–23 338

Ezra
7:11–26. 988

Esther
4:11. 792

Job
1:10. 646–647
1:21. 795
12:2. . . . . 144, 613, 729
13:15 94
41:11 657

Psalms
2 . . . .324, 325, 463, 506, 546, 806
2:4 . . . . . 232, 292
2:10–12. 974
4:8 217
8:4 357
8:5 . . . . . 357, 473
8:5–6 188
8:6 359
9:19. 859
10:8. 60
14:1. . . . . 232, 809, 830, 831, 854
16:11 62
19. . . . . 290, 831
19:9. 474
24:1. . . . . 38, 82, 233, 561, 623, 765, 861, 867, 938
24:1–2 122
25:4. 144

29. 478
29:10 478
34:18 133
36:9. . . . . 180, 958
37:7. 555
37:11 565
37:26 709
40:8. 339
46:10 556
46:11 556
47:7. 134
49:6–8 241
49:10–12 233
49:17 233
50:7. 233
50:10 233
50:12 . . . . . 657, 938
50:21 749–750
51:3–4 165
51:4. . . . . 581, 741
61:4 (referenced as Ps. lxi:4) . . .324
69:9. 160
72:8. 695
78:10 455
82:2. 985
86:9. 986
91:10 227
92:7-8. 6
94:1. . . . . 259, 539
96:13 359
99:8. 259
106:13–15 291
106:37 474
112:9 709
115:3 935
116:12–14 210
118:24 . . . . . .34, 556
119:54–55 496
119:97 496
119:126. 311
127 495
127:1 . . . . . 34, 48, 56, 110, 256, 285, 540, 612, 869, 977
127:1–2. 226–227
127:3 327
128:1 . . . . . 327, 395
139:7–13 684
143:2 387
143:10 144

Proverbs

1:7 . . . . . 306, 474, 484, 968
2:6 968
3:5 218
3:7 474
5:15–21. 181
8:13. 474
8:32-35 62
8:35. 428
8:35–36. . . . . 305, 581
8:36. . . . . 34, 41, 55, 58, 110, 428, 502, 762, 775, 915
9:10. 474
10:15 255
10:22 245
12:10 . . . . . 150, 846
13:24 883
14:27 . . . . . 474, 484
14:30 238
15:33 484
16:4. 491
18:10 . . . . . 323, 324
18:10–11 255–256
19:23 . . . . . 475, 484
21:16 218
21:26 709
22:7. 207
24:23 985
25:21–22 407
29:25 484
30:20 581

Ecclesiastes

5:9 212

Isaiah

1:16–17. 150
1:22. 553
2:4 695
2:22. . . . . 327, 540, 549, 653
3:12. 642
5:8–10 241
6:5 327
8:20. . . . . 468, 639
9:6 . . . . . 339, 806, 938
9:6–7 . . . . . 324, 520, 557
14:26–27 487
24:5. 455
26:13 . . . . . 634, 963
29:13 . . . . . 328, 539
30:1. 373
34:8. 259
40:6. 759
40:8. 759
41:11 695
42:8. . . . . 449, 623, 634
45:5. . . . . .36, 630
45:22 803
52:7. 730
54:3. 436

55:7. 916
55:8–9 620
57:20–21 557
57:21 883
58:5–11. 159
60:12 695
61:6. . . . . 262, 339, 436
65:20 695

Jeremiah
6:14. 149
7:4 995
8:11. 149
8:20. 547
31:33 . . . . . 339, 487
50:15 259
50:29 217

Lamentations
1:22. 217

Ezekiel
11:19 339
18:4. 609
25:14 259
36:25 781
36:26 339

Daniel
1 101
3 101

Hosea
4:12. 373
4:14. . . . . 641, 642
6:6 995
8:1 455

Amos
1:9 457
3:3 . . . . . 454, 589, 643
5:19. 235
9:7 . . . . . 135, 427

Obadiah
verse 15. 217

Micah
4:3–4 226
6:8 385

Nahum
1:2 259

Haggai
2:8 233

Malachi
3:5 234
3:6 722
3:7–12 536
3:8–12 . . . . . 545, 553, 562, 942

Matthew
2:11. 629
3:9 790
4:1–11 . . . . . 85, 472
4:3 646
4:4 . . . . . .62, 158, 339, 341, 351, 429, 466, 497, 612, 765, 777, 806
4:10. 154
5:5 565
5:9 565
5:13. . . . . 93, 311–334, 366, 407
5:17. 699
5:17–19. 626
5:18–20. 466
5:19. 562
5:22. 83
5:26. 571
5:42. 709
5:45. 39
5:48. . . . . 141, 156
6:2–7 792
6:5 718
6:5–7 466
6:7 . . . . . 136, 138
6:9–13 138
6:10. . . . . 488, 704
6:20–21. 291–292
6:21. . . . . 255, 474, 959
6:24. 785
6:27. 95
6:32. 373
6:32–33. 488
6:33. . . . . 138, 159, 166, 188, 244, 373, 380, 488, 714, 813, 897
6:34. . . . . .95, 164
7:1–2 664
7:1–5 655
7:15–20. . . . . 146, 599
7:16–20. . . . . 271, 369, 466
7:20. . . . . 193, 406, 500, 615, 717, 731, 959
7:20–21. 370
7:21. 498
8:22. 638
9:13. 995
10:8. . . . . 245, 253, 384, 412

10:11–15 790
10:14 792
10:18 341
12:7. 995
12:31-32 42
12:33–34 500
12:43–45 159–160
13. 83
13:5–6 77
13:18–30 84
13:20–21 77
13:20–22 731
13:24–30 82
13:36–43 82
15:1–9 545
15:7–9 . . . . . 539, 543
15:19 96
17:5. 91
17:24–27 560
18:6. 770
19:5. . . . . 196, 759
19:5–6 177
19:17 977
19:21 141
19:26 789
20:26–28 . . . . . 603, 654
21:21 789
21:43 153
22:1–14. 352
22:21 636
22:37 508
22:37–39 189
22:37–40 . . . . . 340, 497
22:39 508
23:11 197
23:14 . . . . . 166, 263
24:36 89
25:14–30 408
25:31–46 . . . . . 638, 774
25:44 583
25:45 638
26:11 262
27:18 238
28:18 . . . . . .56, 627
28:18–20 . . 218, 269, 457, 495, 521, 559, 636, 692, 695, 749, 766, 851
28:19-20 56
28:19–20 627

Mark

1:14–15. 55
4:26–29. 77
4:28. . . . . 77, 78, 80, 81
6:12–13. 474
7:9–13 224
12:17 636
12:29–31 340
15:13 87
16:15 55

Luke

1:52. 630
4:4 341
6:33–34. 709
6:35. 202
6:43. 699
10:1. 317
10:17 317
10:27 . . . . . 340, 935
12:48 . . 29, 186, 246, 541, 641, 642
12:49 112
16:17 626–627
17:10 207
18:1–8 136
18:11 508
18:14 508
19:13 . . . . . .55, 777
19:14 . . . . . 102, 509
20:19–26 86
20:20–26 561
20:25 636
21:26 762
22:42 . . . . . 133, 486
23:30 762

John

1:3 . . . . . 33, 422, 428
1:5 689
1:12. . . . . 218, 763
1:14. . . . . 469, 822
1:14–18. 777
1:17. 712
2:17. 160
3:7 88
3:16. 777
4:34. . . . . 495, 497
6:38. 159
7:17. . . . . 472, 620
7:24. 664
7:44–48. 409
8:17. 177
8:24. 696
8:32. . . . . 546, 875, 877
8:32–34. 738
8:33. 865
8:33–36. 851
8:34. . . . . 853, 873, 887
8:36. . . . . 207, 546, 552, 853, 862, 873, 877, 887, 959
8:44. . . . . 473, 646

10:10 772
11:25–26 58
11:50 269
12:1–6 225
12:14 473
12:31 473
13:1–16. 655
13:15 . . . . . 197, 655
14:6. . . .43, 44, 110, 274, 306, 366, 405, 427, 546, 615, 712, 772, 896
14:13–14 . . . . . 134, 466
14:15 . . . . . 150, 486
14:27 557
14:30 473
15:2. 157
15:10 486
15:10, 14 157
15:14 486
15:16 91
15:19 473
16:11 473
17:12 473
17:14 473
19:12 837
19:15 326

Acts
book of 384, 679
2:38. 350
2:42. 424
4–6 102
4:12. . . . . 426, 860, 896
5:29. . . . . .86, 100, 101, 340, 400, 518, 644
6 782
6:1–3 225
6:5 277
6:7 269
7:51. 524
8:3–4 277
8:5 277
8:16. 348
8:36–38. 348
9:6 . . . . . 16, 166, 399
13:38–39 388
14:8–18. 629
15. 365
15:18 313
17:28 . . . . . 669, 942
17:31 349
17:32 823
19:5. 348
21:15–26 524
22:28 350
23:1. 410
26:29 352

Romans
1:16. . . . . 55, 248, 616
1:16–17. 785
1:17–21. 804
1:17–23. 809
1:18. 809
1:18–20. 854
1:18–21. 530
1:18–22. 831
1:18–25. 625
1:20. 809
1:21–32. 585
2:13. 130
2:28-29 19
2:29. 332
3:10. 875
3:23. . . . . 311, 482, 875
3:31. . . . . 271, 369, 466
4:9–12 197
5:1–5 163
5:8 147
5:12. 473
5:20. 664
6:1 . . . . . 408, 491
6:1–2 147
6:23. . . . . 145, 146, 147, 491, 503, 855, 883, 915
7 664–665
7:5 759
8:2 546
8:4 . . . . . 340, 696, 865
8:7 . . . . . .601, 814, 830, 947
8:13. 500
8:17. . . . . 252, 272
8:18–23. 799
8:26. 134
8:28. . . . . 36, 162, 556, 557, 778
8:31. . . . . 763, 841
8:31–32. 408
8:37. . . . . .84, 351, 386, 408, 696, 702, 763, 879
10:17 . . . . . 33, 727, 730
11:13 365
12:4. 365
12:5. 433
12:19 . . . . . 259, 539
12:20 407
13:1. . . . . 340, 561, 631–632, 642, 988
13:1–4 517
13:1–5 . . . . . 100, 101
13:1ff. 152, 275

13:3. 915
13:4. . . . . 115, 942
13:5. . . . . 100, 340, 352
13:6. 942
13:7. . . . . .86, 154
13:7–10. 466
13:8. . . . . .37, 207
13:8–10. . . . . 253, 485
14:1–15:4. 927
14:17 942
14:23 634
16:17 790

1 Corinthians
book of 370
1:9 424
1:17–31. 721
1:23. 469
1:24. 471
1:24 (as 1 Cor. i:24). 923
3:2–11 370
3:21. 252
3:21–22. 370
4:7 . . . 24, 207, 244–245, 251, 627
5:10. . . . . 632, 701
6 . . . . . 379, 384, 782
6:1–8 945
6:11. 348
6:19. . . . . 186, 252
6:19–20. . . . . .186, 207, 354, 491
6:20. . . . . 252, 456, 792
7:5 186
7:20. 654
7:20–23. . . . . .87, 630
8:1–13 927
9:9 544
10:7. 634
10:8. 634
10:25–33 927
10:26 . . . . . .233, 623, 657, 938
10:28 . . . . . 233, 657, 927
10:31 942
11:1–15. 537
11:29 995
12:3. 350
12:12–20 433
12:13 352
14:14 134
14:34–35 320
14:40 928
15:12–20 696
15:20 558
15:21–22 696–697
15:23 558
15:24–25 94
15:24–26 . . . . . 500, 559, 697
15:24–27 695
15:25–26 499
15:26 499
15:45 . . . . . .423, 986
15:45–47 695
15:45–50 . . . . . .435, 486
15:53–54 408
15:54 474
15:55–57 58
15:58 . . . . . .260, 435, 557, 883

2 Corinthians
3:12–18. 841
3:14–15. 759
3:17. . . . . .204, 546, 841, 871
4:6 578
5:17. . . . . .499, 865
5:18. 233
5:20. . . . . .304, 939
6:14. . . . . .446, 455, 564, 643
6:14–18. 347
6:17. . . . . .757, 796
8:4 424
10:5. . . . . .55, 359
10:13 534
13:1. 177
13:7. 410

Galatians
1:8 675
1:11. 341
2:9 424
3:27. 352
3:28. . . . . .390, 704
3:29. . . . . .252, 272
4:7 . . . . . .252, 272
4:10. 706
5:1 839
6:7 . . . . . 12, 100, 214, 855
6:16. . . . . .271, 317, 433, 534

Ephesians
2:5 387–388
2:8 . . . . . 388, 414, 619
2:8–9 540
2:10. 340
3:6 . . . . . .252, 272
4:14. 163
4:24. . . . . .62, 185, 577, 684, 729, 765, 826
4:24-25 33
4:25. . . . . 29, 39, 137, 225, 549, 654
5:14. . . . . .84, 218
5:16. 295

5:21. . . . . 152, 186
5:21–33. . . . . 107, 185, 197, 434
5:22. 195
5:22–33. 177
5:25. 188
6:2–3 562
6:10–18. 763
6:18. 134
6:20. 939

Philippians
1:5 424
2:6–8 771
2:9–11 . . . 325, 348, 354, 390, 626
2:10. 324
2:11. 777
2:20. 332
3:2 675
3:9 388
3:10. 248
3:12. 427
3:20. 350
4:3 278
4:6 134
4:6–7 363
4:8 474
4:11. . . . . 363, 399
4:19. 399

Colossians
2:11–13. 197
3:5 . . . . . 500, 631
3:10. . . 62, 185, 577, 684, 765, 826
3:17. . . . . 323, 325
4:2 134
4:5 295

2 Thessalonians
1:8 259

1 Timothy
2:1 134
2:1–2 304
2:1–4 145
2:9 536
3:1 365
3:1–13 317
3:6 . . . . . 703, 949
3:10. 365
3:13. 365
3:15. 366
3:16. 634
4:1 675
4:2 165
5:8 . . . . . 173, 224
5:17. 544
5:18. 544
5:19. 177
5:22. 949
6:6–8 363
6:10. . . . . 211, 241
6:15. . . . 349, 378, 390, 417, 659, 692, 697, 707, 782
6:16. 781

2 Timothy
2:15. 467
2:19. . . . . 326, 351
3:5 . . . . . 55, 193, 366, 615, 638

Titus
1:10–16. 709
1:15. . . . . 708, 926, 927

Philemon
verse 6 424

Hebrews
1:3 578
1:14. 473
2:8 325
4:9–16 557
6:17. . . . . 252, 272
7:5 365
7:16. 759
8:10. 339
10:7, 9 159
10:9. . . . . 487, 496
10:28 177
10:30 539
10:31 379
11. . . . . 101, 388
11:1. 163
11:31 101
12:22–23 433
12:22–24 393
12:26–29 93
12:27 . . . . . .44, 556
12:28 134
12:29 . . . . . .6, 93, 383, 805
13:4. 696
13:5–6 946
13:8. 217

James
book of 462
1:23–27. 130
1:25. . . . . 189, 841
2:2 . . . . . 317, 364
2:5 . . . . . 252, 272

2:8 253
2:9 985
2:12. 189
2:14–17. 599
2:14–26. . . 109, 271, 369, 466, 498, 615, 841, 996
2:15–17. 782
2:17. 763
2:17–26. 620
2:19. 601
2:20–26. 130
2:20, 26. 93
2:26. . . . . 406, 731, 946
4:1 79
4:1–3 565
4:1–4 145
4:4 947
4:17. 311
5:16. . . . . 134, 139

1 Peter
1:15–16. 408
2:5 134
2:9 339
2:13–16. 154
3:1–7 . . . . . 195, 197
3:6 186
3:7 . . . . . .162, 196, 251, 506
3:8 332
3:21. . . . . 351, 352
4:17. . . . . .311, 400, 420, 639

2 Peter
1:4 . . . . . 422, 424
2:15. 369

1 John
1:1 62
1:3 424
1:5 416
1:6 397
1:6–7 424
3:4 . . . . . .311, 372, 385, 448, 481, 493, 499, 503, 694, 921
3:8 . . . . . 473, 634
4:1–3 697
14:2. 690
4:2–3 . . . . . 693, 694–695
4:15. . . . . 348–349, 696
4:18. 485
5:4 . . . . . .292, 475, 692, 763
5:5 349
5:16. 789

2 John
verse 7 690
verses 9–11 789

Jude
verse 4 82
verse 11. 369

Revelation
1:6 339
1:17. 773
2 . . . . . 370, 407
2:12–17. 99
2:14. 369–370
2:24. . . . . 472, 474, 806
3 . . . . . 370, 407
3:5 278
3:14–16. 513
5:12–14. 134
6:16. . . . . 571, 762, 876
9:6 762
11:15 . . 33, 157, 285, 349, 351, 627
13:8. 278
13:16–18 351
14:1. 350
14:13 435
15:3. 271
15:4. 157
17:8. 278
18:4. . . . . 55, 125, 645, 916
18:4-5. 17
18:11–21 916
19:16 . . . . . 55, 292, 635
20:12 278
21:4–5 572
21:5. 113
21:27 278
22:3. 518

WORKS CITED INDEX

1984 (Orwell; 1949), 59, 453, *910*, 915, 953, 958
A Beginner's History of Philosophy (Cushman; 1910–1911), *812–813*
"A Better Theory of Legal Interpretation" (Curtis; 1949), *844*
The Abolition of Man (Lewis; 1947), 15
Aborting America (Nathanson; 1979), 42
Abortion: The American Holocaust (Kelly; 1981), 179
A Christian Theory of Knowledge (Van Til; 1954), 529, 530, 667, *823*
A Christian View of Being and Knowing (Buswell; 1960), *814*
A Class by Themselves: The Untold Story of the Great Southern Families (Stadiem; 1980), 652
A Common Faith (Dewey; 1934), 647
A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents (Richardson, ed.; 1899), *900*
A Covenant with Death: The Constitution, Law, and Equality in the Civil War Era (Paludan; 1975), *896*
A Criminal as Hero (Angiolillo; 1979), 511
"Adam lay ybounden" (15th century text), 492
The Adams–Jefferson Letters (Cappon, ed.; 1959), 462
A Declaration of Legal Faith (Rutledge; 1947), *997*
Affable Savages: An Anthropologist Among the Urubu Indians of Brazil (Huxley; 1956), 580
Against Apion (Josephus; ca. 2nd century), 318
Against Heresies (Irenaeus; ca. 175–185), *709–710*, *711*
Against Heresies (Irenaeus; in Ante-Nicene Christian Library), *923*
The Age of Absolutism, 1660–1815 (Beloff; 1962), *933*
The Age of Augustus (Earl; 1980), 503
"Ahead: A Nation of Illiterates?" (Kozol; in *U.S. News and World Report*; 5/17/82), 59
A History of the Church to A.D. 461 (Kidd; 1922), *691*
A House Is Not a Home (Adler; 1953), 65
"AIDS and 'Just Another Word'" (Klinghoffer; in *Wall Street Journal*; 1/20/89), *755*
A Jewish Princedom in Feudal France, 768–900 (Zuckerman; [1965] 1972), 517, 938
A Machine That Would Go of Itself: The Constitution in American Culture (Kammen; 1986), *895*, 995
American Alternative Theater (Shank; 1982), 14
American Family Association Journal (January 1991), 142
The American Historical Review (June 1971), 652
American Journal of Public Health (February 1990), 976

American Patriotism: Speeches, Letters, and Other Papers, etc. (Peabody, ed.; 1880), 322
The American Spectator, 513
American Yesterday (Sloane; 1956), 65–66
"America," or "My Country 'Tis of Thee" (Smith; 1832), *845*, *851*, *862*
"America's Addiction to Addictions" (Levine; in *U.S. News & World Report*; 2/5/90), *975*
America's Money Machine: The Story of the Federal Reserve System (Groseclose; 1980), 265
"Am I A Soldier of the Cross?" (Watts; 1724), *780*
An American Procession (Kazin; [1984] 1985), *993*
"An Answer to the Jews" (Tertullian; ca. 190–220), *705*
"An Anthropological Approach to the Origins of Protestantism" (Bucker; in *The Protestant Credo*), *826*
"The Anatomy of a Radical Gentleman, Henry Marten" (Williams; in *Puritans and Revolutionaries*), *995*
The Ancient Mysteries: A Sourcebook of Sacred Texts (Meyer, ed.; 1987), 470
The Anglo-American Establishment (Quigley; 1981), 496
An Introduction to Apologetics (Carnell; 1948), 815, *816*
An Introduction to Theology (Van Til; 1947), *817*, *819–820*
An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation (Bentham; 1789), 533
An Outline of the Theology of The New Testament (Conzelmann; 1969), 461
Answer to Petilian the Donatist (Augustine; 401), *727*
Ante-Nicene Christian Library (1874)
Clement of Alexandria, vol. 4.1, *923*
Clement of Alexandria, vol. 12.2, *923*, *924*
Irenaeus, vol. 5.1, *923*
The Anti-Capitalist Mentality (Mises; 1956), 242
Anti-Poems (Parra; 1960), 32
The Antiquities of the Christian Church (Bingham; 1850), 319
Antiquities of the Jews (Josephus; ca. 93–94), 318
Antithesis (Marcion; ca. 2nd century), 699
The Apostles' Creed, 49, 390
A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians Contrasted with Real Christianity (Wilberforce; 1797), *718*
"Arianism" (Williams; in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*), 732
Art in Crisis (Sedlmayr; 1958), *992*
The Art of Political Manipulation (Riker; 1986), 465
"A Sermon Preached Before His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson, Esq., etc." (Turner; May 26, 1773), 326
"A Song for St. Cecilia's Day, 1687" (Dryden; 1687), 330
Aspects of Aristocracy (Cannadine; 1994), 18
A Substitute for Holiness; or, Antinomianism Revived; or, The Theology of the So-Called Plymouth Brethren Examined and Refuted (Steele; 1877), *707*
Atheism (Borne; 1961), 667, *830–831*
A Theological Dictionary (Buck; 1802), 478
A Theological Word Book of the Bible (Richardson, ed.; 1952), 400, 412
A World Without Jews (Mark; 1959), 579
The Banquet Years (Shattuck; 1955), *849*, *849–850*
Before Philosophy (Frankfort, Frankfort, Wilson, Jacobsen; 1964), 577
Beijing Review
January 5, 1987, 447
January 12, 1987, 447
Berman v. Parker (1954), *901*
Bhagavad-Gita, 683

Biblical Law (Clark; 1943), 568
Biblical Theology (Vos; 1948), 197
"Big Apple Takes Bite from Its Own Future" (Lochhead; *Insight*; 9/16/91), *915–916*
The Bill of Rights
  The Sixteenth Amendment, 345
The Bill of Rights (ratified 1791), 343–346
  The First Amendment, 343–346, 837, *843*, 888, 890, 891, 892, 900, 901, 941, *982*
  The Fifth Amendment, *901*
  The Ninth Amendment, 899
  The Tenth Amendment, 899
  The Fourteenth Amendment, *848*, 899
The Birth of the Bill of Rights, 1776–1791 (Rutland; 1955), 344
The Book of Common Prayer, 271
"The Book of Genesis" (Simpson, Bowie; in *The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 1), 197
The Book of Proverbs (Whybray; 1972), 255
The Book of the Covenant (Kimhi, 12th century; Talmage, tr.; 1972), *765*
The Books of Homilies (1547, 1562, 1571), 168
Borden of Yale '09 (Taylor; 1926), 555
The Borderland of Right and Wrong (Graebner; [1938] 1954), 927
The Brave New World of the Enlightenment (Bredvold; 1961), 45–46
The Broken Heart: The Medical Consequences of Loneliness (Lynch; 1977), 604
Bureaucracy (Mises; 1945), *853*
Cain (Byron; 1821), *792*
"Calvinism in Geneva in the Time of Calvin and of Beza (1545–1605)" (Lewis, Stauffenegger; in *International Calvinism, 1541–1715*), 201
The Calvinistic Concept of Culture (Van Til; 1959), 330
"Can We Tithe Our Children?" (Rushdoony; in *Chalcedon Report*, February 1979), 395, 626
Capsule (January-March 1987), 28
The Captive (Rowlandson; Ludwig, intro.; [1682] 1988), 329
Carlyle and Emerson (Harris; 1978), 419
Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum (Hieronymus [Jerome]; ca. 347–420), 319
The Catholic Encyclopedia (1910), 77, 534, 578
Catholics, Anglicans, and Puritans (Trevor-Roper; 1987), 375
The Chalcedonian Creed (A.D. 451), 422
Chalcedon Report
  June 1975, 162, 192
  February 1979, 395, 626, 631
  January 1989, 545
  April 1989, 542, 545, 546–547
  Unnamed issue featuring Otto Scott's article on the Zurich drug-war, 864
  Unnamed issue from Winter, 1995–1996, 784
  February 1997, 811
"charity, almsgiving (Hindu)" (Geden; in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*), 243
Children Are the Revolution: Day Care in Cuba (Leiner; 1974), 173–174
The Child Savers (Platt; 1969), *977*
Christ and the Caesars (Stauffer; [1952] 1955), 320–321
Christendom (Winter 1936), *748*
Christengemeinde und Bürgergemeinde (Barth; 1946), 382
Christengemeinde und Bürgergemeinde (Barth; in *Scottish Journal of Theology*; June 1965), 382
"Christian, Dost Thou See Them?" (Andrew; ca. 660–732), *780*
"Christian Epistemology in the Postmodern Age" (Braswell; in *Journal of Christian Reconstruction*; Fall 1996), *808–809*
The Christian in Complete Armour (Gurnall; 1655), 403

Christianity and Classical Culture (Cochrane; 1940), 45, 273
Christianity and Paganism, 350–750 (Hillgarth; 1986), 471
Christian Law Association Defender, 342
The Christian Manifesto (1982), 463
Christian Reconstruction (March-April 1979), 395–396
Christian Revelation and the Completion of the Aristotelian Revolution (Madigan; 1988), 469–470
Christian Statesman (Nov-Dec 1983), 43
Christian Theistic Ethics (Van Til; [1947] 1971), 527
The Christian Tradition (Pelikan; 1971–1989), 700, *746*
Christian Vocation (Forrester; 1953), 495
Christ Unmasked: The Meaning of The Life of Jesus in German Politics (Massey; 1983), 403–404
Christus: A Mystery (Longfellow; 1872), 148–149
Chronicles of Culture (now *Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture*), 513
Church and State in France, 1870–1914 (McManners; 1972), 108
Church History (Eusebius; ca. 323–324), 319, 392
The Church of the Catacombs (Oetting; 1964), 467
Church Order in The New Testament (Schweizer; 1961), 318, 321
Church Order in The New Testament (Schweizer; in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*) 1961), 318, 321
The City of God (Augustine; 426), 393, 539–540, 626
The Climax of Rome (Grant; 1968), *911*, 933
"Come Home, George" (Gergen; in *U.S. News & World Report*; 2/5/90), *975*
Commentary (February 1985), *892*
Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark and Luke (Calvin; [1555]), 202
Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians (Hodge; 1856), 152–153, 195–196
Commitment and Community (Kanter; [1972] 1973), 184
The Common Law (Holmes; 1881), *977*
Communist Manifesto (Marx; 1848), *849*
"Concerning the Statues" (Chrysostom; ca. 387), 398
"conflict" (Bushnell; in *Dictionary of Sociology*), 227
Conflict in 1937: The Supreme Court, The Federal System, and the Constitution (Hoggan; unpublished?), 901
Constitution of the United States of America: Analysis and Interpretation (U.S. Government Printing Office), 542, *848*
The Contemplative Life (Julianus Pomerius; 5th century), 188
The Council of Trent, 6th Session (1547), 534
The Counter-Revolution: Doctrine and Action, 1789–1804 (Godechot; 1971), 419
"Creation and Redemption: Attempt at a Theological Interpretation in the Light of the Contemporary Understanding of the World" (Dantine; in *Scottish Journal of Theology*; June 1965), 382
Critique of Pure Reason (Kant; Smith, tr.; [1787] 1934), *754*, *800*, *804*, *812*
Cultural History of the Modern Age (Friedell; 1927–1931), 637
Currents in Theology and Mission (April 1987), 77
Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature (McClintock, Strong; 1867–1887), *760*
Daily News Digest (August 29, 1990), 593
The Day America Told the Truth (Patterson, Kim; 1991), 49, 51
Ten Days That Shook the World (Reed; 1919), 10
"Death and Taxes" (in *Spectator*; 2/3/90), *976*
Death in the Middle Ages (Boase; 1972), 615
The Death of Common Sense (Howard; 1994), 588
Death of Hercules (ancient play), 275

The Death of the Past (Plum; 1970), 285
Decadence (Gilman; 1975), 307
The Decameron (Boccaccio; Payne, tr.; [1351] 1940), *924*
Decameron (Boccaccio; 1351), 992
De Carne Christi (Tertullian; ca. 203–206), *693–694*
The Decline of the West (Spengler; [1918] 1926), 496
Decretum (Gratian; ca. 1148), 531
The Defense of the Faith (Van Til; 1955), 529, *823–824*
De Haeresibus (Augustine; 429), 319
Deification in Christ (Nellas; 1987), *768*, 769
"Democratic Vistas" (Whitman; in *Specimen Days and Collect*), *757*
De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium (Copernicus; 1543), 728
Descent of Man (Darwin; 1871), 243
De Templis (Hospinian; 1603), 319
Deuteronomy (Rad; 1964), 634
The Devil in the New World (Cervantes; 1994), 759
De voluptate (Valla; 1431), 502–503
Dialogue with Trypho (Justin Martyr; 2nd century), 270
Dictionary of Christian Antiquities (Smith, Cheetham; 1875), 779
Dictionary of Sociology (Fairchild, ed.; 1944), 227, 330–331
Dictionary of Sociology (incorrect citation?), 612
The Didache (anon.; ca. 1st century), 351
The Disappearance of God (Miller; 1963), 811
"Discourse on Inequality" (Rousseau; 1755), 648–649
"Discourse on Inequality" (Rousseau; in *Political Writings*), 648–649
"The Dissolution of German Historicism" (Iggers; in *Ideas in History*), 907
The Divine Comedy (Dante; ca. 1308–1320), 827
The Doctrine of Scripture (Van Til; 1967), 528
Dogmatics in Outline (Barth; 1947, 1948), *724*, *780*
Early Christian Creeds (Kelly; 1950), 348
The Early Lectures of Ralph Waldo Emerson (Spiller, Williams, eds.; 1972), 419
"Easy Virtue" (Scott; in *Chalcedon Report*; April 1989), 542, 546–547
The Ego and Its Own (Stirner; 1844), 511
The Eighteen Nineties (Jackson; 1913), 289
The Emerging Order (Rifkin, Howard; 1979), 520
Empire in Brazil (Haring; 1958), *920*
Encyclopaedia Britannica (1968–1771), 524, 649, *920*
Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (Hastings; [1908–1927]), 61, 138, 243
Encyclopedia of American History (Morris, ed.; 1961), 900
Encyclopedia of Early Christianity (Ferguson; 1990), 732
Encyclopédie (Diderot; 1751–1772), 68
The End of Glory: An Interpretation of the Origins of World War II (Lafore; 1970), 71
Enslaved: An Investigation into Modern-Day Slavery (Thomas; 1990), *734*
Envy (Schoeck; 1966), 243
Epistle 82 (Basil; n.d.), 319
The Epistle to the Romans (Murray; 1960), *915*
"The Epistle to the Smyrnaeans" (Ignatius; ca. 107), 392, *693*
Essay on Liberty (Milil; 1859), *866*
Essays to Do Good (Mather; 1710), 718
"Estate and Calling" (Rushdoony; in *Chalcedon Report*; June 1975), 162
Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy: Studies in His Life and Thought (Bryant, Huessy, eds.; 1986), 447
Exodus (Bush; 1841), 634
The Experience of Nothingness (Novak; 1970), 357–358
Factors in American History (Pollard; 1925), 321

"The Failure of Men" (Rushdoony; in *Chalcedon Report*, January 1983), 162
Faithful Steward (July 1988), *887*
Families in Former Times: Kinship, Household and Sexuality in Early Modern France (Flandrin; 1979), 172, 624
Family and Civilization (Zimmerman; 1947), 624
"Farewell Address" (Washington; 1796), 345, *889*, 899
"Fatal Victory" (Galloway; in *U.S. News and World Report*; 10/29/90), 332
Faust: A Tragedy (Goethe; 1808), 595
"Fecal Contamination of Shanty Town Toddlers in Households with Non-corralled Poultry, Lima, Peru" (in *American Journal of Public Health*; February 1990), 976
Federal Register (Office of the Federal Register), 103
"fellowship" (Schattenmann; in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*), 424
Felony and Misdemeanor: A Study in the History of Criminal Law (Goebel; [1937] 1976), 220
The Feminization of American Culture (Douglas; 1977), 189, 396–397, 398
Feudal Society (Bloch; 1939), *746*
Feudal Society (Bloch; in *The Growth of Medieval Theology (600–1300)*), *746*
Fight, Flight, Fraud: The Story of Taxation (Adams; 1982), 561
The First Apology (Justin Martyr; ca. 155–157), 385
First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles v. County of Los Angeles (1957), 101
For Whom the Bell Tolls (Hemingway; 1940), 10
The Foundations of Social Order (Rushdoony; 1968), *733*
Fountain of Justice (Wu; 1955), *891*
The Freedom Seder (Waskow; 1969), *773*
The French Laic Laws, 1879–1889 (Acomb; 1967), *932*
The Freudian Fallacy (Thornton; 1983), 794
Freud (Rushdoony; 1965), 444
"From Clapham to Bloomsbury: A Genealogy of Morals" (Himmelfarb; in *Commentary*; February 1985), *892*
From Under the Rubble (Solzhenitsyn; 1975), 42, 643, 953
From Utopia to Nightmare (Walsh; 1962), 965
The Future of the Bible (van Bruggen; 1978), 24
Gender: The Myth of Equality (Neely; 1981), 50
German Pietism During the Eighteenth Century (Stoeffler; 1973), 749, 751
Gesta Purgationis Felicis et Caeciliani, ad calcem Optati (author unknown), 319
Gnosticism: Its History and Influence (Walker; 1983), *681*
God's Covenants (Watts; 1980), 450
Gold and Iron: Bismarck, Bleichroder, and the Building of the German Empire (Stern; 1977), *933*
"GOP Homosexuals: The Reason Why 'Social Agenda' Gets Nowhere?" (Potter; in *The Wanderer*; 7/20/89), 420
The Governmental Habit (Hughes; 1977), 861
Grace and Law: St. Paul, Kant, and the Hebrew Prophets (Cassirer; 1988), 585
Gray (Gosse; 1882), 430
The Great Money Panic (Weiss; 1981), 262
The Gulag Archipelago (Solzhenitsyn; 1973), 953, *954*
Hamlet (Shakespeare; 1603), *873*
Harper's (January 1981), 636
Harvard Law Review (1897), 233
The Hawk (play; 1967), 357
"heart" (Sorg; in *The International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*), *759*
Hefner (Brady; 1974), 180
Heidelberg Catechism (1563), 118
Henry V (Labarge; 1975), 15–16, 194

The Heresy of Democracy (Lord Percy; 1955), 396, 399
Heterodoxy (May-June 1993), 382
Hidden History (Boorstin; 1987), *919*
High Noon (film; 1952), 607
Hildebrandine Essays (Whitney; 1932), 270
Historical Letters (Lavrov; [1840] 1967), 208, 208–209
History as Myth (Stevenson; 1969), 382
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Inquiry (December 8, 1980), 635
Inside the Aquarium (Suvorov; 1986), 881
Inside the IRS: How Internal Revenue Works (You Over) (Schnepper; 1978), 625, 941
Insight
January 5, 1998, 670
September 16, 1991, *915–916*
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The Intellectual History of Europe (Heer; 1966), 9–10
Intellectual Schizophrenia (Rushdoony; 1959), 303
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The Interpreter's Bible (1951–1957), 197
"In the Name of Jesus Christ, or, In the Name of Caesar?" (Rushdoony; in *Chalcedon Report*; February 1979), 631
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The Invention of Liberty (Starobinski; 1987), 10, 11–12
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Jerusalem (Blake), 491
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"Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts" (ca. 11th century), 161
The Jewish People and Jesus Christ (Jocz; [1949] 1979), 269
John Wilkins, 1614–1672 (Shapiro; 1969), 280, 281, 282

Joseph II and Enlightened Despotism (Blanning; 1970), 68
Joseph Story and the American Constitution (Story; 1971), *891*
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Karl Marx, Racist (Weyl; 1979), *951*
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Sexual Behavior in the Human Male (Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin; 1948), 799
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"The Lands that Long in Darkness Lay" (Watts; 1709), *850*
The Last Temptation of Christ (film; 1988), 613, 614
Law and Revolution (Berman; 1983), 408
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The Law is Holy (Brokke; 1963), 524
Lead Us Not Into Temptation (Berry; 1992), 381
Leaves of Grass (Whitman; 1855), 579
Letter 54 (Augustine; in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*), 926
Letter 55 (Augustine; in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*), 926
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Letter of June 22, 1655 (Cromwell; in *God's Covenants*), 450
Letter to John Adams on October 28, 1813 (Jefferson; in *The Adams-Jefferson Letters*), 462
Letter to John Adams on September 4, 1823 (Jefferson; in *The Adams-Jefferson Letters*), 462
The Letter to Titus (Quinn; 1988), *708*
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The Life-Line of the Lone One (Chase; 1881), 610
The Life of Jesus (Strauss; 1835), 403
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The Life of Samuel Johnson (Boswell; 1791), 175
The Life of the Heart: George Sand and Her Times (Winwar; 1945), 143
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Looking Backward (Bellamy; 1888), 285, 965
The Lordship of Christ (ten Pas; 1978), 147, 153
Los Angeles Herald Examiner (August 31, 1982), 61
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Love in the Western World (de Rougemont; 1939), 719, 744
Love to Death (unknown publication?), *795*, *796*
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Magic and the Millennium (Wilson; 1973), 382
The Magic Flute (Mozart; 1791), 271–272
Managers of Virtue (Tyack, Hansot; 1982), *909*
Managing in Turbulent Times (Drucker; 1980), 123
Manfred (Byron; 1817), *791*
The Man in the Roman Street (Mattingly; 1947), 467
Man Makes Himself (Childe; 1936), 871
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The Marquis de Sade (Thomas; 1992), 432
The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (Blake; 1790), 448
Medieval People (Power; 1924), 4
The Medieval World (Heer; 1962), *746*
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Michelet (Barthes; 1987), *961*, 971, *972*
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The Miscellanies; or Stromata (Clement; in *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*), *923*
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Modern Times (Johnson; 1983), *909–910*, *911*
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"Moriturus" (Millay; 1928), 146
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National Review, 513
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Nature (Emerson; 1836), *757*
The New Hermeneutic (Van Til; 1974), 527, 665
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The New Politics of Poverty (Mead; 1992), 293–294
New Republic (October 29, 1966), 203
The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (1908–1914), 683
The New Science of Politics (Voegelin; 1952), *688*
Newsweek (February 4, 1985), 464
The New Totalitarians (Huntford; 1971), 935, *953*, *954*
Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers (Schaff, ed.; 1885), 926
Nicomachean Ethics (Aristotle; 350 B.C.), 303–304
Nihilism (Thielicke; 1961), 258
Nobler than the Angels, Lower Than a Worm (Sattler; 1989), *748*
North American Review (October 1824), 155

No title given. (Carpenter), 216
No title given. (Delitzsch), 324
No title given. (February 25, 1987), 600
No title given. (Sloyan), 524
No title given. (Vallée Poussin), 216–217
No title given. (Vincent), 423
Nuclear Holocaust and Christian Hope (Sider, Taylor; 1982), 778
"obey, obedience" (Whitehouse; in *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*), 400
Octopus (Sterling; 1990), 582
"Ode: Intimations of Immorality" (Wordsworth; 1815), 143
"Of the Misery of all Mankind" (Cranmer; in *The Books of Homilies*), 168
Of Woman Born (Rich; 1976) (not cited), 355
"Oh, why was I born with a different face?" (Blake; letter of August 16, 1803), *805*
On Baptism, Against the Donatists (Augustine; ca. 401), *727*, *729*
On Baptism (Tertullian; ca. 3rd century), 353
On Christianity (Hegel; [1795] 1961), *803*
On Fasting (Tertullian; ca. 190–220), 706
On First Principles (Origen; ca. 225), 401, 700
On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers (Schleiermacher; [1799]), *748*
On the Bondage of the Will (Luther; 1525), 477
On the Literal Interpretation of Genesis (Augustine; in *Augustine On Genesis*), *687–688*
On the New Forcers of Conscience Under the Long Parliament; "New presbyter is but old priest writ large" (Milton; 1645), *876*
On Virginity (Gregory; 368), *769*
"Opposing View" (Rockwell; in *USA Today*; 4/23/92), 293
Order and History (Voegelin; 1956–1987), 688
The Origin of Forced Labor in the Soviet State, 1917–1921 (Bunyan; 1967), 229
Origin of Species (Darwin; 1859), 801, 871
Origins of the Medieval World (Bark; 1958), 283
Orthodox Iconography (Cavarnos; 1977), *767–768*
"Orwell's Patriotism" (Lutman; 1967), 411
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Our Enemy, The State (Nock; 1935), 519
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Painted Black (Raschke; 1990), *733*
The Passing of the Modern Age (Lukacs; 1970), 457
Paul at Athens (Van Til; 1954), 823
Penthouse, 940
The People, Yes (Sandburg; 1936), 415
"perfect" (in *Webster's 1828 Dictionary*), 141
Persecution in the Early Church (Workman; 1906), 364, 391
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Playboy, 179, 940
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Loeb and Nathan Leopold, Jr. on Trial for Murder (1924), 120
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Poets of Reality (Miller; 1965), 811
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Political Writings (Rousseau; unknown edition), 648–649
Politicians, Socialism and Historians (Taylor; 1982), *971*, *972*, *973–974*
Politics (Aristotle; ca. 350 B.C.), 303, 936
The Politics of Guilt and Pity (Rushdoony; 1970), 875
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"Pollsters Find God in American Hearts" (in *Insight*; 1/5/98), 670
The Popes and European Revolution (Chadwick; 1981), 175
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Portrait of a Cavalier: William Cavendish, First Duke of Newcastle (Trease; 1979), 651
The Possessed (Dostoyevsky; 1872), 953
"prayer" (Fallaize; in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*), 138
Preacher's Girl (Schultze; 1993), 527
"The Precursors" (Power; 1938), 4–5
Prelude to Terror (Hampson; 1988), 90
The Present-Day Christological Debate (Runia; 1984), 666
Prisoners of Silence (Kozol; 1980), 59, 257
Process Theology: Basic Writings by the Key Thinkers of a Major Modern Movement (Cousins; 1971), 677
Prodigals and Pilgrims (Fliegelman; 1982), 460
ProfScam: Professors and the Demise of Higher Education (Sykes; 1988), 513
Prometheus Unbound (Shelley; 1820), 789
The Prophets of Paris (Manuel; 1962), *847*
The Protestant Credo (Ferm, ed.; 1953), *826*
Protestant Island (Bryant; 1967), *960–961*
Puritan and Cavalier: The English Civil War (Barbary; 1977), 651
Puritanism and Liberty (Woodhouse; 1975), 281–282
Puritans and Predestination: Grace in English Protestant Theology, 1525–1695 (Wallace; 1982), 280, 281
Puritans and Revolutionaries (Pennington, Thomas, eds.; 1978), *995*
"Que Faire?" (Apollinaire; in *The Banquet Years*), *849–850*
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The Quintessence of Ibsenism (Shaw; 1981), 50
Rationalism and Revolution, 1660–1815 (Barnes, Feldman, eds.; 1972), *993*
Reader's Digest (October 1987), 590
"Reading Between the Lines of the School-Prayer Decision" (Ferrara; in *The Wall Street Journal*, 6/11/85), 111
"Reason and Rationalism" (Rushdoony; in *Chalcedon Report*; February 1997), 811
The Rebel (Camus; 1951, 1956), 669, *913*
Rebel Without a Cause (Lindner; 1944), 849
Recent Changes in American Constitutional Theory (Burgess; [1923] 1933), 640–641, 900
Reformer: St. Charles Borromeo (Yeo; 1938), 204
The Register of the Company of Pastors of Geneva in the Time of Calvin (Hughes, ed.; 1966), 201–202
The Reign of the Phallus: Sexual Politics in Ancient Athens (Keuls, 1985), 29
"Religion and the Family" (in *The Stockton Record*; 1/3/98), 670
The Religion of Humanity (Frothingham; 1872), *689*

The Religions of the Roman Empire (Ferguson; 1985), 92
Religion Within the Bounds of Bare Reason (Kant; 1793), 585
Religious Emblems (Holmes, Barber; 1846), 285
Religious Liberty: An Inquiry (Bates; 1972), *934*
Religious Thought and Heresy in the Middle Ages (Bussell; 1918), *736*
Renaissance Cavalier (White; 1959), 9
Reports from the Holocaust: The Making of an AIDS Activist (Kramer; 1989), 523
Republic (Plato; ca. 380 B.C.), 41, 172, 549, *964*
Revolutionary Notes (Lester; 1969), 309, 311
"Revolution or Regeneration" (Rushdoony; in *Chalcedon Report*; January 1989), 545
The Rise of Evangelical Pietism (Stoeffler; 1971), *748*, *752*
Ritual, Politics, and Power (Kertzer; 1988), 650
"Roadmap for a Queer Church" (in *Heterodoxy*; May-June 1993), 382
Robespierre: The Voice of Virtue (Scott; 1974), 90, 729, *761*, *793–794*
Romantic Affinities: Portraits from an Age, 1780–1830 (Christiansen; 1988), *992*
The Romantic Agony (Praz; 1933), 719, 744
Rules of Sociological Method (Durkheim; 1895), 981
Ruling Case Law, vol. 7 (1915), 625
Russian Dissenters (Conybeare; 1921), *716*, 772
Sacralizing the Secular: The Renaissance Origins of Modernity (McKnight; 1989), *992*
Sacra Privata (Wilson; 1847), 497
The Sacred Circle: The Interdependence of Liturgy and Music in Synagogue and Church During the First Millennium (Werner; 1959), 270, 272
Salvation and Godly Rule (Rushdoony; 1983), 702
Saturday Review (May 1980), *941*
Satyricon (Petronius; ca. 1st century), 5
Sayings of the Fathers, or Pirkei Avot (date unknown), 318
The School of Plato (Bussell; 1896), 71
"School Prayer Ruling Sound" (in *The Stockton Record*; 6/6/85), 109
Science and Health (Eddy; 1875), *801*
Scottish Journal of Theology (June 1965), 382
Screw: The Truth about Walpole State Prison by the Guard Who Lived It (McLaughlin, Dynda, Jamison; 1989), 511–512
Search of the Dark Ages (Wood; 1987), *886*
"The Second Coming" (Yeats; 1920), 9
The Second Helvetic Confession (1566), *928*
The Secret Life of Henry Ford (Dahlinger, Leighton; 1978), 241–242
The Secret of the Universe (Wood; [1936] 1955), 299–300
The Secret Six (Scott; 1979), 35, 729
"security" (in *Dictionary of Sociology*), 227
The Selling of the Royal Family (Pearson; 1986), *996*
Sermon Against Auxentius (Ambrose; ca. 386), 398
Sermons (Lever; [1550]), 938
Sermons (Massillon; 1803), 603
Sermons on Different Subjects (Kirk; 1840), 601–603
The Social Contract (Rousseau; 1762), 453, 550, *907*
Social Control in the Colonial Economy (Hughes; 1976), 861
"Song of Myself" (Whitman; 1855), 579
The Sophy (Denham; 1642), *878*
Specimen Days and Collect (Whitman; 1882), *757*
Spectator (February 3, 1990), *976*
Speech and Reality (Rosenstock-Huessy; 1970), 54
The Spirit of Jewish Law (Horowitz; 1953), 568–569
Splendors of Christendom (Kessel, Peyre; 1961), 130
Stalin's Secret War (Tolstoy; 1982), *873*, *877*

"Stand Up, Stand Up, for Jesus" (Duffield; 1858), *780*
St. Augustine On Genesis (Teske; 1991), 687–688
The Stockton Record
June 6, 1985, 109, 111
April 9, 1987, 26
September 24, 1987, 591
January 3, 1998, 670
The Story of My Struggles (Vambery; 1904), *951*
Studies in Medieval Legal Thought: Public Law and the State, 1100–1322 (Post; 1964), 102
Studies in Tudor History (Kennedy; 1916), *911*
Study as Worship (Viviano; 1978), 945
Substitute, Proposed by Mr. Leigh, of Dinwiddie, to the Preamble and Resolutions, on the Subject of the Right of the State Legislatures, to Instruct Their Senators in the Congress of the U.S. (Leigh; 1812), 451
"suicide" (Rose; in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*), 61
Summa Theologica (Aquinas; 1247), 532
The Sun King (Mitford; 1966), 11
The Supreme Court and Prayer in the Public School (Kik; 1963), *901*
Systematic Theology (Berkhof; 1939), 388
"The Tables Turned" (Wordsworth; 1798), 533
The Tale of Kieu (Du; 1820), 778
"The Tax Police, Trampling Citizens' Rights" (Fleetwood; in *Saturday Review*; May 1980), *941*
"Teach Me, My God and King" (Herbert; 1633), 495
"telos" (Schippers; in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*), 141
Thalia (Arius; 323), 676, *722*
Theological Dictionary (Buck; [1802]), 779
The Theology of Anabaptism (Friedmann; 1973), *752*
"Theses on Feuerbach" (Marx; 1888), *754*
The Thirty-Nine Articles (1563–1571), 271, 601
This Independent Republic (Rushdoony; 1964), 47
The Thought Revolution (Tung, Evans; 1967), *948*
Thou Shalt Have No Other Gods Before Me . . . Including the State (Stang; 1980), 630
Tithing and Dominion (Powell, Rushdoony; 1979), 517, 945
"Tobacco Goes on Trial" (Gray; in *Reader's Digest*; October 1987), 590
To Govern Evolution: Further Adventures of the Political Animal (Anderson; 1987), *978*, *979*, *980*
To Harass our People (Hansen, Anderson; 1980), 941
Torture (Peters; 1985), 569–570
To the Romans (Ignatius; ca. 107), *690*
To the Trallians (Ignatius; ca. 107), *690*
Toward a Theology of the Corporation (Novak; 1981), 262
Tradition and Morality in Constitutional Law (Bork; 1984), *892*
Train Up a Child: Educational Ideals in the Ancient World (Barclay; 1959), 318
The Triumph of the Middle Class (Moraze; 1966), *912*
Tropic of Cancer (Miller; 1934), *764*
The Trouble With Social Security (Van Allen; 1969), 223
Twentieth Century Book of the Dead (Elliot; 1972), 586
The Two Cities: A Chronicle of Universal History to the Year 1146 A.D. (Otto of Freising; ca. 1146), 82–83
"Two Talks of Philosophy" (Mao; in *Beijing Review*; 1/12/87), 447
"Under the Willows" (Lowell; 1869), 491
United and Independent Turania (Zarevand; [1926] 1971), 106, 108
United States Magazine and Democratic Review (October 1837), 232

United States vs. Reynolds (1953), *889–890*
Urban-Civilization in Pre-Crusade Europe (Agus; 1965), *885–886*
The Urge to Mass Destruction (Warner; 1957), 778
USA Today
June 19, 1986, 305
April 23, 1992, 293
U.S. Constitution (1789), 109, 141, 355, 456, 542, 640, 837, 843, *845*, *846*, 848, *899–902*, 911–912, 930
"Uses of Great Men" (Emerson; 1849), 461
U.S. News & World Report
May 17, 1982, 59
February 5, 1990, *975*
October 29, 1990, 332
Utopia (More; 1516), 182
The Van Arteveldes of Ghent (Nicholad; 1988), 658
"Variations on a Theme by Max Weber" (Luthy; in *International Calvinism*, 1541–1715), 202
*Victims, Authority, and Terror (*Kelly; 1982), 648, 650
Vodka Cola (Levinson; 1978), 943
The Wall Street Journal
No date given, 590
June 11, 1985, 111
August 7, 1986, 4, 5
April 3, 1987, 26
January 20, 1989, *755*
The Wanderer, 381
July 20, 1989, 420
Washington: City of Scandals (Lambro; 1984), 560
The Washington Times
September 21, 1984, 534
July 31, 1989, 420
Ways of Seeing (Berger; 1972), 369, *684*
Weather and Season (Hamburger; 1963), 114
Webster's 1828 Dictionary (Webster; 1828), 141, 656
The Westminster Confession of Faith (1646), 388, 477
The Westminster Larger Catechism (1647), 185, 311, 477, 503
The Westminster Shorter Catechism (1647), 11, 62, 79, 185, 272, 358, 372, 481, 493, *765*, *795*
"What Marxism Means" (Shi; in *Beijing Review*; 1/5/87), 447
What's Wrong with Human Rights (Ingram; 1978), 396
"When Is It Right to Leave the Church?" (Schlossberg; date unknown), 153
When I Was Old (Simenon; 1971), 604, 606
When the Time Had Fully Come (Ridderbos; 1957), 664–665
"Whistler's Aesthetics and Japanese Design" (Preato; in *La Femme: The Influence of Whistler and Japanese Print Masters on American Art, 1880–1917*), 663
White Trash (Makos; 1977), *762*
Who Should Play God? (Howard, Rifkin; 1977), *912*
"Why Isn't the Whole World Developed?" (Easterlin; in *Journal of Economic History*; March 1981), 441
William Blake and the Age of Revolution (Bronowski; 1944), *984*
Wisdom of the West (Russell; 1959), 636
Without Guilt and Justice (Kaufmann; 1973), 502, 523, 910, 913
"Woodrow Wilson's Pious Young" (Daniels; in *New Republic*, 10/29/66), 203
World (March 28, 1998), 504
World News Digest (June 18, 1992), *864–865*

The World of Humanism, 1453–1517 (Gilmore; 1962), *951*
The World of Rome (Grant; 1960), 274, 275
The World Turned Upside Down (Hill; 1972), 652
"World War II — The Final Phase" (Tambs; in *Christian Statesman*; Nov-Dec 1983), 43
You Say You Want a Revolution (Pielke; 1986), *795*

POSITION PAPER DIRECTORY

1979

No. 1 Conflict with the State 317–322
No. 2 In the Name of Jesus Christ, or in the Name of Caesar? 323–327
No. 2 Can We Tithe Our Children? 327–328
No. 3 The Limitations of Law 536–539
No. 3 Salvation: By Whose Works? 539–540
No. 4 The Eschatology of Death 52–57
No. 5 Accreditation and Certification 337–341
No. 5 The Reason for the Attacks 341–342
No. 6 The Heresy of Democracy with God 395–400
No. 7 Jurisdiction: By Christ or by Caesar? 623–627
No. 7 Standards 627–628
No. 8 The Family 171–174

1980

No. 9 Antinomianism Versus Dominion 99–104
No. 10 The Question of Authority 640–645
No. 11 Covenant, Law, Grace, and Antinomianism 454–459
No. 12 Religious Liberty 842–846
No. 13 The Dream of Reason 950–955
No. 14 The New Racism 21–24
No. 15 The Meaning of Theocracy 517–522
No. 16 The Freedom of the Church 343–346
No. 16 The Crisis 346–347
No. 17 Adiaphorism and Totalitarianism 922–929
No. 17 The Humanistic Doctrine of Infallibility 929–931
No. 18 The Future Is the Lord's 123–125

1981

No. 19 Sovereignty 629–635
No. 19 Sovereignty in Action—Today 635–637

No. 19 Form and Reality 637–639
No. 20 The Meaning of the Sabbath 553–556
No. 20 Karma and the Sabbath 556–557
No. 21 Taxation 937–946
No. 22 Karma, Debt, and the Sabbath 214–219
No. 23 The Attack Against the Family 177–185
No. 24 The Great Fear and the Great Faith 761–765
No. 24 The Image of God in Man 765–766
No. 25 The Trouble with Social Security 223–226
No. 25 Social Insecurity 226–228
No. 26 Wealth 240–245
No. 27 Wealth and Heirship 249–254

1982

No. 28 Wealth and the City 255–260
No. 29 Wealth, Time, and History 287–292
No. 30 Wealth and the State 261–265
No. 31 Religious Liberty Versus Religious Toleration 835–839
No. 32 On Giving to the Rich, the Middle Class, and the Lower Class 35–39
No. 33 The Opposite of Sin 493–498
No. 34 Sin, Confession, and Dominion 355–672
No. 35 The Love of Death 58–62

1983

No. 36 The Failure of Men 190–194
No. 37 Baptism and Citizenship 348–352
No. 38 State Interest Versus Public Interest 932–936
No. 39 Box Theology 441–445
No. 40 The Law, the State, and the People 548–552
No. 41 Communion and Communications 30–34
No. 42 Atonement and Authority 651–655
No. 43 Guilt, Atonement, and Freedom 873–877
No. 44 No God, No Law 909–913
No. 45 Kenosis: The Great Modern Heresy 771–775

1984

No. 46 The Ultimate Pornography 40–44
No. 47 The Place of Women 195–200
No. 48 Kenoticism, the "Gospel" of Defeat 776–780
No. 49 Docetism and the Mandate for Dominion 693–697
No. 50 Incorporation 433–437
No. 51 The Manichaean Heresy Today 715–719
No. 52 The Montanist Outlook 703–707
No. 53 The Changed Meaning of Liberty 847–851
No. 54 Donatism 726–730
No. 55 Natural Law and Canon Law 531–535
No. 56 The Way 401–405
No. 57 Marcionism 698–702

1985

No. 58 The Definition of Man. 185–189
No. 59 Discontinuity and Antinomianism 460–464
No. 60 The Privatization of Morality and Social Decay 888–892
No. 61 Holiness Versus Perfectionism. 156–160
No. 62 Loyalties 506–510
No. 63 The Cathars 742–746
No. 64 Religious Liberty and Dominion 109–113
No. 65 The Definition of Insanity. 609–612
No. 66 Catholicity. 390–394
No. 67 Elitism 964–968
No. 68 Justice and Torture 568–572
No. 69 False Religions. 114–118

1986

No. 70 Living in the Past 296–300
No. 71 The Cult of Victimization 594–598
No. 72 The Doctrine of Debt 207–210
No. 73 Detachment 604–608
No. 74 Gnosticism. 681–685
No. 75 Titanism 789–792
No. 76 Original Sin 484–488
No. 77 Education and Decadence 305–308
No. 78 The Freedom to Sin 489–492
No. 79 Our World Today 3–6
No. 80 The Recovery of Memory 956–959
No. 80 The Family as Treasure 959
No. 81 The Possessor of Truth 425–429

1987

No. 82 False Antinomies 465–468
No. 83 Freedom and Responsibility 852–855
No. 83 Piecemeal Destruction. 855–856
No. 84 The Cultivation and Promotion of Impotence. 13–17
No. 85 Covenant Versus Detente 446–450
No. 86 The Risk-Free Life. 880–884
No. 87 Hypocrisy 599–603
No. 88 "First the Blade". 77–81
No. 89 The Communion of Saints. 25–29
No. 90 Sin and Evil 499–503
No. 91 Against Much Praying. 136–140
No. 92 False Morality and False Reform 590–593

1988

No. 93 Wealth, Responsibility, and Cowardice 246–248
No. 94 The Tax Revolt Against God 560–562
No. 95 Invisible Rulers 804–807
No. 96 The Political Illusion. 895–898

No. 97 The Church as Function 364–366
No. 98 The Paradise of Women 201–204
No. 99 World Salvation Versus World Domination 105–108
No. 100 The Militarization of Life 229–232
No. 101 The Death of Empty Forms 994–997
No. 102 Hypocritical Guilt 164–166
No. 103 Slavery 885–887
No. 104 Bigotry in the Name of Tolerance 613–616

1989

No. 105 Revolution or Regeneration 85–88
No. 106 Catharsis. 793–796
No. 107 Our Doxology 269–272
No. 108 Inferences and Commandments 541–543
No. 109 Morality and Growth 947–949
No. 110 The Cartesian Heresy 754–757
No. 111 Maturity 161–163
No. 112 The Holy Spirit and Freedom 870–872
No. 113 Vouchers, Freedom, and Slavery. 857–859
No. 114 Revolution, Counter-Revolution, and Christianity 418–421
No. 115 Inferences and the Law 544–547
No. 116 Reality, Faith, and Architecture 63–66

1990

No. 117 Property, Charity, and Freedom 867–869
No. 118 The Roots of Environmentalism. 119–122
No. 119 The Reversal of Standards. 511–514
No. 120 Ownership. 233–236
No. 121 Inheritance, Barbarism, and Dominion 67–70
No. 122 The Modern State as a False Messiah 975–977
No. 123 The Political Myth. 971–974
No. 124 Aristocracy 960–963
No. 125 Latitudinarianism 279–282
No. 126 The Hegelian Revolution 800–803
No. 127 The Use and Abuse of Worship and Prayer 132–135
No. 128 Ownership and Authority 656–659

1991

No. 129 The Implications of Arianism 731–734
No. 130 Absolutizing the Relative 152–155
No. 131 Biblical Military Laws. 563–565
No. 132 Demonism 472–475
No. 133 The Myth of Nature 797–799
No. 134 Perfection 141–144
No. 135 Conflict Versus Harmony 329–333
No. 136 The Counseling Heresy 371–374
No. 137 Confessing Other People's Sins 360–363
No. 138 The Crisis of Authority 648–650
No. 139 Modern Gnosticism 686–689

No. 140 The Heresy of Unconditional Love 145–147
No. 141 The Dying Enlightenment 45–48
No. 142 The Failure of Church History 276–278
No. 143 The Myth of Politics 990–993
No. 144 The Myth of Socialization 49–51
No. 145 The Decapitalization of Mankind 237–239
No. 146 The New Tower of Babel 914–916

1992

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No. 148 The Carpocratian Heresy 708–710
No. 149 Education as a Panacea 309–312
No. 150 The Dark Ages 283–286
No. 151 The Lust for Respectability 409–411
No. 152 The Lost Center 9–12
No. 153 Social Amnesia 293–295
No. 154 The Wheat and the Tares 82–84
No. 155 Great and False Expectations 89–91
No. 156 Conflicting Ideas of Freedom 864–866
No. 157 The Love of Money 211–213
No. 158 The Open Face of Religion 919–921

1993

No. 159 The Doctrine of Grace 412–414
No. 160 The Heresy of Love 148–151
No. 161 Pragmatism 415–417
No. 162 Pietism 747–750
No. 163 The Heresy of Theosis 767–770
No. 164 Covenant Versus Contract 451–453
No. 165 Man and the State 220–222
No. 166 The Menace of the Future? 92–94
No. 167 The Antichurch Within the Church 381–383
No. 168 The Sins of the Fathers 167–168
No. 169 Capturing God? 422–424
No. 170 The Doctrine of Original Sin 481–483

1994

No. 171 Docetism, the Crippling Heresy 690–692
No. 172 Altar Versus Pulpit 375–377
No. 173 The Incarnation 469–471
No. 174 Basilicas 378–380
No. 175 Persona 575–579
No. 176 The Pagan Critiques of Christianity 273–275
No. 177 Social Planning and the Family 182–184
No. 178 The Nature of Freedom 860–863
No. 179 What Is the State? 987–989
No. 180 Pelagianism 735–737
No. 181 The Mystery Religions 781–783
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1995

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No. 186 Law and Politics 981–983
No. 187 Pelagianism 738–741
No. 188 Quietism. 758–760
No. 189 "Empty Suits" 582–583
No. 190 The Carpocratian Heresy 711–712
No. 191 Law Versus Right 984–986
No. 192 Faith 387–389
No. 193 Monarchianism 720–721
No. 194 Liberty. 840–841
No. 195 The Death of God and the Death of Man 584–586
No. 196 The Providence of God 476–478

1996

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No. 198 The Source of Law. 430–432
No. 199 Heretical Baptism 353–354
No. 200 Natural Law and Theonomy 526–530
No. 201 Guilt 878–879
No. 202 Monergism and Synergism 784–786
No. 203 The Heresy of Modalism 722–725
No. 204 Curzonization 18–20
No. 205 The Spirit of Heresy 679–680
No. 206 Nationalism 917–918
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1997

No. 208 The Family. 175–176
No. 209 Reason and Rationalism. 808–810
No. 210 Descartes and Rationalism 811–813
No. 211 The Sabbath 558–559
No. 212 The Self-Righteousness of Satan. 646–647
No. 213 Rationalism and the Mind of Man 814–815
No. 214 The Carpocratians. 713–714
No. 215 Rationalism and Heresy 816–818
No. 216 The Bankruptcy of Rationalism 819–821
No. 217 Rationalism and History 822–824
No. 218 Rationalism and Tyranny 825–826
No. 219 The Restoration of Education 313–314

1998

No. 220 Rationalism and the Chain of Being. 827–829
No. 221 Faith and Understanding 129–131

No. 222 Rationalism and God 830–832
No. 223 Autonomy 663–665
No. 224 Reality 666–667
No. 225 Knowledge 668–669
No. 226 Sufficient unto the Day 95–96
No. 227 Dethroning God 670–671
No. 228 The Cultural Conflict 7–8
No. 229 Conspiracies 504–505
No. 230 Presuppositionalism 621–622

1999

No. 231 Serbia, The United States, and Christianity 903–904
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Unpublished

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No. 237 The Old Order (originally written 1997) 71–73
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rousas John Rushdoony (1916–2001) was a well-known American scholar, writer, and author of over thirty books. He held B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of California and received his theological training at the Pacific School of Religion. An ordained minister, he worked as a missionary among Paiute and Shoshone Indians as well as a pastor to two California churches. He founded the Chalcedon Foundation, an educational organization devoted to research, publishing, and cogent communication of a distinctively Christian scholarship to the world-at-large. His writing in the *Chalcedon Report* and his numerous books spawned a generation of believers active in reconstructing the world to the glory of Jesus Christ. For the last twenty-six years of his life, he resided in Vallecito, California, where he engaged in research, lecturing, and assisting others in developing programs to put the Christian Faith into action.

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