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# SOVEREIGNTY

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R.J. Rushdoony

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This volume is dedicated to  
Dr. Ellsworth McIntyre  
and the staff members of  
Grace Community Schools, Naples, Florida  
in great appreciation  
for their generous support  
of the work of my father.

Rev. Mark R. Rushdoony  
President, Chalcedon Foundation



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## FOREWORD

Why is Psalm 110 so important? Because it is the Psalm most quoted in the New Testament. Its frequency of citation underscores its import: it is a powerful text.

What is the most quoted Scripture in the works of R. J. Rushdoony? Runners-up include Genesis 1:26-28 (the so-called dominion mandate), Matthew 28:18-20 (the Great Commission), and Proverbs 8:36 (“all they that hate me love death”), but there can be no question as to the most crucial text in Rushdoony’s works: it is Genesis 3:5.

Genesis 3:5. There is no more pivotal text in a fallen world: it explains why, how, and in what direction our world fell. The entirety of redemptive history involves God’s dragging man out of the pit created by the seductive promise embodied in Genesis 3:5. But Christendom has not only failed to learn the lessons of Genesis 3:5, it has too often co-opted the tempter’s program laid out by the serpent of Eden. It is crucial to understand this one indisputable fact: *the program put across by the serpent involved sovereignty.*

“Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” Since the Hebrew *Elohim* appears here, there is authority for translating the serpent’s promise thus: “Ye shall be as God.” Equality with nothing

less than God Himself is being extended to Eve. Unlike Christ (Phil. 2:6), Eve and Adam did attempt to gain equality with God by means of robbery and preemptive seizure.

On theological grounds, the serpent's promise can be put in compellingly equivalent terms: *ye shall be sovereign!* Satan was extending to man the promise of sovereignty, of man's lordship over himself. Lordship and sovereignty are virtually synonymous: the attributes of one are the attributes of the other. To be sovereign is to be subordinate to no one: all is subject to the sovereign, but the sovereign is beholden only to himself. Sovereignty entails possessing the authority to define, to determine the definition of all things. Rushdoony hence extends the rest of the serpent's promise in light of the promised attributes of sovereignty: "Ye shall be as gods, knowing [*or determining for yourselves*] what is good and evil." The explanatory phrase added in brackets captures the sense in which sovereignty *defines* all moral dimensions; it is an addendum consistently incorporated by Rushdoony to clue his readers in on the core issues driving modern man's mad groping after sovereignty. A true sovereign doesn't merely *know* what is good and evil: a sovereign can and will *define* it. A sovereign is the *source* of law; he is *not subject to it*.

The penchant, the inner drive, for seizing sovereignty from a transcendent God and relocating it to this world takes two fundamental forms: individuals appropriating sovereignty and the state's claim to sovereignty. Rushdoony herein contrasts these two warring factions in trenchant terms:

What we have are two anarchistic would-be sovereigns, modern man, and the modern state. Two sovereigns, however, cannot co-exist with any peace. As a result, both are extending their powers and their self-will. The modern state grows daily more powerful, and modern man grows daily more lawless. For "sovereign" man, the way of expressing his claim of sovereignty is to defy the law and will of the state. Both man and the state seek to displace God as *the center*. The means of attaining this role as the center of being is *power*. Hence the voracious hunger of the state for ever-increasing controls over every area of life and thought. (p. 122)

This emphasis on power is a destructive one for man, since a quest for power displaces a quest for moral order, particularly within the context of freedom and its responsibilities.

According to Lapham, “Americans tend to prefer the uses of power to the uses of freedom.” The emphasis on private power versus public power leads to a man-centered society, and a society in conflict. This conflict of interests is thus harmful to both the private and public sectors. Moreover, the public versus private concern is not a moral one: it is a quest for power, not for moral order. As a result, in politics, law, education, and other spheres morality is no longer a social consideration; morality at best has become a private concern. (pp. 80–81)

Rushdoony implicates Friedrich Nietzsche and the death of God school in this hunt for power and explains the shift in the modern state’s bearing vis-à-vis the state’s purpose and mission.

The death of God belief went hand in hand with belief in man as his own god and law. The assault on Christendom was an assertion of man’s will to power, his will to be his own god (Gen. 3:5). The political consequences of this movement were enormous. Justice as the reason for the state’s existence gave way quietly to the will to power. (p. 330)

As has been well said, the state is the coercive sector of society. The element of coercion that operates in tandem with state-claimed power is something that the state tends to monopolize, denying it to institutions other than itself. In fact, the state will label something as coercive and condemn it on that ground by pure fiat definition in terms of public policy.

State power is coercion, always coercion. To equate the state with Reason is to equate Reason with coercion. Reason then *requires* coercion because it is Reason, and to oppose its coercion is irrational. We can justifiably argue on Biblical grounds that the church should not indulge in physical coercion; the attitude of the humanists is that the church must not coerce because it is neither Reason nor its faith reasonable. This non-coercive requirement imposed increasingly on the church by the civil revolution extends to such things as Christian education; Christian schools and home schools are viewed as coercing the mind of the child. Parents are also seen as coercive if they impose a Christian training and discipline on their children. Only the state’s coercion is rational; all Christian forms are irrational and even evil. (p. 285)

We see here how the sovereign, in this instance the modern power-state, indulges its propensity to function as the definer and determiner of all meaning within society.

In Western culture, the amassing of power, of relocating it from the transcendent plane of God's throne in heaven to incarnate it in visible form on earth (in institutional form), was originally undercut by the coming of Christ. The church, however, fell prey to the siren song of power and sought to create visible power centers on earth (the church shifted power from a transcendent source to an immanent manifestation). What befell the church on account of this tragic misstep was that the state quickly learned the lesson the church was teaching by example: power should be immanentized, should be reflected in institutional form on the earth rather than centered in a transcendent invisible throne in heaven.

Human power centers have claimed sovereignty, and have denied the authority of the church. As Stalin said cynically, "How many legions has the Pope?" Once the premise of Greco-Roman statism, the necessity for an immanent and visible sovereignty, was accepted, it was the state which gained by it, not the church. (p. 459)

A sovereign power is a power that can *necessitate* those subject to that power. Just as sovereignty was transferred from God to man, from heaven to earth, by implementing the seizure of sovereignty advocated by the serpent in Genesis 3:5, so too was the *necessitating power* transferred to the created domain by the same strategy. This particular usurpation was aided and abetted by Arminian theology, which contended against the sovereign God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to liberate man from the necessitating consequences of the divine decree.

Marxism's theoretical foundation has been the shift of the governing or sovereign power, the necessitating or predestining force, from God to the state. In varying forms and degrees, all over the world, *the state is now the necessitating force or power. By claiming sovereignty, the modern state declares itself to be the necessitating power over man.* As such, it is increasingly denying freedom to the economic sphere, to the family, to the school, and to the church. It cannot claim sovereignty without necessitating all things.

It is not an accident that the rise of Arminianism coincided with the rise of the modern state. Arminius warred against the doctrine of the necessitating God. Man's freedom required, he held, deliverance

from such a God. To abolish necessity from theology is not to abolish necessity but to transfer it to another realm, and the state was progressively freed from God's necessitating power to become Hegel's god walking on earth, a this-worldly necessitating power. (pp. 463–464)

The statist implications of the Arminian depreciation of God's sovereignty is examined in length in another important volume co-authored by R. J. Rushdoony entitled *The Great Christian Revolution*, which goes into considerable theological and historical detail concerning the slide into statism that non-Calvinistic theologies invariably undergo. As mentioned earlier, the church set a dangerous precedent by appropriating visible sovereignty unto itself, as the state soon grasped the implications of that strategy. Sovereignty being usurped, even in part, by the church tended to trigger a domino effect that led to power states that coexisted quite peaceably with Arminianism.

God cannot be "robbed" of sovereignty at one point without soon being denied sovereignty at all points. When the church claimed sovereignty, it thereby made it a fact of the human scene, one which others could seize from it. It was not an accident of history that, while civil government often established various forms of Arminianism, they rarely and then only briefly established Calvinism. They saw it as a threat to their freedom. If sovereignty is a this-worldly fact, then who is better to exercise it than the state? With the rise of Arminianism, we have also the rise of statism, of state sovereignty. (p. 74)

Much confusion over apparently synonymous terms has arisen in discussion over the matter of power, authority, dominion, and domination. The term *dominion* in particular is subject to gross misinterpretation, usually with the intent to depict Christians who take the Bible seriously as individuals prone to exercise tyranny (a remarkable accusation, given the dimensions of the modern state's overreaching of its citizens' supposed liberties). Rushdoony wisely provides clarifications concerning the ideas of dominion, domination, and theocracy.

The locus of dominion is *not* at the presumed power centers as understood by secularists and humanists, but the opposite: the individual Christian and the family were the proper recipients of

the mandate to take dominion. Rushdoony dispenses with the popular caricatures in three short sentences.

Moreover, dominion is not given to the state nor to the church but to man and to families.

The Biblical doctrine of theocracy means the self-government of the Christian man.

It is contrary to God's law for church and state to seek to dominate society. (p. 31)

Further clarifying the difference between dominion and domination, Rushdoony focuses on the aspect of lawful versus unlawful moral conduct and the contrast between limited derivative authority versus tyrannical seizure of illegitimate sovereign control.

God's law-word gives man the way to dominion, and dominion is not domination. Domination is the exercise of lawless power over others. Dominion is the exercise of godly power in our God-given sphere. The rejection of God's sovereignty leads to domination; the affirmation of God's sovereignty and His law is the foundation of dominion. It is also the means to power under God.... A humanistic power can only be truly overthrown by God's power, and men cannot escape domination and tyranny apart from a return to the triune God and their total calling and dominion mandate under Him. (p. 165)

It may strike humanists as ironic that the very means to secure freedom from state domination and tyranny is godly dominion. This alone restores sovereignty to the only domain rightfully authorized to exercise it with justice and equity: the throne room of God Himself.

A consistent, full-orbed Christianity that takes the crown rights of Christ the King seriously poses a threat to the self-proclaimed sovereign power state, and this threat is clearly understood by the state. It has accumulated power it has no intention of voluntarily relinquishing; it would take a power greater than itself to pry its fingers off of its claims to ultimacy.

Christians, by affirming the sovereignty of the triune God and the universal Kingship of Jesus Christ, thereby deny the modern doctrine of sovereignty and the people. The fact that most Christians are unaware of the conflict does not alter the fact that the humanists recognize that Christ's lordship spells death to the modern state, because it undercuts its premise. (p. 107)

The state seeks a church that it can use, that is subordinate to its own authority, and that acknowledges the state's sovereignty and dutifully goes through its ritual motions without disturbing the power structures the state has painstakingly amassed over time. Rubber-stamp religion is acceptable to the power state; a faith in a sovereign God that is actually taken seriously presents the state with a problem.

[Quoting Owen Chadwick:] "Government likes religion to bless its acts, crown its dictators, sanction its laws, define its wars as just, be decorous masters of national ceremonies. And since on grounds of religion religious men may criticize acts or laws or wars or modes of waging war, government prefers quietness and contemplation to excess of zeal." (p. 311)

Rushdoony was no stranger to this conflict between church and state. As an expert court witness during trials against Christian schools and homeschooling parents, he observed the official government-sanctioned vilification of Biblical faith firsthand. The roots of that enmity reside in the issue of sovereignty: those who believe they possess it bristle at any challenge to their power.

It is the Christian who is increasingly viewed as the enemy of the state as he stands in terms of the crown rights of Christ the King. He thereby challenges the sovereign claims of the state in the name of the King of kings, and the Lord of lords (1 Tim. 6:15). Increasingly, in the eyes of the sovereign state, this is the unforgivable sin. (p. 362)

The conflict rides on the Christian's appeal to a transcendent law and authority that judges the entire created domain, that stands over all humanity as an irrevocable standard against which there can be no ultimate appeal. The state sees itself as the highest court of appeal; the Christian necessarily denies this usurpation by the state.

The modern state, whether openly or implicitly, hates the church and resents its every effort to be Christian. This should not be surprising. When the church proclaims the whole word of God, it introduces a canon or rule in the public arena which judges every sphere of life and thought. The premise of the state is that it is the source of all law and judgment; its basic faith is that the state is judge over all and to be judged by none. A moral order and law apart from the state which judges the state is rightly seen as an attack on state sovereignty. (p. 356)

The reality is that state sovereignty, the successful result of what Rushdoony terms the *civil revolution* whereby sovereignty is transferred from God to the secular state, does *not* disestablish theocracy, but rather creates a theocracy built around a new god, the power state. The melding of atheism and theocracy is a very ugly development of the modern era:

Brian Tierney illustrates that,

Humans find it consoling to imagine that the order imposed by their rulers reflects a divine ordering of the universe; most of the time, as Bernard Shaw observed, “The art of government is the organization of idolatry.” (The great advance of the twentieth century has been our discovery that it is possible to combine all the advantages of theocracy with all the convenience of atheism.)

This is, of course, a particularly telling statement: we do have now a theocracy without God, an idolatry of the will of man, and atheism. (p. 253)

George Bernard Shaw’s equating of government with idolatry is surprisingly insightful. The sadder surprise is how many Christians are completely engulfed in this same state-centered idolatry.

Such idolatry even makes its way into theology textbooks, some from the pens of conservative Christian scholars. We see a clear example of this in the defense of natural law promoted in works such as the recently published *Systematic Theology* by Dr. Norman Geisler. Volumes such as these contrast Biblical law with “good law” or “fair law.” The idea of natural law has a dubious pedigree, as Rushdoony shows herein.

Natural law theories arose in part to provide the state with a non-theological basis for law. Because Christ established the church, it was held, the Bible could provide its supernaturally decreed law for a supernaturally ordered institution. The state, being grounded in Nature, had to have a natural basis for its law, hence natural law. In time, the state ceased to look outside itself for natural law. (pp. 284–285)

The inherent hazard of this approach is well attested historically, but this has not prevented Christians from being led right back into the ditch generation after generation. The depreciation of God’s law recoils back on theology itself, and natural law and other man-made

surrogate legal structures erected by the supposedly sovereign state are simply used to dethrone God.

Men have sought to relocate meaning, justice, and law on a level below God, because this gives them a convenient starting point. Instead of being judged by God and His transcendental but revealed law and justice, men have, when law and justice are located outside of God, an instrument whereby they can judge God. Churchmen regularly appeal to their humanistic ideas of law, justice, and love to tell us what God cannot be, whatever the Bible may say. (p. 194)

The slide into tyranny that inevitably follows is inexorable.

If the state is the *source* of law, then it is the source of punishment for all transgressions, and no dissent is permissible. As a result, systematically humanistic societies become totalitarian and tyrannical. They move from punishing offenses to punishing dissent. (p. 132)

The ramifications of the move to non-transcendent law, to humanistic law as determined by the sovereign power state, spill over into the conflict between individual sovereignty (the trend toward anarchy) and state sovereignty (the trend toward tyranny). Natural law ultimately cannot avoid a conflict of interests within society because of the contrary flows of power when all connection to human responsibility before God is severed.

Both the individual and the state demand the recognition of their sovereign rights. Each class in the state seeks its “sovereign rights” at the expense of all others. Without God’s law, self-will becomes the ruling premise in every sphere. Society shifts its emphasis from moral duties to civil “rights.” All classes seek advantage, not justice, although their advantages are promoted as justice. (p. 291)

Such ill-conceived appeals to natural law, as are often found on the lips of theologians anxious to avoid the implications of God’s law, lead to a muffling of the church’s prophetic voice. Once Christians repose the source of law in the natural realm, and not in God’s written law-word, all appeal to an authority higher than the state has been forfeited.

If there is no law beyond state law, no justice beyond and over the state, and no supreme court of Almighty God over all courts of state, then there is no criterion whereby the state can be called wrong. Then justice becomes what the state does, as in Marxism and fascism. (p. 340)

The state then proceeds to *actually purge out* all Biblical influence, just as a brood parasite (such as the cowbird or cuckoo bird) will push the host bird's hatchlings out of the nest to their deaths so that it alone rules the roost. The modern state cleans house on *any possible concession* that there is an authority above itself, particularly in legal matters. Rushdoony, describing the Pennsylvania murder trial of Karl Chambers, draws attention herein to a prosecutor's allusion to the Scripture that "the murderer shall be put to death" in front of the jury, which became a controversial lightning rod involving an appeal all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1992—all because the prosecutor had alluded to a source of law independent from the state. As Rushdoony summarizes it,

What the courts said in the Chambers case was that no independent source of law, no source outside the state, will be tolerated. Law is the state's creation. (p. 468)

The modern state wouldn't be much of a sovereign, a lord, if it didn't have its own gospel to proclaim from one end of the land to the other. It *does*, however, have a gospel: it is the social gospel of liberal Christianity, which has been denatured and distorted in terms of the statist idolatry that George Bernard Shaw identified. It is worth rehearsing here the salient points of Rushdoony's discussion of this alternate (and false) gospel, a gospel that mesmerizes far too many churchmen with its lying siren song.

The social gospel is really a *civil* gospel; it espouses salvation by the state and its laws, and its hope shifts from God to the state. This has a major impact on the doctrine of the atonement. In the 1930s, a pastor who adopted the social gospel began to preach also against the orthodox doctrine of Christ's atonement; he ridiculed it in language used by others who preceded him, calling it "butcher shop theology" to preach atonement by the blood of Jesus. This juxtaposition of the social or statist gospel and the denunciation of the blood atonement doctrine was an essential and logical one. If salvation is an act of state, the work of men who are essentially good and who unite to make a better world, to look for a change in men through Christ's atonement rather than through the civil gospel is not only false but misleading. As a result, whenever the civil revolution flourishes, Christianity is under attack. (p. 272)

There appears to be a studied blindness on those who promote this civil gospel: they can see evil in political structures other than their own, but the evils in front of them are invisible.

The advocates of the civil gospel are ready to see a fascist state as evil, but not a truly democratic and socialistic state. Sin, however, is not a monopoly of the left or the right, but common to all men. (p. 273)

The sad fact is, the decline of liberal Christianity into secular statism, the transfer of sovereignty from heaven to earth, to Hegel's "god walking on earth," viz., the state, has yet to solve the societal problems it had promised to cure. The reason for this is letter simple:

The civil revolution has no answer because it is a basic part of the problem. (p. 292)

Because the civil revolution hinges on the Arminian and Pelagian doctrine of the goodness of man (a virtue suited to shaping natural law, as such theologians hold), its foundation exhibits fatal cracks at the outset. Placing unimpeded sovereignty into the hands of men who are by nature *evil*, as Calvinism holds, will inevitably manifest its folly by the subsequent disasters that will follow.

[Quoting Owen Chadwick:] "Human nature is good. This, said Morley, is the key that secularizes the world." However, if man is not good, if he is indeed sinful, fallen, and totally depraved, it becomes instead the key that damns the world. (p. 356)

In support of this contention, Rushdoony quotes from O. Halecki's studies of European secularization. That Rushdoony implicates Christians in the wholesale sellout of Christ's lordship is disturbing, but few are bold enough to tell modernist Christians, "Thou art the man."

[Quoting O. Halecki:] "The attempt to create a culture which would be European without being Christian ... is now recognized as the main cause of the present crisis in European civilization." That churchmen in great numbers are a part of this revolution, this de-Christianization of the West, is an amazing as well as an ugly fact. (p. 296)

It is precisely here, at the door of the church, that the trail necessarily leads. Judgment begins at the house of God. Finger-pointing at the secular state misses the point. The answer is *not* the

shift of power from state to church, but the God-ordained functioning of both state and church in their respective spheres, which requires *their abandonment of sovereignty* and acknowledgment of God as the blessed and only Potentate. The church, by and large, has tended to *reverse* its roles. It was chartered to speak prophetically, working toward justice in the social realm, and to minister mercy in the church realm. It has instead exacted harsh justice in the church realm and urged that unwarranted mercy be indiscriminately applied socially (often characterized in more loaded terms as “coddling criminals,” support for a massive state welfare apparatus, and more). As Rushdoony puts it,

We see here the beginning of a long tradition whereby churchmen view civil offenses with mercy, and ecclesiastical offenses mercilessly. The church thus separated itself from its Biblical mandate, justice in law and society, and its Biblical mandate of grace and mercy in ecclesiastical matters. (p. 346)

Regrettably, this is not all. Not only has the church switched its priorities and inverted its mandates ... not only has it substituted humanistic law for God's justice ... not only has it secured its own subordination to the state and muzzled those Christians who saw such idolatry for what it was ... but the church has, by and large, attempted the unthinkable. To preserve the sovereignty of the humanistic state, far too many churches will restrict Christ and the Scriptures *to the domain of the church*, declaring that He has no binding Word to speak to the secular state. All social life is to be thoroughly informed by humanistic values, not Biblical imperatives. Christ speaks only to the church: His reign is most decidedly *not* “from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth” (Zech. 9:9-10). Christ, like Quasimodo, needs to stick to the church grounds, out of public view. Rushdoony explains how unworkable this stay-at-church Christ really is.

No more than the Romans could lock up Jesus Christ inside a sealed tomb can the churchmen of our day confine Him to the church. If they continue to try to lock Him into the church, He will shatter the church as He did the tomb. (p. 40)

Christ cannot be locked up *because He alone is sovereign; He alone rules the universe from the right hand of all power and authority*. The civil revolution, by first robbing Christ of His sovereignty and then

imprisoning Him in the church, letting Him out only if He agrees to wear a gag in His mouth, has made a grievous error.

Rushdoony notes the contrast between the Christians of former eras and Christians living in our own era:

Christians, who were attacked by the pagan philosophers for their belief in predestination, were the champions of man's freedom, because they freed man from his environment and its controls and placed man under God, not under nature or the state. The same battle is again being waged, but all too many churchmen are on the wrong side. (p. 76)

What is he saying here? That too many modern churchmen are *not* champions of freedom because they place man *under the state*, or *under nature*, rather than *under God*. In a word, modern compromised Christendom *co-opts false sovereignties*. To do so, it must deny the total lordship of Christ over everything He hath made. The compromised church then enables the state to regulate, and finally coerce and persecute, faithful Christians who insist that Christ is Lord: that *Christ is sovereign* and the state and church *are not*.

John Owen put his finger on the reason for this kind of defec-tion back in 1652, addressing the text of Luke 17:20 and the invis-ible sovereign Kingdom of Christ described therein. He held that such declension from Biblical faith arose when men “have been so dazzled with gazing after temporal glory, that the kingdom which comes not by observation hath been vile in their eyes.” Men want to walk by sight: they want a God they can see, and so they’ve grad-uated from golden calves to modern power states. The God who dwelleth in unapproachable light, who exercises sovereign control by a single overarching decree over all time and space, has become the stone the builders have rejected.

That stone shall nonetheless become the head of the corner. This volume faithfully proclaims the Biblical faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and alerts us all to the ever-widening consequences of the social outworking of Genesis 3:5 at the individual and corporate level. As Rushdoony observes, “The same battle is again being waged, but all too many churchmen are on the wrong side.”

Which side are *you* on?

— Martin G. Selbrede



# I

## SOVEREIGNTY

When the philosopher Hegel defined the state as god walking on earth, he expressed what long had been the faith of many men, both in pagan antiquity and since then. This claim by the state, or by its rulers, has long been apparent in the insistence on *sovereignty*. The word *sovereign* as an adjective is defined in five ways by *Webster's Dictionary*:

1. chief or highest; supreme; paramount....
2. supreme or highest in power; superior in position to all others; chief.
3. independent of, and unlimited by, any other; possessing, or entitled to, original and independent authority or jurisdiction.
4. excellent; efficacious; effectual; controlling.
5. of the highest degree; extreme.

The word *sovereign* comes from the Latin *super*, above, so that a sovereign in the nominative sense is one who is above all. One who is above all, is independent and unlimited by any other, and has independent and original authority and jurisdiction can only describe the God of Scripture. In the Bible, the word for *sovereign* is always translated as *lord*: *adonai* in the Hebrew, and *kyrios* in the Greek. Thus, the most common term for God in the Old Testament is *lord* or sovereign, and the most used designation for Jesus in the New is also *lord*, which is also used to refer to God the Father. The term in

Scripture means owner, the one possessing dominion and rule, authority and power. It was a term used to describe pagan gods, and Nero (AD 54-68) is described in an inscription as *ho tou pantos kosmou kyrios*, Lord of all the World.<sup>1</sup> The whole issue between Rome and the early church was over lordship or sovereignty: who is the Lord, Christ or Caesar? If Caesar were lord, then Caesar had the right to tax, license, regulate, certify, accredit, and control Christ and His church. If Christ is Lord, then Caesar must be Christ's minister and obey His word (Rom. 13:1-4; Phil. 2:9-11). Paul is emphatic that every knee should bend and every tongue confess that "Jesus Christ is Lord."

But there is more. The source of law in any society is its god. In fact, the working god of a culture can be identified by ascertaining where law comes from. The first edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, in 1771, defined law thus: "Law may be defined, 'The command of the sovereign power, containing a common rule of life for the subjects.'" All too often, in past and present history, this sovereign power has been a king, emperor, congress, parliament, or a group of judges, all men playing at being gods. Since law defines good and evil, right and wrong, for men to make laws is to rebel against and to defy God.

When men set forth their own versions of the law, they thereby set forth their will as the governing power and authority, and their ideas about justice as true righteousness. It is thus inevitable that such a humanistic state will wage war against Christ and His church and realm. The first and governing law of God is this: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:3), including the state, as Alan Stang has noted. As against this commandment of the triune God, the modern state has its own version: *Thou shalt not have Jesus Christ as Lord God over me*, for the state alone is sovereign and must rule over all things.

In the modern era, the doctrine of sovereignty by man or the state not only had the support of rulers (with respect to the state) but also Arminian theologians. Jean Bodin (1530-1596), a French

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1. H. Bietenhard, "Kyrios," in Colin Brown, general ed., *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1976), 510-20.

nationalist, opposed Protestants who favored tyrannicide and held that sovereignty is supreme power over citizens and subjects and is *unlimited by law*. Hugo Grotius (1583-1645), the Arminian theologian and political theoretician, held that the “maintenance of the social order...is the source of law.” He thus stressed its social utility. However, he did not disagree with Bodin, stating, “That power is called sovereign whose actions are not subject to the legal control of another, so that they cannot be rendered void by another human will.”<sup>2</sup> It is true that Grotius placed human sovereigns under God. He said, “God is the Lawgiver; and man cannot change a law that God has established, since an inferior cannot prevail as against a superior.”<sup>3</sup> The Scripture, however, tells us that Nathan could indict David the King, saying, “Thou art the man” (2 Sam. 12:7). Again, Peter and the other apostles said to the rulers, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). Many texts can be cited to confirm the fact that it is a sin to obey the word of man rather than the word of God:

And unto Adam he said, Because thou has hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. (Gen. 3:17)

And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. (1 Sam. 15:22)

And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice. (1 Sam. 15:24)

7. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

8. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such things ye do.

9. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. (Mark 7:7-9)

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2. Charles S. Edwards, *Hugo Grotius, The Miracle of Holland: A Study in Political and Legal Thought* (Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall, 1981), 100; cf. 53, 83.

3. *Ibid.*, 106-7.

For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. (Gal. 1:10)

What Scripture requires of us is obedience to God and the defense of God's realm. The tax revolt, while against a form of taxation which Scripture does not permit, is a defense of one's own wealth or money rather than God's Kingdom.

Thus, Grotius on two counts strayed radically from the faith. *First*, while formally retaining God's sovereignty, he insisted that a human sovereignty prevails upon earth. Sovereignty or lordship is an indivisible concept. A sovereign is either a sovereign, or he is not. In reality, there are no half-gods or half-sovereigns. Modern sovereigns, like those of antiquity, soon began to claim total power, and their laws became absolute. Totalitarianism begins with the belief that human sovereignty or state sovereignty exists. It is noteworthy that the U.S. Constitution, while not without faults, never uses the term sovereign or sovereignty; it was held to belong to God alone. In recent years, although its roots are in John Marshall and the Supreme Court, federal sovereignty is routinely asserted. At the time of America's War of Independence, the Calvinists were strongly opposed to royal sovereignty, and "in western Pennsylvania a loyalist official found Presbyterians 'as averse to Kings, as they were in the Days of Cromwell, and some begin to cry out, *No King but King Jesus*.'"<sup>4</sup>

Since Grotius's day, the sovereignty of God has been denied in favor of the sovereignty of the state. Grotius had declared that a human sovereign cannot alter God's law; at the same time, he held that no inferior can question or deny a superior's will, so that men were bound by their human ruler's false laws. For him, men were required to obey man rather than God. This was Grotius's *second* great error, to require submission to human sovereigns, obedience to man's law rather than God's law. This made the current form of the state the actual and working god of the society. In the modern world, we see the state less and less willing to recognize any independent realm belonging to Christ. The denial of religious freedom

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4. A. James Reichley, *Religion in American Public Life*, 97, cited in Catherine L. Albanese, *Sons of the Fathers* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1985), 49.

is an ugly fact of our times, because the new god, the state, refuses to allow the church, the last uncontrolled realm in American life, to escape controls.

In a number of church and state or religious liberty trials, I have heard state and federal judges declare that they will not permit any reference to the Bible or to the First Amendment, because they are ruled only by the *latest decision* from the U.S. Supreme Court. We are today in a situation like that of Greece and Rome, of whom Wardman wrote, that, in the age of Augustus Caesar,

Rome was going through the common experience of Hellenistic states which prostrated themselves before their rulers, the sense that other gods are remote and that the god of the here and now is the current ruler.<sup>5</sup>

These developments are logical and natural. Sovereignty cannot be restrained, because a god is by definition beyond all restraint or control by those under him. To control a god is to be god over god. In Scripture, God's palace is His Temple, and His throne room is the Holy of Holies. Habakkuk 2:20 thus declares, "the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him." There is no word nor law that can be spoken to correct, supplement, or contradict the law-word of it. It is sufficient for all the Lord's purposes.

Rulers early recognized that they could not be sovereigns if God and His word are sovereign. During Cromwell's days, John Eliot organized the Christian Indians into villages that were strictly self-governing in terms of God's law. Charles II, on coming to the throne, ordered their destruction. Today, we see an increasing denial of the freedom of Christians to live in terms of every word of God (Matt. 4:4).

Sovereignty cannot be restrained or controlled. If God is sovereign or lord, man must obey His every word, and man has no right to complain, any more than the clay can complain to the potter (Rom. 9:17-21). However, if the state is sovereign or lord, man has no rights nor freedom as against the state. The question

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5. Alan Wardman, *Religion and Statecraft Among the Romans* (London, England: Granada Publishing Company, 1982), 69.

we must answer with our lives is this: Who is the Lord, Christ or Caesar, the triune God or the state?

Similarly, from whence come our laws, from God or from man? If the state is our god, the state is our lawgiver. If the Lord of Hosts is our God, then He is our Lawgiver, and the Bible is our law. Isaiah declares,

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)

“The testimony” is God’s revelation as a system of belief and a rule of duty. If men will not obey the every word of God, there is no light in them, or, no dawn or morning, no future, for them.<sup>6</sup> Unless we return to our Lord, our Sovereign, and His law-word, there is no meaning for us, only darkness and death. We need to say with Isaiah,

For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us. (Isa. 33:22)

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6. Joseph Addison Alexander, *Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, [1846-47] 1953), 193.

## SOVEREIGNTY AND LAW

In Islamic Africa, in a political conflict, one Yoruba chief wrote a letter of protest to the district officer, in the era before 1950, stating, “You appointed me king of Babo, but (Umaru) is still king in the Quarter. *There can be no two kings in one Kingdom.*”<sup>1</sup> The “writer,” Gambo, understood the nature of civil government far more clearly than most churchmen. *There cannot be two kings, two kinds of law, nor two lordships or sovereignties in one realm.* To assume that a humanistic state can tolerate an alien law and sovereignty in its midst is insanity. No state ever has, except the dying ones. Normally, there can be no two law systems in one realm without conflict. Since World War II in particular, the humanistic establishment of the United States has been in a steady if not covert war against Biblical faith and law. It has steadily over-turned long-standing landmarks of Biblical law in favor of humanistic law. It has begun to persecute Christian groups which will not submit to regulations and controls. For Christian agencies to place Christ’s realm under the state is tantamount to denying the lordship of Jesus Christ and abandoning the faith.

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1. Abner Cohen, *Custom and Politics in Urban Africa: A Study of Hausa Migrants in Yoruba Towns* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, [1969] 1973), 138. Emphasis added.

Law is the word and will of a sovereign. As we have noted, the first edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1771) defined law as “the command of the sovereign power, containing a common rule of life for the subjects.” Scripture recognizes no human agency as a sovereign power; God is at war against all such claims. Both church and state are ministries under God, and the state and its rulers are, literally, a diaconate (Rom. 13:1-4), *servants* of the Lord. The state thus has no independent powers, only powers, or, more literally, a service, delegated to it by the triune God.

Laws thus express the will of the sovereign lord of a social order, and, as such, they express the working religion of the state and its people. If the state or the people have differing religions, there will be conflict between the two, because each then has a different concept of government. Government like law is a theological concept: it is revelatory of the god of a system or a society. Among other things, God *is* government, as well as love, justice, mercy, redemption, and more. There can be no salvation if God is not also the absolute government over all things. How else can God redeem us if He does not absolutely govern all things? Apart from God’s sovereign and predestining power, our salvation would at best be conditional. There would be a collapse and a forfeiture of our salvation whenever things passed out of God’s control.

Where man and society are concerned, God’s total government and predestination works to sanctify man and society by working from within, transforming the regenerated man and His world through the Holy Spirit. Where non-Biblical faith seeks to gain control, the result is totalitarianism. The alternative to government by God’s law and Spirit working through the inner man is the totalitarian state.

One consequence of the humanistic alternative is a bureaucracy. In 1944, Ludwig von Mises called attention to the fact that most critics of bureaucracy were attacking a symptom, not a cause.<sup>2</sup> He wrote, of its totalitarian implications:

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2. Ludwig von Mises, *Bureaucracy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, [1944] 1946), 7.

Totalitarianism is much more than mere bureaucracy. It is the subordination of every individual's whole life, work, and leisure, to the orders of those in power and office. It is the reduction of man to a cog in an all-embracing machine of compulsion and coercion. It forces the individual to renounce any activity of which the government does not approve. It tolerates no expression of dissent. It is the transformation of society into a strictly disciplined labor-army — as the advocates of socialism say — or into a penitentiary — as its opponents say.<sup>3</sup>

The “philosophy of bureaucratism” leads to a condition wherein “the State is always right and the individual is always wrong.”<sup>4</sup> Because the people are always wrong, they must be changed by means of totalitarian controls.

German Marxians coined the dictum: If socialism is against human nature, then human nature must be changed. They did not realize that if man's nature is changed, he ceases to be a man.<sup>5</sup>

The logic of bureaucratism and controls leads to the kind of thinking expressed by Professor Joan Robinson of Cambridge University, “second only to Lord Keynes himself in the leadership of the Keynesian school”:

Mrs. Robinson is not only afraid of independent churches, universities, learned societies, and publishing houses, but no less of independent theaters and philharmonic societies. All such institutions, she contends, should be allowed to exist only “provided the regime is sufficiently secure to risk criticism.” And another distinguished advocate of British collectivism, J.C. Crowther, does not shrink from praising the blessings of inquisition. What a pity the Stuarts did not live to witness the triumph of their principles!<sup>6</sup>

In every religion we see implicitly what is explicit in Biblical faith: man is made in the image of his god (Gen. 1:26-28). The modern state is dedicated to the belief that man can, by actions of state (i.e., coercion), be made a new creation dwelling in a state-created paradise. Man being a sinner, violence and coercion have been endemic in all history, but never more extensively, intensively, or systematically than now. Because modern man's vision of life and its promises is statist, and the state is organized coercion, man sees

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3. *Ibid.*, 17.

4. *Ibid.*, 74.

5. *Ibid.*, 103.

6. *Ibid.*, 114-15.

violence and coercion as the means to self-realization. Society is seen as governed by the conflict of interests. It is a war of the haves and have-nots, a war between the generations, between capital, labor, and agriculture, and so on and on. In a healthy society, when men say, *I want*, they mean, *I work*. In a statist society, *I want* is followed by, *we expropriate*.

The role model given to students in the statist schools is derived from its religious ontology, i.e., from evolution, which means that man is reduced to a naked ape. For an ape, possession requires strength and force, and we have in the latter half of the twentieth century an unequalled lawlessness and violence on the part of precisely those youth who would normally be entering the work force and preparing for marriage.

The key to the good society in humanistic society is acts of state, not the work of the Christian man. The future is seen as depending on what the state does rather than on what free men do.

Moreover, the governing word in society is not, Thus saith the LORD God, but, Thus saith Congress. The result is the triumph of externalism and salvation by works, a triumph of state which is disaster for all men. The statist plan of salvation is in effect a plan of salvation by bureaucracy, since the bureaucracy, as the state apparatus for implementing its plan of salvation, is the working savior of a state. Whether it is a war against poverty, disease, crime, or anything else, the bureaucracy is the arm of society whereby this saving statist power is to be exercised. The consequences of this action have been described by Huntley.

Italians complain about five-year waits for tax refunds, Germans about the *Tomatenschutzverordnung* — a law forbidding them to squeeze tomatoes in markets — and Indians about bribes demanded by school offices....

A service that takes days at most in the West can take years in Indonesia, where an electric-power or phone connection to a newly built house may not be installed for three or four years. Solution: Bribe government workers to plug into a neighbor's line. Burma requires six copies of a visa request, including the applicant's life history — and no carbons, please.

Sometimes bribery deals in human life. In Communist Vietnam, corrupt officials accept money to let refugees escape by boat. Those

who lack money don't leave and may wind up in jail. Bribery also frees the sons of the affluent from military service.

An Indian these days must slip money to an official on the side to enroll a child in school, to gain admittance to a hospital, even to secure reservations on a train. Bribery is so pervasive that many businesses routinely assign an employee to do nothing else but pay off various government officials....

In West Germany, the reach of the bureaucrat extends into virtually every nook and cranny of private life. Besides the no-tomato-squeezing ordinance, Germans have to put up with rules that limit late-night parties (one per dwelling per month) and details where and when to hang laundry (away from the street and never on Sunday). "For 200 years, we thought that we could regulate life through more and more regulations and controls," says Herbert Helmrich, a member of parliament who founded an anti-red-tape society. "Now, we have to change this"....

All bureaucracies pale beside those of the Soviet Union and China.<sup>7</sup>

God as Sovereign or Lord allows only ministries to function under Him, and very limited ones at that. Civil government is severely limited because in Biblical law its taxing power is limited to a head or poll tax, half a shekel for every man aged twenty or over per year, neither more nor less (Ex. 30:11-16).<sup>8</sup> The church is also limited, because the tithe, God's tax, is to the Lord, not to the sanctuary. *One-tenth* of the tithe went directly to the priests (Num. 18:25-26), but, since the musicians also were provided for by the tithe, perhaps a little more. The rest went to the work of the Levites, which included instruction (Deut. 33:10), and much more. Thus, neither church nor state have any valid Biblical grounds for a position of centrality in society.

God through His law speaks to every man. With the coming of Christ and the new creation, beginning with His resurrection, and continuing in our regeneration, the law is now written in our hearts (Jer. 31:31-34). Every man in Christ must be a walking law and an evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit. God's government of the world begins with the self-government of the Christian man.

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7. Steve Huntley, "Tales of the Red-Tape Wars Abroad," *U.S. News & World Report*, April 7, 1986, 44.

8. For the continuing use of this civil tax in medieval France, see Arthur J. Zuckerman, *A Jewish Princedom in Feudal France, 768-900* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, [1965] 1972).

God's basic social institution is the family, to which God's law entrusts all the basic powers in government except the death penalty, which is reserved to the state. The control of children, of property, of inheritance, of education, and of welfare belong to the family.

The basic functions of government are personal and familial responsibilities under God. Moreover, if men will neither tithe nor be responsible, it is because they are slaves and wish to be governed rather than to govern. Free men in Christ are working members of the Kingdom of God. They have been remade in Christ into the image of God, into knowledge, righteousness, holiness, and dominion (Gen. 1:26-28; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24; Rom. 2:14-15), with God's law written in their hearts "and power to fulfill it," as the Westminster Larger Catechism, Answer 17, declares. Tragically, almost none of those who profess adherence to the Westminster Standards are ready to call attention today to this phrase concerning the redeemed man and God's law, "power to fulfill it." Redemption is the restoration of that power.

All law defines good and evil: it proscribes what is believed to be evil and protects what is good. Laws against murder protect life and condemn whatever is anti-life and anti-moral. B. Malinowski, in *The Family Among Australian Aborigines* (1913), observed, "All social organization implies a series of norms, which extend over the whole social life and regulate more or less strictly all the social relations."<sup>9</sup> This is a scientifically sanitized way of saying that all laws set forth a religious and moral standard to govern all of society. Punishment expresses the "reprobation" of a society.<sup>10</sup> For Christians, God ordains the reprobation.

According to an old proverb, a change of laws is a change of lords: "New lords, new laws."<sup>11</sup> Legal revolutions are first of all religious revolutions. As men abandon one faith for another, they abandon one morality for another also, and as a result their sense

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9. Cited by E. Sidney Harland, "Law (Primitive)," in James Hastings, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 7 (Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark, 1914), 808.

10. *Ibid.*, 7, 809.

11. Rosalind Fergusson, *The Penguin Dictionary of Proverbs* (Hamondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1983), 104.

of justice changes. Things once tolerable become intolerable, and evils once a source of horror become everyday occurrences. The history of the past is rewritten by each new faith in terms of its legal-moral premises. "The age of faith" becomes "the dark ages," and the dark world of Roman imperial totalitarianism becomes a golden age. Thus, for Edward Gibbon, the decline and fall of the Roman Empire *replaced* the life of Christ as the pivotal event in history. In his first paragraph, he wrote:

In the second century of the Christian era, the Empire of Rome comprehended the fairest part of the earth, and the most civilised portion of mankind. The frontiers of that extensive monarchy were guarded by ancient renown and disciplined valour. The gentle but powerful influences of laws and manners had gradually cemented the union of the provinces. Their peaceful inhabitants enjoyed and abused the advantages of wealth and luxury. The image of a free constitution was preserved with decent reverence: the Roman senate appeared to possess the sovereign authority, and devolved on the emperor all the executive powers of government. During a happy period (A.D. 98-180) of more than fourscore years, the public administration was conducted by the virtue and abilities of Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines. It is the design of this, and of the two succeeding chapters, to describe the prosperous condition of their empire; and afterwards, from the death of Marcus Antonius, to deduce the most important circumstances of its decline and fall; a revolution which will ever be remembered, and is still felt by the nations of the earth.<sup>12</sup>

This is a thorough and devout affirmation of an aspect of humanism, of an Enlightenment version thereof. Gibbon, who despised the lives of the saints, gave us his own form of hagiography, careful in his details while false in his perspective and picture.

The world of Gibbon and his contemporaries has given us a different religion and law than does Scripture, because the men of the Enlightenment, of Romanticism and the age of revolutions, and of modern humanism, have had another sovereign than the Lord God. Their sovereign is the state and its philosopher-kings, its elite planners. As a result, they have consistently, faithfully, and systematically given us another law than Biblical law. This should not

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12. Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. 1 (New York, NY: Modern Library, reprint, n.d.), 1.

surprise us. It is logical, and it means faithfulness to their doctrines. The disastrous fact is the inconsistency, unfaithfulness, and illogical stance of those who profess Christ.

### 3

## SOVEREIGNTY, LAND, AND WELFARE

**A** *sovereign or lord is the source, not the subject, of law* and therefore cannot be bound by law. Hence, all attempts by congresses or parliaments, or by citizens through them, to control a sovereign state are invalid. They are quickly set aside in the name of sovereignty. Once sovereignty is assumed by a state, constitutional law becomes less and less a restraint and more and more a pretext whereby, under the guise of legality, sovereign power is exercised.

In the place of constitutional precedents, the courts then look to exercises of sovereignty in other sovereign states. Courts in the United States thus have cited Tudor and Stuart acts, Roman law, feudal law, and more, all to assert sovereign claims. (Any man who believes that Rome, the feudal ages, and old English history represent a dead past has not read law books, wherein ancient assertions of sovereign power are present bonds on men.)

Thus, to understand the law of a sovereign, we must above all else recognize that a sovereign is the source, not the subject, of law, and *a sovereign cannot be bound by law unless the law expresses his unchanging and infallible nature*. This is only true of the God of Scripture. The law of God expresses the nature of God, His righteousness or justice, His holiness, knowledge, and dominion. Only

God has an unchanging nature. Men and states are developing factors, growing, learning, changing, prone to sin and error, and, in countless ways, unable to be consistent. Indeed, for human beings and human institutions an inability to change, i.e., an absolute consistency, would preclude growth and ensure death. Perfection alone can be unchanging, and God alone has such a nature. "I am the LORD, I change not," God declares (Mal. 3:6). Scripture also tells us,

God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? (Numbers 23:19)

For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. (Romans 11:29)

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. (James 1:17)

As a result, where we have human sovereignty and law, we have the rule of capriciousness, whereas the rule of God and His law gives us justice.

Thus, because we have a conflict both of sovereignty and law between Christianity and the modern state, it should not surprise us that hostility between human sovereigns and Christians who take the word of the Lord seriously is inevitable. For this reason, the Tudors, and the Stuarts after them, could not tolerate the Puritans. The Puritans believed that they had to obey God rather than men, that the church should be governed by the Lord and His word rather than an English ruler, and the result was a bitter conflict. Of Queen Elizabeth, the least aggressive, Kennedy wrote:

Individual action within her ecclesiastical sphere was not to be tolerated. . . . 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 in 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. The Puritan was a dangerous member of society, not so much because he was a Puritan and followed his own opinion in matters of religion and worship, but because he ventured to place his opinion against the Queen's. All through the Puritan history, up to the

time of Bancroft, this was the real crux. It was useless to appeal to Scripture when the Queen was supreme in all ecclesiastical jurisdiction. This was the weakness of the Puritan position — it failed to understand the Queen.<sup>1</sup>

This has been the failure of Christians over the centuries, the inability to understand the religious goals of other peoples, plus limiting the religious motivation to things ecclesiastical. A man's faith governs the totality of his life, or else his professed faith is not his real faith.

Just as a sovereign has total jurisdiction, so Biblical faith has total jurisdiction and application because the triune God of Scripture will tolerate nothing less. *Land*, thus, is under the jurisdiction of a sovereign, among other things. This is the premise of God's government of the earth, of sabbatical years, tithes, and more. Besides the multitude of specific laws, we have the summary statements of God's sovereignty and ownership:

And Moses said unto him (Pharaoh), As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto the LORD; and the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that thou mayest know how that the earth is the LORD's. (Ex. 9:29)

Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is. (Deut. 10:14)

The earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. (Ps. 24:1)

For the earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof. (1 Cor. 10:26)

The words in all four instances are similar, but the implications differ. In Exodus 9:29, God's ownership of the earth is the premise of His right to judge, punish, or dispossess men. In Deuteronomy 10:14, it is the premise of the law, and God's requirement of our love and obedience. In Psalm 24:1, we sing our joy in the fact of God's lordship over the earth: it is our security and strength. In 1 Corinthians 10:26, it is the foundation of God's moral claims over us.

God's law concerning the land forbids alienation and requires perpetuities. The land is to be redeemable upon repayment

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1. W. P. M. Kennedy, *Studies in Tudor History* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, [1916] 1971), 242-43.

(Jer. 32:42-44; Lev. 25:23-28), although urban houses can be alienated (Lev. 25:29-31). By this law, God requires the rural populations to be the stable force in a society, a continuing heritage in a changing world. The land so held is a trust, a stewardship, from the Lord. With apostasy, this trust is broken, and dispossession and captivity resulted in Israel and Judea, and in every like generation.

Although in the United States there was a brief period of family ownership of land, the federal government soon utilized the language of the law to revive feudal and royal claims to ownership and sovereignty. As Hughes has observed, "It would surprise most American landowners today, as it often does those who cannot meet their property taxes, to learn that the state owns the land outright." "Ownership" by individuals means simply the right to use the land, subject to state controls, and to sell it or to pass it on to one's heirs, subject to taxation. The state by eminent domain can take the land with or without compensation.<sup>2</sup>

Biblical law has neither a land tax nor an inheritance tax. Because the earth is the Lord's, only God can tax man's increase, the tithe. This tithe is to further God's government. The poor tithe, the law of gleaning (Ex. 23:6; Ex. 23:10-11; Lev. 19:9-10, 14; 25:35, 39, 43; Deut. 16:10-14; 23:24-25; 24:14; 24:19-21; 27:18, etc.), and other laws tied the land to community responsibilities. During the Middle Ages, both the church and the believer, as trustees of God's earth, had major responsibilities to the poor. In 1535, Henry VIII made poor relief a compulsory obligation of local civil authorities and forbade private almsgiving or charity. The confiscation of monasteries, convents, and religious establishments ended the vast network of Christian charities.<sup>3</sup> Henry VIII recognized what modern churchmen fail to see, namely, that welfarism is a very great power, and, according to Scripture, is not a statist function but a requirement of the Christian community.

In colonial America, under royal law, "insolvent debtors were sold by county courts into servitude, and church vestries were

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2. Jonathan R. T. Hughes, *The Governmental Habit* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1977), 15-16.

3. Jonathan R. T. Hughes, *Social Control in the Colonial Economy* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1976), 100. See also Hughes, *Governmental Habit*, 44ff.

empowered to sell immoral women and their children into slavery. Trustees of almshouses were ordered to ‘compel’ the poor to work.”<sup>4</sup>

The result of this change, which was not limited to England, was that, where the poor were concerned, control replaced brotherly assistance. Where sinners were concerned, repression replaced regeneration. The link between the land and charity for all was broken. Biblical law requires, as a test of our faith, our concern and care for widows and orphans, aliens, the poor, the sick, and more. Henry VIII and other monarchs, Catholic and Protestant, transferred this concern to the state and dehumanized it. While Christian concern was continued in many areas, by World War II it was a minor factor. With a return of this Christian ministry after World War II came also statist hostility and oppression.

Because of this statist power, many evils proliferated. Among them was slavery. Historians sometimes fail to note how various states subsidized slave ships. Only in 1698, for example, did Britain allow private slavers to operate, and then only on payment of a tax to the crown. Prior to that time, it was a state monopoly. Early in the eighteenth century Chief Justice Holt declared, “negroes are merchandise and within the Navigation acts.”<sup>5</sup>

God’s sovereignty over the earth includes all the peoples thereof. As Psalm 24:1 declares, “The earth is the LORD’s, *and the fullness thereof: the world, and they that dwell therein.*” This includes, among other things, the land and the people. W. D. Davies, in analyzing Biblical law with respect to the land, saw certain facets as prominent. *First*, the land was not tribal property but given by the Lord. *Second*, the harvest of the land was subject to God’s law as the Lord or sovereign. “For as the land belonged to Yahweh so rightfully did all the produce. His ownership was symbolically acknowledged through the offering of first fruits. The same concept governed the custom of gleaning.” *Third*, God requires a Sabbath of the land because He is the owner thereof. *Fourth*, the land as well as the people must be holy: “Defile not

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4. Hughes, *Social Control*, 102.

5. *Ibid.*, 114.

therefore the land which ye shall inhabit” (Num. 35:34). If men defile the land (and themselves), they will be judged and cast out.<sup>6</sup>

God’s law is the governing law for man and the earth. God’s law makes every man a walking law, and to be a covenant man is to be a law-keeping man. Thus, Scripture gives us a very limited civil government and a very limited church. According to Davies, “it is impossible to discover any Israelite idea of the state.”<sup>7</sup> The state is a pagan invention and a substitute for God.

A Christian society thus means the restoration of a Biblical perspective, of God’s law concerning the land and welfare. The community in Christ must take over most of the present functions of the state. This means, first of all, the recognition of God’s sovereignty. The Lord, He is God, and none other. “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me” — including the state.

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6. W. D. Davies, *The Gospel and the Land* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1974), 27-31.

7. *Ibid.*, 109.

## 4

# THE GROWING COLLAPSE OF THE WORLD OF HUMANISM

A persistent problem in Christendom has been the unwillingness of people who profess to be Christ's congregation to make an unequivocal stand. Men approach Christ looking for fire and life insurance, not to submit to a sovereign. They come into the church for a variety of reasons: to find a wife or husband who can provide them with love or faithfulness, for business reasons, for a good training and environment for their children, and so on. One result is an impotent church.

Historically, the nations have been equally dishonest and equivocal when they have had a semblance of Christianity. Acknowledging the triune God is fine with them, *provided* God does not interfere with their affairs. In fact, God should be supportive, if anything. After a "resounding defeat," Louis XIV said, "God seems to have forgotten all I have done for him."<sup>1</sup> In political theories, God was made the great insurance agent, and fulsome words paid honor to His place, as witness Jean Bodin:

If we insist that absolute power means exemption from all law whatsoever, there is no prince in the world who can be regarded as sovereign, since all the princes of the earth are subject to the laws

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1. Nancy Mitford, *The Sun King* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1966), 114.

of God and of nature, and even to certain human laws common to all nations.<sup>2</sup>

Clearly, Bodin knew what sovereignty means, and that it can only properly be applied to God. Having stated the orthodox view of sovereignty and law, Bodin went on to say more. He presented the orthodox view in order to disarm critics:

Beyond this, though, Bodin had his own particular, rather less orthodox view of the monarch and law. Whereas tradition had it that the monarch's definitive function is to administer justice, Bodin declared that the ruler's definitive function is to create law – if possible in accordance with natural laws but in practice, of course, often enough not. The ruler, in this view, is essentially a lawmaker and the enforcer of the laws he makes. Bodin wrote: "It is clear that the principle mark of sovereign majesty and absolute power is the right to impose laws generally on all subjects regardless of their consent." And he declared that "law is nothing else than the command of the sovereign in the exercise of his sovereign power." Law is, to a great extent, power, and power, law.<sup>3</sup>

In practice, thus, sovereignty became a political attribute of rulers. Deism was one result; Deism is essentially a political rather than a philosophical doctrine. By positing, in its more consistent forms, an absentee God who created the world and then allowed it to go its way, the Deists made legitimate the political exercise of God's attributes by civil rulers. The next step, with Hegel and Darwin, was to eliminate even the absentee God in favor of a nontheistic universe. Sovereignty does not disappear when we deny God; it accrues in man's thinking to the highest manifestation of power, the state. The concept of the divine right of kings followed the dethronement in Christendom of Christ's Kingship over the nations. Authority was transferred from the Bible to the ruler, and the Bible's major function with some was to vindicate the ruler.

This was clear in the thinking of James I of Great Britain. For James, the realm was under the king, not only in terms of a supposed ordination by God, but on other grounds as well. In a speech to the Lords and Commons of the Parliament at Whitehall, March 21, 1609, James said:

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2. Cited in Jane Aptekar, *Icons of Justice: Iconography and Thematic Imagery in Book V of Faerie Queene* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, [1967] 1969), 53.

3. *Ibid.*, 53-54.

The State of MONARCHIE is the supremest thing upon earth: For Kings are not onely GODS Lieutenants upon earth, and sit upon GODS throne, but even by God himself they are called Gods. There be three principal similitudes that illustrate the state of MONARCHIE: One taken out of the word of God; and the two other out of the grounds of Policie and Philosophie. In the Scriptures Kings are called Gods, and so their power after a certain relation compared to the Divine power. Kings are also compared to Fathers of families: for a King is trewly *Parens patriae*, the politique father of his people. And lastly, Kings are compared to the head of this Microcosme of the body of man.<sup>4</sup>

These three grounds deserve careful attention. *First*, we have the argument from Scripture. James takes texts that refer to a ministry under God to claim sovereignty, something never condoned by Scripture. *Second*, James compares kings to fathers of families, an argument from the “natural order.” The family is God’s basic institution according to God’s law, and James, by placing himself at the head of all families, usurps the power of the family for the state. *Third*, the king is “the head of this Microcosme of the body of man.” A nation is thus seen as an organic whole, like the church, and the king is its head. Since the English church settlement under Henry VIII made the monarch the head of the church, James is now saying that the king is the head of both church and state. The role of the triune God is indeed that of an absentee landlord, and Deism was soon to follow on the footsteps of such politics. James asserted thus a triple headship and sovereignty. Such was the position of James with respect to the people. With regard to law, James set forth the priority of the king to law, in other words, the source of law is the king. In *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies*, he wrote:

The kings therefore in *Scotland* were before any estates or ranks of men within in the same, before any Parliaments were holden, or lawes made: and by them was the land distributed (which at the first was whole theirs) states erected and decerned, and formes of government devised and established: And so it followes of necessitie, that the kings were the authors and makers of the Lawes, and not the Lawes of the kings.<sup>5</sup>

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4. Charles Howard McIlwain, ed., *The Political Works of James I, Reprinted from the Edition of 1616* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1918), 307.

5. *Ibid.*, 62.

The king is thus the source of law. As McIlwain observed, for James, “the fundamental law is *jus Regis*, and nothing more.”<sup>6</sup> Thus, for James the king is a kind of Christ, and both church and state are aspects of His mystical body. Kantorowicz observed, “the good of the people (is) superior to that of the whole Church”:

Here the head, so to speak, has devoured the whole mystical body. What mattered was not the *corpus Ecclesiae*, but the *caput Ecclesiae*, as though life itself or the continuity of life rested in the head alone, and not in the head and members together.<sup>7</sup>

Such theology helped destroy the Medieval Church. The like theology is now destroying the state. Whether or not Louis XIV actually said, “I am the state,” or, “The state, it is I,” this attitude summed up his attitude and that of other monarchs. In due time, dictatorships and democracies saw the entire people mystically incorporated in the state and its leaders. The Marxist doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat is a current version of this belief. The dictatorship incarnates the will of the people. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, of course, formulated this before Marx. For him, the general will of the people is embodied in the state and the will of the state. Robespierre, as Otto Scott has shown, applied this rigorously. He created the purge, “a medical term meaning the forced expulsion of feces: he gave it a new meaning that is with us still.”<sup>8</sup> The revolutionary banners carried the words, “*Liberty, Equality, Fraternity – or Death*.”<sup>9</sup> Since the head of the state, the voice of the general will, is, according to Rousseau, infallible, the head of state is the voice of virtue. All dissenters are feces that must be purged. Rousseau was emphatic: “the general will is always right and ever tends to the public advantage.”<sup>10</sup>

Certainly in the Soviet Union all these humanistic doctrines come into fearful focus, but in every modern state they are strongly present. In political theory, in the name of the people, the modern

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6. *Ibid.*, xxxviii.

7. Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957), 264-65.

8. Otto Scott, *Robespierre: The Voice of Virtue* (New York, NY: Mason & Lipscomb, 1974), 213.

9. *Ibid.*, 195.

10. Ernest Baker, ed., *Social Contracts: Essays by Locke, Hume, and Rousseau* (London, England: Oxford University Press, [1947] 1958), 274.

state has swallowed up the people and reduced them to nothing. The state is now in theory and often in practice totalitarian. As a result, civilization is in crisis and decay. Material comforts are not lacking, but men's hearts fail them for fear. The state has devoured the people and their institutions.

Controls are now extended over every area of life and thought. The family and the church, which should provide the leadership in society, are now under the state and its courts, to be regulated and governed from without. Commerce and agriculture are state controlled. Instead of the sovereign God of Scripture and His law-word governing all other spheres of life, it is now the state which exercises this power. Modern man needs to echo Isaiah's words, "O LORD our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name" (Isa. 26:13). Other sovereigns have had dominion over us because we have chosen them, and bowed down to them, but Thine authority and lordship we alone acknowledge now.

Spengler called "the State" "the highest of all the time-symbols that have come into existence within a Culture."<sup>11</sup> This in itself tells us much. Such a perspective denies the validity of the most dramatic aspect of history, the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the growth of His Kingdom. When we relegate Christian history to the world of myths, then "the State" becomes "the highest of all the time-symbols."

Because of this, life is now defined, not in terms of God and His word, but in terms of the state and its history. J. Paul Getty, in his day called the richest man in the world, sought immortality in two ways. *First*, he wanted it in politics, as an ambassador, a goal he failed to attain. *Second*, he sought it in art, or culture, as a patron and the founder of a museum. Culture is modern man's substitute for the church. For Getty, it was a means of immortality, of being remembered by future generations.<sup>12</sup>

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11. Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, vol. 1 (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, [1926] 1945), 137.

12. Robert Lenzer, *The Great Getty: The Life and Loves of J. Paul Getty – Richest Man in the World* (New York, NY: Crown Publishers, 1986), 178-95.

The state as god walking on earth must give meaning to life. Its political programs and planning begin by offering a safe and sure route to heaven on earth. In time, however, disillusion sets in: the state does not provide utopia but hell on earth as it accumulates power. The one area of consistent success on the part of the state is the accumulation of power. How then to realize its religious goal to provide meaning to life? The answer to this is to stress *Culture*, art as the new realm of vision and truth. The state thus becomes a patron of the arts. In the Soviet Union, "Culture" and the local "opera house" have replaced the Russian Orthodox Church in state planning. Culture, as Henry Van Til noted in *The Calvinistic Concept of Culture*, is religion externalized and made explicit. All over the world now, the state is increasingly involved in the promotion of the arts, in the furthering of a humanistic culture.

To understand this culture we must understand original sin. Genesis 3:5 gives us its premise, every man as his own god and law, determining good and evil for himself. This means the radical *autonomy* of man from God and man alike. Philosophy since Descartes, and his "I think, therefore I am," has built on this belief in man's autonomy. So too has much theology. Thus, the Transcendentalist-Unitarian Theodore Parker held, "The orthodox place the Bible above the soul, we the soul above the Bible."<sup>13</sup> Because Parker's autonomous man is more than mind and sometimes needs to depend on someone, there must be, Parker held, a God on whom man can depend as needed. Hence, he held, "I am; therefore God exists."<sup>14</sup> Since Parker's day, the need to depend on God has been replaced by the need to depend on the state. The insistence on man's autonomy has been broadened to include the autonomy of all spheres of human activity, and certainly art. What Anthony Cooney, in a publication which imagines itself to be "conservative," has written on Ezra Pound's aesthetics is revelatory:

What Pound proposed was that a work of art was *autonomous*; it did not exist for anything else but itself. In creating it the artist was creating an objective universe with its own logic and its own

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13. John Edward Dirks, *The Critical Theology of Theodore Parker* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, [1948] 1970), 64.

14. *Ibid.*, 85.

syntax. A work of art does not exist either to entertain or to convey a message—social, political, or moral. Art must, therefore, be of personal emotion. Further, because its function is neither to entertain nor to instruct the “masses” there is no reason why it should be easily accessible. “The public can go to hell,” Pound declared. The artist is not required to dilute his creation for the sake of philistines and morons.<sup>15</sup>

Because art is autonomous, it is irresponsible; the artist is not accountable to anyone but himself, if that. Strictly speaking, autonomy in art means that art is meaningless to all but possibly the artist. At best, an outsider can logically only admire the artist’s success in rejecting and in expressing contempt for all meaning.

It is ironic that big business, one of the targets of the modern state and the modern artist, is a psychopathic and slavish customer of such meaningless art. Countless millions of dollars are spent by corporations in the purchase of such junk art.<sup>16</sup> At one time, businessmen funded churches, monasteries, missions, and Christian charities. Now they fund the arts of autonomous man, sodomite causes, and the like.

This doctrine of autonomy prevails in many places. Whether in law, politics, education, the sciences, or the church, it means that man is his own law and is subject to no law from God and eternity. The only permitted meaning is man-made or state-made meaning.

One consequence of this is alienation, a communications gap, a pervading sense of aloneness in modern man. For him, there is no God, and because of his ostensible autonomy, no essential tie between himself and his “fellow” men; he is his own god and universe. A world without meaning, and a life without meaning, means that death also has no meaning, and life becomes cheap as a result. Humanism, by its own success, creates a crisis and assures its death. Sigmund Freud saw his thinking as the culmination of humanism, but also its death: humanistic man, having reduced God to a myth, now reduced himself to no more than his own unconscious impulses.

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15. Anthony Cooney, “Ezra Pound: Poet and Propagandist,” in *Candour: The British Views-Letter*, vol. 36, nos. 11 & 12 (November-December 1985): 90.

16. For a favorable report on this, see Todd Brewster, “The Big Money in High Art,” *United*, 31, no. 4 (April 1986): 52-55, 110-19.

The state as sovereign, replacing God, has made life empty and barren of meaning. The meaning provided by the state is not only subject to change as the heads of state change, but it is also negated by the evil, the corruption, and the arbitrariness of the state's actions. Humanism as a faith soon found itself without any meaning other than the affirmation of man's autonomy, whatever that might lead to. Ralph Waldo Emerson was determined to replace the infallible providence of God with man's infallible providence. Romans 8:28 declares, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." God's sovereign decree and providence bring good out of all things. Paul does *not* say that all things *are* good, but that God's providence makes them work together for good, brings good out of them. Emerson's attempt to replace this led to absurdity. He declared, in a lecture in Britain, that even in a brothel, man "is on his way to all that is great and good."<sup>17</sup> Emerson's faith in the value of man's self-expression was indeed a very great faith!

Andrews Norton, himself a conservative Unitarian, saw the dangers in Emerson's thought very early. In "A Discourse on the Latest Form of Infidelity," he saw the danger in abandoning supernatural for natural religion. He declared that, "if there are no miracles, there is no religion."<sup>18</sup> Many naturalistic religions exist, of course, and, in that sense, Norton was wrong. However, Norton believed that, without supernaturalism, a religion would disintegrate and would carry man into disaster. In this sense, Norton was right. The state as god is a failure; it is a sovereign whose idiocies are daily ridiculed even in the most oppressive dictatorship. Men have a particularly strong contempt for false gods. They do not last. The false gods are dying all around us. The sovereignty of the state is a dead end for man and the state. It gives us both law and life without meaning.

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17. Joseph Slater, ed., *The Correspondence of Emerson and Carlyle* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, [1964] 1965), 39.

18. Dirks, *Critical Theology*, 69.

## S

# BIBLICAL RECONSTRUCTION

**S**aint Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), an austere and very ascetic nun, was withdrawn from the world to a degree not readily appreciated today. The temper of her religious experience can best be described in her poem:

Let nothing disturb thee;  
Let nothing dismay thee:  
All things pass;  
God never changes.  
Patience attains  
All that it strives for.  
He who has God  
Finds he lacks nothing:  
God alone suffices.<sup>1</sup>

Saint Teresa, in her convent, all the same saw God as the “Sovereign Lord” on the throne of creation, He who made all things for Himself and His purposes. Hence, she believed with all her heart that the urgent question of life is this: “What wilt Thou have me do?” and hence she wrote:

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1. E. Allison Peers, trans. and ed., *The Complete Works of Saint Teresa of Jesus*, vol. 3 (London, England: Sheed & Ward, 1946), 288.

I am Thine, and born for Thee:  
 What wilt Thou have done with me?<sup>2</sup>

John Calvin (1509-1564), living at about the same time, was even more explicit about God's sovereignty and total government. He held that "it is obvious that every year, month, and day, is governed by a new and particular providence of God."<sup>3</sup> Well before the rise of Deism, Calvin condemned the pragmatic deism which relegated God to heaven and left the government of the world to men. Calvin wrote:

And, indeed, God asserts his possession of omnipotence, and claims our acknowledgment of this attribute; not such as is imagined by sophists, vain, idle, and almost asleep, but vigilant, efficacious, operative, and engaged in continual action; not a mere general principle of confused motion, as if he should command a river to flow through the channels once made for it, but a power constantly exerted on every distinct and particular movement. For he is accounted omnipotent, not because he is able to act, yet sits down in idleness, or continues by a general instinct the order of nature originally appointed by him; but because he governs heaven and earth by his providence, and regulates all things in such a manner that nothing happens but according to his counsel. For when it is said in the Psalms, that he does whatsoever he pleases (Psalms cxv. 3), it denotes his certain and deliberate will. For it would be quite insipid to expound the words of the Prophet in the philosophical manner, that God is the prime agent, because he is the principle and cause of all motion; whereas the faithful should rather encourage themselves in adversity with this consolation, that they suffer no affliction, but by the ordination and command of God, because they are under his hand. But if the government of God be thus extended to all his works, it is puerile cavil to limit it to the influence and course of nature. And they not only defraud God of his glory, but themselves of a very useful doctrine, who confine the Divine providence within such narrow bounds, as though he permitted all things to proceed in an uncontrolled course, according to a perpetual law of nature; for nothing would exceed the misery of man, if he were exposed to all the motions of the heaven, air, earth, and waters. Besides, this notion would shamefully diminish the singular goodness of God toward every individual.<sup>4</sup>

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2. *Ibid.*, 279-80.

3. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 1, John Allen trans. (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1936), bk. 1, chap. 16, sec. 2.

4. *Ibid.*, sec. 3, 220-21.

Calvin here clearly had Aristotle and like philosophers in mind, but he also saw clearly the danger in pragmatic deism. God as Sovereign governs absolutely, so that, as our Lord tells us,

29. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

30. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

31. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. (Matt. 10:29-31)

God is Sovereign; He exercises total and absolute government. He has created us in His image (Gen. 1:26-28), and He commands us to exercise dominion and to subdue the earth. This is a much neglected commandment, but it is the foundation to all the law of God. The law is given to man as the instrument of and means to dominion. Moreover, dominion is not given to the state nor to the church but to man and to families. God created man to exercise dominion. It is man who is made in the image of God, not the state. The state is ordained to be a minister or deacon, a servant, of God (Rom. 13:1-4). It is a serious error to see theocracy, the rule of God, as a government over men by a group of men in the name of God. The Biblical doctrine of theocracy means the self-government of the Christian man. In Biblical law, the only civil tax is the head or poll tax, the same for all males twenty years of age and older (Ex. 30:11-16). The use of this tax continued beyond Biblical times, and until AD 900 among the Jews.<sup>5</sup> This tax was half a shekel of silver per man and guaranteed a limited state. The church was likewise limited to a tithe of the tithe, i.e., to one percent of a man's income (Num. 18:25-29). The rest went to the Levites to provide for education, music, and a variety of kingdom activities. It is contrary to God's law for church and state to seek to dominate society. Both are ministries under God, not dominions. Biblical law is *addressed* to covenant man and his family. It requires every man to be a walking law in his sphere of life, governing himself and exercising dominion under God in his domain.

Adam was created to exercise dominion but, by his sin, lost dominion even over himself. Fallen man seeks to exercise power,

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5. See Arthur J. Zuckerman, *A Jewish Princedom in Feudal France, 768-900* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, [1965] 1972).

and hence he creates institutions and agencies to implement his drive for power. Christ as the last Adam, and the first fruit of the new creation (1 Cor. 15:20, 45-50), makes us a new creation in Himself (2 Cor. 5:17), so that we are now empowered to exercise dominion. The triune God exercises total government over all things, and He requires us as His image-bearers to exercise government in Christ in our own spheres in terms of His law. Our Lord commands us, saying,

24. 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. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

33. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matt. 6:24, 33)

Very plainly, our Lord *requires* us to give priority to the Kingdom of God. This means, *first*, that this Kingdom must govern us, our institutions (including church and state), our vocations, activities, arts, sciences, families, ourselves, and all things else. There is no sphere, area, nor even an atom in all creation outside this Kingdom and its absolute government. *Second*, this is a sovereign, not a satellite Kingdom, and it is ruled by the Sovereign, Christ the King. He is “the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:15). The realm of the triune God cannot be given to another without sin, and if we yield either ourselves, our families, or our nations to another sovereign, we shall be judged. *Third*, we are the Sovereign’s people, His creation, and the earth is His, because He made it. Proverbs 16:4 tells us, “The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.” God is the Lord, the Sovereign, not man. “The earth is the LORD’s and the fullness thereof: the world, and they that dwell therein” (Ps. 24:1). *Fourth*, our Kingdom is also a law-sphere, ruled by a Sovereign whose word is law. The Bible is God’s law-word which must govern every sphere of life and thought. The fact that man-made laws now govern us does not entitle us to disobedience, because Christ’s way is not revolution but regeneration. The revolutionary act for us must be faithfulness to every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4). Opposition does little good without

Christian reconstruction in terms of God's law-word. Tax protesters fail to recognize that what God requires of us is to take back government from the state by our tithing to finance Christian reconstruction, and by our own actions in our spheres of life. *Fifth*, a sovereign realm is also a judgment realm, and an evidence of men's failure to take God's sovereignty seriously is their failure to regard God's judgments in history and in the day of final judgment. Such thinking has waned because faithfulness to God's law has waned, and it will revive together with our obedience to that law. The commandment to honor our father and mother carries with it the promise of life for obedience (Ex. 20:12), and all the laws similarly promise life and blessings for obedience, and curses and death for disobedience (Deut. 28:1ff).

Men always obey their gods. If they are their own gods, or the state is their god, they will obey the same. If God is man's lord or sovereign, man will obey God and live under God's dominion. Charles Buck denied God's dominion thus:

DOMINION OF GOD, is his absolute right to, and authority over, all his creatures, to do with them as he pleases. It is distinguished from his power thus: his *dominion* is a right of making what he pleases, and of disposing what he doth possess; whereas his *power* is an ability to make what he hath a right to create, to hold what he doth possess and to execute what he hath purposed or resolved.<sup>6</sup>

Man's dominion is *covenantal*. God's covenant is an act of sovereign grace on God's part, whereby He graciously gives His law to His image-bearer, man, as man's way of life. Because man's dominion is an aspect of God's covenant with man, it can *only* be exercised in terms of God's law. Any departure from that law incurs judgment. Covenantal dominion means that God, not man, is in control, and the control is total. God's law covers war and peace, courts, domestic relations, labor relations, inheritance, real property, personal property, money and interest, debtor and creditor, contracts, crime, animals, widows and orphans, time and the land,

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6. Charles Buck, *A Theological Dictionary* (Philadelphia, PA: Joseph J. Woodward, 1826), 156.

weights and measures, diet, clothing, and all things else. It binds us in the totality of our lives.

A fundamental requirement of covenantal dominion is to work for our freedom from every kind of slavery, to sin, debt, other men, and so on. We are not to seek our freedom through rebellion but through obedience, faithfulness, and godly reconstruction. Paul declares,

20. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.  
 21. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.  
 22. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.  
 23. Ye are bought with a price: be not ye the servants of men.  
 24. Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God. (1 Cor. 7:20-24)

We are called into freedom to be responsible dominion men under God, reclaiming every sphere for Him by means of His law. We have a duty therefore to remake our world into Christ's Kingdom. The great day shall come, whether or not we are a part of it, when the proclamation shall declare, "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 salvation-victory we are to spread into every realm. Because the tithes are levitical and not priestly, they must be used to fund Kingdom activities in every sphere.<sup>7</sup> Churches, schools on all levels, hospitals, welfare, and more must be financed by Christ's people in the name of the Lord. Because, with Christ's coming to the earth as the true Adam (1 Cor. 15:45-47), the government is now upon His shoulders (Isa. 9:6), we as members of His body and His new, redeemed humanity share under Him that responsibility for the government of all things. The calling of Christ's people is to judge, to govern and rule the world under Christ and His law-word (1 Cor. 6:2). We are "the members of Christ" (1 Cor. 6:15), and Christ's members must be linked, not to sin and sloth, but to government and dominion.

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7. See Edward A. Powell and R.J. Rushdoony, *Tithing and Dominion* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1979).

# 6

## KINGSHIP

One of the major heresies which confronted the early church had to do with the nature of Christ. This heresy took many forms and repeatedly threatened the church. It viewed Jesus Christ as more than man but less than God. He was in some sense perhaps divine but not truly God. As against this, the Council of Chalcedon in AD 451 declared Jesus Christ to be very God of very God, and very man of very man, two natures in perfect union but without confusion.

As we have seen, the most common term applied to God in the Old Testament is *LORD*, *adon*, *adonai*. The most common term applied to Jesus Christ in the New Testament is again *LORD*, *kurios*. Paul tells us that Jesus Christ “is the blessed and *only* Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:15). All other kings and lords are merely claimants and are subject to the total dominion of Jesus Christ. John in Revelation 1:5 declares Jesus to be “the prince of the kings of the earth,” not the king to be but He who “is” that king first and last. Jesus Christ identifies Himself with God the Father, declaring, “I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty” (Rev. 1:8).

For a person to be king over kings meant in antiquity to be truly a sovereign, one whose every word was unchangeable law. In the Book of Esther we see that such a monarch's written word could not be altered (Esther 1:19; 8:8). In Daniel we also see references to this imperial law which "altereth not," or, "passeth not" (Dan. 8:8-9, 12, 15) This fact of royal law which cannot pass away is referred to also by our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount:

17. Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

18. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19. 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: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 5:17-20)

All God's law must be fulfilled, i.e., *put into force*, and our righteousness or justice must not be man-made like that of the Pharisees but in conformity to God's law. Our Lord tells us emphatically, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love.... Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:10, 14). Because Jesus Christ is truly Lord, very God of very God, every word in Scripture is also His word, His commandment. Moreover, because Jesus Christ is truly Lord or Sovereign over all spheres, rulers, and men, we must be governed by Him and His law-word in every sphere of life and thought.

Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, among other things makes it clear, *first*, that Christians cannot be social and political revolutionists:

20. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.

21. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.

22. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.

23. Ye are bought with a price: be not ye the servants of men.

24. Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God. (1 Cor. 7:20-24)

For us, it is regeneration, not revolution, which alone makes true and effectual change. All efforts to change men and societies apart from atonement, justification, and regeneration in and through Christ are failures and only create social structures built on sand (Matt. 7:24-27).

*Second*, Paul tells the Corinthians what Christ's lordship requires of us:

1. Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?
2. Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?
3. Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?
4. If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are the least esteemed in the church.
5. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?
6. But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.
7. Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?
8. Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.
9. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,
10. Nor thieves, nor covetous, not drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 6:1-10)

The saints, the believers, here and now, have a calling to judge or to rule the world, because Jesus Christ is King and Lord over all things. This rule requires that we administer justice. Paul summons the Christians to establish their own courts of justice rather than going to the courts of unbelievers. To do this, they themselves must be godly men, ruled by God's law and free of the vices he cited, and all evils proscribed by God's law. It is of interest that, in some parts of southern Germany in the medieval era, "popular dialect...placed heresy and unnatural sexuality on the same level, as perversions of

Christian decency: the term *Ketzerei* could mean either ‘heresy’ or ‘sodomy.’”<sup>1</sup>

The church took Paul seriously, and church courts became courts of justice. Their record was sufficiently good to attract pagans who wanted justice, knowing that the Roman courts were increasingly both slow and unjust. When Constantine came to power, he recognized this aspect of the church’s governmental power, and, in certain areas, he invested all bishops with legal magisterial powers. With this magisterial power went the garb and insignia of such an office, and bishops to this day wear the insignia of a Roman magistrate.<sup>2</sup> For six hundred years, bishops provided effective government. In the middle of the fifth century, when Huns threatened the area, the people of Troyes turned to their bishop for protection.<sup>3</sup>

The source of law and justice in any system is the god of that social order. The Roman rulers had declared themselves to be that source. Aurelian’s coinage described him as “born god and lord.”<sup>4</sup>

The young Christian Church and its Lord were seen as a threat to Roman civil theology. We fail today to recognize the audacity of a simple sentence by Saint Paul:

1. I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;
2. For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

These words, like Romans 13:1ff., have been grossly misunderstood. Paul asks us to be *intercessors*. Intercession was then a royal prerogative, or, on a lesser level, that of a state-recognized priest. According to Revelation 1:6, we have been made “kings and priests unto God and his Father” by Jesus Christ. To be an intercessor for Caesar or any ruler is to say he is below us in rank before

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1. Richard Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy in Medieval Germany* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1979), 68.

2. Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, [1967] 1983), 164-65.

3. Joseph and Frances Gies, *Life in a Medieval City* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, [1969] 1981), 2-3, 9.

4. Michael Grant, *The Climax of Rome* (New York, NY: New American Library, [1968] 1970), 66-71, 168ff.

God because he is not a believer. Perowne has called attention to the fact that such intercessory power for Caesar “simply confirmed (for the Romans) that they (the Christians) were a seditious and subversive organization.”<sup>5</sup> It is a perversion of Paul’s intent to pray simply, “Lord, bless the president, bless Congress, bless our governor,” and so on. It is usually true that they need, not blessing, but conversion and even judgment.

It was one of the Temple’s many evils in and before our Lord’s day that it was blessing evil. Although the Jewish authorities argued on many issues with their Roman overlords, they compromised on many more. Thus, Augustus Caesar “endowed a daily sacrifice in the temple in Jerusalem for the welfare of the emperor.”<sup>6</sup> Hence, the religious leaders who were responsible for Christ’s crucifixion daily asked God to bless the Roman emperor!

According to Stauffer, Gallienus as emperor saw himself as “the universal god in human form.” He saw himself as the reconciliation of heaven and earth, and of all things else. His coinage proclaims a twofold gospel to the nations, the blessing of the earth and world peace. It is the culmination of the imperial philosophy which lies behind this gospel. In the emperor the conflict between heaven and earth, between West and East, between male and female, between power and blessing, has been overcome. In the emperor the fullness of the godhead dwells bodily, and gives life and peace to the universe in the year of salvation.<sup>7</sup>

In contemporary church and state trials, the language of state theology is more subdued but no less far-reaching in its claims. In no trial of churches, Christian schools, home schools, or parents in which I have been involved has there been any question as to the superior educational achievements and training of youth on the part of Christians. This, however, is considered usually an irrelevant issue because the main concern of the state is to maintain its claims to sovereign jurisdiction. The issue is thus a religious one:

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5. Stewart H. Perowne, *Caesars and Saints* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, [1962] 1963), 85.

6. Ethelbert Stauffer, *Christ and the Caesars* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, [1952] 1955), 97.

7. *Ibid.*, 239-40.

who is the Lord, Christ or Caesar? Who is the Sovereign? We are plainly told by Scripture, not that Jesus *will be* King and Lord, but that Jesus Christ “IS the blessed and ONLY Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:15). Because He is the King here and now and forever more, His law-word must govern us now and always, and all things must be reordered and remade to conform to His royal word. No sphere of life is exempt from His government, and not an atom of creation was created apart from Him or has any right to independence from Him. Christ is not lord over merely a corner of creation, nor only the church, but over all things. He is not less than God but very God of very God as well as very man of very man. There can be no justice or righteousness in man nor in society apart from Jesus Christ as Savior and King.

Moreover, no more than the Romans could lock up Jesus Christ inside a sealed tomb can the churchmen of our day confine Him to the church. If they continue to try to lock Him into the church, He will shatter the church as He did the tomb, and leave it empty as He emerges to rule the world, for He “is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:15).

# 7

## SIN, GUILT, AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT

Stauffer wisely observed, “You must first grasp the reality of guilt if you are to know what history is.”<sup>1</sup> He commented further:

The history of man is the history of guilt rolling through the ages like an ever-increasing avalanche. This guilt is the *daimonia* of self-glorification, which shattered first the community between man and God and then, with logical necessity, the community between man and man. From that time every historical community has been merely an emergency structure on a shattered foundation. Thus the greatest builder of community ever seen in history, the *homo imperiosus*, was only an emergency builder. He could only take emergency measures, which could never overcome radically, and therefore definitively, the original daemonic distress of human society. The *homo imperiosus* could bind the dragon; but he could not slay it.<sup>2</sup>

This important statement tells us much about the theology of the state. In terms of Scripture, the state is a ministry of justice. It has a duty to restrain and punish evil, and to protect the godly. It must administer the law of God, which is alone justice, all man-made codes of law being examples of man’s evil, his attempt to play god. A theology of the state begins with the fact, whether admitted or

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1. Ethelbert Stauffer, *Christ and the Caesars* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, [1952] 1955), 20.

2. *Ibid.*, 101.

not, of man's Fall, man's sin. Every civil government has at least two premises. *First*, there is a tacit recognition that sin exists and must be dealt with. The definitions of sin may vary. For Marxism, it is capitalism, individualism, and, above all, Christianity. For some states, it has been dissent from the king, the dictator, or the state. For others, it has been a legal code which at points resembles God's law and at other points reveals its radical departure. The Code of Hammurabi (1728-1686 BC) is an example. We read, for example,

129: If the wife of a seignor has been caught while laying with another man, they shall bind them and throw them into the water. If the husband (lit., owner, master) of the woman wishes to spare his wife, then the king in turn may spare his subject.<sup>3</sup>

This law against adultery is not God-centered. It is not God's justice that requires satisfaction but the husband's "rights." If he prefers his wife alive though guilty, then the king's property right in the life of the subject, the adulterer, has to be recognized also. The law here recognizes guilt, but it is against man, not with reference to God and His law. Again, in Hittite law, we read:

194: If a free man cohabit with (several) slave-girls, sisters and their mother, there shall be no punishment. If blood-relations sleep with (the same) free woman, there shall be no punishment. If father and son sleep with (the same) slave-girl or harlot, there shall be no punishment.

195: If however a man sleeps with the wife of his brother while his brother is living, it is a capital crime. If a man has a free woman (in marriage) and then lies also with her daughter, it is a capital crime. If a man has the daughter in marriage and then lies also with her mother or her sister, it is a capital crime.

200 (A): If a man does evil with a horse or a mule, there shall be no punishment. He must not appeal to the king nor shall he become a case for the priest – If anyone sleeps with a foreign (woman) and (also) with her mother or (her) sister, there will be no punishment.<sup>4</sup>

As against this, we have Leviticus 18:17, 23-30. In the prefix to these laws (Lev. 18:1-5), we are plainly told that this is God's law, and He is the Lord, our Sovereign. Leviticus 18:23-30 tells us that

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3. James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1955), 171.

4. *Ibid.*, 196-97.

judgment strikes both the people who commit these sins and their land. Hittite law, however, made it clear that a man could do as he chose with his property, whether women or animals, or with foreign women, who had no rights. Only where free women were involved who came from families with rights and powers was such incest wrong. The basis of God's law is that we are His creation, possession, and property. The basis of Hammurabi's law and of Hittite law is the property rights of kings and free men and women. The premise of law in the ancient and modern state is the sovereign power and property rights of the state over the land and the people. Such states have over the centuries both banned abortion and legalized it in terms of the man-power needs of the state. In this century, both the Soviet Union and Red China swung from one extreme to the other.

Lawmaking is an assertion of sovereignty and divinity. It is also the means of coping with evil. The modern state has pursued the logic of its sovereignty to its conclusion. If guilt is the product of sin, then there must be atonement for sin. Ancient Rome and other societies had their annual lustrations to secure atonement and release all citizens from guilt. This "solution" was not a successful one: men continued as before to sin. The modern era has seen the rise of environmentalism. Evils in society are social evils, and they have their origin in a variety of conditioning factors. These can include bad education, bad families, bad religion, a bad community, and so on. The solution then is *more power to the state* to alter the circumstances. Given the powerful role of Christianity in society and in the life of man, it follows that Biblical faith and practice must of necessity become in time a major target of state hostility and legal action.

Stauffer's comment, "You must first grasp the reality of guilt if you are to know what history is,"<sup>5</sup> can be expanded. What the state does to Christianity and to man will be determined by its doctrine of sin and guilt.

The life of the state requires that it adheres itself to the problem of social order and to the sin and guilt which disrupts it.

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5. *Ibid.*, 20.

For the humanistic state, the *solution* is state control, and the problem is a false view of sin and guilt stemming from Christianity.

Humanistic statism believes in a one-world order based on the family of man concept, unity in the fact of *humanity* rather than in the *person* of Christ. Given this faith, the humanist, like John Dewey, will see the Biblical division between Christian and anti-Christian, the saved and the lost, good and evil, as divisive and anti-democratic.<sup>6</sup>

In Scripture, the state has a place in dealing with the problem of sin and guilt. The church proclaims the fact of the atonement through Jesus Christ as the only means of justification and as the necessary concomitant to personal regeneration, which is the source of social regeneration. The state under God, and in terms of His law-word, can then cope with the fact of sin.

The humanistic state seeks to be more than man, more than a part of the human order. It supplants atonement through Christ with a variety of false solutions to the problem of guilt. Not only does it fail to solve the problem of sin but it aggravates it greatly, because the state becomes the sinner-in-chief. Its humanistic laws enthrone and turn into gospel an anti-Christian "solution." The psalmist tells us that we cannot have fellowship with such a state since it is not in fellowship with God, and declares:

20. Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by law?

21. They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood. (Ps. 94:20-21)

Any church, state, or institution which will not be ruled by the triune God and His law-word is a "throne of iniquity," and we cannot have fellowship with it.

If the atonement of Jesus Christ is basic to our faith and life, no other solution in any sphere to the problem of sin and guilt can be acceptable to us. Any departure from that law incurs judgment. Covenantal dominion means that God, not man, is in control, and the control is total. God's law covers war and peace, courts,

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6. John Dewey, *A Common Faith* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1934), 84. See also James Bryant Conant, *Education in a Divided World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1948), 8.

domestic relations, labor relations, inheritance, real property, personal property, money and interest, debtor and creditor, contracts, crime, animals, widows and orphans, time and land, weights and measures, diet, clothing, and all things else. It binds us in the totality of our lives.

A fundamental requirement of covenantal dominion is to work for our freedom from every kind of slavery, to sin, debt, other men, and so on. We are not to seek our freedom through rebellion but through obedience, faithfulness, and godly reconstruction. Paul declares:

20. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.
21. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.
22. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.
23. Ye are bought with a price: be not ye servants of men.
24. Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God. (1 Cor. 7:20-24)



## 8

# ELITIST AUTHORITY

Louis XIV of France saw his kingship and rule religiously. While formally and at times emotionally a Catholic, he was Gallican to the core and saw the church as subordinate to the state and himself as directly under God. He declared, in his *Memoirs*,

As (the King) is a rank superior to all other men, he sees things more perfectly than they do, and he ought to trust rather to the inner light than to information which reaches him from outside.... Occupying, so to speak, the place of God, we seem to be sharers of His knowledge as well as of His authority.<sup>1</sup>

First of all, Louis XIV saw the king's *rank* as "superior to all other men." This was an observation of the *historical* fact that kingship had gained priority over the papacy and the church. At the same time, it sets forth a *theological* claim that kings should rule over the papacy and the church, Catholic or Protestant. *Second*, in terms of the *theological* claim to superiority to all other men, Louis XIV added the logical deduction of such a theological superiority, namely, that the king, "sees things more perfectly" than all other men do. God having given kings the rank, added to this rank superior knowledge. *Third*, this superior rank, with its superior knowledge,

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1. R. W. Harris, *Absolutism and Enlightenment, 1660-1789* (New York, NY: Harper Colophon Books, [1964] 1966), 76.

was accompanied by a special revelation, an “inner light” more to be trusted than any research, reports, or “information” provided by other men. *Fourth*, Louis XIV held, the king occupies “the place of God.” This places him beyond the judicial review of men. *Fifth*, the kings of nations are “sharers of His [God’s] knowledge as well as of His authority.” This is a view of elitist authority which makes the king a kind of god walking on earth. Later, the English revolution of 1688, in Louis’s day, appropriated this royal authority for Parliament, exercising the king’s divine right and power for him. Jean-Jacques Rousseau and his followers and heirs seized this power for the people as united into a state as a general will.

Such a view of authority was elitist and contrary to Scripture. Deuteronomy 17:18-20 makes it clear that kings (and all rulers) are to be under God’s authority and must rule by His law-word. The rebuke of kings by the prophets was an aspect of this limited authority and the governing power of God’s law.

Louis XIV saw royal authority as hereditary and inherent rather than theological and strictly governed and conditioned by the law-word of God. Disobedience to God by any authority of any rank erodes that authority’s status and protection before God. God declares to Israel through Hosea,

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.

13. They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks and poplars and elms, because the shadow thereof is good: therefore your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your spouses shall commit adultery.

14. 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 4:12-14)

Those who despise God’s authority will have their authority despised. Those who sin against God will have those under their authority faithless to them.

Because the language of authority was still religious, Louis XIV’s views were phrased in semi-Christian terms; they appealed to a religious tradition while departing from it.

Later, another Frenchman, Baron de Montesquieu, gave a more modern version of authority. In *Le Esprit des Lois* (1748) Montesquieu saw authority in more humanistic terms. For Montesquieu, in book 1, section 3, “law in general is human reason” combined with the geographical and historical conditioning of nations.<sup>2</sup> For him, therefore, authority rested on this legal-historical foundation, on reason and historical circumstances and experience. It is easy to see how a later Enlightenment thinker, writing in the early years of Romanticism, came to stress tradition and historical continuity. Burke’s great attack on the French Revolution tended to stress the lack of reason and tradition, welded together to form a continuity, as the basic flow in the Revolution.

More than a few philosophers of law stressed reason as the source of law and authority. At the same time, they identified reason with the state. The state thus came to incarnate both reason and the general will. Out of this development came the totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century. There was no appeal against the state because the state was reason or logic and also the incarnate general will at one and the same time. The infallible state thus came into being; by comparison, the divine right of kings was a pale doctrine.

Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., in *The Common Law* (1881), rejected logic as the source of law and declared it to be experience. This was no less an elitist concept. How is the valid experience to be determined? By the democratic consensus, it was subsequently said. The democratic consensus, however, is not the majority vote or opinion. It is the elite man’s version of what the people should think, and the direction society should take. Thus, more than a few educators were ready to say that, because Nazi racism was contrary to the democratic experience, it could never be the consensus of the people, whereas Soviet Russia’s socialism, whatever its errors, represented a step forward in the democratic experience and consensus. Such comments were university classroom commonplaces in the 1930s. What they offered was the new infallibility of elitist intellectuals. To counter such statements by stating that both national socialism (Hitler) and international socialism (Stalin) were *morally*

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2. *Ibid.*, 22.

wrong was ruled inadmissible because a moral judgment extraneous to history had been introduced into an historical discourse.

Elitist authority thus rules out both God and most men. It reserves authority to humanistic intellectuals who will not allow the validity of a Biblical judgment. The Bible, setting forth God's law-word, enables every man to assess other men, himself, institutions, and history. The Ten Commandments set forth the foundations of man's necessary way of life towards God and man. The law of God enables every man to *assess* authority and to *exercise* authority. When the law of God is denied standing, then only the elitist judgments of elitist man can prevail. The vast majority of men are then excluded from authority and denied any valid ground for assessing authority. Totalitarianism is then only a question of time.

Elitist authority, thus, while affirming the authority of a republic, as in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, is anti-republican and totalitarian. This is also true of the Western democracies. Humanistic elitism reserves authority to the limited few.

Quite logically, with the rise of humanism, we have also seen the growth of popular suspicion, sometimes wrong and sometimes right, that secret conspiratorial groups work to dominate men and nations. Elitist views of authority lend themselves to such efforts and suspicions.

As against this, God's enscriptured law-word, written also in the being of all men (Rom. 1:18-20), alone provides a defense against elitist authority and its totalitarianism.

## 9

# SOVEREIGNTY AND REFORM

The law of God over men means the sovereignty of God over men. As we have seen, the word of a lord or sovereign is a law-word, a binding word. The lord or sovereign is the lawmaker, and the source of law in any society gives us the god or sovereign of that society.

This fact about sovereignty and law is not a contemporary opinion, nor a theory propounded by myself. It is an obvious and continuing fact of history. Its existence in pagan antiquity need not be reviewed here.

One of the popes during The Great Schism which followed the end of the Avignon era was Gregory XII. When the question of a church council came up as the means of ending the schism, and some suggested that the question should be submitted to the judgment of the universities of Bologna, Paris, and Siena, Gregory replied, "I am Pope, and have no need of anyone's counsel. Yes, I am above the law, and you must conform to my decisions."<sup>1</sup> At the Council of Constance, the friars were eager to proclaim, "the Pope is a god on earth."<sup>2</sup> The cardinals at the Council held that "a Pope,

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1. Herbert B. Workman, *The Dawn of the Reformation*, vol. II, *The Age of Hus* (New York, NY: AMS Press, [1902] 1978), 68.

2. *Ibid.*, 162.

when once elected, could not be bound.”<sup>3</sup> Once Martin V was elected pope, all the Council’s concerns for reform vanished, because the pope as sovereign was beyond the council’s control. When the French urged reforms, Emperor Sigismund showed little interest, saying he “had not the same interest in the matter as before,” and also, “You have a Pope, implore him for reform.”<sup>4</sup> Martin V in turn invalidated appeals to a council at once, declaring in an early constitution, “no one may appeal from the supreme judge, — that is, the Roman Pontiff, vicar on earth of Jesus Christ, — or may decline his authority in matters of faith” (March 10, 1418).

These claims were made by some of Rome’s weakest popes. The papacy did not attack the pagan doctrine of an earthly sovereignty; rather, it tried to use it to undercut civil sovereign powers. By doing so, the church gave a religious validity in terms of Christendom to the pagan doctrine. The validity of human sovereignties on earth was validated, making possible the subsequent doctrine of the divine right of kings. At the same time, Paul’s insistence in Romans 13:1ff. that civil authorities are ministers or deacons of God was replaced by the pagan doctrine of civil lordship or sovereignty.

After the Council of Constance, the separate nations and monarchs pursued their claims to an independent sovereignty and sought to divorce themselves from the claims of the church. Instead, they made claims on the church, of which Gallicanism was one expression.

What Constance demonstrated was that the reform of the church from within was impossible as long as the sovereign power of the papacy remained unchallenged. *A sovereign cannot be reformed; a god cannot be made over: it is he who makes men and things.* The growth of all sovereign powers is away from all controls.

Papal claims had reached a high point in Nicholas I, 858-867, a learned and godly man, who was trying to defend the church against the world. His view of the papal office was not surpassed by either Gregory VII or Innocent III. The Borgia pope, Alexander VI, passed under triumphal arches with such insignia as, “Caesar

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3. *Ibid.*, 251.

4. *Ibid.*, 255.

was a man, this is a God.” Nicholas I was followed by a fearful decay in the papacy, and Alexander VI’s day saw the papacy not as a religious power but a political and cultural force. The various nations were controlling the church in their realm, and the Vatican slowly declined in significance. The French Revolution and Napoleon delivered the Vatican from Hapsburg control. Pius VI, at the time of the French revolutionary power, was crowned with a gilded cardboard tiara. The substance of papal claims now belonged to *sovereign states*.

About the same time, or a little earlier, the U.S. Constitution marked a major step in history, the formation of a civil government making no claim to sovereignty and avoiding the very word. Later, John Marshall began to introduce the doctrine of federal sovereignty into his Supreme Court decisions, and Southern leaders asserted state sovereignty, a very different concept from state rights. The U.S. Civil War was a battle over sovereignty, and strict constitutionalists regarded the war as disastrous. William Whiting, Union solicitor of the War Department under Lincoln, held that the federal government could not be “chained by any restrictive interpretation of the Constitution. It had complete power to preserve itself in any manner that it saw fit.”<sup>5</sup> According to Whiting, the General Welfare clause gave full powers to the federal government. “The only check was the power of the people to elect new officials.” As a result, “Whiting’s catalogue of powers left the federal government virtually unrestrained.”<sup>6</sup> Both Lincoln and Stanton agreed with Whiting. As against this, Joel Parker, in Paludan’s words, argued, “A constitution which permitted everything was simply not a constitution.”<sup>7</sup> Moreover, Parker held, “The Constitution recognizes no necessity...to destroy the rights which it so solemnly guarantees.”<sup>8</sup> However, another political theorist of the day held, in Paludan’s summary, “Power was necessary to save the Union and the Constitution; therefore the power that was available might be exercised constitutionally.”<sup>9</sup>

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5. Phillip S. Paludan, *A Covenant with Death: The Constitution, Law, and Equality in the Civil War Era* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1975), 44.

6. *Ibid.*, 144-45.

7. *Ibid.*, 156.

8. *Ibid.*, 157.

9. *Ibid.*, 197.

The men who asserted federal power did so in the name of statist or federal sovereignty. The constitutionalists opposed them in the name of the law of the land, the U.S. Constitution. The Constitution, whatever its merits, gave and gives no immunity against the sinfulness of men. The Constitution *presupposes* sin with its checks and balances, expressed powers, and the Bill of Rights, but it *cannot alter nor eliminate* the fact of sin. Where and when the churches fail in their task, no constitution and no law can prevent the destruction of freedom and order. As both Joel Parker and Francis Lieber saw, in Paludan's words, "Liberty was not something which government guaranteed; it was something to be guaranteed against government." Lieber wrote, "We cannot hope to find liberty in a pervading negation."<sup>10</sup>

Sovereignty having been appropriated by man and the state, liberty was also reduced to their definition. For the libertarian who believes in man's sovereignty, it means the individual's freedom from all external moral and legal restraints. For the humanistic statist, it means the state's sovereign freedom to exercise its will without hindrance. Whether it be a nation state or a world state, claims to its sovereignty are destructive of human freedom and social order.

The freedom of the state to exercise its sovereign power replaces man's freedom under God. The state's coercive order replaces God's order.

The question of sovereignty is thus of no small importance to the life of man. *To call it an academic question is comparable to calling our lives an academic question.* God defines Himself in these words: "I am the LORD, I change not" (Mal. 3:6). The state also says it is our lord or sovereign, but a constantly changing one. The law of God is an enscriptured and unchanging law, whereas the state's law changes daily, and so too does our state's permission as to how we can live. All human sovereignties or lordships are inimical to man and his life and freedom. The question of sovereignty is thus not academic: it is a question of life and freedom. Gregory XII and Martin V were right: a sovereign can change his own will,

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10. *Ibid.*, 160.

but he cannot be reformed or governed. He is above the law and the only true source of all law.

Until we recognize the triune God as the only true sovereign and law-giver, there can be no true law, freedom, or reconstruction.



## IO

# THE VOICE OF REASON

Throughout Europe, the late medieval era saw the repudiation of the Gelasian doctrine of the freedom of the church as a separate power under Christ the King. All of Europe was concerned with controlling the church within their political realms as a branch of civil government. Henry VIII's resolution was more open but by no means more radical than that of Catholic monarchs. Symbolically, Henry VIII demonstrated his position by destroying, in 1538, the shrine of St. Thomas Becket, and forbidding the celebration of his feast, on the grounds that "there appeareth nothing in his life and exterior or conversation whereby he should be called a saint, but rather a rebel and traitor to his prince." Becket was important to the court of Henry VIII. As Lockyer noted, "It was Becket who embodied the full Hildebrandian theory that the Church was a monarchy ruled over by the Pope and the princes of Europe were the Pope's feudal vassals."<sup>1</sup> Lockyer's summation of Hildebrand's doctrine is not altogether accurate, but he is thoroughly right in seeing the modern era as in revolt against Hildebrand's reforms. The state saw itself as sovereign, and as the voice of reason and law.

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1. Roger Lockyer, *Tudor and Stuart Britain, 1471-1714* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, [1964] 1971), 64.

The new doctrines of state were increasingly the common property of groups on all levels of society. Thus, the Diggers, in *The True Levellers' Standard Advanced* (1649), spoke of "the great Creator, Reason."<sup>2</sup> Steadily, God became Reason, and the incarnation in ongoing history of Reason was seen as the State, the Sovereign.

Thomas Hobbes developed the doctrine of state sovereignty rigorously. For Hobbes, even the powers of legally constituted representatives of the crown were strictly circumscribed by royal permission. In fact, all subordinate powers existed by the permission of the crown:

Of Systemes subordinate, some are *Politically*, and some *Private*. *Politically* (otherwise Called *Bodies of Politique*, and *Persons in Law*), are those, which are made by authority from the Sovereign Power of the Common-wealth. *Private*, are those which are constituted by Subjects among themselves, or by authority from a stranger. For no authority derived from forraign power, within the Dominion of another, is Publique there, but Private.

And of Private Systemes, some are *Lawfull*; some *Unlawfull*: *Lawfull*, are those which are allowed by the Common-wealth: all others are *Unlawfull*. *Irregular* Systemes, are those which having no Representative, consist only in concourse of People; which if not forbidden by the Common-wealth, nor made on evill designs, (such as are conflux of People to markets, or shews, or any other harmlesse end,) are Lawfull. But when the Intention is evill, or (if the number be considerable) unknown, they are Unlawfull.<sup>3</sup>

Clearly, Hobbes is the father or at least the transmitter of much that marks the modern era and state. *First*, all institutions, associations, and even agencies or branches of the civil government exist only by the permission of the sovereign power. In other words, they exist *by grace alone, statist grace*.

*Second*, there can thus be no universal church having any independence from civil government. The church must be under the control of the state. As Hobbes stated it:

...I define a CHURCH to be, A Company of men professing Christian Religion, united in the person of one Sovereign: at

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2. A.S.P. Woodhouse, ed., *Puritanism and Liberty: Being the Army Debates (1647-9), from the Clarke Manuscripts with Supplementary Documents* (London, England: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1938), 379.

3. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (London, England: J.M. Dent & Sons, [1914] 1937), pt. 2, chap. 21, 118.

whose command they ought to assemble, and without whose authority they ought not to assemble. And because in all Commonwealths that Assemble, which is without warrant from the Civil Sovereign, is unlawful; that Church also, which is assembled in any Common-wealth, that hath forbidden them to assemble, is an unlawfull Assembly.

It followeth also, that there is on Earth, no such universall Church, as all Christians are bound to obey; because there is no power on Earth, to which all other Commonwealths are subject: There are no Christians, in the Dominions of severall Princes and States; but every one of them is subject to that Commonwealth, whereof he is himself a member; and consequently, cannot be subject to the commands of any other Person. And therefore a Church, such a one as is capable to Command, to Judge, Absolve, Condemn, or do any other act, is that same thing with a Civil Commonwealth, consisting of Christian men; and is called a *Civill State*, for that the subjects thereof are *Christians*. *Temporall* and *Spirituell* Government, are but two words brought into the world, to make men see double, and mistake their *Lawfull Sovereign*. It is true, that the bodies of the faithfull, after the Resurrection, shall be not onely Spirituell, but Eternal: but in this life they are grosse, and corruptible. There is therefore no other Government in this life, neither State, nor Religion, but Temporall; nor teaching of any doctrine, lawfull to any Subject, which the Governour both of the State, and of the Religion, forbiddeth to be taught: And that Governour must be one; or else there must needs follow Faction, and Civil war in the Commonwealth, between the *Church* and *State* between *Spiritualists*, and *Temporalists*; between the *Sword of Justice*, and the *Shield of Faith*; and (which is more) in every Christian mans own brest, between the *Christian*, and the *Man*. The Doctors of the Church, are called Pastors; so also are Civill Sovereigns: But if Pastors be not subordinate one to another, so as that there may be one chief Pastor, men will be taught contrary Doctrines, whereof both may be, and one must be false. Who that one chief Pastor is, according to the law of Nature, hath been already shewn; namely, that is the Civil Sovereign.<sup>4</sup>

This is totalitarianism, the logical outcome of humanism in every form. Because the church for Hobbes exists only by the grace of the “Civil Sovereign,” there can be no “freedom of religion” except by the permission of the state. This means that religion can only have establishment and/or toleration, not freedom.

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4. *Ibid.*, pt. 3, chap. 39, 252-53.

*Third*, we have seen in Hobbes what is now a truism of humanism, namely, that religion is a *private* affair whereas concerns of state are *public* concerns. If the state is *sovereign*, then the state's business is a public concern; if the triune God is alone Lord or Sovereign, then all concerns are religious and public, and the church and Christianity the supremely public concerns. Hobbes saw the church apart from the state's permission as an unlawful private association.

How deeply the thinking of Henry VIII and Hobbes had become a part of American thinking became apparent in the late 1970s and the 1980s as evangelical Christians became politically active. The liberals showed righteous shock and horror, and some press and other media pundits snarled in anger that Christianity, which should be a "private" concern, was insisting on becoming public. The humanistic conservatives were often no less distressed, and they alternated between hostility and attempts to use Christian activism.

In Jean-Jacques Rousseau's day, the public nature of the state and the private nature of Christianity had become ideas seen as natural truths. In *The Social Contract*, chapter 7, "Of the Sovereign," Rousseau logically held that the Sovereign cannot be under law, because he is the source of law. "Consequently, it is against the nature of the body politic that the sovereign should impose upon himself a law which he cannot infringe."<sup>5</sup> Like Hobbes, Rousseau was emphatic that "the body politic, or Sovereign, . . . can never bind itself." Given this fact,

Consequently, the sovereign power need give no guarantee to its subjects, since it is impossible that the body should wish to injure all its members, nor, as we shall see later, can it injure any single individual.<sup>6</sup>

Somehow, this is no comfort to anyone who loses a son in a needless war, or property to the state because of confiscatory taxes.

Rousseau was only able to declare that such a state cannot injure any of its members, nor deprive any of their freedom, by

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5. Sir Ernest Barker, ed., *Social Contract: Essays by Locke, Hume, and Rousseau* (London, England: Oxford University Press, [1947] 1958), bk. 1, 259.

6. *Ibid.*, 260.

redefining injury and freedom. Since the state is sovereign for Rousseau, the state is thus the source of both law and definition as the god of the social order. When George Orwell, in *1984*, wrote about newspeak and double-think, he was recognizing the logical implications of sovereignty. Language and meaning become what the state says they are. John 1:1 declares, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” The logic of Rousseau leads to the conclusion, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with the Body Politic, and the Word was the Body Politic.” For Rousseau, both law and definition proceed from the general will as expressed in the state. As a result, he could say, concerning freedom,

In order, then, that the social compact may not be but a vain formula, it must contain, though unexpressed, the single undertaking which can alone give force to the whole, namely, that whoever 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 it may be necessary to compel a man to be free — freedom being that condition which, by giving each citizen to his country, guarantees him from all personal dependence and is the foundation upon which the whole political machine rests, and supplies the power which works in it. Only the recognition by the individual of the rights of the community can give legal force to undertakings entered into between citizens, which, otherwise, would become absurd, tyrannical, and exposed to vast abuses.<sup>7</sup>

*Compelling men to be free* was the logic of the Soviet Gulags.

For Rousseau, freedom for the church creates in a society “two powers and two sovereigns.”<sup>8</sup>

Of all the Christian authors, the philosopher Hobbes alone has seen the evil clearly, and the remedy too. Only he has dared to propose that the two heads of the eagle should be united, and that all should be brought into a single political whole, without which no State and no Government can ever be firmly established. But he should have seen that the arrogant spirit of Christianity is incompatible with his system.<sup>9</sup>

Given this heritage, the modern state assumes the right to govern the church as a part of its natural jurisdiction. In the case in

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7. *Ibid.*, 261-62.

8. *Ibid.*, bk. 4, chap. 8, 429.

9. *Ibid.*

the Supreme Court of the United States, October Term, 1985, *Ohio Civil Rights Commission, Appellant v. Dayton (Ohio) Christian Schools, Appellees*, attorney William Bentley Ball was retained by the Dayton Christian Schools. At stake was the freedom of the Christian Schools to govern itself in terms of Biblical faith. In an *amicus curiae* filed by the Rutherford Institute, attorneys F. Tayton, John W. Whitehead, and eleven others, attention was called to “the essentially iconoclastic role of intermediate associations in democratic theory and practice”:

A fair description of that role must concede that associations have not always served the instrumental aim of advancing public values, either in their social practices or in their ideological agendas. Indeed, the dominant impact of associations has probably been to perpetuate traditional views and practices as against developing constitutional norms. They have, in any case, at least frequently advanced roles that diverge from constitutional norms. The role of associations in permitting divergence between private and public values is thus an important feature of our form of government as it has functioned historically. For this Court to adopt a constitutional role requiring private associations to conform to public values would therefore affect a shift away from our historical form of government....

The power of an association to govern itself is indeed an awesome power, for it is the power to constitute a sphere of authority independent of the state. It was precisely this recognition that led Hobbes and Rousseau to opine against associations.<sup>10</sup>

Increasingly, by asserting the sovereignty of the state, courts and civil bureaucracies are denying the freedom of Christianity to exist uncontrolled by the state. Associational freedom is denied in the name of the State’s superior Reason. The foundations of the twentieth century totalitarian trends were established by the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. R.W. Harris wrote that “the period of 1660-1789 was a great period of State-making.”<sup>11</sup> It developed the concept of the “enlightenment despot.” Mercier de la Riviere (1767) held, in Harris’s summary, that “the Enlightenment

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10. Rutherford Institute, *Amicus Curiae, In the Supreme Court of the United States, October Term, 1985, Ohio Civil Rights Commission v. Dayton Christian Schools* (Manassas, VA), 6.

11. R.W. Harris, *Absolutism and Enlightenment, 1660-1789* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, [1964] 1966), 1.

Despot is one whose laws are the true expression of the needs of society; he is the one from whom abundance arises, the one whose very glance ‘makes the most barren land fruitful.’”<sup>12</sup> According to Montesquieu, “law in general is human reason.”<sup>13</sup> These doctrines prepared the way for the age of revelation (1789-?). Men who saw themselves as an intellectual elite felt that they, the voice of reason and virtue, were destined to rule all other men. Robespierre saw himself, as Otto Scott has written, as *the voice* of virtue. Thus, anyone critical of Robespierre was by definition the voice of evil and unreason. Virtually all our tyrants since then have likewise identified themselves as law, virtue, and reason incarnate, and Christianity as the enemy of these things. Such a belief means that these men are playing god, and the Lord God of Hosts does not take kindly to rebels and apers.

It has often been observed that men who do not learn from history are condemned to repeat it. In 1607, John Cowell, in *The Interpreter*, held that the king, being sovereign, was above both parliament and law. He was “above the law by his absolute power” and hence above parliament’s control.<sup>14</sup> This was the belief of Charles I,<sup>15</sup> and it led to civil war. The failure of men today to recognize the implications of sovereignty is leading again to futile conflict and insuring that that conflict is grim.

The logic of our time resembles the Egypt of the ancient pharaohs. The pharaohs were regarded as living gods on earth. So far as we know, Egypt had no detailed legal code or a written body of laws, only legal documents. According to Sarna, the “plausible” explanation is that “the concept of the king’s divinity was not compatible with the existence of the independent authority of a written codified law.”<sup>16</sup> The steady growth of regulations and agencies of control replacing fundamental law give evidence that the modern state does not tolerate any law binding upon itself. For the humanistic state, it is the people who must be bound, and the state freed.

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12. *Ibid.*, 3.

13. *Ibid.*, 22.

14. Lockyer, *Tudor and Stuart Britain*, 226.

15. *Ibid.*, 359.

16. Nahum M. Sarna, *Exploring Exodus* (New York, NY: Schocken Books, 1986), 168.



## II

# THE SOURCE OF LAW

With the Enlightenment, scientism began to govern men's minds and reorder society. One of its premises was the faith that Reason being inherent in all the natural universe, the laws of Reason would thus ensure an orderly society. Bruun called attention to the belief of the philosophers:

Men in society no less than bodies in space were subject to rational principles; the formulation of these was to be the miracle which would bring harmony out of chaos. Since the new legal formulas would possess the same lucidity and command the same acceptance as the axioms of Euclid, they would establish in the affairs of government a mathematical precision. This miscalculation, this confusion of juristic with scientific law, could only have occurred in a century obsessed, like the eighteenth, with the triumphs of mathematics. It made society, as Mably had pointed out, a branch of physics.<sup>1</sup>

Exactly so. And because society became a branch of physics, and a rational Newtonian order was held to prevail in all being, certain consequences followed. *First*, while philosophy divided into rationalistic and empiricist camps, the two began with a common premise, a Cartesian one. Man's self-consciousness was for both the

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1. Geoffrey Bruun, *The Enlightenment Despot* (New York, NY: Henry Holt, 1929), 20-21.

ultimate point of reference, i.e., man the thinker, man the empirical observer. Philosophers disagreed as to the relative importance of reason versus the senses, but they were agreed that Descartes' autonomous man was ultimate, and this autonomous man they saw as the ultimate and decisive reason and observer.

*Second*, their view of law as similar to physics meant that mankind as a whole is not unlike any other concatenation of atoms. It is a vast impersonal realm of social atoms which needs scientific ordering. Historians are so enamored with the high-sounding expressions of Renaissance and Enlightenment thinkers that they neglect to note the horrors those eras brought to the common man. The common man was less and less seen either as Christian man, or at least a being created in the image of God, and more and more seen as a social atom. In fact, man was now to be understood, not as God's image bearer, but in terms of "the laws of human nature." Especially after Hegel and Darwin, the laws of human nature were seen in physical and biological terms.

Van Til showed that man has been explained by reference to his ostensibly evolutionary past, the man in terms of the child, the child in terms of an animal ancestry, and steadily on backwards. Child psychology "explains" the man, and so on backward in what Van Til termed an "integration into the void":

In contrast with this (the Christian view) the modern concept of the integration of personality is an integration into the void. We can best appreciate this if we note that *the concept purpose itself has been completely internalized*. Heinemann says, in the same connection in which he brings out that according to Freudianism the soul has become a Vitalseele, that Freud has willy-nilly to recognize the "Sinnhaftigkeit des psychovitalen Geschehens." By that he means that the idea of purpose itself is something non-rational.<sup>2</sup>

All this has led to the dehumanization of man which has marked the twentieth century. Man as a social atom will in time, if such thinking continues, have no more "rights" than any of Newton's atoms.

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2. Cornelius Van Til, *Psychology of Religion* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Theological Seminary, 1935), 59-60.

*Third*, this scientism logically holds that, because Christian man, Christianity, and the church are by definition irrational, they have no place in a scientific society.

The nineteenth-century liberal politician, August Ludwig von Rochan, in his *Grundsätzen der Realpolitik* (1853), was, like other liberals, an advocate of general toleration. However, pragmatically and historically variable as those limits may have been at the time, a hard fact remained, as Schieder noted:

It was only within the framework of the great basic convictions of Liberalism that it was thought possible to hold tactically diverse views in detail; and party division and parties were permissible only within the intellectual and political scope delimited by these convictions.<sup>3</sup>

Given this perspective, it follows logically that anthropologist Edmund Leach, in an article titled, “We Scientists Have the Right to Play God,” should hold: “There can be no source for...moral judgments except the scientist himself.”<sup>4</sup>

If Nature replaces God as the source of law, then man must adapt to Nature, which means in part adapting to himself. In the words of then Quain Professor of Comparative Law in the University of London in the 1920s,

Adaptation to environment is the basic necessity; and the individual man finds the means of adaptation – which we may call natural human law – intuitively and inseparably interwoven with his consciousness.<sup>5</sup>

Where man rather than Nature becomes the source of law, it still means integration downward. Instead of obeying God’s law, seeing law as above and over us, law becomes something we express and determine in terms of adaptation to our own natural being. This then is alone true law. Christianity and the Bible become then alien to the true and natural order.

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3. Theodor Schieder, *The State and Society in Our Times: Studies in the History of the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London, England: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1962), 93.

4. Herbert Schlossberg and Marvin Olasky, *Turning Point: A Christian Worldview Declaration* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1987), 39.

5. J.E.G. de Montmorency, *The Principles of Law* (London, England: Ernest Benn, 1929), 16.

According to Francis Ellingwood Abbott, in his “Nine Demands of Liberalism” (1873), the tax exempt status of churches should be revoked; chaplains should be dropped from Congress, prisons, and the military; all Sabbath observances should be repealed, and no laws should express Christian morality.<sup>6</sup> Blau held that “rights” exist only for individuals. Some rights entail the right to organize, which means religious freedom. However,

Just as the state and all its agencies are committed to an indifference to the religious beliefs of individuals, save where the belief issues in a practice that is socially undesirable, the state is committed to the strictest neutrality as far as the religious associations are concerned, again with the same reservation. This must not, however, be considered as a right of the churches as such. It is, rather, the fulfillment of the rights of the individuals composing the churches. No organization as such can have rights save by a legal fiction. It may be considered to have the rights of an individual under the law, but it cannot be considered to have rights above the law. In any other sense than this it is absurd to talk about the rights of an association. The individual conscience may in certain respects be granted a position of privileges above the law, an immunity against authority. An association, even though it be a church, may not be granted such special privilege....<sup>7</sup>

Blau spoke of “the illegitimate extension of individual freedom to organizational freedom.”<sup>8</sup> For Blau, only the individual has authority, and that authority is delegated essentially to the state. For him, “religion is a personal matter.”<sup>9</sup> Religion for him is supernatural, Biblical faith, not his militant humanism. It is “the separation between religion and government.”<sup>10</sup> Given this separation, it follows that Christians have no right to seek anything in the way of Christian legislation.

This is, of course, a widespread current view. Humanists are seen as free to express pro-abortion, pro-homosexual, and anti-Christian views and to seek legislation to further their faith. For Christians to express themselves against abortion and homosexuality, or for capital

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6. Joseph L. Blau, ed., *Cornerstones of Religious Freedom in America* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, [1949] 1950), 208-9.

7. *Ibid.*, 1.

8. *Ibid.*, 17.

9. *Ibid.*, 89.

10. *Ibid.*, 7.

punishment, is held by many to be a “violation” of the separation of church and state. They insist on reading the First Amendment as a restraint upon Christianity rather than upon civil government. Men like Blau oppose anything which smacks of Biblical law and regard it as tyranny, yet at the same time they seek to impose a muzzle on Christians.

If man and the state are the true source of law, it then follows logically that no law from God has any standing in society and will be seen as alien to “liberty,” and, just as Stalin sought to deliver the Soviet Union from the supposed tyranny of the Christians, so too in time all democratic societies will move against any supernatural source of law, and all advocates of God’s law. Indeed, in the name of democracy, they have been doing so. In Orwellian language, these men declare that tyranny and persecution are expressions of freedom.

The source of law in any society is the god of that social order. The new god is the state, the modern Molech, and he demands human sacrifices.



## I2

# THE ALTERNATIVES IN SOVEREIGNTY

Sovereignty is ultimate power in every sphere. It is over man and the cosmos, over church, state, law, man, and all things else. To deny absolute sovereignty to God is to deny that He is God. The doctrine of predestination is simply the necessary implication of God being God. If man is the determiner of his own destiny, then man has gained thereby an independence from God and the power to prevent God from the exercise of His will and the fulfillment of His plan. God is then reduced at best to the status of a constitutional monarch: He reigns but does not rule.

This is, of course, precisely what many churches have done. They place the power to say *no* to God in man's hands. Preaching then ceases to be the proclamation of the sovereign law-word of God and becomes a pleading with man to accept what God has to offer. God then becomes the greatest resource which man can exploit rather than his sovereign lord. If God is a resource, then man has no obligation to obey God's law: he can avail himself of what God has to offer, but law remains as a human prerogative, because man is sovereign. Law is always the will of a sovereign, and, in the modern era certainly, law is the product of man or the state. Sovereignty has been transferred to the human scene.

The conflict between God and man over the issue of sovereignty comes about in various ways. An important instance of the clash can be found in the rise of English Arminianism between c. 1590 and 1640. The basic problem was one of predestination versus sacramentalism, or, more specifically, predestination versus baptismal regeneration. If God saves man by His sovereign predestinating grace, then baptism is an outward witness to an inner grace, and to God's covenant promise. It witnesses to the fact that God has a covenant of grace with His people. It is, according to chapter 27 of the Westminster Confession, "a sign and seal of the covenant of grace." It witnesses to what God has promised and to what God has done; it is not itself the ingrafting into Christ, or regeneration, or remission of sins, but a witness to what God in His sovereign grace does. The salvation is from God, not from the rite nor the church. The Larger Catechism, A. 165 says of baptism,

Baptism is a Sacrament of the New Testament, wherein Christ hath ordained the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to be a sign and seal of ingrafting into himself, of remission of sins by his blood, and regeneration by his Spirit; of adoption, and resurrection unto everlasting life: and whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible Church, and enter into an open and professed engagement to be wholly and only the Lord's.

Behind a man's baptism there stands God's sovereign decree, and Christ's atonement in satisfaction of God's justice. To affirm baptismal regeneration means to transfer the saving power from the Lord who ordains baptism to the rite itself, and to the church which performs the rite.

During the early seventeenth century, the religious battle in England was between those who affirmed the grace of predestination and those who affirmed the grace of the sacraments.<sup>1</sup> The sacramentalists affirmed baptismal regeneration. Richard Bancroft held that baptism by lay persons "in case of necessity" had to be allowed, because a dying infant, "if it die baptized there is an evident assurance that it is saved."<sup>2</sup> John Yates saw that this Arminian

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1. Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism, c. 1590-1640* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1987), 10.

2. *Ibid.*, 15.

doctrine undermined God's sovereignty: "I profess against all the crew of Arminius's defenders that they do greatly derogate from the majestie of God."<sup>3</sup> By means of this sacramentalism, predestination was transferred from God to man, and, as in this instance, to the church. Edward Quarles held, "All baptized infants are undoubtedly justified."<sup>4</sup>

Quite logically, sacramentalism led to the exaltation of the clergy. They were the ones to whom confession had to be made, and they had the power of absolution. It was even held that "a special confession unto a priest...is necessary unto salvation."<sup>5</sup> Determination with respect to eternity was thus transferred from God to man, to the church, i.e., to the human scene, to time and history.

The English Arminians saw the issue. It was monarchy versus theocracy, and Calvinists, they held, were disloyal to the crown.<sup>6</sup>

William Land, the great Arminian archbishop, agreed, and held,

[W]e must be bold to say that we cannot conceive what use there can be of civil government in the commonwealth or of preaching and external ministry in the Church, if such fatal opinions, as some which are opposite contrary to these delivered by Mr. Montague, are and shall be publicly taught and maintained.<sup>7</sup>

To hold to Arminianism did not always mean sacramentalism, but it always meant the transfer of sovereignty from God to this world. The Arminians in the Church of England favored sacramentalism. The Arminians outside the Church of England and in later history placed the determining power in the will of man, in man saying "yes" to Jesus. Non-sacramental Arminianism led to revivalism and the intense concentration on bringing men to the point of decision. The solemnity and significance of predestination as a sovereign act was now replaced by this new key fact in the life of the church, the bringing of men to a decision for Christ.

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3. *Ibid.*, 40.

4. *Ibid.*, 52; cf. 208.

5. *Ibid.*, 222.

6. *Ibid.*, 246.

7. *Ibid.*, 267.

In this new faith, the form of Christianity was retained, but sovereignty was transferred from God to man.

But God cannot be “robbed” of sovereignty at one point without soon being denied sovereignty at all points. When the church claimed sovereignty, it thereby made it a fact of the human scene, one which others could seize from it. It was not an accident of history that, while civil governments often established various forms of Arminianism (which in itself is neo-scholasticism or Thomism), they rarely and then only briefly established Calvinism. They saw it as a threat to their freedom. If sovereignty is a this-worldly fact, then who is better able to exercise it than the state? With the rise of Arminianism, we have also the rise of statism, of state sovereignty.

The Arminian believer may regard the state with distrust and suspicion; he may resent its power; but he is weakened and less able to resist the new sovereign because he has denied the sovereignty of God and God’s providence in all events.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones called attention to the fact that sacramental churches confine the Holy Spirit to the Church, the priesthood, and the sacraments. There are as a result few strong lay movements in sacramental churches, because the Holy Spirit is a virtual “monopoly” of the church.<sup>8</sup> Because the Puritans fought this Arminianism in church and state, it could be said, “The Puritan is never ‘an establishment man.’”<sup>9</sup> Eastern Orthodox Churches tie the Holy Spirit to the sacraments to the point that lay initiative is weak. The whole of life and creation is seen, not in terms of God’s decree and word, but in terms of the sacrament of the eucharist. Hence, as one Eastern Orthodox theologian has written, “The only real fall of man is his non-eucharistic life in a non-eucharistic world.” Man did not fall, according to Schmemmann, because he preferred the world to God, but because he viewed the world materially rather than sacramentally.<sup>10</sup> Schme-

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8. D.M. Lloyd-Jones, *The Puritans: Their Origins and Successors* (Edinburgh, Scotland: Banner of Truth Trust, 1987), 2ff.

9. *Ibid.*, 268.

10. Alexander Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1973), 18.

mann's idea of the Fall has nothing to do with Genesis 3:1-5, which declares that man's original sin (and fall) is the desire to be his own god, determining good and evil for himself. This should not surprise us: Schmemmann appeals instead to "the primordial intuition" rather than revelation, when he is not appealing to the church.<sup>11</sup> He regards the theological "search for precise definitions" as a "tragedy"; reality for him is "sacramental reality," and we must, to recover it, "return to the *leitourgia*, of the Church."<sup>12</sup>

It is noteworthy also that Pope Leo XIII wrote a letter to Cardinal Gibbons condemning "Americanism," i.e., in particular "the view that the Holy Spirit can work without intermediaries."<sup>13</sup>

In fundamentalism and Pentecostalism, the Holy Spirit is given free play on the human scene, but, in the process, it is made man-centered. It is separated from God's sovereignty and predestination and therefore becomes a human resource. When man in or out of the church is man-centered, he lacks the transcendental framework and power to resist the modern state, which is state-centered and power-centered.

Then, when a battle results between church and state, as in France, 1870-1914, both sides play the same political power game, and, in such conflicts, the church loses the most. In surveying that struggle, the vicomte Melchior de Vogue, a novelist and literary critic, commented:

We think of the dead as lifeless dust beneath our feet; in reality, they are all around us, they oppress us.... When great ideas, great passions surge, listen for their voice: it is the dead who speak.... They had convictions...and we have none, yet they compel us to proclaim them. Not only do they speak, but they hate and do battle.... Here is the insoluble problem of our national life.<sup>14</sup>

Neither *our* problems nor *our* cowardice are new, nor are the answers to the problem of sovereignty. We do not honor God with liturgical pomposity nor revivalistic gush; rather, we show our own poverty and arrogance. Our problems do not disappear because we

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11. *Ibid.*, 124.

12. *Ibid.*, 68.

13. John McManners, *Church and State in France, 1870-1914* (London, England: Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, 1972), 107-8.

14. Cited in *ibid.*, 13.

deny them. If God's sovereignty and predestinating power are denied, we are then subjected to the total planning and control of church or state. The controls of the church are more blasphemous in that they claim to be in God's name; those of the state are more efficiently coercive because the state has the power of the sword.

In *Christianity and Classical Culture* (1939), Charles Norris Cochrane showed that the Christians, who were attacked by the pagan philosophers for their belief in predestination, were the champions of man's freedom, because they freed man from his environment and its controls and placed man under God, not under nature or the state. The same battle is again being waged, but all too many churchmen are on the wrong side.

# I3

## PRIORITIES AND SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

Words often cluster around a central concept. Thus, the word *ultimacy* is linked to *sovereignty*, and Paul Tillich defined religion as *ultimate concern*. Whatever is of ultimate concern is to us our god and religion. The same is true of *priority*; the dictionary defines *prior* first of all as “preceding in time, order, or importance”; we can therefore say that God is prior to all things and thus must have priority in our lives.

But things other than the God of Scripture can have priority and ultimacy in our lives, either in the lives of persons or of nations, and thus become the working god over all things. This has been especially true in the modern era. To cite but two examples, protectionism (or, mercantilism) and free trade have both functioned, not only as economic policies, but as *god-concepts*. A god-concept is a faith whereby life is organized and structured. It governs life and policy and is seen as the hope of man or society. Great Britain’s dedication to mercantilism led to the American War of Independence. The function of colonies was to provide raw materials and a market for the nation but never to compete with it. The insistence of American colonial merchants on trading on their own, in violation of imperial restrictions, led to conflict and, finally, independence. Europe, under the influence of mercantilism, waged a

number of wars in which the various states sought to protect and further their controls over their markets.

This god-concept, protectionism, was succeeded in priority, especially in Great Britain, by *free trade*. The Bible of free-trade faith was Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* (1776). For Smith, the "perfect freedom of trade" would most improve a country by supplying it with "artificers, manufacturers and merchants," and also with gold.<sup>1</sup> The remarkable fact about Smith's vision of the free and good society was that there was no pressing need for the moral reformation of society: "self-love" would motivate all men to the kind of enlightened self-interest that would create a prosperous and good society.<sup>2</sup> Smith's fallacy was that the people whom he looked to for enlightened self-love were the peoples of Britain primarily, and Europe secondarily. In Britain, these were peoples with a Puritan and Calvinistic background to a great degree, and hence with a strong work ethic as well as some morality. The same was true of continental Europe. These were not the non-Christian peoples of the world, nor the Western men of the twentieth century, to whom self-love has meant increasingly self-indulgence in narcotics, liquor, sex, entertainment, and play. Smith's views had a liberating power for a time, but, as the broader world grew in its social impact, free trade began to create its own problems in economics.

However, prior to that time, free trade led to unprecedented evils in nineteenth century imperialism. It is common now to condemn imperialism without a second thought. Before dealing with the evils of free trade imperialism, it is important to remember that history records evils more readily than things which are good. Many colonial agents the world over were remarkable sources of good in their areas. We hear of those who left illegitimate children rather than those who married and had children whom they educated. We do not hear of men who on their own time and with their own money held classes for natives and opened up opportunities and freedoms to them. Colonialism was more than an imperial policy; it was also numerous men, some clearly bad, but many

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1. Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (New York, NY: Modern Library, 1937), 635, 404. See p. 375 for his definition of freedom.

2. *Ibid.*, 14.

good, and these godly men quietly became remarkable sources of friendship, guidance, and freedom for many peoples. Many persecuted minority peoples were protected by colonial officials.

Protectionism had bred one form of military policy; free trade became an even more potent force for military intervention in the name of freedom. One of the better known hymns of the church, by Sir John Bowring (1792-1872), reads in part:

In the cross of Christ I glory,  
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;  
All the light of sacred story  
Gathers round its head sublime.

All the other stanzas of this hymn are similar, moving but subjective and devoid of doctrinal content. In this respect, it is a thoroughly modern hymn. To find doctrine in Bowring, a very devout man, we must look elsewhere, to his statement on free trade, for example: "Free Trade is Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is Free Trade."<sup>3</sup> It would be an error to see Bowring as a scoundrel; he was an earnest and deeply troubled man. He was a highly placed British agent in the Far East and an important part of the efforts which forcibly opened China to the opium trade and turned an opium-free country into a nation of addicts. Opium greatly distressed Bowring, but free trade as an ultimate faith ruled him.

The premise of free trade was and is a radical libertarianism. All practices, including the use of narcotics, prostitution, perversions, etc., should be subject to no controls other than the individual's choice and self-interest. To ban free trade was to ban progress and freedom, and free trade meant freedom for opium.<sup>4</sup> China did not want opium, but Britain demanded free trade, which meant opium. It was the Whig liberals who insisted on free trade.<sup>5</sup> Many "enlightened" missionaries and Christian leaders were thus on the side of opium because of free trade, and Beeching states that many of the drug merchants were Presbyterians, and they justified their work with quotations "from Adam Smith's

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3. Jack Beeching, *The Chinese Opium Wars* (New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanich, 1975), 295.

4. *Ibid.*, 67.

5. *Ibid.*, 157ff.

*Wealth of Nations*, the Bible of Free Trade.”<sup>6</sup> The “greater good” of free trade would in time overrule temporary problems of opium addiction.

The result was free-trade wars, in the case of China, wars of ferocity and remarkable savagery, especially with British troops, but also with involvement by the French, Russians, and Americans. Queen Victoria favored free trade, opium, and war (but Gladstone fought it as a Christian). Some American fortunes were made, including the Delano wealth (Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s family on his mother’s side).

Because free trade has priority and ultimacy as a governing premise with its believers, as with many libertarians today, all other values become subordinate to it. Bowring could thus say, “Free Trade is Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is Free Trade.” And yet, however grim the present wars might be, free trade would ultimately bring in salvation for China.

The faith or idea which governs a person or society is its god-concept, and sovereignty accrues to that god-concept. Free trade also led to the slave trade in Chinese coolies and girls (to be prostitutes). The United States gained its Chinese population of the nineteenth century by this means.<sup>7</sup> This was a less logical outcome of free trade, perhaps, but, given the fact that *freedom* to trade without moral restraint is basic to this faith, it was not a surprising development. Where freedom is prior, it requires the surrender of all else in the name of free trade. Morality becomes an early bit of excess baggage to be jettisoned.

In the twentieth century, other priorities have taken over. According to Lapham, “Americans tend to prefer the uses of power to the uses of freedom.”<sup>8</sup> Americans, however, are behind most countries in this respect, and, because of this, more freedom still exists in the United States than in most countries. It is, however, waning, as the power state grows in the United States in the same way as elsewhere.

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6. *Ibid.*, 197.

7. *Ibid.*, 174ff.

8. Lewis H. Lapham, *Money and Class in America: Notes and Observations on Our Civil Religion* (New York, NY: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1988), 65.

In the modern world, moreover, the emphasis is on public versus private power. On the one hand, anarchistic private powers are demanded by many, whereas the state moves towards totalitarian “public” power. Again, when either private or public power is given priority or ultimacy (*de facto* sovereignty), a destruction of all other values follows. Thus, advocates of private power assert the “right” to homosexuality, or abortion, or incest, drugs, child-love, etc., whereas advocates of public power insist on the total jurisdiction of the state over all spheres of life.

Barrington Moore Jr., in discussing *Privacy* (1984), notes in passing that, for the ancient Hebrews, the important distinction was not between public or private power and freedom, but “between holiness and defilement.”<sup>9</sup> Holiness does not have a man-centered or humanistic frame of reference: it is an attribute of the triune God, but a communicable attribute, although, in the determinative and original sense, we must say of God, “Thou only art holy” (Rev. 15:4). God is all-holy because of the total purity and justice of His being. When a person or a society seeks after holiness, it is seeking God and His will. We are commanded, “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14). The Third Person of the Trinity is called the Holy Spirit, and “the Spirit of truth” (John 14:17), so that to seek holiness is to seek to establish the rule of God’s justice and truth. The emphasis on private power versus public power leads to a man-centered society, and a society of conflict. This conflict of interests is thus harmful to both the private and public sectors. Moreover, the public versus private concern is not a moral one: it is a quest for power, not for moral order. As a result, in politics, law, education, and other spheres morality is no longer a social consideration; morality at best has become a private concern. A restoration to sound practice in economics, politics, law, education, and more requires an abandonment of immanent priorities; none of these spheres in themselves have a legitimate claim to “ultimate concern.” They are legitimate *limited* concerns, to be viewed in terms of God and His law-word. Life is fractured into conflicting and

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9. Barrington Moore Jr., *Privacy: Studies in Social and Cultural History* (New York, NY: Armonk, 1984), 205.

warring interests where a God-centered faith is lacking. Arminian, man-centered churches surrender to this fractured world by withdrawing into a purely pietistic concern, and many traditionally reformed churches have followed them into this retreat. Then pragmatism takes over the world at large, and we have the kind of cynicism cited by Lapham: law becomes not “the permanent ethical code of the society” but instead the “tools with which to harvest the crops of wealth.” Laws then are written and rewritten “as easily as computer programs” to serve the “transient majorities or special interests” who make the most trouble or pay the most.<sup>10</sup>

Without the priority of a God-centered faith which lives in terms of the whole law-word of God, pressures dissolve the nominal Christianity of churchmen. Lord Elgin, who served in India and China during the critical times of the free-trade wars, wrote from India to his wife:

I have seldom from man or woman since I came to the East heard a sentence that was reconcilable with the hypothesis that Christianity had come into the world. Detestation, contempt, ferocity, vengeance, whether Chinamen or Indians be the object.<sup>11</sup>

Many missionaries became shipwrecked by their false priorities, whether free trade, nationalism, or anything else.

This should not surprise us. We are plainly told in Scripture,

For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. (Ex. 34:14)

Because of this, our age is culminating in judgment.

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10. Lapham, *Money and Class*, 51.

11. Beeching, *Chinese Opium Wars*, 244.

## THE LUST FOR SOVEREIGNTY

A problem in many discussions of sovereignty is men's failure to recognize that sovereignty is much more than either a philosophical or a theological concept. Thus, Georges Gurvitch, in *The Dictionary of Sociology*, saw three different types of sovereignty as the term applies to a power, a group, or a jural order. These three are *first*, jural sovereignty, the primacy of one jural order over other jural orders; *second*, political sovereignty, the monopoly of power by a state within its realm; and, *third*, the sovereignty of the people, "the inalienable prerogative of the people for self-rule."<sup>1</sup> Alfred E. Garvie, however, defined sovereignty in religious terms, exclusively with reference to various doctrines of God and without reference to other forms of the doctrine.<sup>2</sup>

Sovereignty is more than an idea: it is the exercise of ultimate power. Criminal leaders have claimed it for their territories, and corrupt political figures have done the same. Dissenters are assured of death at times for refusing to acknowledge such claims. Such men have not been alone in their assertions. The sword at one's

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1. Georges Gurvitch, "Sovereignty," in Henry Pratt Fairchild, ed., *Dictionary of Sociology* (New York, NY: Philosophical Library, 1944), 304.

2. Alfred E. Garvie, "Sovereignty," in James Hastings, ed., *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 11 (Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, [1920] 1934), 756-59.

throat, or a gun at one's head, is an assertion of power, and, very often, of sovereignty as well. Long before Rome fell, the barbarians were moving into the empire. In the year that Augustine died, Hippo fell; Rome had fallen much earlier. The German barbarians over-ran most of the empire. In the seventh and eighth centuries, the Saracens in the Mediterranean world conquered many areas. In the ninth and tenth centuries, the Scandinavians, or Norsemen, or Vikings, seized some areas and raided others. The Magyars took other areas, in northern and central Europe. The Arabs took many areas and then the Turks took over much of the Near East, Georgia, Armenia, and Byzantium, and later were at the gates of Vienna. For more than a thousand years, invasions marked Christendom and gave to the various areas new pagans, new rulers claiming sovereignty, power, and more.

The Christian mission was thus a complicated one. In northern Europe, for example, Charlemagne had to contend with tribes practicing human sacrifice. Missionaries barely began the Christianization of many areas of Europe before fresh pagan influxes and rules disrupted their work and necessitated fresh beginnings. Moreover, even as these invasions were ending, paganized political doctrines arose to insist on the freedom of the state from Christian claims and controls. The church was repeatedly silenced and controlled.

In view of all this, it is ironic that men indict the church for having failed after twenty centuries to Christianize Europe! The miracle is the survival of the church, from Georgia and Armenia, Egypt, and other regions, to Sweden and Norway. Every attempt was made to destroy the church.

At the same time, historians have had much to say about the mistreatment by one church of another. Thus, we are told of the damage done by the Puritans to the Anglican churches. This was slight compared to the assault of Henry VIII on the church, or the wars waged by Catholic monarchs on the continent against their churches and monasteries. The Benedictine monasteries in 1789 numbered about 1500 in all of Europe; in 1814, there were about thirty, and these had fewer men and had been despoiled of their

assets.<sup>3</sup> “Catholic” monarchs had been as active in the destruction as French revolutionists, and the same was true in the days of Henry VIII.

This is not to deny that religious conflict led to evil acts by one church against another. The major destruction has come from unbelievers, sometimes deliberately, sometimes callously and casually. A.L. Maycock is typical of many writers in seeing the minor damage by Puritans of the Little Giddings Church, but, while noting the condition of the church when Nicholas Ferrar became pastor, he does not recognize that the condition of Little Giddings was commonplace in England. The nave and chancel had been stuffed with hay to the roof; some of the building, perhaps the sacristy on the south side, had been used as a pigsty. All the windows had been knocked out, and filth and rubbish were everywhere.<sup>4</sup> In the past two centuries, in Ireland, Russia, Spain, and elsewhere, radical and revolutionary groups have regularly destroyed churches, as did the British troops in America during the War of Independence.

Attacks on churches are expressions of contempt for the sovereignty of God. For this reason, churches the world over have been the targets of hatred, vandalism, and attack because, whereas non-Biblical religions do not threaten the sovereignty of man, Christianity does.

St. Augustine was cynical about the causes of wars, and about the use of words like *glory* and *victory* by politicians. For him men were governed by “the lust of sovereignty.” Augustine wrote,

This vice of restless ambition was the sole motive to that social and patricidal war — a vice which Sallust brands in passing; for when he has spoken with brief but hearty commendation of those primitive times in which life was spent without covetousness, and every one was sufficiently satisfied with what he had, he goes on: “But after Cyrus in Asia, and the Lacedemonians and Athenians in Greece, began to subdue cities and nations, and to account the lust of sovereignty a sufficient ground for war, and to reckon that

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3. Jean Dearreaux, “An Historical Outline of Benedictine Monasticism,” in Don Pieter Batselick, ed., *Saint Benedict: Father of Western Civilization* (New York, NY: Alpine Fine Arts Collection, 1981), 353.

4. A.L. Maycock, *Nicholas Ferrar of Little Giddings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, [1938] 1980), 114, 129-30.

the greatest glory consisted in the greatest empire,” and so on, as I need not now quote. This lust of sovereignty disturbs and consumes the human face with frightful ills. By this lust Rome was overcome when she triumphed over Alba, and praising her own crime, called it glory. For, as our Scriptures say, “the wicked boasteth of his heart’s desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.”<sup>5</sup>

This “lust for sovereignty” is the outcome of man’s original sin, Genesis 3:5, man’s desire to be his own god and to know or determine good and evil, law and morality, for himself. Unscrupulous politicians lead the people to believe that they will gain the upper hand through their leaders to realize their lust for sovereignty through the state.

Historically, the lust for sovereignty has led to wars and conflict. The triune God needs to prove nothing: He is the living God. He can wait with patience for men to bring His judgment on themselves by their contempt for and violation of the laws of being. The false gods, men who lust for sovereignty, must prove to themselves and to others that they are the new gods of creation by exerting raw power over others. From the days of Lamech to the present (Gen. 4:19-24), the boast is in essence the same: “The man who wounds me, him I slay, I slay a blow for a blow” (Gen. 4:23; Moffatt’s trans.). This demonstration must be endlessly repeated to maintain the claim. Hence, anti-Christian societies will see, both in social policy and personal action, an *insistence* on a radical conflict of interests and continual warfare of social classes.

Frederick William I of Prussia wrote, a year after his succession, “One must serve the King with life and after, with goods and chattels, with honour and conscience, and surrender everything except salvation: the latter is reserved for God. But everything is mine.”<sup>6</sup> Given this perspective on all sides, it is not surprising that churches became viewed “increasingly as an arm of the secular state.”<sup>7</sup>

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5. Augustine, *The City of God*, Marcus Dods trans. (New York, NY: Modern Library, 1950), bk. 3, sec. 14, 86.

6. George Rude, *Europe in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, [1972] 1985), 108.

7. *Ibid.*, 123.

Since then, the state's claim to sovereignty has been more emphatic, and, at the same time, the people are convinced that their own lust for sovereignty is a justifiable one. As in the days of Judges, now we also are seeing the implications of the rejection of the kingship and sovereignty of Jesus Christ: "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25).



# I5

## THE NEW SOVEREIGNTY

After 1660, the foundations of Western culture began to shift away from Christianity. This was a resumption of a trend which began in the late middle ages and resulted in the Renaissance. The new, humanistic culture of the Enlightenment was primarily a culture of the court, of intellectuals, artists, and some of the clergy. This dominant culture did not reach into the lower classes except to impoverish them religiously and economically, so that eighteenth-century peoples were on a very low, neglected, and debased level.

The explosion which affected all classes was the French Revolution, which insisted on a new foundation and a new creed for all men. As surely as St. Dominic and Francis had been reformers, and, later, Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, and Loyola, so too the revolutionary leaders were reformers, but of a different kind. As Otto Scott noted, they did not begin by reforming themselves: “they expected to reform others.”<sup>1</sup> This was a major break with Christendom. In pagan antiquity, reform had meant the imposition of the will of a man or a group on all society. Gaius Marius (157-86 BC) craved justice for Rome with a great intensity, for example, but

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1. Otto Scott, *Robespierre: The Voice of Virtue* (New York, NY: Mason & Lipscomb, 1974), 24.

he had, as G.P. Baker noted, no doctrine of original sin. His solution was to see evil in others and then to destroy them in order to save Rome.<sup>2</sup> Marius as a result had no patience nor interest in the ordinary legal processes of civil life. Instead, he bypassed them to gain quick “reform” and “justice.” This meant the sack of Rome, corpses in the streets, the ravishing of the wives and children of all his enemies, and the pillaging of their properties. Marius’s fretfulness over injustice made him a monster of vengeance.<sup>3</sup> Because the Romans had no transcendental doctrine of sovereignty, lordship inevitably belonged to the state and its ruler.

In the French Revolution, Robespierre could declare in the Assembly, “The People are the Law,” and hence the sovereign.<sup>4</sup> In practice, this meant, in terms of Rousseau, that the general will of the people was made manifest in the people’s voice, Robespierre. Because reason was sovereign, and Reason, the attribute of man, did not come into its own in the common man but rather in the general will and its elite voice, Robespierre was thus the sovereign, the voice of Reason, and the voice of Virtue. Fouché and d’Herbois set forth an edict which sums up the spirit of revolutions: “All is permitted those who act in the Revolutionary direction.”<sup>5</sup>

An unappreciated aspect of the French Revolution and its aftermath, the Napoleonic Wars and their impact on all of Europe, was its effect on the universities. This in itself was one of the most far-reaching of all revolutions.<sup>6</sup> Before the French Revolution, despite the presence of Enlightenment scholars, the university was still what some term “medieval.” This means that its basic orientation was still *formally* theological. The triune God, His enscriptured and revealed word, and the ordained order of creation, were seen as the object of study, the ultimate source of knowledge, and the focus for all learning. Although the state had previously funded its universities in many cases, the state still saw

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2. G.P. Baker, *Sulla the Fortunate: The Great Dictator* (New York, NY: Barnes and Noble, [1927]1967), 215.

3. *Ibid.*, 214.

4. Scott, *Robespierre*, 73.

5. *Ibid.*, 205.

6. Daniel Johnson, “The Politics of the University: Reflections on the Legacy of Humboldt,” *Salisbury Review* 5, no. 2 (January 1987): 11.

itself and its universities as *formally* under God. The slow erosion of the theological foundations of society and learning were greatly stepped up by the French Revolution.

The university began to shift from a theological to a civil foundation, and Germany led the way. Scholars like Kant, Humboldt, Fichte, Hegel, Savigny, Schleiermacher, and others began to remake the university. It was now a civil agency, and the focus of the university and its learning was not on God but on the state. In 1492, Columbus, by his discovery of the Americas, gave centrality to an already developing era of exploration. There was a new world for man to explore and conquer. The French Revolution in its own way opened up what to many was an even more important new world, a man-centered world. The focal point of society was now not God but either man or the state.

A major consequence of this was its impact on the meaning of salvation. Whereas for orthodox Christianity salvation means regeneration by God's grace with the forgiveness of sins through Christ's atonement, for revolutionary men it means the change of political and economic systems by means of a political gospel. Sin is identified with those who uphold the "old order," i.e., Christianity, a respect for orderly legal processes, justice as God's revealed law, and so on. Knowledge is no longer tied to God's order, or to any objective order: "knowledge merely reflects power." It is a social construct of a class in power. Revolutionary knowledge means the denial of truth to anything other than the revolutionary creed. Within the church, this means liberation theology, which means that where revolutionists declare themselves to be the voice of an ostensibly oppressed group, the revolutionists and their views constitute virtue and knowledge. In place of the Biblical doctrine of sin, the revolutionists hold to a "belief that the evil of this world is unique to a political system, and can be overcome by political action on behalf of a rival social order." This view marks humanists and Marxists alike. It means, "Morality is that which serves to destroy the old exploiting society." For Christianity, salvation means faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ; there is then reconciliation with God. The new faith has no reconciliation, only annihilation. Salvation is only for the revolutionary

party; all others must, like demons, be exorcised.<sup>7</sup> This exorcism we see in all its murderous intensity in Marxist states; in other states, the drift is in the same direction. For modern man increasingly, like Gaius Marius of old Rome, evil is in other men, in the opposition, and the solution is to destroy them. Lacking any sense of either the depravity of man or the sovereignty of God, modern man sees himself as sovereign and other men as fallen and evil.

In the *Book of Homilies* of Edward VI, we have a statement which correctly assesses all men:

Because all men be sinners and offenders against God, and breakers of his law and commandments, therefore can no man by his own acts, works, and deeds, seem they never so good, be justified and made righteous before God; but every man of necessity is constrained to seek for another righteousness or justification, to be received at God's own hands, that is to say, the remission, pardon, and forgiveness of his sins and trespasses in such things as he hath offended. And this justification or righteousness, which we so receive by God's mercy and Christ's merits, embraced by faith, is taken, accepted, and allowed of God for our perfect and full justification.<sup>8</sup>

These homilies were written for Renaissance men, for a generation which arrogantly assumed its own participation in divinity. Well after Edward VI, in 1604, we see this in George Chapman's play, *Bussy D'Ambois*. When D'Ambois is fatally wounded, he is amazed that he is mortal and can die. He has no desire for grace from God but rather faces death with arrogant pride, and considers complaining to God about his wounding:

Is my body, then,  
But penetrable flesh? And must my mind  
Follow my blood? Can my divine part add  
No aid to th' earthly in extremity?  
Then these divines are but for form, not fact.  
Man is of two sweet courtly friends compact,  
A mistress and a servant; let my death  
Define life nothing but a courtier's breath.  
Nothing is made of nought, of all things made,  
Their abstract being a dream but of a shade.

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7. Caroline Cox and Rachel Tingle, "The New Barbarians," *Salisbury Review* 5, no. 1 (October 1986): 22-27.

8. *The Two Books of Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches* (Oxford, England: University Press, 1859), 24.

I'll not complain to earth yet, but to Heaven,  
 And, like a man, look upwards even in death.  
 And if Vespasian thought in majesty  
 An emperor might die standing, why not I?<sup>9</sup>

When D'Ambois says, "Then these divines are but for form, not fact," he declares theologians to be unrealistic. (His "divines" are, of course, Renaissance thinkers.) This does not make D'Ambois humble before God. He goes on to say,

The equal thought I bear of life and death  
 Shall make men faint on no side.<sup>10</sup>

D'Ambois belongs to the world of Marius, and the world of Marius is very much with us in Marxism, in modern education, in liberation theology, and more.

How far gone we are is apparent in the death of teaching and preaching on the sovereignty of God. Failure to recognize that God is the sovereign means that He is treated as a human resource, and Jesus Christ is seen as the great fire and life insurance agent. The church then becomes an ally of every modern Marius and his humanistic dream of justice.

The culture of the modern era is centered on man and the state. It has created a world in which men see salvation as the coercion of other men, and "all is permitted those who act in the Revolutionary direction."<sup>11</sup> It has made the twentieth century the bloodiest century of all history, with a higher percentage of the population being murdered than ever before, as G. Eliot, in *The Twentieth Century Book of the Dead*, has documented. The new foundation for society has demonstrated its deadly nature.

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9. George Chapman, "Bussy D'Ambois," in Hazelton Spencer, ed., *Elizabethan Plays* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, [1933] 1940), Act IV, sc. 11, lines 77-90, 555-56

10. *Ibid.*, 556.

11. Scott, *Robespierre*, 205.



# 16

## LEGITIMACY

Names in antiquity had a significance beyond anything we now invoke. The *name* of a man was a definition and it called up his character. Thus, God, in calling Abraham, named him first Abram and then Abraham; we are not told what his original name was. The names of the gods were descriptions of their character and power: they were thus called Baal (lord), Molech (king), and so on. Names, however, are in this sense statements of limits, in that a definition is an establishment of boundaries. A *city* is not a field; it is a concentration of houses and businesses. A *table* is not a chair: it is, like a chair, an article of furniture, but not one to sit on, but to place food on, or to work at, or place various articles on. A *swamp* is not a desert but low land saturated with water, and so on.

Because names are limitations, God told Moses that He had no name *per se*, because He is “I AM THAT I AM,” the self-existent and ultimate one, He Who Is, the creator of all things (Ex. 3:14). God is known, not by a name, but by His self-revelation: He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the God of Moses’s father, Amram (Ex. 3:6, 15). *Names* can be applied to specific attributes of God in His revelation: thus, His “name is Jealous” (Ex. 34:14). He is “a consuming fire” (Heb. 12:29); “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5); and “God is love” (1

John 4:8). In these and other instances, we have an attribute of God named, not the totality of His Being.

To give someone your name means to adopt them and to incorporate them into your family or clan. Thus, Jacob said, of the two sons of Joseph,

The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth. (Genesis 48:16)

Because marriage is an act of incorporation, whereby the two are made one flesh, the man gives his name to the woman (Gen. 2:23). In Adam's case, he also gave Eve her given name (Gen. 3:20). Feminists, by rejecting their husband's names, reject incorporation. To have "no name" is truly death (Job 18:17). To be God's people is to have the protection and power of His name. "The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Prov. 18:10).

The NAME of the Lord, of the Triune God, is beyond naming, because He is HE WHO IS, the Creator, the definer, and the Redeemer. The NAME which is beyond naming is so because God is limitless and all-holy: we cannot approach nor comprehend His glory. To be *in* the Name of the Lord is to manifest His image in us faithfully, i.e., to reflect His knowledge, righteousness, holiness, and dominion. To be members of His body means to be faithful to His person and law-word, His justice. Then it follows, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). We are thus told

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)

9. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. 2:9-11)

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. (Col. 3:17)

And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. (Rev. 14:1)

3. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

4. And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. (Rev. 22:3-4)

To be the people of His Name means to manifest His character and life. This is most fully accomplished in the new creation, where “his name shall be” visible on the foreheads of all, i.e., all will manifest their membership in the body of Jesus Christ clearly and unequivocally.

The name *Jesus* (Joshua, Hoshea, Oshea, Jehoshua, Jeshua) means *Jah saves*. As Dr. Ernest L. Martin shows, Eusebius, in his *Proof of the Gospel*, preferred the name Jesus to Christ, Savior, Lord, Logos, Sovereign, Son of God, or Son, important though all of these are. All these titles have been applied to false gods and men, but the name *Jesus* means all things and more. It invokes the power of God and drives away demons.<sup>1</sup>

All other titles refer to aspects of His calling, just as “Love,” “Holy,” “Jealous,” and other references to God simply refer to some facet of His character or being. The name *Jesus* refers to the *person* of God incarnate. Sovereignty or lordship is an attribute of His being, and the predominant use of the term *lord* in both the Hebrew and the Greek tell us how central sovereignty is to His revelation. Sovereignty or lordship, however, is an attribute of the person, of the Godhead, whereas the name *Jesus* points to the unique incarnation, to the Word made flesh. The person of a king is more central than any power he exercises. In the modern era, however, power, sovereignty, dominion, and more have been detached from the king, so that his person is now bereft of all except ornamentation. At the same time, there has been a disguise of power and an ostensible diffusion through society. Thus, in the

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1. Ernest L. Martin, *Secrets of Golgotha: The Forgotten History of Christ's Crucifixion* (Alhambra, CA: ASK Publications, 1988), 118.

Soviet empire, the people vote because power supposedly belongs to the people, but they vote only for an approved candidate. The power is supposedly vested in a representative body and its presiding officer, but in reality it rests elsewhere. The state exercises centralized power which is disguised in a supposed diffusion. To some degree, this pretended diffusion of power exists in many democracies even as the illusion of diffused power is stressed.

This trend coincides with the fact of the illegitimacy of power and sovereignty in the modern era. Thus, the seizure of the English crown by the Tudors, beginning with Henry VII, marked the rise of absolutism and tyranny in England. In France, Louis XIV, possibly illegitimate, suppressed the powers of the nobility and instituted absolutism. Like trends occurred elsewhere.

The Glorious Revolution of 1688 maintained legitimacy by ruling in the name of the crown. But the crown's legitimacy was in origin one of conquest, not of right. "Power to the People" has since been a pretext for the diffusion of a supposed legitimacy while concentrating power and control in an elite group.

In the modern era, thus, legitimacy is an evaded problem, but the fact of evasion does not eliminate the problem. The concept of democratic power, or "Power to the People," accomplishes a further erosion of authority, in that the people, however powerless, become contemptuous of an order which does not represent their will. Power may be exercised in the *name* of the people, but it does not express their will but the will of an elite, controlling establishment.

The basic beliefs of the people cannot be expressed by any group, because those beliefs, in any democratic order, are diverse, contradictory, and changeable. At all times, a large or small group in a society will question the legitimacy of the ruling class. This is expressed in a statement which can be heard in barber shops, in parks, and from campus agitators: "All politicians are *bastards*." This is a curious statement: it does not tell us that all or most politicians are venal, wrong, or derelict in their duties. Rather, the word *bastards* tells us that they are *illegitimate*. It points us to the question of legitimacy.

It would be *very wrong* to idealize the state of affairs in the early years of this century, or in the last century. Our present problems are a result of that past. However, in public life, in state and schools, a façade of Christianity existed. It gave *legitimacy* to the order and *respect* to its officers. With the erosion and the planned destruction of the relics of a Christian establishment, legitimacy and respect have disappeared.

What has replaced *legitimacy* and its consequent *respect* is *popularity*. In the United States, this was an early development, as it was in France after the Revolution, and in countries influenced by the French Revolution. Men like Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson courted popularity, as did William Jennings Bryan. In Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and in all U.S. presidents since then, *popularity* has been virtually central. This rise in *popularity* as an essential to candidates has coincided with a decline in the popular belief in *legitimacy*, and, at the same, there has been a decline of *respect* for the office irrespective of the man.

*The name of the law* is today an almost meaningless expression, because the law depends on congressional or parliamentary majorities and votes. Added to that is the fact of administrative laws; a library-full of such regulations is issued annually. *The name of the law* is *the law has become an oppressor, and laws and lawmakers are alike illegitimate; they are bastards who rule by power, not by right to justice.*

States and their laws have lost legitimacy, because religion has been undermined. Legitimacy and law are theological facts. There can be no true legitimacy or law apart from the triune God. Civil governments in the modern era manifest a weakness apparent from the times after the Fall, but now made more manifest than ever: they have no legitimacy. They have no *NAME*. Names, we must remember, speak of the character of the named. How can one name the modern state? With the Marxist states, an *evil* name can be given, and this is true of many others, but, even then, with changes in the leadership, the form of the evil changes, and the same specific names do not always apply.

As against all this, God, in His revelation to Moses, declares, "This is my name *for ever*" (Ex. 3:15).

For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. (Malachi 3:6)

The security of the "sons of Jacob," of the people of God, rests in His unchanging character. We can never know God *exhaustively*, but, because of His revelation, we can know Him *truly*. Hence, we are told of Jesus Christ that He is "the same yesterday, and today, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8). The triune God does not change, nor does His law, grace, mercy, and judgment. Erosion marks all illegitimate orders. They cannot appeal to an absolute order or law but must seek some kind of *popularity*. In democracies, this is sought by means of statist education, whereby the popular will is shaped to conform to the elite rulers. In dictatorships, Marxist or fascist, education is united to terrorism to compel obedience.

In either case, step by step, the appeal to *popularity* becomes in time the appeal to *coercion*. Might becomes right for such states. Sovereignty then is not an ultimate right but rather the power to kill at will.

Not surprisingly, non-Christian political philosophers have serious problems in trying to ground sovereignty in a way which will provide legitimacy.

Chief Justice John Marshall said, "According to the theory of the British constitution, their parliament is omnipotent."<sup>2</sup> One can add that he proceeded to transfer that omnipotence to the United States. An omnipotence with a changing and self-contradictory mind is an idiotic omnipotence, and it soon incurs the contempt of the people.

A false sovereignty and legitimacy can survive only as long as it provides *success*. Any decline in its prosperity or triumphs will lead to disaster. In previous centuries, when, rightly or wrongly, the European powers had a semblance of legitimacy, they survived defeats and disasters. Increasingly now, and especially in the twentieth century,

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2. David Henshaw, "The Dartmouth College Case," from *Remarks* (1937), cited in Joseph L. Blau, ed., *Social Theories of Jacksonian Democracy* (New York, NY: Liberal Arts Press, 1954), 173.

few states can survive defeat in war, or an economic collapse. *Popularity* and *success* have become the conditions of survival. With such immoral criteria as its test, the modern state is less and less stable, and more and more prone to a reliance on coercion to maintain its power.



# I7

## CONGRUITY

Normally there is a congruity of character in men and cultures. The several aspects of a person's or a culture's nature will be in an essential agreement or harmony. Thus, if a man is a rapist or a murderer, he is likely also to be a liar. If a culture is prone to violence and theft, it will also be prone to rape and murder. James, in his epistle, refers to this congruity, declaring,

10. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

11. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. (James 2:10-11)

11. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?

12. Can the fig free, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. (James 3:11-12)

James stresses two things here. *First*, in James 2:10-11, James tells us that, because the whole law comes from God, and because it expresses His nature, to break the law at any one point is to express rebellion against God and against His law. The law of God is a unity, and he who despises God at one point has expressed contempt for God at all points. Thus, "he is guilty of all."

*Second*, there is a unity in man also. Man is not a collection of random wills but is a person, a creature with a particular nature and bent. No more than a fountain can flow with both salt water and fresh can a man be at peace with God while breaking God's law. Again, each kind of fruit tree bears a particular kind of fruit, so that a grapevine does not produce figs. Similarly, no lawless man manifests a love of God and His law.

Applied to the matter of sovereignty, this fact has very important implications. If sovereignty has its locale in man, then morality and law will to all practical intent originate in man. There will be a natural congruity in these things. Similarly, if sovereignty belongs to man, then wisdom will also originate in man.

Thus, because Louis XIV saw himself as the sovereign power, his attitude towards God was one of treaty, not humility. After one decisive defeat, Louis said, "God seems to have forgotten all I have done for him."<sup>1</sup> Louis spoke of "the purity of my intentions."<sup>2</sup> At other times, he did speak of having "merited" God's punishments.<sup>3</sup> Kendall noted of Louis XI, "He asked neither for grace nor for salvation, merely for the prolongation of his life."<sup>4</sup> The English Tudors and Stuarts were equally arrogant, if not more so; they were, after all, *sovereigns*. Their sovereignty to them meant that they were also endowed with wisdom and virtue, and hence they were unforgiving of the real or imagined errors of all subordinates while oblivious to their own greater lapses.

When sovereignty was seized by the middle class leaders of the French Revolution, the same congruity in their pretensions was apparent. Robespierre saw himself as the voice of wisdom and of virtue. In all revolutions, this same megalomania has been apparent. As sovereignty has descended downward to "the common man" or "the worker," so too has this arrogance and megalomania.

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1. Nancy Mitford, *The Sun King* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1966), 114.

2. John B. Wolf, *Louis XIV* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 1968), 563.

3. *Ibid.*, 612.

4. Paul Murray Kendall, *Louis XI: The Universal Spider* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 1971), 366.

Not only has sovereignty moved theoretically and sometimes actually downward, so too has megalomania. The human wielders of sovereignty have a deep suspicion of all other people. Thus, *The Stockton Record* carried a long editorial on March 23, 1988, charging a third-grade state textbook with racism because someone had protested a statement with respect to Martin Luther King Jr., i.e., that he had been “killed,” whereas the protestor and the newspaper insisted it should have read “assassinated!” Someone objected to this nonsense, writing,

In reference to your editorial on March 23, as long as you and others of similar mind set can find racism in a third grade school worksheet that uses the word killed instead of the word assassinated we are going to travel down the road of racial conflict in America a long, long time.

Of course, Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated, but how many third grade school children know the meaning of the word? Any reasonable, observant adult can readily understand that the paragraph that you quoted was couched in the language the child could understand. It was not written to adult readers nor to those who are overly sensitive to any racial overtones, whether real or imaginary.<sup>5</sup>

Sturdivan’s letter was logical and sensible, but both logic and sense are attributes lacking where men fawn over a human power center. Men in Louis XIV’s day vied for the “privilege” of taking care of the king’s chamberpot when he needed to urinate or defecate. In the same way, men today are ready to be the chamberpot bearers for the “workers” and whatever “minority group,” racial or sexual, is making demands.

On Easter Sunday, April 3, 1988, *The Stockton Record*, using the syndicated story of *The Los Angeles Times*, had a front page story, not on the resurrected Christ and Easter, but on Martin Luther King Jr., in which the readers were told:

“He resurrected a society,” said Washington lawyer Charles Morgan, the first white man to serve as director of King’s Southern Christian Leadership Conference. “No one else did that. No one except Roosevelt.”<sup>6</sup>

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5. Letter of Walter W. Sturdivan, *Stockton (California) Record*, April 6, 1988, A-16.

6. Rudy Abramson, “King’s Declaration Remains Unfulfilled,” *Stockton (California) Record*, April 3, 1988, A-1.

At the same time, others championed other “sovereigns.” Thus Angus White, a professor of environmental studies at California State University, Sacramento, California, charged that “many Mexicans go hungry and are exploited so Americans can have vegetables on the table all year.” The Mexican government subsidized improved farming, but the growers decided there were more profits in selling to the U.S. Unsafe spraying of vegetables, White said, is responsible for endangering the lives of Mexican workers, and this too he saw as the fault of the U.S.<sup>7</sup> White said nothing about the eagerness of Mexico to sell to the U.S., nor that the U.S. has repeatedly protested the heavy and dangerous use of pesticides by Mexican growers. Because sovereignty has drifted downward to “the people,” all power *and virtue* belong to the people also. If between the U.S. and any smaller country a problem exists, the virtue belongs to the smaller country, and the sin to the U.S. The same is true in racial matters: the sin belongs to the white man, and the virtue to the others. Of course, a century ago, before the drift from kings to the lower depths of society had gone this far, the white man was seen as the locale of virtue, and other races the source of vices. It was then believed that the darker the skin, the less the virtue. Now, this former truism has been reversed!

As a result, in the Western world, lower class whites are resentful against other races because of the legal favoritism to them. We can say that racial antagonism is a modern phenomenon; it did not exist prior to the rise of humanism because, as long as religions which pointed beyond man dominated societies, *tensions were religious, not racial*. The Jews experienced, prior to the modern era, both antipathy and a regard alike based on *religious* grounds. Racial hostility is basic to cultures which center on man because human factors are then central to society.

The rise of the homosexual “rights” movement has meant some resentment by blacks in America. For them, their displacement from the center of concern by the homosexual cause is a matter of resentment.

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7. Keith Robison, “Mexicans Paying Price to Feed U.S.,” *Stockton* (California) *Record*, April 7, 1988, B1, 5.

Sovereignty, however, having been separated from God by modern thought, moves downward, and it carries with it other things as well, wisdom and virtue among them. It is thus usually impossible to get militant logical humanists to admit that homosexuality is a sin, an evil, because for them virtue and wisdom attach themselves to the downward drift of the center of society. The congruity of life's movement requires these men at the same time to vindicate the newest center of that downward drift. The cry of "All power to the People" began with humanism, and with the divine right of kings. Rulers like those who wear the British crown are figureheads; the real rulers are in the slums of London, Glasgow, and other cities. Carl Sandburg said, "The people, yes," and the modern state is increasingly defying the people downward. Christians are at best only marginally the people; in some states, they are the "enemies of the people." This designation should not surprise us. Christians, by affirming the sovereignty of the triune God and the universal Kingship of Jesus Christ, thereby deny the modern doctrines of sovereignty and the people. The fact that most Christians are unaware of the conflict does not alter the fact that the humanists recognize that Christ's lordship spells death to the modern state, because it undercuts its premise.

Christians speak of "natural man," meaning *fallen man*, the man who is now all around us since the Fall. The term witnesses to the fact of human depravity outside of Christ. The Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter 6, says:

II. By this sin they fell from their original righteousness, and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.

III. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed, to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation.

IV. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.

In the modern era, however, as a result of the trends which culminated in the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the term "natural man" means the naturally good humanity whose corruption stems

from civilization. Somehow this “natural man” exists and can be freed from evil by means of revolution. However, as Fosco Maraini has pointed out, “There is no such thing as natural man; there is only cultural man.”<sup>8</sup> We must thus say that the *modern* idea of natural man is a myth; “there is only cultural man.” The culture of modern man is what Cornelius Van Til has described as “integration into the void.”<sup>9</sup> This is what we are witnessing. In recent years, various groups of humanists have fought, in and out of the courts, for animal rights, the rights of trees, and so on, seeking to get the approval of the courts for a legal standing in court of trees, animals, and, in one case, of rocks. Whereas at first it was the white man who was sovereign, now, if these groups succeed, it will not be man at all! Rocks and guppies may displace the homosexuals! The logic of modern man’s doctrine leads to this integration downward into the void.

The only valid alternative is the sovereignty of God.

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8. Fosco Maraini, *The Island of the Fisherwomen* (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & World, [1960] 1962), 53.

9. Cornelius Van Til, *Psychology of Religion* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Theological Seminary, 1935), 59, 134.

## CONSUMERISM

Within a few years after World War II, a study by David Riesman, Nathan Glazer, and Reuel Denney, *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character* (1953), described the change taking place in men. Society was becoming consumption-centered rather than production-centered. People were less and less conscience-directed and more and more group-directed. The feelings and demands of the group were replacing God for many. *Life* magazine, in a double issue on December 28, 1959, devoted about two hundred pages to "The Good Life," which was defined in terms of two things, "play," and "love, the elixir." Men who had once lived to work were now increasingly working to play. "Knowledge" was becoming consumer oriented also, and university courses were directed to *students as consumers*.

Shortly thereafter, the universities exploded with protests, riots, and revolutionary disruptions. The role of professional agitators was a real one; Marxists were clearly involved in the campus agitations. The Marxist minority, however, was able to function and to use large numbers of students because they were consumption-oriented, and, as consumers, they were eager to protest the quality and the character of the product, their education. The demonstrations destroyed property; in some instances, occupied

buildings were vandalized, and the protestors urinated and defecated everywhere in order to register their gleeful protest.

Now a consumer-or-consumption oriented society has a very obvious character: *infantilism*. The infant is the total consumer; a baby is fed, clothed, looked after, and a baby is not penalized for urinating and defecating at will. The same is at times true of the elderly with the onset of senility; they again become total consumers. In the elderly, this is seen as a very sad condition; in the infant, there is an expectation of maturity.

The startling fact of the second half of the twentieth century is that, under a variety of flattering names, infantilism has become a social goal, though not with the loss of urinary and rectal controls. A successful advertisement of the 1980s offers a work-free life; a man who at the age of thirty-six retired to live off his investments offered a work-free life to his subscribers. The goal of too many people is to become a consumer.

Consumerism rests on the premise that the world revolves around the consumer, and that consumerism is basic to life and economics. In such thinking, sovereignty has shifted from God to man, but, more specifically, to man as consumer. In this framework, the consumer is king; he is a godlike person in that his wants, appetites, and tastes are determinative of society. The meaning of freedom then comes to mean consumer freedom; the freedom of the producer is curtailed, controlled, or eradicated, because the producer is now becoming a necessary evil, whereas the consumer is the king of society. His tastes and demands are legitimate because consumption is increasingly the area of legitimacy.

As we have seen, there is congruity of trends within a social movement or a society, unless someone or some group sets itself religiously in opposition to that order. It should not surprise us therefore to see that marriage has changed. From the perspective of Scripture, marriage is a religious matter; it is a union of two persons to establish a family under God. The marriage ceremonies of the churches commonly stress its covenantal character: the bride and groom “do vow and covenant” to live together under God and His requirements. Such marriages are not consumer oriented; they are

God-centered, and, over the centuries, the church has regulated marriage and has stressed its theological meaning. The family is the God-created order for mankind, and Western civilization has been family-centered, not state-centered until recently. As Zimmerman and Cervantes noted:

From birth to grave, there is scarcely any great action of consequence that can be performed by a person, even in our free society, that is not guided and colored by family relations. The individual in his family meaning is the real unit in society. Detached or non-familistically guided individuals exist only in imagination or in discolored surroundings such as prostitution, crime, or skid row.<sup>1</sup>

According to Lawrence Stone, the secularization of society began after 1660.<sup>2</sup> The root of the problems which ensued had their origin in the rise of antinomianism, so that, both within the church and outside of it, sexual license was increasingly advocated. Stone noted the “occasional antinomianism” which plagued “the sects”; for example, in 1751, John Wesley had to move against a Methodist preacher who argued that “a believer had a right to all women.”<sup>3</sup>

In the second half of the twentieth century, this antinomianism combined with consumerism to create a new mentality: marriage was now viewed as a *consumer's opportunity*, not as a godly covenant. Scientific “experts,” sexologists, replaced pastors and priests as authorities on marriage. Scientific technique replaced Biblical faith as the key factor in marriage. Marriage manuals were now sex manuals, and one so greatly centered life on the sexual act as to become unconsciously a work for laughter, not counsel. Dr. Van de Velde, M.D., insisted, “But – the husband must exercise the *greatest gentleness*, the *most delicate reverence!*”<sup>4</sup> Reverence was transferred from the church to the marriage bed.

But this reverence could not last long when both parties were consumers, nor did it. In 1927, Ernest Groves began to teach a

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1. Carle C. Zimmerman and Lucius F. Cervantes, *Marriage and the Family* (Chicago, IL: Henry Regnery Company, 1956), 31.

2. Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1977), 627ff.

3. *Ibid.*, 627.

4. Dr. H. Van de Velde, *Ideal Marriage: Its Physiology and Technique* (New York, NY: Random House, [1926] 1930), 170.

course on marriage education at the University of North Carolina. In about fifty years, such courses had shifted from *marriage* to *sex* education to conform with consumerism. In 1952, Ernest Burgess reported that “‘research findings’ had replaced ‘moral and religious sanctions on sexual behavior.’”<sup>5</sup> Religion and morality were left out of the courses of instruction on sex, on all levels of schooling. As Bailey commented,

One of the earliest manifestos of the movement warned against applying abstract formulations to individual student’s problems. Counseling was, ideally, to be non-judgmental, non-prescriptive, based on “insight-giving rather than advice-giving.”<sup>6</sup>

If sovereignty rests in the people, it follows that the consumer is king. Therefore no religious or moral law can be binding on this sovereign consumer. Thus, “safe sex” and the use of condoms can be advocated to avoid the AIDS disease, but not morality, because morality sets forth a law, whereas condoms are simply an option. A consumption-oriented society will be interested in God only as a resource center. Hence, most churches are antinomian, and they offer Jesus Christ as the great fire and life insurance agent. Such a person offers us protection: he does not command us as Sovereign. But no such Jesus exists, only He who is “the blessed and only Potentate; the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:15).

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5. Beth L. Bailey, “Scientific Truth...and Love: The Marriage Education Movement in the United States,” *Journal of Social History* (Summer 1987): 713.

6. *Ibid.*, 723.

## IMPERSONAL SOVEREIGNTY

Romano Guardini (b. 1885), in analyzing the development of the modern age, has shown that, as men departed from Christianity, they created for themselves a new source of ultimacy. “Nature” became the new norm, replacing God and His law, and Nature became the source of values. Instead of a universe governed by God the Father and His law, the new cosmos was seen as the work and person of “Mother Nature.” The new morality was now the “natural man” and the societal goal the “natural society.” The Enlightenment turned from God’s law to natural law, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau enthroned the natural man and his general will as ultimate.

Guardini wrote:

Nature in short signified and determined a something final beyond which it was impossible to venture. Everything derived from the concept of Nature was understood to be an absolute; whatever could be made to conform with Nature was justified by its very conformity.... She was “Divine,” an object for religious worship; she was praised as creative, wise, benevolent; she was “Mother Nature” to whose truth men surrendered themselves unconditionally. The Natural had become the Holy and the God.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Romano Guardini, *The End of the Modern World* (New York, NY: Sheed & Ward, 1956), 53.

Men like Goethe and Wordsworth wrote rhapsodically about Nature. The world was no longer the creation of the triune God for such men, but the creation of Nature. (Later, Darwin made God irrelevant to creation.) Because God lost His place in man's idea of the universe, very soon "man lost his proper position in existence."<sup>2</sup> Although modern man had convinced himself that he now stood face to face with "reality" without illusions, believing that "the springs of existence would be opened before him,"<sup>3</sup> he found himself increasingly in a meaningless and an empty cosmos. Man had lost his place in the scheme of things.

Because "there is no being without a master," i.e., no *created* being, modern man soon created new masters. He sought and objectified power. This new power, having no *true* frame of reference or meaning, has become, according to Guardini, demonic.

Darwin's role, not discussed by Guardini, is very important. In 1862, Charles Hodge, the Princeton theologian, in a review of Charles Darwin's theories, called attention to their marked irrationality. Darwinism, he pointed out, involved belief in three things: evolution; natural selection as the means of evolution; and the denial of design in nature and the affirmation instead of chance. Of these, the denial of design was most significant to Hodge:

That design implies an intelligent designer is a self-evident truth. Every man believes it; and no man can practically disbelieve it. Even those naturalists who theoretically deny it, if they find in a cave so simple a thing as a flint arrowhead, are as sure that it was made by a man as they are of their own existence. And yet they want us to believe that an eagle's eye is the product of blind natural causes.<sup>4</sup>

Design, Hodge saw, is in all the universe, from the smallest atom to the greatest star. To reject design is to reject rationality. As a result, for Hodge the best refutation of Darwin was Darwin's own books and their studied irrationality.

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2. *Ibid.*, 62.

3. *Ibid.*, 94.

4. Charles Hodge, "What is Darwinism?," in Mark A. Noll, ed. and compiler, *The Princeton Theology, 1812-1921* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Company, 1983), 151.

It was, however, precisely this irrationality that most commended Darwin to modern man and made for the instantaneous acceptance of his theory. By enthroning chance, Darwin eliminated God. *This meant also the elimination of responsibility and accountability.* In a cosmos of chance, God, if He exists, is irrelevant; He is an outsider to the universe which is a product of chance variations. Antinomianism has arisen as a necessary concomitant of Darwinism. However real God may be, He cannot lay down the law for a universe made by chance. As a result, God's contact with men is a pietistic and mystical one, an occasional penetration into an alien realm by an alien God. Thus, the Death of God school of "theology" never said that God as such is dead but only that He is dead in the sense of being irrelevant to our world.

At the same time, with the transition from God to "Mother Nature," to a universe of chance, *rationality and personality* were denied to men in any integral sense. As long as man was seen as one created in the image of God, he had a remarkable link with ultimate reality and a high place in the scheme of things. He was a person because God is a Person; man has rationality because God in all His being is coherent and rational; man's reason can function effectively because God's absolute rationality undergirds every atom of creation.

With God replaced by chance, man's rationality is meaningless in the frame of things, because it is a product of chance; it is an accident. Accountability is gone, and therefore man's sense of responsibility is diminished. There being no heaven nor hell, man sees no need to pray like David,

12. Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.

13. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

14. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer. (Psalm 19:12-14)

Man is made free, ostensibly, from God and accountability, but at a very heavy price. It is one thing to be free *under God* in a universe

rich with meaning, another to be free in a vast and empty prison cell of meaninglessness.

In a world under God, men had meaning, and authority and government were *personal*. Rulers were masters, priests, pastors, nobles, kings, and the like, sometimes godly, sometimes evil, but always *persons*. These persons when evil claimed at times a false sovereignty. At all times, communication, for better or worse, was possible. A person could be talked to and reasoned with; an evil Manasseh could actually be converted, but who can convert a machine, or reason with a computer? Not surprisingly, the student riots of the 1960s began in Berkeley, California, in part as a revolt against a mechanized administration, against persons being reduced to a card which read, "Do not fold, staple, or mutilate." The students who rioted felt that *they* were being folded, stapled, and mutilated by an *impersonal* bureaucracy and government. However exaggerated their response, they were right in seeing the impersonality of the new sovereignty.

The new sovereigns of the twentieth century are not under God, nor in Mother Nature. They are the impersonal overlords of the modern power state, which is an ultimate power in its claims, and which sees no law over itself, certainly no law from God.

But man is created in the image of God; he is a person whose being is fashioned after the communicable attributes of the triune God. For man to be under false sovereigns who are persons, men, is bad enough; to be under an impersonal sovereignty, the modern power state, is deadly. The more modern man becomes, the less loyalty and patriotism he can muster; such feelings are more common among Christians, who still see the world in more or less personal terms. An impersonal sovereignty has neither reason nor morals; it is simply power in action. The moral sense of the men in charge of the power state is diluted by the loss of accountability to God.

Not surprisingly, George Orwell, in *1984*, saw the image of this impersonal sovereignty as that of a boot, stamping on a human face forever. Fearful as that insane monarch, Ivan the Terrible, was,

the modern impersonal sovereign, the Soviet state, is far more vicious and deadly in its monstrous and impersonal terrorism.

The growing horror of a worldwide rise of impersonal sovereignties cannot be avoided except by a return to Biblical faith, to the triune God and His law-word. Sovereignty is an inescapable concept. If men will not have God as their sovereign, they will soon have monsters ruling over them as their man-made sovereigns. An impersonal sovereign is of necessity heartless and will always be so.



## SOVEREIGN INSANITY

In recent years, some have changed their opinion of insanity under the influence of Dr. Thomas Szasz, who holds that, except in cases of physical impairment of the brain, insanity is a retreat from responsibility and reality. Although usually the perspective of such men is not Christian but libertarian, their opinion is in line with Scripture. Man's original sin is set forth in Genesis 3:5 as the will of man to be his own god, determining good and evil, law and morality, for himself. The "insane" thus are those who have pushed this belief to its limits. They recognize as reality only what their imagination has conceived, and they live in terms of their imagined world. The full realization of their hopes for an entirely self-willed world is hell.

Because of this will to be one's own god or sovereign, the logical conclusion of humanistic sovereignties, personal or corporate, private or statist, is insanity. At the same time, there is much in modern culture which sees this insanity, in selective cases, as something great and marvelous: it is seen as *genius*. In modern art, there is a marked appreciation of the artist as outlaw, as a madman, as a man living in splendid isolation, and so on and on. Basic to the modern artist is his *denial of community*: he is a loner by choice, because to seek community or to affirm it is to deny his uniqueness.

To deny community means also denying morality, because morality involves both affirming a higher law than one's own will, and also a responsibility to other men. Thus, to reject community is to sever oneself from God and man. It means a life of studied immorality. We are told that Matigliani was an alcoholic; he threw one mistress, Beatrice, out of his second-story window. When another mistress, Simone, told him she was pregnant, he refused to talk to her. Jeanne Hebuterne, a twenty-year-old carnival girl, he would drag by her hair across his studio; she bore him one child and was pregnant with another, when he developed pneumonia and died; she committed suicide. Utrillo died in 1955 in an asylum; Van Gogh was institutionalized towards the end, and so on. More recently, insane actions by artists have led to publicity and public appreciation at times!

Gerald Sykes has called *avante garde* art a form of warfare.<sup>1</sup> He points out that "in a post-puritan culture irresponsibility has *chic*; responsibility has none at all."<sup>2</sup> Such art not only despises the necessary techniques and disciplines of art, but it takes pleasure in displeasure, in the ugly and the revolting.<sup>3</sup>

D. H. Lawrence is a case in point with respect to the exaltation of insanity. He was radically under his mother's influence and grew up undisciplined: what he wanted he had to have; he spoke without restraint about and to people, delivering his hateful comments as divine fiats. One of his favorite remarks was, "With *should* and *ought* I have nothing to do."<sup>4</sup> He was the totally spoiled child. As Cecil Gray wrote, "Lawrence could not brook equals. One had to be a devoted disciple or he had no use for you."<sup>5</sup> He had messianic delusions and staged a famous Last Supper before returning to New Mexico; he spoiled the drama of it by vomiting before it was over.<sup>6</sup> His wife Frieda admitted, "Sometimes he went over the edge

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1. Gerald Sykes, *The Perennial Avantgarde* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971), xi.

2. *Ibid.*, 13.

3. *Ibid.*, 16.

4. Emily Hahn, *Lorenzo: D. H. Lawrence and the Women Who Loved Him* (Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott, 1975), 67.

5. *Ibid.*, 189.

6. *Ibid.*, 277-78.

of sanity,” an opinion shared by others.<sup>7</sup> All this, including his physical violence to his wife, seemed only to emphasize his genius status to many, and to increase the adulation towards a man who regularly insulted all those around him, and especially those who helped him. He had tuberculosis for years, and died of it, but he refused to acknowledge his condition.

Isolation from other people and from the world of work and responsibility is a means of attaining some limited form of contentment in self-will. Moreover, men who are urban and do not have the necessity of struggling to grow fruits and vegetables, grains and livestock, do not experience the dependency on weather and soil which marks the farmer and rancher. In their urban environment, with water, food, and electrical power available to them, they lose the sense of dependency. While more dependent on others than the farmer, they are less conscious of their dependency because it is hidden from them by their money. As a result, they drift easily into the illusion that they are not dependent upon society. Without God, they begin to see themselves as the center of reality, and they regard their feelings and wishes as *justifiable*, whatever they may be. A woman wrote to Ann Landers about her desire “to kill the neighbors. Not because I was angry with them, but simply because I wanted to kill somebody.” She went to a psychiatrist and reported, “He told me that for many years I had repressed the anger toward my mother and later toward my husband. The stress in my life had triggered the urge to kill.” Not the psychiatrist, not the woman, and certainly not Ann Landers called attention to the fact that stress does *not* trigger “the urge to kill.” Stress can be very productive at times. *Nothing* was said about sin as a governing and motivating force. In fact, the column was titled, perhaps by a newspaper editor, “Urge to Kill Can Be Legitimate Feeling That Comes, Goes.”<sup>8</sup> Because it is held to be a *natural* feeling, it is therefore a *justifiable* feeling. It should be no surprise, then, that very strange justifications are routinely advanced since World War II to vindicate murderers and excuse their crime.

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7. *Ibid.*, 271, 281, 294.

8. Ann Landers, *Stockton* (California) *Record*, April 25, 1985, D-3.

When the will of man becomes ultimate in his life, man has become insane; his ostensible sovereignty justifies his every act, because his will is for him valid as such. Similarly, because the modern state recognizes no sovereign God as its overlord and law-source, the state's fiat will is *per se* justifiable, whatever the state decrees. The result is a sovereign insanity. This evil has crept into the church, and more than a few adulteresses and adulterers now justify their act as a "natural" one. Some argue thus: "You mean you have never felt the same urge? The difference between us is that I am honest about myself and you are a hypocrite." God's sovereign law is replaced by the "sovereign" will of fallen man.

What we have thus are two anarchistic would-be sovereigns, modern man, and the modern state. Two sovereigns, however, cannot coexist with any peace. As a result, both are extending their powers and their self-will. The modern state grows daily more powerful, and modern man grows daily more lawless. For "sovereign" man, the way of expressing his claim to sovereignty is to defy the law and will of the state.

Guardini wrote of man's loss of *place* in the universe with his loss of place in God's order.<sup>9</sup> We can add that the state too has lost its place in the scheme of things. Both man and the state seek to displace God as *the center*. The means of attaining this role as the center of being is *power*. Hence the voracious hunger of the state for ever-increasing controls over every area of life and thought. Hence, too, we have the war of the sexes, the conflicts between parents and children, and the war between the generations.

Such isolation into self-will is a desire for unchallenged sovereignty, and it is a form of insanity. A professor of abnormal psychology described one variety of masochism thus:

There are still other known cases of masochism — cases, for instance, in which the individuals affected might be led by the desire for the utmost degradation of themselves to such practices as *uro-lagnia* and *coprophagia*. By these terms we understand, respectively, the drinking of urine and the tasting or eating of feces. The more he can debase his humanity, the happier the true masochist is.<sup>10</sup>

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9. Romano Guardini, *The End of the World* (New York, NY: Sheed and Ward, 1956), 62-63.

10. Nathaniel Thornton, *Problems in Abnormal Behaviour* (Philadelphia, PA: The Blakiston Company, 1946), 109.

The masochist seeks self-atonement to free himself from God and man; because he pays for his failures, he is free, he believes. Thornton called attention to the fact of self-debasement. This is an important fact. God says of Himself through Hannah, "The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up" (1 Sam. 2:6). Commentators usually give this a symbolic meaning, which strips it of its plain intention. Hannah celebrates the supernatural power of the Lord: He can, literally, kill and make alive, bury a man and also resurrect him; *He is the Lord*. Men, as they try to be gods, seeks to do the same; hence, the attempts to create life, or to freeze the dead in the hopes of resurrecting them later by more advanced scientific knowledge. What men *hope* to do is one thing; what they actually do is another. They find power in *killing*: it is their means of playing god. In the Soviet Union, Red China, and other tyrannies, mass murders are commonplace. In the West, abortion is the usual means of playing god by killing. God's killing is governed by His justice, whereas man's killing is an expression of naked power, whether by the state or by persons. Not surprisingly, murder has increased in the twentieth century, and dramatically so.

Killing others is one means of playing god, a sadistic means. Masochism, punishing and killing oneself by degrees, is another. In Thornton's reference to urolagnia and coprophagia, we see one way some people strike at God, by defacing and degrading His image in man. These practices and others by homosexuals sometimes go openly with an outspoken hatred of God and hence of His image in man. War is waged against God, and against His image in man, in oneself and in others, with a gleeful hatred.

This is insanity, of course. When men and nations deny the sovereignty of God and seek to establish their own, all that they finally accomplish is madness, for to depart from God and His sovereignty is to abandon meaning, reason, and sanity. It means choosing death, for "he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death" (Prov. 8:36). When the love of death governs a culture or an era, its death will soon follow.



## SOVEREIGNTY, RIGHTS, AND RIGHT

Mary Clarke and Clement Crisp, in their survey of *Ballet Art* (1978), begin by citing “the aristocratic view of the human body” in the classic dance and ballet. The ballet originated in the court entertainments of the Renaissance, which “were designed to glorify the image of the prince as ruler,” and “to propagate the idea of the quasi-divine nature of the prince.”<sup>1</sup> Designers, producers, and choreographers flattered “royal pretensions to quasi-divinity.” The allusions in the ballet and dance were to pagan gods and goddesses. (Romanticism at a later date “democratized” the quasi-divinity, shifting it from royalty to a romantic elite.)

The masque, which combined poetry, dance, procession, concert, and play, had its masters in Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones. “It was a court ceremony, and it believed in and sought to reaffirm such values as order, harmony, and the beneficent influence of ceremony,” *royal* ceremony, of course.<sup>2</sup> For Jonson, the masque was a Platonic presentation which saw the earthly idea or form of being in royalty. In *The Masque of Queens* (February 2, 1609), Jonson

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1. Mary Clarke and Clement Crisp, *Ballet Art: From the Renaissance to the Present* (New York, NY: Clarkson N. Potter Inc., 1978), 9.

2. David McPherson, ed., *Ben Jonson: Selected Works* (New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), 274.

celebrated the queen, James I's spouse, but in the course of the masque had Heroic Virtue declare James to be a man who did "cherish every great example contracted in yourself," and called him "so ample a field of honor."<sup>3</sup> He also spoke of the queen as one in whom all the merits of past queens lived. The concluding sentence declared, "Her triumphs...are forever."<sup>4</sup>

Greco-Roman ideas and gods (and goddesses) were prominent in the ballet, opera, plays, and masques. In time, however, humanism shifted the embodiment of quasi-divinity to the artist, and to elite men. Romanticism especially stressed this aspect, and poets like Shelly saw themselves as above other men. The sovereignty of kings was becoming in part the sovereignty of artists.

Anti-Christianity figured prominently in this trend. Jean-Jacques Rousseau expressed this temper in the exaltation of natural man, man stripped of the corruptions of civilization. This led to a major interest in so-called "primitive" peoples as possessors of a natural truth and vitality. Travelers began to journey to out-of-the-way places to commune with the uncorrupted man, man unspoiled by Christianity and civilization. Monti commented on a c. 1900 photograph of an East African native,

The European photographer seemed to find, in the immobility and the dignified gestures of the African, those lost gods that had been present throughout the century in German Romanticism, from Heine to Nietzsche.<sup>5</sup>

Another photograph in Monti's collection shows a black man and a naked white woman lying on a rug (c. 1890), a type of photograph then fairly common.<sup>6</sup> The Romantic myth held that "primitive" men and women were not only healthier but also possessed greater sexual powers. Although repeatedly discredited, this myth would not die; its religious roots were too deep. The unfettered, un-Christianized man was for all such Romanticists the source of

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3. "The Masque of Queens," lines 425-27, in *ibid.*, 293.

4. *Ibid.*, lines 639, 669; 299.

5. Nicolas Monti, *Africa Then: Photographs, 1840-1918* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), 111.

6. *Ibid.*, 105.

unequaled “natural powers.” “Primitive” art became very important to museums and to collectors.

*Because* God is sovereign, His grace is sovereign and *irresistible grace*. He could not be sovereign if His grace could be resisted. When Romanticism transferred sovereignty into other spheres, it transferred with it the concept of *irresistibility*. Thus,

Romantic love is *irresistible*; it has absolute priority over any other claim whatsoever; family ties, duty to country or to a cause, friendship. (This was true in life as well as art: Dilke destroyed his career; Parnell ‘betrayed his country’ for Kitty O’Shea.)<sup>7</sup>

The modern idea of revolution is an aspect of Romanticism, and Karl Marx is a telling example of this. Irresistibility is an attribute of true revolution, and the revolutionary elite, the dictatorship of the proletariat or whatever else it may be called, is seen as the necessary and infallible voice of history. Because sovereignty is an attribute of the revolutionary elite, whatever steps are taken by such men are *per se right*; they represent the will of history, the general will, the people, the folk, or whatever else the revolution exalts as its justification.

Related to this is the Romantic doctrine of *rights*. *Right* is separated from God and is attached to the people, the state, the folk, or some like group. For John Locke, men living in the state of Nature contracted together to establish civil government. As the *original* contracting party, man retained certain “inalienable rights.” The source of law and morality was thus transferred from God to man, and, given this man-centered view, it followed that this humanistic faith saw its beliefs as “self-evident” truths. To deny them was to deny the foundations of the new religion. After Darwin, however, historical and anthropological studies rendered this faith untenable. The post-Darwinian world could not validate any truth, nor any right or rights, unless we say,

Since Darwin, it would appear from applying this method that it was an inalienable and natural right of man to swing from trees.<sup>8</sup>

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7. Geoffrey Grigson and Charles Harvard Gibbs-Smith, eds., *Ideas* (New York, NY: Hawthorn Books, 1957), 343.

8. *Ibid.*, 339.

The doctrine of *rights* is still very powerful, and its main area of power is among newcomers to social power, minority groups in particular. Its content grows vaguer as its political power increases.

Shortly after World War II, then Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court Frederick Moore Vinson declared, "Nothing is more certain in modern society than the principle that there are no absolutes." The courts since then have functioned on that premise.

When *right* disappears from a society, what then remains is naked sovereignty, the raw exercise of power. This is what increasingly prevails today around the world. In any Christian sense, *right* is only an echo now in the councils of state: amoral power governs and relegates morality to the realm of myth. All the world over, tens of thousands of Pilates daily say cynically: "What is truth?" (John 18:38)

Because sovereignty has been democratized, it has left kings, the artists, and others, for the mob, for mass men. The manipulation of the people by the media and by the political elite has become a necessity for rule and for "social order." The goal of diverse groups has become to capture the attention and the allegiance of the masses, to command the revolution which continues to spiral downward.

For the Christian, however, neither kings nor commoners, elites or masses, revolutionary victories or triumphs at the polls, is important. The sovereignty of God must be our starting point, His regenerating power and irresistible grace, His law-word, and the Kingship of Jesus Christ. Only God's power and grace are irresistible, and His justice and right shall triumph.

## WHAT IS LAW?

**I**n his *Apology*, Tertullian makes a significant comment about the Roman emperor:

33. But why dwell longer on the reverence and sacred respect of Christians to the emperor, whom we cannot but look up to as called by our Lord to his office? so that on valid grounds I might say Caesar is more ours than yours, for our God has appointed him. Therefore, as having the propriety in him, I do more than you for his welfare, not merely because I ask it of Him who can give it, or because I ask it as one who deserves to get it, but also because, in keeping the majesty of Caesar within due limits, and putting it under the Most High, and making it less than divine, I commend him the more to the favour of the Deity, to whom I make him alone inferior. But I place him in subjection to one I regard as more glorious than himself. Never will I call the emperor God, and that either because it is not in me to be guilty of falsehood; or that I dare not turn him into ridicule; or that not even himself will desire to have that high name applied to him. If he is but a man, it is his interest as man to give God His higher place. Let him think it enough to bear the name of emperor. That, too, is a great name of God's giving. To call him God, is to rob him of his title. If he is not a man, emperor he cannot be.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Tertullian, "Apology," in *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, vol. 11, Roberts, Conaldson ed. (Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1872), 111-12.

In this important statement, Tertullian held, *first*, that Caesar belonged more to Christians than to nonbelievers because he held office by the providence of the triune God. Whether as a blessing or as a judgment upon all men, the emperor ruled only by the permission of God. “Our God has appointed him.” For unbelievers, life being meaningless and purposeless, rulers are accidents of history. For the Christian, they are aspects of God’s purpose and plan.

*Second*, the persecuted Christians, said Tertullian, do more for the emperor’s welfare than unbelievers. Besides being the salt of the earth, Christians pray for the welfare of their country. Even more, by refusing to recognize the emperor as a god, they keep his majesty within due limits; they place the emperor in their obedience in subjugation to God.

*Third*, Tertullian said he would never call the emperor God. This marked his faithfulness to God and gave to the emperor his due place wherein alone he could be blessed.

Tertullian also insisted on religious freedom. In *Ad Scapulam*, he wrote:

2. We are worshippers of one God, of whose existence and character nature teaches all men; at whose lightnings and thunder you tremble, whose benefits minister to your happiness. You think that others, too, are gods, the same we know to be devils. However, it is a fundamental human right, a privilege of nature, that every man should worship according to his own convictions; one man’s religion neither harms nor helps another man. It is assuredly no part of religion to compel religion — to which free-will and not force should lead us — the sacrificial victims even being required of a willing mind. You will render no real service to your gods by compelling us to sacrifice. For they can have no desire of compelling us to sacrifice. For they can have no desire of offerings from the unwilling, unless they are animated by a spirit of contention, which is a thing altogether undivine. Accordingly the true God bestows His blessings alike on wicked men and on His own elect; upon which account He has appointed an eternal judgment, then both thankful and unthankful will have to stand before his bar.<sup>2</sup>

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2. Tertullian, *Ad Scapulam*, in *ibid.*, 46-47.

Technically, Rome did not believe in religious persecution. However, because it believed in the control and regulation of all religions in terms of its fundamental law, the health or general welfare of the people, its policy meant the persecution of Christians. Religious persecution entered the church with Augustine, who adopted the public welfare policy, Rome's highest law, as his policy against the Donatists. The Roman authorities cooperated.<sup>3</sup>

In 1906, T.P. Ellis, in *Welsh Tribal Law and Custom in the Middle Ages*, pointed out that "crime is a modern phenomenon." A crime is an offense against a state. This means four things: *first*, there must be a State; *second*, laws must come from the State; *third*, crime is an offense against State-law; *fourth*, punishment is in accord with State-law. Criminal law thus presupposes the state as the source of law, as *sovereign*.

Prior to the development of statist law, wrongs done were not against the state but against persons, or groups of persons bound together as a family or clan. Such wrongs were not crimes but torts, and action was taken by the aggrieved, not the state. If instituted in courts, it was not the State vs. John Doe (the offender), but the injured party vs. John Doe.

The case was different in a theocratic society. As J.R. Reinhard pointed out,

In a theocratic community, on the other hand, the attitude toward crime and punishment was somewhat different. Here, as in other primitive societies, there were, to be sure, wrongs or offenses of man against man which were matters of private adjustment, "to be settled between the parties on the principle of retaliation, or by the payment of damages." But such wrongs as murder, incest, adultery and similar offenses against the "sacred laws of blood," constituted an insult to the whole community, and were punished by the whole group. The person guilty of such a wrong was *impious*, and had to be "cut off from his community by death or outlawry."

But whereas a civil offense must be *punished*, the idea originally connected with the *execution* of a tribesman was, among the Hebrews, "not exactly penal in our sense of the word"; the object was "not punish the offender, but to rid the community of an

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3. W.H.C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984), 668-73.

impious member....” Indeed, the death or banishment of such a wrong-doer was a matter of religious duty, for if he were not cut off, the anger of the deity would rest on the whole kin. “Hence, when a tribesman is executed for an impious offense, he dies on behalf of the community to restore normal relations between them and their god....” In other words, in a theocratic society some wrongs were regarded as offenses against the deity, that is, as *sins*.<sup>4</sup>

Reinhard’s summary is a good one despite its religious defects. Above all, in a theocratic society which is Biblical, all offenses are sins against God, whoever else may be offended, whether the “crime” or offense be theft, murder, adultery, perjury, or anything else.

To summarize, law can be, *first*, customary law based on clan requirements and involving torts; these are wrongs done by one person against another in which the prosecution is the work of the aggrieved. *Second*, punishable offenses can be crimes against the state’s law (as against family, clan, or tribal law), and the state, having made the law, is the aggrieved and prosecuting party. In the United States, the victim’s hurt is, according to more than a few judges, incidental to the state’s concern. *Third*, because for Christians, God is the source of all law, all offenses are sins. Some sins are punishable by the civil authorities, but not all. Any reading of Biblical law makes it clear that many offenses are not punishable by any agency of man because God reserves that power to Himself. For men to believe that all offenses are punishable by some human agency is for them to play god (Gen. 3:5).

Thus, prior to Augustine, theologians like Tertullian asserted religious freedom. The sins of apostasy, heresy, and unbelief, among many others, are not punishable by man but only by God. For the state to define offenses, and then to punish them, means ultimately totalitarianism. If the state is the *source* of law, then it is the source of punishment for all transgressions, and no dissent is permissible. As a result, systematically humanistic societies become totalitarian and tyrannical. They move from punishing offenses to punishing dissent. They move from the control of criminals to the bureaucratic regulation of all men and

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4. J.R. Reinhard, “Burning at the Stake in Medieval Law and Literature,” *Speculum: A Journal of Medieval Studies*, 16, no. 2, (April 1941): 190-91. The quotations by J.R. Reinhard are from W.R. Smith, *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites*.

all institutions. The possibility of dissent and of violations of law is ostensibly obviated by controlling all in order to prevent offenses by total regulation. Laws to effect the redistribution of wealth and resources then follow. Not the evil-doer but the law-abiding and productive are controlled and in effect punished.

For Tertullian, because the offense was against God, men could not intervene unless *required* to do so by God's law.

But this is not all. Tertullian said of the emperor, "Caesar is more ours than yours, for our God has appointed him." The fundamental government and order come from God. He is the sole source of law, the determiner of good and evil. This reduces all caesars to ephemeral objects, because the government is upon Christ's shoulders (Isa. 9:6), and He alone can prevail. It is God who is our refuge and strength, not caesar (Ps. 46).

Law is the expression of the will of the sovereign power, and nothing and no man can prevail against the sovereign. If man or the state is the sovereign, then the sovereign will prevail, and the sovereign, as the source of law, cannot be bound by any law. If, however, God is the true sovereign over all things, all things are subject to Him, under His law-word, and shall be judged by Him. The importance of the Last Judgment has receded in theology and life as Biblical law has been neglected.

In 1885, Dicey set forth the three meanings attached to the expression, the Rule of Law. *First*, it means the absolute supremacy of regular law as opposed to the arbitrary power of the state. *Second*, the Rule of Law excludes the exemption of state officials from obedience to the law and subjects all classes equally to the law. *Third*, the Rule of Law means that the law of the constitution is not the source but the consequence of the freedom and rights of individuals.

The creation in recent years of agencies given powers to make regulations not subject to legislative review and approval has seriously undermined the Rule of Law. The Rule of Law concept presupposes the ultimacy of God as Sovereign over the nations and the source of law.

The question, What is law?, can be answered, *first*, by stating that the definition of law varies from one culture to another in terms of the religious faith of each society. There is a difference between Soviet law and Biblical law, to cite two extremes. Since law is the will of the sovereign, what or who the sovereign is will determine what the nature of the law will be, and how it can be defined. *Second*, apart from Biblical faith, law sooner or later evaporates into nothing. In Buddhism, nothingness is ultimate, and it is thus a logical conclusion to hold that men and laws are nothing, and some Buddhists have affirmed this. Soviet law is the will of the dictatorship of the proletariat; it changes, and is basically an irrelevant concept because it is subordinate to the *plan* of the Soviet elite rulers. Human laws are variables of human willing. Thus, in the United States, in 1928, it was a crime to have in one's possession a bottle of whiskey, but legal to have a bar of gold. Then, in a few short years, the matter was reversed; the whisky became legal, and the gold illegal. In either case, the "law" was an arbitrary act of the state, not an expression of fundamental morality, as with the Ten Commandments. Beginning with Justice Holmes and on to the present, American justices have held that religion and morality have nothing to do with law, which is the will of the state. This was the position also of National Socialism, a faith much despised by speech in the United States while pursued in action. Hallowell some years ago traced the origins of Hitler to the philosophers of law who reduced law to the will of the state.<sup>5</sup>

In the United States, we have seen *law* steadily being replaced by *regulations*. Without agreeing with the validity of man-made laws, it must be recognized that all the *enacted* laws of legislative bodies are few when compared with the annual libraries of bureaucratic *regulations* which are held to be binding by the courts. This drift from laws to regulations is a logical one in humanistic cultures. If the state is sovereign, the state does not need the ratification of its will by the people, nor by their representatives. As sovereign, it has a lawmaking power independent of

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5. John H. Hallowell, *The Decline of Liberalism as an Ideology, with Particular Reference to German Politico-Legal Thought* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1943).

the people, and it progressively asserts this power. The drift then into a totalitarian order can only be arrested and reversed by a return to the sovereignty of God. No laws passed to arrest that drift can succeed. No sovereign can be bound by the laws of a subject. Men cannot bind God by their laws and wills, and, when the state is accepted by men as sovereign, it is freed from all human restraint. Only a return to the one true God and Sovereign can reverse man's condition of bondage.



## WHAT IS JUSTICE?

Recently, a prominent person in Washington, DC, remarked that the key question today should be, What is Justice? The justices of the U.S. Supreme Court have for some time held relativistic views of law and justice. Chief Justice William Rehnquist was in line with other men since Holmes's day in believing that neither law nor justice should have anything to do with morality, let alone religion.<sup>1</sup>

Law for many is what the state enacts. As for justice, one New York criminal lawyer summed it up thus: "What the hell is justice?"<sup>2</sup> Such cynicism should not surprise us. It is a logical result of the de-Christianization of society. Augustine's classic statement of the case bears repeating:

Justice being taken away, then, what are kingdoms but great robberies? For what are robberies themselves, but little kingdoms? The band itself is made up of men; it is ruled by the authority of a prince, it is knit together by the pact of the confederacy; the booty is divided by the law agreed on. If, by the admittance of abandoned

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1. Bruce S. Ledewitz, "The Questions Rehnquist Hasn't Had to Answer," *Wall Street Journal*, August 7, 1986, 20.

2. Paul Hoffman, "*What the Hell is Justice?*": *The Life and Trials of a Criminal Lawyer*" (Chicago, IL: Playboy Press, 1974). Hoffman's book is a study of this particular criminal lawyer.

men, this evil increases to such a degree that it holds places, fixes abodes, takes possession of cities, and subdues peoples, it assumes more plainly the name of a kingdom, because the reality is now manifestly conferred on it, not by the removal of covetousness, but by the addition of impunity. Indeed, that was an apt and true reply which was given to Alexander the Great by a pirate who had been seized. For when that king had asked the man what he meant by keeping hostile possession of the sea, he answered with bold pride, "What thou meanest by seizing the whole earth; but because I do it with a petty ship, I am called a robber, whilst thou who dost it with a great fleet art styled emperor."<sup>3</sup>

Before we dismiss Augustine's statement as a clever homiletical illustration, let us recognize some few facts from James Mills's research, with U.S. federal agents, of the international illegal drugs traffic. The world over, people spend more money on illegal drugs than they spend on food, or on housing, clothing, education, medical care, or any other product or service. The annual revenues exceed half a trillion dollars as of the first part of the 1980s. This is more than the gross national product of all but a few nations and is three times the value of all U.S. currency in circulation. This international traffic is a hidden empire in league with or controlling civil authorities and even entire countries all over the world.<sup>4</sup> Without God, Augustine held, there is no justice, and the state becomes in time a criminal syndicate at covert war against its own people. The Bible tells us repeatedly that God's test of a people is their treatment of widows and orphans (Deut. 24:17; 27:19; 1 Tim. 5:3; Ex. 22:22-24, etc.). Today, however, inheritance taxes callously rob precisely these widows and orphans. In God's sight, this is injustice and evil.

In 1897, Girdlestone called attention, *first*, to the fact that the Hebrew word translated as *righteousness*, or *righteous*, (*tsadak*) is essentially the same word as our English word of Latin derivation, *justice*. The Biblical world means (a) conformity to God's law, and (b) love to God and one's neighbor. *Second*, because love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. 13:7-10), Scripture recognizes no

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3. St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, NY: Modern Library, 1950 printing), bk. 4, chap. 4, 112-13.

4. James Mills, *The Underground Empire: Where Crime and Government Embrace* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1986).

difference between the claims of justice and the claims of love.<sup>5</sup> Ancient heresies are very much with us in the common antinomy which supposedly exists between law and grace, and justice and love. The opposite of law is lawlessness, and the opposite of grace is reprobation. The opposite of justice is injustice or unrighteousness, or evil, and the opposite of love is hatred. When we begin with false antinomies we end up with false doctrine.

Attempts to define justice apart from God's law-word lead quickly to relativism and positivism. It is not an accident that the book which has most influenced twentieth-century American law, Holmes's *The Common Law*, has no section of it devoted to justice.<sup>6</sup> Holmes not only separated law from justice but discarded the idea of justice. Because Holmes reduced the law to man's opinion, he "supported the absolute rights of the majority," as Wormser noted.<sup>7</sup> Justice thus was in practice what the people wanted. Holmes saw it as his function as a judge to assess the social mind, the general will, and give it expression. Thus, he could be "anti-labor" and "pro-labor" in turn, feeling that he was justified by the social temper of his times. He had contempt for humanitarian, rationalistic, and religious interpretations of law and justice. Laws are "beliefs that have triumphed," and no more.<sup>8</sup> Justice is thus separated from law.

Those who retain the idea of justice give us no encouragement. Their thinking is evasive and shallow. Thus, the *Dictionary of Sociology* has only a two-sentence definition of justice: it is "the ideal in law by which judges are expected to be guided. That abstract objective which is at best only approximated in the administration of the law."<sup>9</sup> In defining "social justice," this dictionary

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5. Robert Baker Girdlestone, *Synonyms of the Old Testament: Their Bearing on Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI, n.p., [1897] 1976), 101.

6. Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., *The Common Law* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, [1881] 1946).

7. Rene Wormser, *The Law* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1949), 445.

8. Max Lerner, ed., *The Mind and Faith of Justice Holmes: His Speeches, Essays, Letters, and Judicial Commentary* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1943), 372, 389-90, 336-41. See also Charles P. Curtis Jr., *Lions Under the Throne: A Study of the Supreme Court of the United States* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1947), 25, 281.

9. Nels Anderson, "Justice," in Henry Pratt Fairchild, ed., *Dictionary of Sociology* (New York, NY: Philosophical Library, 1944), 165.

gives us more: it is “the intelligent cooperation of people in producing an organically united community, so that every member has an equal and real opportunity to grow and learn to live to the best of his native abilities.” (Neither Stalin nor Mussolini would have disagreed with either definition.) We are then told that social justice is essentially democracy. It means four things: *first*, a normal birth, healthy environment, good food, and a good liberal education for every child. *Second*, for every person a good job, one suitable for his abilities. *Third*, for each individual an income adequate to maintain him at his highest social service. *Fourth*, due consideration for the needs of all by the authorities.<sup>10</sup> This definition gives us no description of justice but a contemporary doctrine of entitlements. It assumes that democracy, as the source of social justice, must ensure certain things, whereas justice or righteousness as something in man’s life is totally neglected. The root word of justice is *just*.

In the second edition of Noah Webster’s unabridged *Dictionary*, we are told that *just* means, *first*, conformity to the spiritual law, righteous before God, as in Job 9:2, “How should man be just with God?” *Second*, it means righteous, or conformity to what is righteous in dealing with men; impartial, as in Leviticus 19:36, requiring just weights and balances. *Third*, it can mean also legally consonant, as in having a just title to property. *Fourth*, *just* can mean not transgressing the requirements of truth or propriety, a conformity to the truth of things. *Fifth*, it means agreeing closely or exactly with a pattern or model; something exact, accurate, i.e., it is just right.

What has happened in recent years is that the doctrine of justice is no longer basic to law and society. Justice is at best a social policy, not an aspect of the fundamental order of being. The logic of this position is the Marxist world, where justice is what the state does, and justice is simply the will of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The consequence is a world of evil. In James Moffatt’s rendering of Isaiah 59:14-15:

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10. Charles J. Bushnell, “Social Justice,” in *ibid.*, 285.

14. Justice has to turn away defeated, right is forced to hold aloof, for truth in our assemblies has no footing, honesty cannot enter there; truth is never to be seen,
15. and moral sense has left the town. The Eternal saw this and was angry that no justice could be seen.

The commandment of God is, "Keep ye judgment, and do justice" (Isa. 56:1). Romans 13:1ff. speaks of civil government as a ministry of justice. When the state abandons God's justice, it abandons the very reason for its own existence. One consequence is the growing disillusionment of people with their civil authorities, and their contempt for both civil authorities and civil laws. When law does not express justice, it no longer commands respect and obedience. It is then that the society without justice becomes suicidal. As Proverbs 8:36 declares, "he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death." God through Amos summons men to return to His law-word and justice that they may live: "let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (Amos 5:24).

Justice is not an abstract concept. It is the expression of God's nature as set forth in His law-word. God is all righteousness or justice (Ps. 119:137, etc.). Scripture repeatedly describes God as righteous, just, and Psalm 11:7 tells us, "the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright." We have this promise, "The righteous inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever" (Ps. 37:29).

The disaster of our time is that civil governments have abandoned true justice and have too often separated justice from law. This should not surprise us. When the churches abandon God's law and justice, how can we expect it from civil authorities?

This abandonment in the church has its source in the sentimentalization of the doctrine of the atonement. Modernism trivialized the atonement by seeing it as an example of self-sacrificing love rather than an objective and saving act of law. Evangelicalism held to salvation by the blood of Jesus but reduced its meaning by its antinomianism and imprecise theology.

The early church held to the atonement, but with a lack of clarity as to the meaning of the atonement. In Saint Anselm, 1033-1109, in his *Cur Deus Homo*, we have a theology of law and justice (one later developed further by John Calvin). According to Berman, "Anselm's theory also laid the foundations for the new jurisprudence."<sup>11</sup> Man having sinned against God's law, God's justice requires satisfaction. Since the death penalty has been passed against all men, and all must die, no man can commend himself to God, since all are under condemnation. The last Adam, Jesus Christ, as very God of very God, and very man of very man, both keeps the law perfectly and pays the death penalty for His elect, so that there is a new humanity now in Christ, regenerated by Him to fulfill the righteousness or justice of God's law by His Spirit and power (Rom. 8:4).

At the same time, Hildebrand (1020-1085), who became pope in 1073 (Gregory VII), started the papal revolution. The church began to seek freedom from the state and also to assume the task of becoming the court of appeals for Christendom against injustice. Rosenstock-Huessy described Hildebrand's work as "the papal revolution." Europe was rescued from the threat of an imperial caliphate, and the religious or Christian character of culture and civilization was maintained. European freedom was created, because the monolithic power of the state was challenged by the church, and a law over all kings and lords was upheld. So Rosenstock-Huessy declared, "This, and this alone, has created European freedom," because "every monism leads to slavery. The modern democracies are leading to slavery, because they have no guarantee against the monocratic tendencies of popular government."<sup>12</sup>

A Biblical doctrine of the atonement restores a Biblical view of God's law, and it alone provides a basis for human freedom, because it places all men and nations under God's law. Antinominism denies this legal subjection to the triune God and gives to

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11. Harold J. Berman, *Law and Revolution: The Formation of the Western Legal Tradition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 179. See also George Hunston Williams, *Anselm: Communion and Atonement* (1960).

12. Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Out of Revolution: An Autobiography of Western Man* (New York, NY: William Morrow, 1938), 543.

men and nations the freedom to pursue the implications of man's original sin, his desire to be his own god, and his own source of law, morality, and justice. The consequence then is lawlessness, immorality, slavery, and a world in which every man does that which is right in his own eyes, because he will not have God to be king and lawgiver over him (Judges 21:25).



## SOVEREIGNTY AND JUSTICE

James Bilezekian has very succinctly set forth the implications of the atonement: “If we are under the blood of Christ, we remove bloodshed from our society, and we have peace; if we reject the blood of Christ, we opt for a divided and bloody world.” If we reject the shed blood of Christ, he adds, we will see men’s blood shed endlessly.

This is a very important fact, and we must examine it closely. It means that, without the atonement, there cannot be justice. We are told in 2 Timothy 4:1 that Jesus Christ “shall judge the quick and the dead.” He is the Judge because He is the Lawgiver. It is the law of the triune God that men rebel against and in terms of which *all* men are judged. Unless a man be redeemed from the curse or penalty of the law by Christ’s atonement *and* regenerated and made a new creature or creation, one whose delight it is to serve and obey God and His law, man will break God’s law deliberately and seek to replace it with his own law. This is the meaning of Genesis 3:5: every man seeks to be his own god and law to redefine justice in terms of his own will and word. The result is the worldwide prevalence of injustice. Injustice begins with a false sovereignty or sovereign; therefore the decreeing of a false law; and therefore the reign of injustice. “The throne of iniquity” is given

to framing “mischief by a law” (Ps. 94:20). David, surrounded by evil in power, asked, “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” (Ps. 11:3). His hope, he then realized, was in God the Judge (Ps. 11:4-7).

Contrary to the current myths, men love injustice; it is their hope of success. They may pay lip service to justice, but they resent all who demand it. The cry of the human heart is for injustice, which is another way of saying, My will be done (Gen. 3:5). Those who insist that all or most men hunger for justice cannot explain sensibly why, then, justice is infrequent, and why injustice seems to gain common assent most of the time. The cry of the human heart is not for justice because most men would be condemned by it. Juries are commonly lax in finding criminals guilty because they are afraid of the severity of justice.

For society to exist, there must be laws restraining the evil in men. All the same, we see in antiquity and since then the formalized rebellion against law and order in festivals, rites, and saturnalias. In such events, a time of total lawlessness was permitted, wherein all kinds of sins and offenses took place. A condemned criminal was made king for the duration and even given the possession of the queen. All norms were overturned.

Thus, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Pomponius record episodes of throwing wine and feces at people. This continued in the middle ages in the “Feast of Fools.” The purpose was *both* to besmirch and to debase, and also to revitalize and regenerate by lawlessness.<sup>1</sup> Justice, and law-abiding living, was then as now seen as an inhibition to freedom, and, given the premises of the Fall, rightly so, because for man as god to be restrained is seen as evil and difficult. *Self-preservation* and *self-gratification* are the laws of man’s fallen heart.

A curious echo of the pagan festival occurs in Giovanni Boccaccio’s *The Decameron*. With the incident of the plague in 1348, “seven young ladies” between eighteen and twenty-eight years of age, in the company of some young men, left Florence for safety.

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1. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, [1965] 1968), 145ff.

In a series of tales echoing the over-turning of order, they celebrated a safe echo of the saturnalia, with a king and queen elected for each of the days. Pampinea, the queen for “Day the First,” declared:

Dear my ladies, you may, like myself, have many times heard that whoso honestly useth his right doth no one wrong; and it is the natural right of every one who is born here below to succour, keep and defend his own life as best he may, and in so far is this allowed that it hath happened whiles that, for the preservation thereof, men have been slain without any fault. If this much be conceded of the laws, which have in view the well-being of all mortals, how much more is it lawful for us and whatsoever other, without offense unto any, to take such means as we may for the preservation of our lives?<sup>2</sup>

This assertion of the “right” of *self-preservation* is followed by ten days of descriptions of the “right” of *self-gratification*.

In Rabelais, “Do What Thou Wilt” is the Thelemite law, and the only one. Rabelais is full of references which are scatological. The strong emphasis on excrement is accompanied by a contempt for order, and for learning: “For my part I study not at all. In our abbey we never study, for fear of the mumps.”<sup>3</sup> More recently, Hugh Hefner, and his “philosophy” of “Blessed is the rebel,” is an echo also of this ancient faith.<sup>4</sup>

The various forms of this faith are agreed on their creed: whether the carpocratians of the early era of the Christian world, or the Russian Chisleniki, sin has been seen as the way of freedom and salvation.

Such a belief is an assertion of the sovereignty of revolt against God. Neither sovereignty nor justice can come from above but must come, for these believers, from below, from man, and even from Satan.

The sovereignty of man, or of the states created by men, requires a war against God’s justice. In such a war, the criminal is an ally of the rebels, because he too is at war against God’s order.

2. Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron* (New York, NY: Triangle Books, [1931] 1940), 8-9.

3. *The Works of Rabelais* (Bibliophile Society, n.d.), 82.

4. Joe Goldberg, *Big Bunny* (New York, NY: Ballantine Books, [1963] 1967), 234.

One result of this is that our “criminal justice system” is often easier on criminals than on victims. Much money is spent to rehabilitate the criminal, but little is done for the victim. Men in revolt against God will feel closer to those who break God’s laws than to those who obey them.

A society of godless men will thus be secretly or openly at war against justice.

But Scripture makes it clear that justice must be equated with life. This is clear from many passages, such as these two:

That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. (Deut. 16:20)

5. But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right,
6. And hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath defiled his neighbor’s wife, neither hath come near to a menstruous woman,
7. And hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment;
8. He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man,
9. Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD. (Ezek. 18:5-9)

Not only is justice equated with life, but justice is set forth as God’s law, the law of the Sovereign.

If chaos and evolution are the sources of all being, then no justice can exist except as an expression of the will of the state. Right and wrong have no ultimacy in the nature of being, and only the current will of man or of the state is law. Such a situation can give no justice, because men and the various states will execute as law that which furthers their *self-preservation* and their *self-gratification*. The consequence of this since Eden has been death.

## GOVERNMENT AND DOMINION

Saint John Chrysostom (c. AD 347-407) is famous for his golden-tongued oratory, and also for his resistance to imperial power. He is less well known for his works of charity. In his day, the Christians at Constantinople numbered c. 100,000. According to J.G. Davies, the Christians held “themselves responsible for the maintenance of fifty thousand poor folk.” In addition to the support of the clergy, three thousand widows and virgins were supported. The funds for the varied works of the church came from the tithes and offerings of the faithful; there were also receipts from lands and properties bequeathed to the church, and the emperor gave an allowance to the church. The poor-fund had Chrysostom’s especial attention and concern.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, Chrysostom served as a judge, a function assumed early in church history in terms of Paul’s command in 1 Corinthians 6:1-6.<sup>2</sup> These hearings were held on Mondays so that peace might be reestablished between the contending parties by and after the decision and before the following Sunday.<sup>3</sup>

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1. J.G. Davies, *Daily Life of Early Christians* (New York, NY: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1953), 167-68.

2. *Ibid.*, 169-72.

3. *Ibid.*, 169.

All this was by no means unusual. Christians took seriously Paul's command that Christians must judge or govern the world (1 Cor. 6:2-3). They early established their own courts of law, schools, welfare work, hospitals, and more.

W.H.C. Frend, in surveying the history of the church to AD 604, mentions in passing some of the activities Christians had instituted. Many of these were things common to Jewish life, in obedience to Biblical law. The apocryphal *Book of Tobit* gives us evidence of this. Tobit counsels his son to give alms faithfully, to pay all workmen promptly, to eat his bread with the hungry and the needy, and to clothe the naked. "See that thou never do to another what thou wouldest hate to have done to thee by another" (Tobit 4:16). The apostate emperor, Julian, recognized that pagans were attracted to Christianity by its community life: "No Jew ever has to beg, and the impious Galileans support not only their own poor but ours as well."<sup>4</sup> Hermas wrote of the Christian duty to care for widows and orphans, to relieve distressed believers, to practice hospitality, to reverence the aged, to practice justice, and to preserve their brotherhood. All the early literature stressed such responsibilities.<sup>5</sup> Prisoners seized by raiders were ransomed. The church, like the Jewish synagogue, acted as a trustee for widows and orphans, and Cyprian compared the clergy with the Levites of the Old Testament in their responsibilities.<sup>6</sup> The sick and captives were to be visited; a decent burial for the Christian dead was seen as another responsibility.<sup>7</sup> Church buildings were more impressive and better constructed than others, and they included rooms for the storage of provisions for the needy.<sup>8</sup> Basil the Great used monks to staff schools, orphanages, and hospitals.<sup>9</sup> Pope Gregory I took care not to waste the Lord's assets. Careful records were kept of all those who received charity, how much and on what date. Fraud was

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4. W.H.C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984), 25.

5. *Ibid.*, 133.

6. *Ibid.*, 404-05.

7. *Ibid.*, 421.

8. *Ibid.*, 558.

9. *Ibid.*, 631.

emphatically discouraged. Gregory's palace entertained strangers and fed the sick.<sup>10</sup>

The medieval era saw such ministries developed and extended. They continued after the Reformation. In England, the preaching of Thomas Lever (1550) started a major movement to undo the depredations of Henry VIII against the church by making a massive restitution to God by way of Christian works, educational, charitable, and so on.<sup>11</sup> The Church of England's charity schools were a factor in later years.<sup>12</sup>

This very brief survey makes it clear that Christians assumed the responsibility for health, education, and welfare. They also provided courts of law to which, in the early centuries, pagans as well as Christians went for justice. *Clearly, the basic government of society was in the hands of Christians, and Christian institutions.*

This should not surprise us. According to Isaiah 9:6, the government shall be on Christ's shoulder. With His coming, His death, resurrection, and ascension, we are told that He "is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15), *is*, not shall be. As kings and priests unto God in Christ (Rev. 1:6), Christians have a duty to rule for Him. We are given this office by virtue of His atonement (Rev. 1:5), so that we are now His dominion people and therefore His justice men, His law defenders.

This faith was not a matter of debate or discussion within the church but *a tacit assumption*. To assume such governmental powers was an affront to the Roman Empire, as it is an affront to the nations today. Marxist states strictly prohibit it. Where a pretense of religious freedom is maintained by some, Christians are limited to worship in a few churches, but barred from a governmental and dominion function.

*Dominion is the exercise of government, and a religious fact.* It was only natural that monks should have first created new lands in the Netherlands with their dikes, cleared forests for farms, and

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10. *Ibid.*, 885.

11. Thomas Lever, *Sermons, 1550* (Westminster, England: Constable, 1901).

12. W.K. Lowther Clarke, *Eighteenth Century Piety* (London, England: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1944), 45-46, 69ff.

taken rocky and barren areas and converted them into fertile lands. All this and more meant the exercise of dominion, of government in Christ's name.

This governmental mandate was diminished and sometimes extinguished by two things. *First*, within the church, faulty theology, pietism, and antinomianism, and, later, eschatologies of flight and escapism, led to the collapse of Christian governmental action. *Second*, statism sought to hold exclusive dominion and government in every sphere, and it has successfully gained such powers.

Behind all this have been religious doctrines and movements, humanistic crusades and faiths. In the United States, this anti-Christianity came into focus in Ralph Waldo Emerson, and in Walt Whitman. Whitman's announced purpose, as set forth in "Starting from Paumanok," in the 1892 version, was "solely to drop in the earth the germs of a greater religion."<sup>13</sup> Whitman saw himself as a poet-prophet, patterning himself after a fictional character in a French novel.<sup>14</sup> In "Chanting the Square Deific" (1865), he presented himself as the current expression of a pantheistic divinity:

Chanting the square deific, out of the One advancing, out of the sides;  
Out of the old and new – out of the square entirely divine,  
Solid, four-sided, (all the sides needed)...from this side  
JEHOVAH, am I,  
Old Brahm I, and Saturnius am;  
Not Time affects me – I am Time, old, modern as any,  
Unpersuadable, relentless, executing righteous judgments....<sup>15</sup>

In the same "poem," Whitman also identifies himself as Satan.<sup>16</sup> This was not new. In 1885, in "The Sleepers," Whitman declared himself to be Lucifer's "sorrowful terrible heir."<sup>17</sup> What begins as a protest against slavery becomes a "poem" celebrating homosexual fellatio (in section 8).<sup>18</sup> According to Helen Vendler, who admires

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13. Lawrence L. Buell, "Unitarian Aesthetics and Emerson's Poet Priest," in the *American Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (Spring 1968): 3.

14. Esther Shephard, *Walt Whitman's Prose* (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace, 1938).

15. Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (New York, NY: Grosset & Dunlap, n.d.), 425

16. *Ibid.*, 427.

17. *Ibid.*, 98.

18. *Ibid.*, 94.

Whitman, this is compared to the wedding feast at Cana in Galilee, and Christ turning water into wine. (Vendler sees the episode as between Whitman and a virgin.)<sup>19</sup> For our purpose, it is sufficient to say that Whitman, more rigorously than Emerson, not only adopted a new religion but also a new morality. Moreover, for him man's true future was democracy. Whitman's monism, as Rosenstock-Huessy pointed out with respect to all monism, leads to slavery. The only truth for Whitman was the voice of the people, whatever it may say, provided that the people were not Christian. Whitman's writings are a prolonged revolt against Christianity and Christian dominion and government.

Because Whitman's religion is the faith of intellectuals and educators, we have seen the steady advancement of monocratic government by the state. When people today speak of "government," they mean the state, whereas the true government begins with the self-government of the Christian man, and government means the family, church, school, our vocation, our society, and its many institutions and agencies, and only partially the state.

By surrendering dominion and government, churchmen have made themselves irrelevant to God and to man, to heaven and earth alike. Because Christ by His atonement has made us kings and priests unto God, we have an inescapable duty to exercise dominion and government.

Man is in Christ a prophet, priest, and king. As a prophet, we must each interpret our lives and world in terms of God's law-word and apply that word to every sphere. To be a prophet in Christ is to live by God's every word (Matt. 4:4).

As priests, we dedicate and consecrate ourselves, our world, and our every activity to the triune God. All things must be made holy in Him (Zech. 14:20-21).

As kings, we are to rule the world in Christ and to develop all its potentialities for Him, so that the desert places blossom like the rose (Isa. 35:1).

Our offices in Christ are governmental and dominion callings. We have none other calling in Him.

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19. Helen Vendler, "Body Language," *Harper's Magazine*, October 1986, 64-65.



## LORDSHIP AND MEMORY

A common illusion is that, if we return to the past, all will be better. Men in the past, however, were no less prone to evil than now. Man apart from Christ has always been a sinner.

In 1829, in New York, Frances Wright's *A Course of Popular Lectures* was published, calling in part for a national education comparable to that of Sparta. Frances or Fanny Wright (1795-1852) was a Scottish woman, a Benthamite, and a friend of Lafayette, who settled in the United States to become an early leader in the feminist movement. She was anti-Christian, a socialist, and a leader in the public school movement.

In writing on "National Education or Common Schools," Wright called for the replacement of all common schools, high schools, colleges, seminaries, houses of refuge, and all other institutions for children and youth by boarding schools. These would take children as early as between two and four, and up to sixteen years of age and older, for institutional care and education. Wright declared,

It will be understood that, in the proposed establishments, the children would pass from one to the other in regular succession; and that the parents, who would necessarily be resident in their close

neighborhood, could visit the children at suitable hours but in no case interfere with or interrupt the rules of the institution.<sup>1</sup>

For Wright, these schools would be “the nurseries of a free nation” in which “no inequality must be allowed to enter.”<sup>2</sup> Only by this means could a free America be realized.

For Wright, freedom seemed to mean freedom from Christianity. This extreme regimentation of all children and youth was for her freedom because she saw Christianity as slavery. Like many other humanistic reformers then and now, her vision of freedom was heavy with chains.

At about the same time, Stephen Simpson was also active. Simpson (1789-1854), an editor, among other things, a pro-control bank man, and an equalitarian, also wrote on education in *The Working Man's Manual* (1831). According to Simpson,

The *educated* are generally the rich; and, where the exception prevails, necessity, or accident, as in the case of labor, soon brings the object under the influence and within the patronage of the affluent. No habit of mind is so decided and obstinate as the contempt of learning for ignorance, or of genius for stolidity. In addition to this, the *feudal* forms of all colleges and universities place an insuperable barrier between the unlettered mechanic and the classical dignitary. In all situations and under all circumstances, charters create a virtual *nobility*.<sup>3</sup>

What made Simpson's statement so ugly is the fact that it contained a measure of truth. Education often does create a gap and a barrier such as Simpson described. Some men are puffed up by their learning. Very often, however, the barrier is not of their creating. One educated and successful man found a return to his New England town always painful. His professorship and modest success in minor investments led to envy. He was regularly humiliated, ridiculed, and treated with resentment. Not even his mother was sympathetic nor ready to admit that this son was being mistreated. People are as often envious of their superiors as they are contemptuous of their inferiors.

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1. Frances Wright, “On Existing Evils and Their Remedy,” in Joseph L. Blau, ed., *Social Theories of Jacksonian Democracy* (New York, NY: Liberal Arts Press, 1954), 286.

2. *Ibid.*, 288.

3. *Ibid.*, 149.

What, then, is the problem? For Wright, Simpson, and others, all such problems can be cured by education and/or legislation. As a result, we continually see legislation aimed at reforming man by law. The Bible tells us that it takes a miracle from God to change a man, whereas the humanists are sure that an act of Congress or the "right" kind of schooling can do it more easily. It should not surprise us that we have problems when both legislatures and schools seek to play a messianic role.

There is another problem. Both state and school today are dedicated to the creation of a new man. This may be the new Soviet man, democratic man, or some other like idea, but their methodology in every case is similar. According to some theoreticians, it is memory which makes us human. It is true that memory is very important in the life of man; it makes learning and advancement possible. Maxim Gorky, in Stalin's day, said, "We must know everything that happened in the past, not in the way it has been written about heretofore; but rather, in the way it appears in the light of the doctrine of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin."<sup>4</sup> The Soviet goal is an open and avowed one: to remake man by remaking his memory, i.e., his history. By cutting off a man's memory of the past, and then giving him a revised version of that past, or a newly created one, it is believed that man can be remade in the Soviet, humanistic, democratic, or whatever other image men may choose. The new memory makes a new man, in this theory.

All this gives the state and the school a different function. If remaking the past is basic to remaking man and creating a sound future, then the state and the school assume a past-bound and negative function. As Heller and Nekrich's study made clear, "memory became state property."<sup>5</sup> Having remade the past, Stalin had little ability to understand the present and hence failed to understand Hitler. Then and now, the Western powers have kept the U.S.S.R. alive by their own blindness to the past and present. When men remake memory and history, they lose their ability to understand the present.

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4. Mikhail Heller and Alexander Nekrich, "Utopia in Power," *The World and I*, no. 7 (July 1986): 353.

5. *Ibid.*, 360.

All this is very closely tied to the issue of sovereignty. Sovereignty is an attribute of deity, of God. Because the God of Scripture is the Sovereign, the Lord of all creation, history is His creation also. The Westminster Larger Catechism, Q. 15 asks,

Q. What is the work of creation?

A. The work of creation is that wherein God did in the beginning, by the word of his power, make of nothing the world and all things therein for himself, within the space of six days, and all very good.

According to Acts 15:18, “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” God as Sovereign created all things, their beginning and ending alike, so that history, in all its totality, is the predestined work of the triune God. Past, present, and future are all God’s handiwork in their every detail. We have eternal security in Christ because He creates time and all things in it in terms of His eternal decree.

This fact is necessary to understand if we are to know what “statist sovereignty” means. The sovereign state seeks to command the present and the future; therefore, it seeks to command the past. This means, *first*, the reshaping of man’s memory of the past, his history, by means of the social sciences. George Orwell, in *1984*, gave an account of this statist revision of all aspects of time, past, present, and future, as a basic tool for the control of man. The decline of family life and solidarity is important to this reshaping of man’s past, because a man’s family is basic to his sense of time and history. It gives us our place in the world. The humanistic school seeks to supplant the family and become the new agency of contextualism. What is man’s context? Is it God, the family, a calling, and the like, or is it the state as the life of man? If man is made rootless by statist education, then man loses his strength of context and roots. *Second*, if the state and the school are now seen as the creators of the future, then the future comes from the state and not from God. If the future comes from God, then, as in Deuteronomy 28, the state is not the source of blessings. Then we are cursed or blessed in terms of our disobedience or our obedience to the Lord God of Hosts.

Because God is the Lord or Sovereign, our future comes from Him, and both state and school, as well as man, are subject to His judgment.

Frances Wright wanted the state schools to predestine all children, and the country's future, by means of her proposed boarding schools for all. Her plan was one shared by countless numbers, all with plans designed to remake man for anti-Christian purposes. All such efforts are ugly and vicious failures.

In 1976, at the Twenty-Fifth Party Congress of the U.S.S.R., Brezhnev declared that this new Soviet man, *Homo Sovieticus*, was the "most important result of the last sixty years."<sup>6</sup> All other efforts in those sixty years were failures, and this one was also. God having created man in His own image (Gen. 1:26-28), all other efforts to make or remake man are doomed to fail.

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6. *Ibid.*, 400.



## SOVEREIGNTY, POWER, AND DOMINION

Near the conclusion of his analysis of *The Decline of the West*, Spengler made a statement with respect to ascertaining the future: “A power can be overthrown only by another power, not by a principle.”<sup>1</sup> Principles or ideas can have an extensive influence; they can create a climate of opinion which can greatly affect a culture, but they are not a power unless they are a religious faith, the governing power in a man’s life, and in a culture. Ideas prevail when a faith no longer governs.

An example of a “prevailing” idea is to be found in Boccaccio’s *Decameron*. Filostrato tells a story based on an idea of law: “laws should be common to all and made with the consent of those whom they concern.”<sup>2</sup> It was the popularity of this idea that made Boccaccio’s story possible. It is not without significance that a consequence of such a view of law was not democracy but the vicious tyrants of the Italian Renaissance. A false idea of law had helped disarm the peoples. When law was transferred from God

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1. Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, vol. 2 (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, [1932] 1935), 506.

2. Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron* (New York, NY: Triangle Books, [1931] 1940), 307.

to man, the tyrants were able to prevail over the religiously disarmed peoples.

In the twentieth century, similar views undermined the Christian view of God as God's enscriptured law-word gave way to humanistic law and pseudo-equalitarian ideas. Together with a semblance of democracy, there came again an era of tyranny, this time in the name of the people.

To deny the power of God is to open society to the evil powers of men. Fallen men can only exercise evil power; hence, the denial of God's sovereignty and law is the choice of human tyranny and the triumph of evil.

Berle, in his analysis of power, gave five laws of power, of which the first and third concern us here:

*One:* Power invariably fills any vacuum in human organization. As between chaos and power, the latter always prevails.

*Three:* Power is invariably based on a system of ideas or philosophy. Absent such a system or philosophy, the institutions essential to power cease to be reliable, power ceases to be effective, and the power holder is eventually displaced.<sup>3</sup>

The "system of ideas or philosophy" on which humanistic powers are based is in every case a development of the basic premise of the tempter and of man's fall, Genesis 3:5, every man as his own god, knowing or determining good and evil for himself. If any man opens up for himself the freedom to determine good and evil for himself in his own chosen domain, i.e., money, property, sex, or anything else, he has thereby breached the law for others and is congenial to the same license in others. As a result, a general lawlessness is established whereby the man seeking power over all others is able to gain his objective. This result is a tyrant state and a slave people. Their ideas or philosophies provide the soil for tyranny, and nothing short of a Biblical faith can effect a substantive change.

Linscheid has written, with respect to sovereignty,

*Black's Law Dictionary* defines sovereignty as "supreme political authority;...the self-sufficient source of political power, from which all specific political powers are derived; the international independence of a state, combined with the right and power of

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3. Adolf Berle, *Power* (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1969), 37.

regulating its internal affairs without foreign direction.” *Black’s* states that sovereignty is “(t)he power to do everything in a state without accountability — to make laws, to execute and to apply them, to impose and collect taxes and levy contributions, to make war or peace, to form treaties of alliance or of commerce with foreign nations, and the like.”<sup>4</sup>

This, of course, is tantamount to saying that the state is a god, and statist claims to sovereignty sooner or later lead to conflict with Christianity. What John Dryden said of monarchs applies to all statists:

Monarchies may own religion’s name  
But states are Atheists in their very frame.

A civil government is a limited sphere, one among many spheres of government, such as individuals, families, churches, schools, vocations, and society, with its many institutions. A state sees itself as the government, and all these other spheres as under its jurisdiction. It sees itself, in Black’s language, as “the self-sufficient source of political power,” and, eventually, of all power.

With Spengler’s and Black’s premises concerning power in mind, let us go a step further. The practitioners of revolution speak readily about “power to the people,” i.e., power to the down-trodden and the helpless. In all revolutions, however, the people become only more savagely oppressed. The new power group oppresses more savagely than any would have imagined possible, and the people are its primary victims. In any and every non-Christian society, *power allies itself with power, not weakness*. It exploits weakness. The powers in a society *may* compete for supreme power; they *may* seek to weaken or demolish one another. What is always certain is that the weak will be destroyed.

The weak may be flattened. They may technically be given an “equal” status in theory, but not in practice. Cicero saw himself, and other men, as gods.<sup>5</sup> For Cicero, the common possession of the gods and of men was Reason, and “Law is the highest reason,

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4. Steven K. Linscheid, “Sovereignty and Self-Determination,” *MCC Peace Section Newsletter*, September-October, 1986, 3. The citation from Black is from the 5<sup>th</sup> edition, 1979.

5. Marcus Tullius Cicero, “The Republic,” in Cicero, *De Re Publica, De Legibus*, ed. Clinton Walker Keyes (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, [1928] 1959), 279, 281.

implanted in Nature,” and “Law is a natural force.”<sup>6</sup> Of course, for Cicero, very few men in the Roman Empire or elsewhere were men of reason. Thus, this godhood was in fact very limited, held by a few! Cicero’s affirmation of the gods was pragmatic; the common people should be persuaded that “the gods are the lords and rulers of all things, and that what is done, is done by their will and authority.”<sup>7</sup> Ruling them would then be easier.

*Power is exercised against the weak.* George Orwell saw the spirit of the new politics as the continual obliteration of any independence on the part of the people. No deviant thought could be permitted. Even where no deviant thought exists, obliteration must take place, because humanistic power requires the continual exercise of brute force as its means of self-affirmation. Humanism began in the modern era with Rene Descartes’ “I think, therefore I am.” Now it declares, “I exercise power for power’s sake: therefore I am.” The image of such a future, according to Orwell, is “a boot stamping on a human face — forever.”<sup>8</sup> The goal of humanistic sovereign powers is the exercise of such unrestrained power. To acknowledge a law over oneself as a restraint on power is to deny that one is a sovereign power. It is necessary to deny God and His moral law by choosing evil in order to affirm an independent will and sovereignty. As Camus said, “Since God claims all that is good in man, it is necessary to deride what is good and choose what is evil.”<sup>9</sup>

The doctrine of Kenosis, a prevalent heresy, makes weak men out of those in the church who accept it. Ostensibly, according to this doctrine, the Christian must be a pacifist, one who always surrenders, is a victim, not a conqueror or victor, and, with some Kenotic cults, the faith has involved self-castration. In all its forms, Kenosis calls for at least psychological self-castration by the believer. Kenosis began in Russia and has moved westward in the past century or more. It has deeply influenced the church in a

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6. Cicero, “Laws,” in *ibid.*, 317-23.

7. *Ibid.*, 389.

8. George Orwell, *1984* (New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanich, [1949] 1977), 271.

9. Albert Camus, *The Rebel* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1956), 47.

variety of ways. R.J. Sider's views are Kenotic at the least. Dick Wulf's *Find Yourself, Give Yourself* (1983), a publication of the Navigators, equates unconditional love for other people with the true Christianity. God can require of us unconditional love for Himself, but can we ever give it to any man? To Hitler, Stalin, the murderer, the rapist? According to Wulf, the starting point is, "I will accept myself as I am, just as God does."<sup>10</sup> God, however, does *not* "accept" us as we are; rather, by His sovereign grace, He *saves* us as we are and *requires* us to grow in holiness and faithfulness. To follow Wulf's counsel is to undercut sanctification. Wulf's religion requires self-acceptance and unconditional love for others to take precedence over God's law, which does not enter into his view at all. This undercuts the moral nature of Christianity and places it in a position of Kenotic surrender to all evil.

If man plays god, he will exercise only an evil power. All sovereignties other than God's are attempts at establishing an independent godhood and are an unrelieved evil. The Christian can never exercise sovereign power. As David tells us, "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God" (Ps. 62:11). At most, the Christian can exercise delegated power. His truest power comes from faithfulness to the every word of God (Matt. 4:4). God's law-word gives man the way to dominion, and dominion is not domination. Domination is the exercise of lawless power over others. Dominion is the exercise of godly power in our God-given sphere. The rejection of God's sovereignty leads to domination; the affirmation of God's sovereignty and His law is the foundation of dominion. It is also the means to power under God. To return to Spengler's premise, we must add, a humanistic power can only be truly overthrown by God's power, and men cannot escape domination and tyranny apart from a return to the triune God and their total calling and dominion mandate under Him.

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10. Dick Wulf, *Find Yourself, Give Yourself* (Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1983), 70.



## SOVEREIGNTY, ORDER, AND JUSTIFICATION

The familiar definition of law, as set forth in the first edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, is that law is “The command of the sovereign power, containing a common rule of life for the subjects.” Law is inseparable from sovereignty; every word from a sovereign power is a binding word. Logically, there can only be one sovereign, and He is the Lord God of Scripture.

In any system of thought, or in any realm of being, the sovereign is the source of order. The realm of the sovereign is the realm of being and becoming, of existence and of potentiality. The sovereign’s realm is an expression of His order. *His laws are the rules of order.* To deny His laws in favor of another set of laws is to deny His doctrine of order in favor of a rival system. It is also a denial of His sovereignty in favor of another.

In this context, Psalm 19 is telling, because it tells us of the order required of all creation:

1. The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.
2. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.
3. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.
4. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,

5. Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.
6. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.
7. The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.
8. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.
9. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.
10. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.
11. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.
12. Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.
13. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.
14. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

In vv. 1-6, David tells us that there is *an observable order* in all creation, so that, wherever we look, that order is as obvious as the sun, which is itself a manifestation of order. This order is not inherent in creation but an order from God, and it manifests His glory.

In vv. 7-11, David declares that God's order includes not only the magnificent structure of the physical universe but moral order as well. The law of the Lord governs all aspects of His creation, so that what we call physical order, chemical order, and biological order are all aspects of one sovereign law-word which is inclusive of moral order. (Thus, the fall of man is the fall of the world, and the restoration of man is the restoration of the world, Genesis 3:17-19; 4:10-12). Moral order thus has cosmic implications. Moreover, God's order brings blessings when men rejoice in it and serve to further it.

As a result, in vv. 12-14, David prays for grace to obey God's law and to further God's moral order. He prays that he may be kept free from "the great transgression." Alexander rendered this as "much transgression," i.e., not one particular offense, but to be kept from deliberate and easy sinning.<sup>1</sup> Kirkpatrick pointed out

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1. Joseph Addison Alexander, *The Psalms Translated and Explained*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, reprint of 1864 edition), 91.

that the reference to “presumptuous sins” gives “the great transgression,” however translated, the meaning of “the deadly sin of rebellion (Isa. 12) and apostasy from Jehovah.”<sup>2</sup>

Thus, what is here and elsewhere affirmed in Scripture is not a law *in* “nature” but a law *over* “nature.” There is no law inherent in the cosmos but one given to every atom by the Creator. Moreover, the word as fallen has no native goodness. The pronouncement of Genesis 1:31 that God created all things *very good* has reference to His work, not any independent goodness on the part of creation. “Natural law” is thus a dangerous concept, in that it infers in “nature” a source and a sovereignty that do not exist.

In the modern era, however, men have ascribed law and order to Nature, or, in many cases, to Reason. Because of this ascription, thinkers began to look to this world rather than to God for the sources of order. The social contract theoreticians are good examples of this. Their efforts were attempts to justify the visible social order, or to create a new order, by appealing to a mythical past wherein Nature and man’s Reason created the contract which provides order. In so doing, they deliberately neglected an obvious fact of history, namely, that each religion produces its own form of order, and Europe’s order had its roots in Biblical faith.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) began his *Social Contract* by declaring in the “Note” to Book 1 (par. 2), “I was born into a free state and am a member of its sovereign body.”<sup>3</sup> Because of this assumption, Rousseau could speak as he did: his home state was a sovereign body, and he a member of it, one who had thus a part in sovereign powers. Since order was for Rousseau a humanistic fact, a man-made contract, it was of necessity his starting point “that we must always go back to an original compact.”<sup>4</sup> For him therefore any attempt by Christianity to assert a God-given order was an unwarranted intrusion on the sovereign power. Since then,

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2. A.F. Kirkpatrick, *The Book of Psalms* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, [1902] 1906), 106.

3. Sir Ernest Barker, ed., *Social Contract, Essays by Locke, Hume and Rousseau* (London, England: Oxford University Press, [1947] 1958), 239.

4. *Ibid.*, 253.

his heirs have waged war against the freedom of the church to express itself and to work for godly order.

The order of the universe is extrinsic to it and is from God the Creator. It is rather sin that is endemic to the natural order. For men thus to seek order from naturalistic sources is to increase the scope and power of evil, for the only source of true order is supernatural, and, specifically, from the triune God though Christ.

What this means is that there can be no true order apart from Christ because there can be no true justice outside the triune God. Humanistic orders become the disorders of evil. St. Augustine, in *The City of God*, called attention to Rome's evils and disorders. Cicero, in *The Republic*, had said, "True law is right reason in agreement with nature; it is of universal application, unchanging and everlasting; it summons to duty by its commands, and averts from wrongdoing by its prohibitions."<sup>5</sup> All naturalistic views of law lead to elitism, because only the self-styled elite, intellectuals, political powers, scientists, and the like, believe they can truly manifest reason and therefore law. Cicero said further,

Law is the highest reason, implanted in Nature, which commands what ought to be done and forbids the opposite. This reason, when firmly fixed and fully developed in the human mind, is Law. And so they believe (i.e., "the most learned men") that Law is intelligence, whose natural function it is to command right conduct and forbid wrongdoing... Now if this is correct, as I think it to be in general, then the origin of Justice is to be found in Law, for Law is a natural force; it is the mind and reason of the intelligent man, the standard by which Justice and Injustice are measured.<sup>6</sup>

The elite then represent order; if they see fit to regard as "clear that some (animals and plants)... have been created to be man's slaves, some to supply him with their products, and others to serve as his food,"<sup>7</sup> why should this not be true of men also? If Nature is for man's convenience,<sup>8</sup> then other men can be for the elite's convenience. For Cicero, the government of the state is by virtue;

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5. Cicero, *De Re Publica, De Legibus*, ed. Clinton Walker Keyes (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, [1928] 1959), 211.

6. *De Legibus*, in *ibid.*, 317-18.

7. *De Legibus*, in *ibid.*, 325.

8. *Ibid.*

the man of great virtue can thus rule alone, since he expresses Reason, Law, and Justice.<sup>9</sup>

Augustine saw the fallacies of Cicero's argument. The maxim was current that "the republic cannot be governed without injustice." In the days of Rome's life as a republic, injustice was commonplace. The basic law of Rome, that the welfare or health of the people is the highest law, meant different things to different men. In speaking of "the weal of the people," Scipio redefined the people "as assemblage associated by a common acknowledgment of law, and by a community of interests." Did such an assemblage ensure justice? The history of Rome belied that idea.<sup>10</sup> Augustine concluded:

Rome never was a republic, because true justice had never a place in it. But accepting the more feasible definitions of a republic, I grant that there was a republic of a certain kind, and certainly much better administered by the more ancient Romans than by their modern representatives. But the fact is, true justice has no existence save in that republic whose founder and ruler is Christ, if at least any choose to call this a republic; and indeed we cannot deny that it is the people's weal. But if perchance this name, which has become familiar in other connections, be considered alien to our common parlance, we may at all events say that in this city is true justice; the city of which Holy Scripture says, "Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God."<sup>11</sup>

Granted this fact, the implications are far-reaching. If the Christian believes that only God through Christ can make a man just then he cannot believe that a true order can exist apart from justification. As McGrath has so ably noted, for Augustine justice is the ordering of the world according to God's justice, which is the order of being. The whole natural order must reflect the justice of God. Man was created in justice, but man has chosen to step outside God's will and law, and therefore order. His present state is therefore injustice, and only Christ's justification can reestablish man in law, justice, and order.

Justification is therefore essentially a "making right," a restoration of every facet of the relationship between God and man, the rectitude of

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9. *De Re Publica*, in *ibid.*, 79-80.

10. St. Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. Marcus Dods (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), bk., 2, sec. 21, 61.

11. *Ibid.*, 63.

which constitutes *iustitia*. *Iustitia* is not conceived primarily in legal or forensic categories, but transcends them, encompassing the “right-wising” of the God-man relationship in its many aspects: the relationship of God to man, of man to his fellows, and of men to their environment. Justification is about “making just” — establishing the rectitude of the created order according to the divine intention.<sup>12</sup>

A society that seeks humanistic foundations establishes and subsidizes evil thereby, because true order cannot come from fallen man, any more than rotten eggs can make a good omelet. Moreover, there can be no justification without justice as its consequence, because fallen, unjustified man is a sinner, and unjust in all his being. Paul says emphatically, “There is none righteous, no, not one” (Rom. 3:10). To be regenerated and justified by Jesus Christ is to be once again joyfully under His sovereignty and law. It means becoming a part of His order, and an agent thereof. If there is no justification, there can be no justice. What this means is that justification is not only the key theological fact, but also the foundation of a just social order. Any political theory which neglects justification is neglecting justice and ensuring injustice.

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12. Alister E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei, A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification*, vol. 1, *From the Beginning to 1500* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 34.

## JUSTIFICATION AND JUSTICE

The sovereign in any system of thought and life is the source of law and of justice. God alone is the true sovereign of all things. All other claimants to sovereign power are false, and their exercise of power will be evil, and their justice will be injustice. The state, therefore, which rejects the sovereignty of the triune God of Scripture and which denies the validity and sway of His law-word, will become, not a means of justice, but a source of injustice. To the degree that it forsakes God, to that degree it will manifest injustice. It will be evil, not good, and its pretended justice and its man-made laws will be evil, not good.

In the world and mind of man, things are fragmented. This is an aspect of a fallen world. For us, for example, because the unity of creation was broken by the Fall, aesthetics and ethics are not in clear harmony, i.e., the beautiful and the good are not necessarily identical. The Greek concept of the unity of the good, the true, and the beautiful was an ideal and an illusion, because a fallen world cannot give us their unity, nor can a fallen world do other than pollute and destroy these things as it develops the implications of its sin.

In the beginning God created all things “good” (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). The word “good” is *tobe* (*towb*), and it means

“good” in the widest possible sense. It means a good person, thing, or act. It also means beautiful, best, cheerful, kind, and more. In Numbers 24:13, it is used with reference to moral good, one of its many uses. Of Genesis 1:4, Ryle said,

The purpose of this sentence is to express (1) that the phenomena of the natural world, in their respective provinces, fulfill the will of the Creator, (2) that what is in accordance with His will is “good” in His sight.<sup>1</sup>

Ryle’s comment on Genesis 1:31, and its reference to all creation as “very good,” develops the meaning further:

The work of the six days’ Creation having been completed, God, as it were, contemplates the universe both in its details and in its entirety. That which He saw to be “good,” on each separate day, was but a fragment; that which He sees to be “very good,” on the sixth day, is the vast ordered whole, in which the separate parts are combined. The Divine approval of the material universe constitutes one of the most instructive traits of the Hebrew cosmogony. According to it, matter is not something hostile to God, independent of Him, or inherently evil, but made by Him, ordered by Him, good in itself, and good in its relation to the purpose and plan of the Creator. The adjective “good” should not therefore be limited in meaning to the sense of “suitable,” or “fitting.” There is nothing “evil” in the Divinely-created universe: it is “very good.”<sup>2</sup>

An aspect of the overall goodness of God’s creation is *justice*. According to Steven S. Schwartzschild, “God’s primary attribute of action is justice (Heb. *mishpat*; Gen. 18:25; Ps. 9:4). His commandments to men, and especially to Israel, are essentially for the purpose of the establishment of justice in the world (see Ps. 119:137-144). Men fulfill this purpose by acting in accordance with God’s laws and in other ways initiating the divine quality of justice (Gen. 13:9).”<sup>3</sup> The messianic age will see universal justice.

In Scripture, justice is “synonymous with holiness” and is consistently used together with “mercy” and “grace.” Justice is inseparable from the Messiah and His purpose for creation. Justice

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1. Herbert E. Ryle, *The Book of Genesis* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, [1914] 1921), 7.

2. *Ibid.*, 22.

3. Steven S. Schwartzschild, “Justice,” in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 10 (Jerusalem, Israel: Keter Publishing Company, 1971), 476.

is “correlated” with love.<sup>4</sup> The Christ reestablishes the totality of the goodness of creation.

The Fall had broken the unity and the moral goodness of man and his world. Lactantius called attention to the widespread belief by pagans in an earlier golden age and some kind of fall. A central aspect of that fallen world Lactantius saw as the destruction of justice. In describing the coming of Christ, and the calling of a remnant to be the new humanity in Christ, Lactantius said,

Therefore the appearance of that golden time returned, and justice was restored to the earth, but was assigned to a few; and this justice is nothing else than the pious and religious worship of the one God.<sup>5</sup>

Paganism, Lactantius said, abolished justice, and “men lost the knowledge of good and evil.” The coming of Christ began its restoration.<sup>6</sup> It was known to all, but not embraced; rather, it was suppressed. Faithfulness to God’s law would give men justice and innocence.<sup>7</sup> For the pagan, however, such as Corneades, a man who preferred justice to self-interest was a fool. If, in a shipwreck, a man’s life depended on seizing a plank for flotation from a weaker man, it was wise to do so. For the ungodly, “justice bears the resemblance of folly.”<sup>8</sup>

The worship of God requires justice, Lactantius held. It is the duty of the redeemed:

When the affairs of men were in this condition, God pitied us, revealed and displayed Himself to us, that in Himself we might learn religion, faith, purity, and mercy; that having laid aside the error of our former life, together with God Himself we might know ourselves, whom impiety had disunited from Him, and we might choose the divine law, which unites human affairs with heavenly, the Lord Himself delivering it to us; by which law all the errors with which we have been ensnared, together with vain and impious superstitions, might be taken away. What we owe to man, therefore, is prescribed by that same divine law which teaches that what-

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4. *Ibid.*, 476-77.

5. William Fletcher, trans., *The Works of Lactantius*, vol. 1, *The Divine Institutes*, Ante-Nicene Christian Library (Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 1871), bk. 5, chap. 7, 306-7.

6. *Ibid.*, chap. 5, 303-4.

7. *Ibid.*, chap. 8, 308-10.

8. *Ibid.*, chap. 17-18, 328-30.

ever you render to man is rendered to God. But the root of justice, and the entire foundation of equity, is that you should not do that which you would be unwilling to suffer, but should measure the feelings of another by your own.... For the first thing is, not to injure; the next is to be of service. And as in uncultivated lands, before you begin to sow, the fields must be cleansed by tearing up the thorns and cutting off all the roots of trunks, so vices must first be thrust out from your souls, and then at length virtues must be implanted, from which the fruits of immortality, being engendered by the word of God, may spring up.<sup>9</sup>

The duty of the redeemed is justice, because the goal of justification and regeneration is the restoration of all things to God's ordained status: "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1:31). However, the entelechy of the Fall, its drive to completion, is radically destructive and suicidal. Over the years, from time to time I have heard of comments made by various ungodly politicians expressing their contempt for Christian efforts and their cynicism concerning justice. The comment of one lawyer, "What the hell is justice?," is a mild statement compared to many.<sup>10</sup> The contempt for justice, virtue, and Christianity finds very clear expression in rock-and-roll music. The Who, a very successful and wealthy rock band, used as their finale, "My Generation," accompanied by the systematic destruction of their instruments. Their booking agent saw this as "brilliant and incredible." Because of their destructiveness of hotel rooms, reservations were soon cancelled. Their manager in charge of reservations was said to "relish the crazy time on the road."

...He has a particular affection for groups that tear up hotel rooms (a fairly common aberration in rock circles) and get flaming drunk. His eyes fairly glow as he speaks of his Southern rockers, Lynyrd Skynyrd: "They're always drunk. I don't book them into hotels anymore. I book them into jails. In one town, Ann Arbor, Michigan, I called up in advance and asked the police to reserve them a nice cell, because I knew they were going to get taken in for being drunk and rowdy."

"Of course," Rudge adds nonchalantly, "The Who still holds the world's record for damage to hotels. I've had to book them under

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9. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, *Epitome of the Divine Institutes*, chap. 60, 145-46.

10. Paul Hoffman, "What the Hell is Justice?": *The Life and Trials of a Criminal Lawyer* (Chicago, IL: Playboy Press, 1974).

the strangest names — like the Andrews Sisters — to get them into hotels.”<sup>11</sup>

The sensational success of such “music,” its affinity to drugs and violence, the prevalence of abortion and homosexuality, and much, much more attest to the suicidal nature of the culture and its love of death (Prov. 8:36).

Shafarevich has said, as one living within Russia, “Socialism is the consequence of atheism, the conclusion to which atheism leads in the field of social relations.”<sup>12</sup> While professing to build a better world for all men, its goal is a universal grave, death for all. Engels himself held, “Everything that arises is worthy of death.” Moreover, “The death of mankind is not only a conceivable result of the triumph of socialism — it constitutes the goal of socialism.”<sup>13</sup>

Justice is alien to all non-Christian states and men. Their goal is injustice. If every man seeks to be his own god and law (Gen. 3:5), then every man is at war with all other men, and there is a total conflict of interests. There is *first* of all a war against God, “because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom. 8:7). Moreover, “the friendship of the world is enmity with God...whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4). If the humanistic mind is at war with God and in rebellion against His law, then the Christian mind is at peace with God through Christ’s atonement and in faithfulness to His law. The enmity of the antinomians to God’s law places them in evil company. There is also, *second*, a warfare against life, and against all living things, including men. Life is ours by God’s creative act; it is a *grace* (1 Peter 3:7). If we deny God, we will deny His justice, and we will deny “the grace of life.” This involves us, then, in the affirmation of evil, injustice, and death. The ethos of the rock-and-roll culture is destruction.

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11. Meridee Merzer, “American Music IV: Rock on Tour,” *Gallery* 4, no. 3 (March 1976): 59, 126.

12. Igor Shafarevich, *The Socialist Phenomenon* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1980), 234.

13. *Ibid.*, 29-285.

In the Western world today, most people live in some affluence. Their direction, however, is calculated to destroy their economic well-being, their mental and physical health, and their very existence. Given the known destructiveness, for example, of illegal drugs, it is suicidal for people to use them so readily. And given the destructiveness of injustice, its worldwide prevalence indicates that fallen man creates and prefers injustice.

What is especially evil is the common fact that churchmen are ready to accept pagan doctrines of virtue and justice rather than the Biblical one. Thus, Watson, an Arminian, defined justice in Greco-Roman, not Biblical fashion, as “that political virtue which renders to every man his due.”<sup>14</sup> When the church thinks like the world, judgment will surely come. Watson’s definition was also that of the first edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1771), which said that justice in the moral sense is that “which gives every man his due.” What man’s “due” is has been variously defined by different cultures and has been a source of much injustice. What the Scripture has to say about man’s “due” is very different: because “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23), death has come upon all; this is their due! Regeneration by God’s grace brings man to life again; justification renders him justified before God. Man is thus moved from the kingdom of death to the Kingdom of life in Christ, to the realm of justice. Then alone can justice be practiced in any society.

Because justice is the attribute of God in action, justice cannot be an attribute of man nor of society unless men are in the Kingdom of God. The truly justified man is the human source of justice in action in history. Those who recognize themselves to be “heirs of the grace of life” are the justified in Christ. The law of God is for them the means to justice in society.

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14. Richard Watson, *A Biblical and Theological Dictionary* (New York, NY: T. Mason and G. Lane, [1832] 1840), 556.

## THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

Men commonly give to custom the status of law. This is not surprising, because in most cultures, custom, i.e., habitual practice, common or recognized usage, has obtained the force of law. Such customs have often been more useful to the community than the laws of kings, nations, parliaments, and legislatures. All the same, common usage and acceptance do not give validity nor assure us of the truth of a custom; they merely witness to an historical fact, namely, that a particular practice has the status of customary law with a people.

Customs are also a common validation of procedures. Certain things are done in a certain way and gain the status of truth, so to depart from this custom is to depart from “the truth.” This custom, however, can be the codification of error, but its venerable status gives it the prestige of truth.

An example of this will be considered shortly, but first let us glance at a very important text in Scripture:

18. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

19. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven:

and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.  
(Matt. 16:18-19)

Our Lord declares that His church, His realm or Kingdom, is the Kingdom of Heaven, or, the Kingdom of God. This equation is an obvious one. It is a supernatural realm and power that will overthrow the “gates” or ruling centers of hell. Since judges and city elders or rulers met and held their legal sessions at the gates, in a public place, to overthrow the gates of hell means to overthrow all the anti-Christian forces of government on earth. This is the *first* implication and meaning of this text. Christ’s realm shall prevail over all His enemies.

*Second*, “keys” are an ancient symbol of royal and legislative power. The sovereign’s word binds and looses men. The very fact that the reference is to “the keys of the kingdom of heaven” makes very clear this fact. Law comes from the sovereign power, and the law of the lord has a binding and loosening power. The Pharisees and scribes claimed to be the bearers of the keys to God’s law, but of them our Lord says, “But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in” (Matt. 23:13). Thus, God’s law is the key to government on earth. The “gates” or ruling bodies of hell will rule by man-made laws, humanistic laws.

*Third*, our Lord tells us that the keys of the Kingdom are given by Him to His church. This transferred a legal power from the Levite order (Deut. 17:8-11) to Christ’s new Levites, His apostles and their successors. If they are faithful to God’s law, then what they bind on earth is bound in heaven, and what is loosed on earth is loosed in heaven, because they have faithfully set forth God’s law. In Israel, Levites were regularly assigned to all courts in terms of Deuteronomy 17:8-11. This tells us, with respect to law, that God as Lord or Sovereign gives the law. The church has the duty to interpret its meaning faithfully, and the state has the duty to apply it in its courts. Failure by church and state to do their duty or stay within their bounds means judgment by God. They then, by departing from God’s law, become a part of the gates of hell, the law agencies of Satan, which Christ’s Kingdom shall overthrow.

Let us return now to the fact of custom. It is today the custom, one having the force of law and natural truth, to see the state as sovereign and hence the source of law, as the interpreter of the meaning of law through its courts, and as the enforcer of the law. The state thus replaces both God and the church.

As both Deuteronomy 17:8-11, and our Lord's restatement of it in Matthew 16:18-19, make clear, the sphere of the church, while primarily the ministry of grace, is also the ministry of justice. Neither justice nor grace can stand alone. Both are inseparable aspects of God's covenant. A covenant is always a treaty of law, a declaration of justice, and God's covenant with man is at the same time an act of sovereign grace. God's law when administered by the state is grace to the people because it brings them under the reign of justice or righteousness. Thus, both church and state are inescapably and inseparably concerned with grace and law. Where there is no law or justice, there is no grace, only hell. In hell, the necessity for justice is gone; all men in hell are eternally "freed" to remain in their unrighteousness and their graceless estate.

Allen O. Miller has noted, with respect to Calvin,

John Calvin broke sharply not only with the imperial tradition of Roman Catholic Christendom, but also with Martin Luther's separation of church and state in terms of the distinctive roles of "gospel" and "law." If, indeed, concentric circles represent the Roman Catholic tradition of church and empire, then, Luther's investment in the "political rebellion" of the German princes against the Holy Roman Empire led him to affirm a division of labor, in the ministry of God: for this world, "justice" through law, ministered by the princes; for eternity, "salvation" through the gospel, ministered by the church.

Calvin's insight and effort is more complex and, we believe, truer to the biblical heritage of the Kingdom of God. Indeed, magistrates properly have authority to govern society as ministers of God's law, but the church has the responsibility to minister both the gospel *and* the law – the gospel through the service of Word and Sacrament *and* the law through the prophetic role of holding up the vision of "justice" and "challenging" the government, at every turn, to implement it.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Allen O. Miller, "Calvin's Political Theology," *Currents in Theology and Missions* 14, no. 2 (April 1987): 135-36.

At present, we have man-made laws and humanistic courts interpreting them. Law thus is what the court says it is, not what God declares. The result is legal and moral anarchy.

Church leaders have been unable to confront the humanistic world order effectively. *First*, as we have seen, their concepts of sovereignty and law are defective. They concede these to the state and thereby cease to be Christian. Like the mystery religions of the Roman Empire, their role is limited to providing salvation in the form of inner peace and an abstraction from the world.

*Second*, churchmen see religion as one sphere among many, and they seek cooperation among the spheres, i.e., such as the harmony of religion and science. Their position involves a fundamental error. It is true that the *church* is one sphere among many, i.e., spheres such as the family, vocations, civil government, etc. To seek to make the church more than a particular sphere is imperialism, such as the state sphere now exercises. Religion, however, is more than the church. It is the ground of all spheres. Church, state, family, the vocations, the arts and sciences, and *all things* else must be governed by religion, by Biblical faith, and every sphere has equally the duty of faithfulness to the triune God.

Modern, like pagan, custom may hold otherwise, but so much the worse for those who cling to false customs and traditions.

## “THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN”

In 1905, Booth Tarkington (1869-1946) published his novel, *The Conquest of Canaan*. A year before, in 1904, Lincoln Steffens (1866-1936) had published *The Shame of the Cities*, a study of the link between politics and corruption; this was a subject which the Progressives had made a major public issue. The classic study, however, came later, with Franklin Hitchborn’s *“The System” as Uncovered by the San Francisco Graft Corruption* (1915). Hitchborn traced, in this and other works, notably his series on the California state legislature, the close, working ties between politics, capital, labor, *and* crime. The men who resisted “the System” were (and are) few, and the penalties for doing so, severe. Because of the concern of the Progressives, these links became for a time both a matter of news and of public concern. It was soon apparent, however, that information about injustice does not lead to justice: knowledge is not character nor virtue, nor does knowledge as such give men moral courage.

It was in the context of these national concerns that Booth Tarkington wrote *The Conquest of Canaan*. The title itself expresses a clear faith of sorts, because it implies two things. The story is set in an Indiana city of about 30,000, and the city’s name is Canaan. The setting is this devout, conservative, church-oriented middle America.

The *first* implication of the title is that America is the promised land. As Canaan was the inheritance, the Promised Land, for Israel, so America is a modern promised land, a rich country, a place of milk and honey. The *second* implication of the title is that some people, who are the Chosen People, are seeking to enter that Promised Land. Some enemies must be dealt with first. The enemies are the ruling class, in particular a wealthy man who rules the town, the court, and the press. The chosen people are the lower classes, foreigners, the Irish, and Negroes. The hero is an outcast youth who goes to law school and returns to challenge and defeat “the System” and to inaugurate a new order in Canaan. Justice prevails, Canaan is conquered, and the chosen people come into their own.

What Booth Tarkington looked for in 1905, but less so in his later years, did come to pass, i.e., the triumph of the outcasts, and the rise to power of new leaders in the name of “the People,” but “the System” not only continues but is greater in power.

“Canaan,” the United States, has been conquered, in that a new group has seized power from the old Canaanites, but they resemble Sodom and Gomorrah more closely than they do Israel! The United States has seen a dramatic reversal downward in its monetary policies; the old hatreds of race and class have not been healed but rather often intensified. Both crime and injustice are on the increase to a very high degree, and lawlessness has grown phenomenally. Crime statistics tell a very grim story of the extension of the practice of crime to all classes and to the young. The family order of those years has given way, in non-Christian circles, to promiscuity and an emphasis of major proportions on self-satisfaction rather than responsibility and duty.

This change, however, *cannot* be blamed on the rise of various groups, workers, minorities, and like sectors of the nation, to public power, because the same disintegration has marked the older ruling class. The reason instead is, *first*, the steady de-Christianization of public life. A systematic exclusion of Christianity from education, politics, and the media has taken place. At the same time, humanism has become the new established religion informing the laws of the country. *Second*, the evangelical-fundamentalist churches have largely abdicated any relevance to the national scene

or culture. Their sometimes studied irrelevance has handed one sphere after another to the humanists. *Third*, there has been also an increasing moral decay in all social classes and minority groups. Social trends are too often set by "the drug culture" and other lawless groups, and popular "rock" musical groups have exalted all kinds of assaults on law and morality. *Fourth*, the middle classes, once the dedicated source of giving whereby Christian causes have been funded, have become more self-indulgent and less generous. *Fifth*, justice was held, by Steffens, Tarkington, Marx, and others of diverse views, to come from below, from "the People." This was a modern form of the old belief in the divine right of kings, only now the kings who could do no wrong were minority groups, the "oppressed" and the "excluded." In the United States, cabinet members have been ousted for real and imagined invidious comments about such peoples.

To seek justice from man is an invitation to evil, because man is a fallen creature. Righteousness or justice is the expression of God's Being: He cannot be other than just and righteous. We are told,

Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? (Gen. 18:25)

Thou has rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou has put out their name for ever and ever. (Ps. 9:5)

God's justice is His action in all His ways. Man's justice is faithfulness to God's law-word, the expression of His justice. For men to abandon God's law is to adopt injustice as their way of life. The "Conquest of Canaan" imagined by Tarkington, Steffens, and others has been the adoption of one form of injustice to replace another.

The *Dictionary of Sociology* (1944) defined revolution as "a sweeping, sudden change in the societal structure, or in some important feature of it." Revolutions may occur without violence, for their essence is "sudden change." The *purpose* of revolutions is ostensibly to overthrow evils and to establish justice. But which revolution, French, Russian, Hungarian, Chinese, Cuban, Nicaraguan, or Vietnamese, has resulted in justice? And what is justice for the humanists? According to Nels Anderson, in the same dictionary,

*justice.* The idea in law by which judges are expected to be guided. That abstract objective which is at best only approximated in the administration of law.<sup>1</sup>

This is a definition which is as inclusive of injustice as it is justice! The same dictionary, in a long definition of “social justice,” defines it as four things: *first*, a normal birth for every child, plus good food, a liberal education, and a healthy environment. *Second*, a job for everyone, suited to his or her abilities. *Third*, a good income to enable one to be efficient in his social service. *Fourth*, influence with the authorities, so that a person’s ideas are given “due consideration.”<sup>2</sup> This definition has little to do with right and wrong and much to do with material satisfactions. Modern man, however, views the “Conquest of Canaan” in these terms. Justice is seen as the satisfaction of his beliefs and desires. However, in Isaiah 5:13-16, we read:

13. Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished [or, their glory are men of famine], and their multitude dried up with thirst.

14. Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

15. And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled:

16. But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy [or, the holy God] shall be sanctified in righteousness.

Death and captivity await the people, says Isaiah, because they are willfully ignorant of God’s law; they glory in “men of famine,” men without God, who rule without His law. The holy God must be sanctified in His judgment and righteousness or justice. We have an identification in the interrelationship of knowledge, holiness, and justice. None of these can be sought or had outside of God. Any hope of a promised land for mankind in any sphere or by any means apart from the triune God is the road, not to Canaan, but to hell. Men do not want God’s Canaan, only their own versions thereof.

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1. Nels Anderson, “Justice,” in Henry Pratt Fairchild, ed., *Dictionary of Sociology* (New York, NY: Philosophical Library, 1944), 165.

2. Charles J. Bushnell, “Social Justice,” in *ibid.*, 285.

## AUTHORITY AND LAW

Patrick J. Buchanan has observed:

Our political and social quarrels now partake of the savagery of religious wars because, at bottom, *they are religious wars*. The most divisive issues in American politics are now about our warring concepts of right and wrong, or good and evil. In a way the Kerner Commission never predicted, we have indeed become “two nations.”<sup>1</sup>

This conflict is basic to the crises in American life since 1950. In *United States v. Macintosh*, Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes recognized, in his dissent, that “the essence of religion is belief in a relation to God involving duties superior to those arising from any human relation.”<sup>2</sup> The Court, however, was increasingly governed by the cynical legal positivism of Oliver Wendell Homes, Jr. who denied God and all legal, philosophical, and moral absolutes. He denied or questioned “if cosmically any idea is any more important than the bowels,” or if man is more significant than a baboon or a grain of sand. He observed, in a letter to Harold Laski, “What damned fools people are who believe things.” In a case involving pacifism, he wrote (1929),

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1. Patrick J. Buchanan, *Right from the Beginning* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1988), 337.

2. Rosco J. Tresolini, *Justice and the Supreme Court* (Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott, 1963), 95.

“All ’isms seem to me silly – but this hyperethereal respect for human life seems perhaps the silliest of all.”<sup>3</sup>

The locale of justice was being relocated, from God, to man, and then to the state. The concept of the divine right of kings was an earlier form of the humanistic doctrine of justice and authority. It had extensive roots in pagan antiquity, from Africa to the Germanic tribes. The doctrine was both developed and limited within Christendom. It was limited by being placed under the authority of God, and with an accountability to Him. In the coronation service, the king had to promise, before being consecrated, that he would uphold the faith and maintain justice. However, royal authority was also expanded by being associated with the triune God. Thus, in Russia, the Josephite Doctrine 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.<sup>4</sup>

The roots of the modern doctrine of the divine rights of the king, a particular ruling class such as the proletariat, or of the state are pagan, and, in particular, Roman. According to Bussell,

Roman Law had revived in cent. xii and had justified the imperial claims. It was from the first a destructive agent in its attitude to the spiritual powers: it could not conceive of a genuine *diarchy* in which both parties respect the limits of the sacred and profane departments. As in philosophic theory, the practical mind pressed towards an absolute and final authority, each side no doubt hoping to influence it to their own profit. A new lettered class of laymen arose, primed with the doctrines of a *secular* absolutism (as it seemed to them) which was destined to supersede the canonists. The Church had early demanded respect for property and the new law helped to define its titles and enforce its covenants. The rejection of usury by the Church (never upheld in practice) was now withdrawn; and the prohibition was ingeniously explained away. This not only removed prejudice against trading enterprise, but also restored the self-respect of the merchant community, now recognized as following an honourable and dignified calling.<sup>5</sup>

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3. *Ibid.*, 72.

4. Arthur Voyce, *Moscow and the Roots of Russian Culture* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 16.

5. F. W. Bussell, *Religious Thought and Heresy in the Middle Ages* (London, England: Robert Scott, 1918), 847-48.

Respect now came from humanistic justifications, not from faithfulness to God and His law-word. Moreover, *divine* right has become *state* right; right now emanates from the state itself, not from God.

In the process, the concepts of *authority* and *law* have been altered. Authority is a religious fact; it is noncoercive. We feel the authority of our God and His law, and we carry within us the *moral* force of our faith. In a Biblical faith, law is derived from God, the ultimate source of all authority in all spheres. God's law has a *moral* force in us; we obey it because it is the ultimate right and justice of things. Modern statist law, as it departs from Biblical norms, becomes increasingly no more than coercion. People more and more pay their taxes, not as a moral act, but as a necessary step to avoid state coercion in the form of a seizure of property and/or imprisonment. As Bussell observed of statist law,

Meantime, having left out of reckoning all appeal to motive (except its own, State-utility or the 'common good') it has nothing to fall back upon in case of criticism or defiance except *force*. *Force* has now become the most striking characteristic in the conception of *Law*.<sup>6</sup>

*Law* once meant a religious and moral force; it now means statist power and coercion.

The modern state has seen itself as the messianic savior of man, as the great culminating hope of the ages. The state, republican or democratic, Marxist or fascist, is the supposed solution to human ills and problems.

In the seventeenth century, Henry Marten opposed monarchy, observing aptly, "I do not think one man wise enough to govern us all."<sup>7</sup> Marten's hope was in a republic which he believed would be the mechanism whereby a virtuous social order would be realized. He wrote, "The People have this advantage in their choice, that they are incapable of being bribed."<sup>8</sup> This naïve assumption has certainly been shown to be false by modern politics; subsidies

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6. *Ibid.*, 649.

7. C. M. Williams, "The Anatomy of a Radical Gentleman, Henry Marten," in Donald Pennington and Keith Carendon, eds., *Puritans and Revolutionaries* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, [1978] 1982), 120.

8. *Ibid.*, 131.

are given to capital, and to a wide variety of other “special interest” groups. Bribery in many forms is basic to the modern state.

Men like Marten believed that some form of government devised by men would provide the solution to man’s problems. The attribute of many Americans has been the belief that the U.S. Constitution provides such a mechanism. Michael Kammen, in *A Machine that Would Go of Itself: The Constitution in American Culture* (1986), has given a telling account of this misguided faith.

The two warring concepts of right and wrong, of good and evil, referred to by Buchanan are humanistic statism and Christianity. Modern statism is a religion, a humanistic one. It believes that the state is man’s natural and true order, and that the democratic (or fascist, or Marxist, or any other state form) is the *just* order. Justice is what the state does, because the state is the final or ultimate order.

Statist law, however, is incomprehensible law because it is so voluminous. With laws and bureaucratic regulations having the force of law equalling a large library *each year*, no man can begin to know or comprehend the laws which govern his life and which can imprison him or confiscate his property. The law is beyond his grasp.

Because of this, the law is not and cannot be a moral force in his life. It is not written in all his being by God’s creative act, so that, despite his suppression of that knowledge because of his sin and injustice,

the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.  
(Romans 1:20)

To deny God is to deny justice. In the modern state, justice is an accident occasioned by relics and memories of God’s law. It is progressively replaced by coercion. Law is thus no longer justice: it is coercion.

More than a few sociologists no longer see *law* as the necessary arm of the state; it is being replaced by psychotherapy, and the therapeutic state. In such thinking, health (or justice) means conformity to the social norms dictated by the state, and any

social deviance requires coercive rehabilitation. The psychiatric hospitals for dissidents in the Soviet Union are a logical outgrowth of this faith.

Statist law, however, lacking *moral* force, leads to the rapid deterioration of social order. The demoralization of society, the rise of delinquency, promiscuity, drug use, alcoholism, violence, perversions, and more, give evidence of the fact that the substitution of state coercion for the Biblical doctrines of authority and law leads to the shift from *moral* force to brutalized force, and to the decline and disappearance of justice.



## POLITICAL ATHEISM

**B**ecause God is the Creator of heaven and earth and all things therein, all meaning and all law come from Him. This is the emphatic meaning of Scripture repeatedly, as, for example, these statements:

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. (Ps. 33:6)

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:3)

And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ. (Eph. 3:9)

15. [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

16. For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. (Col. 1:15-17)

1. God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2. Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

3. Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Hebrews 1:1-3)

We are plainly told that all things were made by God, and that God the Son, the second Person of the Trinity, is not only He for whom all things were made, but also the heir of all things. All things are held together and function because of God the Son, so that nothing exists or has meaning or direction outside of Him.

God is thus the source of all things as Sovereign or Lord over all, and therefore all meaning, law, and justice are derived from Him totally and absolutely. Man, however, in his rebellious desire to be his own god (Gen. 3:5), seeks to separate these things from God. Very early, Hellenic philosophy reduced God to the inactive status of a first cause and located, e.g., the good, the true, and the beautiful, justice, and all else, in forms or ideas, *universals*, which were an inherent part of being in general. Meaning was thus separated from God and made a part of the universe. The philosophers who taught these things were the intellectual fathers of the tyrants of Greece.

The relocation of meaning, law, and justice in a source outside of God persisted. A popular form of this has been the natural law doctrine. Although Scripture is clear that all creation is fallen and therefore reflects that fact, despite its inescapable fact of creation by God, men still hold nature and its supposed law to be normative. Psalm 19 does indeed declare the fact of the glory of God manifested in all creation, but it is “the law of the LORD which is perfect,” not the universe.

Men have sought to relocate meaning, justice, and law on a level below God, because this gives them a convenient starting point. Instead of being judged by God and His transcendental but revealed law and justice, men have, when law and justice are located outside of God, an instrument whereby they can judge God. Churchmen regularly appeal to their humanistic ideas of law, justice, and love to tell us what God cannot be, whatever the Bible may say. To establish a realm of meaning and truth outside of God means to subject God to the criticism of the men who determine

the nature of that separate realm of meaning. As a result, in various eras of the modern age in particular, men have seen as the critical point of reference some concept which they have declared to be central to life.

When the center of law and sovereignty is located outside of God, a problem ensues. An important aspect of the Being of God, an incommunicable attribute, is His unity. Van Til wrote of this,

We distinguish between the unity of singularity (*singularitatis*) and the unity of simplicity (*simplicitatis*). The unity of singularity has reference to numerical oneness. There is and can be only one God. The unity of the simplicity signifies that God is in no sense composed of parts or aspects that existed prior to himself (Jer. 10:10; I John 1:5).<sup>1</sup>

In no sense can this be true of the universe nor of man. The created order is one of differences, of a variety of parts and aspects, and of differing importance. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. to the contrary, a grain of sand is not on the same level of importance as a man, nor is a baboon. Moreover, all men are not equal; I have my areas of competence *by the grace of God*, but there are millions of men who undoubtedly surpass me in many ways, in their spheres of competence and calling, whatever they may be. If I judge myself by man, I invite trouble and distress, whereas if I judge myself in terms of God's calling, I can work in peace. If my source of evaluation is God, I know that by His grace I have peace and a calling; if my source of evaluation is from men, then, instead of grace and peace, envy and hostility will govern me.

In 1832, Eugene Stoffels, in writing to Alexis de Tocqueville, asked Tocqueville if he shared with Stoffels his "political atheism."<sup>2</sup> We do not know exactly what Stoffels meant by that term, but we can say that political atheism exists wherever men ground the state and society in anything other than the triune God and His law-word. We know that Tocqueville held that institutions are secondary in their influence on the shape of society, because "political

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1. Cornelius Van Til, *The Defense of the Faith* (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Company, 1955), 26.

2. Roger Boesche, ed., James Toupin and Roger Boesche, trans., *Alexis de Tocqueville: Selected Letters on Politics and Society* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985), 81.

societies are not what their laws make them, but what sentiments, beliefs, ideas, habits of the heart” make them.<sup>3</sup> We would say that politics and society are what the religious faith of a culture determine them to be.

Tocqueville said that he envied the fact that the United States had an essentially stateless government, because “public force is everywhere.”<sup>4</sup> He could write in 1831 that France was “moving...toward a democracy without limits.”<sup>5</sup> The world was taking a new form, and a dangerous one. Tocqueville in 1842 wrote from Paris to Paul Clamorgan, “We are like an army embarking on the conquest of the world, while the enemy pillages and destroys homes.”<sup>6</sup> This was the reason for Tocqueville’s great interest in the United States, where the new spirit was best in evidence.

In France, the triumph of equalitarianism had been evil in its consequences:

The spell of royalty is broken, but it has not been succeeded by the majesty of the laws; the people have learned to despise all authority. But fear now exhorts a larger tribute of obedience than that which was formerly paid by reverence and by love.

I perceive that we have destroyed these independent beings which were able to cope with tyranny single-handed; but it is the government that has inherited the privileges of which families, corporations, and individuals, have been deprived; the weakness of the whole community has, therefore, succeeded to that influence of a small body of citizens, which, if it was sometimes oppressive, was often conservative.

The division of property has lessened the distance which separated the rich from the poor; but it would seem that the nearer they draw to each other, the greater is their mutual hatred, and the more vehement the envy and the dread with which they resist each other’s claims to power; the notion of right is alike insensible to both classes, and force affords to both the only argument for the present, and the only guarantee for the future.<sup>7</sup>

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3. *Ibid.*, 280.

4. *Ibid.*, 57.

5. *Ibid.*, 55.

6. *Ibid.*, 161.

7. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, vol. 1 (New York, NY: J. & H.G. Langley, 1841), 9.

After Rousseau, law had been made the expression of the general will of the people, and this had led to a bitter struggle of differing groups to be that will of the people. As a result, “force affords...the only argument for the present, and the only guarantee for the future.” Instead of a law and justice coming from the Almighty, there was now a new source, and the political sphere became the arena for a new war of the gods.

Of England Tocqueville wrote that parliament was omnipotent. He cited Delolme, who said, “It is a fundamental principle with the English lawyers, that parliament can do everything except making a woman a man, or man a woman.” Blackstone put it more bluntly:

The power and jurisdiction of parliament, says Sir Edward Coke (4 Inst. 36), is so transcendent and absolute, that it cannot be confined, either for causes or persons within any bounds....It hath sovereign and uncontrollable authority in making, confirming, enlarging, restraining, abrogating, repealing, reviving, and expounding of laws, concerning matters of all possible denominations; ecclesiastical or temporal; civil, military, maritime, or criminal; this being the place where that absolute despotic power which must, in all governments, reside somewhere, is entrusted by the constitution of these kingdoms. All mischiefs and grievances, operations and remedies, that transcend the ordinary course of the laws, are within the reach of this extraordinary tribunal. It can regulate or new-model the succession of the crown; as was done in the reigns of Henry VIII, and William III. It can alter the established religion of the land; as was done in a variety of instances in the reigns of King Henry VIII, and his three children. It can change and create afresh even the constitution of the kingdom, and of the parliaments themselves; as was done by the act of union and the several statutes for triennial and septennial elections. It can, in short, do everything that is not naturally impossible to be done; and, therefore, some have not scrupled to call its power, by a figure rather too bold, the omnipotence of parliament.<sup>8</sup>

In America, Tocqueville held, “the sovereign authority is religious,” and this fact preserved the United States from statist tyranny, but he saw that “a certain number of Americans pursue a peculiar form of worship, from habit more than from conviction.”<sup>9</sup> In 1831, he wrote from the United States to Louis de Kergorlay,

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8. *Ibid.*, 490-91.

9. *Ibid.*, 332.

that, while the American Sabbath was strict and “observed Judaically,” the preaching was moralistic, not theological.<sup>10</sup> The decline of Christianity’s hold on Americans would lead in time to the erosion of freedom.

The state cannot provide an ethic, because its rule rests on power, coercive power. In the modern era we are seeing again what destroyed the Middle Ages, the transfer of law and justice from God to the state. This means also the transfer of every department of human life to statist control. Bussell wrote of the medieval shift:

All these parties joined in heaping power upon the ruler; law, once an edict of God imparted to the reason of mankind, became the command of a sovereign and the interest of the stronger; and society as a whole moved slowly away from an ethical mooring and advanced to the position in which we find it today.<sup>11</sup>

Law becomes the will of the state, and justice is what the state does. Evils have been common to all of history, but evil is never more oppressive than when administered by the agencies of justice, such as departments of state. In 1988, when a Texan state worker lost his job, he also lost his home. Because of the condition of the Texas real estate market, the bank wrote off his \$80,000 mortgage loan as valueless. The U. S. Internal Revenue Service then billed the man for back taxes *and penalties* on \$80,000 in “unreported income.” As Ron Paul reported it,

Says the IRS: if a lender takes a house back at a value less than the outstanding loan — as is all too common now in Texas, and that will be replicated nationwide — the difference will be considered taxable income.<sup>12</sup>

In much of the world, the evils of statism are far greater; one can add that, in the United States, some legal recourses are open. However, it must be added that, in any appeal to a state court, the court will simply be guided by the rules of the IRS and of Congress and the federal courts. It will *not* be guided by any higher law of God. There is no recognition nor admission that law or justice can exist

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10. Boesche, *Alexis de Toqueville*, 48

11. F.W. Bussell, *Religious Thought and Heresy in the Middle Ages* (London, England: Robert Scott, 1918), 730-31.

12. *The Ron Paul Investment Letter* (Houston, TX), April 15, 1988, 8.

above and beyond the state. Man thus is trapped in a closed world, the state.

In a closed society, a culture which denies God and His law, it is the will of man which prevails. Thus, in Islam, during the era of the Fatamid Caliphate, the ruling man became the incarnate deity. Although Allah was affirmed, society was a closed world because the caliph was Allah incarnate. Hakim believed divine reason was incarnate in him; he also told the Byzantine emperors Constantine IX (1025-1028) and Michael IV (1034-1041) that he was the Christian Messiah reincarnated. Hakim may have been mad as he killed Christians and Jews and oppressed his own people, but his tyranny, while more exotic at times, cannot equal that of modern Marxist and other tyrant states.

Basic to modern statism are a number of premises, two of which are most important. The *first* is the elimination of God from human affairs, or, in Stoffels's words, "political atheism." By substituting a source of law other than the triune God, men replace God's sovereignty with their own, and God's final court of appeals and judgment with themselves. A closed world results, man-made and man-governed; this is the goal of fallen man, and it is a great illusion that such a realm can be successfully maintained. Because they are antinomian, because they deny the validity of God's law, most churchmen are themselves at the least political atheists. For them God has no word except for man's soul and its salvation. As a result, the world is surrendered to the devil, and this is done as though it were a religious duty to surrender man to tyranny.

*Second*, political atheism is promoted in the name of equality. The goal of fallen man is to be his own god and law, determining good and evil for himself (Gen. 3:5). His goal for civil government is to equal God by governing and controlling all things, and hence his desire for a Tower of Babel, a one-world order governed by man (Gen. 11:1-9). Equality has a liberating sound to modern man, but, as Bussell observed,

The equalization of all men before a single and central law is of course the slavery of all; and servitude to an official bureaucracy is less tolerable than obedience to a local family.<sup>13</sup>

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13. Bussell, *Religious Thought*, 831.

“Equality” is the modern form of slavery, because it is an instrument whereby all institutions, families, and religious authorities are eroded and destroyed. The egalitarian state stresses destructive and erosive freedoms such as sexual license, abortion, homosexuality, euthanasia, drugs, and more as a means of eroding the positive social forces such as family and church. Such a state presents itself as the champion of liberty because it enhances individual irresponsibility, whereas true freedom means responsibility and accountability. It is the “insane” who are neither responsible nor predictable: their anarchic “freedom” is precisely their bondage.

Where radical individual “freedom” triumphs, irresponsibility reigns, and also the tyrant state. Tyrant states triumph in the name and under the banner of “Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality.” The great crimes of the modern era have commonly been committed in the name of liberty.

When men deny God and His law, we see then “that truly *democratic* tendency to repose a blind faith in an autocratic leader, whose word is law.”<sup>14</sup> If God does not provide the law, men will, and if God’s incarnation is rejected, a man will be accepted.

A glance backward at the pontificate of Celestine V (Pietro di Murrone), 1215-1296, who as a monk and hermit acquired a reputation for sanctity, is in order. He founded the order of Celestines (c. 1254); at the age of eighty, he was elected pope in 1294. Europe felt the need for a holy man to lead the faithful, and men were full of revulsion towards venal and ungodly men in church and state. Without his knowledge, he was elected pope, and great multitudes flocked to greet him, rejoicing that holiness and the Holy Spirit would now rule. The Spiritual Franciscans were overjoyed, and some saw Celestine V as the first legitimate pope since Constantine! For five months, Celestine V sought to reform the church, to the dismay of powerful and not-so powerful churchmen and statesmen alike. Apparently pressure was exerted to lead him to abdicate; given the frustration and futility Celestine V experienced, he was willing to do so, despite the tears and prayers of earnest priests and monks. He was detained and imprisoned after abdicating because

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14. *Ibid.*, 437.

of his popular appeal and was probably either executed or so mistreated that he died.

Celestine V had been made pope because it was recognized that holiness was needed to save Europe and the church. Very quickly it was apparent that holiness was impolitic and out of place, and so Celestine had to go. Europe pursued its course into disaster.

Political atheism governs our age as it did Celestine's, and again men despise holiness, and they reject God and His law. The judgments which are the prelude to change and salvation are very near.



## CULTURAL ATHEISM

The political atheist believes that a *good* society can be built without God, who is the sole source of all goodness. This is the great heresy of the modern age; it is the assumption that the idea of the good is somehow independent of God and is the common property of all being. Not even being exists as such; all created being derives its existence from God, and any moral attributes possessed by men come from faithfulness to God and His law. As men depart from God and His law, they depart also from truth, justice, morality, and meaning. They forsake the good in forsaking God.

To believe that there can be goodness and truth outside of God's law and in contempt of His order is polytheism. It is the assumption that the universe is really a multiverse containing many varieties of order and of the good. Man then has an option of orders to choose from, and each represents a viable order. This is an assertion of the validity of religious pluralism, to believe that there are many varieties of truth, so that what is true in one sphere of religion is not true in another.

In the conflict between Calvin and Beza on the one hand, and Castellio on the other, Castellio is usually portrayed as the oppressed champion of religious liberty. Calvin and Beza saw him

as the proponent of skepticism. Castellio believed that righteousness was an inward condition, but for him this meant that “the criterion of morality became subjective.” Morality and conscience were seen by him in relativistic terms.<sup>1</sup> Although Castellio is viewed as a humble liberal, he saw reason as “a principle of continuous revelation,” so that he could easily supplement Scripture with his own mind. In his own words,

Reason, I say, is a sort of eternal word of God. According to reason, Jesus Christ himself, the Son of the living God, lived and taught. In the Greek he is called Logos, which means ‘reason’ or ‘word.’ These are the same, for reason is a kind of superior and eternal word of truth always speaking.<sup>2</sup>

The implication is that *reason* is something all men can tap into, intellectuals in particular, and thereby rise above and/or correct Jesus by their own connection with or embodiment of that “superior and eternal word of truth *always speaking*.” If this Logos or reason is always “speaking,” then it is likely that, with the passing of time, it will speak with greater clarity and truth in enlightened men. This was the premise of the Enlightenment.

Castellio assigned the doctrines of the Trinity, predestination, and the nature of the afterlife to *nonessentials*. Beza answered:

Bellius says that publicans and sinners were saved without these beliefs. O unheard-of impudence! Saved by him on whom they had not called. Did they call on him in whom they did not believe? Did they believe in him whom they had not known? If Christ is not in heaven, how can he be our high priest? If he be not coeternal and consubstantial with the Father, how can he be our Saviour?<sup>3</sup>

Castellio was more a champion of religious indifference than religious liberty. Like Hindu thought, and also Ralph Waldo Emerson, he believed that a neutral realm of reason, ideas, or being existed which all men could tap into to create their own versions of order. Supposedly this one common realm makes for a true monotheism, when in reality it is the basic premise of all polytheism. Reason, Logos, Brahma, or whatever other name is given to this

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1. Roland H. Bainton, *The Travail of Religious Liberty* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, [1951] 1971), 119-20.

2. *Ibid.*, 116-17.

3. *Ibid.*, 114.

realm, provides, not a given and mandatory order to all men, but rather the power to be their own gods and creators and to fashion their own truth and orders. Polytheism is simply a form of atheism, as are all faiths which follow thinkers like Castellio and Emerson.

Alexis de Tocqueville's concern with the rise of democracy was a philosophical and religious one. Modern thought was stressing *liberty* and *equality*. Could the two coexist? Tocqueville questioned that they could:

For the principle of equality begets two tendencies: the one leads men straight to independence, and may suddenly drive them into anarchy; the other conducts them by a longer, more secret, but more certain road, to servitude. Nations readily discern the former tendency, and are prepared to resist it; they are led away by the latter, without perceiving its drift; hence it is peculiarly important to point it out.<sup>4</sup>

In a democracy, people believe that supreme power should come from the people and be constituted in the state. The effect of this, besides denying God's supreme power, is to undermine all other agencies such as the family and the church. Power is centralized where the people are *most* represented, so that, if the family or the church, which are limited in their scope as popular representations, should come into conflict with the state, the state must prevail. For this reason, the democratic state eventually wars against all other institutions, and then all independent men. In time, "every central government worships uniformity."<sup>5</sup> More and more control over peoples and institutions is wrested from them by the state. "Everywhere the State acquires more and more direct control over the humblest members of the community, and a more exclusive power of governing each of them in his smallest concerns."<sup>6</sup> All agencies other than the state are progressively weakened.

As the state grows in power, private businesses must increase their power to cope with the state:

As private persons become more powerless by becoming more equal, they can effect nothing in manufactures without combina-

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4. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, vol. 2 (New York, NY: J. & H.G. Langley, [1840] 1841), 306-7.

5. *Ibid.*, 315.

6. *Ibid.*, 324.

tion; but the government naturally seeks to place these combinations under its own control.<sup>7</sup>

Centralization occurs in many spheres as men organize to protect themselves against the state.

For Tocqueville, the spirit of freedom in the modern age was a corrosive one, because it “freed” men from their heritage, families, associations, and churches to make them slaves of the state. Historically, in Christendom, government has meant the self-government of the Christian, the family, the school, one’s vocation, the church, the various associations of society and its peoples, and, finally, *civil* government, one form of government among many. All except civil government were being dissolved by democracy, and the United States was no exception, Tocqueville held,

This led me to think that the nations of Christendom would perhaps eventually undergo some sort of oppression like that which hung over several of the nations of the ancient world.<sup>8</sup>

Tocqueville saw no return to the past, to the older order. The question now was “how to make liberty proceed out of that democratic state of society in which God has placed us.”<sup>9</sup> He saw that “printing has accelerated the progress of equality, and it is also one of its best correctives.”<sup>10</sup> Tocqueville concluded, indecisively but hopefully,

I am aware that many of my contemporaries maintain that nations are never their own masters here below, and that they necessarily obey some insurmountable and unintelligent power, arising from anterior events, from their race, or from the soil and climate of their country. Such principles are false and cowardly; such principles can never produce ought but feeble men and pusillanimous nations. Providence has not created mankind entirely independent or entirely free. It is true that around every man a fatal circle is traced, beyond which he cannot pass; but within the wide verge of that circle he is powerful and free; as it is with man, so with communities. The nations of our time cannot prevent the conditions of men from becoming equal: but it depends upon themselves whether the principle of equality is to lead them to servitude or freedom, to knowledge or barbarism, to prosperity or to wretchedness.<sup>11</sup>

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7. *Ibid.*, 331.

8. *Ibid.*, 336.

9. *Ibid.*, 343.

10. *Ibid.*, 346.

11. *Ibid.*, 355.

In Paris, November 28, 1849, Tocqueville wrote to Gustave de Beaumont about Louis Napoleon. He questioned Louis Napoleon's popularity: "what has gained is the taste for strong and stable power, whatever it may be." Thus, France was undergoing a "bastard revolution," and "the enlightened classes...agree that they should resist, either actively or passively; but beyond that, they do not know what they want."<sup>12</sup>

"*They do not know what they want!*" Precisely. Given the polytheism of the modern era, all faiths, ideas, and ends are equal, and this daily becomes more evident. What was once abhorred in the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany becomes more and more acceptable to all nations in varying degrees. And why not? If all faiths are equally valid, then all are equally acceptable in time. A polytheistic world, sooner or later, tolerates almost anything — except the one true God. Instead of one body of truth, there are many truths. Paul challenges the world's premise by declaring:

4. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;
5. One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
6. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. (Eph. 4:4-6)

Polytheism is a form of atheism, and what we have today, both in the church and in the world, is cultural polytheism, or cultural atheism.

Let us remember Castello's basic premise, that reason is the eternal Logos in terms of which Jesus Christ "lived and taught." "Reason is a kind of superior and eternal word of truth always speaking."<sup>13</sup> If a man can by reason tap into the vast reservoir of being and express the "*superior and eternal word of truth always speaking,*" then a thinking man can give the new revelation of reason for and to his age.

When men believe this, and live in terms of this, then reality is shifted from the created world to the mind of man. This was the direction of things from men like Castello and Descartes to

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12. Roger Boesche, ed., James Toupin & Roger Boesche, trans., *Alexis de Tocqueville: Selected Letters on Politics and Society* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985), 242.

13. Bainton, *Travail*, 116-17.

Immanuel Kant. The realm of reality had a new location, in the mind of man. Man was now not only his own God and law, determining good and evil for himself, but he was also his own universe. The dream world of the drug addict is a logical result of Kantianism. Kant held,

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. This would agree better with what is desired, namely, that it should be possible to have knowledge of objects *a priori*, determining something in regard to them prior to their being given. We should then be proceeding precisely on the lines of Copernicus' primary hypothesis. Failing of satisfactory progress in explaining the movements of the heavenly bodies on the supposition that they all revolved round the spectator, he tried whether he might not have better success if he made the spectator to revolve and the stars to remain at rest. A similar experiment can be tried in metaphysics, as regards the *intuition* of objects. If intuition must conform to the constitution of the objects, I do not see how we could know anything of the latter *a priori*, but if the object (as object of the senses) must conform to the constitution of our faculty of intuition, I have no difficulty in conceiving such a possibility.<sup>14</sup>

Given this perspective, the real work in time becomes the mind of man, and what a man conceives to be true, *is* true. Hegel logically held that the rational is the real. Since reason expresses the logos of being, this follows.

Logically also, the Living Theatre members in the 1970s and on held that "life is theatre and theatre is their life." As one of the performers said, "Acting is not make believe, but living exquisitely in the moment."<sup>15</sup> The world of the mind and its imagination has replaced God's reality. This is cultural atheism.

Cultural atheism or polytheism leads to moral indifference, because all values are equal, and all roads lead to the same end. Moral indignation, then, is held to be naïve and

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14. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, preface to 2nd ed., trans. Norman Kemp Smith, abridged ed. (London, England: Macmillan, 1934), 16.

15. Theodore Shank, *American Alternative Theatre* (New York, NY: Grove Press, 1982), 35.

simple-minded, because there is no exclusive truth, only a realm of many personal beliefs as we each develop our own reason and being logos. Ralph Waldo Emerson's poem "Brahma" clearly expresses this rejection of all exclusive truth and meaning:

If the red slayer thinks he slays,  
Or if the slain thinks he is slain,  
They know not well the subtle ways  
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;  
Shadow and sunlight are the same;  
The vanished gods to me appear;  
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;  
When me they fly, I am the wings;  
I am the doubter and the doubt,  
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,  
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;  
But thou, meek lover of the good!  
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

The simple-minded devotees of Emerson do not stop to think that murder is reduced to nothing, because living and dying are equally meaningless, as are shame and fame. All things are one. When the Christian, the "meek lover of the good," finds Brahma in himself, then he can turn his back on heaven! Emerson's moral indifferentism has helped to create the world of the twentieth century. Emerson also influenced Friedrich Nietzsche with his idea of living beyond good and evil in a realm of moral indifferentism, the world of the superman.

The result is anarchy. Cultural atheism is the destruction of culture, and also of learning. All things being equal, what special value is there to education, or to work?

Culture, said Henry Van Til, is religion externalized, and, in the world of Castellio, Descartes, Kant, Hegel, and others, every man is his own god, and thus there is no common faith in anything other than one's own existential being. Sovereignty is held either by existential man or the existential state. Existentialism is self-determination by the biology of one's own being,

without reference to the teaching of parents, church, or society. The existential state or civil government makes laws and policies without reference to God, the church, or the family. It determines the lives of its citizens and subjects in terms of its own will. Like Emerson, it is steadily reducing all things to meaninglessness, except its own claim to sovereign power.

The Renaissance was also a time of cultural atheism and moral indifferentism. The English reformers were confronted by this hostility to moral law in high places. Thomas Becon wrote for *The Two Books of Homilies* "Against Adultery," and, in passing, cited how other cultures had legislated very, very strongly and harshly against adultery in order to preserve society. Becon wrote:

Thus have we heard how God punisheth the sin of adultery. Let us now hear certain laws which the civil magistrates devised in diverse countries for the punishment thereof, that we may learn how uncleanness hath ever been detested in all well ordered cities and commonwealths and among all honest persons. The law among the Lepreians was this, that, when any were taken in adultery, they were bound and carried three days through the city, and afterward, as long as they lived, were they despised, and with shame and confusion counted as persons void of all honesty. Among the Locrenians the adulterers had both their eyes thrust out. The Romans in times past punished whoredom, sometime by fire, sometime by sword. If a man among the Egyptians had been taken in adultery, the law was that he should openly, in the presence of all the people, be scourged naked with whips unto the number of a thousand stripes: the woman that was taken with him had her nose cut off, whereby she was known ever after to be an whore, and therefore to be abhorred by all men. Among the Arabians, they that were taken in adultery had their heads stricken from their bodies. The Athenians punished whoredom by death in like manner. So likewise did the barbarous Tartarians. Among the Turks even at this day they that be taken in adultery, both man and woman, are stoned straightways to death without mercy.

Thus see we what godly acts were devised in times past of the high powers for the putting away of whoredom, and for the maintaining of holy matrimony (or wedlock) and pure conservation. And the authors of these acts were not Christians, but heathen: yet were they so inflamed with the love of honesty and pureness of life, that, for the maintenance and conservation (or keeping up) of that, they made godly statutes suffering neither fornication nor adultery to reign in their realms unpunished.

Christ said to the people, *The Ninevites shall rise at the judgment with this nation*, meaning the unfaithful Jews, *and shall condemn them: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas, but behold*, saith he, *a greater than Jonas is here*, meaning himself, and yet they repent not. Shall not, think you, likewise the Locresians, Arabians, Athenians, with such other, rise up at the judgment and condemn us; forasmuch as they ceased from whoredom at the commandment of man, and we have the law and manifest precepts and commandments of God, and yet forsake we not our filthy conversation?<sup>16</sup>

The moral indifferentism and the cultural atheism of the Renaissance were in time rolled back by the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. The culture of the Enlightenment, Romanticism, and modernism, however, has returned to the same premises and is now pushing for the total victory of cultural atheism, which is another way of saying that they are suicidal who espouse this course, for “all they that hate me love death” (Prov. 8:36).

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16. *The Two Books of Homilies, Appointed to be Read in Churches* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1859 edition), 129-31.



## ARTISTIC ATHEISM

In a very interesting study, Charles Garside Jr. analyzed the views of the reformer Huldrych (or, Ulrich) Zwingli on the arts. Zwingli was himself an accomplished musician, so that an antipathy to art was not his disposition. His hostility was religious and humanistic. *First*, in his humanism, Zwingli was very much a disciple of Erasmus, and his training included “two years of virtually complete immersion in Erasmian thought.”<sup>1</sup> Erasmus was highly critical of church music and wrote of the medieval church,

We have introduced into churches a type of laborious and theatrical music, a confused chattering of diverse voices, such as I do not think was ever heard in the theaters of the Greeks or the Romans. They perform everything with slide-trumpets, trombones, cornets, and little flutes, and with these the voices of men contend. Amorous and foul songs are heard, songs to which prostitutes and actors caper. People assemble in the sacred edifice as in a theater, for the sake of degrading their ears.<sup>2</sup>

The reforms of Erasmus in essence were reforms of *practice* rather than *theology*. The church was to be purified by changes in church forms and practices. In his controversy with Luther, Erasmus made

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1. Charles Garside Jr., *Zwingli and the Arts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), 33.

2. Cited from *Opera Omnia*, ed. L. LeClerc (1703-1706), 6, 731-32., in *ibid.*, 32.

it clear that a zeal for clarity of doctrine was not essential to him. The elimination of abuses rather than a theological renewal was most important to Erasmus.

Zwingli barred the artist from the service of the church. As against Luther and Calvin, he refused to see the Christian artist as a tool or instrument of the Holy Spirit. Paintings were scraped off the walls, images were broken. All music was banned from the Zurich churches, both vocal and instrumental. Organs were destroyed and did not return to Zurich churches until 1809 to 1874.<sup>3</sup>

True worship, pure worship, for Zwingli was “an absolutely private prayer.” It was *necessary* to have public worship, or “common prayer,” but the presence of the many he saw as a corrupting factor.<sup>4</sup>

*Second*, Zwingli followed Erasmus (and Greek philosophy) in seeing the world in terms of the dialectics of flesh and spirit. For the Greeks, reality was defined in terms of two kinds of substances, spirit and matter or flesh. For Scripture, this is a false division. Both spirit and flesh are *created* being, aspects of God’s created world. The Fall affects both equally, so that no greater value can be ascribed to spirit against flesh, nor greater moral status. The antinomy of flesh and spirit was Hellenic, not Biblical, and Erasmus held to it. He was not alone in this; it was a common belief.

Zwingli saw the divine image in man only in the soul of man, because he saw the flesh as alone corruptible.<sup>5</sup> He declared, “The soul is so vital a substance that not only does it have life in itself, but it gives life to the dwelling-place in which it resides.”<sup>6</sup>

Erasmus, holding a like faith in the soul, had asked, “But is not Christianity the spiritual life?” Zwingli wrote in the margin of this statement in *Lucubrations*, “Christianity is the spiritual life.”<sup>7</sup> As Garside so ably stated it,

3. *Ibid.*, 61-62.

4. *Ibid.*, 42-51.

5. Zwingli, “Of the Clarity and Certainty of the Word of God,” in G.W. Bromiley, ed., *Zwingli and Bullinger* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1953), 59ff.

6. Zwingli, “An Exposition of the Faith,” in *ibid.*, 274.

7. Garside, *Zwingli*, 36.

This radical Erasmian antinomy between flesh and spirit, form and content, was to become one of the assumptions controlling Zwingli's systematic commentary on music in worship, as well as his later critique of images.<sup>8</sup>

It is an ironic fact that within the Roman communion this flesh and spirit antinomy led to asceticism among the clergy, i.e., sacerdotal celibacy, but asceticism was rejected in church architecture and worship. Within the Protestant communions, Luther and Calvin were largely rejected in this sphere; sexual asceticism was denied by Protestants, but asceticism was affirmed in the spheres of architecture and worship.

In any case, the artist was left out, with the passage of time, from a place in the ministry of faith. Among Protestants, the elimination came with a Puritan reaction against the established church: if the Anglicans did it, it must be bad, because formalism ("the flesh") was so common among the established clergy. The result was that the artist was anathema for many Puritans, whereas, among the churchmen of the establishment, the old order was maintained, but it was not extended; it was a spent force.

In the Renaissance, art had become extensively secular, even when within the church. The heavily classical influences were indicative of the fact that Greco-Roman norms were far more cherished by the artist than were Biblical ones. Art came to see itself as an autonomous discipline, and artists developed a new arrogance and insolence.

The justification for this asserted autonomy came later, with the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. In 1790, in *The Critique of Judgment*, in a discussion of aesthetic judgment, Kant wrote:

For in such an estimate the question does not turn on what nature is, or even on what it is for us in the way of an end, but on how we receive it. For nature to have fashioned its forms for our delight would inevitably imply an objective finality on the part of nature, instead of a subjective finality resting on the play of imagination in its freedom, where it is we who receive nature with favour. That nature affords us an opportunity for perceiving the inner finality in the relation of our mental powers engaged in the estimate of certain of its products, and, indeed, such a finality as arising from a

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8. *Ibid.*, 37.

supersensible basis as to be pronounced necessary and of universal validity, is a property of nature which cannot belong to it as its end, or rather, cannot be estimated by us to be such an end. For otherwise the judgment that would be determined by reference to such an end would found upon heteronomy, instead of founding upon autonomy and being free, as befits a judgment of taste.<sup>9</sup>

Kant freed the aesthetic judgment as well as the artist in his work from any outside standard of judgment. He did not even consider theonomy, or God's law, as a criterion, or heteronomy, the will of others or of many. For him the criterion was autonomy, or self-law. Kant "freed" the artist from God and man, from nature and society, to the self-expression of his own being without reference to or regard for anything external to himself. Kant was the philosophical father of modern art. He was the man who most clearly formulated atheism in art.

The spirit-matter dialectic had separated art from God and the church. Now Kant justified art in a course of militant anti-Christianity. Artists have since been used by churches, but only in terms of their radical autonomy in most cases, so that atheistic art has invaded the church.

How radical Kant was in his views appears in a footnote in *The Critique of Judgment*:

Perhaps there has never been a more sublime utterance, or a thought more sublimely expressed, than the well-known inscription upon the Temple of Isis (Mother *Nature*): "I am all that is, and that was, and that shall be, and no mortal hath raised the veil from before my face." (Johann Andreas V.) Segner made use of this idea in a suggestive vignette on the frontispiece of his *Natural Philosophy*, in order to inspire his pupil at the threshold of that temple into which he was about to lead him, and with such a holy awe as would dispose his mind to serious attention.<sup>10</sup>

This is a very interesting bit of anti-Christian pious gush on Kant's part. He was familiar with Revelation 1:8, wherein Christ uses similar words to give an absolutely different meaning: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is,

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9. Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgment*, in *Kant, The Critique of Pure Reason, the Critique of Practical Reason and other Ethical Treatises, The Critique of Judgment* (Chicago, IL: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1952), 546.

10. *Ibid.*, 530.

and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.” Christ affirms Himself to be the determiner of all history, of past, present, and future. He is the Almighty, the Predestinator in a world totally made, ordered, governed, and ruled by Him. In contrast, the Temple of Isis inscription is radically different:

The heathen inscription identifies God with the universe, making Him, not an ever-being, but an ever-becoming, from whom personality is excluded: the Christian description is of the personal, everlasting, self-revealing God – who is, who was, and who *cometh*. We should have expected after “is” and “was” “will be,” but there is no “will be” with an eternal God. With Him all *is*; so that the word “cometh” is used, hinting His constant manifestations in history, and the final coming in judgment.<sup>11</sup>

If nature is an “ever-becoming,” and no man can unveil the future because the future is to be made by man, then it follows that man in every sphere faces a meaningless realm of brute factuality wherein only he can become a creator, although a dying one.

Given the Kantian definition of art and its autonomy, in this sense only an atheist can be an artist. Not at all surprisingly, some teachers in the arts do not believe that a Christian can be an artist because his “creative powers” are inhibited and stultified by his faith.

In 1947, T.H. Robsjohn-Gibblings wrote on *Mona Lisa's Mustache: A Dissection of Modern Art*. Among the things he called attention to was the fact that, *first*, as his title indicated, creativity was now associated with irreverence and a contempt for past order. *Second*, he saw a close link between modern art and occultism and magic. Having denied meaning and power from above, from God, modern artists often sought it from below, and from occult forces.

*Third*, because of the Kantian emphasis on autonomy, every artist as his own god and creator, modern art requires warfare between the artist and society. Without rancor and as a matter of fact, the architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe said, “I think we should treat our clients as children.” Peter Gay observed, “The innovator must, almost by definition, offend reigning taste.”<sup>12</sup>

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11. W. Boyd Carpenter, in “Revelation,” in Charles John Ellicott, ed., *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, n.d.), 534

12. Peter Gay, *Art: Its History and Psychological Significance* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1976), 142-43.

Let us remember, *first*, the separation of matter and the arts from the spirit and from Christianity, and then, *second*, the Kantian assertion of the autonomy of art. This will help us understand Mondrian's criticism of Cubism: "it was not developing abstraction toward its ultimate goal, the expression of pure reality." This is a very ironic fact. The Erasmians cast out art as materialistic and non-spiritual. This gave us some generations of heavy, "fleshy" art: heavy nudes, crowded landscapes overfilled with nature, heavy, pompous music, lush operas, and so on. Kant, however, "freed" art from nature and the material world. Art was now separated from the older, Hellenic meaning of spirit, and from nature, and also from God. A new realm was opened to it, the inner world of man's spirit. True, this was a small, bleak, and empty realm of spirit, one in which, after Kant, and certainly after his heir, Jean-Paul Sartre, nothing has any meaning, and the only valid influence is one's own mind.

Luther and Calvin were always mindful of the fact that the Holy Spirit can work through artisans like Bezaleel and Aholiab (Ex. 31:1-6), and, in fact, *call* them to His service. Both churchmen and their enemies have, since the Renaissance, worked to separate the artisan and the arts from Christianity. The transition from the Spirit of God to the spirit of fallen man has not been good for the arts, the church, or society. Atheism is no better in the arts than anywhere else. It shifts sovereignty from God to man.

## DEFINITIONS AND SOVEREIGNTY

**N***ames* in the Bible are definitions and classifications. When God called a man out of Ur of the Chaldees, he gave him a name, Abram, later changed to Abraham (Gen. 11:27, 29-31; 12:1ff.; 17:5); we are not told what Abram's original name was. This is blotted out of history. In the beginning God named what He created: day and night, light and darkness, the heavenly bodies, the earth and its vegetation. As Zlotowitz commented, God named the light, the darkness, the heavens and the earth, "but it is man, in his God-given role as governor of the earth (1:28), who is called upon to name his subjects — the animal world."<sup>1</sup>

Adam's task was to classify the animals, i.e., to understand their interrelationships, their purpose, and their nature. This was a scientific task as well as a practical one. Adam had to understand God's purpose and design in creation, and his own station in terms of all things.

God having created all things had thereby given them an ordained function in nature, and man's task is to understand God's creation as God's dominion man over it. Thus, man's task from

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1. Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz, trans. and commentator, *Bereishis: Genesis*, vol. 1 (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publications, [1977] 1980), 106.

Adam on has been to understand God's definition of all things, their meaning, purpose, and limits; limits are basic to definition, which can be called a process of delimitation.

Definition in any basic and ultimate sense is the act of God, the act of the Creator. An artist names his paintings, and a writer titles his book, although their actions of definition are secondary and are dependent on a given world of meaning. Men have recognized the relationship between creation and definition. One writer, Nicholas Wade, in writing on genetic engineering, has spoken of the goal thus: it is "for *Homo sapiens* to bring to birth his finest creation."<sup>2</sup> The hope is to change "humankind as well as nature."<sup>3</sup> Wade recognizes that human genetic engineering will be resisted on religious grounds.<sup>4</sup> The ultimate technology for Wade is to manipulate life and to control evolution; man will then be "controlling his own creator."<sup>5</sup>

The U.S. Supreme Court, in legalizing abortion, made being a living person a matter of *legal* definition; the basic premise in this and related cases was not a medical definition but a legal one. Charles Rice pointed out that, given this premise, by the end of the century various groups could easily be redefined as nonpersons and put to death. In *Social Research*, Autumn, 1985, Peter Singer and Helga Kuhse dealt with the handicapped newborn infant. They argued that newborn infants do not have a right to life merely because they are human. "Their lives as *persons* have not yet begun."<sup>6</sup> This means that being a *person* has been made a matter of definition by man. If a handicapped new-born infant is not a person, can it not be said that the senile elderly are not either? What about the sick, or the useless? What is to prevent men from a definition of various races, nationalities, or religious groups as nonpersons? When men take over the task of definition and make it an autonomous power separated from God's law, no man is safe from

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2. Nicholas Wade, *The Ultimate Experiment: Man-Made Evolution* (New York, NY: Walker, 1977), 7.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*, 150.

5. *Ibid.*, 155.

6. Helga Kuhse and Peter Singer, "Ethics and the Handicapped Newborn Infant," *Social Research* 52, no. 3 (Autumn 1985): 541.

the peril of being redefined as a nonperson. Already millions of unborn babies have died because of this, and countless prisoners of state in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union.

The redefinition of man begins by separating man from God and by denying man's created status as God's image-bearer. Man is thereby separated from an overruling and absolute law of God. He is absolved of moral responsibility. Scientific determinism began in the Enlightenment to separate man from God and to reduce man to a machine, or, at best, a naturalistically determined being to whom ethics is an alien and mythical thing. This view was in time held by many peoples, including popular writers like Mark Twain, who wrote:

Man is not to blame for what he is. He didn't make himself. He has no control over himself. All the control is vested in his temperament – which he did not create – and in the circumstances which hedge him round from the cradle to the grave and which he did not devise and cannot change by any act of his will, for the reason that he has no will. He is as purely a piece of automatic mechanism as is a watch, and can no more dictate or influence his actions than can the watch.<sup>7</sup>

Mark Twain shared in the expansive American temper of his day, except when it came to Christianity; then he denied ability and responsibility to man.

This was not an unusual perspective. In my university years in the 1930s, our textbook on psychology dismissed man's consciousness as irrelevant and as merely an "epiphenomenon." Man, we were told, is fully comprehensible in terms of biological "drives." For these thinkers, man as God made him, or, man as he is, was dismissed as a poor specimen subject to conditioned reflexes. At the same time, however, the professor referred to the amazing future man could have when remade by science. Although Nietzsche's term, *the superman*, was never cited, it was popular in those days, and, in more sober, scientific terms, we were given hints of human potentiality when scientists remade man.

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7. Mark Twain, "Reflections on Religion," ed. Charles Neider, in *The Hudson Review* 16, no. 3 (Autumn 1963): 351.

The basic definition of the word definition is “limitation; the power of setting limits.” This is why God cannot be defined; while His attributes can be described, and His revelation known, God in Himself is beyond limitation: He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. God defines; He is not defined.

Man, by redefining himself in defiance of God, as did Mark Twain, reduces himself to virtual nothingness. Mark Twain’s mythical man can *do* nothing, he can *be* nothing, and he can *will* nothing. None of Mark Twain’s fictional characters was created in terms of such a definition!

The implication is that, as man separates himself from God and remakes himself, then he can be a free man. Mark Twain, writing in 1906, hoped that by 2006 men would be sufficiently liberated from Christianity to read, and profit from, his “Reflections on Religion.”

Twain’s “Reflections” were published much earlier than planned. The intellectuals, who came into power with the Enlightenment as the new priests and prophets of culture, had done their work well. Heer described this “brand new type of man,” the intellectual, as one who “called everything in the world into question except his own ego.” Moreover, the intellectual saw himself as the heir to authority.<sup>8</sup>

He represents an ancient spirit of rebellion against any law or definition coming from God to man. In the years between 1306 and 1311, there were proceedings against a movement called the “Sect of the Spirit of Liberty,” *Secta Spiritus Libertatis*. The leader of this sect, Bentivenga, told Clare of Montefalco, “God has told me there is no ‘devil’ excepting Himself.”<sup>9</sup> For God to be God, the Creator and the definer, made Him the devil to this group. Man could only be free if he redefined himself, and this required the death of God. Hence, the war against God has been a necessary prelude to man’s redefinition of himself.

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8. Friedrich Heer, *The Intellectual History of Europe* (Cleveland, OH: World Publishing Company, [1953] 1966), 202.

9. *Ibid.*, 162.

Another aspect of this task of redefinition began with the Romantic movement. Men like Lord Byron began to redefine the devil. As the great rebel against God, as the one who first insisted on the need for redefinition, Satan was to be venerated. In Genesis 3:5, Satan redefines man as his own god, a god having the power to “know” or redefine and determine what is good and evil.

In another context, Hedrin has called attention to “the cultural trend toward a preference for the meaningless,” and the viewing of “all experience as casual and meaningless.”<sup>10</sup> Such a trend is expressive of the desire to escape from God and His sovereign law and definition of life and man. This same cultural trend “is toward greater and greater stimulation of appetites.”<sup>11</sup> Things and sensations replace meaning and God. The flight from God begins with a flight from the defined and the prescribed.

It is also a flight into lawlessness and a contempt for the defined life. In the 1960s and 1970s, success in the theater often went hand in hand with a violation of moral norms, e.g., such things as masturbations on stage.<sup>12</sup> One actress saw nudity before a camera, according to Davies, as “the equivalent of being saved.”<sup>13</sup>

When medical men reported on the fact of AIDS and its killing propensity, there resulted a massive hostility towards any honest description of the consequences of homosexuality. When doctors spoke of the perils of homosexual promiscuity, Michael Lynch, writing in *Body Politic*, a Canadian homosexual journal, declared, “Gays are once again allowing the medical profession to define, restrict, pathologize us.” Note the objection to being defined! According to Ronald Bayer,

To follow the advice of physicians would involve renunciation of “the power to determine our own identity,” and would represent “a communal betrayal of gargantuan proportions” of gay liberation founded upon a “sexual brotherhood of promiscuity.” Doubting the scientific validity of the data on the basis of which the cautionary advice was being proffered, another wrote, “I feel that what we

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10. Herbert Hedrin, *The Age of Sensation* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 1975), 326.

11. *Ibid.*, 325.

12. Christopher Davis, *The Producer* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1972), 41.

13. *Ibid.*, 188.

are being advised to do involves all of the things I became gay to get away from.... So we have a disease for which supposedly the cure is to go back to all the styles that were preached at us in the first place. It will take a lot more evidence before I'm about to do that.<sup>5</sup> In a particularly vitriolic attack upon Jonathan Liberson's essay on AIDS that appeared in the *New York Review of Books*, John Rechy wrote, "How eagerly do even *perhaps* 'good heterosexuals' impose grim sentences of abstinence on others."<sup>14</sup>

What AIDS has made clear is that God's creation has moral limits on all sides, and that God's definitions and laws cannot be violated without serious consequences.

But man denies that definitions which are God-ordained govern economics, politics, education, and all things else. It is becoming clear that those who break God's laws are broken by them. Only God's definitions stand, because only God is sovereign.

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14. Ronald Bayer, "AIDS and the Gay Community," *Social Research* 52, no. 3 (Autumn 1985): 595.

## EDUCATION AND SOVEREIGNTY

James E. Wood Jr., editor of the *Journal of Church and State*, ridiculed the notion of fundamentalists that, *first*, secular humanism is the faith of the state schools of the United States. He echoes the opinion that it is “a paranoid delusion” on the part of the religious right. He sees secular humanism as a myth whose “perpetrators” are the fundamentalists. He cites Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan as stating that neither he nor any who assisted in drafting the Education for Economic Security Act (1984), which in part barred a school district from receiving funds to finance any course which involves secular humanism, knew “of any school district that teaches a secular humanism. I’m not sure anyone knows what secular humanism is...certainly, no schools affected by the legislation” teach it.

*Second*, Wood affirmed the “neutrality” of the public schools “toward particular religious faiths or traditions.”<sup>1</sup>

Wood accepted the state schools’ claim to neutrality at face value. The idea of neutrality is, however, a myth. Every person and institution has a perspective and a plan which involves a commit-

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1. James E. Wood Jr., “Editorial: Religious Fundamentalism and the Public Schools,” *Journal of Church and State* 29, no. 1 (Winter 1987): 15-17.

ment. If God is indeed the Creator of heaven and earth, and if the God of Scripture is the living God, to eliminate Him from education is not neutrality but enmity; the most important consideration of all is not considered. No man can be neutral towards God. The idea of neutrality presupposes an objectivity on the part of man which is not tenable. Moreover, we cannot assume that neutrality is essential to establishing truth; if a man is neutral towards all things, then all things are equally meaningless to him. Not even God professes to be neutral; He speaks of *hating* certain things and persons (e.g., Prov. 6:16-19). In the sciences, a hypothesis, which is a non-neutral presupposition, however tentative, is used in approaching factuality. Statist education is *not* neutral; every subject in the curriculum, every textbook, and every regulation involves a non-neutral judgment. Courts of law are not neutral; in a murder trial, neither the court nor the law is neutral about murder. Rather, the quest is for *justice* in procedure and judgment, something very different from neutrality.

As for secular humanism being a myth, Wood gives no evidence of any knowledge of schools of education, their textbooks, and school textbooks. How would he account for such a teachers' textbook as the *Humanistic Education Sourcebook*?<sup>2</sup> The fifty six articles by major educators emphasize humanism. One article tells us that "values evolve." Values are a human option, not a religious mandate. They are a "product of our experiences. They are not just a matter of true or false." This places values beyond good and evil.<sup>3</sup> Another article ridicules the Biblical doctrine of man as a sinner; we are told, "People are not evil."<sup>4</sup> Still another essay is titled, "Humanism: Capstone of an Educated Person."<sup>5</sup>

If secular humanism (i.e., humanism as practiced by laymen) is a myth, how can we account for such writings?<sup>6</sup>

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2. Donald A. Read and Sidney B. Simon, eds., *Humanistic Education Sourcebook* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1975).

3. Louis E. Raths, Merrill Harmin and Sidney B. Simon, "Values and Valuing," in *ibid.*, 72-81.

4. William R. Coulson, "Encounter Group and Brainwashing," in *ibid.*, 232.

5. Stephen N. Stivers, L. Gerald Buchan, C. Robert Dettloff, and Donald C. Orlich, "Humanism: Capstone of an Educated Person," in *ibid.*, 363-69.

6. See R.J. Rushdoony, *The Messianic Character of American Education* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1963).

An April 1988 publication of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, *Moral Education in the Life of the School*, totally ignores Biblical morality. It follows Emile Durkheim, who held that the three essential elements in morality are, *first*, discipline; *second*, “moral authority” that is “social in origin,” which eliminates God; and *third*, autonomy, self-determination, and the human being (*not* God) as “the sacred thing par excellence.”<sup>7</sup> The section on “The Morally Mature Person” continues in the same vein. For education which pretends to be democratic, to neglect the Biblical faith of the majority of Americans, or at least the largest element in the population, is hardly democratic! Even more, to neglect the religious faith which is basic to Western civilization is not only *not* a neutral stance but in fact one of aggressive hostility. It is a hostility with serious consequences.

In 1957, Kenneth Rexroth analyzed what was happening to art with the rise of the beatnik movement (which preceded the hippies). He noted that “many of the most impressive developments in the arts nowadays are aberrant, idiosyncratic.”<sup>8</sup> The “best popular fiction” was concerned “with the world of the utterly disaffiliated.” Nelson Algren’s thesis, he pointed out, was, “It is better to be out than in.” “It is the greatest social significance that the novelists who say, ‘I am proud to be delinquent’ are nevertheless sold in editions of hundreds of thousands.”<sup>9</sup> He concluded,

The disengagement of the creator, who, as creator is necessarily judge, is one thing, but the utter nihilism of the emptied-out hipster is another. What is going to come of an attitude like this? It is impossible to go on indefinitely saying: “I am proud to be a delinquent,” without destroying all civilized value. Between such persons no true enduring interpersonal relationships can be built, and of course, nothing resembling a true “culture” — an at-homeness of men with each other, their work, their loves, their environment. The end result must be the desperation of shipwreck — the despair, the orgies, ultimately the cannibalism of a lost lifeboat. I believe that most of an entire generation will go to ruin — the ruin of Celine, Artaud, Rimbaud, voluntarily, even enthusiastically.

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7. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, *Moral Education in the Life of the School* (Alexandria, VA, 1988), 16-18.

8. Kenneth Rexroth, “Disengagement: The Art of the Beat Generation,” in *New World Writing*, no. 11 (New York, NY: New American Library, 1957), 32.

9. *Ibid.*, 35-36.

What will happen afterward I don't know, but for the next ten years or so we are going to have to cope with the youth we, my generation, put through the atom smasher. Social disengagement, artistic integrity, voluntary poverty — these are powerful virtues and may pull them through, but they are not the virtues we tried to inculcate — rather they are the exact opposite.<sup>10</sup>

An education which “disengages” itself from God, and from its entire history, is an education in love with death; it has, in Rexroth's terms, “the cannibalism of a lost lifeboat.” Not surprisingly, state schools are today in a state of moral and educational lawlessness and anarchy.

In an interesting passage, the novelist Erica Jong spoke of marriage as no cure for loneliness, lovers as no panacea, sex as no final solution, and then said, “If you made your life into a long disease then death was the only cure.”<sup>11</sup> Increasingly, more and more students see death as the only cure because life itself is rejected. Before the French Revolution, the world of writers was marked by a hostility to everything positive. These men were *the enraged*. Prior to the Russian Revolution, Russian writers became nihilistic, as did youth, and they became an *enraged* class. Herzen, who was no champion of the old order, wrote with annoyance from London concerning these nihilists, the *enraged*:

What struck me about them was the ease with which they despaired of everything; the ferocious joy of their denial and their terrible ruthlessness. Despite their excellent spirits and noble intentions, our “bilious ones” can by their tone, drive an angel to blows and a saint to curses. They exaggerate everything in the world with such aplomb and not as a joke but out of such bitterness, that they are quite unbearable.<sup>12</sup>

In education as in society at large to attack Christian norms is to gain favor as an “intelligent” and “perceptive” man. More than a few churchmen have gained national prominence by giving their voice to such “cultured” critiques of Biblical faith and law. On June 18, 1943, during World War II, George Orwell wrote a poem

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10. *Ibid.*, 41.

11. Erica Jong, *Fear of Flying* (New York, NY: New American Library, 1973), 254.

12. Cited in Walter Laqueur, “Literature and the Historian,” in Walter Laqueur and George L. Mosse, eds., *Literature and Politics in the Twentieth Century* (New York, NY: Harper Torchbook, 1967), 13.

about his “crime” of patriotism, i.e., his desertion of disengagement from traditional values. He said

one had the effrontery  
 To write three pages calling me “traitor”  
 So black a crime it is to love one’s country.  
 Yet where’s the punk that would have thought it odd of me  
 To write a shelf of books in praise of sodomy?<sup>13</sup>

The *enraged* of our century are enraged most of all against Godly order. In 1968, The Rolling Stones, a rock musical group, introduced their song, “Sympathy for the Devil.” Marshall Berman, in writing on the student revolution of the 1960s, reported, as a member of that revolutionary element, how unnerving it was for many of them, when the facts of the Manson case began to emerge, to find how their world overlapped with Manson’s. They were a part of the same “counterculture,” with the same music, drugs, sexual behavior, and more. The “Weather-people” cheered the Manson murders “as an exemplary political act.” They “reveled in the language of revolutionary demonology.” Berman found it “appropriate that LSD was first used and celebrated not in shadowing bohemian enclaves but at Harvard and at the UCLA Medical Center.” All the same, Berman held,

Anyone who persists in the belief “that good can follow only from good, and evil only from evil” — who believes, in other words, that he can live in this world and still keep his innocence intact — “is a political infant.” Human life is darkly ambiguous at its core.<sup>14</sup>

Our culture is in sympathy with the devil because it resents the claims of the sovereign God of Scripture. As a result, it will stomach any absurdity in the name of education; it will continue to tolerate the destruction of its children morally and intellectually; it will continue to tolerate crime in the streets and in every corner; it will continue to tolerate degenerate men as politicians. It will continue to do these things and more because it has said of the sovereign, Jesus Christ, “We will not have this man to reign over us” (Luke 19:14).

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13. Stephen Lutman, “Orwell’s Patriotism,” in *ibid.*, 150-51.

14. Marshall Berman, “Sympathy for the Devil: Faust, the ‘60s and the Tragedy of Development,” in *American Review*, no. 19 (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1974), 23-75.



## SOVEREIGNTY AND DOMINION

**F**or fallen man, the problem with God is, *first*, that God alone is God, and beside Him there is none other. This precludes man from becoming God, however much man may desire to be so. *Second*, God holds man accountable for all things, so that man always moves in a moral universe. The appeal of Freud, despite the manifest absurdities of many of his ideas, was that he provided an escape from moral responsibility *to God*. Blame could be passed on to one's parents and society. Gene Fowler cited an amusing analysis of this in his reminiscence of the 1920s:

...After complimenting Mr. Houghton for having on a Brooks Brothers No. 1 sack coat, Mr. (Lucius) Beebe (also educated at Yale and Harvard but not Bowdoin) chanced to remark that most men blame their woes on others. The precedent for this despicable course, he went on to say, was established by Adam. The father of mankind had maintained even to Jehovah Himself that Eve had persuaded him he was not getting enough pectin in his diet.

Mr. (William Morris) Houghton asked Leo the bartender for a glass of Prohibition dew. He then made a somewhat shrewd observation: "The basic cause of poor Adam's cynical behavior lay in the fact that he had no childhood. He had been deprived of the fun of having his mother, or, on the other hand, of a longing to return to the womb. The psychoanalysts are baffled by Adam's case history.

They simply must come upon a cantankerous mother to bolster their findings, else throw in the sponge.”<sup>1</sup>

This is a delightful summation of the matter!

This evasion of responsibility has its counterpart within the church. I have many times been amazed at the hostility and even ferocity of those who deny the relevance of the law and insist that grace only is needed, not works; they insist that faith does not require works as its necessary concomitant, even as life in this world means breathing. Our Lord’s words, that “every good tree bringeth forth good fruit,” and “by their fruits ye shall know them” (Matt. 7:15-20), are rejected. They seem to believe as against Paul that sinning will make grace abound (Rom. 6:1).

To evade responsibility and guilt by an antinomian manipulation of theology is simply another form of Adam’s sin, even when it is called “Bible-believing faith.”

God is the Lord; He is our sovereign. The Sumerian gods, like so many pagan deities, guided and controlled the world to keep it from falling into chaos.<sup>2</sup> Chaos was ultimate, and the gods were attempting to push back this ultimate darkness. Given this ultimacy of chaos, man’s basic problem was not his own sin but the ultimate chaos *and* the frequent perversity of the gods. The cosmos was involved in a great “struggle between cosmic order and chaos.”<sup>3</sup> Given this perspective, man saw himself as a victim of the cosmos *and* the gods. Not moral responsibility but self-pity marked paganism.

The God of Scripture tolerates no self-pity, not even when a man like Job suffers unjustly, because man is not the measure of his own experiences. Only God is the measure. Self-pity assumes that the purpose of creation is the happiness and satisfaction of the self, an insane assumption. Hence God demands of Job,

2. Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

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1. Gene Fowler, *Skyline* (New York, NY: Macfadden Books, [1961] 1962), 9-10.

2. Helmer Ringgren, *Religions of the Ancient Near East* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1973), 4.

3. James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, [1950] 1955), 60.

3. Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

4. Where was thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. (Job 38:2-4)

In paganism, as in our present world of anti-Christianity, sovereignty is united to dominion in the same person or state, i.e., in the dictatorship of the proletariat, in a dictator, or in a democratic state. In Scripture, God alone is the Lord or Sovereign; as our Lord, He requires us to be His vicegerents and to exercise dominion over the earth (Gen. 1:26-28). Because God retains total sovereignty, it being an aspect of His being, man can never be sovereign. As one delegated to the exercise of dominion, man can only justly do so under God and in terms of God's sovereign law, which is an expression of His being. In its narrower limits, the image of God in man is knowledge, righteousness, holiness, and dominion (Gen. 1:26-28; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24). Man can only possess the communicable attributes of God, and hence God's image in man gives dominion, not sovereignty. When man seeks dominion under God, he makes the purpose and goal of his life the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness or justice (Matt. 6:33). When he seeks sovereignty and dominion outside of God, he makes himself and his will the center of his life and of the universe. The same is true of the humanistic state: its goal is defined by man, and, because man is in revolt against God, the humanistic state steadily adapts itself to lawless and evil man. Because the humanistic state progressively becomes more depraved in its practices (abortion, euthanasia, a favorable attitude towards homosexuality, and so on), it becomes steadily more congenial to depraved men and more hostile to the godly.

Thomas Boston said,

The unrenewed will is wholly perverse, in reference to man's chief and highest end. The natural man's chief end is not God, but himself. . . . Most men are far from making God their chief end, in their natural and civil actions, that in these matters, God is not in all their thoughts. Their eating and drinking, and such like natural actions, are for themselves: their own pleasure or necessity, without any higher end, Zech, vii. 6, "did ye not eat for yourselves?" . . . They seek God indeed, but not for himself, but for themselves. They seek him not at all, but for their own welfare: so their whole life is

woven into one web of practical blasphemy; making God the means, and self their end; yea, their chief end.<sup>4</sup>

Men are at war, said Boston, against their “sovereign Lord.” The indictment against them in heaven declares,

1. Thou art guilty of high treason and rebellion against the King of heaven. The thought and wish of thy heart, which he knows as well as the language of thy mouth, has been, “No God,” Ps. xiv. 1. Thou has rejected his government, blown the trumpet, and set up the standard of rebellion against him, being one of those that say “We will not have this man to reign over us,” Luke xix. 14. Thou hast striven against, and quenched his Spirit; practically disowned his laws proclaimed by his messengers; stopped thine ears at their voice, and sent them away mourning for thy pride. Thou hast conspired with his grand enemy, the devil. Although thou art a servant of the King of glory, daily receiving his favours, and living on his bounty, thou art holding a correspondence, and hast contracted a friendship, with his greatest enemy, and art acting for him against thy Lord; for “the lusts of the devil ye will do,” John viii. 44.

2. Thou art a murderer before the Lord, thou hast laid the stumbling-block of thine iniquity before the blind world, and hast ruined the souls of others by thy sinful course. Though thou dost not see now, the time may come, when thou shalt see the blood of thy relations, neighbors, acquaintances, and others, upon thy head, Matt. xviii. 7, “Woe unto the world because of offences – Woe to that man by whom the offence cometh”: Yea, thou art a self-murderer before God, Prov. viii. 36. “He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul; all they that hate me, love death....”<sup>5</sup>

Boston becomes even more intensely passionate as he continues; he is hardly popular reading in a lukewarm church. It was, however, men with this kind of faithfulness and zeal who exercised dominion under God. They often made mistakes indeed, but this is something the dead cannot do!

One of the few good sentences in Hegel’s writings is his maxim: A hero is never a hero to his valet – not because the hero is not a hero, but because the valet is a valet.

The sins and mistakes of valets are rarely if ever noted by history, whereas those of great men are. It is the lukewarm whom our Lord despised.

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4. Thomas Boston, *Human Nature in its Fourfold Estate* (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Publication, n.d.), 74-75.

5. *Ibid.*, 104.

Dominion begins with submission to our sovereign and triune God; it means obedience to His law. It requires bringing every area of life and thought into obedience to the King of kings and Lord of lords. To depart from God's law is to deny the standard whereby a man's works can be assessed, and his faith revealed. It is the evasion of responsibility and justice for a life outside of God. In another context, a non-Christian thinker very tellingly observed:

...Excellence indicts us; and it is perfectly "natural," within a democratic ethos, that we should want to evade that indictment. Condescension, establishes the distance that made evasion easy....

This is another of the obstacles to participation. Non-participation maintains non-participation, because the condescending attitude inherent in the role of spectator justifies the role itself.<sup>6</sup>

For Christians to withdraw to the sidelines is to deny the faith. Their calling is to be dominion men.

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6. John H. Schaar, "Power and Purity," in *American Review*, no. 19 (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1974), 166.



## MAN'S LAW

In 1975, the United States issued a ten-cent commemorative postage stamp to honor the Seventh World Law Conference of the World Peace Through Law Center, held in Washington, DC, October 12-17, 1975. There were over one hundred participating nations. The conference theme was, "The Role of Law in World Cooperation." Central on the stamp was an open law book, with a judge's gavel resting on it, and above it the world globe and the words, "World Peace through Law."

These words echoed the title of a book published a few years earlier, written by Grenville Clark and Louis B. Sohn, *World Peace Through World Law*, an affirmation of a humanistic doctrine of salvation by law.<sup>1</sup> The United Nations was obviously in mind.

"World Peace through Law" is an important slogan and an expression of a modern faith; it is also the antithesis of T. Robert Ingram's affirmation, "The World Under God's Law."

A belief in "World Peace through Law" is a truly amazing faith. *First* of all, no orthodox Christian has ever affirmed salvation by law. To believe that the redeemed of God will live in faithfulness

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1. Grenville Clark and Louis B. Sohn, *World Peace Through World Law* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958).

to God's law is to affirm *salvation* by Christ, not law, but *sanctification* by obedience to God's law-word (Matt. 4:4). Thus, the faith expressed in the slogan "World Peace through Law" represents a radical break with Christianity and all of Western civilization.

*Second*, it is a denial of the doctrine of original sin. To believe that world peace is possible by the adoption of a common law for all nations is to believe that mankind's problem is a bad arrangement of things, or bad laws, *not* bad men. World law cannot abate wars, murders, thefts, adulteries, nor homosexuality, even if it sought to do so. The result of world law would not be world peace but world power for someone or some group.

*Third*, the slogan "World Peace through Law" assumes that there is one *kind* of law, or, one kind of valid law for all nations, and it is humanistic law. There are, of course, a variety of law systems: Christian, Buddhist, Islamic, Hindu, and so on. These are in opposition one to another. If we assume that the *one law* is humanistic, we are still in trouble; there are many varieties here, such as Marxist, liberal humanistic, libertarian, and so on. Libertarian concepts of law are not acceptable to Marxists, for example.

*Fourth*, law is always the expression of a sovereign will. As far back at least as the Babylonians and Assyrians, this was recognized.<sup>2</sup> The steady intrusion of the modern state into every area of life rests on its open claim to sovereignty and lawmaking power. The statist attitude is that law is simply what the state declares it is.

*Fifth*, "World Peace through Law," in the minds of its adherents, means world peace through law of a world state. These men are certainly aware of history; why do they assume that a world state will have a benevolence national states have lacked? Are they assuming that the triumph of humanistic statism will bring in a humanistic millennium? The evidence indicates that the rise of humanism leads to a rise of lawlessness.

*Sixth*, the result of "World Peace through Law" will be worldwide coercion, not peace. The goal of such efforts is peace. Men like Genghis Khan and Dracula established their peace, as have

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2. Helmer Ringgren, *Religions of the Ancient Near East* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1973), 115.

tyrants over the centuries, and men have not been the better for it, nor are they the better for Soviet peace in the twentieth century. But this is not all. In the West, prior to recent years, power was nominally tied to a religious and moral faith. Positivism in law, history, and sociology has undermined this. As Robert Strausz-Hupe observed:

The mood has changed, and academic thinking, as is its wont, has performed a task of historical reorientation by completing a turn of 180 degrees. History is no longer seen as the manifestation of the divine will or the quest for justice and freedom or the march of progress, but as a ceaseless struggle for power. Social change, the neo-realist asserts brashly, is prompted by the pursuit of power; only the fittest survive; and the spoils go to the strong. The quest for power governs the dynamics of social development: to grow is to impose one's will upon others.<sup>3</sup>

Given this relativism and positivism, all talk about justice is nonsense. The goal of "peace" is the silencing of all who disagree with the power state. World peace then becomes world control or tyranny. What can world law represent, if it is not God's law, except evil? It is well known that states change their laws to suit their purposes and power. Abortion, for example, has, since antiquity, been either a crime against the state or the will of the state, depending on civil convenience. Since the Renaissance, the Western state has been steadily moving into an anti-Christian and tyrannical stance. To cite Strausz-Hupe again,

The Renaissance released not only the speculative mind from dogmatic fetters but also the urge to power from religious scruples. The Prince could now persuade himself that he incarnated the State: he no longer held his power as a sacred trust, but possessed it as he possessed his body. The secular theory of the State did not allow for the existence of independent social units, members that, so to speak, were not attached to the "body." The centralizing tendencies that swept the bits and pieces of the crumbling medieval order into the hamper of the secular state, found in scientific analogies their convenient rationalizations. Just as the limbs obey the command of a central and superior organ — presumably the brain — so the body politic must naturally obey the Prince.<sup>4</sup>

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3. Robert Strausz-Hupe, *Power and Community* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1956), 8.

4. *Ibid.*, 97.

Revolutions, thus, in the name of eliminating abuses, have been struggles for power. The French Revolution *logically* resulted in a Reign of Terror, and the Russian Revolution in a permanent terror. The equation of revolutionists is that despotism means private power. Hence, a follower of Robespierre, Bertrand Barere de Vieuzac, wrote on May 3, 1793, "The spirit of the private family must vanish when the great family (of the Republic) calls.... [Children] are born for the Republic, not for the pride and despotism of the family."<sup>5</sup>

The modern revolutionary faith calls for the de-Christianization and re-paganization of the world. As Levi noted, "the Athenian revolution was the unique attempt to base a state and its authority on human reason."<sup>6</sup> Man was made the measure of all things, and human reason was "the source of legitimacy and therefore of the right to govern and command."<sup>7</sup>

This faith in reason is again asserted, now "scientific" reason, and its enemy is Biblical faith, the Kingship of Christ, and the validity of God's law. Humanistic law, as the product of man's science and reason, is a changing law; its faith is not in a *planned* society but a *planning* society, i.e., one in which situational ethics prevails; and the law is changed to meet new social circumstances and needs. Man thus has no appeal beyond the state, because no higher law is acknowledged. Then justice is simply what the state does. Law is quietly replaced by statist regulations, and a bureaucracy replaces the justice system. A bureaucracy is the administration of power, and the more regulations replace law as justice, the more thorough do bureaucratic controls become. The state as a god walking on earth then prevails.

Such a development is a logical outcome of theologies which exalt man and diminish God. If God's law is denied, then man's law will be affirmed. If God is not our sovereign, then man or the state will be. If God's predestination does not command our faith

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5. *Ibid.*, 112-13.

6. Mario Attilio Levi, *Political Power in the Ancient World* (London, England: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, [1955] 1965), 104.

7. *Ibid.*, 105.

and allegiance, then the state's predestination, or total planning and control, will.

The faiths of India denied to God His place, and, as a result, naturalistic causality became the ruler, and men had to control their *karma* in order to command the gods and nature. Thus, Bussell noted, "amongst the Jains (whose main object is to exalt a perfect *human* nature at the expense of the *divine*) prayers are offered to the *jinas* or sanctified human saints but actually rewarded by the gods; for the canonized mortals have passed into perfect peace and cannot be disturbed to listen to us."<sup>8</sup>

When man is the measure and the center of all things, man will be invoked, and man will become the center of power. Then, too, man will look for world peace through his own law, because man sees himself as his only messiah. Then, too, man, having abolished both God *and* Satan from his moral universe, will also become his own devil and hell.

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8. F.W. Bussell, *Religious Thought and Heresy in the Middle Ages* (London, England: Robert Scott, 1918), 41.



## THEOCRACY

Tierney, in discussing *The Crisis of Church and State, 1050-1300*, observed in passing that “theocracy is a normal pattern of government.”<sup>1</sup> More distinctly, we must say that theocracy is *the* normal pattern of government, in that men, whatever the form of polity they adopt, see it as right and ultimate; authority is given in a variety of names, e.g., the dictatorship of the proletariat, the consent of the governed, the general will, the divine right of kings, and so on, but in each case the form expresses the rightness of things. The god who rules may be a man, a class, a race, or a majority, but it is still a form of ultimate power. The word *democrat* comes from *demos*, people, and *kratos*, usually rendered as rule but which can also mean to take possession; thus, *democracy* means that the people take possession and rule. Sovereignty and rule are attributes of God, and to claim the right to rule in one’s own name is a claim to sovereignty or divinity. As Fritz Kern pointed out, medieval thinking, until quite late, regarded sovereignty as an attribute of God alone: “The people in the Middle Ages were no more regarded as ‘sovereign’ than was the monarch.... The monarch, on the one hand, and the community on the other, are joined together in the

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1. Brian Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State, 1050-1300* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964), 131.

theocratic order in such a way that both are subordinate to God and to the Law.”<sup>2</sup>

False theocracies are the rule of men; true theocracy is the rule of God’s law in men and over men. True theocracy requires a very limited church and state. Giving more power to men, either privately or institutionally, is no substitute for the rule of the triune God in the lives of men.

We are told of Cardinal Richelieu that there was madness in his family. The cardinal himself, in “his spells of mental aberration,” thought himself to be less than a man; he “imagined himself to be a horse.” Richelieu’s elder brother, a half-wit, feeble-minded and delusionary, believed that he was the First Person of the Trinity. Richelieu took this brother out of his Carthusian monastery and made him the Cardinal-Archbishop of Lyon.<sup>3</sup>

Such madness is a dramatic and compelling fact. However, all claims to sovereignty by men and their institutions are even more insane, however routine and humdrum their expressions. Such bland and colorless insanity is in fact far more dangerous than the more dramatic expressions of madness.

Friedrich and Blitzer have seen the origins of the modern state in large part in the idea of “reasons of state.” (This was not a new idea in the modern era, but it certainly took on new meaning.) It was popularized by the Jesuit Giovanni Botero (1540-1617) in *Della ragione di stato* (1588) and was quickly popular. It facilitated the shift from ethics to politics, or the blending of the two.<sup>4</sup> In the modern state, the core of power has been found in “developing effective bureaucracies.”

In the 1970s, while lecturing in Washington, DC, I referred adversely to bureaucracies to an audience which included such men. They were very unhappy, but, at the same time, gracious and courteous in their objections in a private discussion which

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2. Fritz Kern, *Kingship and Law in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell, 1939), 10.

3. Aldous Huxley, “The Lust for Money and Power,” in Theodore K. Rabb, ed., *The Thirty Years War* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, [1964] 1972), 141.

4. Carl J. Friedrich and Charles Blitzer, *The Age of Power* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, [1957] 1970), 7.

followed. Their thesis was a very interesting one. *First*, they made it clear that, from their perspective, a bureaucracy does *not* initiate policies but simply develops the implications of congressional legislation. *Second*, they said, the men in a bureaucracy prefer anonymity and dislike public attention. While some like to see their names appended, with other names, to a document, the majority do not. For them, an impersonal approach is best, because all actions must be seen as departmental actions or policy decisions. A personal stance defeats the function of a bureaucracy. *Third*, contrary to the opinion of many, whether the bureaucrat is in the Internal Revenue Service or elsewhere, he is usually a quiet and timid man, one who prefers to perform an anonymous task rather than gain public attention.

The sincerity of the men could not be questioned. They saw themselves as each performing a limited task in a limited place. What was, however, equally clear, was their sense of *public duty and mission*. This is a noteworthy fact. During the age of Pope Alexander VI and his son Cesare Borgia (1458-1507), a great advance was made in the efficiency of the Vatican and its various arms. Almost a century later, Pope Sixtus V spoke of "St. Peter, Alexander, and Ourselves," thereby summing up church history in three names. In the mid-seventeenth century, Urban VIII cited four: "St. Peter, St. Sylvester, Alexander and Ourselves."<sup>5</sup> In terms of the administrative history of the papacy, there was good reason for this high rating given to Alexander VI. However, in terms of faith and morals, Alexander merits an abysmally low rank! Men working under Alexander VI could, however, have had a strong sense of *public duty and mission*, very much like our modern bureaucrats. In both cases, men could have vindicated their calling as service to an essentially and morally valid institution.

Both in church and state, the issue is a very important one, and at stake is a controversy which came into sharp focus in the Donatist controversy. During the latter half of the third century, and well into the fourth, the struggle raged. During a time of persecution many churchmen apostasized in fear, but later repented.

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5. Clemente Fusero, *The Borgias* (New York, NY: Praeger, [1966] 1972), 156.

The Donatists opposed the reentry of the “lapsed,” whereas the Catholics favored it. At stake also was the validity of such things as baptism when performed by a priest who lapsed. The Catholics held, as have Protestants since, that the validity of baptism rests, not on man, but on God. Therefore baptisms performed by a lapsed priest did not become invalid.

The issue that was *not* faced then nor since is this: what happens if the priest *continues* as a lapsed man, i.e., continues to be faithless and disobedient? Assuming that his baptisms, i.e., the baptisms he officiates at, are valid, can a people continue to seek baptism from such a man? Catholics of Alexander VI’s day believed him to be an atheist, and the church, like him, corrupt. It was said, “Do you want to ruin your young son? Then make a priest of him.” Alexander had illegitimate children.<sup>6</sup>

What is the duty of a man in such a context: in church or in state? The Donatist controversy concerned the *restoration* of *repentant* lapsed men. What is the moral requirement of men when unrepentant pastors and priests control the church, and when equally ungodly men control the state?

In the area of the church, men have some choice, in that Protestants still have some evangelical and orthodox churches they can join. Roman Catholics have some Eastern churches whose validity they can recognize. What happens in the area of the state? The modern state is either openly or covertly godless; it has legalized abortion and homosexuality, and, increasingly, euthanasia. Shall the Christian abandon civil office in the bureaucracy because a *public duty and mission* is now a godless one? Or should he work from within to try to change the course of state in some small way?

We find, in Paul’s letters, reference to civil officials who served an evil empire. In Philippians 4:22, “Caesar’s household” may refer to what we would call cabinet-rank officials. Another citation of a Christian official is in Romans 16:23, “Erastus the chamberlain of the city,” which city have may have been the corrupt Corinth. Such references are important. Christians then were *not* pietists who withdrew from the world, or failed to apply their

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6. *Ibid.*, 204-5, etc.

faith to the world and their calling. We know that these men in the generations following the apostolic age at times died for their faith.

Neither a mindless obedience nor a mindless resistance are godly. In current church and state battles, the startling fact at times is the eagerness of some churchmen to battle over absurdities while neglecting central issues.

At stake is an issue which the early church faced, the issue of lordship or sovereignty. The church's response was, "Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil. 2:9-11), not Caesar. For Christians, theocracy *must be* the normal pattern of all government, in every sphere of government, because God alone is Lord or sovereign. It is basic to the madness of our time, and of all apostate history, to assert the sovereignty of man, or of the state (Gen. 3:5).

The problem with bureaucracies in church and state is that men ascribe to them an area of necessity which is godlike. God's Kingdom will not end, nor His sovereignty diminish, if churches and states collapse, because all things depend on Him, and He depends on nothing. Isaiah declares:

13. Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him?
14. With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?
15. Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.
16. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering.
17. All nations before him are as nothing: and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.
18. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him? (Isaiah 40:13-18)

To serve God requires a high seriousness, but not self-importance. Theocracy is the normal pattern of life in every sphere, and the rule of God must govern all our actions. All things must be subordinate to God and His covenant law.



## THE DEVIL THEORY OF POLITICS

The universe is a moral realm, and every atom in all creation is God-created. Men can never sidestep the religious and moral issues of life; they can blind themselves to them, and regularly do, but this is comparable to a blind man walking on high cliffs without even a cane in hand.

Under Cromwell, England gained great international power, but Cromwell was resented by many within England, *until* Charles II reigned for a time. Then, as Samuel Pepys commented in his diary,

It is strange how everybody does nowadays reflect upon Oliver and commend him, what brave things he did, and made all the neighbour princes fear him, while here a prince, come in with all the love and prayers and good liking of his people... hath lost all so soon.<sup>1</sup>

The order Cromwell represented was unpopular especially because of its religious and moral character. Frederic Harrison, in *Cromwell*, wrote:

For the first and only time in modern Europe, morality and religion became the sole qualification insisted on by the Court. In the whole history of modern Europe, Oliver is the one ruler into whose

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1. Cited by Roger Howell, *Cromwell* (Boston, MA: Little Brown, 1977), 250.

presence no vicious man could come, whose service no vicious man might enter.<sup>2</sup>

Such a faith meant an unsentimental people wherever that faith was found. We are told of one incident during the Civil War, of

one faithful daughter dressing wounds of over three score Cromwellian soldiers in one day, and, in the midst of it, receiving the intelligence that her faithless lover had given his heart to another woman, and taken her to wife, which caused, we are told, but a very brief interruption to her work of mercy. "Since he hath made himself unworthy of my love, he is unworthy of my anger or concern," was her philosophic reflection. She soon found a better mate.<sup>3</sup>

More recently, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher spoke to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, saying that she was "speaking personally as a Christian as well as a politician." She spoke of godly responsibility, declaring,

We are told we must work and use our talents to create wealth. "If a man will not work he shall not eat," wrote St. Paul to the Thesalonians. Indeed, abundance rather than poverty has a legitimacy which derives from the very nature of Creation.

Nevertheless, the Tenth Commandment – Thou shalt not covet – recognized that making money and owning things could become selfish activities. But it is not the creation of wealth that is wrong but love of money for its own sake.

The spiritual dimension comes in deciding what one does with the wealth....

When Abraham Lincoln spoke in his famous Gettysburg speech of 1863 of "government of the people," he gave the world a neat definition of democracy which has since been widely and enthusiastically adopted. But what he enunciated as a form of government was not in itself especially Christian, for nowhere in the Bible is the word democracy mentioned. Ideally, when Christians meet, as Christians, to take counsel together their purpose is not (or should not be) to ascertain what is the mind of the majority but what is the mind of the Holy Spirit – something which may be quite different.<sup>4</sup>

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2. John Stephen Flynn, *The Influence of Puritanism on the Political & Religious Thought of the English* (London, England: John Murray, 1920), 61.

3. *Ibid.*, 69.

4. "Thatcher: Sow, and Ye Shall Reap for All," *Wall Street Journal*, May 31, 1988, 22.

The report is that these comments received a sharply adverse reaction from the public.

People do not want a moral universe, because, as sinners, they are then openly under condemnation. State schools now teach “values education,” and children are taught that the *valid* morality is the one which suits them. This is in faithfulness to the tempter’s program, ye shall be as gods (or, God), every man his own god, knowing, or determining for yourself, what constitutes good and evil (Gen. 3:5). The universe, in such a perspective, is morally neutered; no act or attitude is of itself good or evil; only in their relationship to us can we give them a moral status. Thus, at a university chapel, a prominent clergyman spoke of the fact that at times adultery could be beneficial and hence morally valid for a person. Neither persons, nor things, nor acts, can of themselves be morally reprehensible. This means that there are no bad people, no forbidden meats, nor any sinful acts. The test of value is pragmatic: is it personally, or, better, socially, conducive to human welfare to commit such an act?

One American general, in attempts to discuss a variety of issues with prominent State Department officials, has found that his insistence that Marxism is evil, for example, leads to a prompt rejection. The answer, given with condescending tolerance, is, “That’s the devil theory of politics, and we don’t subscribe to that.” The answer may be bad, but the characterization is sound: *the devil theory of politics*. To reject this is to believe that men and nations are morally neutral, and all that is required to bring about world peace is tolerance, patience, and even unilateral disarmament to show good faith. Then comes the humanistic millennium, supposedly!

Such men, by failing to acknowledge the fact of evil *in men*, condemn themselves and their societies to death. They are like blind men walking on high cliffs without a cane.

Let us consider the implications of their position, a thoroughly Darwinian one. If we do not live in a moral universe but rather a neutral one, then we live in a vast realm of brute factuality. Cornelius Van Til has shown with devastating clarity that brute

facts are meaningless facts, unrelated to anything else in any way. To be morally neutral is to be meaningless, or dead.

In the perspective of its humanistic advocates, however, the denial of the devil theory of politics (and life) is an affirmation of the freedom of man from the compulsion of moral absolutes. To live beyond good and evil is at the least to live as a superman, if not as a god. The Biblical doctrine of God declares God to be absolute in His moral being and unchangeable in all His attributes. His justice is thus immutable and eternal: "For I am the LORD: I change not" (Mal. 3:6). He is "the same yesterday, and today, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8). Karl Barth to the contrary, God never changes.

The goal of fallen man is to be as God, to be his own sovereign *and creator*. Man seeks to remake himself in terms of his own imagination, and his goal is to live beyond good and evil in any absolute sense. This to him means *freedom*, freedom to sin, i.e., to express contempt for God. Nietzsche said cynically, "We are most dishonourable towards our God: he is not *permitted* to sin."<sup>5</sup> For Nietzsche, free man now has greater liberty: he can sin at will. In chapter 5, "The Natural History of Morals," Nietzsche wrote:

*Morality in Europe at present is herding-animal morality; and therefore, as we understand the matter, only one kind of human morality, beside which, and after which many other moralities, and above all higher, are or should be possible. Against such a "possibility," against such a "should be," however, this morality defends itself with all its strength; it says obstinately and inexorably: "I am morality itself and nothing else is morality."*<sup>6</sup>

The Biblical faith in one God, one law, and one morality was anathema to Nietzsche. It was a form of slavery, the enslavement of man to God. He held, "*The real philosophers, however, are commanders and law-givers; they say: 'Thus shall it be!'*" "Their will to truth is — *Will to Power.*"<sup>7</sup> Beginning with the same philosophical premises, Karl Marx, in his "Thesis on Feuerbach," wrote, "The philosophers have only *interrupted* the world, in various ways; the

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5. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, chap. 4, "Apothegms and Interludes," in *The Philosophy of Nietzsche* (New York, NY: Modern Library, n.d.), 72.

6. *Ibid.*, 114-15.

7. *Ibid.*, 135-36.

point, however, is to *change* it.”<sup>8</sup> One American novelist wrote his protest against “a world I never made”!

For Nietzsche, the “European problem” was “the rearing of a new ruling caste for Europe.”<sup>9</sup> This new ruling caste had to be anti-Christian, of course.

This is the background for the contempt expressed by the State Department for “the devil theory of politics.” It is a rejection of God and His law as having any validity for man and his world. Brian Tierney observed,

Humans find it consoling to imagine that the order imposed by their rulers reflects a divine ordering of the universe; most of the time, as Bernard Shaw observed, “The art of government is the organization of idolatry.” (The great advance of the twentieth century has been our discovery that it is possible to combine all the advantages of theocracy with all the conveniences of atheism.)<sup>10</sup>

This is, of course, a particularly telling statement: we do have now a theocracy without God, an idolatry of the will of man, and atheism as a policy of state. The term, the “devil theory of politics,” is very apt and revealing, because it points to the rejection of morality in statecraft; all is now beyond good and evil. To call this Christian perspective “the devil theory” is a rejection of Satan, and of the idea of evil, of a rebellion against God, and a denial of His law. It is the radical rejection of God by men who are determined to remake man and the world in terms of their ideas.

In contemplating this fact, the psalmist observed,

7. When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever:

8. But thou, LORD, art most high for evermore.

9. For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered. (Ps. 92:7-9)

To depart from God is to depart from wisdom and to love death (Prov. 8:36). It is not the suicidal who shall inherit the earth, but the meek, the tamed of God (Matt. 5:5).

8. K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Religion* (Moscow, USSR: Foreign Languages Publishing House, n.d.), 72

9. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 186.

10. Brian Tierney, *Religion, Law, and the Growth of Constitutional Thought, 1150-1650* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 8.



## REFORMATION IN CHURCH AND STATE

**P**ierre (or, Peter) Viret (1511-1571), a Swiss reformer and a close friend of John Calvin, is of importance in a study of the doctrine of the state. A study published in 1964, *The Political Ideas of Pierre Viret*, by Robert Dean Linder, is important in making Viret's thinking more widely known.

*First*, Viret held that, because of the sin and disorder introduced into the world by Satan, the state is ordained by God to keep peace and order. *Second*, for Viret, the state's duty is to mediate God's will for the human race through law. There could be no state without law, and this law had to be based on God's law. Because God's law is so basic to the life of the state, the essential fact in a civil government is not its polity but the nature of its laws.

These considerations appear to have led him (Viret) to conclude that in the last analysis it is not the political system which counted but government by good laws. By "good laws" Viret meant a legal code which was based upon the principle and precepts of the Divine Law of God as found written in the Bible and in the hearts of all men everywhere. According to Viret, no government could survive and escape eventual confusion and ruin if it refused to recognize and accept this principle.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Robert Dean Linder, *The Political Ideas of Pierre Viret* (Geneva, Switzerland: Librairie Droz, 1964), 94.

*Third*, “Viret saw political order as an absolute necessity if religion were to exist among men.” This means that the welfare of church and state are tied together: they need each other. “The maintenance of the state was as necessary for a public form of religion and an ordered human society as was food, water and air.”<sup>2</sup>

It is impossible to understand the Reformation without this consideration. The Renaissance era was a time of tyranny and torture. This was a revival of ancient pagan practice. Torture was legal under Roman law, and the Romans took delight in refining and developing torture as well as painful forms of the death penalty, of which crucifixion was one. It is usual now to express cynicism about the deaths of Christian martyrs, but the accounts are accurate reports of the Roman practice; the Romans, moreover, loved wholesale executions of a fearful sort. In the siege of Jerusalem, and its fall, the Romans crucified so many Jews that the hills and countryside for fifty miles in every direction were stripped of all kinds of trees, including fruit trees. Mannix wrote,

Another unique Roman torture was described by St. Gregory: “The people of Heliopolis took young girls and after stripping them naked cut open their bellies and then, while the inwards were yet quivering, they stuffed them with barley, sewed them up, and allowed wild hogs to tear them open.” Some of the martyrs who died in this fashion were St. Prisca, St. Agnes, and St. Ephemia of Acquileia. Since it was against Roman law to execute a virgin, the girls were first raped by gladiators.<sup>3</sup>

Rape by animals was also practiced, a fact mentioned by Apuleius in *The Golden Ass*; this is also practiced in the Soviet Union.<sup>4</sup> For the Romans, torture was a basic part of the legal process in questioning prisoners.<sup>5</sup> Because Christianity condemned the legal rise of torture, “torture as a legal device to obtain information or a confession virtually disappeared in Europe for nearly a thousand years.”<sup>6</sup> Its revival came with the Renaissance and the rise of humanism, so that

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2. *Ibid.*, 83-84.

3. Daniel P. Mannix, *The History of Torture* (New York, NY: Dorset Press, 1964), 38.

4. Victor Herman, *The Gray People* (Independent Publishing House, n.d.), 65ff.

5. Mannix, *History of Torture*, 41.

6. *Ibid.*, 43.

torture, brutality, and a disregard for Christian morality became synonymous with civil government.

This is a fact of very great importance, one which we can neglect only at the cost of warping our views of the Reformation. The Inquisition began as an instrument of state, to control people. In Spain, it continued to be a major aspect of civil control well into the modern era. Popes Paul IV and Pius V made vigorous use of the Inquisition.<sup>7</sup> Hand in hand with this use of ugly coercion and immoralism, Pius IV, for example, had three illegitimate children.<sup>8</sup> Paul IV made a nephew, a drunken and dissolute soldier, a cardinal. On the death of Paul IV, the Romans took revenge on his relatives. Conditions with the European states were far, far worse. Europe was ruled by vicious and immoral tyrants.

The Reformation cannot be understood apart from this fact, nor can the subsequent work of Ignatius Loyola. Men felt a need to preserve Christendom by reforming church and state, and this was especially true of the Calvinists. This is one reason for the abiding hostility to Calvinism.

The Reformation had an *institutional* focus: it sought to reform church and state for the welfare of both. That this focus was at times dimmed by state controls, as in the case of Henry VIII and his successors, does not diminish the fact of this motive. In England, it led finally to civil war.

Linder calls attention to Viret's view of the state in this respect:

Viret did not feel that the state was either omnipotent or transcendent.... Viret was emphatic in condemning those individuals who worshipped their ruler and denounced those people who took "their princes for their law in matters of religion and conscience." In Viret's eyes neither rulers nor governments were infallible and a state could be either "good" or "evil" in Viret's dichotomy of things. Speaking of kings, princes, emperors and lords, he clearly stated his thinking on the subject:

For they are moral men like their subjects. They are able to err like other men and by the just judgment of God to fall from rule into

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7. A.G. Dickens, *The Counter-Reformation* (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1969), 118-19.

8. *Ibid.*, 120.

servitude and subjection, oftentimes into the subjection and servitude of their own subjects, as often has happened to many.

Viret leveled all men before God and many times took the opportunity to remind rulers that their subjects were men like themselves and that both prince and people had the same God. Viret was not awed by either the state or secular rulers and often let it be known. And he bluntly stated that the best way for princes to command honor and respect from their subjects was to earn it by living a courageous, virtuous God-fearing life.<sup>9</sup>

Institutional reformation of both church and state was very important to John Calvin. He opposed strongly those who, like the Anabaptists, withdrew from the state and sought a purely spiritual reformation. For Calvin, the reformation of things meant bringing man and society, church, state, and every sphere of life under the sovereignty of God and His word. To deny the need for a thorough reformation of both church and state was for Calvin dangerously wrong. He saw men placing their hopes in a purely spiritual religion as well as becoming flatterers of princes as both serious errors. For those who affirmed a faith relevant only to things spiritual, he said:

For some men, when they hear that the gospel promises a liberty which acknowledges no king or magistrate among men, but submits to Christ alone, think they can enjoy no advantage of their liberty, while they see any power exalted above them. They imagine, therefore, that nothing will prosper, unless the whole world be modeled in a new form, without any tribunals, or laws, or magistrates, or any thing of a similar kind, which they consider injurious to their liberty.<sup>10</sup>

Late medieval pietism and retreat lead men to regard devotional exercises as more important than applying the faith to the life around them; in fact, such application was seen as a lesser way or as wrong. Some were ready to hold, as Calvin was not, “the whole system of civil government as a polluted thing, which has nothing to do with Christian men.”<sup>11</sup> He went on to say,

Some fanatics, who are pleased with nothing but liberty, or rather licentiousness without any restraint, do indeed boast and vociferate, that since we are dead with Christ to the elements of this

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9. Linder, *Political Ideas*, 85.

10. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1936), bk. 4, chap. 20, sec. 1, 770-71.

11. *Ibid.*, sec. 2, 771.

world, and, being translated into the kingdom of God, sit among the celestials, it is a degradation to us, and far beneath our dignity, to be occupied with those secular and impure cares which related to things altogether uninteresting to a Christian man.<sup>12</sup>

To become so spiritual that one is of no earthly good was not Christianity for Calvin. What was necessary was reformation in every sphere, beginning with church and state.

In our time, the state has declared its independence of God, and the church has withdrawn from the necessary relevance of Christian faith to the state and to every other sphere of life. Both are under the judgment of God for their course of action and their rejection of Christ's crown rights.

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12. *Ibid.*, 771-72.



## THE CIVIL REVOLUTION, PART I

**T**he Council of Constance met (1414-1418) supposedly to reform the church. In reality, it ensured the corruption of the church until well after the Reformation. The Emperor Sigismund, who controlled the Council, was himself a man very much in need of reform. What kings and emperors wanted least of all was a strong church; they preferred a weak and corrupt church as a means of ensuring their own power. The realm of the Vatican progressively became administration, architecture, art, and, in time, the papal states. It was easier for the popes to be heads of state than of a church which threatened kings with moral ultimatums. An Erastian Europe was in the making, one in which the state controlled the church within its domain.

In England, in 1514-1515, the people of London demonstrated against the church because of the murder in the bishop's prison at Saint Paul's of Richard Hunne, held as a heretic. Parliament then attacked benefit of clergy somewhat later. Charles VIII, Louis XII, and other French monarchs were champions of a Gallican church, one controlled by them, not the Vatican. Philip II of Spain was in constant conflict with the popes, and the Catholics of Spain were not permitted an appeal to the pope, against the king or against the king's inquisition. Earlier, Ferdinand and Isabella had

been “vigorous Erastians.”<sup>1</sup> Maximilian I (1459-1519) hoped to gain the papal throne, after the death of the pope or by deposing him.<sup>2</sup> All these men seized church properties and wealth when it suited them. These were “good Catholics” who did as much harm to the church as Henry VIII. Thomas More, a “good Catholic” later made a saint, counseled Henry VIII to take the very steps he later opposed.

A strong argument could be made for the fact that the Reformation saved Christendom and preserved the Roman Catholic Church. This is not to say that the dismantling of Christendom did not continue with vigor. The various rulers were determined that society be civil in its foundation rather than theological. The crown lawyers were everywhere busy establishing new legal premises for society. The Reformation and then the Counter-Reformation created a counterforce to the civil revolution under way.

But the foundations were shifting. Charles Baudelaire, in his *Salon of 1846*, wrote,

The critic should arm himself from the start with a sure criterion drawn from nature, and should then carry out his duty with a passion; for a critic does not cease to be a man, and passion draws similar temperaments together and exalts the reason to fresh heights.<sup>3</sup>

This is a curious and important statement. Baudelaire’s “sure criterion” came, not from God but from nature, and the critic’s great asset for him was that he was a man, i.e., natural.

The Renaissance was deeply concerned about tradition, but not Christian tradition but that of pagan antiquity.<sup>4</sup> Lorenzo Ghiberti showed a hint of resentment at the triumph of Christianity. Art began to lose its supernatural framework and reference, and, increasingly in Renaissance art, “there is no reference beyond what we see.”<sup>5</sup>

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1. A.G. Dickens, *The Counter-Reformation* (New York, NY: Harcourt Brace and World, 1969), 15-18, 91-92, 149ff.

2. Friedrich Heer, *The Holy Roman Empire* (New York, NY: Friedrick A. Praeger, 1967), 139.

3. Michael Fried, in “Painting Memories: On the Containment of the Past in Baudelaire and Manet,” in Robert von Hallberg, ed., *Canons* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 227.

4. Michael Levey, *Early Renaissance* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, [1967] 1987), 15.

5. *Ibid.*, 24, 81.

The “sure criterion,” whether in art, religion, or politics, was steadily becoming nature rather than God and His revealed law-word. The state, as man’s natural order, came into its own as an end in itself. It was less and less, “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness” (or, justice; Matt. 6:33), but, steadily, seek ye first the political kingdom as the basic life and order for man. The civil revolution gave life a new focus, the state. Man began to see himself as a political animal rather than as a creature of God.

In the *Dictionary of Sociology* (1944), Mapheus Smith has two very interesting definitions of man which tell us much about our twentieth century world. Man no longer sees himself sharply and clearly in terms of God as a creature made in His image. Rather, “science” has taught him to think of himself naturalistically. According to Smith,

man. (1) The human species in general as distinguished from sub-human organisms. *Homo sapiens*. (2) An adult male member of the human species.

man, marginal. In the broadest sense, a person who is not a fully participating member of a social group. Most marginal persons are marginal to two or more groups, as is true of partially assimilated immigrants.<sup>6</sup>

The roots of this shift from Christian man to civil man are in the adoption of Aristotle’s thought by the medieval church. In terms of Aristotle, Aquinas held, “Man is a social animal”; “Man is properly that which he is according to reason,” and

Nature has given man the beginnings of the satisfaction of his wants, in giving him reason and a pair of hands; but not complete satisfaction, as to other animals, to whom she has given in sufficiency clothing and food.<sup>7</sup>

There is much more to Aquinas than this, but there is too much of this. What can we say of Aquinas’s statement that “*nature* has given man...reason,” etc.? If nature gave man his being, we can only have a naturalistic moral and social order, but if *God* has given man every atom of his being, and is the Maker of all things, then we have a

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6. Mapheus Smith, “Man,” in Henry Pratt Fairchild, ed., *Dictionary of Sociology* (New York, NY: Philosophical Library, 1944), 182.

7. Marris Stockhammer, ed., *Thomas Aquinas Dictionary* (New York, NY: Philosophical Library, 1965), 118-19.

mandate for a God-ordained order according to His law-word. The Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q. 10, asks, "How did God create man?" and answers,

God created man male and female, after his image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures. (Gen. 1:26-28; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24)

The entrance of Greek views of man and his being into medieval philosophy and civil polity led to a new way of thinking in church and state. The result was the civil revolution, a revival of paganism in which man's defining order was now the state rather than the triune God. With this civil revolution, the center of society shifted from church to state, from theology to politics, and from the Kingdom of God to the various kingdoms of man. "Reasons of state" now began to provide the new morality, because morality is man's relationship to reality. If the ruler of civil society is the reality, then, as Machiavelli and Castiglione saw, we align ourselves to that ruler as our moral and realistic duty. In such a society, God's law becomes "unrealistic" morality. If, however, the God of Scripture is the *living* God, then civil morality is fallaciousness and civil man and the state are under judgment and reprobation. The civil revolution is thus to unreality and death.

## THE CIVIL REVOLUTION, PART 2

On October 7, 1984, twenty four nuns signed an advertisement in *The New York Times* declaring that opposition to abortion is not “the only legitimate Catholic position.” The Vatican ordered their superiors to secure their recantation or dismiss them. On June 9, 1988, two of the nuns, Barbara Ferraro and Patricia Hussey, met the press to praise their superiors for defying the Vatican doctrine, and they called it “an enormous victory for all women,” especially nuns. The two nuns declared, “The victory confirms us in the belief that by entering a religious community, we do not give up who we are as feeling and thinking human beings.”<sup>1</sup> Priests, monks, nuns, and bishops have been defying the Vatican for centuries, but the reasons for the defiance have shifted. The defiance now reflects the civil revolution. Moreover, the defiance is based on claims of a truer morality, and the Vatican is indicted for failing to conform to a more ostensibly enlightened moral standard.

Behind this is the civil revolution. Biblical faith is *covenantal* faith. A covenant is a treaty of law between two parties. Covenants between equals means an agreement on the law terms and an equal input as to the character of the agreed law. A covenant between

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1. “Pro-Choice Nuns Praise Decision Against Ouster,” *Stockton (California) Record*, June 10, 1988, A-8.

unequals is a covenant of grace whereby the superior graciously gives his law to the inferior. God's covenant with man is thus a covenant of both grace and law. Because law is a religious fact, God permits no covenants or treaties by His people with ungodly nations (Ex. 23:31-33; 34:12-16; Deut. 7:1-4).

With the Enlightenment, men secularized the doctrine of the covenant into the social contract, a treaty between equals. John Locke (1632-1704) developed this concept extensively. His thinking had roots in Aristotle's view of man as a political animal who of necessity had to live in terms of agreed civil polities and laws. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) added to the doctrine.

The social contract was formed to protect the individual and his property rights. One consequence, as in England, was the passage of numerous laws requiring the death penalty for even minor thefts. An age that prided itself on having "outgrown" religious intolerance showed far greater intolerance towards the violation of property rights. The twentieth century transferred the intolerance to politico-economic dissent and has murdered millions while boasting of its superiority to the "age of faith"!

John Locke, in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, book 2, chapter 27, denied original sin and the curse and asserted man's rational control over and responsibility for all his actions. Hence society represents, not a fallen order, but a social contract, the rational consent of men. Civil government is thus a *radical contract*: it represents rational order. Much later, Hegel was to see the state as god walking on earth, as *geist* or Spirit incarnate. For Locke, the state was reason, and Locke's hope for man's salvation was in effect civil. The chief end of civil government was for Locke the protection of property. In terms of this faith, England passed law after law calling for the death penalty for theft, and for any infraction of property rights. For Locke, freedom meant having rules to live by legislated by civil government. For Locke, freedom from absolute and arbitrary power meant representative government. For Locke, this civil order was one of propertied men. For him, natural rights were *rational* rights, and the social contract was the order of *reason*. The order of reason was the will of the

majority. A dissenting minority might complain that its rights were being violated. According to Locke, a

government must be by majority legislative decision, unless a number larger than the majority is specifically stipulated. This follows from the intention of the Social Contract or “original compact.” But how are we to understand that a man enters into this compact? By a declaration express — or tacit. And what is the sign of tacit compact? The answer is residence; the compact lasting so long as does the residence. “He is at liberty to go and incorporate himself into any other commonwealth, or agree with others to begin a new one *in vacuis locis* (in the wide open spaces).<sup>2</sup>

Since Locke’s day, however, the state as the personification of reason has moved away from the protection of property to the taxing and even confiscation of property for the rational goals of the civil revolution. In the Western democracies, heavy taxation is the rule; in Marxist states, confiscation normally prevails. These steps are taken by the state as the requirements of reason.

Of course, after Rousseau, God’s will has been replaced by a new infallibility, the general will of the people. Since this general will is unknown until it is expressed, the state has no sure criterion except a supposedly developing general will.

Because the general will has replaced God’s will, there is a shift of emphasis from man’s duty to God to man’s rights. Rights having replaced duties, the focus of society has shifted from production to consumption. Man lives as a *consumer*, not as a creature made in the image of God and required to serve Him with all his heart, mind, and being. It is not God who must be served but man and the state. God as the lawgiver has been replaced by man. In 1962, Robert M. Hutchins said:

...I believe that government is indispensable, contrary to Kropotkin and the anarchists, and I believe that law is the expression of reason and not the expression of arbitrary power. I take violent opposition to the jurisprudence prevalent in most of the law schools of this country, and in England as well, that the law is what the courts will do or that law is the command of the sovereign.

Law has to be judged in terms of its contribution to the common good. Law, therefore, is good or bad in terms of whether or not it

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2. George Catlin, *The Story of the Political Philosophers* (New York, NY: Tudor Publishing Company, 1939), 295-96.

makes that contribution. Government is the essential means by which the political community moves toward the common good. If any particular government or any particular law or any particular legal system does not contribute to the common good, then what should be done is to find out why the government and the law do not contribute to the common good; and the government and the law should be changed.<sup>3</sup>

Notice that for Hutchins civil law was “the expression of reason.” The *test* of the law’s rationality was for him “its contribution to the common good” because not the church but the state and its law “is the essential means by which the political community moves toward the common good.” How do we know when the state fails the common good, and by what standard? What if the state decrees the death of all Jews, or of all Christians? Why was Hutchins never greatly concerned about the murder of the Russian clergy, and many believers?

The problem from Locke through Rousseau, and on to the present, is the rejection of God’s law as the standard of justice *and* the rejection of the doctrine of sin. Because man’s sin is discounted, man’s reason is held to be good when in fact it serves the purposes of sinful man. Sin is the basic pattern of fallen man: he delights in it, sees it as self-expression, and as a means to power.

Some illustrations can be cited. During The Depression of the 1930s, men in key positions in federal agencies took payoffs for jobs in the form of sexual submission from women employees. Shortly after the war, I was told of one such official who had described such activity as the best kind of payoff, no money to be traced, and no outside witnesses. Is this the state as reason and justice?

A German told me that, at the end of World War II, when entrance into universities was difficult, and the waiting lists were long, the registration of young women was high, and virtually all were beautiful. Entrance was by sexual payoffs. Is this the university as the life of reason?

Friedrich Heer, the Austrian historian, reported that, *after* World War I, “at the very gates of Vienna, a priest was dismissed

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3. Robert M. Hutchins, with Joseph P. Lyford, *A Conversation: The Political Animal* (Santa Barbara, CA: Fund for the Republic, 1962), 16.

from his post because he dared to preach against the *jus primae noctis* (the right to the first night with every newly-married peasant woman on the manor) which had been claimed by the lord who was his ecclesiastical patron.” This was a system long upheld by both peasants and lords alike.<sup>4</sup>

If the priority of Christ and the triune God over every sphere of life is removed, then moral and social anarchy begins to prevail. The alternative to the reign of God is the reign of sin. The civil revolution has denied the priority of God and His law in favor of reasons of state. The state as man’s rational order has steadily eroded every area of life to create a mounting disorder. The civil revolution has exalted the state, but it is producing anarchy.

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4. Friedrich Heer, *The Intellectual History of Europe* (Cleveland, OH: World Publishing Company, [1953] 1966), 59.



## THE CIVIL REVOLUTION, PART 3

James Barros, in *No Sense of Evil: The Espionage Case of E. Herbert Norman* (1986), tells the story of a Canadian Marxist. Norman was connected to the Cambridge University spy network which included Anthony Blunt, Guy Burgess, Donald Maclean, and Kim Philby. Despite Norman's sometimes known connections, he continued to enjoy the confidence of men in high places, notably Lester Pearson.

Barros's concern is to understand why this was possible. Norman and others had a background of religious modernism and the social gospel. Because American agencies were investigating Norman, he committed suicide on April 4, 1957, because public exposure, not a sense of sin or guilt, was the great fear which stalked him.

Norman's basic problem, as that of the many men who trusted him although aware of his dubious connections and his Marxism, was the lack of the sense of sin and evil, so that men *religiously* assume that their motivation is good, and that their intentions are beneficent. They are therefore ignorant about themselves and about others.

This illusion about man is basic to the civil revolution. With the Renaissance and then the Enlightenment, men saw themselves, not as sinners but potential gods, as giants on earth. Great things were to be accomplished by man freed of the restraints of a “repressive” Christianity. Man, instead of being a sinner needing salvation by God through Christ, was seen as himself a maker who would establish a wondrous new world order through the state, together with science. The civil revolution thus rebelled against the doctrine of original sin *and* the blood atonement by Jesus Christ. John Locke denied original sin, which meant implicitly to make atonement unnecessary.

The state accordingly shifted its ground. For Christianity, the state is a ministry under God, a diaconate. Its calling is to administer justice, i.e., God’s law. The state thus has a duty *to be just* in order to administer justice. In the modern view, this duty is denied because, instead of a duty to be just, *the state is seen as justice incarnate*. The more humanistic the state, the more clearly it is identified with justice, and the more clearly justice becomes a state monopoly. The developed socialistic state therefore insists on a monopoly over justice, government, education, medicine, and more.

In such a state, the social gospel flourishes as the servant of the state. The *social* gospel is really a *civil* gospel; it espouses salvation by the state and its laws, and its hope shifts from God to the state. This has a major impact on its doctrine of the atonement. In the 1930s, a pastor who adopted the social gospel began to preach also against the orthodox doctrine of Christ’s atonement; he ridiculed it in language used by others who preceded him, calling it “butcher shop theology” to preach atonement by the blood of Jesus. This juxtaposition of the social or statist gospel and the denunciation of the blood atonement doctrine was an essential and logical one. If salvation is an act of state, the work of men who are essentially good and who unite to make a better world, to look for a change in men through Christ’s atonement rather than through the civil gospel is not only false but misleading. As a result, whenever the civil revolution flourishes, Christianity is under attack.

In Psalm 43, the psalmist prays to God for justice against an ungodly nation, saying,

1. Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.
2. For thou art the God of my strength: why does thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?
3. O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.
4. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.
5. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

The psalmist sees injustice all around him, in church and state alike. His need to be led to God's "holy hill" and sanctuaries is because the visible expressions of God's worship is corrupt. *Because* the nation and its people, civil and ecclesiastical, are unredeemed and corrupt men, his hope cannot be in them. He tells himself, "hope in God," i.e., as against church and state.

The "social gospel" interpretation is, of course, different. Thus, *The Interpreter's Bible* saw this psalm as a prayer for vindication against "enemies by being healed and restored to the privilege of worship in the Temple."<sup>1</sup> The advocates of the civil gospel are ready to see a fascist state as evil, but not a truly democratic and socialistic state. Sin, however, is not a monopoly of the left or the right, but common to all men.

Moreover, the civil gospel insists upon reducing Christ's atonement *at best* to a moral example of self-sacrifice for humanity's sake. Consequently, the orthodox doctrine is decried as morally wrong. The Unitarians in their early years were especially emphatic:

"Christ saves us, so far as his sufferings and death are concerned, through their moral influence and power upon man; the great appeal which they make being not to God, but to the sinner's conscience and heart; thus aiding in the great work of bringing him into reconciliation with or reconciling him to his Father in heaven.... Reconciliation is accomplished by Christ; by all that he was

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1. William R. Taylor, "Psalms," in *The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 4 (New York, NY: Abingdon Press, 1955), 225.

and is; all that he taught, did, and is doing; and by all that he suffered for our sake. Not by one but by all of these are we saved.” (Farley, *Unitarianism Defined*, 1860). Christ’s sacrifice was not made to God, for he did not need to be propitiated or rendered merciful, but simply with reference to man alone, — for his good; God’s justice needed no pacification. “There can be no greater or more blinding heresy than that which would teach that Christ’s sufferings, or any sufferings on behalf of virtue and human sins and sorrows, are strictly substitutional, or literally vicarious. The old theologies, perplexed and darkened with metaphysics and scholastic logic — the fruit of academic pride and the love of ecclesiastical dominion — labored to prove and to teach that Christ, in his short agony upon the cross, really suffered the pains of sin and bore the actual sum of all the anguish from remorse and guilt due to myriads of sinners, through the ages of eternity.... Our sense of justice and goodness so far as God himself is concerned, is vastly more shocked by the proper penalties of sin being placed upon the innocent than had they been left upon the guilty, where they belong.... The truth is, literal substitution of moral penalties is a thing absolutely impossible! Vicarious punishment, in its technical and theological sense, is forbidden by the very laws of our nature and moral constitution” (Bellows, *Restatements of Christian Doctrine*.)<sup>2</sup>

This was a point made over and over again, that vicarious atonement was *morally wrong* because it punished the innocent for the sins of the guilty, i.e., Christ being punished to redeem sinful men. The civil gospel, however, has not abandoned vicarious suffering and atonement by the innocent; it has merely transferred it from Christ to all men who must now suffer. To illustrate, a very high percentage of U.S. citizens in the 1980s are the descendants of immigrants who came to the U.S. *after* 1865 and have lived, until recent years, in areas without any blacks. Those Americans whose forebears were already here before 1865 number millions whose families sent a man to fight for the Union in 1861; some lost their lives. All the same, the social or civil gospel advocates insist on laying the guilt for black slavery on all white Americans. They must pay by taxes in reparation; they must feel guilty for the sins of the past, and so on, despite the fact that many of those emigrated from unspeakable tyrannies to the United States, worked their way out of the slums in a few years, and have often done

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2. John F. Hurst, *History of Rationalism* (New York, NY: Carlton & Porter, 1866), 550-51.

much to help others. Humanistic atonement *demand*s vicarious suffering, and monetary payments as well. Some blacks fought for freedom; many more whites did, and died of it.

Christ's vicarious atonement and regenerating power make of guilty and sinful men a new creation. State-imposed vicarious suffering has no regenerating power; instead, it destroys those it punishes as well as those it seeks to help. Statist atonement is destructive, not regenerative, because the state is a false savior. As Machen observed earlier in this century,

The grace of God is rejected by modern liberalism. And the result is slavery — the slavery of the law, the wretched bondage by which man undertakes the impossible task of establishing his own righteousness as a ground of acceptance with God. It may seem strange at first sight that “liberalism,” of which the very name means freedom, should in reality be wretched slavery. But the phenomenon is not really so strange. Emancipation from the blessed will of God always involves the bondage to some worse taskmaster.<sup>3</sup>

The history of the social or civil gospel movement and its contribution to the rise of tyranny needs to be written; in old Russia, in pre-Nazi Germany, and elsewhere in the West this humanistic faith has preceded the rise of statism.

One of the charges once commonly made by skeptics concerning Christian theology was its ostensible incomprehensibility. In the 1930s, Harold Anson, Master of the Temple, told of his attendance as a student at the Clifton chapel lectures by the headmaster:

I imagine there must have been about six of these (lectures), and I expect, from all that I came to know about that very remarkable man, that they were admirable. Alas! all I can remember is that he told us that we need not believe the Athanasian Creed and that it was not used in our College Chapel, but that if the Bishop compelled him to use it, it would be sung as a hymn. This seemed to me so ingenious a way of circumventing a dogma, that it remained always in my memory. I think I must have had an hereditary dislike of the Athanasian Creed. My mother always stood in silence when it was repeated. My great-grandfather, Cuthbert Ellison, an eccentric personage, I imagine, used to say in stentorian tones when that creed was being recited, “The Father incomprehensible, the Son

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3. J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, [1923] 1946), 144.

incomprehensible, the Holy Ghost incomprehensible, and the *whole thing* incomprehensible!<sup>4</sup>

Anson, a kindly man, simply gave voice to a vague faith which had neither clarity nor hard truth; his theology, however, was comprehensible because it was so meager and empty. The modern state and its laws, however, have become progressively incomprehensible. Because God is infinite, omnipotent, eternal, omniscient, and more, He is *of necessity* so far beyond our limited, created, and time-bound minds that He is incomprehensible to us, although He reveals Himself truly in Christ and in His written word. He tells us, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways" (Isa. 55:8). God's incomprehensibility rests on His transcendence. The incomprehensibility of the state is apparent to anyone reading acts of Congress, tax forms, and more, but it is the incomprehensibility of stupidity, cupidity, and often of evil, not of a higher status. All false gods die, when men begin to look upon them with moral disgust.

The civil revolution began as a form of redemption for man, as a means towards true order by good and rational men. It has become instead the oppressor of men and a source of disorder. As men become living members of God's order, the civil revolution will fade away.

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4. Harold Anson, *Looking Forward* (London, England: Religious Book Club, n.d.),

## THE CIVIL REVOLUTION, PART 4

With the Enlightenment, the trust in reason began to replace Christian faith and revelation. At first, revelation was given a place in the scheme of things as necessary for things pertaining to God which were beyond reason. As time went on, the limited realm of Christianity and revealed truth receded, and reason claimed total jurisdiction.

This development had roots in Greek philosophy. For both Plato and Aristotle, theoretical thought belonged to the eternal realm of ideas, of form and being. “The aristotelian god was absolute theoretical thought, the equivalent of pure form. Its absolute counterpart was the matter of principle, characterized by eternal, formless motion of becoming.”<sup>1</sup>

The influence of such thinking has been very strong in the Christian centuries and has radically warped the church in much of its history. If one assumes that the realm of ideas is the divine realm, then as man becomes more rational in all his ways, he approximates the abstract and determinative realm of being. He can then become a philosopher-king who brings reason and the state together to

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1. Herman Dooyeweerd, *Roots of Western Culture* (Toronto, Canada: Wedge Publishing Foundation, 1979), 34.

establish true justice. From the Renaissance on, and again with the Enlightenment, the ideal of a philosopher-king was a common one among both rulers and humanistic thinkers. It was believed that, above and over the sensory world of nature, there existed the realm of reason and freedom, so that the dialectical tension was between nature as necessity, and the rule of reason as freedom. It was in terms of this that Karl Marx saw the hope of mankind in a transition from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom, i.e., to the realm created by the intellectual leaders of the workers.

Dooyeweerd has tellingly described the implications of this in Immanuel Kant (1724-1804):

Like Rousseau, Kant gave religious priority to the freedom motive of the modern personality ideal. Freedom, according to Kant, cannot be scientifically proven. For him science is always bound to sensory experience, to "natural reality" as understood in the limited context of Kant's own conceptions. Freedom and autonomy of personality do not lie in sensory nature. They are *practical ideas* of man's "reason"; their suprasensory reality remains a matter of *faith*.<sup>2</sup>

As Dooyeweerd made clear, this was no less a religion, no less a matter of *faith*, than Christianity, while radically opposed to it.

As this faith in Reason developed, some nuances came to light. It was a faith closely allied to Greek evolutionary thinking, the view of the material universe, in Dooyeweerd's words, as "eternal, formless motion and becoming."<sup>3</sup> It is Reason which gives form and direction to this becoming, as Hegel saw. Hence, Hegel formulated a doctrine of cultural evolution whereby the state becomes the central expression of Reason, *Geist*, or Spirit, as it realizes its ideas in material form. For Hegel, according to Bussell, "Evolution is from unconscious Reason to self-comprehending Reason, by the law or formula of the three stages." (These three stages, as Auguste Comte later formulated them in detail, are the theological or fictitious; the metaphysical or abstract; and the scientific or positive).<sup>4</sup>

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2. *Ibid.*, 171-72.

3. *Ibid.*, 34.

4. F.W. Bussell, *Christian Theology and Social Progress* (London, England: Methuen, 1907), 119-20.

This is a logical development. If Hegel's Prussian state was the expression of Reason, indeed, its incarnation for Hegel's day, then the realized Reason of that state was an unconscious Reason in the eras *prior* to Hegel and the Prussian state. Such a perspective shifts much wisdom *and Reason* from the conscious mind to the unconscious. In Bussell's words, "May we not repeat with increased meaning: 'The owl of Minerva takes its flight only when the shades of night are gathering'"<sup>5</sup>

When Bussell wrote, Sigmund Freud's work had not yet gained its subsequent international prestige. It was, however, clearly in the Greek line through Kant and Hegel. For the supremacy of Reason, Freud substituted the supremacy of unconscious Reason. But this was not all. Without using the word *infallibility*, Freud saw the unconscious as infallible.

In the civil realm, such thinking undergirded the irrationality of the modern state; the state was still the embodiment of Reason, but it was now a developing *scientific* Reason, a *planning* society instead of a *planned* order. Since the future required shaping in terms of the evolving, developing nature of things, this future was still a part of the unknown, an aspect of the social and scientific unconscious.

In brief, we can thus say that the civil revolution has become the triumph of the unconscious. Justice no longer rules the truly modern state but rather the *development* of social policy. Hence such rational considerations as a balanced budget are disregarded. Present reality must give way to future reality, logical Reason to unconscious Reason. A part of this trend is the demand for charismatic political leaders who can, like Hitler and Roosevelt, appeal to men's unconscious Reason.

In all such thinking, the state is sovereign, and it is the voice of Reason, yet that Reason is unconscious and evolving. As a result, the modern state is coming closer and closer to being the expression of unreason. The ways of the modern state are increasingly past finding out!

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5. *Ibid.*, 123.

The civil revolution has thus developed into a major dilemma. It sees the state as sovereign, and as Reason, but that Reason is now *unconscious*. We are left with an unconscious and nightmarish sovereign.

In Biblical faith, in Elazar's words,

No state — a human creation — can be sovereign. Classically, only God is sovereign and He entrusts the exercise of His sovereign powers mediated through His Torah — as constitution to the people as a whole.<sup>6</sup>

This development of the civil revolution, and its de-Christianization of the West, has been due to the retreat of the church as much as the humanistic offensive. D.V. Segre has quoted Professor Nathan Rotenstreich, of the Department of Philosophy in the Hebrew University, as saying in 1959 that,

To him, the fact that it (Zionism) was given a place in the ordinary daily course of historical events, meant that at this — unspecified — time, two or three generations ago, the fact of history “ceased to be *Christian* history in the specific meaning of that term and became the *political* history of nations and of political blocs.”<sup>7</sup>

The problem, however, is deeper than two or three generations ago. Men sought the solution to all kinds of problems outside of religion, e.g., the problem of “insanity” was traced to mental inactivity or overactivity and hence phrenologists argued against mental inactivity and overactivity. In other words, the issue was not moral but physiological. Popular and learned writers alike sanctified such thinking. In Cooter's very telling words,

No longer was morality to be the exclusive province of theology; the laws of physiology were now to share that administration and with an even greater indisputability. Fittingly and expediently, the Reverend John Barlow incorporated this defense of morality into his *Man's Power over Himself to Prevent or Control Insanity* (1843). Quoting from Conolly that “those who most exercise the faculties of their minds are least liable to insanity,” he added that “a brain

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6. Daniel J. Elazar, “Introduction,” in Daniel J. Elazar, ed., *Kinship and Consent: The Jewish Political Tradition and Its Contemporary Uses* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1983), 6.

7. D.V. Segre, “The Jewish Political Tradition as a Vehicle for Jewish Auto-Emancipation,” in *ibid.*, 295.

strengthened by rational exercise...is but little likely to be attacked by disease...and thus the larger half of the evil is removed.”<sup>8</sup>

The church was content to retreat into the “spiritual” realm, or, to be more accurate, into irrelevance. Authority was handed over to the sciences and the state in one area after another:

At a time of declining confidence in religion and growing reverence for science, physicians quite consciously offered guidance on behavioral matters which, as one explained, “the custom of centuries has wrongfully confided exclusively to the profession of theology.”<sup>9</sup>

The church, however, has no right to surrender what belongs to God. It has a duty to reclaim every area for Christ. Because of its dereliction, now as always, “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?” (1 Peter 4:17).

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8. Robert Cooter, “Phrenology and British Alienists, ca. 1825-1845,” in Andrew Scull, ed., *Madhouses, Mad-Doctors, and Madmen: The Social History of Psychiatry in the Victorian Era* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 79.

9. Barbara Sicherman, “The Paradox of Prudence: Mental Health in the Gilded Age,” in *ibid.*, 218.



## THE CIVIL REVOLUTION, PART 5

In his study of *Politics*, Aristotle raises the question, “What is a state?” His rather meandering answer begins with the comment that “the state is a composite.” This leads to the question, “What is a citizen?”, which Aristotle does not answer clearly. He continues by saying that the state is “composed of unlikes,” i.e., its citizens, and therefore it must be of a variety of peoples both good and bad; like a human body, it has diverse elements.<sup>1</sup> Aristotle then goes on to the *form* of government, as though the question, “What is a state?”, has been answered. He had begun his study by defining the state thus:

Every state is a community of some kind, and every community is established with a view to some good; for mankind always act in order to obtain that which they think good. But, if all communities aim at some good, the state or political community, which is the highest of all, and which embraces all the rest, aims at good in a greater degree than any other, and at the highest good.<sup>2</sup>

For Scripture, God is the highest good; for Aristotle, the state is his god, his highest good. Man for him is more a political animal than any other creature because man has speech, and a sense of good and

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1. Aristotle, *The Politics* (New York, NY: Modern Library, 1943), bk. 3, chap. 1-5, 125-136.

2. *Ibid.*, bk. 1, chap.1, 51.

evil. Because of these factors, man “makes a family and a state.” It is only “a beast or a God” who has no need for a state and “is insufficient for himself.” In terms of this, Aristotle says,

Further, the state is by nature clearly prior to the family and to the individual, since the whole is of necessity prior to the part; for example, if the whole body be destroyed, there will be no foot or hand, except in an equivocal sense...the state is a creature of nature and prior to the individual...<sup>3</sup>

The state is for Aristotle the *natural* order and hence the *rational* order. Therefore, “the end of the state is the good life.”<sup>4</sup>

The influence of Aristotle on the medieval and modern eras is well known. Besides Aristotle’s actual writings, another work, attributed to Aristotle, *Secretum Secretorum*, Aristotle’s supposed counsel to his pupil, Alexander the Great, was very popular in the medieval era. In this work, Aristotle supposedly told Alexander,

O Alexander, the head of policy and judgment is Reason. It is the health of the soul and the mirror of faults... It is the chief of all praiseworthy things, and the fountainhead of all glories.<sup>5</sup>

Given the premise of Aristotle and pseudo-Aristotle, it is not surprising that Aquinas defined the state as “a perfect community,” i.e., not in the moral but in the natural sense.<sup>6</sup>

The thinking of Plato also made its contribution. In Catlin’s words, for Plato, “against Reason, there are *no* natural rights.”<sup>7</sup> If the state is the natural order of man, and, in the hands of the philosopher-kings is also Reason, how can a man have rights against Reason? Hence, Plato’s *Republic* is of necessity a totalitarian state.

With the Enlightenment, and then later with Hegel, this equation of the state with Reason and the truly natural order of man became more insistent. Natural law theories arose in part to provide the state with a nontheological basis for law. Because Christ established the church, it was held, the Bible could provide

3. *Ibid.*, bk. 1., chap. 3, 55.

4. *Ibid.*, bk. 3, chap. 10, 144.

5. Alexander Murray, *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, [1978] 1986), 120.

6. *Summa Theologica*, bks. 2 - 3, q. 65, a. 2, 2; bks. 1 - 3, q. 90, a. 3, 3.

7. George Catlin, *The Story of the Political Philosophers* (New York, NY: Tudor Publishing Company, 1939), 52.

its supernaturally decreed law for a supernaturally ordered institution. The state, being grounded in Nature, had to have a natural basis for its law, hence natural law. In time, the state ceased to look outside itself for natural law; as in essence the natural order, the state became its own source of law, positive law. More recently, transcendental meditation, new age thinking, sex education, and values clarification courses in schools are expressions of the new natural law.

The philosophical development from the Greeks, Romans, scholastics, and modern philosophy into the modern state had meant the union of Reason and Power in the new civil polity. There is now ostensibly the happy union of Reason and Power. The grip of Christianity, seen as unreason, on power, has been broken, so that the Great Community can now emerge. The ugly fact in all this is that state power is coercion, always coercion. To equate the state, or to equate the scientific socialist state, with Reason is to equate Reason with coercion. Reason then *requires* coercion because it is Reason, and to oppose its coercion is irrational. This is the thinking of such states as the Soviet Union, openly so, but it is implicitly the theory also of democracies. It is required by the thinking of Rousseau and others on the general will.

We can justifiably argue on Biblical grounds that the church should not indulge in physical coercion; the attitude of the humanists is that the church must not coerce because it is neither Reason nor its faith reasonable. This noncoercive requirement imposed increasingly on the church by the civil revolution extends to such things as Christian education; Christian schools and home schools are viewed as coercing the mind of the child. Parents are also seen as coercive if they impose a Christian training and discipline on their children. Only the state's coercion is rational; all Christian forms are irrational and even evil.

So viewed, statist coercion becomes the necessary rational order. As Otto Scott has noted, the full revolutionary slogan on the French Revolution was "*Liberty, Equality, Fraternity – or Death.*"<sup>8</sup>

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8. Otto Scott, *Robespierre, The Voice of Virtue* (New York, NY: Mason & Lipscomb, 1974), 195.

Thus too some Jacobins could hold, "All is permitted those who act in the Revolutionary direction."<sup>9</sup> Both in the French and Russian Revolutions, the Terror was equated with Reason; Lenin was very clear on this.

Of course, such men have held and hold that coercion is bad if not linked with scientific Reason. Such bad coercion includes that of parents, the church, Fascists, reactionaries, counterrevolutionists, and all who disagree with the civil revolution, which is the epitome of Reason and the voice thereof.

Bussell observed,

The rupture took place with authority, in the Humanists, with their neo-pagan and Hellenistic ideals; in the Copernical Lutheranism ("each man as each planet a centre"); in the theories of independent political systems, as Machiavelli and Bodinus; or of independent ethics. The entire period from the middle of the sixteenth century to the French Revolution is dominated by the 'Law of Nature.' Even in Thomas there was a lurking belief that only for the theological virtues was heaven's grace indispensable.<sup>10</sup>

Now the state is itself both nature and law.

The impact of this civil revolution has been far-reaching, and its roots deep. Thus, Maimonides, in the *Guide of the Perplexed*, spoke of intellectual perfection as the true human perfection, placing it ahead of external goods, bodily perfection, and moral perfection. He created thereby a priority in Judaism which led to intellectualism and a rapid departure from a moral and religious emphasis. According to Elazar,

Maimonides was not satisfied merely with indicating that philosophy had autonomous value. In the *Mishneh Torah* he showed how the mitzvah of *ahavat hashem*, love of God, can only be realized to the extent that one appropriates intellectual disciplines that are not particular to the Jewish tradition.<sup>11</sup>

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9. *Ibid.*, 205.

10. F.W. Bussell, *Christian Theology and Social Progress* (London, England: Methuen, 1907), 32-33.

11. David Hartman, "Halakhah as a Ground for Creating a Shared Political Dialogue among Contemporary Jews," in Daniel J. Elazar, ed., *Kingship and Consent: The Jewish Political Tradition and Its Contemporary Uses* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1983), 359.

Thus, in both Christianity and Judaism, as well as in our humanists, political wisdom is sought outside of God and His law-word. Scripture tells us,

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. (Prov. 9:10)

For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. (Prov. 2:6)

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. (Prov. 1:7)

23. But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

24. But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. (1 Cor. 1:23-24)

In the civil revolution, the state is the saving institution, and it is reason and power; it is wisdom. The civil revolution is thus an anti-Christian revolution.



## THE CIVIL REVOLUTION, PART 6

Voltaire has been publicized as a great skeptic and wit; it is certainly clear that he was cynical about Christianity and the church, although he had received only good from the Jesuits who educated him.<sup>1</sup> He found cannibalism more reasonable than Christianity.<sup>2</sup> In fact, almost anything which was “natural” was for Voltaire more reasonable than a religion which posited a supernatural order as prior to the natural, and God as Lord over all. Statism was thus the logical order for Voltaire; for him, Louis XIV made more sense than Jesus Christ.

Voltaire was a facile and superficial writer, but he made a great impact on his time and on many minds since. The reason is a religious one. Alexander Murray has written about the “broken images” (T.S. Eliot’s term) which mark our time:

Medieval Christian society...is our ancestor. It has bequeathed us many images, broken and unbroken. And among the broken ones is a view of nature which admits — interleaved with those natural laws which we see day after day bring our jet aircraft safely down on their radar tracks — the direct concern and intervention of the old God of Jacob.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Voltaire, *Philosophical Dictionary, A-I* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1962), 170-98.

2. *Ibid.*, 365ff.

3. Alexander Murray, *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages* (Oxford University: Clarendon Press, [1978] 1986), 404.

Exactly. God's government is no longer seen as the very present fact. Men no longer find strength in the inescapability of God's providence. *One* result is cowardice. If men are not afraid of God, they will be afraid of men. In June and July, 1988, Ford and Andrea Schwartz of San Jose, California, circulated a petition which asked a religious hospital, belonging to a Christian church, either to cease practicing abortions or to drop their Christian name. Some people were *afraid* to sign. Thus, an athletic coach, ostensibly Christian, felt it was "unwise" for him to sign and handed it to his wife, who trembled and refused.

David says of the wicked, "there is no fear of God before his eyes" (Ps. 36:1), and Paul cites this as descriptive of the ungodly (Rom. 3:18).

A *second* result is statism. When men are not afraid of God, they are afraid of the state, because it is the power they believe in and know. Their hope then is the state. Bussell observed, in 1896,

We are passing through a period of transition (the usual excuse!), and have not quite, perhaps, discarded the old beliefs of the "Enlightenment," that Happiness can be secured by Act of Parliament, and that the highest exercise of the human Reason lies either in the election of annual officials, or in the discovery of some fresh material convenience.<sup>4</sup>

Man and the state were the basic realities, behind which faith was the waning of belief in the God of Scripture. For Ralph Waldo Emerson, who influenced Friedrich Nietzsche, the state as the present reality had to educate "the wise men." In his "Essay on Politics," Emerson saw the future in terms of "the wise man" (singular), whom Nietzsche called the superman. Said Emerson, "with the appearance of the wise man, the State expires.... The wise man is the State...he is value.... His relation to men is angelic...."<sup>5</sup> In such a world review, the *Summum Bonum*, the highest good, is either man or the state. These are the two "realities," because God has been denied the status of "reality."

There is thus no Jacob's ladder, no governance and communion between heaven and earth. For the civil revolution, there

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4. F.W. Bussell, *The School of Plato* (London, England: Methuen, 1896), 22.

5. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Essays and Journal* (Garden City, NY: International Collectors Library, 1968), 348ff.

is no law beyond the state. If value comes from either man or the state, then on either level the governing factor is, "my will be done." Both the individual and the state demand the recognition of their sovereign rights. Each class in the state seeks its "sovereign rights" at the expense of all others.

Without God's law, self-will becomes the ruling premise in every sphere. Society shifts its emphasis from moral duties to civil "rights." All classes seek advantage, not justice, although their advantages are promoted as justice.

Every man's life, and every society, has a center of gravity which is the ground force in all its being. This center of gravity can be economic advantage, pleasure, racial concerns, and a variety of other motives. It can also be the triune God. Since the Enlightenment in particular, the center of gravity in the Western world, and now all over the world, has shifted from God to man, and from church to state. The world has grown smaller; for many men, there is now no heaven and no hell. Because there is for them no God whose justice and law absolutely governs all things, there is no appeal against man and the state. The statist philosopher tells men, as he presents them with his humanistic world, "This is all you are going to get!" There is no justice beyond man and the state, and usually too little in man and the state.

The quest for advantage becomes a denial of justice, because justice denies all privileges in favor of God's law. Because all justice comes from the triune God and is set forth in His law-word, there can be no monopoly on justice by any human agency, because man is not the source of justice. For men to arrogate the execution of justice to themselves is to assume that they alone are the instruments of justice. In earlier eras, a variety of courts, civil, ecclesiastical, commercial, and so on, all dealt with justice in their realm *under God*. The state is in process of claiming a monopoly right to dispense justice.

There are, however, still some courts of law maintained by the more orthodox Christians and Jews to administer justice to all who come. It has been observed of the Jewish courts that their basic premise is this: "The concept behind it is that there can be no justice without Godliness."<sup>6</sup> This is, of course, the premise of Biblical law, of Moses, Jesus Christ, and Paul.

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6. Jerold S. Auerbach, *Justice Without Law?* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1983), 93.

But this is precisely the premise set aside by the civil revolution. Godliness is not a requirement of either judges or juries, and no longer a qualification of witnesses. It is assumed that the key requirement for the administration of justice is not godliness but education and reason. By education is meant essentially a humanistic education.

This leads to an ironic fact. All laws are simply enacted morality; they are the ideas of right and wrong held by the legislators. At the same time, morality is no longer a qualification for office! Only in very limited spheres is morality operative: the public official must be a thorough equalitarian in sexual and racial matters!

The result is injustice, and Machiavelli's world. The Italian city-states of Machiavelli's day were without either legitimacy or justice. As a result, the rulers ruled by brute force and without justice. Force and fraud marked their civil orders. Parkes rightly noted,

Since Machiavelli was attempting to find remedies for a disintegration which has fortunately been a rare occurrence in Western history, and since the terms in which he stated the problem made any solution impossible, his work is much less important than has often been supposed.<sup>7</sup>

Since Parkes wrote, we have moved into a Machiavellian era, but Parkes was right: the terms in which Machiavelli stated the problem made a solution impossible. Spain had to impose an "answer" on Italy. We are in a like situation today. The civil revolution goes from one crisis to another, and the deterioration of culture and society since World War II is dramatic. All the answers proposed by our humanistic statist only aggravate the problem. The civil revolution has no answer because it is a basic part of the problem.

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7. Henry Bamford Parkes, *The Divine Order* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 10n.

## THE CIVIL REVOLUTION, PART 7

The civil revolution has been a result not only of various movements within the political sphere but also of the decline of Biblical theory within the church. The heresies of Pelagius in the early church have returned again and again to claim control over the church. Webster's *Dictionary* (1909, second edition) defined Pelagianism thus:

- (1) There is no such thing as original sin; consequently,
- (2) there is no baptismal regeneration, no damnation of unbaptized infants, no hereditary taint of Adam's sin.
- (3) Man has perfect freedom of the will and has no absolute need of God's grace to set him right.
- (4) Man, though aided in various ways by divine grace, is virtually the author of his own salvation.

Some Reformed churches would limit no. 2, to "no hereditary taint of Adam's sin," because they reject baptismal regeneration, and, in other instances, qualify the reprobation of unbaptized children by stressing the covenant family rather than the covenant rite of baptism as the important fact.

In any case, Pelagianism stresses the free will and the independent powers of man with reference to God. In "freeing" man from God's predestination, they free also the state, in that all of the world is given an independent jurisdiction. This means also

“freeing” man from God’s law, because man’s free will, having no hereditary taint, gives man a natural law and a natural goodness.

Natural law in Greco-Roman thought is identified with the state and reason. In the medieval era, Gratian identified natural law with the Law and the Gospels.<sup>1</sup> In the modern era, natural law has replaced God’s law and has been seen as a law inherent in nature. At the same time, natural law advocates have bypassed the doctrine of a fallen universe. Norman L. Geisler cites Romans 1:19-20 to state that all men have God’s general revelation, which is true enough, but he does not cite the qualifying statement of Romans 1:18 that men “hold (or, suppress, hold back) the truth in unrighteousness.” His answer to the kind of laws a civil government should have is that they should be neither Christian nor humanistic: “Rather, they should simply be just laws. Laws should not be either Christian or anti-Christian; they should simply be fair ones.”<sup>2</sup>

“Fair laws”? And what is the criterion of fairness? Each religion, including Humanism, has its own doctrine of justice and fairness. Are “fair laws” natural laws? But the idea of natural law, in its Christian and Enlightenment forms, is essentially a product of Christendom.

But this is not all. Geisler writes “fair laws.” Is he saying that God’s law as set forth in scripture is unfair? Is he implying that when God gave His general revelation, as described in Romans 1:18ff., He gave a law that differs from His enscriptured law? Is the law, “Thou shalt not steal,” or “Thou shalt not commit adultery” (Ex. 20:15, 14), valid only for Jews and Christians and none other? If God is the Creator of all men, how can His law be unfair to anyone? Where the psalmist declares, “Unless thy laws had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction,” Geisler says this “is a chilling legalism.”<sup>3</sup>

Geisler believes that there is some kind of “fair” and natural law out there in nature on which all men can agree. Will the mur-

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1. Gratian’s *Decretum* (c. 1148), in Ewart Lewis, *Medieval Political Ideas*, vol. 1 (New York, NY: Cooper Square Publishers, 1974), 32.

2. Norman L. Geisler, “Should We Legislate Morality?” *Fundamental Journal* (July-August 1988): 64.

3. *Ibid.*, 17.

derer, adulterer, thief, or liar agree with us on any law? Are they not, like so many others, lawless men, lawbreakers, and sinners? Any law that all men will agree is “fair,” or any law which all Christians, Moslems, Buddhists, Humanists, and other religionists will agree on, will be no law at all; it will have so many qualifications that its meaning will be gone!

But Pelagianism affirms man’s ability to reason without handicap, to act freely without the warp of the Fall, and to legislate fairly without the only true Lawgiver, God Almighty.

Whenever man allows himself any independent sphere apart from the triune God and independent of His law, he opens the door to every evil, and to arrogance. We cannot live outside of God for a moment, nor can we ever find a sphere or a second of life where God’s law does not govern us.

The arrogance of paganism was not its denial of the idea of God but its rejection of God as man’s absolute sovereign and law-giver. It was only a couple of generations before the Norman Conquest of 1066 that “the dying Earl Seward called for his axe and shield for fear of meeting God unarmed, ‘like a cow.’”<sup>4</sup>

The world of Machiavelli’s *The Prince* is one in which Christianity had no power to determine events; faith was defective and its social impact weak. “Fairness” did not replace God’s law, but *the pursuit of power* did. Power being the goal, the ruler must learn how to commit atrocities to maintain and further power.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, “it is necessary for a prince, who wishes to maintain himself, to learn how not to be good, and to use this knowledge and not to use it, according to the necessity of the case.”<sup>6</sup> Machiavelli gave instructions on how to deceive men, break faith with them, and so on.

Machiavelli’s laws of statecraft govern our era, and every era that departs from the law-word of God. Machiavelli’s ideas of “fairness” are clear; whatever means used to gain and hold power are fair.

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4. Richard Hall, “The Vikings Town-Dwellers,” *History Today* 36 (November 1986): 37.

5. Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, in Machiavelli, *The Prince and the Discourses*, (New York, NY: Modern Library, 1940), chap. 8, 35.

6. *Ibid.*, chap. 15, 56.

We face a curious fact. Non-churchmen can discuss the growing fact of secularization, and the developing secular monopolies of the state,<sup>7</sup> but churchmen act as if their hangman is coming with a bouquet of flowers. They are ready to believe ill only of their fellow Christians!

We need to remind ourselves again and again of the words of O. Halecki, in *The Limits and Divisions of European History* (1950): “The attempt to create a culture which would be European without being Christian...is now recognized as the main cause of the present crisis of European civilization.”<sup>8</sup> That churchmen in great numbers are a part of this revolution, this de-Christianization of the West, is an amazing as well as an ugly fact.

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7. David Martin, *A General Theory of Secularization* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1978).

8. Halecki, 51, cited in David C. Douglas, *The Norman Fate, 1100-1154* (Berkeley, CA: University Press, 1976), 8.

## THE CIVIL REVOLUTION, PART 8

In a study of major importance historian Edmund S. Morgan deals with the “fiction” behind modern civil governments. His purpose is not to challenge the civil authorities, and he is sincerely “troubled by the pejorative connotation attached to the word *fiction*, but I have been unable to find a better one to describe the different phenomena to which I have applied it.”<sup>1</sup> Morgan writes as a scholar investigating the subject, not as a reformer.

The many are governed by the few because the many believe that the order prescribed and/or ruled by the few is the right and just order. When Morgan writes about the *fiction* or the “make-believe”<sup>2</sup> behind civil governments, he is discussing the religious faith, whatever it may be, which undergirds authority and rule.

Not surprisingly, Morgan’s book begins with the following quotation from David Hume’s “Of the First Principles of Government,” *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects* (1758 edition):

Nothing is more surprising to those, who consider human affairs with a philosophical eye, than to see the easiness with which the many are governed by the few; and to observe the implicit submission with

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1. Edmund S. Morgan, *Inventing the People: The Rise of Popular Sovereignty in England and America* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 1988), 14-15.

2. *Ibid.*, 13.

which men resign their own sentiments and passions to those of their rulers. When we enquire by what means this wonder is brought about, we shall find, that as Force is always on the side of the governed, the governors have nothing to support them but opinion. 'Tis therefore, on opinion only that government is founded; and this maxim extends to the most despotic and most military governments, as well as to the most free and popular.<sup>3</sup>

Hume assumed something against common opinion in saying that "Force" is on the side of the ruled. In sheer numbers, they far outweigh their rulers, who cannot enforce anything except with soldiers and officers from the people. Hume concluded, "'Tis on opinion only that government is founded." Like Morgan and his use of the word "fiction," Hume meant "faith" by the word "opinion." For Hume, religion was at best only opinion and more often only opinion. Hume is popular with liberals who are sufficiently well-read to know him, because he doubted everything and believed in nothing. Nothing was knowable or believable in his world. At the same time, Hume is popular with humanistic conservatives because Hume was a "conservative." Since for Hume nothing was rational, knowable, or believable, nothing was worth changing, or dying for.

But, to return to Morgan's thesis, contemporary doctrines of popular sovereignty are modern versions of the belief in the divine right of kings. Kantorowicz demonstrated that the theory of the monarchy was borrowed from the church and from Christology, only to be in turn taken over by parliament.<sup>4</sup> Morgan notes, "Monarchy has always required close ties with divinity,"<sup>5</sup> which is true not only for monarchies, but for all forms of civil government. All governments, whether they acknowledge a divine component to their authority or disguise that fact under secularist language, ultimately derive their authority on religious grounds, because sovereignty and ultimacy are religious concepts and inescapably refer to God.

Morgan is perceptive when he, noting the greater power of the divine right of kings in Protestant countries, links it to their

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3. *Idem.*

4. Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957).

5. Morgan, *op. cit.*, 17.

rejection of the papacy as Antichrist. “The way to fight divinity was with divinity.”<sup>6</sup> In brief, the king, not the pope, was God’s lieutenant on earth.

This doctrine of the divine right of kings in time became the doctrine of the divine right of parliament (which “can do no wrong,” even as earlier kings could do no wrong).<sup>7</sup> Popular sovereignty replaced royal sovereignty, and the civil order had a new religious orientation. In the earlier eras, *Christian society* had been seen as a *corpus mysticum*, a mystical body whose head was Christ. Then the head of society became the king,<sup>8</sup> and now the state is the mystical body of the people.

Whether in kings or in the people, the civil authority raised more problems than it solved. Kings were commonly much more sinners than saints. Although Charles I is given a martyr’s status by the Church of England, Charles lost his head because he was a thief and a liar, a man who could be depended on to be devious and dishonest, and, withal, a Pharisee of the Pharisees. Moreover, in time, with the high value placed on royal blood and royal inbreeding, kings became increasingly mentally and physically warped or deformed characters and hardly likely to command respect on any close or distant inspection. Incestuous inbreeding was certainly a factor in the decline of monarchies!

The rise of the people to sovereignty has not been a moral triumph. As with kings, as the Christian character and patina left the people, it has become apparent that they too are degenerate and cannot rule even themselves.

There is, however, still *another* factor. The Puritan pastor and writer, John Cotton, held that a democracy is a contradiction in terms: “If the people be governors, who shall be governed?”<sup>9</sup> Let us remember that *a sovereign is the source, not the subject, of law*. Because God’s law is the expression of His nature, there is a total congruity between His nature or being and His law. This is not true of men. A man may affirm the necessity for

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6. *Ibid.*, 18.

7. *Ibid.*, 64.

8. Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies*, 16.

9. Morgan, *Inventing the People*, 45.

a nondiscriminatory society and yet discriminate in spite of his profession; or, he may believe in love as the solution and yet show hatred towards those who cross him or disagree with him. Man makes a dangerous sovereign, because such power and authority enable him to play god when he is only a sinful man.

When men become sovereigns, they make law but exempt themselves from it. No clearer example of this can be cited than the Congress of the United States. It may favor by law a variety of labor practices, nondiscriminatory human relations, and standards of accountability while excepting itself by law from the requirements of its own laws. Congress regularly promotes the prosecution of presidential assistants for offenses Congress regularly commits but declares it is exempt from such laws totally. However worded, this constant legislative stance means that Congress claims to express and represent the sovereignty of the people and thus to have a sovereign immunity.

The matter does not stop there, however. The sovereignty of the people is a doctrine religiously believed in by countless Americans (and the same is true of Frenchmen, Spaniards, and others). Hence, as a common expression has it, "I have a right to do as I please." Popular sovereignty means popular lawlessness. Over the years, in numerous instances of counseling in marital problems, I have seen this anarchic freedom claimed. A "right" to sexual "freedom" is claimed by a man or a woman and justified on the grounds that the spouse has not been deprived of anything! More basically, the premise is, simply, "my will be done."

Moreover, given the priority or ultimacy of the individuals, their actions are seen as immune to law. Whether it be drugs, shoplifting, or some other offense, *they* are not to be classified as other people. The same consequences of law do not properly apply to them. Even more pervasive than specific instances of *lawbreaking* is the very general temper of *lawlessness*.

This should not surprise us. The root of authority has been broken by man's rejection of the triune God. Since all are governors, who then shall be governed? Like the men of old, men say of Christ the King, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke

19:14). If men will not obey the triune God, why should we expect them to obey Congress, or any other humanistic authority?

The civil revolution has seized authority, sovereignty, and lawmaking from God, or so it believes. As a result, it has less and less authority and sovereignty, and its laws are more and more despised. A sure product of the civil revolution is judgment upon itself.



# SI

## THE CIVIL REVOLUTION, PART 9

Natural law theories have been basic to the civil revolution. The concept of natural law has been very appealing to many scholars over the generations. Whereas God's law is written and not subject to change, natural law is known through reason, and this gives the scholar an opportunity to become the source of the law because he is ostensibly the voice of reason. We are told that Scripture is not precise and is subject to varying interpretations, but how can we call precise a law known only to scholarly reason and imprecise at every point? Natural law transfers legislation from God to man, and, in particular, to statist man. It is an instrument of relativism and closely related to positivism in law, because it is a simple association of reason and the law with the "sovereign" state.

The great revolution in the intellectual realm which preceded the civil revolution was the development of the myth of Nature. This, in Western thought, was the undermining of Christendom. While this intellectual revolution came through the auspices of the Roman Church, it has also proven to be its major source of troubles, in that it created a civil revolution which steadily severed its dependence on revelation and the church.

In my study of *The Mythology of Science* (1967), I dealt with the erroneous (and dangerous) concept of Nature. A created universe

exists because of God's act of creation. The doctrine of *Nature* assumed this universe to be a self-enclosed and self-contained system of causality with its own laws. A unity and self-being, an aseity, is posited and assumed as fact without any evidence. This doctrine was an aspect of Hellenic religion and philosophy, and it is the religious presupposition of the modern age.

Geoffrey Koziol saw behind this intellectual revolution "changing perceptions of the world." He noted,

As "nature" came to be recognized as a "substantive reality" possessed of its own equilibrium and ordinarily functioning without divine or human intervention, the positing of "laws of nature" followed necessarily.<sup>1</sup>

Koziol is right: once Nature was seen as in and of itself a "substantive reality," it "followed necessarily" that Nature was seen as the source of law.

Prior to the development of the concept of "immutable" natural laws, law was seen as the expression of the sovereign Person, God; in medieval life, it was "an expression of lordship." It was personal, whether in God or in man. In the acclamation of medieval rulers, we see lordship on earth made subordinate to lordship in heaven, personal in both spheres. According to Kantorowicz,

The laudes invoke the conquering God — Christ the victor, ruler, and commander — and acclaim in him, with him, or through him his imperial or royal vicars on earth along with all the other powers conquering, ruling, commanding, and safeguarding the other order of this present world: the pope and the bishops, the ruler's house, the clergy, the princes, the judges, and the army. The correlation of the two worlds, the present and the transcendental, and the dissolving of the one in the other became manifest on closer inspection of the text of this chant.<sup>2</sup>

We can differ with the medieval concept of the connection between heaven and earth, but we cannot as Christians question the premise that the source of law is God. The early medieval view of God as the source of justice had its weaknesses, but the source of

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1. Geoffrey Koziol, "Lord's Law and Natural Law," in Harold J. Johnson, ed., *The Medieval Tradition of Natural Law*, Medieval Institute Publications: Studies in Medieval Culture, vol. 22 (Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan University, 1987), 104.

2. Ernst Kantorowicz, *Laudes, Regiae: A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Medieval Ruler Worship* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1946), 14.

law was still God, not man, and to some kings, such as William Rufus, this was wrong. He complained on one occasion,

What is that? Is God a just judge? Damn whoever thinks it! He will answer for this by my good judgment and not by God's, which can be folded this way and that as anyone wants it.<sup>3</sup>

By the fifteenth century scholars like Gabriel Biel has connected right reason with natural law.<sup>4</sup> Thomas Aquinas had already laid the Aristotelian foundations for this and spoken of natural law as the "participation of the eternal law in the natural creature."<sup>5</sup>

The association of natural law with right reason was the foundation of elitism. It meant that the intellectual, the scholar, as the voice of right reason was logically the source of true law and planning (or predestination). Plato's philosopher-kings were as a result a social necessity. The word of man was now the ruling word, the law-word.

According to John H. Geerken, both natural law thinking as found in Cicero, and as expressed in Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*, is basic to Machiavelli's thinking.<sup>6</sup> Boccaccio gives a grim report on the plague in Florence, and then a justification of flight from family and friends to preserve one's health:

Dear my ladies, you may, like myself, have many times heard that whose honesty useth his right doth no wrong; and it is the natural right of every one who is born here below to succour, keep, and defend his own life as best he may, and in so far is this allowed that it hath happened while that, for the preservation thereof, men have been slain without any fault. If this much be conceded of the laws, which have in view the well-being of all mortals, how much more is it lawful for us that whatsoever other, without offense unto any, to take such means as we may for the preservation of our lives?<sup>7</sup>

We have here the language of *rights* and *natural right*. Man's duty to God has been replaced by man's duty to himself. In *The Prince*,

3. Koziol, "Lord's Law," 106.

4. Kevin McDonnell, "Nominalist Natural Law Theory Revisited: Gabriel Biel," in Johnson, *The Medieval Tradition of Natural Law*, 131.

5. Dennis P. Seniff, "Introduction to Natural Law in Didactic, Scientific, and Legal Treatises in Medieval Iberia," in *ibid.*, 161.

6. John H. Geerken, "Elements of Natural Law Theory in Machiavelli," in *ibid.*, 37-65.

7. Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron* (New York, NY: Triangle Books, [1931] 1940), 8-9.

Niccolo Machiavelli gave precedence to “the health of the country” over questions of “justice or injustice, humanity or cruelty,” or anything else. As Max Lerner noted,

Machiavelli sought to distinguish the realm of what ought to be and the realm of what is. He rejected the first for the second. But there is a third realm: the realm of what can be. It is in that realm that what one might call a humanist realism can lie.<sup>8</sup>

Nature as a substantive reality and as the source of its own laws was increasingly seen as conferring natural rights on individuals, and also on civil governments. The one aspect led to *laissez faire* and libertarian thinking, and the other to statism. Law and dominion had been transferred to man.

Boccaccio’s perspective on law and nature has not received the attention it deserves because, in popular form, it gave expression to the new thought. There is a cynicism regarding virtue:

By Christ and His faith (and I should know what I say, when I swear thus) I have not a single gossip who went a maid to her husband; and as for the wives, I know full well how many and what tricks they play their husbands; and this blockhead would teach me to know women, as if I had been born yesterday.<sup>9</sup>

Sexual sins are *natural*, not wrong. As one man says, “my sin was one which still goeth hand in hand with youth and which on you would do away, it behoveth you first do away with youth.”<sup>10</sup>

Boccaccio affirmed the equality of all men, first citing God and then turning to Nature for his verification:

But now let us leave this and look somewhat in the first principles of things, whereby thou wilt see that we all get our flesh from one same stock and that all souls were by one same Creator created with equal faculties, equal powers and equal virtues. Worth it was that first distinguished between us, who were all and still are born equal; wherefore those who had and used the greatest sum thereof were called noble and the rest abode not noble. And albeit contrary usance hath since obscured this primary law, yet is it nowise done away nor blotted out from nature and good manners; wherefore he who doth worthily manifestly showeth himself a gentleman, and if

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8. Max Lerner, “Introduction,” in Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince and the Discourses* (New York, NY: Modern Library, 1940), xlvi. See also Geerken, “Elements,” 49.

9. Boccaccio, *Decameron*, 295.

10. *Ibid.*, 81.

any call him otherwise, not he who is called, but he who calleth committeth default.<sup>11</sup>

The “primary law” is no longer to seek *first* the Kingdom of God and His righteousness or justice but it is rather the equality of man. The Golden Rule is parodied to read, “Whoso doth it to you, do you it to him”; it is altered to read as a law of vengeance.<sup>12</sup> God’s law is set aside, and we are told, “But, as I am assured you know, laws should be common to all and made with the consent of those whom they concern.”<sup>13</sup>

These are the “democratic” sentiments, but Boccaccio’s was an age of tyranny. God’s law having been replaced by the will and law of man, it was not government and law by the consent of all which prevailed but the will of tyrants. Boccaccio (1313-1375) gave expression to these sentiments, but Cesare Borgia (1475 or 1476-1507) demonstrated that, without the restraint of God’s law in a society, the law and power of man prevails. The Renaissance gave birth to a humanistic faith, and to tyranny. The two go together. Law derived from man or from nature is no restraint; those who give the law see themselves as above it. The association of right reason with natural law leads to elitism. Elitism logically leads men to play god. Thomas Jefferson, the great “democrat,” in a letter to John Adams on October 28, 1813, affirmed his belief in the contemptible nature “of the Conaille of the cities of Europe,” and of “the mobs of the cities.” His basis for judgment was not *sin*, not the violations of God’s law, but the difference between the elite and the herd. Sex has its purpose, Jefferson held, not pleasure but the perpetuation of the species. As in animal husbandry, sexual coition should be for the improvement of the species; the goal should be a race of aristocrats, a natural aristocracy of men like Jefferson.<sup>14</sup>

If Nature is ultimate as a “substantive reality,” then there is no reason why eugenic ideas should not prevail, nor abortion and euthanasia not be legalized. Red China has limited children to one

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11. *Ibid.*, 198.

12. *Ibid.*, 292.

13. *Ibid.*, 307.

14. Lester J. Coppon, ed., *The Adams-Jefferson Letters*, vol. 2 (Chapel Hill, NC: University Press, 1959), 387-92.

per family; we are not told if this law applies to the elite leaders. The American Bar Association Section on Family Law has come out with a strongly favorable report on licensing parents and limiting parenthood in the U.S.<sup>15</sup>

We misunderstand these events if we fail to see them as modern efforts to rebuild the Tower of Babel, the one-world humanistic order. In that instance, God observed, "now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do" (Gen. 11:6). Now as then God brings confusion on such an anti-God dream and confounds it radically. The Babels of this world shall not and cannot stand. The civil revolution is a dream of a new Tower of Babel.

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15. Claudia Pap Mangel, "Licensing Parents: How Feasible?," *Family Law Quarterly* 22, no. 1 (Spring 1988): 17-39.

## THE DREAM OF REASON

**D**reams, daydreams and night dreams, are insubstantial wisps of the mind which occupy a substantial amount of man's life and time. On rare occasions, according to Scripture, God has used dreams to speak to men, but this is no reason to dignify dreams as such. Usually, dreaming is a mild form of insanity whereby the man forsakes reality for a chosen unreality. Our mind in dreams seeks freedom from the real world to indulge its wants, fears, or evasions. Psychotherapy of the Freudian variety placed great emphasis on dreams but was itself a form of dreaming in that it sought to evade the fact of human responsibility; Freudianism located sin in the environment, not in man, and it thereby sought to nullify guilt.

Daydreams are rightly called dreams because they also seek freedom from reality. In fact, they are usually a more pronounced form of escapism, and, when pursued too long, lead to a loss of the awareness of reality, to insanity.

The border between dreaming and governed wakefulness is steadily being eroded by our contemporary humanistic culture and its will to fiction, its radical immersion in films and television which cater to the desire to replace reality with man's dreams.

Shortly after World War II, I met briefly a man who had a curious belief; he held that mental health required free expression. As a result, he readily spoke his mind; every obscenity, every vagrant erotic thought when a woman walked by, every idea that came to mind, he gave free expression to at once. He insisted that his was the free and healthy mind in a sick and repressed world. Since he had enough money now to indulge himself, I asked if he now would seek greater "health" by indulging in his daydreams. He had two, he said, one of which he would not indulge, since he wanted to live, namely, to "improve" the world by executing a number of its political heads. The other daydream was to sample a variety of beautiful women of different races and colors. I then became the object of his free expression of mind when I called attention to the contradiction between his professed anarchism and his dreams of coercion. Certainly the execution of various heads of state was coercive and not compatible with an affirmation of radical freedom for all men. Then his sexual dream was also coercive; he wanted these women to be the creatures of his will. What he was saying was, "My will be done"; his thinking did not see solutions and personal fulfillment as regeneration through Christ but as coercion. I wanted to add that any non-Christian solution had to rely on eternalism and coercion for its solutions (including coercive education), but by then he was freely expressing his mind about the obscenity of Christians and Christianity.

This is, however, the hard reality which humanistic man refuses to recognize. The dream of the power state is, Man's will (elitist man's) be done. Whether it be a power church or a power state, its premises include the death or suppression of its enemies, and the equation of its will with truth and society. It is an elitist order it seeks, and its solution to problems is power or coercion, not God's regenerating power and grace through Jesus Christ.

The civil revolution is the application and enforcement of the statist dream of reason. As a result, the "reality" which governs it is the daydream of humanistic planners and dreamers. Thus, in the early 1970s, the illiteracy rate of Niger's adult population was 99.1 percent. However, the schooling provided to the young aggravated Niger's problems. According to Clarke,

A study of Niger's schools by the University of Montreal concluded that they are doing the country more harm than good, since they fail to educate students in the management of the agricultural and livestock sectors so crucial to the economy. Instead, the schools produce a semi-educated, frustrated urban proletariat, trained for jobs that do not exist and disdainful of jobs that do. Among the handful of students who completed their studies abroad, only 22 of 342 were studying the veterinary sciences and agriculture.<sup>1</sup>

This is true in countries all over the world, with equally bad results.

Patrick Marnham has shown that the management of African game preserves reveals a "fantastic invasion" by foreign scientists, Russian, American, French, Chinese, and others. Reports on the wildlife are falsified to give grounds for increasing controls over more and more land in contempt of the needs of African peoples. Where scientific work among the human population is under way, the priority is given to research rather than therapy, i.e., studying the natives' "health" rather than healing them of "easily curable" conditions.<sup>2</sup>

Power is the goal of political parties and of the modern state. Commenting on this fact, Owen Chadwick wrote,

Before Marxists attained power in Russia and China, the proposition was widely believed, government likes religion. Wanting honesty and service, it hopes that religion helps make honest men who serve. But government is ever aware that religion is unpredictable and that prophets are hard to control. To rule men needs compromise. In face of the sacred is always an unbendable will. Government likes religion to bless its acts, crown its dictators, sanction its laws, define its wars as just, be decorous masters of national ceremonies. And since on grounds of religion religious men may criticize acts or laws or wars or modes of waging war, government prefers quietness and contemplation to excess of zeal. Though religion is important to government, it does not value excess of religion. It is happy with general morality, reasonable and moderate, but uncomfortable with too much enthusiasm.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Thurston Clarke, *The Last Cavern* (New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1978), 171-72.

2. Patrick Marnham, *Fantastic Invasion: Notes on Contemporary Africa* (New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanich, 1980), 136-37.

3. Owen Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, [1975] 1977), 117.

As states have been more and more humanistic, they have also increasingly distrusted the church and Christianity as an independent and dangerous power. Thus, in the France of the 1880s, with anti-clericalism strong, one man said openly, “Anything with a strong moral life embarrasses government.”<sup>4</sup> This is the reason why Tertullian’s plea to the emperor was futile; it was true, as Tertullian said, that the Christians were Rome’s best citizens, the honest taxpayers, and the finest soldiers, but a morally strong people exercise a resistance to evil powers which others do not.

Moreover, the modern state is given to absolutism as an aspect of its claim to sovereignty. Dooyeweerd pointed out that the theory of the state in the post-Reformation era has been governed by “the mechanistic model of a machine — an instrument of control,” and this is an aspect of its natural law origins.<sup>5</sup> The state, we can add, has in such thinking the same necessity as does gravity; it is an aspect of the natural order and its own law sphere in a naturalistic sense. Moreover, Dooyeweerd wrote,

Humanistic thought directed itself particularly to the construction of the state. The new state, which was unknown in medieval society, was designed as an instrument of control that could gather all power to itself. Humanism assumed that science was as competent to construct this state as it was to manufacture the mechanical tools controlling the forces of nature. All current knowledge of society, which was still relatively incomplete, was consciously adapted to this constructionist science ideal.<sup>6</sup>

At the same time, we are told that morality in the Biblical sense is not a civil concern. Indeed, state schools teach morality as a purely personal set of values which has no mandate for life at large. Situation ethics prevails. The state’s concern is not the moral satisfaction of victims of crimes, i.e., restitution, but “public policy.”

The Biblical perspective requires restitution. Sin is primarily an offense against God, the lawgiver, and secondarily an offense against His creature, man, and His creation. Without necessarily agreeing with the forms it took, the restitution and penance

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4. *Ibid.*

5. Herman Dooyeweerd, *Roots of Western Culture* (Toronto, Canada: Wedge Publishing Foundation, 1979), 173.

6. *Ibid.*, 156.

required by the early church recognized sin as something that required correction in man and society. We have an amusing example of this from the early 1300s, in the case of Sir Eustace d'Ambreticourt, whose father had been a founder of the Knights of the Garter. Sir Eustace stole Elizabeth of Juliers, niece of a queen, out of her convent with her consent. He had a hedge-priest, John Ireland, marry them before sunrise. Elizabeth, for breaking her vow, a deadly sin, had to recite daily the seven penitential psalms, the fifteen gradual psalms, the Litany, *Placebo* and *Dirige*, and, together with her husband, give freely to the poor "whenever they had carnal intercourse." Because of the benefits to the poor, the needy villagers gathered each morning early to cheer him on and to rejoice in his accomplishment.<sup>7</sup>

The naturalistic (or, mechanistic) model of the state reduces human action — and sin — to conditioned reflexes, to reactions to an environment, and, generally, to basically impersonal sociological forces and influences. This further demoralizes man and society.

Biblical faith, however, views human action and sin in personal terms. Sin is personal guilt, and David confesses this fact and acknowledges the full justice of God's judgment:

3. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

4. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. (Ps. 51:3-4)

Such a view is alien to the state as a scientific development which is a sphere of the natural order. A morality from beyond this world, God's law, then has no relevance. The dream of reason leads to a depersonalized man and world; it is destructive of human responsibility, and its goal is an anthill society.

But dreams, usually a *mild* form of insanity, can become deadly in the hands of intellectuals and theorists. Because their dreams are incarnated in the state, its schools, laws, courts, and more, such dreams are *dangerously* insane, and they can kill men — and have. The victims of state slave labor camps are tens of millions.

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7. Michael Packe, *King Edward III*, ed. L.C.B. Seaman, (London, England: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1983), 255.



## THE DECLINE OF RELEVANCE

The Reformation can be regarded with good reason as the means whereby the church was preserved. Its advantages were as great to Rome as to the Protestants. The papacy was under the control of the Holy Roman Empire and some powerful national states; the church had turned to art and “culture” as a safe means of eminence. Moreover, as Ranke observed,

It was an inevitable consequence that the whole body of the hierarchy should be influenced by the character and tendencies of its chief, that all should lend their best aid to the population of his purposes, and be themselves carried forward by the impulse thus given.

Not only the supreme dignity of the pontiff, but all other offices of the church, were regarded as mere secular property. The pope nominated cardinals from no better motive than personal favour, the gratification of some potentate, or even, and this was no unfrequent occurrence, for actual payment of money! Could there be any rational expectation that men so appointed would fulfill their spiritual duties? One of the most important offices of the church, the *Penitenziaria*, was bestowed by Sixtus IV on one of his nephews. This office held a large portion of the power of granting dispensations; its privileges were still further extended by the pope, and in a bull issued for the express purpose of confirming them, he declares all who shall presume to doubt the rectitude of such measures to be “a stiff-necked people and children of malice.” It followed as a matter of course that the nephew considered his office

as a benefice, the proceeds of which he was entitled to increase to the utmost extent possible.<sup>1</sup>

Sixtus IV (1414-1484) was not one of the worst popes by any means. In fact, Joseph McCabe, who was quick to note papal immoralities, said simply of him,

Sixtus was a virtuous monk, General of the Franciscan Order; and he surpasses all other Popes in the enrichment of relatives whose luxurious vices were as well known in Italy as are the sayings of Mussolini today.<sup>2</sup>

Sixtus IV was a patron of learning; he had the Sistine Chapel built, and also the Sistine bridge. The Vatican library was enriched by him, and painters greatly helped. After the Council of Constance (1414-1418), a reforming pope was especially unlikely. The emperor, Sigismund, led in the lynching of Hus and Jerome of Prague. A reformer had to be something of a wild man, and this the popes were not. No churchman could go very far except in terms of pragmatism, and pragmatists never risk a burning at the stake. Shortly before the Reformation broke loose, the emperor Maximilian I (1459-1519) hoped to combine the offices of pope and emperor in his person. He thought at times also of depraving Julius II to hasten his plan.<sup>3</sup>

With the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation, Europe was to a degree re-Christianized. Ranke, after depicting the church's decay, said of the era 1589-1607,

There has been no period in which theologians were more influential than at the close of the sixteenth century. They sat in the councils of kings, and discussed political affairs from the pulpit in the presence of the whole people – they directed schools, controlled the efforts of learning, and governed the whole range of literature. From the confessional they gained opportunity for surprising the secret struggles of the soul with itself, and for giving the decisive bias to all the doubtful questions arising in private life. It may perhaps be affirmed that the eager violence with which they opposed each other, the fact that each of the two great divisions found its

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1. Leopold Ranke, *The History of the Popes*, vol. 1 (London, England: Bohn, 1853), 42-43.

2. Joseph McCabe, *A History of the Popes* (London, England: Watts, 1939), 398.

3. Friedrich Heer, *The Holy Roman Empire* (New York, NY: Fredrich A. Praeger, 1967), 139.

antagonist in its own body, was precisely the cause of that comprehensive and pervading influence.

And if this might be said of both parties, it was more particularly true of the Catholics. Among them the ideas and institutions, by which the minds of men are more immediately and effectually disciplined and guided, were arranged with the most perfect adaptation to the end proposed; no man could now exist without a father confessor.<sup>4</sup>

Men's concerns were now theologically influenced. Why, then, did Europe go astray? Why, instead of a renewed Christendom, did the Enlightenment prevail in time?

The concerns of Catholics and Protestants became too strongly institutional, and this helped weaken their hold. Reality tended too often to have as its center an ecclesiastical or institutional emphasis, and this made for irrelevance. Thus, Jean Boucher, in his sermons (1594), held that,

The difference between the priest and the king renders this matter clear to us, the priest being of God alone, which cannot be said of the king; for, if all kings were dead, the people could easily make themselves others; but if there were no more priests, it would be needful that Jesus Christ should come in person to create new ones.<sup>5</sup>

One might agree or disagree with this assertion; in any case, one must say that, in the face of momentous current issues, the church was raising minor and peripheral ones; however much one might agree with Boucher, one should still see that the church was exalted, not Christ, and the people were not fed.

On the Protestant side, in England, the Presbyterians were ready to overlook anything except their belief in the necessity for Presbyterian polity. The Presbyterians helped destroy the English Commonwealth, even as popes determined on the ascendancy of the Vatican helped cripple the Counter-Reformation and give Catholic Europe over to the national states. In time, the Austrian emperor, Joseph II, would treat the church as his domain and under his rule.

The church had made itself irrelevant, and the state, already grasping for power, gained by default and claimed one sphere after

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4. Ranke, *History of the Popes*, vol. 2, 2.

5. *Ibid.*, 9n.

another. The rise of Pietism added to the irrelevance of the church and led to its feminization. In time, a few would derisively refer to the three sexes, “men, women, and preachers.” (In the mid-nineteenth century, a variation spoke of men, women, and Beechers, with especially telling reference to Henry Ward Beecher.) Instead of being the most relevant of the faiths, Christianity was made less and less relevant by the churches. To read the accounts of church synods, assemblies, and the like, or to read papal encyclicals, is to become lost in much institutional detail and to see too little an awareness of the world outside the institution. In the twentieth century, a reversal of this has been under way.

At the same time, the state has been irrelevant to the reality outside its bureaucratic doors. The U.S. Constitution states the purpose of the Federal Union in its Preamble:

We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Almost from the beginning, many have questioned whether or not this has been done. Granted that the perfectionists will always find fault with their era, the fact still remains that the closing years of the twentieth century are making it harder to see any great fidelity of the U.S. to its stated function. Certainly justice seems less established than ever and criminal injustice is especially flagrant. “Domestic tranquility” is obviously lacking. “The common defense” is also questionable, and “the general welfare” of the federal government is better promoted than that of the people. “The blessings of liberty” are also clearly dimmed.

Like the church, the state has made itself irrelevant. Its power has grown with far greater rapidity than the freedom and tranquility of the people. Its grasp of reality is poor because the state sees itself as the maker of reality. Mitchell, in *Bismarck and the French Nation*, referred to Otto von Bismarck’s “habitual paranoia” and its impact on history.<sup>6</sup> This fact of paranoia is now basic to the

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6. Allan Mitchell, *Bismarck and the French Nation, 1848-1890* (New York, NY: Bobbs-Merrill Pegasus, 1971), 104.

modern state: it distrusts families and intrudes on their domain; it resents the freedom of the church and seeks to curb it; it will not grant that many if not virtually all independent schools are better educators than the state schools; it controls business as though the state alone can exercise reason and morality, and so on and on. The state in every area has made itself a roadblock to the people to some degree or another. As the state's incompetence grows, so too does its claims to authority, its claim to total relevance, and, in time, its claim to totalitarian power.



## JUSTICE

An acquaintance stopped by recently, a devout man, finally successful, and of an independent spirit. He had offended some people and paid a price for it. After returning home from a trip abroad, he discovered that he had no home; he attempted to trace the alienation of his house (built for a million dollars, and full of antiques), but he found no record that he had ever owned the house in the county records!

According to the *Wall Street Journal*,

It's three torturous years and some \$3 million late, but Alexia Morrison on Friday finally lifted the grinding weight of possible indictment off the shoulders of Theodore Olson and his family. This is a cause for celebration, but it is sobering to note that the only two countries outside the Third World that still threaten political opponents with jail are the Soviet Union and the United States.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Olson had offended Congress and the bureaucracy; \$4.5 million in taxpayer's funds had been spent trying to punish him, and Mr. Olson had to spend a like amount defending himself.

In Yonkers, New York, a U.S. District Judge, Leonard B. Sand, ordered 1,000 low-income housing units (for blacks in the main, apparently) to be built in middle-class neighborhoods. For a

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1. "Finally, Justice for Olson," *Wall Street Journal*, August 29, 1988, 10.

refusal to comply, he held the city council members in contempt of court and fined them \$500 a day, the city \$100 a day, and the amount to double daily each day that they were still in contempt. The judge did not order the construction of such housing in his own neighborhood.<sup>2</sup>

In a letter to me of August 21, 1988, a student reported his experience in applying for admission to a medical school. His academic record was “excellent,” but his Christian faith created problems:

...In my interview, it was apparent very early on to those interviewing me that I took more than a weekend interest in religion. Asked if I would perform an abortion on a 14 year old, I responded of course not. Asked if I would refer her to someone who would, once again, I said that in light of my views on abortion, it would be hypocritical of me to say, “No, I won’t kill your baby, but here’s the name of someone who will.” This did not sit well with the interviewing committee.

When all was said and done, after an hour, I walked out of the interview confident that I had not betrayed my values or my Lord by my responses. I felt that the matter was in God’s hands. A week later, I received notice that I was not being offered a position in the entering class, but that should I wish to discuss the reasons for my rejection, the dean of admissions would be pleased to meet with me. My talk with the dean was very enlightening. He told me that there was nothing wrong with my academic record at all, but that all three of my interviewers described me as being extremely rigid and inflexible with respect to my values. And that was where my problem lay. I responded that that was an interesting way of looking at a person who had absolutes. He retorted that we live in a changing world, and that as physicians, we have to be ready to change with society. He said that it was OK for me not to believe in abortion (90% of the students felt that way, he told me), but it was inexcusable for me to impose my values on others (i.e., by not helping this fictitious 14 year old to obtain an abortion). There is no place in the medical profession for people as judgmental as that.

Furthermore, it was felt that I might even go so far as to proselytize my patients when they are in a state of vulnerability (although some would call it receptivity). Once again, inexcusable, even bordering on malpractice. My views on homosexuality as something

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2. Charlotte Low Allen, with Hugh Aynesworth, “A Divided City Digs in its Heels,” *Insight*, September 5, 1988, 30-31; and Patrick J. Buchanan, “Why Yonkers is Under Judicial Tyranny,” *Wanderer*, August 25, 1988, 5.

deviant were greeted in a similar vein. I'm sure you get the drift of the meeting.

Augustine's conclusion that godless societies cannot provide justice, and that such states are comparable to a criminal syndicate, is well known.<sup>3</sup> Amazingly, churchmen have not considered its implications nor taken it seriously.

There is no abstract justice existing in independence of God. The universe is a fallen realm, and it has moreover no independent being or nature. There is no realm of justice or right and wrong apart from the triune God, who sets forth His justice in His law. Anything else is injustice. The opposite of law is lawlessness, even if it be enacted lawlessness. A few days ago, I received a letter from a political theorist who is convinced that some kind of abstract law and justice, in independence of both God and man, exists and is available as a source of political and constitutional order. Such thinking posits a God without God! Somehow, this abstractness brought forth the universe by evolution and has inherent in it available and applicable ideas of justice, law, and order. Such thinking is mythological and less honest than avowed atheistic and positivist thinking. It is, however, very prevalent.

Dostoyevsky dealt with this same problem in *The Brothers Karamazov*, in "The Grand Inquisitor" tale. A commonsense "morality" is the Inquisitor's substitute for Christ's way. The Inquisitor holds that the tempter in the wilderness was "the will and mighty spirit," and Jesus was wrong in rejecting the temptation. To convert stones into bread would be an easy, miraculous solution to the economic problem. It would alleviate human misery and remove the ugly problems of freedom. For Christ to cast Himself down from the Temple pinnacle, or to come down from the cross, would have eliminated the necessity for faith. Who then could doubt Jesus? To bow down and worship the tempter was to recognize the rightness of his way as best for the welfare of mankind. Christ's way sentences men to the perils of freedom and the possibility of damnation. The Grand Inquisitor declares:

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3. St. Augustine, *The City of God*, bk. 4, sec. 4 (New York, NY: Modern Library, 1950), 112-13.

We are not working with Thee, but with him – that is our mystery. It's long – eight centuries – since we have been on his side and not on Thine. Just eight centuries ago, we took from him from what Thou didst reject with scorn, that last gift he offered Thee, showing Thee all the kingdoms of the earth.<sup>4</sup>

Dostoyevsky saw this as illustrative of the faith of the Jesuits and the Roman Catholic Church. It would be wiser and more apt to see it as the faith of all churches and states that abandon God's law and seek to establish an independent ground for morality, justice, and law. The argument of the Grand Inquisitor is an empirical argument. Men, he holds, are slaves by nature; they want to avoid the necessity for moral action and thinking. An order which will control them to prevent unwise choices and acts will most satisfy them and do the most good.

The implication of the Grand Inquisitor's argument is that God's way is idealistic and unwise, whereas Satan's way is realistic, practical, workable, and wise. We thus have again the assumption that God and man live in a world of Platonic abstract form, or way of justice. Some may choose more wisely than others.

The origins of such thinking are Greek. Abstract universals exist and are impersonal and separate from God (or gods) and man. These abstract universals are potential building blocks for social order, and they are amenable to variations. As a result, Greek thought was not troubled by polytheism, since a variety of forms could be constructed out of the building blocks. There were potentially many ways to the just social order, or to God, if one chose.

From a Biblical perspective, the alternative to God's law is lawlessness and injustice because only God expresses and defines justice. All His ways are justice (Deut. 32:4), and He alone defines sin and justice (1 John 3:4). For a church or state to deny the authority and government of God's law is to deny the validity of justice and to replace it with man's injustice made into "law."

Origen had no great interest in God's law, and yet he observed:

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4. Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, trans. Constance Garnett (New York, NY: Modern Library, 1937), 267.

Although a great many lawgivers were eminent among Greeks and barbarians, as well as numberless teachers or philosophers who promised they were declaring the truth, we remember no lawgiver so influential that he was able to inspire the minds of other nations with zeal either to adopt his laws willingly or to defend them with the entire effort of their minds. Therefore, no one was able to introduce and to implant what seemed to him the truth even in one nation, to say nothing of many other foreign nations, in such a way that his knowledge or his belief should reach everyone. Moreover, it cannot be doubted both that the lawgivers wanted all men to observe their laws if possible, and that the teachers wanted everyone to know what seemed to them the truth. But since they knew that they were entirely incapable of this and that they did not have such great power as to rouse even foreign nations to observe their laws or doctrines, they did not even dare to undertake such a project at all, lest what had been begun but could not be finished should mark them out as men without foresight. Nevertheless, in every part of the world, in all of Greece and in every foreign nation, there are numberless throngs of people who have left their ancestral laws and those they supposed gods, and who have dedicated themselves to the observance of Moses' Law and to the discipleship and worship of Christ. And they have done this not without finding an immense hatred stirred up against them from those who worship idols, with the result that they are often afflicted with tortures by these people and sometimes are led away to death. Nevertheless, they embrace and guard fast the word of Christ's teaching with all their desire.<sup>5</sup>

Christian missions brought civilization and justice to all areas of the world, working either in the face of barbarism or cultured degeneracy. In terms of God's law, one form of injustice after another was pushed back. As against entrenched sin and power, it was a slow and difficult task. Modern antinomianism is destroying all the work of centuries, hand in hand with a revived paganism. Equal justice before the law (Lev. 19:15) is being replaced by class and racial injustice. Slavery and polygamy, once commonplace and normal to the non-Christian world, will no doubt reappear as Christianity wanes, and abortion and euthanasia are with us now.

To deny God's law is to deny justice. To separate the state from the triune God and His law is to embrace injustice. To

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5. "On First Principles," in Rowan A. Greer, trans. and intro., *Origen: An Exhortation to Martyrdom; Prayer; First Principles: Book IV; Prologue to the Commentary on the Song of Songs; Homily XXVII on Numbers* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1979), 171-72.

reduce Christianity to saving souls for heaven is to deny the absolute Lordship of Christ over all things. It is also an invitation to His judgment.

## THE NIETZSCHEAN STATE

Friedrich Nietzsche is seen by some as an anarchist in his theory of the state, and by others as the theorist of Prussianism and Hitler's National Socialism. It is true that Nietzsche can be quoted by both groups. Thus, in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, he called the state "the coldest of all cold monsters." He continued:

False is everything in it; with stolen teeth it biteth, the biting one.  
False are even its bowels.

Confusion of language of good and evil; this sign I give unto you  
as the sign of the state. Verily, the will to death, indicateth this sign!  
Verily, it beckoneth unto the preachers of death!

Many too many are born: for the superfluous ones was the state devised!

See just how it enticeth them to it, the many-too-many! How it swalloweth and cheweth and recheweth them!

"On earth there is nothing greater than I: it is I who am the regulating finger of God" – thus roareth the monster. And not only the long-eared and short-sighted fall upon their knees!<sup>1</sup>

It is apparent, *first*, that Nietzsche's claim that life should be lived beyond good and evil applied only to the Biblical doctrine of good

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1. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, in *The Philosophy of Nietzsche* (New York, NY: Modern Library, n.d.), 64.

and evil. Hence, for him, the state of his day had a “confusion of language of good and evil.” As a result, for him the state was suicidal. *Second*, the evil of the modern state is its democratic tendency: “Many too many are born: for the superfluous ones was the state devised!” As against Carl Sandburg’s “The People, Yes,” Nietzsche held, “The People, NO!” Nietzsche despised the Christian man, the common man, and any love for humanity. *Third*, Nietzsche’s sister, Elizabeth Forster-Nietzsche, rightly observed of her brother’s philosophy:

Stated briefly, the leading principle of this new system of valuing would be: “All that proceeds from power is good, all that springs from weakness is bad.”<sup>2</sup>

“Weakness” for Nietzsche meant Christianity, democracy, a republic, the people, and a concern for “justice for all.” He wrote, “Once spirit was God, then it became man, and now it even becometh populace.”<sup>3</sup> This will to power requires the “death of God”:

But that I may reveal my heart entirely unto you, my friends: if there were Gods, how could I endure it to be no God! Therefore there are no Gods.<sup>4</sup>

*Fourth*, it follows then that if Nietzsche wills the death of God and himself to be god, reality is what he says it is and nothing else. Hence, he declares, “Nothing is true, all is permitted,” meaning thereby that nothing coming from the Biblical God is true, only what Nietzsche proclaims.<sup>5</sup>

Given this “fact,” it follows that all values now are values if they serve the will to power. We find, therefore, that Nietzsche saw knowledge simply “as an instrument of power.”<sup>6</sup> A reality apart from the man with a will to power must then be denied. Nietzsche wrote:

The greatness of all fables is the one relating to knowledge. People would like to know how things-in-themselves are constituted: but behold, there are not things-in-themselves!...

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2. Elisabeth Forster-Nietzsche, “Introduction,” in *ibid.*, 11.

3. *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, in *ibid.*, 56.

4. *Ibid.*, 98.

5. *Ibid.*, 273.

6. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power, in Science, Nature, Society & Art* (New York, NY: Friedrich Publications, 1960), 11.

A “thing-in-itself” is just as absurd as a “sense-in-itself,” a “meaning-in-itself.” There is no such thing as a “fact-in-itself,” for a meaning must always be given to it before it can become a fact....

In short: the essence of a thing is really only an opinion concerning that “thing.” Or, better still, “it is worth” is actually what is meant by “it is,” or by “that is.”<sup>7</sup>

In Genesis 1, God said, “Let there be...,” and there was: His word created factuality; there is no brute factuality because all facts are God-created facts, and their meaning is God-ordained. Nietzsche insists on the same fiat power: factuality is what the superman decrees it to be; it is “created” by his interpretation, by the meaning that he assigns to it. This means that “it is of cardinal importance that the real world should be suppressed.”<sup>8</sup> Not only God but the universe He created must be denied existence. Truth is rejected, because “we have created the world that has any value!” hence, “All is false — everything is allowed!”<sup>9</sup>

In Nietzsche’s realm, the unfit must be castrated; the “unhealthy parts of an organism” (the state) “must at all costs be eliminated.” Compassion and “equal rights for the physiologically botched — this would be the very principle of immorality.”<sup>10</sup> Nietzsche opposed parliamentary government and “the power of the press, because they are the means whereby the cattle become masters.” In fact, “the arming of the people means in the end the arming of the mob.”<sup>11</sup>

Nietzsche thus believed in a state, but in an anti-Christian power state. Figgis observed:

Further, in politics, according to Nietzsche, perfection is to be found on purely Machiavellian principles. He definitely prophesied the coming of that savagery so well named by M. Cambon “*La barbarie pedante*.”

Is it not, then, obvious what is likely to happen if any state or nation adopts his views? It can assert that the State is Power; nothing else but Power. It can believe with Nietzsche that power is the one end of life. It may go on to proclaim itself free from limitation in

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7. *Ibid.*, 64-65.

8. *Ibid.*, 84.

9. *Ibid.*, 102.

10. *Ibid.*, 194.

11. *Ibid.*, 206.

dealing with its enemies and from every kind of limitation in dealing with its subjects or with religious and economic groups.<sup>12</sup>

Some years ago, an American philosopher, an admirer of Nietzsche, observed:

The anarchist school hates the State as a symbol of power. Nietzsche hates the State as a symbol of weakness. The anarchist school heralds the downfall of the State as the end of tyranny; Nietzsche sees in the downfall of the State the means of establishing the dominion of the Superman.

The anarchist school works against the State as an instrument of class domination, and asserts the interest of the masses; Nietzsche thunders against the State as an instrument for the protection and creation of the masses and asserts the interest not of the masses but of the Superman.

Anarchist and Nietzsche agree in desiring the downfall of the State, then, but for entirely opposite reasons. The anarchist school desires the complete downfall of the State in order to inaugurate the era of anarchy.

But what is more precisely Nietzsche's position? Perhaps, after all, Nietzsche does not desire so complete a downfall of the State as we might imagine. Nietzsche is an autocrat. So far as the State represents authority, that is, the Will to Power, to dominate, Nietzsche is perhaps willing to accept it.<sup>13</sup>

Foster was right, but more important, as the general attack on Christianity by the nineteenth-century "thinkers," among them Nietzsche, gained momentum, was the fact that the death of God belief went hand in hand with belief in man as his own god and law. The assault on Christendom was an assertion of man's will to power, his will to be his own god (Gen. 3:5).

The political consequences of this movement were enormous. Justice as the reason for the state's existence gave way quietly to the will to power. Justice became increasingly a façade whereby the people were persuaded to give more and more power to the state.

The medieval church, Luther, Calvin, and others held that rulers have power from God to further justice. It is their calling to

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12. John Neville Figgis, *The Will to Freedom, or, The Gospel of Nietzsche and the Gospel of Christ* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917), 283.

13. George Burman Foster, *Friedrich Nietzsche* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1931), 82.

be a “terror...to the evil” (Rom. 13:3). When rulers forsake justice, they forsake all legitimate title to power. (More than a few justified tyrannicide in such circumstances.) What is clear is that Biblical faith made justice the only valid ground, finally, for civil power. In pagan antiquity, power in itself maintained power. The great revolution wrought by Biblical faith was to set forth and implement the requirement of justice, God’s law. As early as in the day of the Roman Empire, Saint Ambrose humbled an emperor by giving him the mandate of God’s justice above power.

In the twentieth century, this order has been steadily reversed. The language of justice is still hypocritically used, but it is not God’s justice: it is now class justice, the people’s justice, Party justice, racial justice, and so on, all terms for injustice. As state power increases in the name of justice, so too does injustice increase.

Nietzsche demanded the “revaluation of all values.” Man had to be freed from Biblical faith to attain freedom as superman. By placing man under God and His law by requiring a justice which limits and inhibits power, Christianity for Nietzsche was a war “against life itself” because life for him meant freedom from God and from God’s law. He declared:

Wherever there are walls I shall inscribe this eternal accusation against Christianity upon them — I can write in letters which make even the blind see.... I call Christianity the one great curse, the one great intrinsic depravity, the one great instinct for revenge for which no expedient is sufficiently poisonous, secret, subterranean, petty — I call it the one immoral blemish of mankind.<sup>14</sup>

Nietzsche’s views are shared by many intellectuals, politicians, men of the media, and cultural barons. Although they are expressed less vocally, they are applied more potently. The modern state is a Nietzschean state, a power state. It is also an enemy of justice increasingly, and all in the name of justice!

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14. From, “The Anti-Christ,” in Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols: The Anti-Christ* (Marmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, [1889], 1972), 186-87.



## JUSTICE AND MAN'S DETERMINATION

There are many varieties of trees, but only one kind of justice. We can pick and choose the flowers of our choice, but there is no choice where justice is concerned. What is not justice is injustice, and justice is what God has ordained it to be. Our delight may be in marigolds, or in orchids, in roses, or in fuschias, in one or in several; it is a matter of taste and preference. Justice is not a question of what we want but of what God has decreed. We live or die by it, and we receive it, but we do not determine its nature or its scope. God does.

Nietzsche, by stressing with others the priority of man and of man's power over good and evil, shifted the state from the function of justice under God to power and the ultimacy of state power.

This revolution was facilitated, expedited, and encouraged by what was occurring in the churches. *First*, Pietism had shifted the focal point of Christianity from the triune God to man and man's salvation. Salvation became less and less God's sovereign call to man for service in His Kingdom and became more and more the deliverance of man from his problems, and meeting man's needs. Religious concerns were now "spiritual" concerns, and the total relevance of the faith for every area of life and thought gave way to an almost studied irrelevance.

*Second*, this shift to Pietism coincided with the theological shift from Calvinism and Augustinianism to Arminianism (a Protestant form of Scholasticism and Thomism, and a debased and non-ecclesiastical form thereof). The salvation decision was now made by man, not by God. Jesus Christ made salvation possible; man's decision, his choosing Jesus, made it actual. Christ's statement, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John 15:16), was set aside in favor of man's ability to take the decisive step. Scripture repeatedly stresses man's total depravity and inability (Ps. 14:1-3; Rom. 3:10-31, etc.). In Jeremiah, as elsewhere, we are warned against any trust in man's ability to save himself or to be saved by man:

Thus saith the LORD: Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. (Jer. 17:5)

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jer. 17:9)

Now, however, the church's evangelism became more than an instrument used by God: it became the determinative form of salvation. Altar calls, organizations, follow-ups, and more turned evangelism into salesmanship. It was a way of "selling" Christ to sinners. The sinner was a consumer in need, and Christ was the product to be sold.

*Third*, Calvinism had become truncated and more governed by traditions than by the power of God. From a feared power, Calvinism had receded into a dour and critical collection of men who endlessly preached the "Five Points of Calvinism" to one another. The "Five Points" are true enough, but in themselves are no more than the bones of a man's hand. All the bones can be there, but not life, nor is the hand the man. It is especially sad that the name of Calvin is associated with such sterility and impotence. Theology has been made an academic discipline rather than the arming of a man for the wars of the Lord. William Ames (1576-1633) began his *Marrow of Theology* with these words:

1. Theology is the doctrine or teaching (doctrina) of living to God. John 6:68, The words of eternal life; Acts 5:20, The word of this life; Rom. 6:11, Consider yourselves...alive to God.<sup>1</sup>

Eusden, Ames's translator and editor, commented on this, saying:

With this opening definition [Ames] placed himself, once more, in the company of Calvin, Bucer, Perkins and the English Puritans, and Peter Ramus. Calvin laid it down in the Geneva Catechism that nothing worse could befall a man than not to live to God.<sup>2</sup>

But why "live to God" if alternate "lifestyles" are available and are equally valid ways of life? If the choice is not between heaven and hell, life and death, or justice and injustice, why worry? If there are many ways of life and many forms of justice, why be concerned?

If decision and determination are in man's hands, then man can set up alternate choices for everything, all of which are valid alternatives.

Attorney-at-law Melvin Belli has written:

Some say that after Adam and Eve and the garden, man's basic nature is evil. I don't agree. I think man's basic nature is good, that there is a *de rerum natura*, a natural law. It's the concept of man that provides, without legislatures or constitutions, a natural or conscientious law which is "good."

This "goodness" is not an immutable one-age goodness, but extends through history so that it is a contextual "goodness," dependent upon the time, age, and country.<sup>3</sup>

For Belli, *first*, man is naturally good. This means that man can solve the problems of man and society without God. *Second*, there is no absolute goodness; justice and the good are dependent on the context or situation. Just as some have proposed situational ethics, Belli holds to situational law, or contextual goodness and justice. *Third*, this implies that justice and law are not only contextual but also evolving, so that each age has its own justice and law in terms of its needs and development.

Given this premise, how can the "right" development be known? The twentieth century has seen a number of "develop-

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1. William Ames, *The Marrow of Theology* trans. and ed. John D. Eusden (Boston, MA: Pilgrim Press, 1968), 77.

2. Eusden, "Introduction," in *ibid.*, 47.

3. Melvin Belli, *The Law Revolution* (North Hollywood, CA: Leisure Books, [1968] 1970), 235.

ments,” most notably communism, fascism, national socialism, dictatorship, Islamic “fundamentalism,” welfare democracies, and more. Without an unchanging standard, how can we judge which development is right, moral, and just? If we use “the welfare of man” as our standard, how then can we object if men choose an alternative we dislike? Men may deem their welfare best served by a “good” we regard as “evil.”

In a film documentary on her life, actress Lillian Gish spoke of David Llewelyn Mark Griffith (1875-1948), the pioneer film producer. According to Miss Gish, Griffith believed that films would bring in the millennium by acquainting all the peoples of the world with one another, and thereby furthering mutual love and help.

Now we have others who believe that student exchanges will accomplish the same goal, or cultural exchanges. The Bolshoi Ballet tours are thus seen as a building block for peace. Of such foolishness there is no end. I regularly receive enthusiastically written proposals of schemes whereby national or world problems will be solved.

All such people believe that some plan, law, scheme of justice, or cultural exchange devised by man will change man and bring about world peace and justice. Whether they occupy positions high or low, they share in common a high opinion of man, beginning with themselves, and a low opinion of God, if they believe in Him at all. Their premise is that His world is to be recreated by man, and it is God’s duty to support man in this “worthy” task. Law and justice are man-made, and, I have been told by more than a few, God’s attempt at lawmaking was crude and primitive, and, at best, valid only for the nomadic Hebrews.

The sovereign in any system is the source of law and the determiner of justice. For modern (and so-called “postmodern”) man, the sovereign is either man or the state. We are told in Exodus 34:14,

For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.

False sovereigns or gods have a very poor future.

## POETIC JUSTICE

The doctrine of *poetic justice* is an important one. It is usually associated with the eighteenth century, but, by other names or forms, it has been common to much of history. *First* of all, the term *poetic* does not mean that the concept is limited to poetry. It refers rather to its origin in Aristotle's *Poetics* and to Aristotle's concept of the wholeness of a work of art. Aristotle, however, set forth in his aesthetics that which was basic to his politics, so that for him art had a duty to reflect the purpose of the political order. For the same reason, Plato, much more openly and clearly, felt that the arts should serve the political order and reflect its goals. *Second*, justice in terms of poetic justice means that in art and society virtue is rewarded or prospered and vice punished. Human society must be just, and hence in every sphere this purpose must be reflected. *Third*, Plato's *Republic* is an expression of this belief. Philosophers-kings by ruling a society ensure full justice here and now, and the whole social order functions harmoniously. Various thinkers since have compared such a harmonious society to a beehive or to an ant-hill: all people become parts of an organism and function in terms of the whole. They work as units of a great whole and not as particular persons.

Basic to this doctrine is the belief that the solution to human problems is a particular form of organization. Injustice prevails because the wrong element is in control, or a wrong form of government used. Whereas the Bible sees *sin* as the cause of injustice and death, the pagan premises of the doctrine of poetic justice rest in the faith that man's salvation comes from his deliverance from Christianity into a man-made social order, one in which man governs himself without God. Not surprisingly, the doctrine of poetic justice gained its name and formal development with the Enlightenment. While a façade of Christianity was retained, the doctrine saw justice in terms of a man-made definition and accomplishment. Since then, the ways of attaining poetic justice have varied. They have included enlightened despotism, democracy, constitutionalism, fascism, and Marxism. Attain the desired form, and justice shall prevail. For some, revolution is the instrument whereby poetic justice will be ushered in; for others, it is the ballot box. The idea of the "family of man" has been widely promoted: if men but realize their humankind, their humanity in one another, justice will flow to all men. Alfred Lord Tennyson, in his poem "Locksley Hall," presented a similar vision:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;  
Saw the heavens filled with commerce, argosies of magic sails,  
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;  
Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew  
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;  
Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wing rushing warm,  
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm;  
Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were fur'd  
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.  
There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

Note that Tennyson's world peace and salvation is by the "common sense of most" who keep "a fretful realm in awe," Man shall be saved by man through "the Parliament of man," a United Nations. In this way will poetic justice be attained.

The essence of political liberalism and radicalism is the belief that these ideas, when realized, will provide justice for all. Political conservatives seek justice in a return to constitutionalism, forgetting that what may have been good in the past was due to men's Christian character rather than a form of civil government. All these views are forms of the doctrine of poetic justice.

As a student, I recall hearing a radical agitator in the student body orating at the university campus gate. World problems were simple for him: oust the evil old men, change the ownership of labor and property, and justice would prevail. He was a passionate believer in poetic justice under other names. Personally this student was lawless and immoral; he believed that the cause and his "importance" to the cause gave him privileges over others. He was not the kind of man to trust in your house let alone over your country. As a champion of a modern form of the doctrine of poetic justice, for him considerations of character were irrelevant, because he believed men to be economically and materialistically determined, not religiously.

The premises of the Enlightenment furthered the revival of paganism and made central the doctrine of poetic justice. One consequence of the Enlightenment was the rise of many movements developing the materialistic determination of man. One of these was phrenology; it is now remembered as the belief that a man's life was physiologically determined, not morally so. The popularity of phrenology was that it ostensibly undermined the moral foundations of Biblical religion. Mental health was seen by phrenology as the result of the daily exercise of all "the mental organs." Inactivity and overactivity could both produce insanity. As Robert Cooter has pointed out:

No longer was morality to be the exclusive province of theology; the laws of physiology were now to share that administration and with an even greater indisputability.<sup>1</sup>

Phrenology insisted on material causes for moral effects. Its interpretation of the specifics of those causes is no longer regarded as

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1. Robert Cooter, "Phrenology and British Alienists, 1825-1845," in Andrew Scull, ed., *Madhouses, Mad-Doctors, and Madmen: The Social History of Psychiatry in the Victorian Era* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 79.

valid, but its belief that the causes were material is now a scientific article of faith.

This is not to say that all humanists have abandoned moral causality. What some have dropped is simply the theological nature of morality in favor of a humanistic one. Thus, Staughton Lynd criticized “an orthodox Rankean-Marxist position that ethical judgments of historical events are irrelevant because the events themselves are determined.”<sup>2</sup> For Lynd, however, “the act of revolution is precisely the ability to take purposeful action with confidence that intended consequences can be achieved.”<sup>3</sup> This is an insistence on man’s free will and on humanistic morality.

For them, the social order has replaced God as the source of morality and justice. Justice and morality become expressions of the natural order, and the state and its courts, instead of being the administrators or ministers of justice, in terms of Romans 13:1ff., become the source thereof. God is replaced by the state, and, theoretically, therefore, its enactments are law and justice.

This, however, confers an infallibility on the state. If there is no law beyond state law, no justice beyond and over the state, and no supreme court of Almighty God over all courts of state, then there is no criterion whereby the state can be called wrong. Then justice becomes what the state does, as in Marxism and fascism.

As a result, humanistic man is in a windowless room without doors. Not surprisingly, even “entertainment” reflects this. Writing about horror films, Stuart M. Kaminsky has said:

More recently, though, the aspect of horror has changed and any kind of hope for the viewer has been withdrawn. Horror films of the recent past have, increasingly, been more pessimistic, more horribly confident that the dark side of man’s nature will triumph, that our worst fears must be faced, and that the evil within us simply cannot be destroyed or controlled.<sup>4</sup>

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2. Staughton Lynd, “Historical Past and Existential Present,” in Theodore Roszak, ed., *The Dissenting Academy* (New York, NY: Random House Vintage Books, [1967] 1968), 99.

3. *Ibid.*, 101

4. Stuart M. Kaminsky, *American Film Genres* (New York, NY: Dell Books, [1974] 1977), 140.

Without the theological roots of morality, despair is inevitable. There is then no salvation. Poetic justice in the eighteenth century borrowed heavily from Christianity and converted its borrowings into a naturalistic scheme. Now the doctrine means simply that justice is what the state does. This is neither poetic nor is it justice.



## JUSTICE AND THE CHURCH

An important aspect of law and justice is set forth in Deuteronomy 17:8-13, 19:17, and 21:5, namely, the part of the priest in a court of law. The priest sat together with the judge. They could in times of need be the judge-governor of the people (1 Sam. 4:18, Ezek. 44:24). C. H. Waller summed up the relation of the priest to the court thus: "The priests are the custodians of the Law; the judge or chief magistrate is the executor of it."<sup>1</sup> Normally, the priest defined the law and its applicability to a case, and the civil judge passed sentence in terms of it. Waller noted further:

It is not sufficiently observed that this defines the relation between the Church and the Bible from the time the Law (which was the germ of the Bible) was delivered to the Church, and that the relation between the Church and the Bible is the same to this day. The only authority wherewith the Church (of Israel, or of Christ) can "bind" or "loose," is the written Law of God. The binding (or forbidding) and loosing (or permitting) of the Rabbis — the authority which our Lord committed to His Church — was only the application of His written word. The Rabbis acknowledge this from one end of the Talmud to the other by the appeal to Scripture which is made in every page, sometimes in almost every line. The application is often strained or fanciful; but that does not alter the principle. *The written*

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1. C.H. Waller, "Exodus," in Charles John Ellicott, ed., *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, reprint, n.d.), 51.

*word is the chain that binds.* Nor does the varying relation between the executive and legislative authority alter the principle.<sup>2</sup>

The law must be known and understood before it can be applied. This was the *primary* function of the priest in the court.

The early church took the law seriously, and it was believed that, in a Christian state or empire, the clergy should have some part in the judicial process. Such a view was not well received by the empire. In the Theodosian Code 9.40.15, we have a reference to ostensible interference by the clergy. The law said also (9.40.16),

16. Emperors Arcadius and Honorius Augustuses the Eutychnianus, Praetorian Prefect.

... No clerics or monks nor even those called *synoditae* (note: literally "fellow travelers," companions) shall be permitted to vindicate and hold by force or by any usurpation persons who have been sentenced to punishment and condemned for the enormity of their crimes. We do not deny to such clerics, monks, or *synoditae* the right to interpose an appeal in a criminal case, in consideration of humanity, if the legally prescribed time limits permit, in order that a more careful investigation may be made in a case where it is supposed that, through the error of the favoritism of the judge, justice has been suppressed to the prejudice of the safety of a person, provided that whether a proconsul, a court of the Orient, an augustal prefect, or a vicar was the judge, he shall know that he must refer the case not so much to Our Clemency as to the Most August authorities. For it is Our Will that their jurisdiction over such cases shall be complete, so that, if the matter is of such a nature and the crime so demands, they may be able to punish the condemned person more justly.

1. Also, after the time of appeal has lapsed, no person shall either hold or defend an accused person when he is going to the place of punishment under escort; and the judge shall know that he will be punished by a fine of thirty pounds of gold and the primates of his office staff by a capital sentence if such usurpation is not punished immediately. If the audacity of the clerics and monks is so great that it is thought the outcome will be a war rather than a judicial trial, their unlawful action shall be referred to Our Clemency, so that by Our decision a more severe penalty may soon result.

2. It shall redound to the discredit of the bishops, of course, as shall all other such matters, if they should learn that any of those acts which We prohibit by this law have been perpetrated by the monks in that part of a district in which they, the bishops, guide the people

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2. *Ibid.*

by instilling the doctrine of the Christian religion, and if they should not punish such violations. From the number of these monks the bishops shall ordain clerics more suitably when, perchance, they think that they are in need of them.... July 27, 398.<sup>3</sup>

Clearly, the Code is hostile to the interference by priests. A small opening is left “to interpose an appeal,” but not to take part in the interpretation of the law and its application to the case at hand.

Saint Augustine used this opening to intercede in a letter to Macedonius; after Macedonius questioned Augustine’s right to do so, Augustine wrote further, arguing:

In no way, then, do I approve the fault I want corrected; nor what is done wrongly do I want to be unpunished because it pleases me. But I pity the man and I detest his crime or outrage. The more his vice displeases me, the less I want the vicious man to die without being corrected. Common and easy it is to hate evil men because they are evil. Rare and dutiful it is to love the same men because they are men, so that in one man you simultaneously disapprove his fault and approve his nature and more justly hate the fault because it befouls the nature you love. He who is the foe of crime in order to be the liberator of the man is, therefore, not bound in a partnership of iniquity but in that of humanity.

Moreover, there is no place to correct morals except in this life....<sup>4</sup>

Morally, Augustine took a non-Biblical position. He distinguished between the sin and the sinner and became an advocate of the ancient belief in loving the sinner and hating the sin. Sin, however, is not a thing; it is an attribute of a man, a term of his actions, and it cannot be abstracted from the person. Murder is a sin condemned by God, but it is a sin of man, not something which exists of itself and is thus an act which can be separated from a murderer. There is no murder without a murderer, nor sin without a sinner. Theologically, Augustine should have claimed the right to set forth the law of God as it related to the case at hand rather than to interfere with what he knew to be a just sentence, given the crime. Augustine espoused humanistic pity in the name of Christ, a serious error.

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3. Clyde Pharr, trans. and ed., *The Theodosian Code, and Novels and the Sirmondian Constitution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1952), 257.

4. Letter 153, cited in John T. Noonan Jr., *The Believer and the Powers That Are* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1987), 17.

Augustine, however, wrote a letter to Boniface, a Roman governor in Africa, calling for coercion against the Donatists and justifying it with fanciful arguments from Scripture.<sup>5</sup>

It is noteworthy that, in a statement similar to the Theodosian Code, Justice Brennan of the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Presbyterian Church in the United States v. Mary Elizabeth Blue Hull Memorial Presbyterian Church*, 393 U.S. 440 (1969), said, “The First Amendment prohibits a State from employing religious organizations as an arm of the civil judiciary to perform the function of interpreting and applying state standards.”

Turning again to Augustine, we see that, on the one hand, he interceded in trying to forestall the sentence of a criminal. In the name of correction, he sought to prevent the state’s sentence from taking effect. He substituted mercy for justice. However, as against the Donatist churches, he advocated coercion. We see here the beginning of a long tradition whereby churchmen view civil offenses with mercy, and ecclesiastical offenses mercilessly. The church thus separated itself from its Biblical mandate, justice in law and society, and its Biblical mandate of grace and mercy in ecclesiastical matters.

Early in the history of the United States, in the Massachusetts Supreme Court’s decision, in *Barnes v. First Parish in Falmouth*, 6 Mass. 400 (1810), the decision, written by C.J. Parsons, read in part:

Civil government, therefore, availing itself only of its own powers, is extremely defective; and unless it could derive assistance from some superior power, whose laws extend to the temper and disposition of the human heart, and before whom no offense is secret, wretched indeed would be the state of man under a civil constitution of any form.

This most manifest truth has been felt by legislators in all ages; and as man is born, not only a social, but a religious being, so, in the pagan world, false and absurd systems of religion were adopted and patronized by the magistrate, to remedy the defects necessarily existing in a government merely civil.<sup>6</sup>

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5. Letter 185, “The Correction of the Donatists,” in *ibid.*, 196.

6. *Ibid.*, 145.

Civil government without God is defective: this is a remarkable decision from a civil court. What is lacking is a like statement from the church, namely, that churches without justice, religion without justice, are defective. Where mercy functions without justice, we have injustice and lawlessness, and such indeed are the fruits of antinomianism.

The modern state is indeed lawless and evil, but the church has a heavy and central guilt in the matter. It has also been heretical, because, in assuming the superiority of grace and mercy to law and justice, it is theologically in serious error. The Being of God is unlike the being of man, in that there is a perfect unity and equality of all God's attributes. In man, talents and attributes can be and always are disproportionate. One man can be a musician, a kindly, indulgent, and generous man, whereas another can be unmusical, hard, miserly, and unfriendly. A third man can be as good as our first man, but his basic concerns may be justice and a strict accountability by all men. Man's being is not in balance; man can still be good in his own way, despite his incapability of manifesting all the virtues equally.

In God, however, all attributes are in perfect balance and harmony. There is no conflict between His love, mercy, justice, wealth, law, grace, or anything else.

For the church, as the ministry of God's word, to manifest an unbalanced stress is to replace the living God with an idol. The church *is* the ministry of grace, but the people of grace receive grace to be restored in the image of God and to serve God. To neglect justice for mercy is to damage both mercy and justice and to warp society. It means also that a defective civil government develops, because the wholeness of God's revelation has been broken. Men can create false gods for themselves, even with the use of Biblical materials. Idolatry in the church leads to the death of justice in the state. Hence, Peter tells us, "judgment must begin at the house of God" (1 Peter 4:17).



## LAW, ORDER, AND JUSTICE

In imperial Russia, an expert on constitutional law, Professor N. M. Korkunov, held that the main function of law in Russia “was not so much to enforce justice as to maintain order,” as Pipes summarized it. Count A. C. H. Benchendorff, Chief of the Secret Police under Nicholas I, told an editor who complained about illegal censorship, “Laws are written for subordinates, not for the authorities!”<sup>1</sup> The Congress of the United States has a similar view of law; many acts of Congress are made binding on all save Congress.

Pipes also noted, of the Russian radicals of the mid-nineteenth century, “Psychologically, the outstanding quality of the new generation of radicals was a tendency to oversimplify by reducing all experience to some single principle.”<sup>2</sup> When this “single principle” was a naturalistic or humanistic one, it was particularly destructive of the wholeness of life. To reduce the explanation of all things to economic determinism, or to a naturalistic or mechanistic determinism, is to falsify reality. Man is more than atoms, and life is more than economics. Such reductionism is a devastating impoverishment of meaning. However, any attempt to

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1. Richard Pipes, *Russia Under the Old Regime* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974), 290.

2. *Ibid.*, 271.

explain this world and history leads to reductionism if its source of meaning is also of this world. Then a small part of reality determines the whole or becomes the whole. It would be vaguely comparable to saying that the number eight is the key to and the meaning of all numerics. In any non-Biblical explanation of reality, this is what happens. Creation is used to explain itself, or, more accurately, a fragment of creation is seen as the cause of, or, the key to the totality.

The deformation which follows then affects every area. Pipes, commenting on the lack of true freedom in the Russian tradition, said:

But liberty not grounded in law is incapable of evolution and tends to turn upon itself; it is an act of bare negation which implicitly denies any mutual obligation or even a lasting relationship between human beings.<sup>3</sup>

Up to a point, this statement is valid. The question is, what is law? On what law is liberty grounded? If the law is my will, or the will of a king or dictator, or of a legislative body, what makes it morally right? It can be an act of injustice, as most legislation in history has been. We must remember that “lawmakers,” from the days of the caesars and before, in the French and Russian revolutions, and in legislative bodies everywhere, have given the world as much evil and lawlessness perhaps as have criminals. It is possible to say that Stalin and Hitler both provided *order*, but neither true law nor liberty. An enacted law does not thereby represent justice; a prostitute in a white bridal gown does not thereby become a virgin.

If we accept for a moment the Darwinian worldview, we then must say that a vast working of chance explains itself in one fragment of its fortuitous happenings. However, chance always remains chance and nothing more. This is why, in God’s creation, even “random” events manifest patterns which cannot be attributed to chance. To attribute meaning to a cosmic realm of meaningless or brute factuality is to borrow a category of interpretation from the realm of Biblical faith.

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3. *Ibid.*, 51.

At the same time we must add that the “single principle” method of interpretation is invalid even when it borrows that single premise from the Bible. Theology fails if it resorts to such a device. The popular reduction of theology to “God is love” uses Scripture to fashion an idol, because God is also declared to be just, jealous, a consuming fire, merciful, compassionate, and much, much more. God must be taken in all the wholeness of His Being and self-revelation *in Scripture*. Pipes pointed out, “The ultimate authority in its (the Russian Orthodox Church’s) eyes is not the Gospels but church tradition.”<sup>4</sup> Tradition gives us the church’s experience; Scripture gives us God’s word. The church’s experience is often shamefully derelict and wanting. At best, it is self-contradictory. It cannot be authoritative without placing the church’s experience over God’s revelation.

*Tradition* is usually associated only with Rome and with Eastern Orthodox churches. It is also very much a part of Protestantism under other names, such as church bylaws. Charles Grandison Finney, according to Hammond, “made revivals a human product rather than a gift of grace, and taught that God required men to promote them.”<sup>5</sup> In his *Lectures on Revivals in Religion* (1835), Finney laid down the philosophical or scientific methods of inducing revivals.<sup>6</sup> With Arminianism especially, because of its emphasis on free will, men created a church tradition that set the pattern for God and man. However, to expect man’s devices to set the pattern for the Creator God is an insane expectation. Oscar Wilde defended his association with male prostitutes because he was searching for “all the joy, hope, and glamour of life.” On one occasion, he said, “We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking for stars.”<sup>7</sup> The antinomian church is no better than Oscar Wilde: it abandons the whole law-word of God for a portion thereof, and it forfeits its birthright for a mess of pottage. The state cannot have a valid doctrine of justice when the church has

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4. *Ibid.*, 225.

5. John L. Hammond, *The Politics of Benevolence* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1979), 36.

6. *Ibid.*, 41-43.

7. Wolf von Eckhardt, Sander L. Gilman, and J. Edward Chamberlain, *Oscar Wilde’s London: A Scrapbook of Vices and Virtues, 1880-1900* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor Press, 1987), 241.

none. The church cannot further a godly society when it ceases to be one itself.

In the resultant world, laws are created by a part of the whole to be inflicted on subordinates. Ministers, priests, and television evangelists will offer a strange salvation without justice and will promote an emotional binge as a substitute for God's regenerating power.

There is no substitute for the authority and justice of the triune God. We are told that, in the 1870s, the people of Marseilles, France, had no confidence in lawyers unless the lawyers attended church. As a result, each year "a black procession of men appeared, almost a parade," going to church during holy week.<sup>8</sup> If, however, the churches' lawyers and others have no true knowledge of the triune God and His justice, they cannot do other than fashion a society in which law serves the purposes of order, not justice, and is written for subordinates, not authorities.

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8. Owen Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, [1975] 1977), 109.

## CANON LAW

Canon law became a matter of controversy at the time of the Reformation. The word *canon* means rule, and, strictly speaking, canon law is the application of Scripture as a rule to the life of faith and the operations of the church.

According to A. Boudinhon, “Canon law is the body of laws and regulations made by or adopted by ecclesiastical authority, for the government of the Christian organization and its members.” It came from Scripture, he said, from natural law also, and from “human or positive law, formulated by the legislator, in conformity with the Divine law.”<sup>1</sup> This is a modern definition, but an accurate one in describing what canon law became. In origin, it was the application of Scripture and its law to the Christian community; it was binding on the church and on its members, but the state and every other sphere were no less duty-bound to obey the canons of Scripture. The development of canon law was inseparable from the conversion and the civilizing of Europe. It meant that the moral order of man and nations was under the jurisdiction of God’s law. The church thus had ecclesiastical courts. These courts tried all cases involving marriage, legitimacy (and thereby

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1. A Boudinhon, “Law, Canon,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 9 (New York, NY: Encyclopedia Press, [1910] 1913), 56-57.

inheritance), separation, dowries, last wills and testaments, contracts made under oath to God, and more. As a result, Christian standards were made the basis of society.

Martin Luther, while not an expert in canon law, studied it for a time and later made use of it. As the Reformation began, Luther concluded, with some reason, “that the Papacy and the whole Roman system were entrenched in Canon Law.” Therefore, when officials of the Roman Church began the burning of Luther’s books in 1520, Luther responded by burning the complete collection of canon law outside the Elster Gate, December 10, 1520. This was his main target; as an afterthought, the papal bull was also burned. The event is most remembered for the burning of the papal bull, but the more radical act was the burning of the canon law; “by this act Luther symbolized the destruction of the very system that gave the Roman hierarchy its power. The teaching of Canon Law was discontinued at Wittenberg.”<sup>2</sup>

Harold J. Berman has indicated something of the meaning of this event:

When Martin Luther publicly burned the canon law books, he performed both a religious and a political act — symbolizing the revolt against the Roman Catholic conception of a visible, legal Church and the desire to purge the existing political and legal regime of ecclesiastical influence. The success of the Protestant Reformation of the Church meant the transfer of the initiative in law and government to new secular classes, with new territorial jurisdictions; and it was these new political states — which needed a legal system.<sup>3</sup>

Luther, by his insistence on the meaning of justification, created a revolution which promised new power for the church and Christendom. By burning and renouncing the canon law, Luther created a contradiction to his work: he surrendered morality and life to the state. It is true that canon law had become in many areas wayward and full of irrelevancies. What was at stake was this: is man in all his spheres of activity to be ruled by God’s word, or were humanistic

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2. E. G. Schwiebert, *Luther and His Times* (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1950), 20.

3. Harold J. Berman, *Justice in the U.S.S.R.* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, Random House, [1950] 1963), 178.

sources of law to be sought? For some time, Catholic rulers had been in rebellion against the canon or rule of faith, against the rule of God's law. In fact, from the earliest days of the church, the rule of God's law had been, as it is still, anathema to most rulers. Luther furthered their rebellion to create a modernistic humanistic state.

John Calvin also wrote against the canon law, but with a difference. He denied that the church "has authority to make laws which shall bind the consciences of men." He continued:

This question has nothing to do with political order; the only objects of our present attention are, that God may be rightly worshiped according to the rule he has prescribed, and that our spiritual liberty which relates to God may be preserved entire. Whatever edicts have been issued by men respecting the worship of God, independently of his word, it has been customary to call *human traditions*. Against such laws we contend, and not against the holy and useful constitutions of the church, which contribute to the preservation of discipline, or integrity, or peace.<sup>4</sup>

The general tenor of Protestantism has been closer to Luther at this point than to Calvin. What has happened as a result is that Christianity and the church have been removed from everyday life and limited to the private life of the believer, and even this sphere is now being challenged. Instead of reforming the canon law, the churches mainly abandoned it. As a result, the priorities of life now became statist, not Christian. The seeds of this shift were in the medieval system, because reason was identified with law, and reason had become Aristotelian, not Christian. This gave the philosophers an edge over simple believers, and over the church.

The secularization of Europe followed. Its essential premise was that the issues of life are to be determined out of the context of this life, not in terms of God and the Bible.<sup>5</sup> This meant a radical shift in the outlook of men. In the earlier eras of the modern age, anti-Christianism meant atheism; increasingly, it came to mean agnosticism, an indifference towards Christianity and a strong resentment toward all who sought to reintroduce it into the

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4. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1936), bk. 4, chap. 10, sec. 1, 448.

5. Owen Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, [1975] 1977), 91.

public arena. It meant also the state as sovereign, as the new god, and as the new source of law.<sup>6</sup> The result has been the shattering of modern man; capitalism has brought in material prosperity, but, together with it, a deep restlessness and hostility. As Chadwick observed:

But it was a Swiss of 1867-9 who said that a worker without God, and without hope of another life, would remain dissatisfied with his wages however high the wages.<sup>7</sup>

The church limited itself to saving souls and then leaving them to live a life of practical atheism under a godless state which was assumed to be good even if godless!

The modern state, whether openly or implicitly, hates the church and resents its every effort to be Christian. This should not be surprising. When the church proclaims the whole word of God, it introduces a canon or rule in the public arena which judges every sphere of life and thought. The premise of the state is that it is the source of all law and judgment; its basic faith is that the state is judge over all and to be judged by none. A moral order and law apart from the state which judges the state is rightly seen as an attack on state sovereignty.

According to Chadwick again,

*Be in tune with the universe* — it is the cry of Marcus Aurelius, which Taine and other positivists took to themselves. But if the universe were not in tune?<sup>8</sup>

To be in tune with the universe assumes that the universe is in tune. Right reason, natural law, or the *Geist* or spirit of history embodied in the state can, supposedly, embody that tune. But if the universe is fallen, then all these human efforts place their advocates in touch with sin and death, not life. “Human nature is good. This, said Morley, is the key that secularizes the world.”<sup>9</sup> However, if man is not good, if he is indeed sinful, fallen, and totally depraved, it becomes instead the key that damns the world.

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6. *Ibid.*, 110-11.

7. *Ibid.*, 111.

8. *Ibid.*, 255.

9. *Ibid.*, 152.

The urgent need is for a true canon law, God's law, in order to restore life to men and nations. Luther helped abort the Reformation when he burned the canon law and gave jurisdiction over all spheres of life to the state.



## 61

### SOVEREIGN POWER

One of the persistent problems in theology has been the failure of theologians to begin with the triune God and His enscriptured word. They seek instead borrowed armor, premises taken from the world of humanistic thought. Cornelius Van Til based Christian thought firmly on God-centered foundations, on God and His word, and the humanistic theologians reacted with horror.

Whether in the area of theology, exegesis, philosophy, economics, education, church and state, political theory, or anything else, our presuppositions and starting point are determinative. Ultimately, our world can be no larger than our given, our presupposition. The Cartesian presupposition of the autonomous mind of man has given us, in post-Kantian thought, only the autonomous mind of man, or existential premises.

Because the universe is the creation of the triune God, and because the realm of the mind and its potentialities are also God's creation, the boundaries as well as the channels of thought in every sphere are of His ordination. Man may make wrong arrangements, but they are wrong because God's order is determinative. There are inevitable categories of thought, because it is God's creation, not man's. Time does not reverse itself, nor do the years make us younger and return us to our mother's womb.

Thus, when fallen man seeks sovereign power, he does not invent the concept; he claims rather that which God alone truly possesses. When man attempts to be sovereign, or when the state claims sovereignty, they seek thereby to be as God and to replace Him. This is a vain attempt, and a very costly one in terms of human misery. The claim takes a number of forms, of which the following are notable.

*First*, every lord, sovereign, or god is the source of law. Thus the non-Christian state has consistently claimed to be the creator or maker of law. The lawmaking power is a claim to ultimacy, a claim to be the determiner of good and evil, of right and wrong.

*Second*, sovereign power means ultimate property rights over men, things, and the earth. Scripture declares repeatedly what Psalm 24:1 joyfully affirms: "The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." The modern state claims, not stewardship over the earth, but ultimate and essential power. Hence, it asserts its claim to eminent domain over all.

*Third*, the modern state claims taxing powers. The tithe is God's tax. In Exodus 30:11-16, God provides for a civil tax whereby a covering or civil atonement is to be secured. This tax presupposes a limited civil government which functions under God and as His ministry of justice. In fact, this tax went through the tabernacle, God's throne room, to the civil authorities, since civil government was set forth as an aspect of God's ministry over man (Rom. 13:1-8).

*Fourth*, the sovereign power is the determiner of good and evil. According to Scripture, this is God's prerogative:

5. I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

6. That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.

7. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things. (Isa. 45:5-7)

37. Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the LORD commandeth it not?

38. Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good? (Lam. 3:37-38)

The modern state seeks to define good and evil autonomously; it exemplifies original sin thereby, the will to be good, to determine or know good and evil independently of God (Gen. 3:5). This drive places it in conflict with the true church.

*Fifth*, the determination of the right to live or die, the power over life and death, is a manifestation of sovereign power. God declares:

See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. (Deut. 32:39)

The modern state kills on its own authority in several ways, most prominently now by means of abortion. It routinely claims the right to regulate life and death independently of God's law, because it claims sovereign power.

*Sixth*, the sovereign state moves steadily into total planning and control, i.e., into the predestination of men and society, because this follows as a logical outcome of its claim to sovereignty. The power state exercises its power over its people, their lives, economies, and thought.

*Seventh*, sovereign power controls the movement of things. We read of the nations and their peoples that God "hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation" (Acts 17:26). Before World War I, passports were viewed as common to oppressor states and as relics of tyranny, such as that of the Turkish Empire. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, passports and travel restrictions have increased rapidly and are now routine. Mind control, travel restrictions, monetary controls, and much, much more are examples of statist restrictions on human freedom and movement.

Not surprisingly but logically, when the state begins to play god, it soon sees the faithful people of God as its enemies, and it wages war against them. This amazed Tertullian, who pleaded with Rome that the emperor had no more loyal "citizens," faithful and honest taxpayers, and more law-abiding subjects than the Christians. Why then persecute his best people?

The emperors, however, were logical in persecuting the Christians, logical but evil. They recognized that the Christian community gave its essential allegiance to its sovereign, the triune God. They only obeyed the emperor because their Lord required it, not because Rome demanded it. Rome preferred immoral, dishonest, and lawless citizens to Christians because the lawlessness of the Roman populace was not based on a religious premise but a desire to get whatever one could, lawfully or unlawfully. There was no religious threat in all this; no Roman who was lawless was ready to die for his faith in hedonism.

We have a like situation today. Whether in the Soviet Union, Red China, the United States, Canada, Australia, or any other country, it is the Christian who is increasingly viewed as the enemy of the state as he stands in terms of the crown rights of Christ the King. He thereby challenges the sovereign claims of the state in the name of the King of kings, and the Lord of lords (1 Tim. 6:15). Increasingly, in the eyes of the sovereign state, this is the unforgivable sin.

## PREDESTINATION AND THE STATE

Scripture speaks very clearly about predestination, but few churchmen accept this doctrine. They prefer to approach God and His word as a resource available to man, and hence that which offends their sense of autonomy is disregarded. But God is not a resource to be mined by man but the living Lord, the Sovereign over all creation. To treat Him as a resource is to incur His wrath. Churches which overlook predestination, God's sovereignty, in favor of salvation-preaching, which then becomes man-centered, are dishonoring God at the least.

The same is true of nations. They may give lip-service to God, but they insist on claiming sovereignty as their own possession and birthright. It is thus not surprising that, at the time of the Reformation and after, no state voluntarily adopted Calvinism. It was to the nations an offensive faith. Neither men nor nations can control the earth if God predestines all things. The mind of God then governs all things, not the minds nor counsels of men. As a result, there is a hatred for God's plan, predestination. It has been called many things, beginning with "a detestable doctrine," because it challenges man's autonomy, his will to be his own god (Gen. 3:5).

To deny predestination, however, is to deny grace. Grace is a sovereign act of mercy on the part of God: it is uncaused by anything in man, or by any obligation binding God. Saint Augustine saw the identity of grace and predestination very clearly, writing,

But we say, by divine grace or predestination. Further, between grace and predestination there is only this difference, that predestination is the preparation for grace, while grace is the donation itself.<sup>1</sup>

John Calvin said, with respect to predestination,

We may safely infer, then, if he chose us that we should be holy (2 Tim. i.9), his foresight of our future holiness was not the cause of his choice. For these two propositions, That the holiness of believers is the fruit of election, and that they attain it by means of works, are incompatible with each other. Nor is there any force in the cavil to which they frequently resort, that the grace of election was not God's reward of antecedent works, but this gift to future ones. For when it is said, that believers were elected that they should be holy, it is fully implied, that the holiness they were in future to possess had its origins in election.<sup>2</sup>

If man's works are the result of God's predestination, then so too are the works of nations (Isa. 40:15-17). If no man can be holy or just without God's grace, then neither can nations be just apart from God and His law. Their planning without God is an exercise in futility and an invitation to judgment. There is no justice apart from God. Calvin said:

For the will of God is the highest rule of justice; so that what he wills must be considered just, for this very reason, because he wills it. When it is inquired, therefore, why the Lord did so, the answer must be, because he would. But if you go further, and ask why he so determined, you are in search of something greater and higher than the will of God, which can never be found.<sup>3</sup>

Because God is the Creator and Governor of all things, morality and justice are determined by His nature and appear in men by His sovereign, predestinating grace.<sup>4</sup> Calvin added,

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1. St. Augustine, "A Treatise on the Predestination of the Saints," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd ser., vol. 5, *Saint Augustine's Anti-Pelagian Works* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1956 reprint), 507.

2. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1936), bk. 3, chap. 22, sec. 3, 185.

3. *Ibid.*, chap. 23, sec. 2, 201.

4. *Ibid.*, sec. 12, 212-13.

For, as Augustine justly contends, it is acting a most perverse part, to set up the measure of human justice as the standard by which to measure the justice of God.<sup>5</sup>

This, however, is what men and nations, and churches as well, routinely do: they set up their own standards of justice, or salvation, and insist that their standard is God's also. A good example of this in the realm of the state is Louis XIV. He was confronted with God's predestination by two groups in France, the Huguenots and the Jansenists. The Huguenots, or French Calvinists, in 1661 are estimated to have numbered between 850,000 and 1,000,000 persons, about 4 or 5 percent of France's population. Their influence and power far exceeded their numbers, however. They were, of course, strongly predestinarian in faith. The Jansenists were so named because of their leading churchman, Bishop Cornelius Jansen of Ypres (1585-1638). An Augustinian, Jansen grounded salvation in God's predestination. The French Catholic Church was Gallican and semi-independent of the pope. Louis XIV wrote, for the dauphin's instruction, in his memoirs,

You should, therefore, first rest assured that kings are absolute lords and naturally have free and full disposition of all the goods possessed by clergymen as well as by laymen.<sup>6</sup>

Louis XIV took the initiative in moving against both Huguenots and Jansenists. Rome was not marked by the same zeal against Jansenism that marked Louis XIV. Clearly Louis XIV wanted a *united* France, and both Huguenots and Jansenists were seen as divisive and had to be suppressed. But this was not all. The king saw himself as "absolute lord" over church and state. If determination rested in God rather than the king, then the king's absolute lordship was nullified. Of Jansenists, we are told,

The King hated them more than he hated the Protestants and much more than atheists. His nephew Chartres wanted to take a friend of his campaigning. The King said he could not allow it because he had been told that his friend was a Jansenist. "Fonper-tuis a Jansenist?" said the Duke, astonished. "I very much doubt

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5. *Ibid.*, chap. 24, sec. 17, 241.

6. Julius R. Ruff, "Louis XIV and Religious Absolutism," in Robert R. Macdonald, ed., *The Sun King: Louis XIV and the New World* (New Orleans, LA: Louisiana Museum Foundation, 1894), 56.

if he believes in God!" The King said in that case he would make no objection.<sup>7</sup>

A fine irony now entered into the picture. Louis XIV wanted the Jansenists condemned. Their predestinarianism took salvation out of the hands of his Gallican Church and placed it in the hand of God. For Louis, membership in his church had to be sufficient. Together with the Jesuits, he exerted pressure on Rome to condemn Jansenism. Louis's condemnation was not enough! The result, after much pressure, was Clement XI's Bull, *Unigenitus*, September 18, 1713. While directed against Quesnel, a leading Jansenist, it struck at the Jansenist doctrine of sovereign grace. Louis wanted a chained Bible and chained grace, i.e., a state-controlled religion.

There was nothing new in all this. From the early medieval era, rulers had sought to chain the church to their reasons of state. In England, this was a constant problem. Henry V, more than a century before Henry VIII, assumed the role of the supreme governor of the Church of England without that formal title.<sup>8</sup> In this he did what his precursors had done. Seward spoke of "his determination to assert the royal will in every area of ecclesiastical life."<sup>9</sup> The persecution of religious dissidents was undertaken by Henry V.<sup>10</sup> To believe other than the king believed was an affront to his majesty and divine right.

The Reformation "settlement" was in terms of prerogatives of state. Each ruler believed that his subjects should believe as he believed, which was another way of saying that the faith of the people should be determined (predestined) by him. This is certainly true today in Marxist states, and it is becoming an issue in the democracies, where state schools seek a monopoly on education, and education must be humanistic.

The hostility of the state to Christianity and its doctrine of predestination has deep roots. The pagan doctrine of the state saw

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7. Nancy Mitford, *The Sun King* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1966), 146.

8. Desmond Seward, *Henry II: The Scourge of God* (New York, NY: Viking, 1987), 45.

9. *Ibid.*, 180.

10. *Ibid.*, 16, 34.

it as a monopoly power over every sphere of life and thought. It held in effect that, as water is the sphere of life for a fish, and completely so, the state likewise must be man's sphere. The modern state has revived and amplified that claim, having the instruments of modern technology to enhance its powers. The battle of the early church is being fought again.



## SAINT AMBROSE

As men and women grow very old, they walk with increasing caution, knowing how fragile now are their bones, and how unsteady and unsure their feet. The early churchmen had none of this hesitancy in their lives and writings. They wrote carefully, but with a holy boldness. They are easily criticized, because they are unequivocal in their statements. Their writings were marked by a clarity in their yea and nay.

One of the more plain-spoken, Saint Ambrose of Milan, was also a man without rashness. His strength was in his clarity and courage, marked by a godly judiciousness. This was apparent, for example, in the controversy over a basilica.

Ambrose (c. 340-397) was born in Treves, the son of an important Roman official; trained in Rome to be a lawyer, he entered into the service of Rome. As governor, ruling out of Milan, he was confronted with a problem when Bishop Auxentius, an Arian, died. The Arians and the Orthodox Christians were in immediate conflict over a successor. Ambrose, in attempting to adjudicate the matter, so pleased both sides that they united in making him the bishop, although he was only a catechumen. Within a week, Ambrose was baptized, was ordained into all lower orders, and was consecrated as bishop. He then studied the faith

carefully to become a strong bishop, the mainstay of the poor and needy, and an unwavering enemy of any attempt by the emperors to control the church. His conflicts with the emperors were many, and his successes very important to the history of the church. It is noteworthy that Ambrose began his work as a bishop by selling his great personal estates, and giving their proceeds, together with much gold and silver, to the poor. He reserved only an allowance for his devout sister, Marcella. He was always a friend to the poor. His fault in this direction lay in his belief in a kind of voluntary neo-communism. Ambrose was also a great administrator.

When the Emperor Theodosius slaughtered thousands of innocent people as a reprisal for a riot, Ambrose demanded his repentance and refused Theodosius the holy communion. Theodosius pointed to the fact that King David had committed both murder and adultery. Ambrose answered, "Well, if thou hast imitated David in sin, imitate him also in repentance." Theodosius submitted to church discipline, made public confession of his sin, and received absolution only after issuing a law requiring a thirty-day delay between a death sentence and an execution.

Our concern here is with two other episodes: *first*, the request of Prefect Symmachus to the emperor for a pagan restoration, notably of the Altar of Victory, and Vestal Virgins. *Second*, Valentinian II's attempt to seize a basilica for Arian worship.

Turning first to the request of Symmachus, we find that his request had, among other things, two clear emphases. *First*, Symmachus was asking for the reestablishment of historic Roman paganism in the name of religious liberty. Thus, establishment was identified with freedom. This would be, Ambrose held, compulsion for the Christians, and Christians would be "compelled to swear at heathen altars," at civil centers.<sup>1</sup> The living religious activity of the day was Christian, moreover. Without state support, paganism had no future.

*Second*, Symmachus downplayed his anti-Christianity by asserting the oneness, *and hence equal status*, of all religions. Since

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1. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd ser., vol. 10, *The Principal Works of St. Ambrose* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1955 reprint), letter 17, 412.

the Roman gods were the historic deities of the Senate, what harm was there in replacing them into their ancient status?

10. We ask, then, for peace for the gods of our fathers and of our country. It is just that all worship should be considered as one. We look on the same stars, the sky is common, the same world surrounds us. What difference does it make by what pains each seeks the truth? We cannot attain to so great a secret by one road; but this discussion is rather for persons at ease, we offer now prayers, not conflict.<sup>2</sup>

In the name of tolerance, paganism was to be reestablished as the faith of Rome. Ambrose's response was, "Has any heathen Emperor raised an altar to Rome?"<sup>3</sup> (One emperor much earlier had placed a statue in his private chapel as a means of attempting to beguile Christians.) Moreover, the pagan faith of old Rome held to the priority of the emperor over the gods, whereas Christianity declares that emperors are under Jesus Christ.

8. By one road, says he, one cannot attain to so great a secret. What you know not, that we know by the voice of God. And what you seek by fancies, we have found out from the very Wisdom and Truth of God. Your ways, therefore, do not agree with ours. You implore peace for your gods from the Emperors, we ask for peace for the Emperors themselves from Christ. You worship the works of your own hands; we think it an offense that anything which can be made should be esteemed God. God wills not that He should be worshipped in stones. And, in fine, your philosophers themselves have ridiculed these things.<sup>4</sup>

It was true, Ambrose said, that some properties of the pagans had been confiscated, but *not* "gifts to the shrines," but "their land alone has been taken away, because they did not use religiously that which they claimed in right of religion." As against this, the church had been religious in the uses of its possessions.

16. ...The Church has no possessions of her own except the Faith. Hence are her returns, her increase. The possessions of the Church are the maintenance of the poor. Let them count up how many captives the temples have ransomed, what food they have contributed for the poor, to what exiles they have supplied the means of living. Their lands then have been taken away, not their rights.<sup>5</sup>

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2. *Ibid.*, "The Memorial of Symmachus, Prefect of the City," 415.

3. *Ibid.*, letter 18, 418.

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*, 419.

Precisely because the church was so active in all these and other areas of charities, the emperors could not easily oppose men like Ambrose. Their governmental powers through charity were very important.

Turning now to the attempt of Valentinian II to seize a basilica for Arian worship, we encounter an important fact of the day. Arianism had power, among other reasons, for two telling facts. *First*, Arianism affirmed a non-divine Christ and became thereby an excellent vehicle and cover for a disguised paganism and anti-Christianity. It was a popular faith with some emperors for this reason; they could call themselves Christians without any real belief in the essentials of Biblical faith. It was in this respect similar to the “faith” of many churches of our time. *Second*, there were many sincere, unthinking, but dedicated Arians, and a key element in their ranks was the army. The army contained great numbers of Goths, and the Goths had been converted to an uncritical Arian faith. The Arian emperors thus had a double reason for championing that faith.

The conflict with Ambrose began when Valentinian attempted to gratify his Arians by ordering that a basilica be turned over to them. As Ambrose wrote to his sister,

2. First of all some great men, counsellors of state, begged of me to give up the basilica, and to manage that the people should make no disturbance. I replied, of course, that the temple of God could not be surrendered by a Bishop.<sup>6</sup>

The emperor’s move was highly unpopular, and a popular resistance followed. Ambrose had communicated his spirit to the people. This attempt occurred during Lent. Ambrose wrote:

5. Whilst offering the oblation, I heard that a certain Castulus, who, the Arians said, was a priest, had been seized by the people. Passers-by had come upon him in the streets. I began to weep bitterly, and to implore God in the oblation that He would come to our aid, and that no one’s blood be shed in the Church’s cause, or at least that it might be my blood shed for the benefit not of my people only, but also for the unbelievers themselves. Not to say more, I sent priests and deacons and rescued the man from violence.

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6. *Ibid.*, letter 20, 422.

6. Thereupon the heaviest sentences were decreed, first upon the whole body of merchants. And so during the holy days of the last week of Lent, when usually the bonds of debtors are loosed, chains were heard grating, were being placed on the necks of the innocent persons, and two hundred pounds weight of gold was required within three days' time. They replied that they would give as much or twice as much, if demanded, so that only they might preserve their faith. The prisons were full of trades-people.<sup>7</sup>

A delegation came at once to urge Ambrose to be "reasonable" and to surrender the basilica to the emperor. Ambrose wrote his sister about the incident:

8. The Counts and the Tribunes came and urged me to cause the basilica to be quickly surrendered, saying that the Emperor was exercising his rights since everything was under his power. I answered that if he asked of me what was mine, that is, my land, my money, or whatever of this kind was my own, I would not refuse it, although all that I have belonged to the poor, but that those things which are God's are not subject to the imperial power. "If my patrimony is required, enter upon it, if my body, I will go at once. Do you wish to cast me into chains, or to give me to death? It will be a pleasure to me. I will not defend myself with throngs of people, nor will I cling to the altars and entreat for my life, but will more gladly be slain myself for the altars."

9. I was indeed struck with horror when I learnt that armed men had been sent to take possession of the basilica, lest while the people were defending the basilica, there might be some slaughter which would tend to the injury of the whole city. I prayed that I might not survive the destruction of so great a city, or it might be of the while of Italy. I feared the odium of shedding blood, I offered my own neck. Some Gothic tribunes were present, whom I accosted, and said, "Have you received the gift of Romans' rights in order to make yourselves disturbers of the public peace? Whither will you go, if things here are destroyed?"<sup>8</sup>

Ambrose's point was a telling one. The Goths were faithful and able servants of the Empire, but they were alien to Roman law, and, in their ignorance, could destroy the very Empire they now served and loved. The Arians did not include the citizens, but only "a few of the royal family, and some of the Goths."<sup>9</sup>

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7. *Ibid.*, 423.

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*, 423.

Valentinian had to surrender. The whole city was against him. He ordered the soldiers to leave the basilica, to release the merchants, and to restore the money exacted from them. The soldiers welcomed this reversal. Valentinian showed an ugly spirit in his surrender, telling his Counts, "If Ambrose bade you, you would deliver me up to him in chains."<sup>10</sup>

Ambrose wrote to Valentinian and said in part:

35. ...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.

36. That this is said with respectful feeling for the Emperor, no one can deny. For what is more full of respect than that the Emperor should be called the son of the Church. As it is said, it is said without sin, since it is said with the divine favour. For the Emperor is within the Church, not above it. For a good emperor seeks the aid of the Church and does not refuse it.<sup>11</sup>

The role of Ambrose in forming the medieval Catholic *and* Calvinist resistance to the state is deserving of emphasis. Of the early church's discipline over rulers, Calvin wrote:

From this discipline none were exempted; so that princes and plebeians yielded the same submission to it; and that with the greatest propriety, since it is evidently the discipline of Christ, to whom it is reasonable that all the sceptres and diadems of kings should be subject. Thus Theodosius when Ambrose excluded him for the privilege of communion, on account of a massacre perpetuated at Thessalonica, laid aside the ensigns of royalty with which he was invested, publicly in the Church bewailed his sin, which the deceitful suggestions of others had tempted him to commit, and implored pardon with groans and tears. For great kings ought not to think it any dishonour to prostrate themselves as suppliants before Christ the king of kings, nor ought they to be displeased at being judged by the Church.<sup>12</sup>

What the church fathers did was to alter man's view of life because they placed man into the essential relationship to God through Christ, supplanting thereby the supposedly essential and

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10. *Ibid.*, 426.

11. *Ibid.*, letter 21, 436.

12. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol.2 (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1936), bk. 4, chap. 12, sec. 7, 509.

basic relationship of pagan man to the state. Morino described the change thus:

Christianity has not only caused a great spiritual and social revolution, but it has been the source of equally important revolutions in the political sphere as well.

The pagan State was a political, ethical, and religious unity in which the individual realized his own natural perfection. The individual did not transcend the "*polis*" and his interests did not extend beyond its confines. No personal interests which transcended this present life were recognized or admitted by the State....

In the ancient world, religion consisted in a complex relationship between God and man, but only insofar as these relations were profitable to men in time and especially to the State. The result was that the State was necessarily concerned not only with political matters but also with religious matters as well. The State thus absorbed both ethics and religion by reducing them to its own proper functions.<sup>13</sup>

For paganism, religion was an affair of state; for Christianity, politics was now an affair of religion.

*At the same time, there was a shift also in the realm of the sacred from the state to God.* Morino wrote:

On the other hand, the State, the *civitas*, was the *res sacra* par excellence. This was so true that everything that belonged to the State or was part of the *civitas* was considered to be sacred. Thus, for example, the walls and gates of a city were "sacred, holy, religious things" (*res sacrae, sanctae, religiosae*).<sup>14</sup>

The destruction of this exaltation of the state as the source of sacredness began with the resistance of the Christian martyrs to the claimed lordship of Caesar; it was set forth clearly also by Ambrose.

Ambrose, moreover, distinguished between God-given authority and the quest for power, saying, "The ordering of authority is from God: the desire for power is from the devil."<sup>15</sup> Ambrose acted out of authority, not from a desire for power. He said, "In a cause of God, where there is danger to the community,

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13. Msgr. Claudio Morino, *Church and State in the Teaching of St. Ambrose*, trans. M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J. (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1969), 29.

14. *Ibid.*, 30.

15. *Ibid.*, 57.

it is no small sin to act as though one saw nothing.”<sup>16</sup> Western freedom owes much to men like Ambrose; it cannot survive without men of like faith and courage.

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16. *Ibid.*, 25.

## CIVIL DONATISM

Judgments and opinions by all men everywhere presuppose a moral and religious perspective which determines the nature of factuality. Thus, Otto Scott gives us a grisly report on the Reign of Terror in the French Revolution, and the mass murders and executions.<sup>1</sup> J. M. Thompson, however, quoted Robespierre favorably:

Immorality is the basis of despotism: the essence of Republicanism is virtue. The Revolution is the transition from the regime of crime to the regime of justice.<sup>2</sup>

Given this definition of old regime as “crime,” all its adherents were criminals, and their murder was justice. This perspective has governed all subsequent revolutionary regimes. J. M. Thompson spoke of the Jacobin Regime of 1793-4 as “commonly but unfairly called the Reign of Terror.”<sup>3</sup> The many, many tens of millions of victims of this and more recent terrors, as in Russia, Spain, China, Cambodia, and elsewhere, are not important to men who define all dissidents as criminals.

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1. Otto Scott, *Robespierre: The Voice of Virtue* (New York, NY: Mason & Lipscomb, 1974), 164-65., 209-10, etc.

2. J. M. Thompson, *Robespierre and the French Revolution* (New York, NY: Collier Books, 1962), 113.

3. *Ibid.*, 64.

Another example: the second century B.C. apocryphal Jewish *Jubilees*, supposedly a special revelation to Moses, had some unusual ideas about the sacredness of the Sabbath and moral behavior thereon. We are told, "Every man who will profane this day, who will lie with his wife...let him die."<sup>4</sup>

In every culture, certain things are sacrosanct. They are beyond criticism, and their sacrosanctness is basic to society. In the modern era, the sacrosanct realm has increasingly been the political, *the state*. The state having usurped the title of sovereignty has seen its claims to a sacred status as valid.

A major battle in the early church was over the issue of Donatism. For the Donatists, the validity of the sacraments depended on the character of the priest. If the priest proved to be a man who, when faced with death at the hand of Rome, denied the faith, then all baptisms, communions, and marriages performed by him were held to be invalid. If, however, as the Catholic party held, the validity rested, not on the man but on the triune God and the church's essential faithfulness to Him, then the failure of the individual pastor could not nullify the sacraments. In brief, the validity of the acts rested on their faithfulness to the Lord, not on the perpetual faithfulness of the priest.

As in so many other areas, the state adopted this perspective. The emperor or the king might be old, infirm, incompetent, and also very evil. All the same, his acts retained their full validity. Sir Edward Coke called the body politic of the king "a mystical body." Kantorowicz noted:

It is evident that the doctrine of theology and canon law, teaching that the Church, and Christian society in general, was a "*corpus mysticum* the head of which is Christ," has been transferred by the jurists from the theological sphere to that of the state, the head of which is the king.<sup>5</sup>

The result of such thinking was civil Donatism: the state became a catholic church irrespective of the faith or character of the king.

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4. "Jubilees," in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 2 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), 142.

5. Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957), 15-16.

The king, by assuming the throne, assumed thereby a divine character. This was a divinity by grace, not by nature. As a result, Kantorowicz noted,

The axiom of *deificatio*, of becoming god as opposed to being God, brought about in the royal christology of A.D. 1100 a certain affinity with Nestorian and Adoptionist formulae.<sup>6</sup>

There were many other defects, to say the least, in the royal theology, but its anti-Donatism was not one of them. The authority of the state is not nullified by the corrupt practices of certain bureaucrats or officials. Similarly, the authority of a father or of a mother is not invalidated because of his or her mistakes. Infallibility is not a human nor an institutional attribute. Church and state alike can err. If we invalidate authorities on the evidence of any sin or error, we guarantee anarchy. It is necessary to respect authorities even when they are wrong, and to seek redress or change in lawful ways. To be intolerant of errors and sins in authorities is to posit ourselves as the unerring judges and juries.

In an important study, Thomas Molnar has studied the relationship between politics and the sacred. He states that until recently, all civil power had a sacred derivation, meaning thereby a source which was in some sense supernatural. Modern political theory has its own realm of the sacred, history in the Hegelian sense. The naturalistic *Geist* or spirit incarnates itself in civil orders, culminating in the dictatorship of the proletariat for Marx. Implicit in Molnar's perspective, and rightly so, is the triune God of Scripture as the sacred, and God as His own mediator in Jesus Christ. In other religions, many persons in various ways mediate the sacred.

As Molnar points out, the modern view has led to desacralization:

Total desacralization is reached when the former mediators — whether priests or painters — no longer perceive themselves in their original function but instead as self-contained ends.... When the mediators turn into individual sources of meaning, artists become a sacred caste and speak a language understandable only to themselves and a coterie of adepts.<sup>7</sup>

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6. *Ibid.*, 52.

7. Thomas Molnar, *Twin Powers: Politics and the Sacred* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 67.

For modern man, “we witness, in short, the replacement of the transcendent order by the future.”<sup>8</sup> Men like Richard Neuhaus, in *The Naked Public Square*, recognize the loss of the sacred, Molnar points out, but their strategy is a rationalistic substitute for the orthodox Christian faith.<sup>9</sup>

Neither a humanistic stratagem nor a non-Christian view of the sacred will give us a valid answer. It is the Biblical faith and the triune God of Scripture that alone can return us to a true doctrine of the sacred, the holy.

A very important aspect of the loss of the sacred has been the decline of interest in typology. In some evangelical circles, typology still has a place, but a trivial one. The various colors and details of the tabernacle in *Exodus* are seen as types. However, as R. T. France noted, “the basic idea behind typology (is) that the principles of God’s working are constant.”<sup>10</sup> This means that history is a seamless garment. There is a total meaning behind all events, so that nothing is by chance, and nothing is mindless. The purpose of all things may be and usually is beyond our grasp, but the fact that all things come from God and express His sovereign will is knowable: it cannot be otherwise if God is God. This total determination is clearly set forth in Zechariah 10:4:

Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together.

Morality requires a universe of total meaning. As Cornelius Van Til observed, if man could press one button which would enable him to step outside God’s jurisdiction for a moment, he would keep his finger on that button continually. No such button exists. We live totally in God’s creation of total meaning, and hence of total accountability and responsibility. The sacred, the triune God, is thus also the source of all morality and law.

The modern state has limited and desecralized life by declaring Christianity and the triune God to be matters of private concern and private allegiance. The realm of public life, seen by

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8. *Ibid.*, 128.

9. *Ibid.*, 130-32.

10. R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament* (London, England: Tyndale Press, 1971), 48.

political theologians as the realm of the state, is a neutral realm. So speak the civil theologians on the U.S. Supreme Court.

By removing the state from under God, and from a responsibility to God's moral law, the civil theologians have thereby removed the realm of politics from the realm of meaning into the realm of pragmatism. In one of John Lofton's series, "Lofton's Law," he makes the point that "pragmatism doesn't work!" It does not work because pragmatism posits a meaningless world in which no criteria exists. There is then no standard of right and wrong, moral and immoral, nor that which works and that which does not work, because purpose and meaning have been negated. It is not surprising that a major step taken to facilitate human organ transplants was to redefine what constitutes death. Since then, a few have begun to argue that a working definition of death is "difficult." The decline of meaning is the decline of morality and law. It is also the breakdown of authority.

Saint Ambrose said, concerning rulers,

The ordering of authority is from God: the desire for power from the devil.... There is therefore no fault in the office but in the minister: God's ordination cannot offend, but the action of the administrator can.<sup>11</sup>

Ambrose often enough fought against the abuse of imperial power, but he also denied the validity of civil Donatism and upheld the authority of the state.

The decline of belief that the state must be as much under God's law and authority as the church has led to a decline in the state's authority. Civil Donatism is very prevalent, and men feel that their dissent is sufficient ground for a refusal to submit to the civil power. The modern state increasingly claims total power, and, at the same time, sees increasingly the decay of its authority. Having removed itself from under the authority of God, it has lost authority. More and more, authority is replaced with coercion and terror.

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11. Msgr. Claudio Morino, *Church and State in the Teaching of St. Ambrose*, trans. M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J. (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1969), 57.



## THE STATE AS THE SOURCE OF GRACE

The Bible compares the coming of Christ, God incarnate, to the sun, declaring Him to be, in Malachi 4:2, “the Sun of righteousness (or, justice)... with healing in his wings.” This analogy appears in varying forms, as in Luke 1:78 and Revelation 2:28. Because the sun is the source of life in the physical universe, God is compared to the sun in that all life, physical and spiritual, is derived from Him and is His fiat creation.

This analogy was an obvious one. In the realm of man and society, those who governed, kings and emperors in particular, those whose powers over men included the power to kill and the power to prosper, were compared to the sun. In the ancient Near East, the kingdom “mirrored the rule of the sun in the heavens,” and the king was called “The Axis and Pole of the World,” “The Sun of Babylon,” “The King of the Universe,” “The King of the four Quadrants of the World.”<sup>1</sup> This analogy was not restricted to the Near East but existed worldwide. Thus, in Peru, the Inca was the Child of the Sun.<sup>2</sup>

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1. H. P. L’Orange, *Studies on the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship in the Ancient World* (New Rochelle, NY: Caratzas Brothers, [1953] 1982), 13.

2. Louis Baudin, *A Socialist Empire: The Incas of Peru* (Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand, 1961), 42.

This analogy had a thoroughly religious meaning. Even as man's life in the natural sphere depends on the beneficent aspects of the sun, so in his societal life man was seen as dependent on the beneficence, *the grace*, of the ruler. Hence it was possible to speak of such rulers as a "divine saviour-king."<sup>3</sup> Because the king or emperor was also the supreme judge of the land, his role as judge made him a living fate.<sup>4</sup> A canopy over his throne depicted the astral bodies to indicate that he ruled like the sun in the heavens.<sup>5</sup> Christians viewed the pagan sun-kings as new Lucifers.<sup>6</sup>

In time, however, ostensibly Christian rulers adopted the pagan symbols and theology. The Byzantine emperors had thrones which made their power one with nature, with an artificial tree before the throne filled with singing mechanical birds.<sup>7</sup> Louis XIV was known as *The Sun King*, the title Nancy Mitford gave to her biography of him (1966).

The trappings of the sun-king concept have disappeared, but the substance and meaning remains. The Renaissance, the Enlightenment and its enlightened despots, and the whole world of political thought since Rousseau reveal to us the fact that ancient paganism has undergone a dramatic revival and has, with the benefits of science, been carried to an unprecedented power. Humanistic statism is the reigning religion of the modern age, and its meaning has been well summarized by the sociologist Robert Nisbet:

Rousseau transferred, as it were, grace from the body of the church to the body of the state, the state based upon the social contract and the general will.<sup>8</sup>

For Woodrow Wilson, the state became for him man's true church, the state as Wilson conceived it. This thesis he set forth in his book, *The State*.<sup>9</sup> Law, state law, was now to be the instrument of change

3. L'Orange, *Studies*, 18.

4. *Ibid.*, 35.

5. *Ibid.*, 181ff.; 134ff.; 114ff.

6. *Ibid.*, 114ff., 120.

7. "Antapodosis," in *The Works of Liudprand of Cremona* (London, England: George Routledge and Sons, 1930), bk. 6, ch. 5, 207-8.

8. Robert Nisbet, *The Present Age: Progress and Anarchy in Modern America* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1988), 55.

and social salvation.<sup>10</sup> The result has been the totalitarian or the absolute state, which Walter Lipmann in 1929, in *A Preface to Morals*, described thus:

A state is absolute in the sense which I have in mind when it claims the right to a monopoly of all the forces within the community, to make war, to make peace, to conscript life, to tax, to establish and disestablish property, to define crime, to punish disobedience, to control education, to supervise the family, to regulate personal habits, and to censor opinions.

The modern state claims all of these powers, and in the matter of theory, there is no real difference in the size of the claim between communists, fascists, and democrats.<sup>11</sup>

Tung Chi-Ping wrote of his experience as a university student in Red China. The students were required to attend political lectures and to do manual labor of various kinds. Priority had to be given to Party demands. Serious students who tried to do academic work in the face of these things were “apt to be branded as not ‘red’ enough. Some students used such ruses as covering a textbook with the dust jacket of the book, *The Selected Works of Mao-Tse-tung*. If caught, they were punished.”<sup>12</sup>

These students were seeking to gain knowledge apart from the state’s controls; the learning they sought was not in contradiction to communist Party premises. Their premises were regarded as dangerous because they represented an independent motivation. Like the sun, the Party and its state must alone give life.

Behind the rise of the sovereign state as the source of grace and life, is the decline of the church into a pietism which abandoned the world to the state. At the same time, Cartesian man has progressively abandoned reality. Descartes’s starting point was, “*Cogito, ergo sum*,” “I think, therefore I am.” The reality of the world and of God found their “demonstrations” by means of the autonomous consciousness and mind of man. In time, with Kant and Kierkegaard, and then Jean-Paul Sartre, the mind replaced the

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9. *Ibid.*, 30-31.

10. *Ibid.*, 66-67.

11. *Ibid.*, 41.

12. Tung Chi-Ping and Humphrey Evans, *The Thought Revolution* (London, England: Leslie Frewin, 1967), 77.

objective world to become its own reality, and its only reality. Men cut loose their ties to God, and also their ties to other men, except in one area. In pleasures, other people were usually needed. Modern-day Cartesian and Kierkegaardian little gods need also an audience to perform before, very much like Castiglione, the Renaissance courtier.

Richard Collier, in *The Rainbow People* (1984), describes the lives of those who can live this existential life. Without an audience, they find life difficult. Their parties extend into the morning hours. If alone in the middle of the night, they feel impelled to telephone others, because to be alone means to not exist. Anxiety, alienation, and a metaphysical sense of aloneness haunt such people.

Cartesian man's universe is his own mental construct. One practical result, a product of modern philosophy and science, has been "the adoration of the artificial." (The artificial, after all, has the "virtue" of being man-made, not God-made.) Oscar Wilde's dictum was, "The first duty in life is to be as artificial as possible."<sup>13</sup> (This "artificiality" has extended to the world of sexuality, and a desire for the abnormal.) When Oscar Wilde left Oxford for London in 1878, he told David Hunter Blain,

God knows, I won't be a dried-up Oxford don, anyhow. I'll be a poet, a writer, a dramatist. Somehow or other I'll be famous, and if not famous, I'll be notorious.<sup>14</sup>

Cartesian man lives with a will to fiction and a readiness to believe that, with a capture of the state apparatus by his kind of radical, liberal, or conservative, grace will flow into every area of life, and heaven on earth will be realized. This was the dream of the Enlightenment men of "Reason," of the fathers of the revolution-religion, and of most modern men in all ranks and areas.

But grace does not flow from the state, only controls and demands for taxes. Each election, however, represents for many an opportunity to capture the source of grace and to unleash its saving beneficence upon society.

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13. Wolf von Eckhardt, Sander L. Gilman, and J. Edward Chamberlin, *Oscar Wilde's London: A Scrapbook of Vices and Virtues, 1800-1900* (Garden City, NJ: Anchor Press, Doubleday, 1987), 93-94.

14. *Ibid.*, 1.

In *The Laws*, Plato set forth his idea of the “cosmic” city-state, a faith which many since have shared.<sup>15</sup> Plato saw it as obvious that “the lawgiver of this place...will never set down laws with a view to anything but the greatest virtue.” His lawgivers, given his state, came from Zeus.<sup>16</sup>

The medieval respect for Plato and Aristotle reintroduced into Christendom concepts which, with difficulty, were in process of being suppressed. Joseph R. Strayer stated the case most tellingly:

There had long been (in France) a cult devoted to the king — the only European monarch who could claim that he was anointed with oil brought directly from Heaven, heir of Charlemagne, healer of the sick. By 1300 there was a cult of the kingdom of France. France was a holy land, where piety, justice, and scholarship flourished. Like the Israelites of old the French were a chosen people, deserving and enjoying divine favor. To protect France was to serve God. As these ideas spread — and soon after 1400 they were known by a peasant girl living on the extreme eastern frontier of the kingdom — loyalty to the state became more than a necessity or a convenience; it was now a virtue.<sup>17</sup>

Very true! When a peasant girl, Joan of Arc, saw salvation in terms of a free France, i.e., free of the English, rather than in terms of Christ and His atonement, obviously a major change had occurred. Again, Strayer’s summation of what had occurred by 1700 is very telling: “the state had become a necessity of life.”<sup>18</sup> Or, as Nisbet stated it, the state had become the means of grace.

We live now in the approaching collapse of that dream.

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15. L’Orange, *Studies*, 9-16.

16. Thomas L. Pangle, trans. and ed., *The Laws of Plato* (New York, NY: Basic books, 1980), bk. 1, 630c, 9.

17. Joseph R. Strayer, *On the Medieval Origins of the Modern State* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, [1970] 1973), 56.

18. *Ibid.*, 111.



## HISTORY: ANTIQUARIAN OR RELIGIOUS?

**M**en have a variety of motivations for their actions, some trivial, and some important. Thus, some men do not steal out of fear of the police, or in fear of their wives; their reasons can be pragmatic, but they can also be moral. (A bumper sticker I saw today read, “Don’t steal. The Government hates competition”!) *Motivations* and *reasons*, as they govern human action, presuppose a realm of meaning. Why be honest, or dishonest? Why live, or die? Motivations and reasons point us clearly to religion, not necessarily theistic or Biblical faith, but religion in Paul Tillich’s sense as “ultimate concern.” Our ultimate concern will govern our lives.

Our ultimate concern will lead to a variety of unconcerns as well as passionate causes. Thus, in one European country, what used to be taught as history is now taught without dates; the “flow” of history towards “the liberation of man” by the modern state has taken its place. A radically humanistic sociology has replaced history.

Not surprisingly, many students in many countries cannot locate their nation on the map nor answer questions correctly about the great persons and events of the twentieth century. This is a religiously governed ignorance, because its basic rationale comes out of modern humanistic faith.

For Biblical faith, history began with creation and the Garden of Eden. Man by his sin fell, and the world now sees the workings of sin and death. Jesus Christ gives focus and direction to history towards making all things new. History is the account of man's struggle to play god, and God's providential workings with men as He redeems and redirects them towards the new creation. The Bible gives us God's revelation to man in history, and through history; it is an historical account.

Humanism's new creation is only in the future, and it is completely a human accomplishment. It is accomplished without God by either autonomous man (the libertarian), or by the autonomous state (the totalitarian). In this accomplishment, the tool is not the knowledge of God's revelation, and of providential history to see the application of God's law-word and judgment, but scientific planning and control. As a result, "social studies," sociology, and science replace history in the curriculum, and history becomes more and more irrelevant. All history teaching in humanistic schools is suffering as a result. Interest is often deflected to side-issues which are given separate faculties, e.g., Black Studies Program, Feminist Studies, etc.

Medieval history has certainly suffered. On November 5, 1969, Joseph R. Strayer spoke on "The Future of Medieval History" to the Midwest Medieval Conference at the University of Illinois (Champaign). He said:

The generation of Charles Homer Haskins simply took it for granted that any civilized man would study medieval history. They could not conceive of a college, or even a high school curriculum, in which medieval history did not occupy a prominent place. My generation realized that a little persuasion was necessary and that a little time had to be surrendered to other periods of history, but we were sure that we could convince our colleagues and our students that medieval history deserved to have a key position in a liberal arts program. The new generation of medievalists will have to fight to keep it from being shoved into the back corner along with Sanskrit, Assyriology, and other subjects that are kept alive only through the efforts of a handful of specialists.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Joseph R. Strayer, "The Future of Medieval History," in Paul Maurice Clogan, ed., *Medievalia et Humanistica: Studies in Medieval & Renaissance Culture*, new series, no. 2 (Cleveland, OH: Case Western Reserve University Press, 1971), 179.

During the student rebellions of the 1960s, on one university campus, I had a number of students around me when the meeting ended, asking questions or issuing challenges. One whose question revealed a radical ignorance of the past, and of history in general, responded to my suggestion that he study a specific area of history germane to his query with an angry statement that he and his fellows were not interested in knowing the past but determining the future; for him, neither religion nor history were essential to that task. His was a logical humanism. (Another student said that the Bible was as important to remaking man and society as a comic book.)

History is, like all subjects, a theological study, and in a particularly pertinent fashion. Man lives his life in time and history; to be indifferent to the past and the future is to be ignorant and incompetent in facing the present.

If the religion of a people be libertarian or anarchistic, or statist and totalitarian, sociology and science will replace Christianity and history as man's means of understanding himself and his problems. Then, as Strayer feared, medievalists will end as "antiquarians."<sup>2</sup> The anti-historians refuse to regard religion and history, and they accordingly see the horrors of their regimes as steps toward world liberation. Strayer noted:

When I first read about the Albigensian Crusade, some fifty years ago, I would have said that this was one type of evil that could not occur in the twentieth century. Now I wonder if we should not be reexamining the causes of the Fall of Rome.<sup>3</sup>

To abandon history means to abandon also God and law. A common dismissal by students of any Biblical and historical statement is, "It doesn't have to be that way." The past has no meaning, because there is for them no God to give determination, and unchanging law, and certainty to history. For them, as for Dostoyevsky's Raskolnikov, and others, because there is no God, all things are possible.

In the 1920s, a senseless and vicious murder committed by two young men, Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb, was a forerunner of

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2. *Ibid.*, 181.

3. *Ibid.*, 183.

legions of crimes committed since by young and old, and by nations, for “reasons” of state. Leopold and Loeb felt no remorse, and they saw no reason for not killing. The alternative to their actions was faith in the Biblical God. As Brophy noted, of the alternative to their way was this:

What it did offer them was God, and they saw through him. “He gave up the idea that there was a God,” states one of the medical reports on Leopold, “saying that if a God exists some pre-God must have created him. In this line of thinking he reasons by analogy...” Having been taught that the moral law drew its sanction from God, the young men were simply being logical in concluding that to jettison God was to jettison the moral law as well. Indeed, this, in society’s eyes, was their crime — or at least the crime of Leopold, the more intelligent of the two: he reasoned. And having worked out his position by reason, he could not be induced to change it under emotional pressure from the threat of death. As the medical report records, “...he stated that consistency has always been a sort of God to him.”<sup>4</sup>

Contemporary statist education, being anti-Christian, is producing Leopolds and Loeb’s wholesale, and it seeks a solution to its problem in even more anti-Christianity. When students are taught that there is no God, and that values are simply personal choices, why should history govern or command them? Why should any kind of education command them? The growing illiteracy is due both to bad teaching methods *and* to bad content. With A. Crowley, its basic implication is, *Do what thou wilt is the only law*. Ironically, Brophy, who saw the problem clearly, believed that the answer called for “constructing a new rationalism and laying the foundations of a twentieth-century morality.” She saw the “two great mainstays” of this new morality as Bernard Shaw, “metabiologist,” and Sigmund Freud, “hyperbiologist!”<sup>5</sup>

Man, however, is God’s creation, and he functions best in terms of God’s law. When faith in the triune God of Scripture is removed, then in time, the only valid way of governing man is by total controls and total terror. Plato, in his *Laws*, called for guardians to control man totally, to train the minds of the people not ever to

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4. Brigid Brophy, *Black Ship to Hell* (New York, NY: Harcourt’s Brace & World, 1962), 31.

5. *Ibid.*, 131.

consider acting as individuals. Even in dancing or singing, a single step or note “contrary to the public and sacred songs” and dances should be punished.<sup>6</sup> There could be no private religion; anyone having a private shrine, even to the state gods, was to be punished.<sup>7</sup>

In such an order, there is no history, only an anthill society. Indeed, the goal of humanistic statism is the end of history is a permanently static anthill order. In the process, man must be dehumanized. History has no place in such an unchanging order. If private man seeks to have history, he is suppressed by total terrorism.

There is another aspect to the anti-history perspective of modern (and postmodern) man. Albert William Levi said of Jean-Paul Sartre’s existentialism, “The heart of Sartre’s strategy for freedom is an attempt to destroy the decisiveness of the past.”<sup>8</sup> St. Paul tells us plainly, “The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). He states thereby a religious and an historical fact. Modern man is like Clarence Darrow, who, in his defense of Leopold and Loeb, rejected religious (anti-God) motivation, and the historical facts, in favor of a psychological and sociological interpretation. He denied, with much pseudoscience, the personal responsibility of the two young men. Darrow became a hero to the liberals; in the process, he also was instrumental in an anti-history and an anti-Christian cause, and favorable to modern statism.

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6. Thomas L. Pangle, trans. and ed., *The Laws of Plato* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1980), bk. 7, 800a, 198-99.

7. *Ibid.*, bk. 10, 910cd, 310-11.

8. Albert William Levi, *Philosophy and the Modern World* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1959), 421.



## THE DYING STATE, PART I

**T**he anti-history stance of the twentieth century and its education is a logical consequence of its statism. History is assumed to end in a final order, world communism, the Great Society, or some like order “ending time” and development.

Behind this fact lies a religious factor. It is often assumed that the late medieval pietism was a forerunner of the Reformation. Theologically, this pietism had little in common with the Reformation; at one point, however, its contribution was substantial. The laity were deeply involved and paved the way for the lay revolt which marked both the Reformation especially and also the Counter-Reformation. The center of religious power early in the medieval era was in the regular clergy, the monastic clergy. Although new monastic orders from time to time revitalized the church, the initiative shifted to the regular clergy, and with that shift the Vatican also increased its power. Then lay orders began to take precedence, and the pre-Reformation era saw many such groups.

For a century and a half, Europe, to a degree, was under the influences of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation, but by 1660, the power shifted clearly to the civil powers. Soon, too, the influence of Pietism began to dominate the life of the church, and the withdrawal of the church from social relevance was

underway. Pietism was also tied to nationalistic sentiments in some areas.

Zelinsky has very tellingly summed up what happened in these words. Previously,

Reality was structured much more meaningfully in a heavenward direction, in unquestioning devotion to the Lord God, his local deputies and saints, and the eternal verities. With the crackup of this system of belief, the nation became both possible and necessary.<sup>1</sup>

This shift was a gradual one. Not until the French Revolution was it dramatically apparent. After that, unbelief and positivism were increasingly vocal. Julian Jaynes tells us how vocal and blatant the new mood was:

This secularism of science...became rough and earnest in 1842 in Germany in a famous manifesto by four brilliant young physiologists. They signed it like priests, in their own blood...(and) angrily resolved that no forces other than common physicochemical ones would be considered in their scientific activity. This was the most coherent and shrill statement of scientific materialism up to that time. And enormously influential.<sup>2</sup>

Devotion shifted, insofar as many people were concerned, from the church to the state. There were and are still many pilgrimages to holy sites, but, for example, no religious center in the Western world has commanded the number of annual visitors which the grave of President John F. Kennedy commands. Even more, Abraham Lincoln, “the martyred Christ of democracy’s passion play,”<sup>3</sup> has become comparable to the saints of old in the American pantheon. For many, too, over the years, the U.S. Federal Union has been like a church and an article of faith. For a time, an “American Creed” was promoted.

The conflict in the Western nations between the people and the intellectuals is related to this. George Orwell, in the late 1940s, wrote, “In societies such as ours, it is unusual for anyone describable as an intellectual to feel a very deep attachment to his

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1. Wilber Zelinsky, *Nation into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 11.

2. Julian Jaynes, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind* (Boston, MA: Houghton, Mifflin, 1977), 437; cited by Edward Proffitt, “Science and Romanticism,” *Georgia Review* 34, no. 1 (Spring 1980): n.2, 55-56.

3. Zelinsky, *Nation into State*, 47-48.

own country.”<sup>4</sup> This did not mean a break, however, with the statist dream. The intellectuals believed and believe in an ideal future *state*; the common man is still more attached to the present *state* or nation.

However, even as faith in the church and its vision of order gave way to the civil and statist hope, so now the civil dream is fading. The “mother country,” or the “fatherland,” have steadily receded as the state and its bureaucracy have become an aggressive and brutal power. The increasing powerlessness of the citizen makes him as zealous for the state as were the late Romans. Rome progressively gave citizenship to more and more people, until virtually all freemen were Roman citizens, but, at the same time, it stripped them of property, money, and power. For many peoples in the twentieth century, legal “rights” have greatly increased on paper, while actual freedom has rapidly diminished. The result is a crisis for the modern state, one which it is not clearly aware of. The late medieval church had a clear awareness of *particular* problems, but not of the growing shift, from the 1200s on, of power to the state. The modern state assumes as a *natural* fact what is in reality a *cultural* and shifting fact, i.e., the priority of the state in the life of man. It sees itself as the new and indispensable church of man; it is necessary for man’s salvation, it believes. Its judges go robed like priests; its heads of state issue their encyclicals, and the world around them grows more weary and more cynical.

The state or civil government can be a ministry of justice under God, or it can become a parasite. In time, every parasitic institution collapses because it devalues life for those whom it should serve. A parasite which destroys the host body also perishes; the mistletoe which covers and kills the oak tree dies also.

In third-century AD Rome, debased coins were destroying confidence in the Roman state. Increasingly, those who made money quickly reinvested it in other things to avoid losing their profits. Land became the investment for many.<sup>5</sup> As the tyranny of Rome increased, not even land was a good area of investment

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4. *Ibid.*, 248.

5. Pierre Dockes, *Medieval Slavery and Liberation* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 80.

because taxes eroded wealth in any and every form. As a result, Rome collapsed; the wandering barbarians found limited resistance, because the will to fight was gone. Few Romans felt that Rome was worth fighting for.

More rapidly than in the days of Rome, we are approaching a like condition. The peoples of the West love their lands; they do not love their states.

Marcus Aurelius (AD 121-180) is revered by statist as a wise philosopher-king. He was in reality a pathetic figure who insistently expanded his dream of the state. For him as for Aristotle, his nature was rational and political. Not only did he believe strongly in the Roman Empire, but in a world state, a cosmic state. The “gods” and men, he said, are “fellow-citizens of the universe.”<sup>6</sup> The people hoped for less and less from the Roman Empire, while Marcus Aurelius was viewing the whole universe as one empire! Not surprisingly, when Rome fell, cities also died. Men turned away from the statist dream. Historians sometimes depict the Frankish and other Germanic rulers as crude and brutal, as they sometimes were. The Roman rulers, however, had been sophisticated and efficient in their brutality and power. When we read *The Governor of God* by the Presbyter Salvian, we can understand why some men saw the fall of Rome as the vindication of God and of His word.

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6. C. R. Haines, trans., *The Communings of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, Emperor of Rome, Together with His Speeches and Sayings*, vol. 5 (London, England: Heinemann, 1916), 261.

## THE DYING STATE, PART 2

David Cannadine has written, "Power is like the wind: we cannot see it, but we feel its force. Ceremonial like the snow, an insubstantial pageant, soon melted into thin air."<sup>1</sup> Power is manifested in visible men and orders, however, and it can be present either as brute and tyrannical force, or as a religiously validated instrument present among men. In the latter sense, in antiquity the king was seen as "the guarantor of the divine order."<sup>2</sup> Janet L. Nelson, in writing of the Carolingians, has said:

The ideology presented by historians of medieval political ideas has sometimes seemed divorced not only from the realities described by historians of medieval politics but from the ideas of most of those involved in medieval government. The divorce is an illusion, a trick of historiographical light. Nobles, clergy and king inhabited one world. There was no power that was not religiously validated. In that very general sense, the Carolingian king was sacral, God-appointed, but the people and its leaders were also chosen by God. The king, like other Christians, was part of the Church in the widest sense of that elastic term: king and people

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1. David Cannadine, "Introduction: Divine Rites of Kings," in David Cannadine and Simon Price, eds., *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 1.

2. Amelie Kuhrt, "Usurpation, Conquest, and Ceremonial: From Babylon to Persia," in *ibid.*, 30.

collaborated in the Church's protection, the king leading rather than dominating.<sup>3</sup>

The people and the king were members of a common order. With Christianity, that common order of kings, lords, and people had more to it than a political structure linked to the gods. The Christian social order had a radically different strength, one without equal in other societies. Kings, prelates, barons, and people were all alike the recipients of God's sovereign grace. Their common bond was in Christ and His mercy.

In the preface to his study of *The Rise of French Liberal Thought* (1954), Kingsley Martin wrote:

The clue to the political thought of any period lies in the conflict between various views of human nature. Theories continually change, but the main division between authoritarians and libertarians remains the same at all periods. In the eighteenth century, Church and State were founded on the belief that human nature was essentially bad and capable of regeneration only through the gift of Grace and the exercise of absolute sovereignty. From the Renaissance onwards that view was challenged by free-thinkers, who held that life was made to be enjoyed, and that men needed not Grace but freedom to develop their faculties, to cultivate the arts and to profit by the pleasures of society. The peculiar interest of the eighteenth century, however, lies in the growth and apparent triumph of a third view, which repudiated clerical discipline and transformed Renaissance hedonism. It substituted knowledge for Grace as the means of salvation, and held that the prospect of improving men and society could serve as an ideal, sufficient to coordinate men's purposes and provide them with a criterion of right and wrong. These efforts to give men a secular religion — a religion which is the real basis of Liberalism and Socialism which is its linear heir — is the theme of this book.<sup>4</sup>

In its early stages, especially in the United States, democracy flourished. The common school seemed to be the doorway into a great participatory freedom and prosperity. The substitution of *knowledge* for *grace* in time created a division. The people's resentment of experts and bureaucrats was an evidence that

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3. Janet L. Nelson, "The Lord's Anointed and the People's Choice: Carolingian Royal Ritual," in *ibid.*, 147.

4. Kingsley Martin, *The Rise of French Liberal Thought*, ed. J. P. Mayer (Washington Square, NY: New York University Press, 1954.) ix-x.

knowledge did not draw people together but divided them. The theme of the mad scientist became a popular one of an elitist education out of control. In the ages of grace, emperors could be compelled to do public penance, a fact which at times made their power palatable to their subjects. When the king was brought low because of his sin, he stood in the same need of grace as his humblest subject, and his public penance demonstrated that fact. The idea of professors and scientists, bureaucrats and experts, doing public penance is absurd, because, in terms of their premise, their problem is not sin but insufficient knowledge or data.

A secular doctrine of progress through scientific socialism has replaced the doctrines of grace and progress, and Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality replace the Gospel as man's hope of redemption. Now, however, progress is no longer an article of Liberal faith, and, as a result, an erosion has set in to the hopeful dreams of the French Revolution and its slogan.

The religion of the Revolution was thus founded on the belief that all men and all societies were capable of improvement by deliberate and scientific adjustment of their environment.<sup>5</sup>

In the waning years of the twentieth century, this faith is also waning, even as, in the late medieval eras, the church's hold waned. A. G. Dickens wrote, of the Reformation and pre-Reformation years,

Amid all nations and social groups there flourished a host of irrational forces: a preoccupation with diabolic agencies, witchcraft and sortilege, a curious blend of eschatological expectancy with a dread of universal dissolution.<sup>6</sup>

These words can also serve as a description of the twentieth century. The "dread of universal dissolution" is very much with us. Barraclough's comments about the late medieval papacy are particularly relevant. Corruption flourished. Nepotism of a particularly revolting kind was commonplace: popes made cardinals of their illegitimate sons. Cynicism was widespread, and even priests like Giovanni Boccaccio told coarse tales about the church. Barraclough observed:

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5. *Ibid.*, 15.

6. A. G. Dickens, *Reformation and Society in Sixteenth Century Europe* (New York, NY: Harcourt Brace and World, [1966] 1967), 48.

...it might be thought that Christendom would have revolted in scandal. What is astounding is that it did not; and the fact that it did not is the best evidence that people had, so to say, already “written off” the papacy; it no longer had any hold over men’s minds — not even enough to provoke angry hostility.<sup>7</sup>

When the revolt came, it was the Holy Roman Emperor who resisted Luther; again, it was the emperor who insisted on the Council of Trent and the need for Catholic reform. From the Council of Constance in 1414-1418 to Loyola, the church was increasingly peripheral to social order: the state was the formative power.

Since World War II, the triumph of statist education has given way to confusion and rout. In 1950, only 6 percent of the school-age children in the United States were in non-statist schools; by 1987, this number had risen to thirty-five percent, with a steadily accelerating increase of home schooling as well as Christian schools. In the areas of charity, a growth of private activities was also in evidence. At the same time, state power was increasing, yet confidence in the state declining steadily.

There is a curious and modern note in the last days of King Louis XI of France (1423-1483). Philippe de Comynes said of him, that no man ever “feared death so much as he nor tried so hard to find remedy against it.” He begged Comynes and his servants never to mention the word “death” to him, for the word was too much for him; they should only suggest that he have himself shriven.<sup>8</sup> When death approached, Louis XI summoned holy men and women, but “he asked neither for grace nor for salvation, merely for the prolongation of life.”<sup>9</sup>

The modern state is dying. Its humanistic faith is collapsing. Science and education have not been substitutes for grace, and their efficacy and integrity is now questionable. The humanistic states, however, dream of a prolongation of life and power. In their pride and vain imagination, they see themselves, like “*eternal Rome*,” as life’s necessary order. Power, like the wind, can die quickly.

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7. Geoffrey Barraclough, *The Medieval Papacy* (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968), 192.

8. Paul Murray Kendall, *Louis XI: The Universal Spider* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 1971), 364.

9. *Ibid.*, 366.

## THE DYING STATE, PART 3

The popularity of ancient Greek philosophy has a history not yet fully written. The authoritative status which Plato and Aristotle had with men led to the belittling of everything Greek after their time. The Greek church fathers were never viewed in the West with anything like the respect given to the Hellenic pre-Christian philosophers. In the past two centuries, it has been commonplace to contrast the modern and supposedly “degenerate” Greeks with their pre-Christian and “noble” ancestors. Of course, the handful of philosophers lived in a context of slaves and down-trodden poor, and a higher ratio of good men could have been found in Greece in the 1800s, when, after the liberation, it became fashionable to downgrade modern Greeks.

The idolatry of ancient Greece by Renaissance, Enlightenment, and nineteenth-century men extended to curious details. The Greek city-states had limited populations; hence, the ideal republic should have a small population. A small population for them meant a free state, and the ability of an intellectual elite to shape society, and perhaps wander about the forum like Socrates! This was solemnly believed by men as diverse as Claude Adrien Helvetius (1715-1771), a philosopher and an encyclopaedist, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 -1778), a Romantic thinker.

This idealization of the Greek city-state had some grim results in the Reign of Terror. Robespierre and others saw a need to prune back the population of France in order to equalize available property and make for a small republic. Hence, a third of the population should be executed! It was a planned depopulation that they embarked on.

Thus Courtois, in his report on the papers seized at Robespierre's house after Thermidor, wrote: "These men, in order to bring us to the happiness of Sparta, wished *to annihilate twelve or fifteen millions of the French people*, and hoped after this revolutionary transfiguration to distribute to each one a plough and some land to clear, so as to save us from the dangers of the happiness of Persepolis."<sup>1</sup>

This madness did not end with the French nor the Russian revolutions. It is still endemic among intellectuals, who love to believe and propagate the myth of overpopulation. It is basic to abortion, and the good liberals who advocate abortion do not tell us that a very high ratio of the murdered babies are black; this would lay bare their racism. They prefer to speak rather of the poor black woman's "right" to kill her unborn child.

It is believed that too many people means the death of freedom, as though freedom is a quantitative rather than a qualitative matter. Such an opinion was a product of the world of the French philosophers: it was the small, limited realm of the salon. According to Tornius, "The Renaissance was the cradle of the Salon."<sup>2</sup> The salon's origin was in Naples, but it spread from there throughout much of Western Europe. A noted woman usually provided a place for the salon in her home. Here the new intellectuals of the humanistic world of thought gathered regularly for their meetings. Lucrezia Borgia, the Renaissance popes, and others gathered around themselves men who were ready to equate wisdom with cynicism about the church, together with a high regard for pagan antiquity. In its latter years, the salon became less exciting in the hands of persons like Madame de Stael.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Nesta H. Webster, *The French Revolution* (London, England: Constable, 1921), 424-25.

2. Valerian Tornius, *The Salon, Its Rise and Fall: Pictures of Society Through Five Centuries* (London, England: Thornton Butterworth, 1929), 17.

3. J. Christopher Herold, *Mistress to an Age: A Life of Madame de Stael* (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958).

In France, in the eighteenth century, the philosophes dominated the salon, which provided a setting for their self-display. These French philosophes contributed greatly to the formation of the character of the modern intellectual, and also the media. Their two characteristics were “trivial libertinism,” and indirect satire and contempt as a means of attacking Christian civilization.<sup>4</sup> They were propagandists, and they were anti-Christian. For them, civil society was the new god, and it needed their wisdom. They had no use for serious discourse, only for witty attacks. As Martin observed,

Men who regarded civil society as a divinity on earth, and wished to enlist its support in practical reforms, were likely to busy themselves with metaphysical problems only in so far as their free treatment would cause amusement by annoying the ecclesiastical authorities.<sup>5</sup> The philosophes deplored what they saw as the appalling tone of the Bible, “and the deplorable lack of taste displayed by the Holy Ghost.”<sup>6</sup> They did not offer sound arguments against Christianity but rather ridicule and contempt; they saw faith as absurd. The heirs of the salon and the philosophes are to be found in the modern university. Not surprisingly, a professor like Peter Gay has written an adoring study of the Enlightenment and its philosophes.<sup>7</sup>

The philosophes, as time went on, saw their ideas as “the hope of the future regeneration of man.”<sup>8</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, while ill at ease among the philosophes, applied their presuppositions to man and society. He removed sovereignty from both God and the state to give it to man. However, while for him the people rather than the state were sovereign, he enhanced state power dramatically. The sovereign as monarch could do wrong, and usually did, but the state as the people was for him infallible because it embodied the general will of the people. The state therefore as the expression of the “democratic” general will is beyond law. Rousseau wrote that the state cannot be subjected to law when it is the expression of the general will. “The body politic, or Sovereign,...can never bind itself.” No guarantee of rights need

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4. Kingsley Martin, *The Rise of French Liberal Thought*, ed. J. P. Mayer, (Washington Square, NY: New York University Press, 1954), 91.

5. *Ibid.*, 92.

6. *Ibid.*, 105.

7. Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, vol. I, *The Rise of Modern Paganism* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966); and vol.2, *The Science of Freedom* (1969).

8. Martin, *Rise of French Liberal Thought*, 104.

be given the people “since it is impossible that the body should wish to injure all its members, nor...can it injure any single member.”<sup>9</sup> *Right* for Rousseau meant what the state as the general will does. *Right* thus is not what God’s nature is and what God’s law-word sets forth but the general will expressed in the state. It is this concept which is important for us to grasp. Its implications were not fully appreciated by everyone then, nor are they now. *Right* became a human concern and a human product. Parents in the latter half of the twentieth century are appalled by the absurd and highly artificial styles adopted by youth. They do not understand its humanistic roots, its Enlightenment sources. Of the eighteenth century we see:

“A genuine sentiment,” wrote a contemporary, “is so rare that when I leave Versailles I sometimes stand still in the street to see a dog gnaw a bone.” It was this fact, the extreme artificiality of social life, which gave Rousseau his power with the men and women of the eighteenth century. He brought, it is true, a romantic insincerity even more distasteful to later generations than the polished show of the cultured salon.<sup>10</sup>

This “extreme artificiality” was necessary to men who were determined to replace God. Their concerns were with what they could create, not God’s world. Hence, they regarded the city as the only fit dwelling place for an intelligent and civilized man. Their battle cry was *ecrasez l’infame*; they were determined to wipe out the shame of Christianity, to eliminate the church, Christian doctrine, morality, institutions, and the Christian view of man.<sup>11</sup> Voltaire referred to Christianity as “that beast,” his distaste for Christianity amounting almost to an “obsession.” He welcomed Diderot’s affectionate description in 1762 of himself as his “sublime, honorable, and dear Anti-Christ.”<sup>12</sup> One aspect of this increasing attack on Christianity was the exaltation of other religions, and also savages.<sup>13</sup> Even cannibals were viewed as morally superior to Christians. The

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9. Rousseau, “The Social Contract,” in Sir Ernest Barker, ed., *Social Contract: Essays by Locke, Hume, and Rousseau* (London, England: Oxford University Press, [1948] 1958), bk. 1, chap. 7, 258-262.

10. Martin, *Rise of French Liberal Thought*, 113. Martin was favorable to Rousseau in many ways.

11. Gay, *Rise of Modern Paganism*, 59; cf. 125, 128.

12. *Ibid.*, 391.

13. Gay, *Science of Freedom*, 920.

myth of the “noble savage” was propagated by men with little contact with savages but much hatred of Christianity. The savage was seen as a *naturally* noble person. How then was artificiality reconciled with the humanistic emphasis on Nature and the natural? Nature was separated from God, and the natural was seen essentially as the anti-supernatural, anti-God life. Christianity was thus unnatural and the pagan and savage were natural. The church was anti-Nature, whereas the State was seen as the natural form of order. The *natural* was thus an aspect of rebellion against Christianity; it had to be stripped of its *created* being and made the great *uncreated* being and the source of all. Hegel and Darwin greatly furthered this new view of nature. The *rebel* is thus natural and the Christian *unnatural*. This view of nature is a mythical one, a construct of man’s imagination. Hence, this view of the natural progressively espouses the artificial and the rebellious. Illicit and perverse sexuality become natural for such thinkers, and the homosexual is seen as the leader in the new “culture.” Both the Renaissance and the Enlightenment saw homosexuals in the vanguard; it is now seen as liberation from Christianity and hence natural.

The modern concept of the state and its sovereignty shares in this artificiality. The humanistic state as god walking on earth, as the locale of sovereignty and the source of law, is a product of the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment world of ideas. It is a form of Utopia in action; it is extremely artificial. More and more men are recognizing of the modern state that “the emperor has no clothes.”

We need to face our age’s problems with the confidence expressed by John Calvin in his writing on the conclusion of the Lord’s Prayer (“For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory”): Calvin observed that we need “never be shorn of assurance, since His kingdom, power, and glory, can never be snatched away from our Father.”<sup>14</sup>

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14. Ford Lewis Battles, ed., *The Piety of John Calvin* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1978), 110.



## SOVEREIGNTY AND SADOMASOCHISM

**G**uilt is the result of irresponsibility to someone (or to a law) above and over us to whom responsibility is due. Guilt is an inescapable human phenomenon. In some cultures, it takes less direct forms, but it is all the same present.

God, however, can feel no guilt whatsoever because it is His Being that defines all law and establishes good and evil. He alone is totally and perfectly good in that His Being is the good, and it is a nonderivative good. Man's goodness comes from conformity to the revealed law-word of God; even in its perfection in heaven, man's goodness is a derivative one. It comes from God's grace, and man's faithfulness to God's law in his sanctification.

Guilt among men towards men comes from dependence and interdependence, from mutual obligations neglected or poorly discharged. A husband and wife can incur guilt if they fail to discharge their moral obligations one toward the other, even as parents and children can also. All the relations of mankind one with another involve responsibilities and also the possibility of guilt. Legitimate guilt is a barometer of moral failure. Rulers in civil societies are not gods; in spite of their arrogance, they can and do feel guilt.

God's provision for guilt is the atonement of Jesus Christ, man's repentance, and man's regeneration and his absolution. One of the resounding sentences of Scripture is our Lord's often repeated declaration: "Thy sins be forgiven thee" (Matt. 9:2, etc.). A supernatural act is involved, and a moral regeneration. Not so with human forgiveness. Saying, "I forgive you," cannot effect a moral change in any man, unless God says it.

But men want forgiveness. Guilt is bondage to the past, and it warps a man's life and law. Apart from Christ, guilt has no solvent, and it wavers between two humanistic and untenable solutions, sadism and masochism. In sadism, a man (or a society) lays its guilt on others and then punishes them; in masochism, self-punishment is sought as the means of finding absolution from guilt. Both end in failure, and both are socially destructive.

In 1976 Dr. Samuel S. Janus and Dr. Barbara E. Bess of New York Medical College reported to the American Psychiatric Association meeting at Miami Beach, Florida, on a study of the clientele of forty-two "expensive call girls and ten madams." They stated that these prostitutes, who worked in New York, Las Vegas, and California, reported on 5,408 customers, 80 percent of them married, and 60 percent of them being "either public officials or influential executives." "These two groups of customers overwhelmingly preferred flagellation, bondage, and humiliation to conventional intercourse."

Major cities, and especially capital cities internationally, have houses of prostitution catering to prominent officials and their masochistic demands for punishment. Periodically, the "discreetly" written (meaning no persons identified) memoirs of the madams of such houses are published.

Those who patronize such houses are seeking atonement. Their punishment gives them a brief pseudo-respite from their guilt. It is, of course, an altogether illusory respite. Their continuing guilt has serious results for society. When sadistic, such guilty men lay the punishment on other people, possibly a social class, a race, or a nation. When masochistic, they bring punishment upon their country and people.

We must remember that there is guilt in society, guilt towards God, commonly unacknowledged, and guilt towards men, commonly misdirected. In either case, the social result is irresponsibility.

A black professor has written powerfully on the implications of this in racial relations. His awareness of the theological and psychological implications of guilt are exceptionally telling:

I think the racial struggle in America has always been primarily a struggle for innocence. White racism from the beginning has been a claim of white innocence and, therefore, of white entitlement to subjugate blacks. And in the '60s, as went innocence so went power. Blacks used the innocence that grew out of their long subjugation to seize more power, while whites lost some of their innocence and so lost a degree of power over blacks. Both races instinctively understand that to lose innocence is to lose power (in relation to each other). Now to be innocent, someone else must be guilty; a natural law that leads the races to forge their innocence on each other's backs. The inferiority of the black always makes the white man superior; the evil might of whites makes blacks good. This pattern means that both races have a hidden investment in racism and racial disharmony, despite their good intentions to the contrary. Power defines their relations, and power requires innocence, which, in turn, requires racism and racial division.<sup>1</sup>

Steele is right, of course. Laws may require equality, but they cannot create racial harmony when one group reacts masochistically and the other sadistically. By switching their views of guilt, neither gains absolution. Steele is aware of this, since he states, "The power that black bargainers wield is the power of absolution."<sup>2</sup> We must add that human absolution solves nothing, because it cannot take the place of God morally or effectively. No good is done to either group. In twenty years' time, life in Detroit's inner city, Steele points out, has declined in quality.

But there is a reluctance among blacks to examine this paradox, I think, because it suggests that racial victimization is not our real problem. If conditions have worsened for most of us as racism has receded, then much of the problem must be of our own making. But to fully admit this would cause us to lose the innocence we

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1. Shelby Steele, "I'm Black, You're White, Who's Innocent?", *Harper's*, June 1988, 47.

2. *Ibid.*, 50.

derive from our victimization. And we would jeopardize the entitlement we've always had to challenge society. We are in the odd and self-defeating position where taking responsibility for bettering ourselves feels like a surrender to white power.<sup>3</sup>

Steele clearly and powerfully states the problem: "In the end, black power can claim no higher moral standing than white power."<sup>4</sup>

The transfer of guilt to others leads to social and personal responsibility, as does the masochistic burden-bearing of sins. Masochists, in their seeming humility, are playing God: they believe that they can do what only God can do, i.e., forgive sins, their own and other's sins.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Confessions* make clear his masochistic nature. Rousseau's sense of guilt was allied to a faith in the innocence of natural man, of "primitives" and savages, and the guilt of bondage of civilized man. Virtue was equated with the natural. Rousseau was personally antisocial; as against the claims of society and civilization, he pitted his own "pure" and natural feelings. As Roger Kimball observed,

Since Rousseau knew that mankind was, like him, good, he was forced to the awful but inevitable realization that the creatures who treated him so heartlessly were not *really people* at all, that the key to the mystery was that "my contemporaries were but mechanical beings in regard to me who acted only by impulsion and whose actions I could calculate only by the laws of movement."<sup>5</sup>

This opinion took deep roots. It marked the "beatnik" and "hippy" movements and their emphasis on "naturalness," and it had a powerful hold on the student movement of the 1960s and 1970s. I heard at that time a student tell a grade-school teacher (middle-aged) that she was not really human unless she could strip herself naked and copulate on the lawn!

At the conclusion of the *Confessions*, Rousseau said that anyone who read his life and still doubted his virtue "ought to be strangled." Rousseau's influence on Robespierre was very great, and Robespierre called Rousseau a "divine man," and described the *Confessions* as "that free and courageous emanation of the purest

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3. *Ibid.*, 51.

4. *Ibid.*, 53.

5. *Ibid.*, 61.

soul.”<sup>6</sup> Robespierre said of the revolutionary republic that it was founded on “virtue and its emanation, terror.” Robespierre and Saint-Just believed that their utopia, when realized, would see “all distinction between ruler and ruled vanish, indeed,... all separate consciousness would vanish.”<sup>7</sup> After World War II, Henry Miller popularized the same dream, called the time of the assassins, i.e., the new order coming after the murder of all belonging to the old order. This is the logic of sadomasochism.

When sovereignty is placed in man, the answers to the problems of guilt, responsibility, and social order are wrong. Sovereignty cannot reside in man or in the state without deadly results: sadomasochism then becomes steadily more and more important in politics, law, and society. Neither man nor the state can effect that atonement for sin which man needs in relationship to God. Humanistic efforts result in impossible burdens for men and society.

In the triune God of Scripture, ultimacy, sovereignty, and justice are one; truth, law, grace, mercy, wrath, forgiveness, and more, are all equally basic and ultimate aspects of God’s nature and being. The ultimacy of none of these resides in man, who is simply God’s creature.

The “sovereign” state has a contradiction of purpose. It presents itself as the source of justice and therefore the definer of guilt in relationship to itself. At the same time, its citizens and its officers are guilty men, marked by sadomasochistic mentalities. The pagan state becomes a contradiction to itself and, finally, its own executioner.

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6. *Ibid.*, 62.

7. *Ibid.*, 63.



## CENSUS

Both the words *census* and *censor* come from the same Latin word, and logically so. The word *census* meant in Rome to register adult males and their property for the purpose of military service, taxation, and the determination of political status. A census was a valuation of the assets of the state, the presupposition being that the state is the owner of all. A censor or censorship also involves a valuation, in this case of certain activities or publications. Over the centuries, various states have, *without exception*, censored certain actions, activities, and publications for the general welfare as lords over society. A common and generally accepted form of censorship is the denial of freedom to any man to shout “fire!” in a crowded theater.

State censorship implies at least two powers and rights on the part of the state. *First*, state censorship means that the state is the determiner of the common good as the sovereign over all its subjects or citizens. *Second*, state censorship as a sovereign power and right means that the power to determine the good or evil of things subject to censorship rests in the state as an inherent factor.

A census is an enumeration found in antiquity, in Egypt and elsewhere. Wherever found, its basic purposes are taxation and conscription. It is likely that the first major bureaucracy in the history

of statism was the department of the census. Because labor levies were one form of taxation, the census was basic to state building construction ventures, road construction, and the maintenance of state properties.

Because both census and censorship manifest sovereignty, their presence in Scripture is plainly religious. God alone, by His law, has the power to censor man and to limit his activities; censorship is always a religious fact. With twentieth-century oneworldism and world brotherhood faiths, racism is censored. Anti-semitism, and anti-black expressions, are forbidden in some states of the world as “racialism,” while anti-Christianity is permitted. This implies a religious evaluation. Biblical law forbids the mistreatment of aliens, or legal discrimination against them, but the modern laws are humanistic, not Biblical.

With respect to a census and the Bible, we find that God ordered a census after the Mount Sinai deliverance of His law. The total number of males over twenty was 603,550 (Ex. 38:26); the purpose was taxation in terms of God’s law in Exodus 30:11-16; for the civil ordering of Israel.

Some years later, prior to their entry into the Promised Land, another census was ordered by God (Num. 26:1ff.). On this occasion, again with adult male Levites numbered separately, the total number of all other adult males was 601, 730 (Num. 26:51).

Another census is recorded in the Old Testament in 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21. This census angered God; it was motivated by David’s sense of proud and royal ownership over Israel. We are told that Satan was behind David’s arrogance, and God, in anger against Israel, moved David to go ahead with the plan in order to judge both David and Israel.

Centuries later, under Roman rule, Cyrenius was sent by Caesar to tax Syria and Judea (cf. Luke 2:1-3). According to Josephus,

Moreover, Cyrenius came himself into Judea, which was now added to the province of Syria, to take an account of their substance, and to dispose of Archelaus’s money; but the Jews, although at the beginning they took the report of a taxation heinously, yet did they leave off any further opposition to it, by the persuasion of Joazar,

who was the son of Boethus, and high priest. So they, being overpersuaded by Joazar's words, gave an account of their estates, without any dispute about it; yet there was one Judas, a Gaulonite, of a city whose name was Gamala, who, taking with him Sadduc, a Pharisee, became zealous to draw them to a revolt, who both said that this taxation was no better than an introduction to slavery, and exhorted the nation to assert their liberty; as if they could procure them happiness and security for what they possessed, and an assured enjoyment of a still greater good, which was that of the honour and glory they would thereby acquire for magnanimity. They also said that God would not otherwise be assisting to them, than upon their joining with one another in such counsels as might be successful, and for their own advantage; and this especially, if they would set about great exploits, and not grow weary in executing the same; so men received what they said with pleasure, and this bold attempt proceeded to a great height. All sorts of misfortunes also sprang from these men, and the nation was infected with this doctrine to an incredible degree; one violent war came upon us after another, and we lost our friends who used to alleviate our pains; there were also very great robberies and murders of our principal men. This was done in pretence indeed for the public welfare, but in reality for the hopes of gain to themselves; whence arose seditions, and from them murders of men, which sometimes fell on those of their own people (by the madness of these men toward one another, while their desire was that none of the adverse party might be left,) and sometimes on their enemies; a famine also coming upon us, reduced us to the last degree of despair, as did also the taking and demolishing of cities; nay, the sedition at last increased so high, that the very temple of God was burnt down by their enemies' fire.<sup>1</sup>

Judea's folly had led to Roman rule and control. Instead of returning to a faith and character that would result in freedom, a number of men chose revolution. The census provided them with the opportunity. The revolutionists were right in relating the census to slavery but wrong in assuming that their violence was a cure for their bondage. As Fujita rightly observed, "to the Jews, assessment was tantamount to ownership," and hence Judas and his followers resisted the census. Their standard was "no lord but God."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Flavius Josephus, "Antiquities of the Jews," in *The Works of Flavius Josephus* (Philadelphia, PA: David McKay, n.d.), bk. 18, chap. 1, 5443.

2. Neil S. Fujita, *A Crack in the Jar: What Ancient Jewish Documents Tell Us About the New Testament* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1986), 55-56.

There was no reason to assume that Joseph believed any differently when the decree from Caesar Augustus went out. As a descendent of David, and as a believer, he knew what a census meant. Yet he complied, because his hope was not in revolution but in God's salvation.

A census, and an assessment, by the state was and is an assertion of ultimate and essential ownership. However, our Lord condemns a like inventory in terms of personal assertions of ultimacy and ownership. In the Parable of the Rich Fool who inventoried his assets in order to plan his future apart from God, our Lord says,

20. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

21. So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God. (Luke 12:20-21)

The commandment to "take... no thought for the morrow" (Matt. 6:34; Luke 12:22-30) is not a requirement that we be improvident, but that our providence be God-centered because we are God's property (Matt. 6:33; Luke 12:30-31).

A census is very much a part of the life of the modern state; as sovereign, it assumes that it has a right to know whatever it chooses to know, claim whatever it wills, and appropriate to itself anything within its realm by eminent domain, i.e., by its sovereign claim to overlordship and ownership. A census now enumerates far more than a head-count; the questions asked grow more numerous and more detailed. A census now is an important aspect of statist planning; its purpose is the welfare of the people as determined by the state.

The Bible does not condemn a census as such, but only a nonreligious motivation in census-taking. Prior to World War II, a very important part of the United States census was the enumeration of all Christian churches, a report on their doctrines, membership requirements, and more. Since then, this had been dropped, and a more detailed enumeration of property has replaced it.

A census is a religious fact, and the modern census is humanistic and statist. It is an instrument, as in ancient Egypt, Rome, and

other tyrannies, for the general purposes of taxation and control, for the governance of man by the state. It is not surprising that, as the details of the census have grown in the United States since World War II, so too has the uneasiness and distrust of the people.



## THE STATE AS CHURCH

**I**n the New Testament, the doctrine of the church as the body of Christ is clearly stated (Rom. 12:4; 1 Cor. 10:17, 12:12-27; Eph. 1:22-23, 4:13, 5:23; Col. 1:18, 2:19, 3:15, etc.). The church is more than a collection of believers; the believers are members of Christ, the Head of the body, and in Him members one of another. Therefore, “the members should have the same care one for another” (1 Cor. 12:25).

26. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.  
 27. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.  
 (1 Cor. 12:26-27)

This was written by St. Paul to the Corinthians, a divided church, to heal the breaches and rebuke their offenses. All the letters of the apostles speak to troubles within the churches. Christians from Paul’s time to the present have been sensitive to and distressed by the sins and shortcomings of the church. But, since this is not heaven here, we cannot expect perfection, although our recognition of the church’s imperfections must not become a tolerance for them.

The church as a mystical body, possessing a unity which is above and beyond the sum total of its visible membership, has often been a more important fact to its enemies than to its own

members. Beginning with Rome, this strange unity of the church has troubled its enemies. It has meant that a church is a state within a state, and an empire within an empire, and also a state and empire with stronger bonds amongst its people than states can routinely command. In the modern era, wars have for a time divided churches, each affirming allegiance to its own country, but, after the war, the old ties reassert themselves. Very often, there are not institutional ties uniting the peoples in the two countries, but the sense of kinship remains.

The incident at Canossa in 1077 is not a forgotten one. Henry IV, the German emperor, in one of the longest and coldest of European winters, sought absolution and the lifting of his excommunication by Hildebrand, Pope Gregory VII. In spite of Henry's later ascendancy, the episode remains a dramatic one. The pope was at the time able to command the German peoples against their emperor. The memory of this event at Canossa has been as important as the event itself. The Prussian state, in its struggle against the Vatican, 1870 to 1887, had Canossa in mind. Prince Bismarck, in speaking before the Prussian Chambers, said that "he would never go to Canossa." However, as David S. Schaff observed, "ten years afterwards he found it politic to move in that direction, and to make a compromise with Leo XIII, who proved his equal as a master of diplomacy." The Roman Church emerged with greater freedom than before.<sup>1</sup> Adolph Hitler also had the destruction of all that Canossa represented in mind as he strove for the subjection of Catholic and Protestant churches.

States medieval and modern have sought to reproduce in themselves the corporate nature of the church. Ernst H. Kantorowicz, in *The King's Two Bodies* (1957), traced the doctrine of the state as a church, i.e., as a mystical body whose head was the king, and, later, the parliament, or the state as such.

As a result, Christian terms and imagery were transferred to the state. Thus, in England, the poet John Collop (1625-c.1676) compared Charles II, who was flagrantly promiscuous and who was

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1. David S. Schaff, in Philip Schaff, ed., *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 5, *The Middle Ages from Gregory VII, 1049, to Boniface VIII, 1294* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, [1907] 1981), 59.

in the pay of France, his country's enemy, to Christ.<sup>2</sup> For Collop, therefore, Cromwell's regime was "Atheism":

Atheism away, twin to Rebellion hence  
 'Bove fraud and force acquires, see providence!  
 Charl's the Church Gold, God's Image, see! returned  
 Through all the fiery trialls shines unburn'd.  
 Kings are God's Christs; *Charls* Christ-like doth appear  
 For Reformation in His Thirtieth Year.  
 The day which brought him forth, him in doth bring  
 Gives both new life to th' people and the King.

For Collop, all kings are Christs within their realm and for their people; no matter how Christian a rebellion, it is atheism. The return of Charles II is another "Reformation," as he comes like Christ "in His thirtieth year" to give "new life" to people and kingship. The Cromwellian order was "Sacrilige."<sup>3</sup> The return of Charles meant "A Golden Age" and the sight of Charles "can change ev'n City Chains to Gold."<sup>4</sup> Collop also said of Charles, writing of the ready flow of wine, that it

From every Conduit, proclaims *Charls* divine,  
 Who Saviour like, turns Water into Wine.

Thousands half-starved, by miracle seem fed,  
*Charls* by his presence multiplies their bread.

.....

Yet see Great *Charls* not fit for vulgar eyes,  
 Like to Divinity Couh'd in mysteries!

.....

God his own Character doth on Princes Write,  
 He rob'd Divinity call'd God's shadow light.<sup>5</sup>

In pagan antiquity, the state and its people and their possessions, were all the property of the ruler. This extended to all the game in the land as well. There is a long history, well-chronicled in England, of such claims. Royal game preserves were common and many, and it could mean death to kill the "king's deer," or his

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2. Conrad Hilberry, ed., *The Poems of John Collop* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1962), 9.

3. *Ibid.*, 167.

4. *Ibid.*, 164.

5. *Ibid.*, 165.

rabbit: if the game were destroying the peasant's grain, vegetables, or fruit trees, the peasant could do nothing, not even so much as to build a high fence to protect his livelihood. The concerns of the peasantry were of no concern to the king; the land, the people, and the game were all crown possessions, and there were no rights against the king. The right of the lords to the first possession of a bride was a part of this pagan concept.

The Renaissance in particular gave renewed strength to these pagan doctrines. "A state was, to its absolute ruler, an extension of his own house."<sup>6</sup> As a result, the bureaucracy received, not a contracted pay, but whatever the ruler chose to give them, sometimes very irregularly. "Even a career in a prince's chancery was built, not on personal ability, but on his generosity and willingness to compensate devotion."<sup>7</sup>

The court was, in its ceremonial, "a Platonic mimesis." It was both an image of the court of Zeus on Olympus, and of the Christian paradise, "and the individual courtier was the image, imitator, or 'double' of his prince. The city, with its environing lands, was an image of the ruler environed by his court."<sup>8</sup> The prince was above the law, and like a god.

Given this fact of the realm as the king's possession, it involved no great effort to adopt the doctrine of the church from Christian theology and to hold that the realm is the king's mystical body. Kantorowicz documented this in detail, from monarchs to modern parliamentary civil governments. The state has become the anti-Christian church as against a godly civil government, God's ministry of justice.

Borrowing from the opposition is a common practice. Judea, faced with the horrors of crucifixion (perfected by Rome but not original to them), adopted the practice for its own purposes. Alexander Jannaeus, high priest during 103-76 BC, crucified his Jewish enemies.<sup>9</sup> The Christian Church very early borrowed Platonism

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6. Elisa Acanfora and Marcello Fantoni, "The Courtly Life," in Sergio Bertelli, Franco Cardini, and Elvira Garbero Zorzi, eds., *The Courts of the Italian Renaissance* (New York, NY: Facts on File Publications, 1986), 210.

7. *Ibid.*, 220.

8. *Ibid.*, 191.

from the Greeks; the medieval church borrowed the inquisition from Emperor Frederick II; the modern church, with liberation theology, borrowed a revolutionary faith from the Marxists, and so on. The irony in all this is that the doctrines of the church, most certainly atonement, and also such subordinate doctrines as that of the church, represent a wealth very much coveted and imitated by the state. The church has often shown a singular ability to trade a pot of gold for a mess of pottage.

The state as a mystical body, however, has lacked an abiding cohesive force. Wars and the hatred of an enemy provide a temporary binding power, but this does not endure. Mussolini and Hitler attempted to remedy this by their doctrines of the state as an entity of mystical power, and, in Hitler's case, as matter of race and blood. Their efforts were failures, as have been all efforts to turn the state into a mystical power and entity.

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9. Neil S. Fujita, *A Crack in the Jar: What Ancient Jewish Documents Tell Us About the New Testament* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1986), 132-33.



## THE PHARISEE STATE

In February and March, 1989, the press reported at length on the public ordeal of John Tower before a U.S. Senate committee. Having been nominated (and, later, not confirmed by the Senate) to become U.S. Defense Secretary by President George Bush, Tower had his drinking problems and his sexual infidelities subjected to close scrutiny by a group of senators who in some cases certainly did not have unblemished lives in these matters. The investigation was a brutal trial by press, and many nameless sources were used. Harrison Rainie commented on the senate investigation,

...the withering of the division between public and private lives is perilous. It invites the creation of a culture of hackers. Legions of people are *already* devoted to breaking into the lives of others. And when rules of what is in bounds and what is out of bounds disappear, standards are set by the least scrupulous, who whisper, "Tell us what you know. We will pay you well and make you known." Those secret traffickers are playing with bombs.<sup>1</sup>

Rainie's article is a good example of the modern perspective. *First*, hackers, people who illegally penetrate computers and data of

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1. Harrison Rainie, "The Making of a Culture of Hackers," *U.S. News & World Report*, March 13, 1989, 10.

corporations and civil agencies, are engaged in criminal activity. The concerns of periodicals like *People* and *Penthouse* with the private lives of famous people may be silly curiosity or a purient interest, but it is not criminal. Rainie confuses the two. Moreover, the concern of a U.S. Senate committee may be hypocritical insofar as individual senators are concerned, but it is a necessary concern in terms of national interest.

*Second*, Rainie's distinction between public and private lives makes the wrong division. A country has a legitimate concern whether or not its officers of state are responsible men or not. In this instance, the legitimate question was whether a nominee, through ostensible drunkenness and association with the female spies of a foreign power, posed a risk to national security. This is a very legitimate and necessary concern.

*Third*, the many commentators on the Tower case generalized on scandal-mongering but failed to call attention to an important fact. To resurrect a sin of two or three decades earlier, as was done by one senator, may be dealing with data no longer relevant. We have a very curious situation today where the various offenses of prominent and not-so-prominent men are concerned. The central Christian concerns are overlooked: sin, repentance, and forgiveness. Modern man denies the fact of sin, which 1 John 3:4 defines thus: "sin is the transgression of the law," i.e., God's law. The Westminster Shorter Catechism, A. 14, says, "Sin is any want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God." Denying sin does not eliminate it; all that is dropped is its God-centered frame of reference. By eliminating God, man not only does not eliminate the fact of sin, but he also makes any true repentance and forgiveness impossible. True absolution then does not exist. The humanistic alternative is to say, "forget it," but men neither forgive nor forget. The denial of sin, the lack of repentance, forgiveness, and absolution, leave modern man in a very serious plight, having the burden of sin and no freedom from it. To deny sin is to deny forgiveness and release and to create the modern psychopathic and sociopathic mentality.

To deny God is to remove any valid standard from life and history and to subject all things to relativity. The possibility of law

is then denied, because social order presupposes a standard which is valid for all, everywhere, and at all times. Humanistic statism is comparable to a rudderless ship; direction is gone.

In recent years, many Christians, and many conservatives as well, have been distressed over the consequences of the sexual revolution. Homosexuality has become legally acceptable, and abortion as well. Euthanasia is being practiced, and incest is increasing. Homosexual periodicals in the 1970s advertised trained animals for bestiality, and some have advocated giving permission to necrophilia. Child molestation has many advocates.

If God's law is removed from the scene, then what standard remains? Many of these revolutionaries insist that only physical harm to another person is wrong. Some, however, are asking why harm to others is wrong. With the Marquis de Sade, they insist on an absolute freedom to do what they will. For them, "do what thou wilt" is the highest, if not the only, law.

All kinds of curious practices are cited from various non-Christian cultures to show us how wide the concept of natural and hence acceptable practices is. At the same time, we are given instances of absurd rules as a means of damning every godly rule or law. Thus, Brundage tells us,

On the other hand, sexual practices that many Westerners regard as "natural" sometimes strike members of other cultures as horrid, disgusting, and perverse. Thus in the 1950s, for example, a married woman complained to the Ndola Urban Court in Zambia that her husband was a sexual pervert. She also feared that his weird sexual practices might be a method of casting a spell on her. Upon examination of the facts it appeared that the husband's perversion consisted in his attempting to kiss and suck his wife's breasts as a preliminary to intercourse. The elders of the court agreed that this was unheard of and intolerable behavior, and they arranged for the woman to have a police guard to protect her from her husband's unnatural pleasures.<sup>2</sup>

For a century and a half now, we have been deluged by scholarship governed by relativism and determined to catalogue all kinds of practices as a means of ridiculing all standards. Brundage simply

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2. James A. Brundage, *Law, Sex, and Christian Society in Medieval Europe* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 7n-8.

cited the natural versus unnatural category; Kinsey based his work on the reduction of all sexual acts to the level of the natural, with no law distinguishing between right and wrong.

The doctrine of good and evil has been under savage attack since Max Stirner and Friedrich Nietzsche called on man to repudiate God and moral law, to live in terms of pure egoism and beyond good and evil. It should not surprise us that the modern state has adopted this same doctrine, although not advertising the fact. A teacher who in passing asked statist students to answer the question, "What is bad?" had some interesting responses: racism, forcing standards or values on people, discrimination, prejudice, and so on. Apart from one or two items remaining on the liberal moral agenda, the response of the students indicated moral anarchism: "personal morality," i.e., what one did with one's own life and body, was purely a personal option.

One result of this is Phariseism. One definition of Phariseism is that it is "formality, self-righteousness, censoriousness, or hypocrisy." The Pharisee is one who is good at seeing the sins of others, but not his own. Our Lord ridiculed this aspect of Phariseism in His parable saying, "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican'" (Luke 18:11). The Pharisee could ably confess the sins of others, but not his own, because, whatever he said about God, his starting point and standard was himself. Whether in Judaism or in Christianity, or in any other religion or philosophy, Phariseism ends up in humanism.

In politics, we have the modern Pharisee state: it has no standard other than itself and its own will. It recognizes no law outside itself nor any higher power to judge the state. When the state chooses to call some activity illegal and criminal, it proceeds to treat all offenders of its law as great malefactors, even though previously the same activity had been routinely practiced and never viewed as morally wrong. Fines are imposed for failing to fill out a federal or state form properly, i.e., omitting a signature, or some like minor error.

Statistics issued by statist agencies are increasingly suspect, since they have become a form of propaganda. The very astute head of a major U.S. corporation maintained his own statisticians, because he found that federal statistics were unreliable.

In the Soviet Union, truth and state pronouncements have little connection. The interests of the state govern all statements, including those dealing with past and present events. James E. Oburg has shown how photographs are altered, historical events such as failures and disasters denied, and reality reshaped to suit the needs of the state.<sup>3</sup>

What the U.S.S.R. does, however, is only quantitatively, not substantially, different from what the other nations do. The surviving elements of Christianity in Western states inhibits them.

The nations of the world in the twentieth century have been progressively wedded to counterfeit money, i.e., to fiat currencies. Counterfeiting reality is thus basic to their way of life. It is not surprising that this trend has been closely linked to New Age thinking. New Age philosophies are versions of ancient faiths of the Far East, radically relativistic and pessimistic faiths. Douglas R. Groothuis very powerfully summed up this New Age counterfeiting:

The phrase “create you own reality” is often intoned in New Age circles as a basic premise. The idea is that we are not under any objective moral law. Rather, we all have different ways to realize our divine potential. And since “all is one” (monism), we can’t slice up life into categories like good versus evil. That is too dualistic; we must move “beyond good and evil” in order to realize our full potential. A supposed spirit-guide named Ramtha teaches that God — of which we are all a part — is neither good nor bad. God does not judge. No one sins, and there is no need for forgiveness. Ramtha continues: “Every vile and wretched thing you do broadens your understanding.... If you want to do any one thing *regardless* of what it is, it would not be wise to go against that feeling; for there is an experience awaiting you and a great adventure that will make your life sweeter.”<sup>4</sup>

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3. James E. Oburg, *Uncovering Soviet Disasters: Exploring the Limits of Glasnost* (New York, NY: Random House, 1988).

4. Douglas R. Groothuis, *Confronting the New Age* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 24.

Not only New Age thinking but also the modern era is not fully comprehensible apart from the recognition of Groothuis's thesis. Men and nations are all trying to create their own reality. What was once regarded as insanity is now prized as great philosophy. Formerly, men who created their own realities and imagined themselves to be Napoleons were sent to insane asylums. The same delusion now on a grander scale makes men heads of state because most men are now busily creating their own realities. Some of the extravagant denials by feminists of any difference between male and female have been examples of this will to create one's own reality.

The modern state is in the business of remaking reality. It presents us with counterfeit money, self-made laws, education based on self-created values, and itself as an ultimate authority. Instead of Christ's righteousness imputed to us we are given self-righteousness as alone real. When, however, Christ's atonement, our regeneration by His power and the Spirit, and His righteousness imputed to us, are denied, the self-righteousness, which is Phariseism, takes its place. The atoning work of Christ is denied by the modern state as having any relevance to its structure. The atonement, however, makes it clear that God's law and justice are ultimate and basic to creation, and all things are fallen and distorted apart from it. Without the atonement, there is no remedy for sin, nor any forgiveness, only an evasion of the fact of man's fallen nature, and a futile gesture at forgetting about sin. Phariseism is then the alternative; self-righteousness replaces God's grace and imputed righteousness. As Colonel V. Doner said of American law, courts, and justice, "Our justice is not just."<sup>5</sup>

The original Pharisees had a remarkable vision of society. They "supplemented" God's law by a multitude of regulations to cover every area of life, so that their regulations in effect supplanted God's law. They were in this respect forerunners of the modern state.

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5. Colonel V. Doner, *The Samaritan Strategy* (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1988), 81.

The Pharisees, according to Josephus, shared with the Sadducees and the Essenes the belief that not God but fate or man governed human action:

At this time there were three sects among the Jews, who had different opinions concerning human action: the one was called the sect of the Pharisees, another the sect of the Sadducees, and the other the sect of the Essenes. Now for the Pharisees, they say that some actions, but not all, are the work of fate, and some of them are in our own power, they are liable to fate but are not caused by fate. But the sect of the Essenes affirm that fate governs all things, and that nothing befalls men but what is according to its determination. And for the Sadducees, they take away fate, and say there is no such thing, and that the events of human affairs are not at its disposal; but they suppose that all our actions are in our own power, so that we are ourselves the causes of what is good, and receive what is evil from our own folly.<sup>6</sup>

All three groups, each of which saw themselves as faithful ones, were nevertheless apostate. God was not for them the determiner of all things in an absolute as well as immediate sense. God was affirmed by all three, and His law held to be binding, but in practice He was set aside in favor of man. Josephus said of the Pharisees,

What I would now explain is this, that the Pharisees have delivered to the people a great many observances by succession from their fathers, which are not written in the law of Moses; and for that reason it is that the Sadducees reject them, and say that we are to esteem those observances to be obligatory which are in the written word, but are not to observe what are derived from the tradition of our forefathers....<sup>7</sup>

The Pharisees were the “separated ones,” ostensibly the very holy, but their holiness was self-derived, like their righteousness.

The modern state creates its own law, decides for itself what is good and what is evil (Gen. 3:5), and challenges the right of any power beyond itself to define and to create law. The Pharisees contrasted themselves to the *‘am-ha-aretz*, the ignorant common people. They saw themselves as the true exegetes or interpreters of the law, as the bearers of the keys of the kingdom. According to our Lord, they made the commandments of God of none effect by their

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6. Flavius Josephus, “Antiquities of the Jews,” in *The Works of Flavius Josephus* (Philadelphia, PA: David McKay, n.d.), bk. 13, chap. 5, 394.

7. *Ibid.*, chap. 10, 403.

traditions (Matt. 15:6; Mark 7:13). They had in effect made themselves at best the intermediaries between God and man, or, with their tradition, supplanted God.

The Pharisee state claims a similar ultimacy. Everything which the modern state offers in the way of services, laws, and regulations is subject to change and variation, but its claim to ultimacy and sovereignty is not subject to negotiation. Such a state, however, erodes allegiance, law, order, and meaning. The great disaster of the Jewish-Roman War of AD 66-70 was not wanted by the Pharisees. They helped create a spirit of lawlessness in which everyman's will was a key to the Kingdom of God, and in which, God's authority being implicitly denied, finally all authority was eroded. After all, if God's authority can be set aside, why not man's? The Pharisee state creates a false church whose members or citizens turn on it and trample it under their feet.

## FORGIVENESS AND SOCIAL ORDER

In the newspaper, *USA Today*, on March 7, 1989, a brief news item read:

RAPIST OUTRAGE: A judge's decision to spare rapist David Caballero a prison term because the young man wants to become a police officer has outraged many in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. Judge Charles Stark convicted student Caballero, 21, under a youthful offender act that spared him a minimum 5-year term for sexually assaulting a female student at Lake Superior State University. "I think they would lynch the judge if they had him right here," said local newspaper editor Ken Fazzari. Prosecutors are appealing. (3A)

Incidents like this are not unusual in the courts today. The judge usually believes that his action represents enlightened and humanitarian practice. But this is not all. Major legal steps have been taken since World War II to protect a criminal from his past. If the criminal, on release from prison, is on good behavior for a given number of years, his records are sealed. In some cases, the records are closed to all but a few civil agencies; but "some 35 states now will erase convictions for small drug offenses, like possession of marijuana." Critics have called attention to the fact that records are now made to lie legally; history is rewritten. Others point out that police are hindered in some investigations. Still others hold that

businessmen and other employers may have a legitimate reason for knowing of a prospective employee's past; University of Nebraska Law Professor Richard Harnsberger, while favoring expunction, still conceded, "If someone has been convicted of embezzlement, a bank has a reason to know before offering a job." Some proponents feel it is unfair to hold a man's past against him. Georgetown University Law Professor Herbert Miller said, "It's in society's best interest not to hold down ex-cons. You're inviting them to vent some pretty frustrated feelings."<sup>1</sup>

Behind all such efforts, whether by lenient judges or by legislators who have enacted laws to seal records, is a belief in the necessity for a "new start" for criminals. This means forgiveness, and forgiveness raises an important question. Forgiveness means asking, Who has the right and power to forgive? If God is the law-maker, then forgiveness is *primarily* His power, and, *secondarily*, only in terms of God's law, within the sphere of the offended party. Charles Seignobos said, of feudal justice,

The court did not act in the public interest: it rendered a service to the parties; the plaintiff must make a request for this service. Even in the matters of crime, the court intervened only on the demand of the victim or of his relatives, and the criminal trial took the form of a process between the accuser and the accused. Both had to be treated equally: both were imprisoned, and the plaintiff who lost incurred the same penalty that otherwise the defendant would have had to undergo; for the accused was the equal of the accuser.<sup>2</sup>

Without agreeing with this concept of the court, we can still recognize that the fact is very important that the court did not equate itself with "the public interest." It rendered a decision on a specified offense or charge; it did not offer forgiveness or social reform, only an application of the law to a specified case. This was evidence of judicial humility.

Forgiveness is essentially an act of God; it is His law which is broken, and it is He who is primarily offended. Hence David prayed, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight" (Ps. 51:4). According to the Westminster Larger

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1. "Fresh Start — or Cover-Up?," *Time*, November 10, 1980.

2. Charles Seignobos, *The Feudal Regime* (New York, NY: Henry Holt, [1902] 1933), 77.

Catechism, A. 194, by sin we “become debtors to the justice of God.” By Christ’s atonement, His obedience and satisfaction (or, restitution), our sins are forgiven. Restitution is necessary by the offender to God through Christ, and in person to the offended parties on earth.

The problem with statist forgiveness is that, *first*, it involves the pretension that the state has taken God’s place as lawmaker and forgiver. *Second*, the state has no power to make of the forgiven man a new creation. There is neither forgiveness in any effectual sense nor regeneration in statist forgiveness. Without forgiveness in history, there is an endless repetition of evil acts, because humanistic forgiveness cannot change man.

Ethelbert Stauffer rightly said, “You must first grasp the reality of guilt if you are to know what history is.”<sup>3</sup> Guilty men are past-bound men, and they create, as Stauffer noted, “an ever-increasing avalanche.”<sup>4</sup>

A classical example of man’s effort to eradicate guilt and evil by means of forgiveness is Julius Caesar’s policy of conciliation. He sought to end the many-generations-long civil war in Rome by a policy of forgiveness. As he conquered his enemies in the civil war, he let his enemies go free. The clemency he manifested excited all the Roman world. In battle after battle Caesar pardoned his enemies. He pardoned them, destroyed the evidences against them, and even gave many back their high offices. The senate, too, was caught up in the popular enthusiasm over clemency and a new order, and it decreed that a special temple should be built for the *clementia caesaris*. “There Caesar and his divine *clementia* were to be set up and worshipped, and on the pediment of the temple a globe of the world proclaimed that the clemency of Caesar spanned the whole world.”<sup>5</sup> When on March 15, 44 BC, Julius Caesar was assassinated, it was “forgiven” men who killed him, men forgiven and honored but not regenerated.

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3. Ethelbert Stauffer, *Christ and the Caesars* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1955), 20.

4. *Ibid.*, 101.

5. *Ibid.*, 50.

Matters have not changed since Julius Caesar's day, nor the nature of men. The modern state dreams of a new world order. It imagines that history will see a new Eden, a Great Community wherein all men are prosperous, enlightened, and righteous. Its forgiveness, however, does not result in changed men but more social disorders. However benevolent its intentions, the results are, at their best, poor.

Even more dangerous than the results are the pretensions of the state in such matters. The criminal commits an offense that affects a limited number of people; the offense of the judge, bureaucrat, administrator, and legislator affects all the people.

Rebecca West, some years ago, not long after World War II and the use of atomic bombs against Japan, reported on the feelings of a scientist who believed that scientists alone should control atomic energy. When one of his hearers asked what guarantee there was that scientists would not use such a control for evil,

He, the least arrogant of men, replied by a simple claim that he and all his kind were born without sin. "How can you suppose that any scientist would do such a thing?" he asked, his spectacles shining with anger. "Science is reason. Why should people who live by reason suddenly become its enemy?" He put into words an implication which often can be recognized when Communist scientists write on other than technical matters. The comradeship of scientists with the Soviet Union, even if it amounts to a transference of national loyalty, cannot be wrong and cannot lead to any harm, because scientists cannot be wrong and cannot do harm, because they are scientists, and science is right.<sup>6</sup>

Because the modern state sees itself as Reason incarnate, it shares in this self-righteousness. Any failures it experiences are temporary; given the time and money, it will solve all problems.

As one who has been a witness for churches, home schools, Christian schools, and parents in a number of court cases, I can attest to this attitude on the part of state attorneys and officials. In hallway conversations, some have expressed sincere bewilderment that an educated or intelligent man would question the state's

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6. Rebecca West, *The New Meaning of Treason* (New York, NY: Viking Press, [1945] 1964), 173.

integrity and rightness. By identifying itself with Reason, the modern state has intensified its Phariseeism.

The historian Mozley, in writing on the Reformation era, observed, "If apt and well-aimed words could have reformed the church, Erasmus would have reformed it."<sup>7</sup> Similarly, if earnest efforts and laws could remake men, our modern statisticians would clearly have cause for triumph instead of facing a growing disaster.

Without the forgiveness of sins, a man's past is a brutal fact; through Christ's atonement, there is not only forgiveness but the amazing and glorious fact that our past, present, and future, with all their sins and stupidities, are made to work together for good by our God (Rom. 8:28). Apart from the Biblical doctrine of the forgiveness of sins, man's life and world are very dark. Social order requires the true forgiveness of sins and man's regeneration.

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7. J. F. Mozley, *William Tyndale* (London, England: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1937), 236.



## THE LOCKEAN STATE

To speak of the forgiveness of sins and social order is to go against the grain of the modern era, against the humanistic statism which triumphed after 1660. The roots of the humanistic state run back into pagan antiquity; they were nourished by some aspects of medieval life, and they were dominant in the Renaissance. There was, however, a façade of Christianity which the Reformation and Counter-Reformation made at times a reality.

The Enlightenment was not born in 1660; it too had deep roots in European history. The man who brought into focus many of these strands was John Locke (1632-1704). We are routinely told, perhaps to make Locke palatable to Christians, that his family leaned towards Puritanism. It is true that Locke's father fought for Parliament in the war against Charles I. This did not make them Puritans. At Oxford, John Locke did not take orders, i.e., enter the church, out of a dislike for the Puritans, so it is hardly accurate or fair to either Locke or the Puritans to place him in their camp in any sense.

Among Locke's influential works were his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), *Thoughts on Education* (1693), *Letters on Toleration* (1689, 1690, 1692, etc.), *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695), and his *Treatises on Government* (1689).

In Locke's day, nominal Christians associated with important nominal churchmen and lords to retain a façade of orthodoxy, and this Locke did. In *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, Locke defined *reason* and *faith* and gave us a perspective which has become standard since then. Reason for Locke meant something "contradistinguished" from faith; it was

...the discovery of the certainty or probability of such propositions or truths, which the mind arrives at by deductions made from such ideas which it has got by the use of its natural faculties, viz., by sensation or reflection.

*Faith*, on the other side, is the assent to any proposition, not thus made out by the deduction of reason, but upon the credit of the proposer, as coming from God in some extraordinary way of communication. This way of discovering truths to men we call revelation. (Bk. IV, Ch. 18, para. 2)<sup>1</sup>

The framework of Locke's definition is the worldview of Rene Descartes; the "autonomous" mind of man is the starting point of all true knowledge. Since true knowledge begins from the mind of man rather than the mind of God, all data coming from God was implicitly and in time explicitly on a different and potentially questionable level. In approving of Biblical ethics, Locke said that, while abstract reasoning could give us the same morality, only the intelligent few would reach conclusions; "the people" need miracles and revelation.<sup>2</sup> The realm of faith was thus the province of the poorly educated and the less intelligent; the superior mind would quickly come to the same conclusions by reason and by empirical observation. Faith was thus a necessity for the nonelite. In passing, it is noteworthy that Locke confused revelation and faith, two very different things.

Locke's view of the mind as a blank tablet at birth was basic to his educational theory but very much at odds with the Biblical doctrines of man's original sin and total depravity, doctrines both basic to Puritanism. Locke's view of man was an optimistic one. Given man's clean and malleable nature, education could do

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1. John Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, ed. and abr. J. T. Ramsey (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1958), 10-11.

2. *Ibid.*, 66-67, para. 243.

remarkable things in remaking man. The shift from atonement to education for the regeneration of man was thus begun.

In Peardon's words,

The political philosophy of the *Second Treatise*, like all political philosophies, rests upon an interpretation of human nature. Locke viewed man as a pretty decent fellow, far removed from the quarrelsome, competitive, selfish creature found in Hobbes.<sup>3</sup>

This was the basis of Locke's liberalism: the people would do the right thing if left free to do so.<sup>4</sup>

According to Kain, echoing John Dunn, whom he cites, the two central themes in John Locke's *Two Treatises on Government* are the rights of property, and the limitations of political authority.<sup>5</sup> The purpose of civil government for Locke is the protection of property. Property precedes civil government and the social contract. "Citizens have a right to revolution when the government invades their property."<sup>6</sup> The citizen has a "natural right" to property. This raises a question, then, with respect to the legitimacy of any state wherein many poor people are not able to exercise their "natural right" to property. One writer, C. B. Macpherson, has called this type of political theory the doctrine of "possessive individualism." Macpherson held that "religion for Locke is merely a tool by which rich capitalists condition the poor to accept their inferior status as subsistence laborers."<sup>7</sup> Macpherson's view is a modern one and not likely to have been Locke's. All the same, as Christianity has receded, many of the poor have seen property as a *right* they are denied rather than something to work for. Thus, a *third* theme in Locke, after the "rights" of property and the limitation on state authority, is the "right" to property. To exercise this "right" to property, men have increased the state's power in order to compel the redistribution of

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3. Thomas P. Peardon, "Introduction," in John Locke, *The Second Treatise of Government*, ed. Thomas P. Peardon (New York, NY: The Liberal Arts Press, [1952] 1956), xiii.

4. *Ibid.*, sec. 164, 93-94.

5. Philip J. Kain, "Locke and the Development of Political Theory," *Annals of Scholarship* 5, no. 3 (Spring 1988): 334.

6. *Ibid.*, 352.

7. James R. Jacob, "Locke's *Two Treatises* and the Revolution of 1688-89: The State of the Argument," in *ibid.*, 314.

wealth. In practice, then, this equalitarian theme has subverted the other two. Locke opened the door to this by equating labor with “a right to property”:

45. Thus labor, in the beginning, gave a right of property wherever anyone was pleased to employ it upon what was common, which remained a long while the far greater part and is yet more than mankind makes use of.<sup>8</sup>

The theory of revolution as it developed out of Rousseau was that a total revolution can restore the state of nature and make possible a freedom for man’s natural rights.

Locke’s purpose, however, was not revolutionary. In Peardon’s words, for Locke, “stability, it has been said, was the central assumption of his thinking.”<sup>9</sup>

It is apparent from all this how radically Locke departed from Christian thinking. Locke’s foundation for civil government is property; Calvin’s foundation is God’s word. Calvin held,

...this civil government is designed, as long as we live in this world, to cherish and support the external worship of God, to preserve the pure doctrine of religion, to defend the constitution of the Church, to regulate our lives in a manner requisite for the society of men, to form our manners to civil justice, to promote our concord with each other, and to establish general peace and tranquility....<sup>10</sup>

The state, like the church, has a religious function under God and a duty to God and to man. This is very different from Locke’s foundation of the state on man’s property “rights.” Scripture says of property, “The earth is the LORD’s, and the fulness thereof; the world, *and they that dwell therein*” (Ps. 24:1). This means that man himself is property, God’s property, and that his relationship to the world is not as owner but as a steward under God. This is a different order of things than that presented by Locke.

It is noteworthy that, when Locke was young, the Westminster Confession of Faith was formulated. Again, we are far removed from John Locke’s property base when we read chapter 23 of that Confession, “Of the Civil Magistrate.” Apart from the

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8. Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, 17.

9. Peardon, “Introduction,” in *ibid.*, ix.

10. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1936), bk. 4, chap. 20, sec. 2, 772.

title, the reference throughout this chapter is to “civil magistrates,” except for two minor instances. In a time of strident monarchism, the Westminster divines did not reduce civil government to a single magistracy. In chapter 25, “Of the Church,” single headship was given to “the Lord Jesus Christ.”

In our time, we are seeing the growing collapse of the Lockean state. It has abandoned its property base, and its limitation on power, in favor of the individual member of the social contract and *his* “rights.” The result is the growing dissolution of society as the anarchistic and amoral citizen and the highly centralized and authoritarian state clash with one another. The state insists on ever-increasing power to remake man and society, and anarchistic man insists that his view of human rights gives him the right to take to the streets in civil disobedience whenever his thinking so determines and orders the rightness of things. The Lockean state now has power, but it lacks legitimacy. Whether in its Marxist or democratic forms, the Lockean state rests on sand, and its citizens are increasingly its enemies.



## THE ELITE

**I**t is a grimly ironic fact that the modern era is so thoroughly elitist. This does not mean that the medieval and Reformation eras were equalitarian. Rather, different motives governed men. Also, all men were equally destined to face Almighty God, a humbling and levelling fact.

The governing faith or premise of a culture creates its own antithesis. Thus, when heaven is the goal of man, then the antithesis is hell, and the tension is between the redeemed and the reprobate. The goal of history determines its antithesis. In the modern era, the latent goal, implicit in Locke but given no place in his time, was the equalitarianism of the state of nature. With property made basic to civil order, and all men endowed by Nature with a natural right to property, the logic of revolutions is to equalize wealth and property or to socialize it by state seizure. Equality is then the great virtue, and, in the thinking of some, the sole virtue. Inequality then becomes the great evil, the source of all iniquity, and humanistic sermons by senators and editorial writers attack this evil and its adherents.

The underside of the medieval world, and of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation era, was Satanism. As against the heaven-bound, the hell-bound revelled in their Satanic masses, witches' covens, and occult practices. The underside of the modern

era is its rampant elitism. Academicians, politicians, and socialites who publicly champion equalitarianism become in private the most intense elitists. Fashions and styles change rapidly in the modern era because the elite abandons them when the people, eager to imitate the elite, adopt them. No culture has perhaps ever had anything so popular in the way of antithesis as modern elitism. Resorts and spas loved by the elite are quickly abandoned when the would-be elite crowd into them.

A key element in the modern elite is the homosexual, both male and female. The perversity of the homosexual nature revels in the transformation of values and in elitism. Thus, Victoria Sackville-West, a lesbian married to a homosexual, was an elitist.<sup>1</sup> In 1927, she with others journeyed through primitive areas on foot and by mule to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company sites. Her reaction to its stores, “cool, organized hospitals,” schools, and tennis courts was one of revulsion. She called it “a hell of civilization.” She was contemptuously sure that here was “society, intrigues, and gossip. One shuddered at the thought of it.”<sup>2</sup> There, too, were no doubt people who were her equals or superiors, an unforgivable offense! She described her *Manifesto* as a hatred of democracy and the people. “I wish education had never been introduced.” The people should be “as well fed and well housed as T. T. Coves, but no more articulate than that.”<sup>3</sup> She was by her own account a cruel person.<sup>4</sup>

This is not unusual. Victoria Sackville-West showed more candor than most. Paul Johnson’s *The Intellectuals* describes the same ugly qualities in this whole class of elitists. Lionel Abel cited their propensity for error on issues. Of the leftist elite and intellectuals, he said, “It has always been accusatory and almost always wrong.... With all these errors behind it, the Left has learned not even one lesson in modesty.”<sup>5</sup> In fact, nonsense is exalted to help denigrate all standards and values. Professor Harold Bloom holds “that the only right way to read a text is to endeavor to misread it.”

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1. Michael Stevens, *V. Sackville-West: A Critical Biography* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1974), 30ff., 57, 105-6.

2. *Ibid.*, 48.

3. *Ibid.*, 50-51.

4. *Ibid.*, 14ff.

5. Lionel Abel, *Important Nonsense* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1987), 15.

For him, “it is enough to be greatly mistaken to be greatly interesting.” The British philosopher Peter Strawson “tells us that Descartes was a genius because he managed to be so wrong.”<sup>6</sup> According to Abel, in a review of Guare’s play, *The House of Blue Leaves*, in *The Village Voice*, April 1, 1986, Gordon Rogoff wrote, “There is something breathtakingly tonic about a play that almost never lets family and community values have a respectable moment.” Abel calls this the “confusion of values.”<sup>7</sup>

This is a logical consequence of equalitarianism. It reduces virtue to a political levelling, and it makes its antithesis a sterile negation, mindless elitism. If equality is the god and virtue of a society, elitism, as a covert anti-equalitarianism, will flourish. It will not only flourish but will also strike out against all values as a liberal version of atheism, the god in this case being equalitarian humanity. Even as Satan wars against heaven, so, too, the elitist wars against the equalitarian order.

This warfare, however, is not a holy war for the City of God. It is a mindless war against everything. The young nihilist nobleman, Dimitri Pisarev, in the mid-1800s in Russia, held that,

Whatever can be smashed ought to be smashed in bits; only what can resist our blows is worthy to survive them. So let us strike out right and left. Whatever we can destroy is just rubbish.<sup>8</sup>

Henry Miller, in the post-World War II era, went further: he wanted a time of the assassins to destroy all civilization and literacy and “restore” a world beyond good and evil, a world full of equality.

All this comes out of the modern philosophical premises of Descartes, Locke, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Dewey, and others. Thinking, scientific man ostensibly has the keys to the modern idea of heaven, or, for that matter, hell. As a paper published for Christian schools noted with respect to Auguste Rodin’s sculpture, his famous doors, “The Gates of Hell,” were commissioned for a museum which was never built. As Carol Bommer wrote:

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6. *Ibid.*, 45.

7. *Ibid.*, 203-4.

8. *Ibid.*, 153.

In the Middle Ages, sculptures like this showed Jesus Christ seated in judgment above the doors. But Rodin did not put a figure of Jesus Christ sitting in judgment on "The Gates of Hell." Instead he put *The Thinker*.

Rodin's *Thinker* is the famous figure of a man deep in thought. Rodin was saying that man's mind is the only truth. He believed that only what man experiences through his senses is true. Man is sovereign — not God.<sup>9</sup>

Since Rodin's time a century ago, confidence in the thinker, the intellectual, or the scientist, is gone. Even Rodin's *Thinker* seemed to be confused or at the least puzzled! The world of rational modern man professes equalitarianism while subverting it at every turn. Equality has been a sterile virtue, producing neither fraternity nor liberty.

Equality in the modern world is a political virtue. It is state imposed and state punished and rewarded. Jean-Paul Sartre, as an existentialist, in his *Being and Nothingness* effectually negated all values other than a purely personal, self-chosen value on the one hand, and a political value on the other. He tried to merge existentialism and Marxism. For him, in the personal domain, man could play existential god. In the political realm, he stressed responsibility, but his view of the responsible, ethical act meant something very different. Here, "the good deed...meant a political act of some kind."<sup>10</sup> This had to be a socialist act, because socialism, by rejecting God and the church, was closer to existentialism.

The moral antithesis of the modern world is equality versus elitism; it is a disguised antithesis, because the intellectual, cultural, and political champions of equality are themselves the core group in the ranks of the elitists. They are like angels who work for God but revel in hell! Their world is an untenable one.

Because an *elite* is by definition the choice or select part of any group, it is therefore superior to all the rest. An elite group, whether in Rome, Paris, New York, or anywhere else, does not subordinate itself to the common man, nor to the state, nor to any religious or moral requirements: it is alone all these things. Mao

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9. Carol Bomer, "Rodin: The Lost Creator," *It's God's World*, March 23, 1989, 5.

10. Abel, *Important Nonsense*, 210; cf. 182.

Tse-tung was suspicious of all artists because he recognized their elitism. In the modern era, the elite steadily weakened and severed all its ties with the church, and then, beginning with the French Revolution, with the state. Subsidies to the arts are commonly a form of keeping these cultural vultures in line.

The closer affinity of the elite has been to those below them, where they are unchallenged. A 1930s musical film made note of this in a song, about 42nd Street, New York, "where the underworld can meet the elite, 42nd Street."

It is not only the modern state that courts and subsidizes this self-designated elite. The corporate world does also, with heavy subsidies to *avant-garde* art. In neither case is the ploy very helpful. The elite are erosive of all order, because they can endure submission to none. The modern state thus seeks allies where it has none.



## THE REVOLUTIONARY IDEOLOGY

The modern worldview carries within itself many contradictions. It views as the definitive institution of society, as the modern “church” as it were, the state, and an intellectual elite who, with scientific experts, come together to create the scientific socialist state. This state is, in terms of its philosophical premises, the voice of Reason, if not Reason incarnate.

At the same time, a very different perspective is held with respect to the People. Rousseau exalted both the natural man and also the state which embodies the general will. The natural man, however, is clearly not rational man. Rousseau and Romanticism idealized the natural man’s untaught feelings and instincts in a manner which led in time to the doctrine, in the nineteenth century, of the subconscious mind in man. With Freud and his followers, this became the *unconscious* mind. For Freud, the unconscious replaced God and became the new locale of infallibility. Whatever the unconscious in man, in particular, the *id*, and then the *ego*, revealed, whether in dreams, actions, words, or in any other way, had for the Freudians an unerring revelatory character. Consciously, man could die; unconsciously, he reveals himself and confesses readily to the mainsprings of his being. The unconscious mind of man thus represents man in his primordial character.

Rousseau's natural man became revolutionary man. In revolution, the pre-civilized energy and power of man shatters the conventions and breaks the chains of civilization. Revolution supposedly revitalizes a corrupt and effete society by unleashing the forces of primordial chaos against it. The French Revolution, as Otto Scott has pointed out, adopted the language of medicine to describe its murderous course. "The purge," the forced expulsion of feces, became a political term, now widely used.

This creates an amazing paradox: at the top in the state, the state as Reason, is the scientific socialistic elite, and, at the bottom, the unconscious forces of society, the masses. Of course, both the views of the elite and the masses are intellectual constructs and in part figments of the imagination. All the same, everything is done to enhance this illusion and better enable all concerned to play their parts. The more power is centralized at the top, the more vocal is the affirmation that power is being exercised of, by, and for the people.

Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929), in *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899), described the ancient leisure class as dedicated to the belief that "Whatever is, is right," whereas "the law of natural selection, as applied to human institutions, gives the axiom: 'Whatever is, is wrong.'"<sup>1</sup> Veblen thus saw evolution working against the leisure class. Now Veblen's leisure class is not the same as the modern statist elite, but his point applies all the same. The Darwinian premises are very much a part of the main current of modern thought, and of Romanticism. Charles Darwin was a most unromantic soul, but his premises were still derived from Romanticism. Whether in biology, politics, or literature, power was derived from below. Even as the romantic looked to his feelings for guidance and power, so the evolutionist believed in *power from below*. The magnificence of the universe, its complexity, energy, and diversity, had to have a primordial source of power, chance, and chaos.

The Darwinian enthronement of power derived from chance and chaos delighted Marx and Engels because it verified

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1. Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York, NY: Modern Library, 1934), 207.

their revolutionary ideology. The Age of Reason saw hope in its enlightened despots; the new temper created by Romanticism saw hope instead in revolution and the worker. The sins of the enlightened despots became monstrous evils; the mass murders by the revolutionists became revolutionary justice.

Freud's *id*, the unrestrained pleasure principle, was for him also the will to live. Modern revolutions give expression to Freud's *id*, to pleasure in destruction. When the Revolution lives, the Revolution kills! Mass executions, slave labor camps, and a continuous rule of a secret police become endemic to revolutionary regimes.

At the same time, the revolutionary *id* seeks to kill religion, Christianity in particular. The Biblical premises are all hostile to the revolutionary ideology, because Christianity affirms God as the Creator and Redeemer, not chaos and revolution. Power is sought from above, not from below. In fact, for Christianity, power from below is ultimately demonic.

The modern state sees itself as the source of authority and power, not God. It thus seeks steadily to contain every area of life and thought and to rule over all.

In the history of the Church of England, the claim of the crown has been over all the church and its properties and incomes. As Miall wrote,

The last point is epigrammatically put by Bishop Warburton, in a sentence contained in a note on Clarendon's "History of the Rebellion," referring to the demand of Parliament for the alienation of Church lands. "The State," he observes, "may resume what the State originally gave."<sup>2</sup>

The modern socialist states openly claim such a total jurisdiction, and the democracies implicitly so.

This claim is challenged by some churchmen, although the compromises are many.

There is, however, another potential challenge of a revolutionary sort. If the people are the source of power, and if power,

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2. Edward Miall, *Title-Deeds of the Church of England to Her Parochial Endowments* (London, England: Longman Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1862), 118.

whether in art, politics, or biology, comes from below, what is to keep the masses from revolting?

Since World War II, we have seen evidences of this. Students have occupied university administrative offices and lecture halls and issued nonnegotiable demands. Workers have done some of this also. Welfare recipients have done their share of “demonstrating.” In one instance, the office of then Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York was occupied by insolvent welfare recipients who refused to speak civilly to the governor, who tried hard to be patient.

All this might have delighted Freud, who wrote on December 22, 1897, to Wilhelm Fliess: “I can scarcely detail for you all the things that resolve themselves into — excrement for me (a new Midas!).”<sup>3</sup>

The modern state thus faces a problem. The revolutionary ideology is implicitly hostile to the life of the state. The people believe that they have a right to disobey whatever law displeases them. Freud’s *id* knows no law outside its will; Darwin’s evolutionary force recognizes no higher law; and the modern temper had a notable expression in Paris, in the 1960s, when rebellious students declared, “It is forbidden to forbid!” The modern state is in the business of forbidding on its own waning authority.

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3. Cited by Jonathan Weinberg, “It’s in the Can: Jasper Johns and the Anal Society,” *Gender* (University of Texas Press), no. 1 (Spring 1988).

## THE LOCALE OF SOVEREIGNTY

One of the conditions which early created problems in Europe was the lack of a court of appeals. There was a lack of legal recourse against the local lord or king. Moreover, because the lords controlled the appointments of bishops and abbots, the church was lacking in the necessary independence to challenge the injustices of civil rulers. Pope Gregory VII, by insisting on, *first*, the freedom of the church from civil authorities, and *second*, on the papacy as Europe's appellate court, gave to the people the possibility of justice.

These claims were challenged and contested by civil rulers in the ensuing centuries. In the course of the battle, one aspect of it increasingly found its basis in Greco-Roman thought, with a consequent damage to the Biblical faith.

Legitimate authorities, when they make illegitimate claims, forfeit thereby their authority with people as time passes and their false premises are developed. Men are marked by two facts: *first*, they are God's creation and cannot escape from His law and purpose; however much they suppress it, God's witness is in every atom of their being. *Second*, being sinners, men reject God's word and claim, but they can never free themselves from it. Their allegiance to all that despises God's law is readily broken: to live means

that God's order must prevail. It should not surprise us thus that Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II, wrote in 1454:

Christianity has no head whom all wish to obey. Neither the Pope nor the Emperor is rendered his due. There is no reverence, no obedience. Thus we regard the Pope and Emperor as if they wore false titles and were mere painted objects. Each city has its own king. There are as many princes as there are households.<sup>1</sup>

It was the influence of Aristotle which led men astray. Teodoro Laelo, in his *Replica*, set forth the premise of the papal claims (as against the imperial position) by citing Aristotle's *Metaphysics*: "Entities oppose incorrect order. The plurality of sovereignties is evil."<sup>2</sup> This is a valid premise. There must be one sovereign, not many. A plurality of sovereignties cannot have a common jurisdiction. The error of Greco-Roman thought, reproduced by both church and state in the medieval era, was the assumption that the one sovereign must be on earth.

Now, God, the one sovereign, is omnipotent, so that His sovereignty is over both heaven and earth. Calixtus III, in 1457, held that "the authority of the Apostolic See is completely unrestrained and ought not to be confined with the bonds of covenants."<sup>3</sup> Gabriel Biel, in *A Defense of Apostolic Obedience*, held:

What the holy Church, our Mother, defines and accepts as catholic truth must be believed with the same reverence as though it were stated in Holy Scripture.<sup>4</sup>

Such a position weakens the direct sovereignty on earth of both God and Scripture. The pope, by his anointing, was Christ, Biel said.<sup>5</sup> To reject the pope is to reject Christ, according to Biel.<sup>6</sup>

Not a few claims to sovereignty have been made by the church and by the nations. Nation-states claim it, and attempts at

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1. Heiko A. Oberman, Daniel E. Zerfoss, and William J. Courtenay, eds. and trans., *Defensorium Obedientiae Apostolicae et alia Documenta* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968), intro., 8.

2. *Metaphysics*, L. XI, c. 1, 1059b; cited in *ibid.*, 317.

3. *Ibid.*, 16.

4. *Ibid.*, 75.

5. *Ibid.*, 93.

6. *Ibid.*, 211.

world-sovereign power are not lacking (the League of Nations, the United Nations, the Communist International, etc.).

When sovereignty is located on earth, in an institution, civil order, or other agency, then the process of appeal is limited. The final jurisdiction is on earth then, and usually with the very organization we seek an appeal against.

According to Scripture, God alone is the Lord or Sovereign. He declares, "I am the LORD: that is my Name: and my glory will I not give to another" (Isa. 42:8).

Many churchmen have limited or denied God's sovereignty in the name of human freedom. Usually, this denial takes the form of a reinterpretation or outright denial of God's predestination; ultimate determination is placed in man's hands. This is clearly logical: if sovereignty is denied to God, it then accrues to men, or to the state. By beginning with false and borrowed premises, the church has undermined its own position. Human power centers have claimed sovereignty, and have denied the authority of the church. As Stalin said cynically, "How many legions has the Pope?" Once the premise of Greco-Roman statism, the necessity for an immanent and visible sovereignty, was accepted, it was the state which gained by it, not the church. The state as the great power center could claim totalitarian powers over every sphere. If our perspective is truly immanentist, then the power center is the locale of sovereignty and authority.

By failing to restrict sovereignty to the triune God, the human scene has been falsified. Human sovereigns and sovereignties are those who have successfully bested all their rivals and have thus gained power. However, although a criminal with a gun may invade a good man's house and hold the family hostage, his power does not give him *authority*. The law has authority, not the criminal. This is a judgment which cannot be made if there is no God and no valid law above and over *both* the police and the criminal, and also over the family. Without God, men, churches, and nations seek power primarily. The future as well as the present are then summed up in George Orwell's words as "a boot stomping on a human face — forever."<sup>7</sup> In such a state, the words of the

Cermenian, Hakop Paronian, are fully true: "Justice is the last thing to appear at legal proceedings."<sup>8</sup>

The purpose of God's law is the diffusion of human powers. God's law gives limited powers to church and state and requires every man to be a walking law (Rom. 1:17-25). Society, for its health, requires not a concentration of power in any man or institution, but holiness, knowledge, righteousness (or, justice), and dominion on the part of all people.

Moreover, God as Sovereign gives us His sovereign law, not to confer on us arbitrary powers over others, but to set forth our duties to Him. *Duties, not powers*, are stressed by God's law for all men, all nations, all churches, and all institutions. The locale of sovereignty is in the triune God; the locale of duty is man, the state, the church, and all things else on earth.

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7. George Orwell, *1984* (New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, [1949] 1977), 271.

8. *Kroonk*, 1986, 8, 21

## SOVEREIGNTY AND NECESSITY

One of the great moments in the history of Christianity is the confrontation by Peter and John of the Sanhedrin after their arrest. The question asked of them was to the point: "By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?" (Acts 4:7). Peter's answer was clear: "by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth" (Acts 4:10); the crucified and resurrected Lord was the source of power and authority:

11. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

12. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:11-12)

Ever since then, this statement has brought forth intense hostility from many. More than a few anti-Christian persons will demand to know, "Do you believe that salvation is *only* possible through Jesus Christ?" A "yes" answer is sufficient to condemn one in their eyes. They may not, and often do not, believe in God, nor in heaven and hell. They are certain, however, that any possible salvation should be open to all religions and all men, and in any way that men may choose. Men should be free to determine their own way of salvation, and to declare themselves saved in their own good time

and judgment. In brief, salvation cannot be a realm wherein any suprapersonal necessity exists.

In 1967, in *The Mythology of Science*, I cited the scenario of Kenneth Heuer, a specialist in planetary astronomy, and a fellow of Britain's Royal Astronomical Society. Heuer, in looking ages ahead to the death of the sun, saw many solutions to that crisis:

Still another possibility would be to construct our own sun, a source of heat and light which might be suspended in the sky and hold the hovering demons of cold and darkness at bay. This artificial sun would operate by subatomic energy. In the remaining years of grace, man might learn how to run the carbon cycle. Hydrogen, the fuel, is abundant, and other light atoms, such as lithium, are plentiful sources of energy. With several billions of years of time at his disposal for research, man should be able to develop cheap, abundant, and manageable subatomic power.<sup>1</sup>

The physicist, Joseph Harold Rush, had earlier stated that, in time, men would conquer space and death and explore the universe endlessly.<sup>2</sup> I cited these and like statements to various groups, students and others, only to find them ready to believe that no necessity could bind man in any sphere from accomplishing whatever man wills. We are told in Scripture that with God nothing is impossible (Luke 1:37; 18:27). Now the presuppositions of man's original sin, his will to be his own god (Gen. 3:5), are manifesting themselves. More and more people are ready to affirm that with man, nothing is impossible.

Men now necessitate God while giving sovereign freedom to man. God cannot limit salvation to His appointed way, Jesus Christ (John 14:6), because God, it is held, cannot necessitate man, whereas man can necessitate God. Some men can outline a logical history for this freedom from necessity. When men developed aircraft, they negated to a degree the power of gravity by using natural forces to undercut it. When men first rocketed to the moon, they

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1. Kenneth Heuer, "The End of the World," in *Panorama*, The Laurel Review, no. 1 (December 1957): 83. Adapted from Heuer's chapter 5 in *The Next Fifty Billion Years* (Viking Press, 1957).

2. J. H. Rush, *The Dawn of Life* (Garden City, NY: Hanover House, 1957), 236, 243-48. See also J. H. Rush, "The Next 10,000 Years," *Saturday Review* 41 (January 1958): 4.

overcame the limitations of earth, and more will follow to develop man's triumph over the realm of necessity.

Marxism in particular has as its credo the deliverance of man from the kingdom of necessity into the kingdom and realm of freedom. The practical consequence of Marxism has been the enslavement of man, but its theoretical foundation has been the shift of the governing or sovereign power, the necessitating or predestining force, from God to the state. In varying forms and degrees, all over the world, *the state is now the necessitating force or power.*

Let us examine the state's necessitating power. A limited or local necessity is possible, or a total and absolute necessity. Thus, while for Scripture there is no salvation except through Christ, it is not necessary for all men to be saved; they are free to go to hell if they choose. In the realm of the state, it is necessary to be a citizen of the United States to vote, but one is free not to vote. However, air, for instance, is not a limited necessity: to live, one must breathe, and this requires air and functioning lungs. Because the Lord is He by whom all things were made, and without Him was not anything made that was made (John 1:3), all creation is under necessity: it can only live, move, and have its being in God (Acts 17:28).

*By claiming sovereignty, the modern state declares itself to be the necessitating power over man.* As such, it is increasingly denying freedom to the economic sphere, to the family, to the school, and to the church. It cannot claim sovereignty without necessitating all things.

Beardsley Ruml, then chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, saw this clearly in the 1940s. During the last year of the war (World War II), in a paper read to the American Bar Association, he declared taxes for revenues to be obsolete. Two things made this possible. *First*, there was now a central banking system, the Federal Reserve System. *Second*, there was an inconvertible currency; gold had been withdrawn from circulation, and a fiat money had replaced it. The central state as the creator of money need not maintain the old form of dependence on taxation.<sup>3</sup>

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3. Beardsley Ruml, "Taxes for Revenue Are Obsolete," *American Affairs* (January 1946): 35-39. Franklin Sanders brought this article to my attention.

It is not an accident that the rise of Arminianism coincided with the rise of the modern state. Arminius warred against the doctrine of a necessitating God. Man's freedom required, he held, deliverance from such a God. To abolish necessity from theology is not to abolish necessity but to transfer it to another realm, and the state was progressively freed from God's necessitating power to become Hegel's god walking on earth, a this-worldly necessitating power.

The modern state has clearly played god over man. In the process, however, it has come to resemble God less and less, and Satan more and more. To depart from God is to depart from life, and the modern state has become a warfare state. All over the world, while we see various states at times at war with one another, we see them at all times at war against their subjects, destroying freedom in the name of humanity.

## THE GOAL OF SOVEREIGNTY

Central to Christ's challenge of the world are some very important statements with regard to authority and power. They can be found in Matthew 18:1-6, Mark 9:33-37, Luke 9:46-48, Matthew 20:25-28, and Mark 10:42-45. The position of the Gentiles, i.e., the ungodly, is contrasted to that of Christ's followers. This implicitly places the religious leaders of Judea in the camp of the Gentiles. Our Lord defines greatness in authority and power as a faithful, humble ministry under God to men. The contrast is between the ungodly lording it over men, and the godly ministering in Christ's name.

The difference rests in original sin, man's fall (Gen. 3:1-5), as against man regenerated in Christ to be a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). The fallen man is his own source of law and determination; the redeemed man is governed by God's law and His Spirit. Genesis 3:5 makes it clear that fallen man's purpose is to be his own god and his own source of law. This means that the fallen man, as his own god, cannot tolerate, *first*, subordination to any God or man outside of himself, and will seek to dominate all others. He believes that his will must be done. A classic example of this was the Roman Emperor, Caligula (AD 12-41). When given advice or counsel by any official, his immediate reaction was to do the opposite. In

Anthony A. Barrett's words, "*Tolmai tis didaskein?* ('who dares teach me?') was his reaction."<sup>1</sup> Suetonius, in *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, gives us a vivid account of Caligula's deliberate perversities. The word of Gaius Caligula was affirmed to be above dispute, being the word of a god. "When a Roman knight on being thrown to the wild beasts loudly protested his innocence,... (Caligula) took him out, cut off his tongue, and put him back again."<sup>2</sup>

*Second*, to be a man-god in antiquity meant to be above the law. As the source of law, fallen man seeks to subvert God's law and to demonstrate that he is beyond the law, or, as our modern men, after Nietzsche, affirm, to be beyond good and evil. Suetonius, recognizing the nature of power in his day, is here a better judge than modern scholars. According to Suetonius, "He lived in habitual incest with all his sisters."<sup>3</sup> Barrett is inclined to doubt the incest, but he does acknowledge Caligula's homosexuality,<sup>4</sup> his transvestite living,<sup>5</sup> and his studied shamelessness.<sup>6</sup> This defiance of all moral standards was a way of affirming deity. The man who could live beyond good and evil, which, in practice, meant a studied pursuit of evil and depravity, thereby demonstrated his deity! Such behavior was expected of a god (or goddess), as witness the actions of the Greek and Roman gods. As Barrett recognizes, "the people actually enjoyed his licentiousness,"<sup>7</sup> and they were angry when he was assassinated.<sup>8</sup> Caligula's madness was thus an asset, and an advantage in his claim to deity. The fact that he set up a brothel in the palace, stocked with males and females and opened to outsiders, apparently did not upset too many.<sup>9</sup> Caligula would boast that he had "every power over every person," and he claimed good constitutional grounds for this because "he was a *princeps legibus*

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1. Anthony A. Barrett, *Caligula: The Corruption of Power*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 78.

2. Suetonius, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars* (New York, NY: Book League of America, 1937), 174.

3. *Ibid.*, 181.

4. Barrett, *Caligula*, 85-86., 106, 220, 238, 44, 46, 81.

5. *Ibid.*, 146.

6. *Ibid.*, 43.

7. *Ibid.*, 229.

8. *Ibid.*, 172.

9. Suetonius, *Lives*, 192.

*solutus* (a princeps not bound by the laws).” Given the fact that the emperor was sovereign, this was a logical conclusion: a sovereign is not under law because he is the source of law; this is the premise of the modern state. This is why a sovereign civil government cannot be bound by any law, or by a constitutional amendment, e.g., barring deficit financing, or anything else.

To be beyond the law is the goal of present rock stars and others. Their flagrant contempt for the laws of God and man is a major source of their popularity with youth. It is the realized dream of all Caligulas and Nietzsches, to be their own god and to live beyond good and evil.

This desire manifests itself whenever godless men gain wealth and power. Thus, Cornelius “Commodore” Vanderbilt felt free to use women, so that servant girls were unsafe around him. He courted, when a widower, an attractive Mrs. Crawford, younger than himself and the mother of Frances (“Frank”) Crawford. He stunned his children by marrying the daughter rather than the mother.

When asked why he chose the younger woman and not the mother, who was attractive and more fitting a woman for his age, Vanderbilt replied, “Oh, no. If I had married her, Frank would have gone off and married someone else. Now I have them both.”<sup>10</sup>

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, I began to notice a drift of men into perversions, and now women also. The men, for example, found that not only marital sex but also adulteries were no longer capable of exciting them. As a result, they were experimenting with anal sex, homosexuality, child molestation, incest, and like perversities as a means of reviving their flagging sexuality. The drift was appearing in their forties, at an early age. The pleasure in sex was in violating God’s law and in defiling another person. The mentality of the Marquis de Sade was becoming democratized, with ugly results. The pleasure was in sin, not in godliness. This is an ancient impulse, and we see it, certainly, in the behavior of the men of Sodom (Gen. 19:1-19). The attitude of all too many is that of Caligula; when confronted with God’s law, their angry response is,

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10. Clarice Strasz, *The Vanderbilt Women* (New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1991), 56.

“Who dares teach me?” After all, who can teach a god, and, since fallen man is his own god, who can qualify to teach him? Given this premise, the modern educational goal is to teach children that they have a right to create their own value systems, and also to refuse to be bound by them.

The courts were manifesting a like lawlessness. For example, in Pennsylvania, Karl Chambers murdered Anna Mae Morris; she was beaten to death with an axe handle and robbed. Chambers was convicted, and, at the sentencing trial, a prosecutor concluded his remarks to jurors with these words: “Karl Chambers has taken a life. As the Bible says, ‘And the murderer shall be put to death.’ Thank you.” The Pennsylvania Supreme Court held that the prosecutor’s remark told the jury “that an independent source of law exists for the conclusion that the death penalty is the appropriate punishment.” Accordingly, that court barred prosecutors from referring to *the Bible or any other religious writing* when trying to persuade a jury to require a death penalty. Prosecutors who do so may be subject to disciplinary action. New York District Attorney H. Stanley Rebert had argued that such a ban would violate the prosecutor’s freedom of speech and be hostile to religion. In November 1991, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court threw out Chambers’s death sentence and required a new sentencing trial. The U.S. Supreme court in 1992 sustained the decision.

The Chambers case is an important milestone in the development of political theory. *First*, it is now more clear than ever that Christianity is being disestablished and humanism established as the religion of the land. Since all law represents the establishment of a moral and religious order, the disestablishment of one means that another faith is being established. Law is not neutral: it is always expressive of a faith in a specific form of moral order and ultimacy, or religion, as basic to the specific doctrine of societal organization. Christianity is now barred from schools and courts, two key areas in the development of a social structure.

*Second*, what the courts said in the Chambers case was that no independent source of law, no source outside the state, will be tolerated. Law is the state’s creation. The state, as god walking on earth, will tolerate no other source of law because the state claims

to be sovereign. This was the doctrine in antiquity, and it was never suppressed successfully in the medieval era. Richard II of England, according to the official Articles of Deposition from the Rolls of Parliament, was charged thus: "He said expressly, with harsh and determined looks, that the laws were in his own mouth, sometimes he said that they were in his breast." For Richard II, this doctrine brought grief; for our modern rulers, it is the basic ingredient in their power. There can be no independent source of law, no power or truth outside the sovereign state. The state judges; it cannot be judged: this is the doctrine. If the death penalty is abolished, or if it is decreed, it is right because the state wills it. If abortion, euthanasia, or homosexuality be abolished or favored, the state's decision is the law and the truth, because there is no other god tolerated by its courts and servants.

There are thus no restraints on the power of the state because there is no god greater than the state. If a god is not universal, he must become imperial: he must bring all others into submission to him. Polytheism means imperialism, because the *many* gods mean *many* conflicts. The state that denies the triune God must seek either by diplomacy or by imperialism to create a unified world order.

Today we see international bodies, whose records of incompetence and ignorance is phenomenal, talking with learned ignorance of laws to avoid the pollution of space. The arrogance in such talk is amazing.

Sovereignty has no boundaries, and all claimants to sovereignty will expand their powers wherever possible. Thus, on Monday, June 15, 1992, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the U.S. government may kidnap people from foreign countries to stand trial in the U.S. This is irrespective of extradition treaties. By a six to three vote, the court said that the U.S. can kidnap a man from another country for trial in the U.S. A Mexican doctor, Humberto Alvarez, is held to have taken part in the kidnap and murder of U.S. Drug Enforcement agent Enrique Camarena and his pilot. The court claimed a century-old precedent for this. There are, of course, precedents for almost everything, including torture and murder. Who draws the line? Or does a line exist any longer?

Justice Stevens, in his dissent, saw the problem.

Stevens, in his dissenting opinion, said the majority's view would transform the extradition treaty "into little more than verbiage." Under yesterday's interpretation, he said, "If the United States, for example, thought it more expedient to torture or simply to execute a person rather than to attempt extradition, these options would be equally available because they, too, were not explicitly prohibited by the treaty."

In brief, where no higher law, the enscriptured law-word of the triune God, is recognized, law becomes simply the will of the state, or of its ruler. The examples of this are many. Michael Kunze has given us a telling instance from 1660, in Munich, Germany. The Pappenheimers, a simple, illiterate family, itinerant workers, were arrested, charged with occult traffic, condemned, and executed. The victims were regarded as nonentities. There were "too many" poor itinerants, and the charges were a convenient means of social harvesting by ducal authority.

The persecution brought against them (the Pappenheimers) was not designed simply to deter the ruffians who infested the highways, it was also meant to prove to the aristocracy and the cities who it was that held sway over life and death in the principality. It was a matter of demonstrating the ducal authority.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, charges of witchcraft, communism, supposed or possible treason by the American Japanese in World War II, and other claims can be used by the state to reorder society to suit itself. In eighteenth-century England, over two hundred kinds of death penalties existed, many covering very petty thefts. Most of those condemned were not executed. They were given the alternative of living, being transported to the various colonies, and working at hard labor for many years. Thus were the colonies, and especially Australia, populated. The *hard labor* was exactly that, in a way difficult now to grasp fully. The main offense of the many "convicts" transported to Australia was not crime but poverty. In the modern state, the decisions made about crime and punishment are political, not moral, decisions and judgments.

Kunze, in his brilliant study, commented,

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11. Michael Kunze, *Highroad to the Stake: A Tale of Witchcraft* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, [1982] 1987), 99.

The resemblance between this method and those used against our vagrants is not merely coincidental; the ecclesiastical procedure used by the inquisition against heretics was subsequently adopted by the secular courts.

It was Spanish despotism once more that first deliberately employed the idea of the crusade and the Inquisition to increase its own power and further its political interests. In their fight against the aristocracy and the privileges of the estates, Charles V and Philip II used the ecclesiastical courts as a weapon. Every suggestion of resistance to the king's absolute authority was regarded as evidence of heresy, which set the Inquisition in motion. Torture led rapidly to "conviction" and elimination of the troublemaker. The clergy readily allowed themselves to be used as the king's henchmen, which indicates, on the one hand, their heavy dependence on royal favor and, on the other, their blind, hysterical fear of heresy.<sup>12</sup>

As Kunze observed, the state requires an ideology, and "it seems that totalitarian states are not viable without some such doctrine of salvation — we know that from the communist and fascist dictatorships of our time."<sup>13</sup> We see this also in the democracies and other states.

Since a sovereign must have absolute power, the state, where it claims sovereignty, whether a democracy or anything else, moves towards totalitarian powers. Sovereignty with such powers becomes *the saving power*, and the state becomes man's god and savior. It then governs and controls man's total life. "When a prince fiddles, subjects must dance." The modern state is a salvationist state, as was ancient Rome. The disillusionment and the conclusion are likely to be similar.

Shortly after 1400, Henry IV of England said, "Kings were not wont to render account."<sup>14</sup> Things have only changed for the worse since then. As faith in the triune God has become peripheral at best to society, so too has accountability. The question is, accountability to whom? To the people? The façade of accountability exists, but the reality eludes us. A sovereign power need not be accountable. Henry IV at least had his religious confessor, but not so our modern presidents and prime ministers. Now there is no

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12. *Ibid.*, 112.

13. *Ibid.*, 113.

14. Edmund King, *England, 1175-1425* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1979), 186.

independent source of law and judgment because the triune God is either relegated to ecclesiastical concerns or is denied. But, “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.” The heathen “and the uttermost parts of the earth” (Ps. 2:4, 8) are given to the Christ as His inheritance. He shall in due time possess His inheritance.

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