

# CHALCEDON Report

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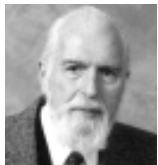
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# Law as Liberty

By R. J. Rushdoony

From *The Institutes of Biblical Law, Vol. 3, pp. 47-49*



We have seen thus far that *restitution* is basic to God's law, its purpose being the *restoration* of godly order. This is a step towards the establishment of God's kingdom, begun as men and women are made new creations in Christ, and then furthered as they bring every area of life and thought into captivity to Christ.

The Western world, once known as Christendom, has abandoned its centuries old adherence to God's law for an antinomian and modernist position. (My father, a graduate of the University of Edinburgh and New Mound College prior to World War I, in his preaching echoed Edinburgh, but, in his day-by-day living, reflected his rural, old country adherence to the law-word of God.) This antinomianism has been an abandonment of the Faith, because whose law you follow, he is your god.

## The Law as Bondage

The horrifying premise of church thinking is that the law is bondage. That is indeed true *if you are a law-breaker*. The lawless man finds the law a fearful handicap. If priests and churchmen create and impose their own version of law upon us, it is a yoke and a hindrance.

But is this true of God's law, the law of the Holy One? James, the brother of our Lord, in James 1:25 and 2:12 (cf., *Gal. 5:1*), speaks of "the perfect law of liberty," very obviously seeing the law as a blessing to the righteous.

Now the giver of law is the god of that society, whatever name he may be given. The law-giver defines good and

evil, right and wrong, and he thereby ordains the course of that society; law is a key form of determination, and laws are given by rulers and states in order to set the course for a realm or social order. On the human scene, laws, together with social planning, regulations, and controls, are a humanistic form of predestination. We live in a time of fanatic dedication to humanistic, statist predestination, which, naturally, finds talk of predestination by God intolerable.

*The choice for men is anarchy or law.* But humanistic law is a form of anarchy because it has no relationship to God's fundamental order. Humanistic law thus leads to anarchy. By necessity, humanism has chosen the tempter's program, every man as his own god, knowing or deciding for himself what is good and evil (*Gen. 3:5*). In humanism, sometimes the individual is his own god; at other times, the state exercises this power for all the people.

## Law Is Liberty

Biblical faith means recognizing God's law as the ground of our freedom. *Law is liberty*, not slavery. If I am a murderer, the law is bondage and a yoke to me. If I am a godly man, it is freedom for me that law restrains the men who would like to see me dead. The law to me then is liberty from murderers, thieves, and others. How much freedom can any of us ever enjoy if we are suddenly in a world ruled by a Marquis de Sade, where all crimes are legal because they are *natural* (being the acts of fallen man), and only Christianity is illegal, because it is *supernatural* and hence anti-natural?

Law is liberty, and religious antinomianism is a guarantee of slavery because it exalts the laws of the fallen men over the law of God, and because it makes a holy cause of a contempt for God's law.

The psalmist asks, "Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?" (*Ps. 94:20*) In James McFatt's rendering, a paraphrase, this reads, "Can evil rulers have thee for our ally, who work us injury by law?"

Can there be a free society, the *professed* goal of modern men, when God's perfect law of liberty is despised? How free can any society be when it drops God's Ten Commandments, and the whole body of His law? It is no accident that the Western World, no longer Christendom, is moving into statist tyranny.

The cause of freedom is a futile one on anything other than God's terms, His Son the King, and His law our way of life. For men to seek freedom apart from God is comparable to seeking heaven in hell. The humanistic state constantly expands its power, because its goal and the goal of its citizenry is to be as God, determining their own laws, lives, and morality (*Gen. 3:5*). Because it is not God, the humanistic state has a problem, never having enough power to play god as it hopes to do. As a result, by an ever expanding body of law, the humanistic state strives for the total power that is its dream.

Humanistic law means tyranny, whereas God's law is liberty. God's law cannot expand: it is a limited body of legislation, and, in much of the law,

God reserves the right of judgment to Himself. Thus, little is left to man's discretion, if anything.

Humanistic law is a plan of salvation, a way to the good society as the humanist envisions it. God's law is not a plan of salvation but of sanctification, of holiness. The antinomians think that by denying God's law, they have preserved the integrity of Christian salvation when in fact they have denied it. *By embracing humanistic, statist law, they have adopted an anti-Christian plan of salvation.*

When Horace Mann promoted humanistic and statist education, together with civil government, as the means to heaven on earth, the Arminian churchmen of his day failed to see that, in adopting Mann's viewpoint, they were abandoning the premise of Christian faith, the sovereignty of God and salvation through Christ's statement and His headship as

*By embracing humanistic, statist law, they have adopted an anti-Christian plan of salvation*

our priest, prophet, and King. Horace Mann was quite openly a Unitarian, but too few were concerned about that. We are now surrounded by Mann's legacy, and too many treasure it because it is an old one, therefore good Americanism!

The culmination festival in the law is the jubilee which stresses liberty and release:

And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto

his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. (*Lev. 25:10*)

Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for I am the Lord your God. Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety. And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety. (*Lev. 25:17-19*)

God's law is full of promises of blessings to His people. Man's law is essentially punitive, not given ever to promising any good thing!

These questions need to be asked of all antinomians: What freedom can exist in a lawless society? And whose laws alone give justice and freedom? How we answer these questions will reveal who our God is.

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# God's Law Is Our Freedom

By Mark R. Rushdoony



The greatest hurdle most people have when they attempt to apply God's Word to a social issue is their assumption about God's law itself. Quite simply, they often assume God's law is repressive and necessitates a denial of liberty. This perspective comes from a very non-Christian view of liberty.

## The Essence of Liberty?

When the issue of freedom and God's Word arises, the first objection of the non-believer to any interjection of Biblical law usually centers on its inconsistency with sexual freedom. This happens with such predictable regularity that one would think sexual freedom were the essence of liberty, its basic social manifestation. Few would argue this, but multitudes act in terms of that definition. Many repressive regimes throughout history have encouraged sexual vices to mask their destruction of economic and political liberty. Such activity makes men feel free while their enslavement progresses in other areas.

The equating of sin with freedom comes naturally to man as a result of his sin nature. Men in rebellion against God want to see their rebellion as freedom. Those who daily repeat Adam's sin desire freedom from God and His governing law. They define their sinful rebellion as normative and God as an intruder into their freedom. Paul, however, saw nonbelievers as slaves to sin, slaves moving to a certain death. His exhortation to those freed from such slavery was to become servants to God and live (*Rom. 6:15-23*). In order for us to be God's servants, we must obey His every Word as our command. In this

vein, we see God's Word as our "perfect law of liberty" (*Jas. 1:25*). In order for Christians to put teeth to their faith and make it applicable to all of life and thought, they must first get past understanding sin as true freedom.

## Freedom by State Action

Another problem arises in discussing Biblical law. Many wrongly assume that the goal of those who believe in Biblical law is the control of the political process so that such law can be imposed by state action. Because our modern era is an era of statist power, control of the machinery of the state, whether by revolution or by legal political process, is the pathway to power. Many then see the "religious right" as a competition (and hence a threat) in this essentially statist process.

Biblical law was given to a Hebrew society under a decentralized tribal government. It is a moral law, though certainly intended for social and civil application. Only later did the Hebrews have a monarchy, and that monarchy was, on the whole, perhaps more conducive to the corruption of God's law than to its implementation. As moral law from God, it was directed to individual self-government, family government, and social and cultural standards that certainly had very real and necessary applications at the civil level. Many laws, however, such as the tithe, had no provision for human enforcement on any level. The essential thing to remember is that Biblical law is God's law because He was, is, and always shall be the Sovereign Ruler of all of His creation. God rules; the only remaining issue is whether we acknowledge His rule or rebel against it. The first response will always bring us

to Biblical law; the latter returns us to Adam's rebellion and slavery to sin.

The Christian must stand for the validity of Biblical law and against statist action, even if such action is for a good cause. The Christian message cannot be imposed by force. It speaks of regeneration, not revolution. Biblical law must be embraced; it cannot be imposed.

The question of which laws should be enacted at the civil level is not a simple one. Our Western legal codes, at least in their basic forms, are products of Biblical law. This can be seen by contrasting Western law with Asian or Muslim law where a non-Christian morality dictates different justice. The Christian codes developed with the advance of Christendom, not with any sudden legislation. As the culture moved away from paganism toward Christianity, the legal system developed.

Western cultures are today far from Christian; however, imposing good laws on a morally lawless people would have a limited effectiveness. The essence of a godly society is a godly people, not a state-imposed legal structure. Laws that get ahead of the willingness of a people to submit to them may only teach contempt for both law and morality in general. Conversion and persuasion must come before the political process. Because the West has, in many respects, reverted to paganism, a simple reversion to Biblical law will not solve that problem.

## A Covenant Nation

The example of Israel under the theocracy is sometimes raised with the purpose of suggesting that we must be what God commanded Israel to be. The assumption here is that we are called

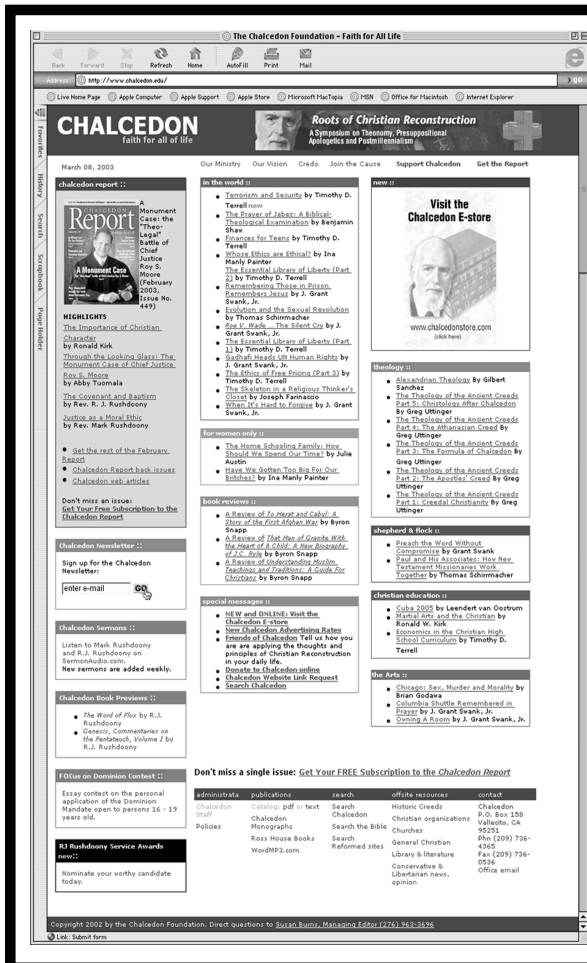
to be a covenant nation like Israel. Israel, however, was a covenant people before it was a political state, and it remained a covenant people for the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity. Israel's political nationhood was a blessing, not a covenant necessity. The mistake here is assuming that the United States (or any political entity) is called to be God's Israel for today. Nations are called to be godly, but not to assume the covenanted uniqueness of Israel. The church, rather, is called to be God's Israel for today. As God's Israel, the modern church's rejection of Biblical law is far more serious in God's eyes than any nation's. The church as God's covenanted people is called to "the perfect law of liberty." We cannot compensate for the church's failure in this regard by trying to impose godly laws on an ungodly people. Such a culture would tend to display a Pharis-

ical hypocrisy which is also reprehensible to God.

However, saying we cannot impose Biblical law by force is not saying the state should be secular, or that religion should be limited to the "spiritual" realm. "The earth is the Lord's," (Ps. 21:1) we are to believe. There is no inherent conflict of interest between the civil order and Biblical faith. The idea of the conflict of interest stems from Greek dualism, which saw warring realities between matter (such as the state) and spirit (faith). This dualistic conflict of interest was the basis of Marxism's dialectic and Darwin's survival of the fittest. This false idea saw conflict as a metaphysical norm rather than a moral struggle.

Conflict is not a metaphysical fact, however, but a moral one. Men

perceive that freedom and God's Word conflict because of their sinful view of freedom. Men and women, church and state, rich and poor all can find a *harmony of interests* once their slavery to sin is overcome by Christ's atonement received by faith alone. All things belong to God and all find their life and joy in submission to His eternal law. It is in God's law that we find our freedom because all other law represents our rebellion from God, slavery to sin, and a pathway to death. Obedience to God's law is the response in faith to God's salvation through Jesus Christ. It represents life, hope, joy, and blessing. The only alternative to God's law is man's rebellion. In choosing God's law we choose, by His grace, to be free and blessed in terms of His will, rather than our own.



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# Freedom Under The Fear Of God

By John E. Stoos

*“He who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.” (2 Samuel 23:3b)*



There is a simple choice that any group of people must make when organizing the civil government that will rule over them. On the one hand, they can pledge, as the Pilgrims did on the Mayflower to “solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one of another, Covenant and Combine ourselves together into a Civil Body Politic....” This choice continued years later, when Americans made the same choice by breaking with Mother England. The colonists upheld the principle of “ruling in the fear of God” in the Declaration of Independence with those famous words, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” [or “property” as in the early drafts].

Or, on the other hand, a group of people can choose to go the way of the French who presented their “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen” shortly after our own Declaration of Independence. Not wanting to be under the shackles of religion, and in their pride and rebellion wanting nothing to do with “ruling in the fear of God,” the French revolutionaries simply declared that all men are born equal. Americans held to a “firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence,” but the French stated, “[T]he principle of all sovereignty re-

sides essentially in the nation. No body nor individual may exercise any authority which does not proceed directly from the nation.”<sup>1</sup> The French Declaration talked a lot about “protecting” the rights of individuals, but it was all subject to the laws of the sovereign state. It was not long thereafter that hundreds of thousands of French citizens lost their heads on the guillotines after their “right to life” was deemed expendable by a “committee” of their fellow citizens — all done under the laws of the sovereign nation, of course!

## Two Choices

Now this may sound simplistic, but these are the only two choices. Either people understand that basic rights come from God and choose to live in a proper fear of God by acknowledging His sovereignty, or people reject God and look to the wisdom and understanding of man to establish what is right and wrong. There are no other choices. The former has been practiced by many countries in Europe and the West, and most consistently, albeit not perfectly, here in the United States. It has resulted in the greatest expansion of freedoms and liberties in the history of mankind. The latter brought forth the French Revolution, the horrors of Marxist Communism in the twentieth century, and, of course, the ultimate humanist experiment of Nazism attempting to create the super race that would rule the world for a thousand years.

Sadly, today few Christians truly understand this choice and certainly few consider the implications. It should truly grieve us to see how much has been forgotten about the impact of the gospel of Christ as it sets people free, not only from their individual sin but in the general affairs of men as well. M. Stanton Evans has done a masterful job of reviewing this part of Christian history in his book, *The Theme is Freedom*. This work should become required reading in all Christian homes and schools. Mr. Evans shows in great detail that only if a people embrace the Biblical principle of “ruling in the fear of God” can any government find “a proper balance between the requirements of liberty and those of order.”<sup>2</sup> Only living under God’s law enables societies to find a way to give the civil government enough power to keep order, but not so much to endanger their freedom. Mr. Evans puts it this way:

That biblical teaching was the formative influence in the creation of Europe, and that Europe was the nursery of freedom as we know it, are both established facts of record.... [T]his correlation of Christianity with the rise of freedom is anything but accidental. In fact, the precepts of our religion provide the conceptual building blocks for the free societies of the West — including the very idea of liberty as we know it, limits on the power of the state, and the in-

stitutions that gave these practical expression.<sup>3</sup>

Our modern educators and experts often equate “ruling in the fear of God” with the Taliban or other extremists. In fact, Democrat Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur of Ohio put it this way: “One could say that Osama bin Laden and these non-nation-state fighters with religious purpose are very similar to those kind of atypical revolutionaries that helped to cast off the British crown.”<sup>4</sup> You see in the minds of the modern liberal, religion is the problem and to them all religions are equal.

### Freedom and the Truth

All religions are not equal, and only Christianity reveals the truth about God’s nature, creation, man’s fall, and the great salvation available through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. The freedoms and liberties that Americans have enjoyed are the product of this faith, and if we fail to understand the foundations upon which they are built, the United States will lose them in very short order. Ms. Kaptur and the other skeptics view Christianity as oppressive. However, they should be asked to explain why the very freedoms and liberties they say they cherish have only existed and flourished where the gospel has been preached and the Bible has been respected and obeyed. The reality is that the concepts of personal freedom and limited government are uniquely Biblical, and any discussion of these concepts by the moderns is simply borrowing from solid Christian foundations.

For more than five years on my radio show this topic was debated, and I usually asked liberals to give me just *one* example of people enjoying freedom and liberty anywhere in the world today, or in history, that was not based on the Biblical teaching of per-

sonal liberty and limited government. The best they could do was to try and make our nation secular in its origins with a little revisionist history and then claim our own Constitution as their example. Just ask the Blacks of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries or the unborn children of today how well the Constitution protects life and liberty if the foundations of the Declaration of Independence are not consistently followed by those in power.

The advance of freedom has come at great cost down through the centuries, from the early Christian persecution and Church Councils to our own American War for Independence. We are at risk today of forgetting not only these struggles and sacrifices, but of forfeiting the very foundations themselves as Americans enjoy the safety and affluence that these freedoms and liberties have brought to us.

So, the next time someone objects to having “Under God” in the Pledge of Allegiance or “In God We Trust” on our federal reserve notes, ask him when it last was that he sat down and

carefully read the Declaration of Independence. If he finds the language of the Declaration objectionable or dismisses it as irrelevant for our modern world, then ask him to explain to you what he would replace the principles of that great document with. If you discuss it with him, perhaps you can help him understand the wisdom of choosing to live under the fear of God in freedom and liberty. You might also explain to him that the alternative is certainly living under the fear of man, with the eventual tyranny and death which naturally flow from that choice, as demonstrated by so much of the 20th century.

John E. Stoos is a political consultant living in Sacramento, California, with his wife Linda. They have six children and sixteen grandchildren.

<sup>1</sup> The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen; approved by the National Assembly of France, August 26, 1789.

<sup>2</sup> M. Stanton Evans, *The Theme is Freedom*. (Regnery Publishing, 1994), 25.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, 29.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in the *Toledo Blade*, March 2003.

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# Maintaining, Increasing, and Optimizing Our Liberty

By Samuel L. Blumenfeld



Never before in our history has it become more imperative for us, as American citizens, to do all in our power to maintain, increase, and optimize our liberty. The freedoms we enjoy and value so much have been secured at great cost. Our founding fathers fought and died in the War of Independence to achieve freedom from Great Britain. Our soldiers died in the War of 1812 to maintain that freedom. A half million men died in the Civil War to preserve the Union and free us from the evil institution of slavery. And many more died in the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the War in Vietnam, the Persian Gulf War, and the War in Afghanistan. And more Americans have died as we liberated Iraq from the brutal dictatorship of Saddam Hussein, whose continued existence posed a danger to our nation.

## America's First Wars

Not many people know this, but the very first war the newly created United States was forced to fight occurred in 1801 and was against the Islamic piratical thugs in North Africa who harassed American merchantmen in the Mediterranean, and who demanded payments for captured ships and ransoms for their crews. Even back then, Moslem governments did not adhere to the norms of civilized society. In 1801, Tripoli declared war against the United States. That war lasted four years and required sending an American expeditionary

force to invade Tripoli, and it finally put an end to Tripoli's depredations on June 4, 1805.

During this same time, Algeria also engaged in piracy against American shipping. To combat this, the U.S. government sent naval commander Stephen Decatur in 1815 to the Mediterranean where he captured the Algerian flagship, *Mashuda*, and forced the Algerians to end their piratical seizures, restore all American property, free all Christian slaves, and treat all prisoners of war humanely. Our country has been very much involved in the world from its earliest days as a nation.

There were no peaceniks in those days demonstrating against the Barbary War. When the anthem for the Marine Corps was written, it began, "From the halls of Montezuma to the Shores of Tripoli..." Today, however, there are many who have opposed this latest war in Iraq. Of course, nobody wants war. But what the peaceniks don't understand is that if we had not removed Saddam Hussein at a time when it was fairly easy to do so, we would have had to do it later when it would be far more costly.

This is the lesson that history has taught us. Had England and France stopped Hitler when he made his first aggressive move in 1933, there would have never been World War II in 1939. Had President Clinton taken the opportunity to capture Osama Bin Laden when the Sudanese government offered him to us, there would have never been the bombing of the

World Trade Center on 9/11. But Clinton decided to do virtually nothing, passing the problem on to the next administration.

And thus President Bush was given the job of getting rid of Saddam Hussein and restoring Iraq to the community of civilized nations.

## Isolationists

There are isolationists who say we ought to withdraw from the world, keep our nose out of other people's business and turn America into a gigantic Switzerland. But let's face it, we are now the dominant power in the world and are likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. We cannot restrict our economic power just to our shores. Besides, America has always been engaged in the world in one way or another. That was the case in 1801, and it is the case today. In this age of worldwide economic expansion, our large corporations have become global in reach, and we have no choice but to protect them, just as we had no choice but to defend our merchant ships in 1801. Ironically, we are facing the same Islamic enemy today as we did then.

And let us not forget the attack on 9/11. For two years a small group of Islamic terrorists lived among us, trained in our flight schools, and spent many hours carefully planning the attack on Washington and New York. Up until then we considered ourselves fairly invulnerable. But now we know how vulnerable we are. We know the damage and fear a little bit of an-



thrax can cause when unleashed into our postal system. And so, we now live under constant threat of terrorist attack. Why? Because our wealth and enterprise have made us the world's dominant power.

For many years after World War II the communist empire, ruled from Moscow, thought it could compete with us for world dominance. But it failed because communism is by its very nature inhuman, unproductive, and totalitarian. And so, with the demise of the Soviet empire, we have emerged as the only superpower on earth. Is it possible for some other nation to achieve that kind of power? Can China with a billion people do it? Or India? Possibly, but highly unlikely. Why? Because they lack the two ingredients which are at the foundation of our success: Christianity and the English language.

Consider China. Some people say that China will soon catch up with us economically and become the world's dominant power. But the problem with China is its language and writing system and its philosophical vacuum. Even though the country is ruled by a communist government, it no longer believes in communism. It has no detectable political philosophy. Also, it cannot provide us with a world culture because its language won't permit it. Meanwhile, American cultural influence has become global.

### **The War Against Christianity in America**

I'm not too happy that so much of our culture comes out of Hollywood and MoTown. But there's much more to our culture than entertainment. There are our Christian values embodied in our foundational documents, which are studied abroad by students. There is no philosophical vacuum in America, although our schools have created a lot of empty heads. Our ideas

are the most potent in the world today. They are potent because they work for human good and happiness.

Even though Christianity is being battered in America by secular humanists and atheists, it is the Christianity in the hearts of everyday Americans that remains the moral basis of our greatness. Our Declaration of Independence was based on a Christian view of government, and our Constitution was based on Biblical principles of civil society and morality. True, our culture has been perverted by the humanists to serve the most depraved aspects of human nature. But our Christian foundation has been surprisingly resilient in the face of such cultural depravity. And the reason for this is that cultural depravity is basically nihilistic and therefore contrary to human good.

We also have a President who unashamedly calls upon the God of the Bible to bless and protect us. Our Biblical religion with its moral code is the basis of our free enterprise system. Capitalist commerce depends largely on trust for its successful operations, trust based on absolute moral principles. When we depart from those principles, the system becomes perverse. That is why we now have a billion-dollar pornography industry, a huge gambling industry, a huge abortion industry, corporate corruption, and widespread drug trafficking and addiction.

Protestant Christianity is also the source of our deep belief in education, without which there can be no scientific, technical, intellectual, or cultural advance. And even though the progressives have done all in their power to destroy the brains of millions of American children, a sufficient number of our citizens have escaped their brainwashing so that we have a large enough creative force to keep us ahead of other nations.

### **The Necessity of Private Property**

Another important type of liberty inherent in Christianity is that of private property. Without it we would not have had the thousands of inventors who lifted us from the age of agriculture to the age of space flight in less than 200 years. All we have to do is read the annual reports issued by the U.S. Patent Office since its beginning to become aware of the incredible inventive genius of the American people. No other nation in history has had such an outpouring of technical creativity. And that would have never happened without the underpinning of private property.

Jedidiah Morse, who lived from 1761 to 1826, was a Calvinist minister in the Congregational Church, who also wrote a series of geography books for the schools. His son, Samuel Finley Breese Morse, invented the electric telegraph and devised the Morse code. His famous message, "What hath God wrought!" was the first sent on his Washington-Baltimore line on May 24, 1844. He was also a very fine painter and a founder of the National Academy of Design in 1825. His brother, Sidney Edwards Morse, was also an inventor as well as a journalist and geographer. He coined cerography, a method of making stereotype plates and perfected the bathometer. Everything the Morses did was to improve life, increase knowledge, and create beauty. It was a manifestation of their Christian life.

I am always amused by those educator "change agents" who chide American parents for resisting change. The change they want is for us to give up freedom for slavery. Naturally, there is resistance. The reality is that Americans embrace change when it's for the good, when it enhances freedom, enhances human life and happiness. The pursuit of

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happiness is the God-given right of every American.

Just consider the changes the invention of the automobile has wrought in America. When first invented, it was considered a novelty. But inventors kept improving the automobile until it became increasingly reliable and affordable to the average family. In the short period of twenty-five years, it put all of America on wheels. We didn't need change agents to bring this about. Americans wanted the new freedom of mobility the automobile offered. Today, the automobile offers the average individual a level of comfort and pleasure that the kings and emperors of the past could never enjoy.

Recently, I flew nonstop from Boston to California in a large jet, listening to music, watching a movie, and having lunch 35,000 feet in the air. On any given day there are a million Americans flying above the clouds over the earth. What a miraculous phenomenon! All due to the work and striving of a free people. It took five hours to fly across the continent, a trip that once took months. Yes, America has been in the vanguard of radical change, and the world has followed behind us.

Other nations certainly have made their contributions to scientific advance and invention. But there is no question that America has been the leader in such progress.

None of it could have happened without Christianity, without the freedom to exercise our human creative genius. Christianity has provided the moral basis for free enterprise. And it was the English Bible that gave the Puritans and the founding fathers the vision, the guidance toward greater human freedom.

## **Homeschoolers and the Future of Freedom**

Is it providential that the Christian homeschool movement embodies those two vital ingredients: Christianity and its emphasis on freedom, education, and literacy, and the English language, with its King James version of the Bible, which homeschoolers learn to read. English has become the world's dominant language and the language of world culture.

And so it falls on the homeschool movement to maintain, increase, and optimize our liberty. We are producing the literate leaders of tomorrow, imbued with the teachings of the Holy Scripture and our founding documents, and dedicated to improving the family, the community, and the nation.

What are the best ways to fight for this liberty God has so graciously allowed in this country? We must become politically active in our communities, electing to office men and women who share our hopes and dreams for the American future. Homeschoolers have made a clean break with the state's most important institution of control: the public school. They have asserted parents' rights to educate their children according to their own values. In short they are exercising educational freedom. And without educational freedom there can be no political freedom.

And while many Americans fear that the measures taken by our government to combat internal terrorism interfere with our rights to privacy, I have no doubt that educational freedom will prevent the government from going beyond what is necessary for national safety and security.

While supporting our government's efforts to combat terrorism, it becomes the duty of every family to provide for its own protection. We must keep

abreast of what is happening nationally, but also know our communities and what can happen to them. We should all plan a strategy for safety, and take advantage of the second amendment to the Constitution, which protects the right to own a firearm. We must take full advantage of political freedom by joining the parties of our choice and making our views known. If necessary, we should even run for office, or help someone else run who shares our views.

Homeschoolers can become a vital, positive force in their communities, able to spread the gospel of freedom among their neighbors, the first of which is educational freedom. They should let their neighbors know how much they are saving them in taxes through home education. By doing these things, we will be maintaining, increasing, and optimizing the freedom of all Americans, present and future.

Our nation is facing difficult times ahead. But today we have instruments of technology that can help us reach the better times we all long for. Homeschoolers have already made great use of the Internet. Our influence is growing. Humanists don't know what to do with this astounding Christian revival. They believed that Biblical religion was just about dead. But that's because they love to indulge in wishful thinking. Biblical religion is flourishing in America as never before, mainly because what the liberals and atheists have to offer is so contrary to human happiness.

In fact, an article in the humanist magazine, *Free Inquiry*, in the summer of 1993, proves that point. The article investigated the mental health of atheists and religionists. Surprise! They found that the psychologically healthiest people in America are the

— CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 —

# American Law and Perfect Liberty

By Herbert W. Titus

*“But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.” (Jas. 1:15)*

*“I can certainly agree with the proposition — which I deem indisputable — that a woman’s ability to choose an abortion is a species of ‘liberty’ that is subject to the general protections of the Due Process Clause. I cannot agree, however, that this liberty is so ‘fundamental’ that restrictions upon it call into play anything more than the most minimal judicial scrutiny.”*

Justice Byron White, dissenting in *Thornburgh v. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists*, 476 U.S. 747, 790 (1986)

*“Proclaim liberty throughout all the land,” God commanded the people of Israel in the their year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:10).*



These same words, taken from Leviticus, are etched on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, reminding the people of America of the “liberty” to be secured “to ourselves and our posterity,” as stated in the Preamble of the United States Constitution.

## America’s Forgotten Legacy

Just as the people of Israel forgot the true meaning of liberty, turning it into every form of licentiousness (*Is. 1:4-9*), so the people of America have forgotten their godly legacy of liberty, transforming abortion and — if the homosexual lobby gets its way in *Lawrence v. Texas* (now before the United States Supreme Court) — sodomy as a constitutionally protected “liberty.”

Even the judicial opponents, like the late Justice Byron White, of a woman’s right to choose whether her baby lives or dies have conceded the moral high ground to the abortion promoters, having allowed that “a woman’s ability to choose an abortion is a species of liberty.”<sup>1</sup> Such a concession divests liberty of all normative content. After all, if “human ability” equals a kind of “liberty,” then a person’s ability to choose to

murder, to steal, to rape, or to commit any other wrong is equally a “species” of liberty.

Such a view of liberty is clearly erroneous, having been derived from the Fall. Yet, even in Christian circles, we are oftentimes told that free will is affirmed in the Bible by the account of the rebellion of Adam and Eve, as if freedom were the ability to disobey God, rather than to obey Him. Just because a person is able to do something, however, does not mean that he is free to do so. As the book of James attests, true liberty is obedience to God — to His Word, to His will, and to His way (*Jas. 1:25*). Instead of looking to the first Adam for the meaning of liberty, James teaches us that we should look to “the last Adam,” Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>

## The Perfect Free Man

In Matthew 4, we learn that Jesus was “led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.” Being led of the Spirit, we know that Jesus went freely into the wilderness, for “where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty” (*2 Cor. 3:17*).

Satan first tempted Jesus to exercise His power as the Son of God to turn stones into bread (*Mt. 4:3*). Jesus declined, *not* because He lacked the ability (*Lk. 19:40*), but because He was

free, even after fasting for forty days and forty nights, to abide in the Word of God. Even though food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food, Jesus was mastered by neither (*1 Cor. 6:12-13*). So, true liberty is, first of all, obedience to God’s Word, as empowered by the spirit of the law of life in Christ, free from the law of sin and death (*Rom. 8:2*). True liberty is just the opposite of the choice made by Adam and Eve in the garden, a choice that put them and the whole human race into bondage (*Rom. 5:12-14*).

But there is more. Satan also tempted Jesus with God’s Word, inviting Jesus to jump off the pinnacle of the temple, reminding Him of God’s promise in Psalm 91:11 that God would send His angels to save the Son of God (*Mt. 4:5-6*). Jesus replied that He had come to do God’s will, not His own, and therefore, that He would not presume upon God: “[N]ot as I will, but as thou wilt” (*Mt. 26:39*). Thus, Jesus could truly testify that He freely gave His life at the cross, having been commanded to do so by His Father (*Jn. 10:18*), even though the Father would have sent “twelve legions of angels” had Jesus decided to do His own will (*Mt. 26:53*). By doing the Father’s will, and not His own, Jesus demonstrated true liberty.

And there is even more. Satan finally tempted Jesus to become King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, if only Jesus would exchange the Father's plan for Satan's (*Mt. 4:8-9*). Again, Jesus declined, opting to do it God's way (*Mt. 4:10*). By submitting to His Father's plan, Jesus ascended into heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father to rule over the nations as "the blessed and only Potentate" (*1 Tim. 6:15*), while Satan, having contrived his own plan, is consigned forever to the bondage of hell (*Rev. 20:1-10*).

Jesus, then, is the perfectly free man, having lived according to God's Word, will, and way. Thus, we are admonished to abide in Him, and thereby experience true freedom (*Jn. 8:31-32*). Indeed, "if the Son... shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (*Jn. 8:36*).

### The Founders' Christian Legacy

It is this Christian legacy of freedom that America's founders endorsed in the nation's charter, the Declaration of Independence.

First, the founders rested their claim for national independence upon God's Word, appealing to God as the Supreme Judge of the world "for the rectitude<sup>3</sup> of our intentions." In seeking God's judgment, America's founders recognized that however strong their appeal "to the opinions of mankind" for independence upon the international "laws of nature and of nature's God," their success depended upon God's assessment of their hearts and minds. In this way, America's founders ultimately rested their case for independence not on the external rightness of their revolutionary cause, but upon the internal spirit of their desire for true liberty. By appealing to God as the Judge of their hearts, the founders based their case for independence on the law, as explicated in Jesus's sermon on the mount, not as understood by the scribes and Pharisees (*Mt. 5:20*).

In recognition that they could not — even inwardly — meet God's righteous standard of perfection (*Mt. 5:48*), America's founders further sought "for the support of this Declaration... the protection of Divine Providence," — that is, as Webster puts it in his 1828 *Dictionary*, "the care and superintendence which God exercises over his creatures." Remarkably, the founders expressed "firm reliance" upon God's provision because they knew the character of God, that even though they and their fellow patriots were not perfect, it was God's *will* to show His mercy to those who diligently seek Him. Just as Abraham could count on God in His mercy to provide (*Gen. 22:8*), so America's founders likewise believed in "Jehovah-jireh" (*Gen. 22:14*), for His mercies are new every morning, great is His faithfulness (*Lam. 3:21-23*).

Second, the founders laid out God's way for the new nation, a plan based upon the "self-evident truths" (*Rom. 1:20*): that all men are created equal (*Gen. 1:27*); endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among which are life, (*Gen. 2:7*), liberty (*2 Cor. 3:17*), and the pursuit of happiness (*Eccl. 3:13*); and that to secure these rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed" (*1 Sam. 8:5, 22; 10:17, 24*).<sup>4</sup> To that end, the people of the original states and of the United States organized their respective governments under written constitutions, following after the pattern of the constitutional monarchy of Israel (*1 Sam. 10:25*) so that their rulers would be governed by the rule of law.<sup>5</sup> Compare Deuteronomy 17:14, 15, 18-19 and 1 Samuel 13 and 15 with Article VI of the United States Constitution ("This Constitution shall be... the Supreme Law of the Land") and with *Marbury v. Madison*, 5 U.S. (1 Cranch) 137, 177 (1803) ("Certainly all those who have framed

written constitutions contemplate them as forming the fundamental and paramount law of the nation...").

As the Preamble to the United States Constitution states, one of the major purposes of a written constitution for a civil government is "to secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity." But a written constitution, no matter how important initially, does not guarantee liberty to future generations. Rather, as Article I, Section 15 of the 1776 Virginia Constitution attests: "[N]o free government, or the blessings of liberty, can be preserved to any people, but by a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, frugality, and virtue, and by frequent recurrence to fundamental principles."

### Misbegotten Freedom

Not only have the American people and their leaders generally failed to "recur" to the fundamental Christian principles upon which their nation was founded, but many have cast aside virtue, frugality, temperance, moderation, and justice, choosing the way of the first Adam over that of the second. As a consequence, we live in a nation that, while claiming to be the "land of the free and the home of the brave," is increasingly becoming a country of bondage and cowardice, succumbing to the sins of lust, greed, and power.

Should America continue on this course of misbegotten freedom *from* God and His law, it will surely be said of these United States what the prophet Jeremiah observed of ancient Israel: "[M]y people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, *and* hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water" (*Jer. 2:13*).

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# The Hills Are Alive with the Call for Freedom

By Ian Hodge



Mel Gibson has portrayed many characters, but perhaps none so palatable to the American psyche as William Wallace in *Braveheart*. In his final scene, despite the pain and life-ebbing garrotting, Gibson manages to make the hills resound with his cry for “F-R-E-E-D-O-M!”

## What is Freedom?

Freedom, it seems, is an inescapable goal for mankind, yet history is replete with mankind’s failure to achieve it. A major part of this problem is the definition of freedom itself. What, then, is freedom?

For many, freedom is the equivalent of personal liberty; that is, it is the epitome of the ideal that every man is free to do whatever he likes. This definition is the one that is offered in the current cultural climate around the world. Embodied in the idea of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, freedom is seen as a climate where we can do whatever we like. Period.

In previous times, this kind of arrangement would have been considered anarchy. No rules, everyone does whatever it is he likes to do without any restraint whatsoever. The only problem with this kind of freedom is that it exists only in the minds of men who themselves are not really committed to freedom in this sense. And there’s a good reason for this. This definition of freedom is an impossibility. There can be no freedom of this kind because the definition requires that everyone else conform to this

definition of freedom, and this, in the long run, is the very opposite of the freedom espoused.

No matter how hard we may try to come up with a definition of freedom allowing people to do whatever they like, we run into a brick wall. If person A does not like person B’s actions and wants to restrain person B in some form, this means there is no freedom in this sense for person B. Stalemate.

Yet we all seem to desire such a freedom as this one. And that is probably because we are still carrying with us Eve’s mistaken belief that we can be our own god, defining for ourselves right and wrong, good and evil (*Gen. 3:5*). This, after all is said and done, is our basic psychology, and only in redeemed people is there some kind of commitment to reverse this process and allow God to be arbiter of what is good.

The kind of freedom dreamed by men and women did not exist even before the Fall. God put Adam and Eve in the Garden, but placed a limit on what they could do. That both Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit is evidence of the strong attraction that the idea of being their own god had for them. This is an attraction that has not gone away for us and is a major struggle for all people.

Not only as individuals, but also as people in community, we struggle with freedom. While many recognize the impossibility of an unbridled individual freedom, we seek a politically imposed definition of freedom. Our governments cannot impose freedom. If freedom is exemption from arbitrary

control, then our governments offer anything but this kind of freedom. The events of 9/11 have made sure of this, with increased powers to government agencies in the so-called war against terrorism. Taxation levels also evidence that we are far from having a climate that is exempt from arbitrary control.

## Let the Bible Define.

If, on the other hand, we are to take the Bible as our source for the concept of freedom, then we find that this idea of freedom does not exist in our world today. For example, Proverbs 22:7 clearly indicates that debt is a form of slavery. If we accept this as true, then we must admit that our current debt levels put us into slavery in a very deep way. We have little chance of getting out of this kind of slavery without paying a difficult economic price, a price that many may not be willing to pay voluntarily.

The Bible identifies lack of freedom as a state of slavery to sin. This, in the long run, is why we find freedom an impossible achievement. We think we can vote freedom into existence, or expect that we can at least influence political decision-making to an extent that will create freedom, but all attempts have failed.

They have failed because deep down our commitment is to the wrong kind of freedom. We want our sin and our freedom at the same time, but we cannot have both. Something has to give.

Our attempts at freedom will also continue to fail while we remain slaves

to some incorrect notions. These include, but are not limited to: First, the idea that the political order can create freedom for us while it operates on the mistaken notion that the political order defines what is good and evil. This makes the state god and makes the state's supporters idolaters. Second, that freedom is only defined as freedom from political control. This misses the point that the opposite of freedom, slavery, is inherent in economic conditions as well. And while we may not accept political slavery so easily, we are certainly ready to welcome with open arms debt slavery in the belief that other people's money is the new way to wealth for all.

Romans 8:21 makes it very clear that until the problem of sin is resolved, we cannot be delivered in the "glorious liberty of the children of God." If we want to know why we have not found freedom, it is because we have not dealt with the problem of sin in our lives. As the Bible reminds us, sin is disobeying the law of God (1 John 3:4).

Freedom, the kind promised in the Bible, will remain elusive until we re-discover the law of God and purge sin (disobedience) from our lives. This is the first and only step in the quest for freedom. The only real freedom is that which allows us to discover and implement God's requirements in our lives.

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***[T]he source of American happiness and liberty: a strong belief in God and an unequivocal faith in His abiding providence.***

deeply religious and that the most miserable are the irreligious. The author, Dr. John F. Schumaker commented: "If religion is generally beneficial to psychological health, that is unfortunate.... While I agree that it is possible to live without religion, I suggest that most people find such a road to be psychologically bumpy."

Bumpy indeed! It only confirms the source of American happiness and liberty: a strong belief in God and an unequivocal faith in His abiding providence.

Samuel L. Blumenfeld is the author of eight books on education, including *NEA: Trojan Horse in American Education*, *How to Tutor*, *Alpha-Phonics: A Primer for Beginning Readers*, and *Homeschooling: A Parents Guide to Teaching Children*. All of these books are available on Amazon.com or by calling 208-322-4440.

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<sup>1</sup> See the quote from White's dissenting opinion in *Thornburgh* above.

<sup>2</sup> In like manner, the apostle Paul directed our attention to the last Adam, not the first Adam, to understand the true meaning of life (1 Cor. 15:45)

<sup>3</sup> In his 1828 American *Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster defined "rectitude" as a moral term: "uprightness of mind, exact conformity to truth.... Perfect rectitude belongs only to the Supreme Being. The more nearly the rectitude of men approaches to the standard of divine law, the more exalted and dignified is their character. Want of rectitude is not only sinful, but debasing."

<sup>4</sup> For a short, but more detailed, examination of the Christian text, principles, and worldview of the Declaration, see H. Titus, *The Declaration of Independence: The Christian Legacy* (The Forecast: 1995).

<sup>5</sup> For a short, but more detailed, examination of the Christian foundation, order, and covenant of the United States Constitution, see H. Titus, *The Constitution of the United States: A Christian Document* (Titus Publications: 1997).

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# True Violence and the Right to Keep and Bear Arms

By Curt Lovelace



Nearly every time there's a shooting anywhere in the country, the calls for more gun control get louder. Emotional pleas to protect our children make their way to state capitals and the halls of Congress. Calls for safer streets and schools are necessary and right. We need to do something to make our society less violent. Abridging the freedoms of law-abiding citizens, however, is not the way to control the excesses of violence and greed that stem from a much larger problem: sin.

More laws restricting the rights of citizens to own firearms will not make society less violence prone. Let's face it, we've tried that and it doesn't work. Washington, D.C. is a virtual "no-gun-zone," yet it consistently has a crime rate at the top of the national listings. Both Australia and England have already banned personal ownership of guns, but violent crime is not down in either country. Stephen Poe, author of the challenging book *The Seven Myths of Gun Control*, reports that in Australia violent crime has increased in every category. From 1997 to 1999, murders rose 6.5%, and attempted murders rose 12.5%. Increases were also reported in assaults, kidnappings, and armed robberies.

Australia ranked first on a list of violent crime "among industrialized nations." But things are not much better in the mother country, which ranked second. Meanwhile, the United States, assumed by many to be the most violent of all nations — and a nation in

which gun ownership is still possible — isn't even among the top 10.

## Guns and Families

On the other hand, Switzerland, according to Poe, "has the highest per capita firepower in the world." Yet that small, peaceful nation "has managed to stay out of both world wars and to avoid dictatorship, invasion, and revolution." Poe reports that the murder rate in Switzerland is about the same as that of Japan, where guns are outlawed. The murder rate is much lower than that of England, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

Family life may be an important factor in this regard. Families are more stable in Switzerland than in most places in the world. According to Poe, "[T]he percentage of children born out of wedlock was 8.7 in 1998 — the lowest in Europe. The percentage of women who work outside the home is also lower in Switzerland than in any other European country. Families spend much of their free time together.... Studies have shown that Swiss teenagers prefer the company of their parents to that of their peers."

## So What To Do

The first thing we do is to stand back and take a sober look at the causes of violence in our nation. In the wake of the workplace massacre in Wakefield, Massachusetts a few years back, a liberal state senator was quick to file new bills to restrict access to firearms even further. She got a lot of media attention. Yet when a representative of an association of sportsmen

and gun owners proposed a Blue Ribbon Commission to study the societal roots of the violence problem, he was ignored by the press. And his proposal was barely noted by the governor's office.

Next, we need to consider a moratorium on new gun laws. We have gun laws. Most new gun laws are no more than "feel-good" legislation, aimed at padding the liberal bona-fides of lawmakers and bolstering their prospects for reelection. Enforcement, not enactment, is what's needed. Better enforcement of existing laws has been proven to work. When Richmond, VA, Baltimore, MD, Rochester NY, and Bridgeport, CT decided to devote greater resources to prosecution of criminals who illegally possessed and used guns, violent crimes statistics were reduced significantly.

Finally, and most importantly, we need to accept responsibility for the problem of gun violence — and all other violence — in our nation. We, the citizens, are ultimately to blame. We are the ones who let our society become immersed in the culture of death. It is we who have allowed life to become cheap in our nation by legalizing abortion, offering free needles to drug addicts, denigrating the "old fashioned" family values, and normalizing all sorts of sexual immorality. It is we, the taxpayers, who have allowed the public school systems to become cesspools where alternative lifestyles are espoused and students are taught that the only values that count are the ones we create for ourselves. When we, the citizens, take re-

sponsibility for our own families — and begin once again to teach the difference between right and wrong — society will become less prone to violent acts of aggression.

One more point ought to be made. Even confirmed liberals can understand the logic of the popular bumper sticker that reads, “When we outlaw guns, only outlaws will have guns.” Liberals are not automatically stupid people. Why then, do they resist the logic, as well as the statistics?

We all understand that liberals (as well as many conservatives) use tax dollars to create pockets of dependency. If tax dollars are needed to enrich our lives, pay our doctor bills, keep us in work, or pay us when we don't work, we vote for the liberal politician. Perhaps liberals are seeking to create the biggest dependant class — all of us. Maybe society will be easier to control when all law-abiding citizens need protection from the criminal element, because the only people with legal weapons are those in uniform. Cradle-

to-grave protection from violent crime is a promise government cannot keep, however, thereby putting a totally disarmed citizenry at greater risk.

#### **Nehemiah 4**

I have a license to carry a concealed weapon. There are times when I carry a loaded gun. People have asked, reasonably, whether this is a responsible Christian behavior. I don't try to respond with a full-blown theology of gun ownership. I merely refer people to one chapter in God's Word: Nehemiah 4. Surrounded by hostile enemies, Nehemiah writes, “We prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.” After posting armed guards at strategic places along the wall, Nehemiah then exhorted his people, “Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.”

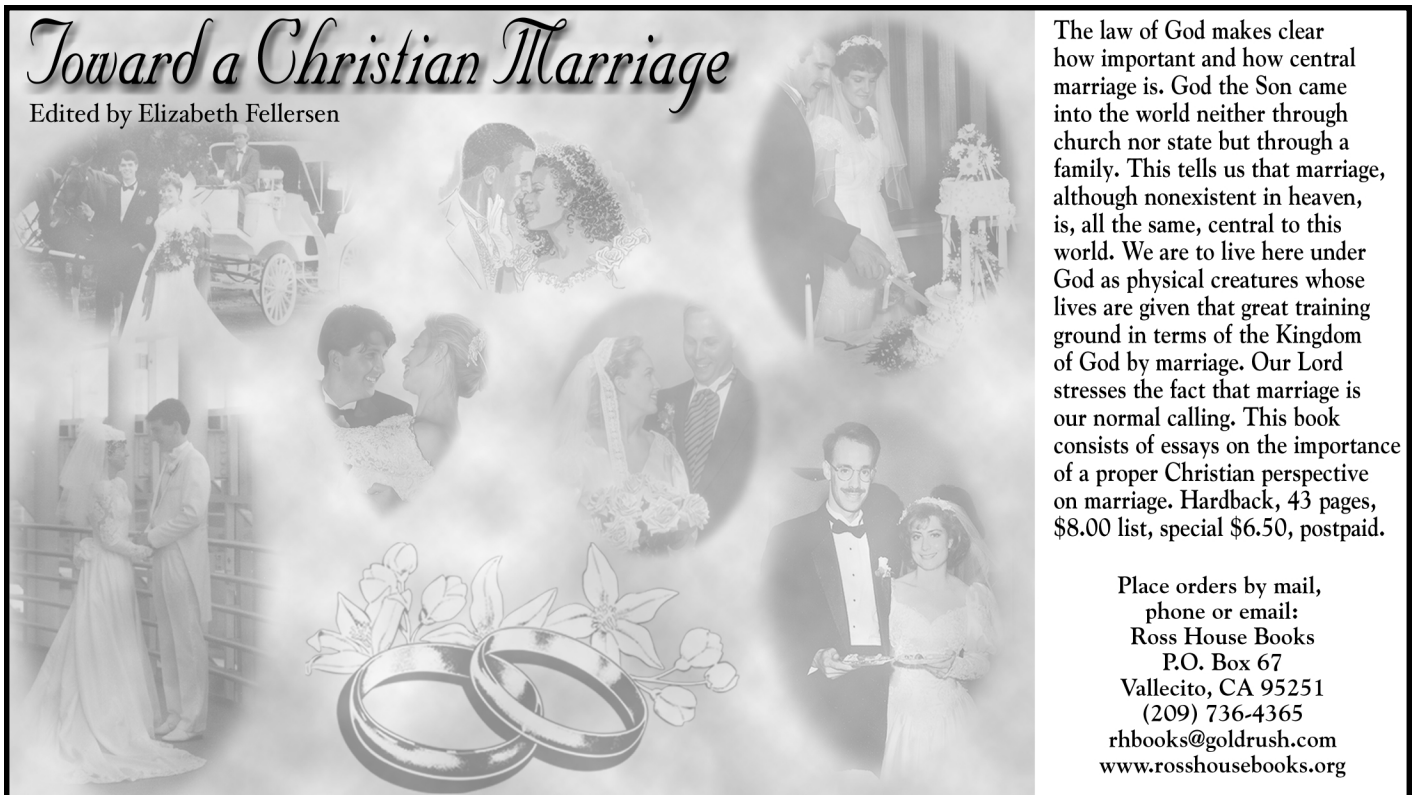
Violence results from sinfulness. It should be resisted. Families should be

protected. At the same time evangelism should be viewed as a weapon more powerful than even guns and armor. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews reminds us, “The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” God knows about the violence in our hearts. He knows our need for rescue. He has the answer. Ultimately, the only answer for violence with guns is the salvation which Jesus offers. It is no failure of trust in God, however, if we continue to protect our families from the violence around until such time as all our neighbors become brothers and sisters in Christ.

—  
Curt Lovelace is a pastor, family man, patriot, and gun owner. His articles have appeared in numerous conservative publications, including the *Chalcedon Report* (April, 2003), *Human Events*, and *The Massachusetts News*. He resides in Shirley, Massachusetts.

## *Toward a Christian Marriage*

Edited by Elizabeth Fellersen



The law of God makes clear how important and how central marriage is. God the Son came into the world neither through church nor state but through a family. This tells us that marriage, although nonexistent in heaven, is, all the same, central to this world. We are to live here under God as physical creatures whose lives are given that great training ground in terms of the Kingdom of God by marriage. Our Lord stresses the fact that marriage is our normal calling. This book consists of essays on the importance of a proper Christian perspective on marriage. Hardback, 43 pages, \$8.00 list, special \$6.50, postpaid.

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# Freedom, Slavery, and America's Founding

By Joseph Farinaccio



The fact that slavery existed in a country like America, supposedly founded as a Christian nation, one where Scripture was used at times by Southerners to defend chattel slavery<sup>1</sup> prior to the Civil War, is seen as evidence of the dangers that come from mixing religion with politics.

Questions about slavery in the Bible are completely valid, especially because the term almost always conjures up images of the type of slavery practiced in the colonial/antebellum periods of American history. But historical documents clearly show that many of the founding fathers understood that using the Bible to defend chattel slavery was a serious misapplication of God's Word.

The Bible shows that slavery is an ever-present reality that has both a spiritual and a physical side:

To understand God's slavery laws, we must understand a basic biblical fact: slavery is inescapable — no culture is without it. Apart from God's grace, all men are enslaved to sin. Salvation liberates us from slavery to sin and makes us slaves to righteousness, obedient to God's word rather than to Satan's (Romans 6:16-22).... If men are not slaves to God they are already enslaved to sin.<sup>2</sup>

This is a paradox of Scripture. *When men are in God's yoke, under the lordship of Christ, they are spiritually free.* Likewise, when a nation builds

its laws upon God's Word and encourages its citizens to exercise self-governance under those laws, as Israel was instructed to do, that nation will outwardly experience political and economic freedom.

## The Slavery of the Hebrews

The ancient world practiced different kinds of slavery. The newly-liberated Hebrews immediately understood the contrast between the servitude God prescribed to them in His law and what they had just experienced under Pharaoh's rule in Egypt. Their legal and economic system would be one wherein people's hearts and actions would be continuously weighed and judged before a just and holy God. Chattel slavery was not morally acceptable for those living under God's rule. Jews understood that their laws were supposed to be an example of justice and benevolence to the heathen nations that surrounded them (*Dt. 4:5-6*).

The context of relevant passages in Scripture indicates that the type of slavery described and regulated in the law was largely a form of bondservice, or indentured servanthood. There appear to have been different levels of Hebrew bondservice, but on a practical level its main purpose was to justly meet the needs of economically disadvantaged individuals in society. It also provided a means for criminals to make restitution to their victims.

Chattel slavery entails complete personal ownership of the slave and the "fruits" of his labor. In Hebrew bondservitude, the owner purchased the potential economic value of a

servant's estimated productivity. This was usually done to relieve the slave's debts, which were often acquired through mishandling of finances or misbehavior.

Further, non-criminal Hebrews entered into servitude *voluntarily* (*Lev. 25:39, 47; Dt. 15:11-12*). This bondservice was primarily to *help the poor* gain economic independence (*Lev. 25:35-43*). Kidnapping and forced slavery were considered crimes punishable by death (*Ex. 21:16; Dt. 24:7*). Most Hebrew bondservants were freed from debts and generally released either every designated seventh year (Sabbatical) or forty-ninth year (Jubilee), depending on the type of service contract (*Lev. 25:39-41; Dt. 15:12*).

Certain conditions of Hebraic slavery were considered permanent. Some servants voluntarily chose to bind themselves to their rulers permanently, preferring the security of the owner's provision to personal freedom (*Ex. 21:5; Dt. 15:16*). Hebrews were allowed to purchase foreigners who were already slaves and were permitted at times to take women and children of conquered nations (*Lev. 25:44-46; Dt. 20:14-15, 21:10-14*). In such cases the heathen would be brought into the households of God's covenant community.

Those taken from pagan nations would have an opportunity to hear and embrace the message of God's covenant with man. This is an act of divine mercy when seen in light of the proposition that *God owns all men* and sovereignly controls their eternal destinies. Yet even within this state of

servitude, a slave could gain his freedom if he were adopted into his ruling family. *This act would have foreshadowed the adoption of a sinner held in slavery of sin into God's family by grace (Rom. 8:15).* The slavery prescribed by God's law actually fostered freedom on both a spiritual and practical level.

### Indentured Servants

Unlike chattel slavery, indentured servitude benefited many individuals and was practiced well into America's colonial period. America's founders understood that while both of these systems were types of servitude, one was moral while the other was not.

It was apparent to most of the founders that the "rhetoric of the Revolution — which emphasized the importance of liberty and the danger of enslavement — could not help but direct attention to America's own institution of bondage."<sup>3</sup>

Thomas Jefferson once remarked, Americans were holding a "wolf by the ears." However unappealing it was to hold on to, letting go promised to be even worse.... Were slavery to be abolished, the South would find itself with a substantial unpropertied laboring class.... The social tensions that would inevitably ensue would, Southerners feared, ultimately destroy the stability of society.... As a result, slavery survived.<sup>4</sup>

However, because of the Bible's influence, America began a long journey towards emancipation: "The subject of slavery was an explosive issue in the colonies throughout the Revolutionary War. Under the Articles of Confederation, slavery was abolished north of the Ohio River."<sup>5</sup> After bitter debate, delegates to the Constitutional Convention eventually agreed that the new federal government "... would

have no authority to stop the slave trade for twenty years. To those delegates who viewed the continued existence of slavery as an affront to the principles of the new nation, this was a large and difficult concession."<sup>6</sup> But America led other nations in limiting chattel slavery at this time.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century's abolition movement throughout Western culture was an overwhelmingly Christian-based social movement, and was set against the pagan cultures of slavery that influenced Western thought:

Aristotle believed slavery both natural and just, and here lies the difference between the plantation owner and Nero. Southerners, such as Charles Pickney and John Rutledge of South Carolina, may have seen slavery as a "necessary evil," but it was an evil; indeed, the South was continuously on the moral defensive until slavery was eliminated from American life. But Aristotle saw slavery, not as necessary, but as wholesome and good. His moral standards were different precisely because his god was different. The contrast between America and ancient Greece is as stark as the contrast between the God of scripture and the god of Reason.<sup>7</sup>

Humanists who scoff at the Bible's slave laws usually overlook the fact

that chattel slavery has been a *humanist institution* throughout history. It is not God's Word that needs to be feared but rather the arbitrary laws of man established upon finite human reason. The whole counsel of God, including its slave laws, presents a message of *total freedom* to man. Scripture speaks not only of sin but its root cause as well. Jesus Christ is humanity's only genuine emancipator.

Joseph Farinaccio is a Christian writer and public speaker from New Jersey. The Christian apologetic *Faith With Reason* is his first book. He lives in Pennsville, NJ with his wife Joni and their two children. They are members of the Glasgow Reformed Presbyterian Church in Bear, Delaware. He is currently at work on another book and speaks to College/Youth and Church audiences on Christianity and world religion.

<sup>1</sup> Chattel slavery is the type of slavery that considers the slave the personal property of the "owner." It differs from other types of slavery as discussed below.

<sup>2</sup> David Chilton, *Productive Christians in an Age of Guilt Manipulators* (Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1981), 60.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Current, T. Harry Williams, Frank Freidel, Alan Brinkley, *American History: A Survey* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1987), 146.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, 147.

<sup>5</sup> Benjamin Hart, *Faith & Freedom* (Dallas, TX: Lewis and Stanley, 1988), 303.

<sup>6</sup> Current, *et al*, 161.

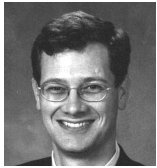
<sup>7</sup> Hart, 303.

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# Crisis and the State

By Timothy D. Terrell



Each new crisis in a nation's history seems to bring with it an expansion of the civil government. The crisis may be war, economic catastrophe, a natural disaster, or some other emergency. At the time, most people seem to see the increased power granted to the state as reasonable, even unavoidable. Yet a grave danger is embedded in each new transfer of authority to the state. Basic freedoms that are curtailed as "emergency measures" may never be regained. In the long run, the loss of liberty can prove far worse than the initial emergency.

As Genesis 41:33-57 and 47:13-26 tell us, the patriarch Joseph dealt with the seven-year Egyptian famine by confiscating grain during the years of plenty and then selling it back to the Egyptian people. When they ran out of money, they sold their livestock to Pharaoh. As the famine continued, the Egyptians sold their land to Pharaoh, then sold themselves into slavery to him. At the end of the famine, Joseph instituted a permanent 20 percent tax on harvests. The famine left Pharaoh greatly enriched, with the people of the land utterly enslaved to him.

## The Opportunities of Crisis

Crisis presents an opportunity for the state — an opportunity to appear on the scene of the disaster as protector and savior. In some cases, as with an unprovoked attack by a foreign foe, some involvement by the civil government is justified. Yet even here, the state often takes far more power than is necessary to deal with the emergency. The state exploits crises, feeds on them, grows through them. In

some cases, it may even cultivate a crisis if one is not forthcoming.

World War I, for example, provided a new opportunity for the expansion of the federal government. As a result of the war, the brand-new income tax exploded in size and importance. Until wartime, the tax had been relatively unimportant compared with the tariff included in the original Constitution. Yet between fiscal 1917 and fiscal 1919, Federal revenues rose by nearly 400 percent. In addition, the national debt grew to over 21 times its prewar level — from \$1.2 billion in 1916 to \$25.5 billion in 1919.

Frequently, the state is reluctant to relinquish emergency powers once it has enjoyed their use. As Robert Higgs explains in his book *Crisis and Leviathan*, the government activity that accompanies a crisis rarely disappears entirely after the crisis has abated. Rather, the state continues on at a new and increased size. Higgs has called this the "ratchet effect."

## The Ratchet Effect

There are several examples of the ratchet effect from the last century. The Great Depression accompanied one of the greatest peacetime expansions of the federal government in American history. Herbert Hoover began the process with public works projects, but Franklin D. Roosevelt dwarfed his predecessor's efforts with a mountain of government intervention. Roosevelt's famous Hundred Days after his inauguration in 1933 produced massive employment programs, sweeping banking and investment regulations, moratoriums on foreclosures, and much more. Roosevelt used emergency powers

freely, assisted by a fawning Congress and a desperate citizenry. Washington, D.C. boomed with the New Deal bureaucracies. Ironically, the intervention prolonged the crisis it was supposed to resolve.

Roosevelt's gold-confiscation scheme was one emergency measure with long-term negative consequences. In March, 1933, Roosevelt took control of all banking and financial transactions. Soon afterward, people who held gold for monetary purposes were required to exchange it for paper certificates. Within a year, it became illegal for private citizens to hold monetary gold (it remained illegal until 1974). All gold was turned over to the Federal Reserve, then to the federal government.

These actions were based upon the declaration of a national emergency. The Depression was a plausible excuse, but what would happen when it was over? World War II made for an extension of the emergency, but for decades after the war the "emergency" was perpetuated in some form.

World War II was the greatest crisis America had seen in seventy-five years. Like the War Between the States, it too marked a surge in the size and importance of the federal government. Federal revenues increased from \$7 billion to \$50 billion between 1940 and 1945, and the publicly held national debt more than quintupled. The IRS began income tax withholding in 1943, and taxes at all levels increased. The bottom tax bracket saw an increase from 4.4 percent to 23 percent during the war, and the top bracket was paying an incomprehensible 94 percent by 1945. And, consistent with Higgs's "ratchet

***“Few indeed have been the invasions upon essential liberties which have not been accompanied by pleas of urgent necessity advanced in good faith by responsible men....”***

effect,” the government did not shrink to its prewar size after the war, much less the pre-Depression size. The federal government consumed about 2.6 percent of gross national product in 1929. In 1940, when the United States was gearing up for war and employment was higher, the federal government was consuming about 8.2 percent. In 1944, the last full calendar year of the war, an astounding 52.3 percent of production of goods and services went to the federal government. In 1950, five years after the end of the war, the percentage was lower — but at 14.5 percent the government was spending far more than before the war. By comparison, the pre-Depression federal government was small potatoes.

By 1950, Washington, D.C. was addicted to “national emergency.” And so the remainder of the twentieth century — and the beginning of the twenty-first — would be an era of continuous emergency. If not a depression or an expansionistic Germany, it would be the Cold War, the War on Poverty, the War on Drugs, or the War on Terrorism. Continued government expansion came to rely on crisis, because Americans had come to rely on the state in time of crisis. The church and the family, sources of refuge,

comfort, and sustenance in earlier days, lost ground in America. The state metastasized, rapidly extending its reach with each new calamity (real or imagined). With each increase in the size of government, a new constituency of government bureaucrats and hangers-on was created to oppose any shrinkage of the state.

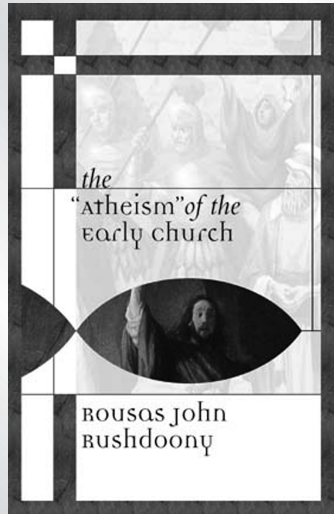
Higgs has pointed out that, in national emergencies, the Constitution is likely to be read very differently, and the freedoms it protects are likely to be significantly curtailed. The “Crisis Constitution,” as he puts it, takes precedence as a fearful population grants immense powers to all branches of government. Higgs writes that “the great danger is that in an age of permanent emergency—the age we live in, the age we are likely to go on living in—the Crisis Constitution will simply swallow up the Normal Constitution, depriving us *at all times* of the very rights the original Constitution was created to protect *at all times*.”<sup>1</sup>

Today we face new crises. The threat of more terrorism, and the crises with Iraq and North Korea, are perhaps most significant in the public view. To politicians with a lust for

more power, the war on terrorism must seem particularly promising, as it will be next to impossible to ever declare a “victory.” Even the seemingly interminable Cold War had its end when the Soviet Union crumbled. Countless billions of dollars may be expended on combating terrorism, and draconian powers tendered to the state — and few will complain. Yet greater threats than al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein exist in the world. Sacrificing the basic Biblical freedoms that made America great, in order to protect us against terrorism, would expose each American to the nascent tyrannies of our own government. We would do well to remember the words of Justice Frank Murphy, one of FDR’s appointees to the Supreme Court: “Few indeed have been the invasions upon essential liberties which have not been accompanied by pleas of urgent necessity advanced in good faith by responsible men....”

Timothy Terrell teaches economics at a small college in South Carolina. He is also director of the Center for Biblical Law and Economics, at <http://www.christ-college.edu/html/cble/>.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.independent.org/tii/news/011017Higgs.html>



the  
“Atheism” of the  
early church

ROUSAS JOHN  
RUSHDOONY

## The “Atheism” of the Early Church

By Rousas John Rushdoony

Early Christians were called “heretics” and “atheists” when they denied the gods of Rome, in particular the divinity of the emperor and the statism he embodied in his personality cult. These Christians knew that Jesus Christ, not the state, was their Lord and that this faith required a different kind of relationship to the state than it demanded. Because Jesus Christ was their acknowledged Sovereign, they consciously denied such esteem to all other claimants. Today the church must take a similar stand before the modern state. Paperback, 64 pages.

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# Charles Cummings and the Roots of American Freedom

By Roger Schultz, Ph.D.



Historians have largely forgotten the Rev. Charles Cummings (1733-1812), the feisty Presbyterian minister of southwestern Virginia. For historians living in the 19th century, however, he illustrated how the pious and freedom-loving folk of the frontier exemplified the American spirit of independence.

Why are leaders like Charles Cummings forgotten today? There are two reasons for this shift in historical memory. First, 19<sup>th</sup> century historians tended to emphasize the significance of the frontier. And second, they were more inclined to see the religious roots of American independence. In an age such as ours, one that is hostile to Christianity, religious leaders of the past are marginalized, and are rarely held up as role models.

## 19<sup>th</sup> Century Historians and the American Revolution

No historian of the 19th century had greater influence in America than George Bancroft. Sometimes called “the father of American history,” Bancroft authored a magisterial multi-volume *History of the United States* that emphasized the theme of freedom. Bancroft described the coming of the American Revolution, with the opening of the House of Lords in England on January 20, 1775:

It is not probable that even one of the peers [in the House of Lords] had heard of the settlements beyond the Alleghenies,

where the Watauga and the forks of the Holston flow to the Tennessee. Yet on the same day, the lords of that region, most of them Presbyterians of Scottish-Irish descent, met in council near Abingdon. Their united congregations, having suffered from Sabbaths too much profaned, or wasted in melancholy silence at home, had called Charles Cummings to the pastoral charge of their precious and immortal souls. The men never went to public worship without being armed, or without their families. Their minister, on Sabbath morning, would ride to the service with shot and pouch and rifle.... The news from Congress reached them slowly [Ed., the Continental Congress began Sept. 5, 1774]; but, on receiving an account of what had been done, they assembled in convention, and the spirit of freedom swept through their minds as naturally as the forest winds sways the firs on the sides of Black Mountain. They adhered unanimously to the association of Congress, and named as their committee Charles Cummings [and others]. Adopting the delegates of Virginia as their representatives, they addressed them as men whose conduct would immortalize them in its annals.<sup>1</sup>

Bancroft continues by quoting from Fincastle Resolves, a remarkable document from Fincastle County, which at the time covered all of southwest Virginia:

We explored our uncultivated wilderness ... but even to those these remote regions the hand of power hath pursued us, to strip us of that liberty and property with which God, nature, and the rights of humanity have vested us. We are deliberately and resolutely determined never to surrender any of our inestimable privileges to any power on earth but at the expense of our lives. These are our real though unpolished sentiments of liberty and loyalty, and in them we are resolved to live and die.<sup>2</sup>

This is worthy of note. On January 20, 1775, frontier leaders resolved to fight to the death against tyranny. It is the first time that any colonist took that step.

In 1894, future President Theodore Roosevelt offered a similar perspective on the freedom loving pioneers of the region in *The Winning of the West*. The “enterprising and intelligent” settlers were a sturdy and “God-fearing race, as was natural in those who sprang from the loins of the Irish Calvinists. Their preachers, all Presbyterians, followed close behind the first settlers, and shared their toil and dangers.” These yeoman saints of southern Appalachia would unite to defeat British loyalists at Kings Mountain, in 1780, at the turning point of the war in the south. For both Bancroft and Roosevelt, these fearless Presbyterian frontiersmen were perfect examples of the indomitable spirit of American independence.<sup>3</sup>

## Recent Historical Literature on Religion and Freedom in America

Over the last fifteen years there has been a renewed interest in the religious roots of American freedom. Some have emphasized the role of Christianity in the founding of the United States. *Defending the Declaration*, by Gary Amos, is an analysis of the Declaration of Independence and a refutation of those who claim that it is a deist document. “Created equal” and “self-evident truths,” for instance, were terms frequently used in a Christian context. *Christianity and the Constitution*, written by Christian attorney and Constitutional scholar John Eidsmoe, offers biographical notes on the framers of the Constitution and an assessment of the religious milieu.<sup>4</sup>

Others have emphasized the political implications of the Reformed doctrine of the covenant. *Fountainhead of Federalism*, by Charles McCoy and J. Wayne Baker, deals with the covenant theology of Heinrich Bullinger and how covenantal ideas gave rise to modern Republicanism. Keith Griffin’s *Revolution and Religion*, a study of the Reformed clergy in the middle colonies, shows how political ideas such as the consent of the governed and legitimate resistance were “the extension of the theological heritage of Reformed Protestantism.”<sup>5</sup>

The best work on Reformed and Calvinistic political thought is *The Emergence of Liberty in the Modern World* by Douglas Kelly, a former Chalcedon staff-member. Kelly describes the political legacy of Reformed Christianity in Geneva, France, England, Scotland, and America. This is an excellent book, and is a must read for all who want a historical framework for a Biblical political covenantalism.<sup>6</sup>

*The Theme is Freedom*, a recent popular book by M. Stanton Evans, takes religion and its impact on American history seriously. Evans concludes

the work by saying, “In every sense, the spiritual and intellectual vision must be foremost. Recovery of our religious faith and its teachings must be our first and main concern. Without it, nothing much by way of practical improvement can be accomplished. With it, all the rest might be added.”<sup>7</sup>

Both Kelly and Evans are eager to show the importance of Philippe du Plessis-Mornay’s *Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos (A Defense of Liberty Against Tyrants)*. Written by a courageous Huguenot during the 16th century French wars of religion, it presents a thoroughly Calvinistic and covenantal political theory.

Years ago, Rushdoony noted the significance of *Vindiciae* and its influence on America, but pointed out that the seminal work was often overlooked. Why was it neglected? Because the author was a Calvinist. “More than most of us realize,” Rushdoony argues, “the current belief in historical studies of the ‘irrelevance’ of Christian faith has been written into interpretations of American history.”<sup>8</sup>

### Reintroducing Charles Cummings

If we are to take religion and American Independence seriously, perhaps it is time to revisit Charles Cummings. Born in northern Ireland, Cummings prepared for the Presbyterian ministry in Virginia and accepted a call to the southwest frontier in the early 1770s. (His old cabin still stands, and can be seen at the Sinking Springs Presbyterian cemetery in Abingdon, Virginia.) Throughout his life, this frisky Presbyterian preacher left the legacy of a fighter.

First, Cummings was an Indian fighter. The ever-present threat of an Indian attack was why Cummings always carried a gun — even to church. According to legend, Cummings even saved the town by a providential self-scalping. As the story goes, Indians at-

tacked while Cummings was riding in a wagon, and as he jumped to safety his wig caught in the brush. Indians were so surprised to see a “scalp” hanging there that they hesitated in their attack, giving Cummings the chance to tumble to safety and rally a defense.<sup>9</sup>

Second, Cummings fought the British. He was the probable author of the Fincastle Resolves, a document that warned of the imminent loss of both religious and civil liberties. The settlers didn’t intend to shake off their allegiance to their lawful sovereign, the Resolves state, “so long as we can enjoy the free exercise of our religion as Protestants, and our liberties and properties as British Subjects.”<sup>10</sup> But the settlers were willing to die to protect them. Cummings would also serve as chairman of a Committee of Safety and as a chaplain for patriot troops.

Third, Cummings fought the Anglicans. Virginia Presbyterians and other evangelical dissenter groups vigorously opposed the established and frequently tyrannical Anglican Church. The Memorial of Hanover Presbytery (October 24, 1776), supported by Cummings, advocated religious freedom and the removal of “every species of religious, as well as civil bondage.”

Fourth, Cummings fought the state of Virginia. Southwestern Virginians long felt overlooked by the state establishment and in the 1780s a secessionist movement flourished in the region. Cummings and others hoped to withdraw from Virginia and join with east Tennesseans to create a “Greater State of Franklin.” Governor Patrick Henry was horrified to learn of the movement, quickly suppressed it, and launched an investigation. (The Virginia Calendar of State Papers includes fascinating information about Cummings’ involvement and the secessionist meetings at the church.) Cummings was willing to fight injustice anywhere—even in Henry’s Virginia.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, Cummings fought other Presbyterians. The first documented church split in southwest Virginia came when the Green Spring Presbyterian Church broke away from Cummings' main congregation. The division was partly over distance, as the new congregation served an outlying community. And partly over personality, as dissidents complained that Cummings "has treated us in an *unfriendly* manner." But the division was mainly over worship practices. Cummings had introduced Watts' hymnbook, and the secessionist Green Spring Church believed in exclusive psalmody.

Charles Cummings is worth remembering. Called to serve in a "wilderness," he faithfully served his congregations in some of the most dangerous and exciting times in American history. He was committed to freedom, and the Fincastle Resolves is his greatest legacy. When a bygone generation of historians wanted to illustrate the passionate frontier com-

mitment to freedom, they looked to Rev. Cummings and the Presbyterian pioneers of southwest Virginia. "These are our real though unpolished sentiments of liberty and loyalty," they declared in early 1775, "and in them we are resolved to live and die."

Dr. Schultz is Chairman of the History Department at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia.

<sup>1</sup> Bancroft, *History of the United States*, III: IV: 100f.

<sup>2</sup> The text of the Fincastle Resolves and the pastoral call to Cummings can be found in Lewis Preston Summers, *Annals of Southwest Virginia, 1769-1800* (Reprint edition; Baltimore: Genealogical Press, 1970), 673-675, 1354-55.

<sup>3</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, *The Winning of the West* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1894), 198-199.

<sup>4</sup> Gary Amos, *Defending the Declaration: How the Bible and Christianity Influenced the Writing of the Declaration of Independence* (Brentwood, Tennessee: Wolgemuth and Hyatt, 1989) and John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987).

<sup>5</sup> Charles McCoy and Baker, *Fountainhead of Federalism* (Westminster/John Knox, 1991) and Keith Griffin, *Revolution and Religion: The American Revolutionary War and the Reformed Clergy* (N.Y.: Paragon House, 1994), 1. For a different assessment of the McCoy/Baker thesis, see Ruben Alvarado, "Fountainhead of Liberalism" and T.M. Wilder, "The Covenantal Tradition in Political Theory," both in *Contra Mundum* 10 (Winter, 1994), available on-line at [http://www.visi.com/~contra\\_m/](http://www.visi.com/~contra_m/).

<sup>6</sup> Douglas Kelly, *The Emergence of Liberty in the Modern World* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R, 1992).

<sup>7</sup> M. Stanton Evans, *The Theme is Freedom: Religion, Politics and the American Tradition* (Washington: Regnery, 1994), 323.

<sup>8</sup> Rousas Rushdoony, *The Biblical Philosophy of History* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R, 1979), 130. Rushdoony attributes authorship to Hugh Languet who may have collaborated on the work.

<sup>9</sup> Douglas Summers Brown, "Charles Cummings: The Fighting Parson of Southwest Virginia," *Virginia Cavalcade* (Winter 1979), 142.

<sup>10</sup> Summers, *Annals*, 675.

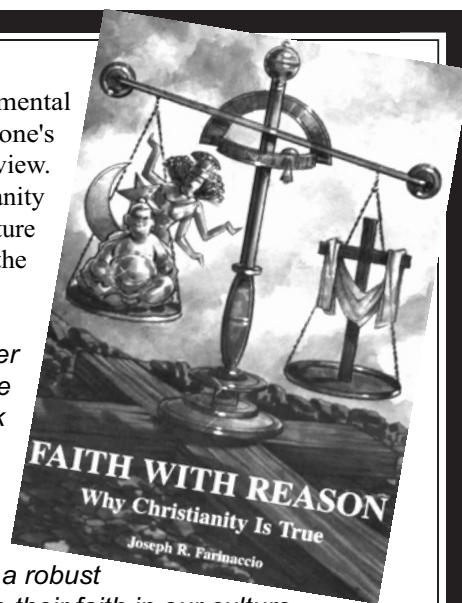
<sup>11</sup> Recent studies of the Franklin movement in Virginia include Hartwell Quinn, *Arthur Campbell* (London, McFarland, 1990) and Peter Kastor, "Equitable Rights and Privileges," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 105:2 (Spring, 1997).

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# “For Altar & Home”

By R.G. “Rick” Williams, Jr. ©2003



“Liberty” and “freedom” are words we as Americans, and especially as Christians, instinctively associate with patriotism and our unique heritage. But has patriotism become a mere cliché in the average American Christian’s mind?

Certainly to our forefathers, patriotism was much more than an abstract concept, more than an idea discussed in political speeches and debates. Patriotism, and the love of liberty, was something very real, something tangible. These ideas were made tangible by the fact that many of our forefathers willingly sacrificed lands, riches, families, and futures. Our history is replete with such stories of heroism and self-sacrifice. From our Pilgrim progenitors to those in this century who have paid the ultimate sacrifice, we have, as King David wrote, “a goodly heritage.” One of the best, but lesser known, examples of true patriotism and love of liberty was personified by the Liberty Hall Volunteers. Their example teaches us what true patriotism is and of the sacrifice that sometimes must be paid by patriots who value liberty. Their example also illustrates the rich Christian heritage of our nation’s history.

## The Liberty Hall Volunteers

Liberty Hall Academy was the forerunner of Washington College, which eventually became, as it is known today, Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia. The school traces its roots to the year 1749, and to a Presbyterian preacher by the name of William Graham.<sup>1</sup> Eventually fully funded and directed by Shenandoah

Valley Presbyterians, the school boasts thousands of influential and renowned men as graduates.<sup>2</sup>

At the outbreak of the War Between the States, a group of young men who were students at Washington College formed a military company. This company would eventually become part of the legendary “Stonewall Brigade.” These young patriots chose for their company the name, The Liberty Hall Volunteers — a name used by a similar company of youths formed at the original Liberty Hall Academy. The original “volunteers” marched to repel a British invasion on the east side of the Blue Ridge Mountains with William Graham during the American Revolution. The young men of Washington College also wanted to march to repel an invasion. Their motives were the same, but Providence would dictate a much different outcome. During the month of April in 1861, these young men did little more than “play army.” The rules set up by the not-so-supportive administration did not allow them to carry firearms. The President of the college, Rev. Dr. George Junkin, being Pennsylvania born and a loyal Unionist, was so outraged by the “rebels” that he resigned his position as President. He then immediately left Virginia for good, and tradition has it that once he crossed the Potomac River into Maryland, he “alighted from his carriage and shook the dust of Virginia from his shoes.”<sup>3</sup> But when the school year ended in June, the boys took on a more serious disposition as they were drilled by West Point graduate and rector of Grace Episcopal Church in Lexington,<sup>4</sup> William Nelson Pendleton. Pendleton would eventually become

commander of the Rockbridge Artillery and name his most “famous” cannons, “Matthew, Mark, Luke and John,” because, “they spoke a powerful language.” Indeed.

## Who Were They?

There are several things that make the story of these young patriots very interesting and very instructive. First, consider the fact that all the officers, as well as over half the privates, were professing Christians — one fourth were candidates for the ministry. James J. White, professor of Greek at Washington College and son of the Reverend Dr. William S. White (Stonewall Jackson’s Pastor), organized and commanded the company. This unit was likely the best educated Infantry Company in the Confederate Army.<sup>5</sup> The artillery unit that Pendleton would later organize and command would also be comprised of highly educated and devout men, including “seven Masters of Arts of the University of Virginia, twenty-eight college graduates, twenty-five theological seminary students, and among the others many of the most accomplished young men of the South, including R. E. Lee, Jr.”<sup>6</sup>

The Washington College boys received orders from Virginia Governor John Letcher on June 2, 1861 to report to Harper’s Ferry immediately. The bugle sounded loud and clear on the bright morning of June 8 and the company readied for the march. Among its newest recruits was Hugh Augustus White, younger brother of the commander James J. White and another son of Stonewall Jackson’s pastor, Dr. William S. White. The younger White had studied at Washington College



and was at this time, a seminary student at Union Theological Seminary in Farmville, Virginia. After a day of fasting and prayer at the seminary, Hugh had written to his father on April 22 of that same year:

We of Virginia are between two fires. If we join the one party, we join friends and allies; if we join the other, we join enemies and become vassals. Our decision then is formed, and we will seek to break the oppressor's yoke. Our only hope, under God, is in a united resistance even unto death ... how delightful it would be to enter at once upon the work of saving men's souls, rather than in efforts to destroy their bodies....<sup>7</sup>

Dr. White implored his son to complete his seminary studies rather than fight for the Confederacy, but the youthful patriot replied:

I have thought and prayed much over this question for two months ... and the result is as firm a conviction that I ought at once to take part in the defense of my state ... as I ever felt that I ought to preach the Gospel.<sup>8</sup>

His father could only reply, "Go, my son, and the blessing of God go with you." The company of optimistic youths marched dutifully to the courthouse on Main Street where a crowd had gathered. There they were given a magnificent flag that had been hand stitched by the devout ladies of the Falling Springs Presbyterian Church. Upon the flag was emblazoned the immortal Latin phrase, "*Pro Aris et Focis*" — the English translation being simply, "For Altar and Home."

No doubt as those brave young men read that Latin phrase, knowing full well what it meant, God confirmed in their hearts what they already knew. They were defending and fighting for

everything they held near and dear — their firesides, their native sod, and their sacred places of worship. As the pastor of Falling Springs presented them the flag with a fitting exhortation, these soon to be warriors were baptized with a benediction of fervent prayer by Dr. White and tearful good-byes were exchanged:

You could almost hear the heart-strings of mothers and sisters snap as they pressed sons and brothers in farewell embraces. In surrendering their boys to the services of Virginia, they were making sacrifices, such as their heroic ancestors were accustomed to make on the hills and among the mosshags of Scotland, for God and Presbytery. It was a willing sacrifice. And no less, yet more demonstrative than theirs, was the grief of the black mammies, who came to say good-bye to their "chillum," now grown to be young masters, and press them to their warm hearts.<sup>9</sup>

After the emotional send off, the friends and relatives of the boys returned to the Presbyterian Church and petitioned their God for their safety and their victory. On June the 13, 1861, the *Lexington Gazette* wrote of the event:

[O]ne of the finest looking bodies of young soldiers that have been sent from this portion of the state.... The patriotic fire which animated the breasts of the boys of Liberty Hall in the

days of our Revolutionary struggle is still alive in the hearts of their worthy descendants.<sup>10</sup>

The question Christians in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should ask themselves is this: Is that same patriotic fire to fight for "Altar and Home" still alive in us?

Richard G. "Rick" Williams, Jr. is an insurance professional, freelance writer, and publisher, VirginiaGentleman.com. He is a regular contributor to *Business Reform Magazine* (BusinessReform.com) and *Homeschooling Today Magazine* (HomeSchoolingToday.com). Williams lives in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley with his wife, Diane and their children. He currently serves as Assistant Chaplain to the Stonewall Brigade Camp of the Sons of Confederate Veterans in Lexington, Virginia.

<sup>1</sup> Oren F. Morton, B. Lit., *A History of Rockbridge County Virginia*. (Regional Publishing Company: Baltimore, 1980), 189.

<sup>2</sup> Washington and Lee University no longer has any ties to any denomination.

<sup>3</sup> W.G. Bean, *The Liberty Hall Volunteers*. (The University Press of Virginia: Charlottesville, 1964), 8.

<sup>4</sup> This is the church where Robert E. Lee would attend worship after he became President of Washington College.

<sup>5</sup> Charles W. Turner, *Ted Barclay, Liberty Hall Volunteers: Letters From the Stonewall Brigade* (Rockbridge Publishing Company: Berryville, VA, 1992), v.

<sup>6</sup> Byron Farwell, *Stonewall* (W.W. Norton and Company: New York, 1992), 147.

<sup>7</sup> Dr. William S. White, *Sketches of the Life of Captain Hugh A. White* (Sprinkle Publications, Harrisonburg, VA, 1997), 44-45.

<sup>8</sup> Bean, 12.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, 18.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, 14.

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# Onward Christian Soldiers: Protecting the Ban on Partial Birth Abortion

*By Warren Kelley*



In mid-March, 2003 the Senate finally ended the years-long battle over partial-birth abortion. With a surprisingly strong margin, 63-33, the Senate finally allowed passage of a ban on this gruesome procedure.

This was a major victory for pro-life forces, but it is far from the end of the war. As a spokesperson for the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) said just prior to the passage of the ban, “Legal strategy is more likely to be successful than a legislative strategy.... The courts stand as bulwarks against legislative intrusion upon important liberties.”

For many years, liberal activists have relied on the courts to provide them victories that they could never win through legislation. After all, those legislators answer directly to the voters, unlike activist judges.

This was true when pro-life forces in Nebraska managed to pass a similar ban in their state legislature. That new law was almost immediately challenged and was finally ruled unconstitutional by a 5-4 vote in the United States Supreme Court.

The pro-life community continued to fight for a federal ban, believing that one could be written to withstand a Supreme Court challenge. One thing is certain, the newly passed legislation will have to withstand a challenge in the courts, and one will come very quickly.

## **Hurdles after the Congressional Ban**

Now that Congress has passed a ban on partial birth abortion, there are two major hurdles that the pro-life community will have to clear in order to protect its hard-won victory when the case reaches the Supreme Court. The first is Justice Sandra Day O’Connor. In the Nebraska case, O’Connor was the swing vote that handed abortion advocates their victory. Many in the pro-life community have believed for some time that O’Connor’s vote could swing in support of a federal ban if her two concerns were addressed. In the Nebraska case she voted against the ban because it extended beyond the partial birth procedure and she felt there should be an exception in the ban to protect the health of the mother.

The problem comes in the way that “exception” is defined. The Nebraska ban provided for what seemed to be a reasonable exception. It read, “unless such procedure [partial birth abortion] is necessary to save the life of the mother whose life is endangered by a physical disorder, physical illness, or physical injury, including a life-endangering physical condition caused by or arising from the pregnancy itself?”

Unfortunately, when O’Conner talked about needing an exception she was referring to the concept that was laid out in the majority decision, written by Justice Breyer. His contention was that the procedure was necessary

because “(1) it reduces the dangers from sharp bone fragments passing through the cervix, (2) minimizes the number of instrument passes needed for extraction and lessens the likelihood of uterine perforations caused by those instruments, (3) reduces the likelihood of leaving infection-causing fetal and placental tissue in the uterus, and (4) could help to prevent potentially fatal absorption of fetal tissue into the maternal circulation.”

In spite of the language contained in the statute, O’Connor claimed, “It contains no exception for when the procedure, in appropriate medical judgment, is necessary to preserve the health of the mother.” What she meant was that if the doctor feels like the safest method to use in performing an abortion is partial birth abortion, then that should qualify as an exception to the law. Unfortunately, an exception that large would invalidate the law entirely. Any time that a doctor wanted to perform this procedure, all he needed to do was claim it was for the health of the mother.

The best hope we have to overcome that hurdle is a resignation from the High Court that would tip the balance in favor of the ban. It is likely that we will see at least one resignation from the Court this year, possibly before the end of the summer. That brings us to the second hurdle — judicial confirmations.

It has always been the job of the Senate to confirm judicial appointments

made by the President. This is part of the checks and balances built into our system of government by the founding fathers. However, throughout the years the confirmation process has been treated as more of a courtesy than as an adversarial proceeding. The original intent was to allow the Senate to prevent unqualified or unscrupulous men from obtaining judicial power.

### **Filibustering**

When George W. Bush started appointing highly qualified, conservative judges, liberals switched into high gear. Democrats in the Senate Judiciary Committee under the leadership of Senator Patrick Leahy stalled, blocked, and used every tactic at their disposal to prevent a confirmation vote from reaching the floor of the Senate for any conservative judge that came before them, regardless of qualifications.

With the shift in the balance of power brought by the 2002 mid-term election, judicial appointees thought they had finally received their “get out of jail free” card. Unfortunately, such hope was very short lived. The liberals knew their last bastion of power lay in the overwhelmingly liberal court system manned by activist judges. Liberal forces had no intention of giving up their primary stronghold without a fight. Enter the filibuster.

Never before in the history of the Senate had anyone ever used a filibuster to prevent the confirmation of a judicial appointee until Miguel Estrada. Estrada’s crime was not a lack of qualification (he was given the highest rating possible by the American Bar Association) or his character. The danger he posed was that he was just too conservative.

In 1975, the rules regarding a filibuster were changed, making it unnecessary for the party that wanted to block a vote to be present around

the clock. Since that time, a single Senator can stop a bill by threatening a filibuster.

It is, however, within the Senate Majority Leader’s power to force the issue by ordering the Senate in session around the clock and using the sergeant-at-arms to round up absent Senators. When the filibuster was first threatened against Estrada, Bill Frist threw down the gauntlet saying that anyone wanting to filibuster to prevent the confirmation had better be willing to debate the nominee until he was allowed a vote.

Unfortunately for America, the Democrats called his bluff and proved that he did not have the backbone to make good on his threat. Once that happened, they knew they had a winning strategy to continue to shield the courts from conservative influence.

The opposition has proven they are willing to use any means necessary to win this fight. Conservatives have, in an effort to remain civil, given inch after inch, allowing them to take mile

after mile. If the pro-abortion, anti-family forces are willing to fight this hard over nominees to the federal courts, how hard will they be willing to fight to protect a majority on the highest court of the land?

If we are to have any chance of protecting a ban on arguably the most extreme form of abortion, not to mention defending all of the other family issues that we all hold dear, we must be willing to fight at least as hard as our opposition.

Victory is still very much within our reach, but we must realize that our leadership is not going to do it for us. This is a war that will be won or lost in the trenches by the ordinary foot soldier. You and I must make our voices heard loudly and clearly in the Senate Chamber, or allow abortion in America to continue totally without restriction.

Warren Kelley serves as Executive Vice President for International Christian Media, the ministry that produces Point of View Radio Talk Show.



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