

# CHALCEDON

## *Report*

Report on Historic  
Chalcedon Conference  
in Zambia

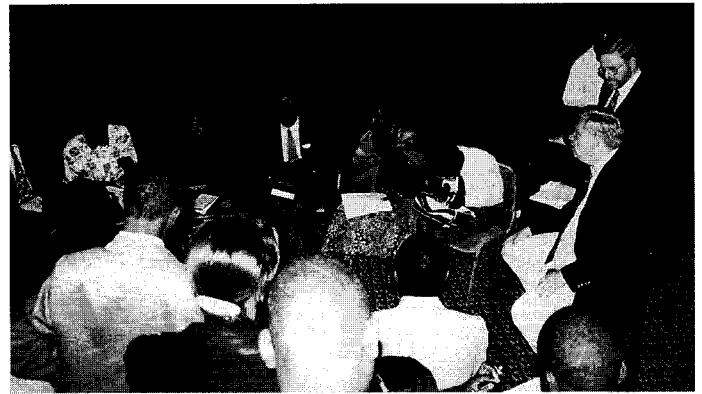
No. 387, October 1997



*Delegates and Speakers*



*Speakers, left to right: Brian Abshire, Peter Hammond, Wayne Johnson, John Jere, Andrew Sandlin, Derek Carlsen, Monte Wilson*



*Andrew Sandlin leading the formation of the Zambian Reformation Society*

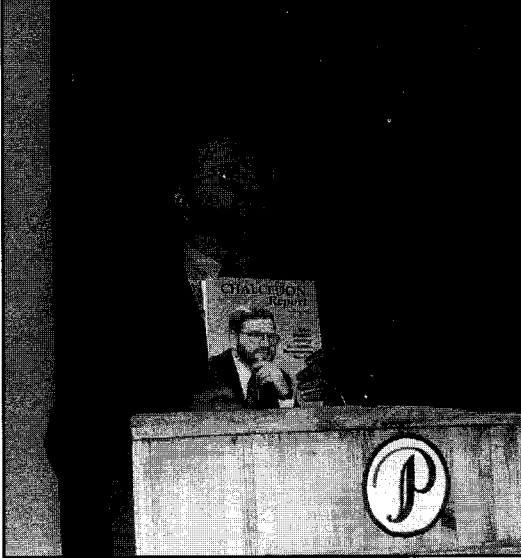
### **Plus...**

*R. J. Rushdoony on the Pastorate*  
*Mark Rushdoony on Subjection (Part 1)*  
*Joseph Braswell on a Tale of Two Cities*

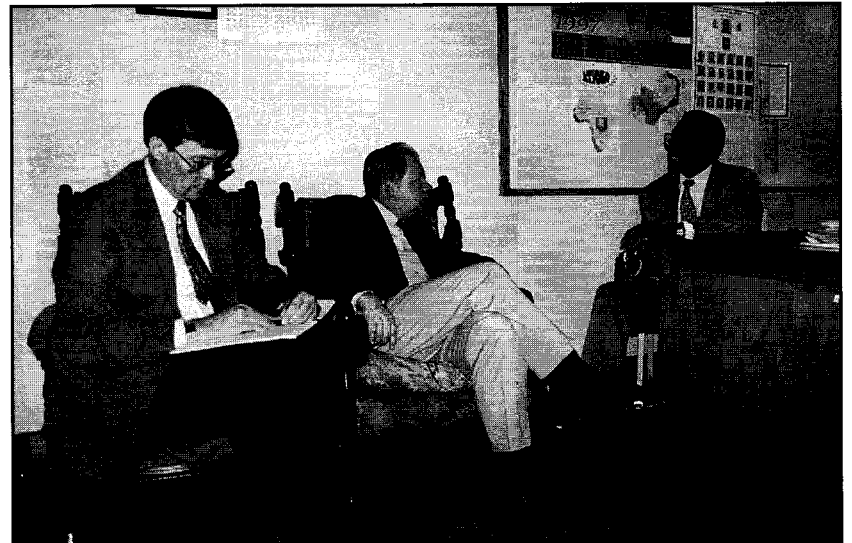


Peter Hammond chairing panel discussion

Wayne Johnson, extolling the virtues of the free market



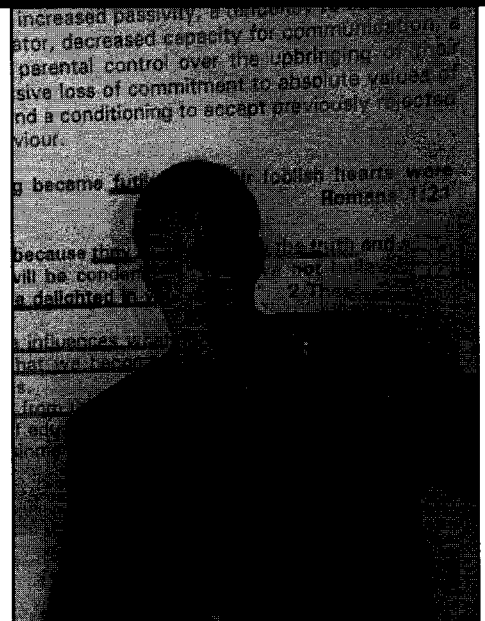
Brian Abshire, promoting the *Chalcedon Report* (and himself!)



Wayne Johnson and Andrew Sandlin conferring with the Hon. Bertram Mmembe, Deputy Minister of Education



Wayne Johnson and Andrew Sandlin discussing Christianity and Politics with the Hon. Rev. Danny Pule, Deputy Minister of Finance and Economic Development



Peter Hammond, the David Livingstone of our generation

# CHALCEDON Report

*A Monthly Report  
Dealing With the Relationship of  
Christian Faith to the World*

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### Chalcedon Scholars:

**Rev. R. J. Rushdoony** is president of Chalcedon and a leading theologian, church/state expert, and author of numerous works on the application of Biblical Law to society.

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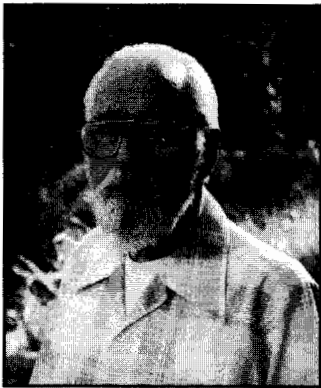
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## The Pastor and His Duties

By R. J. Rushdoony



The pastorate has changed more than a little in my lifetime, both for better and for worse. One area of improvement is preaching. Granted that too much preaching is still shallow and more fluff than food, a growing segment of the clergy is more dedicated to solid study and preaching. The silly, shallow, and embarrassing cheap sermon can still be heard, but

it is losing ground to solid Biblical preaching. We do need more of the approach of the church fathers, who went through entire books of the Bible week after week, and who gave to the church a very sound knowledge of Scripture.

An area of decline has been pastoral visitation, the regular calls on all families and on shut-ins. Some pastors do almost no visitation. Granted, this is time-consuming work, but it is necessary. In one church, I had a happy solution, elderly women who did excellent calling, and an old and very wonderful former Scottish elder and his wife, who called faithfully and told me of any person or family needing my attention.

Clearly, if all the work is left to the pastor, he will be overworked and at times pushed into a premature retirement. Churches need to examine the pastor's duties and to see how the work can be best accomplished.

One value of the participation of others in such tasks is that it carries weight for people to see members actively involved in the church's work.

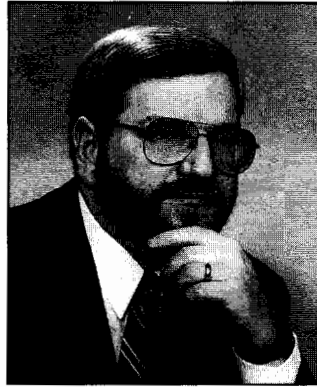
The congregation should be encouraged to pray for the pastor and the volunteer helpers. The church should provide all with some training, certainly beginning with Sunday school teachers.

In one church, we had excellent results with monthly written tests for all Sunday school students. We made it clear that we were not simply baby-sitting the children!

I do believe that the pastor should be relieved of most administrative duties. In some young churches, he is the secretary, the treasurer, the janitor, and the grounds-keeper! Little time is left for his main duties. It is time to re-think some of these things.

## Special Report: Historic Chalcedon Mission to Zambia

By Rev. Brian M. Abshire



The historic Chalcedon Conference on Christian Culture in Zambia was perhaps one of the greatest expenditures of time, money and resources that Chalcedon has ever invested in one ministry trip. Peter Hammond of Frontline Fellowship gave the conference exceptional marks. He said, "I have ministered in Zambia six times before. This conference generated the most

enthusiasm, and brought the greatest response I have ever seen. It was a brilliant success."

But Peter's assessment must be tempered by his pre-conference warning that ministering in Africa is completely different from what any of us had previously experienced.

Concerned about protecting the investment Chalcedon supporters had made to this project, the team sent Brian Abshire and Dave Warren (one of Brian's deacons from Lakeside Church) a week early to check on arrangements and do advance work. The extra time gave the team first-hand information about the social, cultural and economic problems facing this brave, but severely wounded nation.

### The Scope of the Problem Facing Zambia

The task facing Zambia is indeed daunting. First, this country should be called the poster child for Marxism. Twenty-six years of socialism has almost destroyed the nation. Under British colonialism, Zambia was a rich, prosperous nation, considered the jewel of Africa, but the Communists ate out its heart and it will be a long time recovering. The whole country is in very real need of repair, literally. Repeatedly, when we asked when was the last time maintenance had been done to a road, a building, an elevator (or whatever!), the answer was "1963," the year of independence. Yet, there are signs of recovery everywhere. Roads are being repaired, buildings put

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back into shape, people put to work. But there is an enormous amount of lost ground to recover.

Second, the people themselves are in lamentable shape, physically. The CDC in Atlanta cannot give official figures, but informed opinion is that more than 65% of the population is affected with HIV, mostly through contaminated blood (another legacy of socialized medicine!). We saw no old people on the streets, because few people live long enough to get old! Eight out of ten deaths are HIV-related. We were warned that if we suffered a life threatening injury, we would be better off risking bleeding to death by flying out of the country than receiving treatment there. Malaria, typhus and other diseases are pandemic.

Third, poverty is rampant. For many Zambians, finding enough food for the day is a full-time occupation. The problem is compounded by rural people flocking to the cities, in hopes of finding work that just does not exist. These new people put incredible stress on already overwrought social services, and the whole system is in danger of complete break-down.

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*This country should be called  
the poster child for Marxism.*

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Marxism not only destroyed the nation; it destroyed the will of many people to work diligently and effectively. The people were taught that the state would provide all their needs, and it is hard to re-learn self-reliance and take personal responsibility. Begging is common, though vigorously condemned by the government. Zambian Christians, for the most part, have not had a consistent Christian witness on the importance of hard, diligent, conscientious labor. So much foreign aid has flooded the country, that for some, the connection between work, savings and prosperity has not been made.

### **Pre-conference Preparations**

Throughout the first week before the rest of the team arrived, Brian and Dave had a whirlwind series of meetings with cabinet members, newspapers, radio stations and leaders in the community. Even though Zambia United Christian Action president John Jere had sent out over a thousand personal invitations, advertised in the newspaper and had purchased three television spots promoting the conference, the message often still had just not gotten through. We also spent time examining Zambian culture in Lusaka in detail, trying to get an understanding of the people, and the problems they face. With John's inestimable help, Brian and Dave were able to meet with a variety of people, enthuse them with the idea of the conference, and convince them to attend (one prominent member of the National Investment Center, responsible for privatizing state-owned businesses, immediately got on the phone and strong-armed a number of people in various

government ministries to come to the conference, "You WILL come to this conference won't you? I would be VERY disappointed if you are not there." It worked.)

The pre-conference radio interviews also went very well. Christian Voice radio reaches all of Africa. They were so pleased with the interview that they broadcast it three times before the conference began. ZNBC (the national radio network) and Phoenix radio (the only privately owned FM station in Zambia) were both most supportive and gave us maximum air time.

Brian preached in several churches and met with local pastors to promote the conference. Initially, it was hard to get across the importance of this conference ("What do Biblical Reformation and Christian culture have to do with preaching the gospel?"). But God was gracious and a considerable number of pastors made commitments to attend, and take the principles back to their congregations. For every pastor we ministered to, we affected at least 100 other Zambians with basic Christian Reconstruction doctrine.

We were able to write and deliver press releases to four major newspapers, which were printed in their entirety. Radio and television also used the press releases in their news sections. Hence, from a human perspective, not only did the conference receive maximum exposure, we were also able to speak, literally, to the entire nation about the basis of genuine revival and reformation.

In arranging a conference of this size and scope, there are a million details to be worked out. Peter Hammond sent one of his missionary teams ahead to help with the practical side of organizing. Robert Zins, an ex-USAF officer and Frontline Fellowship missionary to Malawi, Botswana and Mozambique was absolutely indispensable. Robert frankly ran himself ragged around Lusaka making final arrangements such as finding a sound system and tape recorder (this doesn't sound like much, but it was literally a miracle to find one in Zambia) so that both video and audio tapes could be made. He also organized the registration system so that we had the names, addresses and occupations of all the attendees (crucial for future ministry).

### **Conference Highlights**

On Wednesday, June 25, the rest of the Chalcedon Team arrived to a relieved and grateful Dave and Brian, who by this time had developed nervous ticks. Andrew Sandlin, editor of the *Chalcedon Report* and *Journal of Christian Reconstruction*; Wayne Johnson, an internationally known political consultant and Chalcedon board member; Monte Wilson, evangelist and director of Global Impact (a charitable ministry to developing nations); and Peter Hammond (Frontline Fellowship) immediately helped shape the final details. After a planning session that night, we committed the entire program to prayer and prepared for the next day's activities.

On Thursday, Andrew and Wayne met with the deputy minister of education who encouraged Chalcedon readers to start Christian schools in Zambia. Not only would they give us every possible assistance, but they also offered us free land to build schools, farms, businesses, etc! That afternoon, Wayne and Andrew met the former Marxist dictator of Zambia, Kenneth Kuanda, the same man who had imprisoned Peter

Hammond a decade ago (we decided NOT to send Peter to that particular meeting!). Wayne and Andrew boldly pressed the claims of Christ, to the shock of Kuanda's handlers. Monte Wilson did various radio interviews during the day. Meanwhile, Peter spent the day arranging the final details of the conference, especially the crucial aspects of literature distribution. We had to get good books into the right people's hands. While the Chalcedon team brought the heavy artillery (Rush's books), the Frontline folks have developed and published an enormous number of small, practically oriented books geared to the needs of the average African. Peter has this ministry down to a science.

Yet with all our advanced planning, we were still uncertain of what to expect the opening night. John had arranged for hundreds of personal phone calls to cabinet members, MP's, business men, lawyers and pastors, who had confirmed that they were going to attend. But as Peter warned us, "confirmation in Africa means nothing. African culture is very polite and respectful. They will tell you what they think you want to hear, and the reality may have nothing to do with the promises." As the time came for the conference to begin, people arrived in dribs and drabs. As the evening progressed, the conference center slowly filled. By the end of the first session, the entire venue was packed. The audience consisted of diplomats, reporters, government ministers, pastors, Bible college students and a large number of businessmen. God was gracious!

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*If we do not teach the  
Zambians God's principles,  
someone else will teach them  
Satan's.*

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Peter Hammond, at Chalcedon's request, opened the conference and chaired all the sessions. John Jere led the group in worship. Monte Wilson delivered the first lecture on "The Greatest Commandment" to a packed house, the people hanging on every word. Suffering ailments from inadvertently drinking the water, Monte still delivered a powerful and rousing talk on loving and obeying God. The response was so positive, that we immediately made some changes to the program and had Brian deliver one of his lectures entitled "Optimistic Eschatology." Zambia has been heavily influenced by pietism, undercutting their ability to reform their nation. Why try to solve social problems if the Lord is going to return soon anyway? The response to Monte and Brian's opening lectures was extremely encouraging.

Friday, the lectures began at 0900 (Zambians use the 24-hour clock) and at first, the conference hall was only partially filled. But as the day progressed, people continued to come, and by mid-day, was at almost full capacity (that's called "African

time"). Andrew Sandlin delivered a talk on "All of the Bible is for All of Life," demonstrating the authority of Scripture over every area of life to choruses of "amen!" Brian spoke again on "The Clergy and Cultural Transformation." Wayne presented an overwhelming case for limited civil government. Monte spoke twice to a rapt audience on creating wealth through hard work, saving and investing. Peter Hammond spoke on Entertainment and Exploitation. In the late afternoon, the whole team was kept busy at a panel discussion where the Zambians asked us specific questions based on the lectures.

That evening, Wayne, gave what was universally acknowledged by the team as the most important speech of the conference entitled "Humanism on Trial." It was brilliant, it was scathing, it was one of the best refutations of humanism possible. But the team feared that due to the communication problems, the speech might be going right over the audience's head. However, on the after-action reports attendees filled out, Wayne's talk was repeatedly cited as one of the most important and useful.

Saturday, we had hoped, would be our biggest day, but Africans do not think like Americans. The conference center was about three quarters full, but we continued to draw on a good representation of Zambian society. Wayne's lecture on a practical guide to effective political action was well received, though not all of the target audience was yet present. Monte spoke on capital punishment, an important issue before the national government. Peter delivered lectures on our Christian Heritage and the Great Reformation, Andrew on a thoroughly Christian education, Brian on Biblical Principles of National Defense. John Jere preached an outstanding sermon, summarizing all the previous lectures to an enthusiastic audience. Meanwhile, between lectures, groups of Zambians flocked around each of the team, asking specific questions about how to apply the principles we had been discussing.

Though the conference was attended by members of parliament, deputy ministers, and diplomats, neither the president nor the vice president ever appeared. We had been assured that both would attend, and that the vice president would open the conference. Yet, even though we had flooded his office with phone calls, faxes, and letters, and asked a number of his deputy ministers to talk with him, we could not confirm his attendance. John even called the VP's pastor, who sent the church administrator over to his house to talk to his wife! We were most frustrated, since the whole point of the conference was to speak directly to the national government about how to Christianize their nation.

In God's providence, however, we miraculously met the Vice President Sunday morning, just before we left the country! He was very apologetic about missing the conference. It seems that his personal secretary had just refused to give him any information about us. However, General Miyanda did ask us to return to Zambia, this time to speak to parliament and meet with the various members of the government. Hence, we were able to make the top-level connections that had motivated us to take on this project in the first place. Not the way we wanted, not the venue we wanted, but eventually, by God's grace, we accomplished the mission. From our meeting, we concluded

that the VP is a solid Christian man, committed to evangelical doctrine and trying to do what is right for his nation. When asked if he would kindly open the next conference with a speech, he replied, "No, speeches are for politics, I'd rather preach." You gotta love a man like that!

### Final Thoughts

In the final analysis, what did we accomplish? We ministered to over 160 delegates from 6 nations, including the High Commissioner of Malawi, the High Commissioner of Botswana, several senior members of the Zambian government, military officers of the Zambian Army and Air Force, and many pastors, teachers and businessmen. The conference left a permanent record of audio and video tapes that contain the basic principles of Christianizing a nation. The tapes may be one of our best legacies to these brave people, struggling to reformation in the most difficult of circumstances. The audio tapes will be broadcast repeatedly on Christian Voice radio. (For information about availability, contact Chalcedon.)

Furthermore, Monte Wilson is sponsoring several orphanages, and supporting several widows, Andrew Sandlin is educating a number of young ministers, providing entire libraries of Christian Reconstructionist books to several Bible colleges and the University of Lusaka, and started a Christian Reformation Society with more than 35 members. Wayne Johnson is now providentially placed to help build the MMD into a truly consistent, Christian political party that can win the next election (see Wayne Johnson's article, page 13). And our new friend, General Miyanda, just may run for president in four years time. Brian and Dave have a personal invitation from the Deputy to the Vice President to come back to Africa, lead a revival in the copper belt and go lion hunting (see Brian's column on "Wild Animals" in the June *Report*).

Despite jet lag, intestinal problems, cultural miscommunication, bad scheduling, canceled airline flights, lost bags, bad food, insane taxi drivers, rental cars without brakes, thieves breaking into our rooms in the dead of night, getting lost, (after dark, in the worst, most crime infested section of Lusaka!), we made some wonderful friends, we trained some godly and courageous pastors, we made contact with dedicated Christian leaders in the national government who want reformation and reconstruction for their nation. And we did it because of the faithful support and prayers of Chalcedon readers.

The road to Reformation is long and hard. But in the final assessment, the Chalcedon team is convinced that Zambia took an important step down that road as a direct result of this conference. During the last few hours, the "Lusaka Concord" was drawn up and approved unanimously by the entire assembly. The Concord (see page 19) is a declaration of Christian responsibility to reform Zambia according to Biblical truth. It will be presented to parliament by members from the conference, published in national newspapers and sent to pastors and churches across the country. It may well be that in future generations, when all of Africa has been reconstructed for Christ, that the Lusaka Concord may be one of her most important founding documents. We wrote it, because you sent

us there. The people received it and embraced it because despite our sin, our weakness and failings, God is sovereign and gracious and nothing will stop the advance of his glorious Kingdom.

But the work is just beginning, and for our brothers and sisters in Zambia, there is so much to be done that the task may appear overwhelming. Perhaps one small anecdote, out of a hundred we could tell, illustrates both the scope of the problem, and the heart of the Zambian people. We met many widows in Zambia, but one in particular reached our hearts. She asked us what could be done for widows. We responded that Biblically speaking, younger widows are normally to re-marry. She responded that so many men have died from HIV that there are few men left in Zambia for godly women to marry. We then said that the church, not the state, has the final responsibility for welfare. She replied that the churches are overwhelmed by the number of desperate people crying for relief.

But this one lady was undaunted. She told us that she rises each morning before sunrise and bakes pies. She then takes the pies to a local intersection where she sells them to passersby. With the money she receives, she buys ingredients for the next round of pies, and whatever is left over, is what she has for food and clothes for her family. Now as wonderful as this may be, there is more to the story. As she sold her pies on the street, her heart reached out to the orphans who are all too plentiful in Zambia. So, she took 15 of them into her house, and feeds and clothes them as well! Though an English teacher by training, she cannot make enough money to provide for basic necessities on what she would make teaching. So each day after baking and selling her pies, she home schools each of the children, using a Christian curriculum!

Now there is a success story that ought to thrill every *Chalcedon Report* reader's heart. A brave, hard-working, home schooling, entrepreneurial mother, not afraid of taking dominion by meeting real needs. Monte Wilson's ministry, Global Impact, is taking this courageous lady on as a special project. But her story could be multiplied a thousand-fold. Amid the most difficult of circumstances, the Zambians are learning the hard lessons of self-reliance, personal responsibility and diligent labor. It would be a terrible loss if their hard work is undermined by the antinomian nonsense flooding the country. If we do not teach the Zambians God's principles, someone else will teach them Satan's.

Did we change the nation of Zambia in this one conference? Of course not. At best, we cultivated some ground, planted some seeds, watered some first struggling sprouts. The Reformation in Zambia has a long way to go, and needs our ongoing encouragement and support. But, and this is an important but, they are taking the steps necessary to see the blessings of the gospel flow. Readers of the *Chalcedon Report* can, in the final analysis, consider themselves partners with their Zambian brothers and sisters in this great endeavor, a partnership that will ultimately result in the transformation of a nation.



# All of the Bible is For All of Life

By Rev. Andrew Sandlin

*Editor's note: This message was delivered at the Chalcedon Conference for Christian Culture in Lusaka, Zambia, June 28, 1997.*



**W**e're going to take a little trip this morning. I will begin by talking about the Bible, and end by showing that *every area of life* must be governed by the Bible. If you are willing to *start* with me on this trip, I am convinced you will *end* up where I will take you. The implications are astonishing, and life- and culture-transforming.

We begin our trip by answering this question: is the Bible God's Holy Word? Every Christian can only answer a loud YES. Why? Because God tells us so in the Bible. The Bible is God's inspired and infallible word (2 Tim. 3:15-17; Jn. 17:17). Why do we appeal to the Bible to prove the Bible? Because there is no higher authority that we can appeal to. What else could we appeal to prove that the Bible is the word of God? The church? But the church is made up of fallible men. How can fallible men infallibly prove an infallible Book? What about science? Should we appeal to science to prove the Bible? No, science has been shown to be wrong time and again. What about historical evidence: archaeological finds that agree with what the Bible says or teaches? We are glad for these, but they can always be variously interpreted. They don't prove the Bible to be true. The only infallible proof of the inspired, infallible Bible is the Bible itself, as the Holy Spirit seals the truth to our hearts.

For this reason, we say that the Bible is *self-authenticating*. All those who have been saved by God's Spirit have God's testimony that the Bible is the word of God. The Christian needs no proof from the church, from reason, from science, from archaeology. He *knows* the truth because God has sealed the truth to his heart (1 Jn. 2:20, 21, 27). No amount of proof can convince a hard-hearted, blind sinner (1 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 1:18). And no amount of *disproof* can shake the faith of a submissive, obedient Christian (Rom. 4:18). The only infallible proof of the Bible is the testimony of the Bible, God's Holy Word.

The Bible, then, is God's word to man. It claims to be a message from God to man (2 Pet. 1:19-21). It is written in words man can understand. We have today God's inspired, infallible word in our own tongue. We have the very living word of God at our fingertips.

## Plenary Inspiration

All of the Bible is God's word. 2 Timothy 3:16, 17 teaches us that all of the Bible is inspired, or "breathed out," by God. God is the Author of the Bible. There is no indication in the Bible that *some* is the word of God and the rest is not. Nor is there an indication that some of the Bible is "more" of God's word than other parts. For instance, the Old Testament is not less the word of God than the New Testament. There are many today who want to say that the Old Testament was only for the nation of Israel, but not for Christians. But the New Testament writers and Jesus did not treat the Old Testament this way; in their ministry the Old Testament was God's authority for all of life. The Bible writers treat *all* of the Bible as the word of God.

## Verbal Inspiration

We say that the Bible is inspired. By this we do not mean only that God inspired the writers to say what *they* wanted to say. We mean that the words of the Bible are the very words of God. We call this *verbal* inspiration (Mt. 4:4). When we read the words of the Bible, we are reading the words of God that men wrote down. They are the words of men, but they are also and mainly the words of God (Ac. 1:16). We can be certain that when we read the Bible, we are reading the words of God.

## Authoritative Revelation

If the Bible is the word of God, then the Bible is authoritative. The God that the Bible speaks to us of is the Triune God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe (Gen. 1:1; Col. 1:15-17). He does whatever he pleases (Ps. 115:3). He is Almighty (Gen. 17:1). He knows all things (Jb. 37:16). He governs all things by his unlimited power (Ps. 33:9). He made man (Gen. 1:27). He tells man what is required of him (Mic. 6:8). Where does God speak to man? In Biblical times, he spoke in dreams and visions, and by prophets; today he speaks to us in his Son (Heb. 1:1, 2). That means, in his Son's word, recorded in the Bible (Mt. 24:35). The Bible is where we turn to learn what God is like, and what he requires of us. The Bible is authoritative revelation because it is the word of God.

The Bible is a *command word*. It is not mainly for scholars and professors to nibble on. It is for us read and to obey (Ps. 119).

## The Content of Authoritative Revelation

When we turn to the Bible, what do we see? We see a story about how God created all things. Then we learn that sin entered the world, and that God put into place a plan of redemption. Man became increasingly sinful, so God sent a worldwide flood that destroyed all men except one godly man, Noah, and his family. Then we read about another godly man, Abraham, and his family, whom God chose to be in covenant with. He chose Abraham and his seed, later called Israel. Most of the Old Testament is about God's dealings with this nation. He chose them and loved them. But they sinned. So he judged them for their sin. Through it all he promised a Savior, a final way of putting away sin and providing a permanent forgiveness.

In the New Testament we read of that Savior, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. We read how he came to earth and died a cruel



death. We read how his death paid for the sins of man. We read that all who place faith in him will be saved, both now and in eternity. We read that those who place faith in him become the new chosen people of God, the New Israel. Much of the New Testament tells how this New Israel is supposed to live. The last book of the New Testament, Revelation, shows that Satan and his forces cannot defeat God's program for man and the earth.

### **God's Program for Man and the Earth**

But what *is* God's program for man and the earth? Behind both the Old Testament and the New Testament is the kingdom of God, God's righteous reign in the earth. God commissioned Adam to be his representative. Adam was to exercise dominion in the earth (*Gen. 1:27, 28*). Adam failed. But God then called Noah to the same task (*Gen. 9:1-3*). He called Abraham and Israel to the dominion task also (*Gen. 22:17*). Christ Jesus is the ultimate Dominion Man (*Ps. 110; Ac. 2:34-35*). All who are united to Christ by faith are the seed of Abraham (*Gal. 3:26-29*). They are called to steward the earth for the glory of God.

We cannot afford to miss this: *God's reason for placing man on the earth is for man to exercise dominion in the earth under God's authority*. Because man sinned, he now needs a Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord. When man is saved, he is not saved just to get ready for Heaven. He is saved to steward the earth. *The redeemed man is restored to his original calling from which he fell*. If you are a Christian, this is your main calling: to exercise dominion in the areas of life in which God has placed you. You are a king and priest under God's authority (*Rev. 1:5, 6*)

### **All Are Called To Exercise Dominion for Christ in All They Do**

If you are a husband, you are to work at your vocation and provide for your wife (*1 Tim. 5:8*), cherishing her as Christ cherishes his church (*Eph. 5:22f*). If you are also a father, you are called to train up your family according to what the Bible teaches (*Eph. 6:4*). You are called to lead your family in family worship (*Ex. 12:25-28*) and take them to a sound, Bible-believing church (*Heb. 10:25*).

If you are a businessman, you are called to make money and use it to advance Christ's kingdom (*Mt. 6:21, 33*). You do not make money to consume it on your lusts. You make money to support works like godly charity, helping the poor and disadvantaged (*1 Tim. 6:17-18*). You are called to support sound teachers of God's word and God's church (*1 Cor. 9:6-12*). You are called to support causes that will advance Christ's kingdom. The money that you make is not your own; like all else, it is God's. Therefore, you must spend it where he tells you to spend it in his word.

If you are a teacher, you are called to instruct your pupils in the Faith (*Tit. 2:1*). This does not mean only in Bible or religious instruction time. If you teach math, or reading, or history, or biology, or computer science, or any other topic, you must teach it as a Christian. This means the Bible should govern all these topics. A math teacher who begins with the Bible, the only foundation for math or any other topic, does not teach just as the math teacher who does not begin with the Bible. Of course, the non-Christian math teacher may agree

with the Christian math teacher on certain numerical facts; the non-Christian *must* agree with God-given facts if he is to have any meaning in life. All facts are God-given facts and should be taught from the God-given perspective of the Bible. If we are Christian, we must be Christian in all we do (*1 Cor. 10:31*). Teachers are called to mold young minds for the glory of God.

If you are a politician, you are called to enforce God's law in your sphere (*Ex. 21:1*). You are a minister for God (*Rom. 13:4*). You are no less a minister than a minister in church. The church minister's ministry is the church, but your ministry is the state. This means you are under God's authority. You may not do as you wish. God gave us his commandments in the Bible. The Bible tells us that the political rulers are to read the law of God so that they will rule justly (*Dt. 17:18-20*). They are called to frame the law in accord with what the Bible says. Why are murder, theft, rape, extortion, kidnapping, and blasphemy wrong and illegal? Because God's word says so, not because politicians say so. God's word is the final standard. It is the final standard in politics just like it is in everything else. Politicians are under its authority.

If you are a doctor or other medical worker, you are called to press God's authority in the job of healing. God made the human body (*Gen. 2:7*), just like he made everything else. You are called to use your wisdom and medicines to heal the sick. You are called to assist in healing the sick because they are made in God's image. You help to heal them so they can hear the message of salvation, trust in Christ, obey his word and advance his kingdom in the earth.

If you are a farm worker or other laborer, you are called to work hard to provide for yourself and your family (*Ec. 9:10*). You are called to try to advance at your job, to learn more, so you can do more for the Lord (*1 Cor. 7:21-23*). You are called to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to those who do not know him. You are called to give tithes to Christ and his work (*Mal. 2:10*), so his kingdom will advance.

If you are a lawyer or justice or law enforcement worker, you are called to deal with men according to God's law (*Is. 58:2*). You are called to help those who have been unjustly accused, who have been illegally harmed, who have been unlawfully punished (*Ps. 82:3*). Justice means righteousness, and righteousness is found in God's law in the Bible (*Ps. 119:142*).

Of course, if you are a pastor or other church worker, you are called to preach and teach the word of God and oversee and steward Christ's flock (*1 Pet. 5:1-3*). If you do this properly, you will be fulfilling your calling. You will be exercising godly dominion. In fact, your job is to teach Christians how they are best to exercise dominion. They are to govern themselves according to the word of God. Then they are to govern jobs, schools, businesses and the state according to the word of God. Your job is to teach them how best to do this.

Every Christian's real calling is to steward the earth for God's glory. Whatever your job may be, it is only there to help you to do your *real* calling—exerting godly dominion under Christ's authority.

### **The Bible and the Dominion Calling**

What is the role of the Bible in all this? *The Bible tells us how we are to do this*. It was the word of God that first alerted

Adam as to his dominion calling (*Gen. 1:27-30*). In the Old Testament it was the word of God that told Israel how it was exert dominion in the land of Canaan. This is what much of Deuteronomy is all about. In the New Testament, we are not called to exercise dominion by physical warfare (*2 Cor. 10:4*), but by obedience (*Lk. 16:9-12*) and the preaching of the gospel (*Mt. 28: 19-20*). Where do we learn how to do this? From the Bible, of course (*2 Tim. 3:17*). The Bible addresses the foundational issues of every matter we can address in our dominion calling.

### Comprehensive, Authoritative Revelation

The Bible speaks on all sorts of topics. I do not mean the Bible speaks on every conceivable topic. I mean it is not limited to a certain sort of topic. For instance, the Bible is not just about heaven and the afterlife; in fact, the Bible says very little about these topics. The Bible is not just about “spiritual” topics—it has a lot to say about very earthy things like money, sex, farming, property, politics, animals, and so forth. This indicates that the Bible is not just a “spiritual” book. *This leads us to believe that God wants to govern every area of our lives by his jurisdiction.* He is Lord of all our life. This does not mean he has not given us great freedom within his jurisdiction. If the Son has made you free, you are free indeed (*Jn. 8:36*). But God’s authority in our lives is not limited to “spiritual” matters like Bible study and prayer. If Christ is Lord of all things, then he is Lord in education, the environment, the military, politics, the economy, and all other things.

Some may say, “It is true that Christ is Lord of Christians, but he is not Lord of non-Christians.” Yet the Bible says, “The earth is Lord’s, and the fullness thereof” (*1 Cor. 10:26, 28*). Even the unsaved belong to God as his creatures (*Pr. 16:4*).

Others may say, “That may be true, but education, vocation, technology, and politics are secular matters, not religious matters.” But if Christ is Lord of all things, and if all in the earth belongs to God, and if the Bible speaks on these matters, we know they are religious matters. In fact, the Bible has a great deal to say about education, technology, music, art, politics, medicine, health, and so forth. God’s law governs these areas just like it governs family, church, prayer, and Bible study. The Bible does not give every specific answer to every specific problem, but the Bible does give many specific answers to many specific problems, and every answer to every general problem. In this way, the Bible gives an answer to every question of life; therefore, it governs every area of life.

Let me give just three simple examples.

Crime is a great problem in the Western world. It is greater in modern democracies than in just about any other form of government in the past. Modern democracies have instituted the penitentiary or prison system. Because democracies worship individual freedom, they think that the greatest reasonable punishment they can inflict is to deprive one of that freedom. This view of crime and punishment is based on man-centered sentiment, not God’s word.

The Bible knows nothing of this idea. The Biblical view of punishment is law-based. The state imposes retributive justice. This means that *restitution* is the main means of remedying

crime. That is, paying back those we have harmed. There are no “crimes against the state.” There are only crimes against individuals. If we steal, we restore at least fourfold (*Ex. 22:1*). If we intentionally harm, we pay with our own loss, or its equivalent (*Ex. 21:25*). If we offer false witness, the penalty that would have been levied against the one against whom we falsely witnessed will be levied against us (*Dt. 19:16-21*). If we murder, we must lose our own life—restitution is paid to God who alone gives life (*Gen. 9:5-6*). You see how the Bible gives the answer to the crime problem.

The same is true in politics. All politics should be Christian. This does not mean that the job of politics is to make people Christians. Families and churches should work so that people become Christians. But politics should be based on the Bible; the final court of appeal should be God’s revelation in the Bible. Why are murder, rape, and theft wrong, and why should they be criminalized? Because that’s what the Bible says. We cannot rely on what men think the law should be, whether these men be presidents, legal scholars, or the majority of the populace. We must rely on what God says in his word. The greatest law code a nation can have is the Bible (*Ex. 21:1*).

Finally, what about the economy? The Bible says that man may not steal. It says that men should be free to operate in a free market (*Mt. 25:14-30*). This means the Bible, at the foundation, supports what we call a free market. We should care for the poor and the elderly, for welfare, education, the arts, and so forth; but this should be done by private individuals, not the civil government, the state. A nation that obeys God and does not steal, a nation that does not overtax its citizens, will be blessed of God materially. If you look at the richest nations on earth, you will find that they follow God’s law in this matter. No matter how evil they may be, they are forced to follow God’s law about the free market if they expect to get and keep wealth. If these nations then turn away from God, God will judge them (this will happen to my own country unless it repents). But the problem is not the free market. God’s word states that men may own what they legitimately gain. They may trade freely with each other. This generates great wealth in just a short period. If the state wishes to consume much of this wealth, it will destroy the nation. You cannot improve on God’s word.

These are only three areas where it can be shown that the Bible must govern modern life. There are many more. In fact, there is *no* area of life that should not be governed by the Bible.

### Conclusion

I began by saying that if you started on this trip with me, you must end with me; and if you did start, you must agree with me: if Christ is Lord of all things in heaven and on earth, and if the Bible is the infallible word of God to man, and if it speaks to every area of life, then the Bible as God’s word should govern every area of life. We should look to the Bible to govern our families, churches, thoughts, state, politics, education, art, media, business, economy, technology, medicine, health, military, our future—all that we are or have.

All of the Bible is for all of life.

# “Subjection” (Part 1)

By Rev. Mark R. Rushdoony



*Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.*

*But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*

*For Adam was first formed, then Eve.*

*And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.*

*Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and*

*charity and holiness with sobriety.*

(1 Tim. 2:11-15)

Having just warned of the need for proper preparation for public prayer and the need for women to exercise godly moderation and modesty, Paul now warns women to “learn in silence with all subjection.” The silence refers principally to duty in worship, but subjection includes a constant awareness of her proper role in all areas, as Paul’s reference to the created order (v. 13) makes clear.

It is all too easy for both men and women to see the subjection here in the limited relationship of man and woman. But if women bemoan the arbitrariness of their subjection to, admittedly, sometimes less capable men, and men chauvinistically sit back in pride at “being the boss,” they both miss the point Paul makes in going back to the creation of Adam and Eve. We must see all things in terms of subjection to God and his Law-Word. All authority is derivative and all responsibility is measured in terms of where God places us. If male or female steps out of each’s rightful place, the result morally is rebellion and abandoned responsibility.

The need for subjection and obedience is obvious in the military. Authority and chain of command must be clearly identifiable to all. The military, obviously, is concerned about the clarity of command in life-and-death situations where the stakes are of immense proportions. A general must be obeyed by lesser officers who must in turn be obeyed by those under them. This is not to say that any of the officers is great or even competent at his job. It only means that his authority cannot be questioned by subordinates. To allow such would be to encourage rebellion, confusion and uncertainty. The same could be said to be true in a school, business, court or government.

It is an evident fact that women are often superior in intellect and abilities. It is no accident that most executive secretaries are women. They keep many men and organizations functioning.

But abilities and inclinations are really beside the point. God created man for a purpose and he created woman for a purpose.

Both find themselves in terms of that purpose. One of the healthiest trends in popular psychology in recent years is the emphasis on the differences between the sexes. Whether we compare their temperaments (and say that men are from Mars and women from Venus!) or compare their behavior (men like to control the TV and use the remote like a gun to destroy what they dislike, while women like to agree on a program and stick with it), we are saying that men and women are different. They think, act and emote differently. Many comedians have based their careers on giving obvious examples of these differences.

Men and women are different because God made them different in that he made them each for a purpose. We know too that mothers cannot fully fill the void of an absent father and that fathers cannot be what a mother can be. Still, we often second-guess God. The sticking point seems to be this issue of subjection. It becomes easier if we accept God’s sovereignty and then ourselves as God made us. Once we recognize that there is a sovereign God and that we are not he, it is easier to accept his order and our role in it.

The failure of most relationships, including those of the family, is the failure to acknowledge and accept the limitations they impose. Just as Adam and Eve chose to be as gods, employees choose to be in charge, students choose to challenge teachers, judges choose to make laws as they go along, and husbands, wives and children choose to deny their responsibilities. All such denial of place is a denial of responsibility as defined by God. Some seek to climb the ladder and play god. Others seek to deny their responsibility and refuse their rightful role. All such reactions reflect the sin of Adam and its consequent—chaos and disorder.

Because of sin, man has lost his bearings as to his rightful duties in life. He therefore needs to have his life given direction and purpose by means of external directives. This God has given to us in His Word. The rebel, once redeemed by Jesus Christ, can find understanding and wisdom about the things of God and about his own personal responsibilities. Sometimes the Word points to the responsibilities of men, women, children, judges, ministers, teachers and others. In this particular passage women are exhorted to remember their place. It behooves us all to remember our place. If any of us are dissatisfied with our place, we must not destroy our home, church, business, or society so that we can second-guess God in putting us there. To have contempt for God’s order is to have contempt for God. That, however, is the part of the unregenerate, who Scripture calls the fool.

We find ourselves in God’s order and in our calling. The problem with subjection is not one of roles or the sexes; it is with our own sin nature. Once we recognize ourselves as a sinner in need of subjection before the throne of God, we are better able to find and accept our role in His kingdom.

# The Role of Pastors In Reforming the Nation

By *Brian M. Abshire*

*Editor's Note: This message was delivered at the Chalcedon Conference for Christian Culture in Lusaka, Zambia, June 28, 1997.*

Where do liberty, wealth, security, safety and prosperity in a nation come from? Why do some nations prosper and others suffer poverty, disease and revolutions? Are such things mere accidents of history? Are they simply the result of certain social, cultural or environmental processes? Or does the sovereign God really rule heaven and earth? Most Christians, even supposedly "Christian" academics, often unwittingly become operational humanists when it comes to social and cultural issues. They develop their understanding of the world from the world, rather than the Word of God. And yet God's Word is so simple to understand here, that only an academic could miss it! God rules! He raises nations up and he sets them down. Kings, princes, presidents and prime ministers reign only at his will (*cf. Ps. 2:1ff*). And the Apostle Paul is very clear in Romans 1:20ff that evil men build evil nations. They cannot help but do so. When sinful men turn their backs on a holy and righteous God, that holy and righteous God turns his back on them. They become foolish in their speculations and fall into depravity and sin. In trying to live their lives in defiance of God, they inevitably bring his curses upon themselves in the form of poverty, tyranny, anarchy, perversion and finally, destruction. This is the clear, unambiguous message of Romans chapter one.

In this century, few people in the West still bow down before idols (though this is increasing), but they do bow down before the myth of the omnipotent state. Humanism has taught that the state is the solution to all our social and personal problems. If we just elect the right people, who will develop the right programs, all our problems will be solved. But God is flagrantly left out of the equation, as if his will, his commands, his principles are unimportant.

This is the fundamental problem facing every democratic system. In a nation filled with unrighteous people, wicked men demand that the civil government do things for them that it cannot possibly do, because such things belong only to God. The politicians have to promise to deliver them or they won't get elected. Yet they KNOW that they cannot give the people what they want, so they learn to lie. It does not matter what the politicians promise to do, but rather what they actually *can* do that is the issue.

Even godly elected officials get caught up in this. In order to get elected, they must promise to meet the people's expectations. But if the people's expectations are wrong or sinful, then either the godly politician has to compromise, or he won't get elected in the first place or stay in office long enough to do any good.

Therefore, the one fundamental fact of bringing Biblical Reformation to any nation is that the people themselves must be reformed first! This is crucial: the very first and most basic form of government under God is self government. If a people are to receive God's blessing, they must learn to live their lives in submission to King Jesus, bringing every thought and action into obedience to him (*2 Cor. 10:4-5*).

But how are the people to be changed? Can the King (or President, Prime Minister, etc.) change people by passing laws or developing certain programs or policies? NO! This is the fallacy of legalism, that laws can make people good. Biblically, all that Law can do is restrain sin; it cannot make people better. People are what is in their hearts, and unless their hearts have been changed, their natural inclination will be to rebel against God (and coincidentally, they will rebel against their King as well).

Hence pagan cultures tend to swing like a pendulum between two extremes. On the one hand, without some kind of law, the nation becomes anarchic, where everyone does what is right in his own eyes. Anarchy results in every man's hand being set against every other's. Hence, because all men need a certain amount of security just to live, civil governments tend to become tyrannical dictatorships in order to bring order. The King (President, Prime Minister, or what-have-you) has to pass ever more restrictive laws, employ secret police, etc., just to keep the population under control. People willingly trade their liberty to the state for the promise of security.

You cannot change a nation, unless you change the people in it. Unless a people have been freed from slavery to sin, they can never be freed from the slavery of other men. Think about the former Soviet Union. In 1917, the Russian people overthrew the Czar, who was an oppressive tyrant. Did they then become free? No, they only exchanged one master for another. The Czar murdered at best a few thousand Russians to stay in power. The Communists murdered millions, all while promising security and prosperity. Think about what has happened in the former Soviet Empire since its collapse. Marxism destroyed those nations and finally fell of its own ineptitude and gross mismanagement. But what did the people of many of those nations do with their new found freedom? They elected the very same Communists who used to oppress them right back into power! This is one of the reasons why Zambia is so important in the family of nations! When the people of Zambia got rid of their dictator, you replaced him with committed Christian leaders! No one else did that! God's hand is on this nation!

Therefore, if a people want to be blessed by God, they must be obedient to God. They must walk according to his statutes, commandments and principles, acknowledging him as the one true God. But they will learn this only if there are courageous men, willing to stand tall in an evil age and proclaim the whole counsel of God's Word. The role of pastors is, therefore, absolutely central to reforming the nation.

## The Sacraments and the Church

God has entrusted to his church, and more specifically, to his church's officers, pastors and elders, two fundamental

ministries: (a) preaching the Word and (b) administering the sacraments. On these two ministries rest the health, well-being and success of the church in God's plan. And on the well-being of the church will depend the well-being of the nation.

R. J. Rushdoony has noted that the word "sacrament" is from a Latin term that referred to the oath of allegiance that a Roman soldier took when he joined his legion. It was an oath of loyalty to the emperor and to his comrades that he would do his duty, even unto death. When we talk about the sacraments in Christian terms, we must understand that they are symbols, pictures of God's grace to us. But they are also oaths, or vows, of obedience and submission that we make to him. We don't tend to think about that way; but really, this is what we are doing whenever we perform (or receive) either of the sacraments.

In the church, the sacraments are baptism and the Lord's Supper. In baptism we are united with Christ as a member of his covenant people. It is a visible sign of God's promise of regeneration and restoration, a marking off of God's people from the world, and of their new status in Christ.

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*You cannot change a nation  
unless you change the people  
in it.*

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The visible church then admits a baptized person to the Lord's Table. While there are theological differences among Christians as to what this means, ALL Christians, regardless of denomination, will agree that Christ promises to be in communion with his people through the Lord's Supper and that he strengthens, encourages and prepares us for spiritual war. At the Lord's table, all of God's people are united with Christ and with each other. That's why we call it "communion."

And ALL Christians will agree that to take the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner is to bring God's judgment against the individual and the church (1 Cor. 11:29-32). In Corinth, some people were sick and others had actually died because they did not examine themselves and repent of their sin. Therefore, the true church must practice spiritual discipline against unrepentant sinners, lest they bring judgment on themselves. These spiritual oaths have very real physical implications.

There are two kinds of discipline related to the Lord's Supper; preventive discipline and reactive discipline. Reactive discipline is when we excommunicate someone for unrepentant sin. To excommunicate means to expel an unrepentant sinner from our midst so that God might bring him to repentance (1 Tim. 1:20). A person is "excommunicated" when he is no longer allowed to take "communion." Sadly, most Christian churches today do not practice church discipline. Some do not know about it; many are afraid of it. But according to 1 Corinthians

five and six, it is a vital ministry that we neglect at our own peril. Perhaps God does not grant his church more success in this age just because we refuse to follow his commandments regarding reactive discipline (1 Cor. 11:31).

Preventive discipline is the other side of the coin. Rather than react when someone sins, we disciple Christians, teach them, train them, instruct them how to live their lives in conformity to God's Word. Or at least, that's what we're supposed to do. Sadly, the church often sees so many cases of reactive discipline (even if she doesn't know what to do about them) because of a lack of preventive discipline.

### **The Preaching of the Word**

The key to effectual preventive discipline is the faithful preaching of the Word. It is by preaching the Word that hearts are convicted of sin, regenerated by God's grace and brought to saving faith in Christ. It is by preaching the Word that individuals grow in conformity to the image of Christ and are equipped for spiritual warfare (Col. 3:16, Eph. 6:12-17). If the key to reforming the nation lies in first reforming the people, then the people will be reformed as they become saturated with the Word of God (Ps. 119:9-11, 2 Tim. 2:15).

But pastors cannot preach what they do not know. If the pastors do not read the word of God daily, if they do not meditate upon his precepts, if they do not consider their own ways, then they will lose their people. Remember the great high priest Eli who, though himself a godly man, lost his own children? He failed to teach and refused to discipline his own family and, as a result, the nation was defeated by the Philistines and the Ark of the Covenant was lost (cf. 1 Sam. 2:12-17, 4:11).

Therefore, the key to reforming the nation is in raising up godly men who will preach the truth of the gospel and its requirements. But notice something important here: the purpose of our preaching is not to make people feel good about themselves, not to attract people to our churches, not to be well liked and respected in the community. A wicked people will call to themselves pastors who tell them only what they want to hear (1 Tim. 4:3). But like Nathan standing before King David, the nation needs pastors who will call even the King to account when he is in sin. Do you think Nathan was concerned about being liked by the King when he told him that he was in sin with Bathsheba? Do you think he was worried about his church growth figures? NO! He feared God, not men, not even the King who could have done to him, what had just been done to poor Uriah the Hittite! Nathan feared God and preached the truth.

The nation needs pastors who seek to please God, not men. And that will mean telling people things that they would rather not hear. Most people today, sadly, don't mind at all if the pastor preaches about heaven and hell, because it all seems so safely removed from real life. But let him start teaching about how the gospel ought to change your personal life, your work ethic, your relationship skills, your way of handling your family or finances, and brother, he's stopped preaching and started meddling!

Yet it is just this practical dynamic that is so often missing

in even the best of our preachers. I have heard many fine sermons throughout the years preached by very eloquent, able men. But too often, the problem was that they didn't get specific. They preached in wonderful generalities that everybody could agree with. But as someone said, "God is in the details." Pastors must understand that there is no area of life that does not belong to King Jesus and they must teach God's people how to obey him. If we don't know how to apply the Word of God, who does?

But that will offend many people. You won't always be popular. There is safety in ambiguity. Its comforting to think that when the pastor is preaching, he's preaching about someone else's sins. But when he gets specific and applies the Word of God to real life situations, that is going to get some people upset. And sometimes, your church won't grow as fast, or as much as those who compromise the Word. But let's get serious for a moment. Do you really think that on the Great and Glorious Day of Judgment, when all men must give an account of their labor before God, that Jesus is really going to give out prizes for who had the most people attend his services? Or is Jesus going to be a bit more concerned with how faithful you were in preaching his Word?

Pastors must preach Christ's commands (cf. *Jn. 14:21*). God expects his covenant people, who have been redeemed from the marketplace of sin, to obey HIM! We are now slaves to Christ (*Rom. 6:22*), and if the pastors do not teach this, the people will not grow and the nation will sink into sin. There is a Christian and Biblical way to think about money, time, politics, economics, work, family and church. When we study Christ's commandments, when we repent of our sins and strive by his grace to obey him, then he blesses us. But sadly, most pastors replace the commandments of Christ with the commandments of men (*Col. 2:20ff*).

The Great Shepherd has entrusted his sheep into the care of pastors, for the word "pastor" means a shepherd. When Jesus gave Peter his final orders, he repeated three times, "Feed my sheep" (*Jn. 21:15ff*). But what do we usually feed them? They plead for the bread of life and we give them bad doctrine, empty sentimentality and pious platitudes. How can they grow if we do not feed them spiritual meat (*Heb. 5:12ff*)? They long to drink from streams of living water and we give them the stagnant pools of human wisdom. Powerful, life-changing preaching does not come from the academic cloister, but out of the practical applications of the Word of God to real life situations.

### **Where to Begin**

The problem, of course, is that all too often pastors live lives not all that different from the people they are supposed to be helping change! For example, in my country, pastors' children are notorious for being rebellious, disrespectful and disobedient, causing much turmoil in the church. You see, the problem is that Daddy is so busy having a wonderful ministry and being thought well of by the community, that he has no time to minister to his own family. He breaks God's own commands that an elder must be one who manages his own household well (*1 Tim. 3:4-5*), and then wonders why his church is weak and

sick and ineffectual. Pastors need to start in their own homes, in their own families, loving their wives, bringing their children up in the discipline and admonition of the Lord, having consistent family worship, catechizing their children, disciplining them, making the Scriptures work in their own lives. If we do that, the heathen will beat a path to our door crying out, "What must I do to be saved?"

National reformation thus begins with personal transformation. But personal transformation will not occur apart from the normal ministries of the sacraments. If we do not preach the truth, the people will not know what God expects. If we do not hold people accountable through access to the Lord's Table, then they will have no incentive to change. Think with me for a moment. A godly father teaches his children the truth. He teaches them right from wrong, what is good from what is bad. But all children disobey their parents. What does a godly father do? Does he smile indulgently, pat them on the head and send them on their way? Well, if he wants to raise sons of hell, I can think of no better way. A godly father not only teaches his children what is right, he also disciplines them when they don't do what he told them. Does a father spank his children because he hates them, because they make him angry, because he's fed up and he wants to hurt them? Of course not! He spansk them just because he loves them. They need the pain from the spanking to learn to hate evil. Church discipline is a spanking from God's church. You cannot and will not have a healthy church, unless you have both sound preaching and discipline.

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*Perhaps God does not grant  
his church more success in this  
age just because we refuse to  
follow his commandments  
regarding reactive [church]  
discipline (1 Cor. 11:31).*

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Pastors must teach the people how to show Christian virtues in the homes, work diligently at their calling, and demonstrate in deeds, not just words, that the love of Christ is in them. A nation is transformed, not from the top down by electing politicians who promise us what we want to hear, but from the bottom up, as God gives grace to individuals, families and churches. As individual hearts are changed, as men learn to live self-governed under God's commands, as they teach their wives and children, as they reach out and share the gospel to their friends and neighbors, then the blessings of God begin to flow.

### **Conclusions**

We are a covenant people. God did not create us to live as autonomous individuals. We have a relationship with God, our



families and with our brothers and sisters; we need each other. Godly pastors need to learn how to work with their brothers in other churches. Now this may not be a problem in Zambia, but in the United States, Christian pastors often refuse to work with each other because they think they are in competition! Therefore they won't read certain books, attend certain conferences or work together on important projects, because they are afraid that their people might like some other pastor better than them! And as a result, the work of reformation is impeded and frustrated.

But there are many things too great for individual churches to do. What happens when a man is found in sin in one church, and if, in God's grace, that church has the courage to discipline him? Why he runs right down the street to another church, which is all too willing to take him right in! And does that man change the behavior that got him in trouble in the first place? Why should he, if the pastors will not work together?

There are children to be educated, widows to be cared for, men without jobs that need to be put to work, and no individual church can hope to meet all these needs. But together, we can accomplish miracles, if we trust in Jesus Christ and obey him.

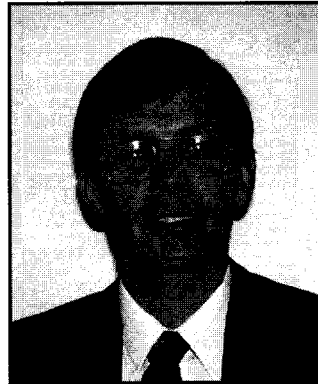
As a pastor preaches the whole Word of God, his people are motivated to step out in faith and struggle to conform their lives to God. As the sacraments are received by grateful, humble hearts, repentant for their sins and depending upon the grace and mercy of God in Christ, then God gives greater grace, the scales fall from blind eyes, and the calluses removed from hardened hearts. When the gospel is adorned with the good works of his covenant people, the heathen are befuddled and amazed at the mercy of God and through that witness. He is pleased to bring them to repentance and faith.

The role of the pastor in reforming the nation is often a lonely one. Real reformation, like revival, is not something in the hands of men; it depends upon the sovereign grace of God. Therefore, pastors must be men of devout prayer, on their faces before God, asking his grace and mercy. National reformation begins with pastors getting on their knees, alone, beseeching the Almighty Creator for mercy.

But our God is a gracious and kind God who hears the prayers of his people. If we seek, we shall find; if we ask, it shall be given unto us. John Knox was the great reformer in Scotland. The nation was spiritually dead and under God's curse before he was raised up to preach the reformation. His daily prayer was, "Lord, give me Scotland lest I die." God gave John Knox Scotland, and through Scotland, God also gave him the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. These nations were all distinctly influenced by the grace that God poured out through one lonely pastor. Are there such men in Zambia? Is there someone here who will pray, "Lord, give me Zambia, lest I die"? Your nation, your future, your children and your God, all await your response.

## Zambia: Eye of the Political Storm

By Wayne C. Johnson



In God's Providence, Zambia has thus far avoided the violence and war that is ravaging its neighbors on several fronts. This hiatus has been crucial for the survival of Zambia's fledgling democratic government and the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), the umbrella party which led the democratic resistance to victory five and one-half years ago.

At that time, Kenneth Kaunda ruled Zambia as a one-party state, losing Zambia's first free election in a stunning upset. The winner, Frederick Chiluba, was a former labor leader who had united the opposition forces under the banner of MMD. From its inception, MMD was heavily influenced by the growing evangelical church in Zambia, a fact evidenced by its proclamation of Zambia as a "Christian nation" in its Constitution.

The Chiluba presidency faced its most difficult challenge in a constitutional crisis, of sorts, in which the Parliament passed several amendments which, in effect, banned former dictator Kaunda from running for President in 1996. Kaunda then called for a boycott of the elections, which were nevertheless held last November, resulting in a second sweeping landslide for MMD. UNIP (the socialist party) and Kaunda have been waging what has, thus far, been a non-violent campaign in the international press and in the nation's courts to invalidate the elections. Meanwhile, rumors persist that he is also thought to be considering a military effort to topple Chiluba. Within the country, civil war would be exceedingly unpopular among a population which clearly cherishes civil peace and the beginnings of their free-market economy.

A more serious threat is posed by the economic war being waged by South Africa against its neighbors, consisting of a 30% government subsidy for exports. The flood of subsidized imports has decimated the textile industries of countries like Zimbabwe and Zambia, costing many jobs. The Zambian government seems nonetheless determined to forge ahead with their free-market policy and hopes to weather the storm in the long run. Currency controls are among the loosest anywhere, land is free, and investors are treated to a "one-stop shopping" permit approval system that fast-tracks investment.

Politically, Zambia is quite stable. MMD's chief worry at this point is actually the lack of a credible opposition. Opposition parties are weak and serious candidates inevitably gravitate to MMD. This has resulted in some of the usual maladies of *de facto* one-party government, including a certain degree of corruption, presumption and bureaucratic malaise, although certainly mild by regional standards.



President Chiluba appears to have a genuine following in the country, as does his vice-president Godfrey Miyanda, a former general who often can be found preaching in local churches on Sunday mornings. His stock among Christians in Zambia is particularly high. It is, of course, much too early to speculate about Chiluba's successor, since Chiluba is less than a year into his second and final five-year term of office.

There is quite a "women's movement" in Zambia, although it is heavily influenced by Christian thought. The devastating impact of the AIDS epidemic also has left Zambia with a huge population of widows and orphans, overwhelming relief efforts. In the hardest hit areas, some churches are overwhelmingly female. In all honesty, it is difficult to get too upset when a woman candidate tells me she's running because "we need more women in office." When I ask why, she tells me that women are more committed to helping the afflicted, stopping abortion and promoting fidelity in marriage and public life.

Gloria Steinem she wasn't.

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*The development of a credible opposition is crucial for the health and survival of MMD.*

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As in most foreign countries, understanding politics in Zambia requires a deliberate suspension of many preconceived notions, particularly as they relate to activism in the churches. MMD suffers acutely from a lack of genuine grass-roots political structure, made more precarious by their reelection. For most of MMD, politics is now governance, and there exists precious little party structure to nourish and develop the candidate and volunteer base which will be necessary to perpetuate their legacy.

Herein, of course, lies the opportunity for opposition parties, unencumbered as they are with the daily duties of governing. One can expect, sooner rather than later, for one of two eventualities: a genuine opposition party develops along the lines of center or center-left models, or the MMD divides into two wings as regional and parliamentary issues create divisions within the main body. In many respects, the development of a credible opposition is crucial for the health and survival of MMD.

Our fervent hope would be that MMD would recognize its strategic position and location and seek to extend its agenda across its borders, linking with and assisting other center-right Christian parties to develop in neighboring nations. This would go a long way toward the promotion of stability, liberty and prosperity in the region, as well as forcing MMD to be faithful to its mission. For MMD and for Zambia, the pressing need of the hour is accountability.

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## Our Christian Heritage

*By Peter Hammond*

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*Editor's Note: This message was delivered at the Chalcedon Conference for Christian Culture in Lusaka, Zambia, June 28, 1997.*



### The Accusation

When it comes to Christian faithfulness in witnessing and work, it is often a case of — if you're not being criticized then you're not doing your job! Those who steadfastly seek to promote Biblical principles will inevitably find themselves accused of being "intolerant," "bigoted," "narrow-minded," "hypocritical," and of "seeking to force your own views upon others"! Zambia in particular has come under severe criticism for committing itself to being a Christian nation.

Are we being "intolerant"? No, it is the secular humanists who are intolerant of Christians. The real bigots are those atheists who are seeking to infringe on the religious liberties of Christians. We are not "narrow-minded"; we stand for freedom of religion. It is the proponents of the secular state who are restricting all public views — including the schools — to the narrow humanistic view. We believe in God's creation encompassing far more than we can ever see, understand and touch. It is the atheist who refuses to believe in anything other than what his narrow materialistic perspective can see, handle or understand.

Christians are not being "hypocritical" when we stand up for our sincerely held beliefs and seek to be consistent with the Biblical injunction to love our neighbours and protect their lives, liberties and property. Rather, it is those secular humanists, who claim to be democratic, who are being hypocritical by ignoring the clear opposition of the majority of citizens to abortion, pornography and the secular state.

Are we seeking to "force our views on others"? No, we believe that God has entrusted man with personal responsibility. We will never seek to force anyone to become a Christian. We use evangelism and education — not force. What we want is for the Christian convictions of the citizens of Zambia to be respected and recognized. It was a very small percentage of atheists who imposed their will on the rest of the nation during the decades of dictatorship.

Time and again we have heard the accusation that a state which recognises Christian principles would result in "oppression." Some have tried to suggest that "more evil has been done in the name of religion." This accusation is completely unjustified by the record of history! The church has never been perfect, but its track record in history should be remembered for its achievements as well as its failures. The sins of the church should not be taken out of context, blown out of proportion and remembered forevermore as if this has been the only activity of the church. People have always done evil, and this has included many who have claimed to be Christians. However, such evil has never been done because of the Christian Faith, but in spite of it — in violation of God's Holy Laws.

### **The Pagan Record**

Before the advent of Christianity almost every culture and religion practised slavery and human sacrifice — even the highly esteemed Greek and Roman civilizations.

In the great Roman Empire, abortion was rampant and abandonment of unwanted babies was commonplace. In ancient Rome, unwanted infants were (legally) abandoned outside the city walls to die of starvation, exposure or from wild animals. Infanticide was not only legal; it was applauded. A father had the legal right to kill his children, to marry them to whomsoever he pleased or to sell them as slaves. The Greek philosophers Plato, Aristotle and Socrates lived in and accepted a culture which practised slavery and human sacrifice and glorified paedophilia (sexual abuse of children).

When missionaries went to nineteenth century China they discovered that baby girls were routinely disposed of by being put out as food for wild dogs and wolves. "Baby towers" were common, where unwanted babies were left out to die of exposure and starvation, or to be eaten alive by birds of prey. Some towns had "baby ponds" where unfortunate infants were thrown. Tragically this pagan practise of infanticide has made a comeback under Communism. In China today every family is restricted to one child. Abortions have been forced on women after they conceived any children after their quota of one. China also has had a record number of stillbirths. Often baby girls have been drowned in a bucket of water or strangled at birth by parents who would have preferred to have had a son.

Child sacrifice was common amongst the pagan religions. Fertility cults, such as those who worshipped Baal and Asherah, the Ammonites who worshipped Molech and the Phoenicians who worshipped Kronos all practised child sacrifice.

The Aztec Empire in Mexico and the Inca Empire in Peru engaged in slavery, ritual rapes and mass sacrifice. Slaves were marched up the stairs of the pyramid-type Inca temples in the Aztec Empire. At the top a priest would rip out the beating hearts — one by one.

One writer from an unexpected quarter has expressed appreciation for the positive impact of the Judeo-Christian emphasis on the sanctity of life. Jerry Adler of Newsweek (November 6, 1995) wrote: "The Gods Must Be Hungry" in response to the uncovering by archaeologists of a 12-year-old girl sacrificed by the Incas five hundred years ago. He expressed outrage at the tendency among anthropologists to justify

barbaric practises such as the ripping out of beating hearts from human offerings by Aztec priests. He quoted the following example of intellectual detachment: "A Tulane University anthropologist has written about ritual killings: 'within the context of [Aztec] culture, it all made sense. The sacrifice of human blood, and particularly the heart, was necessary to make the sun go around every day. It ties in to their stories of creation and myth. It was part of the cultural tradition.'" Adler went on to note: "'The Highest Altar' writer Patrick Tierney documented the prevalence of human sacrifice in cultures from almost every part of the world." Adler's article concluded: "The religious tradition of the West begins with a great renunciation of blood offering, when Abraham put down the knife and unbound Isaac. And it proceeds through the glorious sacrifice on Calvary, when God himself offered up His Son to redeem the world. Modern people know better than to think that the sun needs a fresh heart to rise each day, or that natural disasters can be brought off with corpses. Funny, though, we keep on killing one another."

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"Suttee" — the burning of widows on the funeral pyre of their husbands — was common when missionary William Carey arrived in India. Yet within a few years he had succeeded in India's outlawing that vile practice. It was the tireless work of Christian missionaries like Anna Bowden, Nan Mullins, Mary Slessor and Amy Carmichael which saved tens of thousands of abandoned children. They raised them in their own homes or in orphanages. And it was the persistent work of Christians which outlawed abortion, abandonment and infanticide, first in the Roman Empire, then throughout Europe and America.

Similarly, slavery was eradicated as a result of the tireless efforts of Christians such as William Wilberforce, David Livingstone and General Charles Gordon. Respect for life and liberty is a fruit of Christianity. Those promoting abortion, euthanasia and pornography are not offering us progress but only a return to pre-Christian paganism.

### **The Christian Record**

Most in our society do not seem to realize how much we owe to the Advent of Jesus Christ. Hospitals as we know them were an innovation of Christianity (hence the universal healing symbol of a cross to represent hospitals). The nursing profession was founded by Florence Nightingale out of devotion for Christ. One of history's greatest humanitarian movements, the International Red Cross, was founded by Christians in response

to the Scriptural injunction to care for the sick and suffering. Christians, such as Dr. Louis Pasteur, have fuelled some of the greatest practical advances in medicine. More hospitals and schools have been founded by Christians than by all other religions combined. The Christian church has been the supreme (and often the only) force restraining man's inhumanity towards man.

The whole concept of charity was a Christian innovation. The church of Christ has done more than any other institution in history to alleviate poverty and suffering. Before Christ, benevolence to strangers was unknown. Where the Bible became known, compassionate and unselfish sacrifice flourished. Dr. James Kennedy's book *What if Jesus Had Never Been Born?* documents a wide range of the unparalleled contributions of the Christian church.

Some time ago I led a march of over 20,000 South African Christians to the gates of our Parliament in Cape Town to protest the legalization of abortion and pornography and the establishment of a "secular state." I was invited to articulate our concerns before a select committee of our Constitutional Assembly and to answer their questions. Their main argument for the legalization of abortion seemed to be the street children. "Who will look after these unwanted street children?" they demanded.

To this I responded that every day and night some Christian is picking up the casualties of society and giving them a bath, a meal or a bed for the night. Christians have always been in the very forefront of relief aid, caring for widows, orphans and refugees.

"Sir," I declared "I have spent many accumulated months ministering on the streets to the victims of the laws you pass — those impoverished by gambling, alcoholism, drug addiction and prostitution. When Crossroads (a squatter camp) was burning, we were there the very next day with soup kitchens and blankets. When the refugees were fleeing from Marxist Mozambique, we took food, clothing and blankets to them. I've had drunkards vomit down my back while I carried them from the gutter to a place of shelter and a bath. I know that humanist politicians and socialists like to talk about caring for the poor — but it is we Christians who actually do the work. What I would like to know is this: What have any of *you* ladies and gentlemen ever done — personally — for the poor and needy?" Even as I boldly challenged them, my heart leapt a beat and I felt that I had overstated my case. Surely one or two of them must have actually been involved in works of mercy? However, I was astounded that all 50 Members of Parliament present averted their eyes, looked down and started scratching the back of their head, shuffling the papers in front of them or squirming in their seats with discomfort. Not one answered my question!

The Christian church has made more positive changes on earth than any other force or movement in history. Most of the languages of the world were first codified and put into writing by Christian missionaries. More schools and universities have been started by Christians than by any other group. The elevation of women (from the second-class status they were kept in by other religions) was a Christian achievement, as was the abolition of slavery, cannibalism, child sacrifice and widow burning. Almost every civilization and culture practiced slavery and human sacrifice before Christian influence. Those countries

which enjoy the most civil liberties are generally those lands where the Gospel of Christ has penetrated the most.

As Noah Webster, the statesman, educator and author of Webster's Dictionary, wrote: "The Bible is the chief moral cause of all that is good and the best corrector of all that is evil, in human society, the best book for regulating the temporal concerns of men, and the only book that can serve as an infallible guide . . . The principles of genuine liberty and of wise laws and administrations are to be drawn from the Bible and sustained by its authority. The man, therefore, who [undermines] the divine authority of that Book may be accessory to all the public disorders which society is doomed to suffer."

## Conclusion

Christianity gave birth to liberty. Constitutional republics, the separation of powers, limited government and freedom of conscience are a result of the Reformation.

It is the secular humanists who have a heritage of oppression. The 44 secular or atheistic states have caused the deaths of over 160 million people in this century alone. The abuse of human rights, atrocities and massacres in the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, Red China, North Korea, Eastern Europe, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique and Cuba were an inevitable result of rejecting God's Law. Either men will be governed by God's Law or they will be ruled by tyrants. "All the miseries and evils which men suffer from — vice, crime, ambition, injustice, oppression, slavery and war — proceed from their despising or neglecting the precepts contained in the Bible" (Webster).

We could also recount the unparalleled contributions made by Christians in the fields of science, art, education, economics, civil and human rights and in works of compassion and mercy. Only those ignorant of history could fail to acknowledge that Christianity has made more positive changes on earth than any other force or movement. The teachings and example of Jesus Christ have inspired the greatest acts of generosity, hospitality, self-sacrifice and service for the sick, poor and needy.

It's easy for opponents of Christianity to criticize, but what are our critics doing for the lonely, the widows, the orphans, the sick, the aged and the refugees?

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# The Law and Murder

By Monte Wilson

*Editor's Note: This message was delivered at the Chalcedon Conference for Christian Culture in Lusaka, Zambia, June 28, 1997.*



One of the most difficult concepts for modern man to accept is that religion cannot be divorced from law or ethical standards. However, isn't law merely an expression or application of morality?

Whenever someone begins stating that laws are definitions of good and bad, or that right and wrong are based upon a religious faith, the question immediately arises, Can we

legislate morality? When the question is posed in this way, however, it appears that we have a choice as to whether or not we will legislate morality. The more accurate question is, Whose morality are we going to legislate? When we define right and wrong, we have expressed a religious faith. When I declare something to be morally good, it is because it harmonizes with my religious convictions. Conversely, if it opposes my religion it is wrong. This is true whether my faith is in the civil government, intellectual reasoning, my personal desires or God. The struggle to divorce religion from law has caused considerable confusion and damage. The man who fails to consciously base his life on his religious faith will, in fact, have his life guided by someone else's religious faith. And worse, the man who fails to base his life on the religion of the Creator of the Universe, will be at war with that God.

In my nation today, we seek to tear religion away from morality and have, consequently, ripped to shreds the fabric which holds our society together. We have ceased seeing man as being created in the image of God and are murdering unborn babies. We insist that God's laws have no place in the civil government and, as a consequence, the state has become a tyrannical task-master that claims our tithes (taxes), our private property, our children and our unquestioned obedience. The question is not whether we will have a standard to live by. The question is: with Whose standard are we going to evaluate life? Whose standard is to be used in framing civil law? Whose standard do we use in determining the boundaries of the civil government? Who defines morality? As Christians, we have been given a standard; one which is universally applicable, both in identifying and solving problems and establishing a peaceful, ordered society. That standard is the Law of God as embodied in the Ten Commandments. If we fail to live by this law and lift up his moral absolutes, the only promise in the book we can claim is the one that says, Judgment begins in the house of God.

## Biblical Standards

One of the major reasons that our nations choose standards that are contrary to God's is the church's failure to hold forth the validity and the comprehensive nature of God's law. When the enemy came rushing in like a flood, rather than raising the standard of God's Word, Christians began claiming that The End was near and nothing could be done to restrain evil. The fact remains, however, that Christ has not yet returned, the enemy is still rushing in like a flood and we are still expected to obey and apply the Ten Commandments. Although a majority of serious Christians would admit to the fact that the Ten Commandments are to be obeyed, they restrict the application of those laws to one's private life. For these people, the law has nothing to do with business practices, education, civil-law and the like. Yet, if this were true, then Christians are faced with a dilemma: By what standard are we to approach those various spheres of life? Is God only sovereign at home and in the church? Can he truly be called the All-powerful sovereign God if there are areas of the universe where his law is irrelevant? Is he not, therefore, the impotent God? The source of the dilemma can be traced back to a less than orthodox view of the Old Testament and of the law in particular. When a majority of Dispensational Fundamentalists and Evangelicals began teaching that the law was not for today, they subsequently threw out God's revealed will for our daily lives. This obviously left them with a view of life which said there were certain areas of life where God was neutral. The enemy rushed in to fill the vacuum. For the average Christian, the Old Testament is quite perplexing. It is for them very difficult to harmonize grace with law, love with wrath, faith with works. But this difficulty is due to misconceptions, not only about the law, but about God himself. As J. I. Packer wrote:

God's love gave us the law, just as His love gave us the gospel, and as there is no spiritual life for us save through the gospel, which points us to Christ the Savior, so there is no spiritual health for us save as we seek in Christ's strength to keep the law, and practice the love of God and neighbor for which it calls.

God's law is as eternal and unchanging as he is because his law is an expression of his nature. We are not permitted to define righteousness as we "feel led." We should be grateful that he has not left us in the futile position of defining what is right and wrong on our own but, instead, has revealed his will to us. To ignore or to discount God's standard in any way will only result in confusion and, ultimately, judgment.

The church must return to its prophetic responsibility of declaring, demonstrating and applying the holy standard of God's law. Preaching Christ's lordship includes a Biblical analysis of how his lordship will be expressed in every area of life. The Bible says that we are to war with Satan (*Eph. 6*), that we are to destroy false philosophies that raise themselves up against God (*2 Cor. 10*), and that we are to disciple the nations (*Mt. 28*). Implicit in all three of these mandates is the command to proclaim and apply the Word of God in its entirety. What is now required of us as Christians is a thorough understanding of the standard of God in the context of contemporary life. We

need clear thinking and systematic application of God's laws for living so that the enemy can be defeated, God's kingdom be extended and his glory fill the earth.

Let us consider the national debate in Zambia concerning murder and what God's law has to say about how to deal with those who unjustly kill others. I realize, of course, that this a particularly heated debate in Christian circles due to the abuse of capital punishment by the past political leadership. However, we will not come to the truth by reacting to the errors and sins of others. What we want to know, the truth that will set Zambia free, is what God's Word has to say about this matter.

### **Thou Shall Not Murder**

What is being prohibited here is unjust violence. Some believers think that any and all violence is contrary to God's Word. However, since the same God who gave Moses this law also gave him laws concerning how to wage war, we know that he cannot be against all violent acts. Contrary to pacifism, reverence for life is not the highest value. The highest value is reverence for God (note the First Commandment). Life cannot be placed before God or our duty to obey his law. God is the author of life and has established the principles for maintaining or forfeiting that life. In relation to this commandment, we forfeit our right to life if we unjustly kill another person: "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in His own image" (*Gen. 9:6*).

Is life so cheap in the eyes of God? No, it is so valuable that to murder a human requires the criminal's execution. One of the fundamental Biblical principles of punishment is that it must fit the crime (an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth). Proper justice matters to God. We do not execute an individual for driving through a stop sign. We are not to slap the wrist of a murderer.

"Well, Monte, the law has been replaced by a new law: the law of Love." Okay, who defines love? How do we define it? Where do we go to decide what is "loving" and what is not? By what standard shall we evaluate whether or not something is based on the law of love? Love is keeping the law toward others. The God of the Old Testament is the same God who said, "I am the Lord and I change not." He is eternally the God of love, just as he is eternally the God of Justice and Wrath. As Rushdoony has noted throughout his works, grace and law are equally ultimate within the nature of God. We cannot pit one against the other lest we have God being at war with himself! Genesis 9:6 bases the penalty for murder on the fact that all humans are made in the image of God. Question: Are we still made in the image of God? If so, then this command is as valid today as it was in the time of Noah.

"What about the woman caught in adultery?" (*Jn. 8:1-11*) — The law of God states that capital punishment can occur only where there is more than one eye witness (*Num. 35:30; Dt. 19:15*). Jesus underscored the binding validity of this provision in the case of this woman. Where were the accusers? Where were the eyewitnesses? They all walked off, refusing to testify against her. By the way, if a "witness" lied under oath, the penalty for this perjury was clear. Whatever would have happened to the accused had the witness been believed, was to be applied to the false witness. If, for example, I lied about seeing you murder someone, then the penalty for that lie was death (*Dt. 19:15-21*).

Some say "If we could have perfect justice — never making mistakes — then maybe capital punishment would be wise. But we make mistakes so we should not use this form of punishment." Yes, we are fallible. However, while we must strive to elect godly men to represent a godly system of law and order, we cannot throw out a system of law because we are not gods. Perfect justice will never occur until we stand before the Throne of God! Do we, therefore, give up on our pursuit of justice?

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daily lives.*

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Others say, "It is only a valid form of punishment if you can prove that it deters crime." First, we are to base our judicial system on a commitment to obey God, not on our limited and finite view of the results of a particular form of punishment. Second, if we make deterrence a criterion for proving the validity or fallaciousness of a particular law, we open ourselves to advocating injustice. Consider Pastor John Jere. He is walking down the streets of Lusaka minding his own business, breaking no laws. Suddenly, the police run up and shoot him dead. They then turn and announce, "And the same thing will happen to anyone who breaks the laws of Zambia!" Will this deter crime? You bet it will. Is it just? Hardly. Justice requires that the punishment fit the crime.

"But what if the person repents and is converted?" Great! Praise God! If it is genuine, God will forgive and received the individual into heaven when he or she is executed. Civil penalties and spiritual penalties are not the same. The woman caught in adultery could have been forgiven (ethically) AND executed (judicially), had there been witnesses.

When God executed Jesus on the cross, it was because he bore our treasonous sins. For us to say capital punishment is inhumane is to accuse God of being diabolical. Let us not allow our cultural prejudices or our overreaction to past abuses to raise any standard that would cause God to be displeased with our nation.

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# The Lusaka Concord

## *Adopted unanimously by the delegates at the Chalcedon Conference for Christian Culture Lusaka, Zambia, June 28, 1997*

*"Unless the Lord builds the house, they who  
labor, labor in vain." (Ps. 127:1)*

Poised at the brink of the third millennium since the incarnation of the King of kings and Lord of lords, the assembled delegates at the International Conference on Biblical Reformation and Christian Culture, convening in Lusaka, Zambia, at the Pamodzi Conference Center, the 26-28th of June, in the year of our Lord, 1997, unanimously adopt the following concord:

Whereas the first commandment is to have no other God, but the living and true God, and all of life must be submitted to His authority (*Ex. 20:3*); and whereas Christ Jesus has declared that all authority has been given unto Him, and that He is the reigning King of kings and Lord of lords (*Jd. 24*); and whereas all of the Holy Scriptures are infallibly and inerrantly inspired by God and given to direct every area of life (*2 Tim. 3:16-17*); and whereas there can be no neutrality in religion, ethics, science, economics, art, civil government or indeed any other area of life, and that an authentic Christian Faith requires the subordination of every sphere of government (personal, family, church and state) to the Lordship of Christ as revealed in the Bible (*Lk. 11:23*);

Therefore, we unreservedly commit ourselves afresh to the comprehensive fulfillment of the Great Commission to disciple the nations, teaching them to observe everything that the Lord Jesus has commanded

(*Mt. 28:19-20*), specifically requiring:

A genuine and heartfelt repentance for the sin of failing to teach the whole counsel of God, substituting for a world-conquering Faith an escapist theology of defeat and thereby surrendering our nations to the world, the flesh and the devil (*2 Chr. 7:14*);

And that parents must reclaim their God-given responsibility for the education and admonition of their children, recognizing that a consistent Biblical education is crucial to the development and advancement of Christian civilization (*Eph. 6:1ff, Dt. 6:4ff, Ps. 78*, etc.);

And that the primary role of civil government is to act as God's minister of justice to punish law-breakers and to protect law-abiders (as defined by the Word of God) and that its usurpation of education and social welfare is destructive of the family, business, church, and therefore the nation (*Rom. 13:1ff, 1 Pet. 2:13-14*);

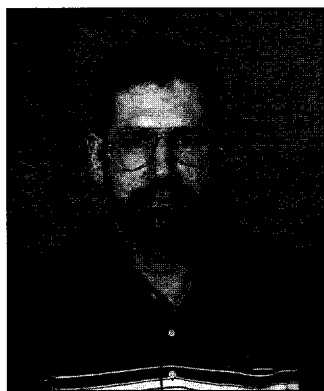
And that the church, as the whole assembly of God's people, must reclaim their responsibility to live self-governed lives under God's Law and to heed Christ's commands to minister God's grace to the needy and oppressed (*Is. 1:17*).

We eagerly anticipate and pledge to work for that Day in which every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father Almighty.

"For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our Law giver, the Lord is our King; He will save us" (*Is. 33:22*).

# A Tale Of Two Cities

By Joseph P. Braswell



Saint Augustine easily stands as one of the greatest theologians in church history and, though he was a prolific writer and the author of many outstanding tomes, his *magnum opus* is surely *The City of God*. In this classic apologetic treatise Augustine provided a unified interpretation to the ever-changing landscape of rising and falling empires, comprehending particulars

under a universal by relating what had heretofore seemed to be unrelated (unconnected) events, separated by space and time.

## Augustine's Contribution

With Augustine's philosophy of history, the idea of history was enlarged and broadened. It was no longer culturally relative or intra-cultural in an ethnic or nationalistic sense; it was no longer merely the story of one nation or people, or the rise and fall of one empire — parochial stories meaningful only to the society in question during its brief moment in the sun. These limited and diverse traditions (histories of peoples) could be gathered together — fitted together — as components of a larger whole: a *universal* history, a *human* history, a *world* history that, in its cosmic breadth and sweep from creation to consummation, transcended any and every provincialist ethnocentricity. It was the larger drama (the big picture) that gave meaning to the brief times of ascendancy that the many empires successively enjoyed on the world stage. Rather than being but instances of endlessly repeated, ultimately meaningless cycles of nations and empires simply arising successively out of shadowy mythology and passing into shadowy oblivion in the Heraclitean stream of directionless time, each era and each participant — Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome — contributed something to the progression of the one story.

Augustine saw human history as at bottom a tale of two cities: the City of God and the City of Man. By speaking thus of a *city*, Augustine intended a *society*: people bonded together by common values and/or mutual interests into a cooperative *community*. However, he did not view this social organization (the social contract) as having a primarily material base (*e.g.*, economics and an organization of social structures — relations of production — around the means of production). Instead, he viewed these societies as united in spirit by an *idea* or *story*. In other words, the social cohesion of these societies — the social fabric that binds the community — is rooted in a shared cultural vision that provides community self-understanding and self-definition. That cultural self-identity and cultural project is expressive of, is rooted in, fundamentally *religious* beliefs and

values — a meaning-providing metaphysical *totality-vision* or *world-and-life-view* — that is collectively shared by the members of the community, serving as a common ground of social constitution and cooperation. The communities are essentially constituted as *communities of faith*.

## Two Cities, Two Lives

As Augustine put the matter, the two societies arise out of two distinct *loves*: the love of God and the love of self, respectively. By such love he meant an absolute and supreme devotion. The object of such love is that which we most value and cherish, that chief end to which we wholeheartedly give ourselves to serve and which commands our primary allegiance. He thus thought in terms of basic *existential orientations*, of *basic commitments* that ethically predispose us and direct us in our comportment with ultimate reality, determining what we regard as our highest good and the object of our ultimate concern.

Augustine saw these two loves as polar opposites, as mutually exclusive and diametrically opposed, and interpreted human history as the conflict between these antithetical principles. One cannot serve two masters; there can be no divided loyalty or doublemindedness, for the claim of each master is *all or nothing* — absolutist and totalitarian in nature. However, it is not simply that a wholehearted, single-minded commitment is by nature exclusive and cannot allow for rivals. The objects of such love are themselves set in the starkest contrast as radically different in character. What fellowship has light with darkness, righteousness with wickedness, Christ with Belial, or the temple of God with idols? The wisdom and power of God stand over against the wisdom and power of the world in absolute antithesis, and friendship with the world is enmity with God. Thus, rather than merely being a case of intolerance for competing ideologies and a drive toward a monolithic conformity against pluralism and diversity, the antithesis is a reflection of the suprahuman warfare between God and the demonic powers as an antithesis between good and evil in the absolute sense.

For Augustine, the religious dimension of human existence is basic. Man as the image of God is fundamentally a *religious being*. He must refer himself and all his life to an absolute reference-point, be this the true God or an idol generated from a false absolutization of the relative (a worshipping of the creature rather than the Creator). The very constitution of man as a religious being necessitates that he either must refer himself to his true reference-point and origin of meaning, or he must exchange the truth for a lie and worship a false god generated from his own darkened imagination. Because as the image of God he ever exists intrinsically as *being-unto-God* (necessarily related to God), man is in this religious act of reference either obedient or disobedient to his divine calling to image God; he is either a covenant-breaker or a covenant-keeper, but he inescapably remains a *covenant being*. Accordingly, his every activity remains essentially covenantal in character as a response to the divine calling, to the covenantal revelation presented to him in every fact of his situation. His every response is fundamentally religious and ethical — either as obedient or as rebellious and idolatrous. He chooses whom he will serve, but



he must, as a law of his created being, religiously serve something deemed by him to be his highest good and ultimate concern. In this he merely recognizes his radical self-insufficiency — his dependence, relativity, or contingency — and seeks to identify that upon which he is ultimately dependent.

However, in idolatrously absolutizing an aspect of creation (a relative good) and seeking to serve it, fallen man is actually seeking only to serve himself. In every false religion it is not simply the object of devotion that is false (the exchange of the truth of God for a lie); *the very act of piety itself is corrupted and distorted*. That is, sinful man always has ulterior motives for his devotion to his god-concept; he is self-concerned and self-serving, acting in self-centered self-interest for self-fulfillment. All false religion is at bottom egoistic.

Of course, the true service of the true God is true self-fulfillment, and we can speak of a proper love of self — an affirmation of one's self-hood, a striving toward self-actualization — in Christian-Theistic ethics. We speak of the Kingdom of God as man's *highest good* and the chief end of man being to glorify God *and enjoy him forever*. We therein recognize that man is a hungry and thirsty being — a self-insufficient and dependent being — who must find satisfaction for his needs and existential longings, who is driven by a restless heart to seek rest. We recognize that there is nothing wrong as such in man's seeking "glory and honor and immortality" (*Rom. 2:7*) as he seeks the fulfillment of his being in the LORD as his "exceedingly great reward" (*Gen. 15:1*), and we may even (with due qualifications) call this a form of enlightened self-interest in which to lose one's life is to gain it, to acquire the one thing needful. However, fallen man perverts this quest for self-realization by absolutizing his self-hood as the *final* (or ultimate) reference-point, by making all things relative to what he perversely imagines to be his needs and desires according to a false self-image (the self-delusion of autonomy) and an altogether selfish impulse. He is curved in upon himself egocentrically in self-preoccupation and self-absorption. He deifies himself and so serves the god of his own belly — an infinite and insatiable, all-consuming appetite for things that cannot truly satisfy his soul.

Thus, in a reflexive, *dialectical* relation, man defines himself in terms of what he believes he needs (not simply for survival and subsistence, but for *quality of life* and *felicity* as well). For example, if he absolutizes the material, he conceives of himself in these terms, projecting a false self-image of materialistic man with wholly material needs, as in Marxism. At any rate, fallen man in his fallen piety serves his gods solely for what they can do for him, for his being and well-being. His is a legalistic, thoroughly self-serving religion of using the idol-gods as means to an end; it is a religion that, seeking to manipulate the divine and so control his own destiny, is truly an absolutized love of self.

### **The Creed and Agenda of the City of Man**

The City of Man, according to Augustine, is rooted in the love of self (albeit, the false self projected by his would-be autonomous act of self-definition and self-understanding). This

religious love is an idolatrous commitment that is egocentric and egoistic. It is a narcissistic self-absolutization (self-deification) that expresses the will to absolute autonomy in revolt against the theonomous and theocentric love of God. This self-love lays claim to the earth as solely and exclusively man's, as material with which he can do as he wills, according to his autonomous project. Man answers to no higher authority in doing what he will with that which he has appropriated as his property and possession; enjoyment of the world in self-gratification is the end, and this end justifies any and every means that serve its attainment.

The City of Man thus begins upon the assumption of a state of nature in which a community is formed by a *humanistic* social contract. We again cannot but note the dialectical tensions involved in humanism, for humanism must begin with a state of nature and thus with a state of anarchy — of egoistic individualism — that must give way to a social contract based on mutual interests and mutual need-fulfillment as but a means to the ends of each autonomous individual. Each individual, in coming together in the formation of a community, must (however grudgingly) subordinate his interests to the collective good so that the community may in turn serve him in the ultimate attainment of his individual good. He forfeits certain freedoms in a voluntary submission to social order and institutional authority in order that the community may make him free in other respects: having a more stable and secure existence under the protection of laws and with the material benefits that come from cooperation and a division of labor. He deifies the state and ascribes to it an absolute authority in the interests of what he believes to be his own salvation.

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*Augustine recognized that there can be no real community without justice and, because justice depends on the Law of God, the City of Man would ever tend toward disintegration.*

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Statism can be the only result of this social contract, for ethics are conventional. There is no moral order that transcends the social context; it is the community of persons that creates the rules that constitute and regulate the community, and the community is the necessary context for the individual's meaningful existence. In an impersonal universe there is no higher personal context than human society, and it is this exclusively human social context that institutes conventions of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behavior in the public domain. If the love of self can be fulfilled only in social

cooperation, then the social order must be preserved by absolute allegiance to the social ethic that, as a categorically imperative expression of universalizable conducts judged to be beneficial to the preservation and proper functioning of the group (e.g., not lying, killing, stealing), ultimately serves the being and well-being of the several citizens in their dependence on the cooperative effort of the collective. The state formally sanctions and enforces the reversible principles of behavior that, expressing the expectations of the individuals involved with regard to opportunities for their personal self-fulfillment, have been universalized by the consensus of the social contract to bind all members of the community to the common good.

### **The Failure of the City of Man**

Yet, this order cannot but be unstable, fraught with a tension between the One and the Many. The sense of duty to the common good often comes in conflict with individual freedom. There is a constant oscillation between anarchy and statism, a struggle over rights or projects in conflict and an ongoing dispute over which is to be subordinated to which. The threat of disintegration ever looms over the society and only force can hold the society together. Yet the centralization of power in the State in turn evokes yet greater resistance from the citizens as it, in the name of a common good that seeks to restrict personal freedom (an atomistic, anarchistic individualism), increasingly infringes on the opportunities for personal self-fulfillment by the individuals whose consent creates and sustains the social contract. Ultimate sacrifice to the collective cannot be reconciled with that which called the community into existence in the first place.

Augustine recognized that there can be no real community without justice and, because justice depends upon the Law of God, the City of Man would ever tend toward disintegration. With every man being his own god and seeking his own ends, there can be no true community spirit of loving one's neighbor and giving oneself to service; one cannot treat others as an end rather than a means if one begins from the autonomous individual and views cooperation self-servingly as but a means to one's self-interests. Even if an order of enlightened self-interest can be established wherein all parties look at the big picture and the long-term consequences in their choices (thus refraining from actions detrimental to the social fabric), if each member ultimately chooses for his own good, ultimate sacrifice to the good of others is inconceivable without a civil religion that posits the postulates of practical reason as regulative principles. Self-interest must be projected beyond the earthly-temporal into a context of eternal reward, enlarging the big picture of long-term beneficial consequences to include earthly-temporal sacrifice of self-fulfillment. Thus, public gods are useful; civil religion serves the state and inspires patriotism, encouraging that public morality and spirit of civic duty necessary for the survival of the social order.

### **The Theonomic Implications of Augustine**

Civil religion is an inescapable fact of any civil order. For the organization of the City of Man into tribes and nations there were tribal gods and national deities — the gods of Egypt; the gods of the Philistines or Canaanites; the gods of Babylon,

Greece, or Rome — who provided to these societies a mythological foundation that ordained and sanctioned the ruling order, providing a “divine right” for the rulers and a purpose and destiny for the people. We must not be deceived when our own national leaders invoke “God” to command our loyalty and call us to a “sacred task” of public service. For the City of Man such religion is purely utilitarian and pragmatic; it is good politics.

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*There is no reason why we cannot establish Christian-Theism as a civil religion, as Theonomy advocates. However, this civil religion cannot be a tool of the state, something to be manipulated to further statist goals.*

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If, however, every civil order must have a civil religion, it follows that there is no reason why we cannot establish Christian-Theism as a civil religion, as Theonomy advocates. However, this civil religion cannot be a tool of the state, something to be manipulated to further statist goals. The Theonomic civil religion by its very nature requires the state to be under God and to act responsibly and justly in his name. It obliges the state to acknowledge its ministerial role and its accountability to God to act faithfully in the discharge of its appointed duties. In such a conception, religion is not simply invoked to legitimize the state, to bless its autonomous agenda and assert a divine right to do whatsoever it pleases. It rather legitimizes the state as God's ordained minister of justice, divinely commissioned to execute a delegated and strictly circumscribed, *limited* authority in executing God's judgments according to the Law of God. Theonomy thus inherently challenges the political philosophy of the City of Man and will never be implemented by those who view religion in utilitarian terms as but a means for establishing a workable social order. It can only come by regeneration and grassroots faith (the vision of the City of God), not by top-down legislation; it will come as a recognition of the truth, not as a useful fiction and an opiate of the people encouraged by the ruling class.

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*Joseph Braswell has done undergraduate and graduate work in philosophy at the University of South Florida, but his real interest is in theology and Biblical studies. He has published several articles in various journals (including the Westminster Theological Journal, The Journal of Christian Reconstruction, and the Chalcedon Report). He currently resides in Palatka, Florida and is engaged in research and writing.*

# Smoke If You Want, and Pay for It

By Sheldon Richman



Tobacco has become a four-letter word. The cigarette companies are getting it from all sides. The federal Food and Drug Administration wants to regulate tobacco as a drug. State governments are suing to recover Medicare money spent on elderly people with tobacco-related illnesses. Heirs of long-time smokers are suing for wrongful death.

It's not a happy time in the business.

It's so bad that the companies are negotiating settlements with several states; they are willing to pay billions of dollars now in exchange for immunity from future suits. That was all complicated recently when R. J. Reynolds prevailed in a private suit in Florida.

The great tobacco controversy shows how far we have come from being a society of self-responsible people. It also shows how we fail to think in common-sense terms. To begin with, no one is forced to take up smoking. It's a choice. Usually the first smoke is unpleasant. If there's any force involved, it's a person's forcing himself to try the second cigarette. It's a little absurd for someone who has smoked 30 or 40 years to sue a tobacco company. Since the 1960s, cigarette packages have warned that smoking may be a health hazard. The term "coffin nail" was coined to derogate cigarettes in the 19th century. In 1607 King James I said tobacco was "noxious to the lung." That seems like sufficient notice that smoking entails some risk.

It is true that the tobacco companies denied the danger. Scientific evidence for the cause of disease can be tricky, especially at the beginning. Correlation is not causation. But even if we assume the worst about the companies, they were not the only source of information, as we've seen. In recent years, smokers have tended to overrate the health risk of cigarettes. So people have known the risks and yet have still chosen to smoke.

Ah, but did they choose? Weren't they addicted to nicotine by the scoundrels in the tobacco business? Here we get into important semantic issues. It may be easy to form a habit of smoking cigarettes, but that is not the same thing as addiction. In the relationship between a person and a cigarette, the active ingredient is the person. You habituate yourself to smoking cigarettes. They do not addict you. There's a big difference.

Moreover, people quit smoking all the time, often without any help whatsoever. There are more ex-smokers than smokers walking around. It may be hard to stop, but it isn't impossible. People choose to start smoking. People choose to keep smoking.

When it's important enough to them, people choose to stop smoking.

The private suits against the tobacco companies are another sad mark of our era: when something goes wrong, sue someone.

The Medicare suits are even more ludicrous. The theory is that the ailments suffered by elderly smokers drain the states' Medicare coffers. So the deep-pocketed tobacco companies should pay. What a mess of fallacy!

Why should the companies pay? When people get heart disease, states don't sue beef cattle farmers or meat packers. It is more than likely that people who die prematurely from smoking save the taxpayers money. Those people will not linger for years in costly nursing homes or get far more costly diseases like Alzheimer's. Maybe the tobacco companies should get bonuses.

The Congressional Budget Office a few years ago studied the question of how high the cigarette tax should be raised to offset the medical costs allegedly imposed on society by smokers. The findings were stunning: to truly reflect those costs, said the CBO, the tax would have to be cut.

The best way to clear up the cost problem is to abolish Medicare and other forced taxpayer-funded medical care. Let people buy health insurance and pay any added premiums associated with smoking. That policy would be most suitable for a free society.

As the old Spanish proverb had it: Take what you want, and pay for it.

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*Sheldon Richman is vice president of policy affairs at The Future of Freedom Foundation in Fairfax, Virginia*

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# Is Inflation Dead?

By Hans F. Sennholz

Mainstream economists are telling us that "there's little or no danger of inflation." The rates of inflation have come down significantly in recent years and can be expected to remain benign in the future. In the developed countries, average price inflation in 1995 was about 2.5 percent. In most less developed countries, it moderated to 8 percent. In Latin America, the Middle East and Eastern Europe, it continued at above-average rates, some even at triple-digit rates.

When compared with the 1970s and 80s the rates of inflation in developed countries, no matter how you may define it, have indeed come down. Yet, despite the visible improvements in central bank behavior in recent years, it is certainly premature to say inflation is down for the count. The monetary system that bred past inflations remains unchanged. It grants legislators and regulators the right to manipulate the country's money supply to suit their political ends.

At the present, the central banks of the developed countries are aggressively expanding their credits because of the fear of recession. With unemployment running high, the German Bundesbank recently cut its discount rate to a record low of 2.5 percent, hoping to revive the dragging economy. The Bank of Japan, which is an important creditor to the U. S. government, last year lowered its fiscal discount rate to a record low — to one half of one percent. When compared with these "stalwarts" of hard money, the Federal Reserve System, which presently is charging 5 percent for its credits, looks like a miser and tightwad. Actually, it has no choice but to keep its rates high because the United States is a low-saving, high-consumption, heavily indebted country with a chronic current-account deficit.

In developing countries, inflation is still an everyday experience. In Asia the rate remains relatively high at some 12 percent. Turkey is the worst, with an inflation rate over 75 percent. In the economies of the former Soviet Union the average rate is estimated at 150 percent, with that of Belarus at 700 percent, Ukraine at 300 percent, Azerbaijan at 460 percent, and Tajikistan at 390 percent.

Everywhere central banks are creating new credits and printing new money. The stock of money is growing faster than at any time in the 1990s. Moreover, the United States is experiencing an explosive growth of securitized debt, what most economists call "rising money velocity." Yet, the price inflation of goods and services remains rather moderate. The rampant growth of leveraged speculation and corporate acquisitions point at a different kind of inflation: that of existing capital assets. Instead of soaring prices of goods and services, we see the effects of easy money and credit in the financial markets. Inflation is not dead but very much alive. It has moved from Main Street to Wall Street.

Most developed countries are mired in economic stagnation or even recession. Japan continues to suffer the readjustment pains from its credit expansion binge of the 1980s. The European countries are chafing under crushing loads of

welfarism and soaring rates of unemployment. The European monetary ease, led by the Bundesbank, is failing to stimulate economic production but instead is fueling a great financial-asset inflation; European stock prices are hitting one record after another. The United States, which is the only country not mired in stagnation, is leading the way in asset inflation.

Our age of inflation has deep roots in doctrines and theories that disparage economic freedom and deny the freedom of contract. Faulty monetary thought paved the way for the age of monetary destruction by allowing governments the world over to create monopolistic banks of issue and make their money "legal tender," which everyone is forced to accept no matter how depreciated it may be. To refuse to accept it is to forfeit income and wealth.

It was in 1971, finally, that the U. S. government opened the inflation flood gates by removing the last deterrent, the gold reserve requirement. Building on political force and managerial discretion, it created the paper dollar standard.

Depend on it, the legislators and regulators who gave us such a system will bring us more inflation in years to come.

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*Hans F. Sennholz is president of The Foundation for Economic Education. "The Fear of Big Business" is available on computer disk at no charge. Please contact Claudia Balestra at (914) 591-7230 with any questions.*

## Christian Reconstruction Explained on Videocassette

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# Whose Kingdom Is Here? Christian Reconstruction in the Former USSR

By Roman Medvid

*The following article was first published in Russian in the Christian newspaper, Predvestnik ("The Forerunner") in Kiev, Ukraine. Roman Medvid as serves the managing editor of Predvestnik which is distributed in 10 of the republics of the former USSR. He also translated this article into English for publication in the Chalcedon Report.*

*The kingdom belongs to the Lord, and He rules over the nations.*

(Ps. 22:28)

The revealed will of God is not obviously seen in every event in history. Temporal setbacks of Christianity and the growth of Islam are vivid examples of this. However, the growth of the kingdom of God predicted in the Holy Scriptures surely contains a message for us.

At the very dawn of the Soviet state, the Russian Communist leaders were too well aware of the fact that this country could not permanently exist unless it received some foreign support. The only socialist island washed by the hostile waters of capitalist countries had little chance to survive. And the 1917 socialist revolution in Russia was carried out with expectations of outside support.

Those revolutionaries who gained power in Russia believed they were at the threshold of a revolutionary movement sweeping all countries worldwide; they were possessed with the idea of "the world revolution." They flattered themselves with the thought that they were pioneers in the universal breakthrough into happiness. There could be hardly another reason to explain the rush and eagerness of rulers to throw the country into the pit of a bloody Civil War in Russia in the years after the Great War.

"During the Civil War, the Bolshevik party believed that the revolution in Russia was just a beginning of transformation of the entire world, and that socialist revolutions would happen in many developed capitalist countries."<sup>1</sup>

As the economy of the newly emerged Soviet Russia needed close collaboration with its neighbors, hopes of economic advancement were also linked with the goal of world revolution. For example, Zinoviev, one of the chief leaders and a co-worker with Lenin, set the date for it: as early as 1927. No wonder the Communist leadership was surprised and upset with the reluctance of the foreign proletariat to use the experience of Russia and carry on the struggle for the Communist cause.

Expressing his confidence in the forthcoming revolution in Europe, Lenin made remarks that "all our hopes of the ultimate socialist victory are founded on this confidence and on this scientific foresight."<sup>2</sup> He also wrote, "There cannot be a shadow

of doubt about the ultimate outcome in the world struggle. In this aspect the ultimate victory of socialism is wholly and certainly secured."<sup>3</sup>

It is noteworthy that the Soviet government was constantly trying to present evidence for the vitality of its cause. It did its best to promote Communist ideas in other countries: in Asia (China, Afghanistan, North Korea, Vietnam), in Africa (Angola), in Europe (the eastern Communist bloc), in the other hemisphere (Cuba). Thus the world revolution had a strong military provision.

Once a superpower, the Soviet Union has disintegrated, and nowadays the victory of socialism in it is even more obscure. The question we should ask ourselves is: Could it possibly have gotten the strength and power to enlarge itself and absorb the whole world with its contrary social order?

This topic is relevant today since many godless ideologies are headed toward the goal of world dominion. Fascist leaders, for example, proclaim at their gatherings in Russia, "The Aryan organization will be back, the Aryan order will return and reside worldwide — it will surely return to stay forever . . . Our national revolution that is being started in Russia is a beginning of the general national revolution, which will bring order into every conglomerate of the universe."<sup>4</sup>

In order to evaluate such claims, the general question we must consider is: What laws are the foundation of this world? Who rules in it? How should an individual live to prosper in it? What ideas and acts are doomed to failure and which ones receive sanction and support?

## The Master Over Historical Development

All orthodox Christians have always believed that God is The Lord over history. It is he who creates history — everything that happens on the earth is in accord with his Providence. The Bible constantly tells us that it is from God that the initial decision emerges to found and lift up a nation or to bring it down and break it as the potter smashes his creation.

The Bible also abounds in cases of God's judgment on rebellious and wicked nations. If the state keeps transgressing God's commandments and turns into a tyrant which deludes itself into believing it is the only sovereign in the land, God will come down on this country in judgment fire. He can hear the outcry of the afflicted. He does answer people's tears and sufferings. On the other hand, individuals in any nation that keep his commandments are pleasing in his sight. Their nation can be blessed by him.

Did the Soviet Union break God's regulations? It certainly did.

First of all, the ideology of the country was from the outset against God. The philosophy of scientific materialism (that is, belief in non-existence of God allegedly founded on scientific evidence) was to replace any idea of God. But the first commandment asserts the existence of God (*Ex. 20:2-3*), and atheists are called "fools" in the Bible (*Ps. 14:1*). At the very beginning, God denied any soundness of mind in Soviet Russia.

Then, the methods of the Communist revolutionaries always involved terror and murder, and this light and thoughtless way

of treating human lives breaks the commandment: “Thou shall not kill.” Substantial redistribution of wealth, from the rich to the poor, was a violation of the commandments: “Thou shall not steal” and “Thou shall not covet.”

The Bible contains many references to a cup filling up with the measure of the people’s lawlessness. When this measure reaches its peak, God unleashes his judgment. While many countries and their official states may be listed as transgressors of God’s law, it is obvious that the cup of the USSR brimmed with resistance to God — murder, theft, etc. After 70 years of its existence, God erased the USSR from the face of the earth. This name can only be seen in history reviews, in the transcription “Made in USSR” on old things, and in posters on rallies of the Communist Party which still cherishes the thought of a triumphal comeback.

### **The Whole World Is Under Control of the Evil One?**

As we are sure of God directing the world’s events, we also are familiar with the Biblical expression: “The whole world is under control of the evil one” (1 Jn. 5:19). This Scripture, however, is very often misunderstood. According to this wrong interpretation, whatever we do in this world, whatever we handle — all such activity is sinful. The whole world is nearing its total collapse. The main task of Christians is to wait till it is all over, to be involved in the matters of this world as little as possible. Though such an opinion might seem very “spiritual,” it is not Biblical whatsoever. It much more fits hermit monks.

The Bible many times declares God to be the King of kings and the Lord over all lords. He always wins, not loses in history. There have been many tyrants, powerful God-haters, blood-shedding empires, and they are no more — God has destroyed them, and has even erased memory of some! His truth, on the other hand, stands up to this day shining brightly.

The Scriptures very often describe the wicked and God-resistors as dust, chaff that is blown away in a flash by the wind (Ps. 1:4, 35:5, 37:10, 83:13). And it’s the righteous who will inherit the earth. Even though the godless are prospering, they put their wealth in store for the righteous (Pr. 13:22).

It would be also profitable to consider two Scriptures that are most often used to defend Christian escapism.

(1) *Matthew 4:8-9*: “Again, the devil took Him [Christ] to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ‘All this I will give you,’ he said. . . .”

It has been stated that the devil had real power over all the world’s kingdoms and was at liberty to pass them on to Jesus. Therefore, if the devil is the ruler of all kingdoms, then there is one thing left for Christians to do — to withdraw from involvement in these kingdoms.

In this statement it is overlooked that Satan is a liar and the father of lies (Jn. 8:44), and his words can hardly be trusted. In the above mentioned Scripture from Matthew, he was actually claiming God’s prerogative.

Many centuries before this happened, God — and certainly not his enemy — had been called “God over all the kingdoms

of the earth” (2 Kin. 19:15) and “the Ruler over the nations” (Ps. 22:28). It’s God who has real power to treat the world’s kingdoms freely according to his good pleasure.

The devil has power over nations only in that these nations are ignorant of God’s truth. The responsibility to bring God’s truth — the gospel — lies on Christ’s messengers (see *Ac. 26:18*). The Scriptures prophesy that finally all nations will turn to God (*Is. 11:10, 60:3; Ps. 22:27; 47; 89:9*), and thus the kingdom of darkness will be pressed out of the earth. “The earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea” (*Is. 11:9*).

(2) *John 18:36*: “Jesus said, ‘My kingdom is not of this world.’”

It is true that the Kingdom of God is not conceived in minds of earthly humans, smart as they might be; it comes down from heaven. But there’s something that has changed since Pilate’s interrogation of Jesus.

When speaking of his kingdom being not of this world, Jesus made his point by saying that he has no servant around to defend him. He was not speaking of angels, for the Father could answer his prayer and send thousands of angels. Christ was talking about men — everybody had deserted him, even his apostles. It was quite logical, though — they couldn’t stand for Jesus because they hadn’t yet experienced the power of the Holy Spirit filling them, and they hadn’t because Jesus hadn’t yet died for them on the cross.

Since the church has now received the Holy Spirit, this has changed. Now Jesus did have his real servants on the earth — he even calls them his Body to explain their close relationship. Thus, the Kingdom of God has reached the earth. Although not *of* this world, it is *in* the world. The people of God are called to overcome in and not escape this world.

### **“It’s Hard for You to Kick Against the Goats”**

Many Christians today espouse a pessimistic outcome of the struggle between good and evil. Now, they do believe in the *ultimate* victory of God over Satan, after Christ’s return, but they have a dim view of their earthly future. Sometimes they even speak more about Antichrist which is coming and his wicked acts than the Lord Jesus. This is indicative of the spiritual bondage that must be cast away from the midst of God’s people. God gives us victory on the earth as well as in eternity.

If God is described as the sovereign over the world’s destiny as far back as in the Old Testament times, it is even more true now, in the New Testament era. For Christ came in order to “destroy the devil’s work” (1 Jn. 3:8). Just prior to his being crucified, Christ said, “Now the prince of this world will be driven out” (Jn. 12:31), “the prince of this world now stands condemned” (Jn. 16:11). If the devil had in a sense been the prince of the world before Jesus came, he has undoubtedly been deprived of any power through the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Christ (see *Mt. 28:18; Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 2:15*).

Christ is the King of kings, and therefore wicked and godless empires will crumble and cease existence, and not build up and prosper. Those individuals, as well as entire states, that resist

God's revealed truth, will always experience the resistance of the earth's Master. Like Saul the persecutor of the Church, they will find it "hard to kick against the goads," since everyone persisting against truth is trying to combat the everlasting and invincible power, God himself.

This Scriptural truth can be the mandate for believers to do good and hope that God will bless their efforts while destroying works of God-haters, exercising their influence in godly transformation of their community, and expecting the gospel to transform entire nations.

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<sup>1</sup> *Political History* (textbook for high schools), Zaporozhye, 1990, vol. 1, 193.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, vol. 2, 8.

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, "It's better to do less, but better," *Complete Selection of Works*, vol. 45, 404.

<sup>4</sup> "Reproof for preaching racism," *Moscow News*, No. 21, 1995.

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*Roman Medvid is the editor of the Russian language newspaper, Predvestnik, The Forerunner. This newspaper is a publication for and by local (i.e., Ukrainian and Russian) Christian activists, pastors, and scholars. Predvestnik is read by young Christians who are struggling to become leaders in the church and society. Our goal is to influence these young leaders, so they, in turn, will influence thousands. To receive a monthly newsletter which describes the progress of Predvestnik, write: Media House International, P.O. Box 362173, Melbourne, FL 32936-2173.*

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# Rationalism and History

By R. J. Rushdoony

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An important aspect of rationalism is that it is normally non-historical in its approach to reality. The perspective of Hellenistic philosophy is a focus on abstract ideas or forms that govern reality, and they are non material. This is why the prologue to John's Gospel is so anti-Hellenic in declaring that "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (*Jn. 1:14*). At every point, this statement is a violation of Hellenic premises. The Word is a Person; he is made flesh; he is the "only begotten of the Father" and the fullness or incarnation of grace and truth. This for Greek thought was a confusion of ideas and history.

Because of this view of things, philosophy in this tradition by-passes history. Hence the failure to consider the Fall and the atonement in philosophy: it simply is not done. Both doctrines are totally anchored on history. In the Fall, at a point in man's early history, mankind, in the persons of Adam and Eve, chose to submit to the tempter's thesis that man could be his own god, knowing, or determining for himself, what is good and evil, law and morality, and truth and error (*Gen 3:5*).

Similarly the atonement stands totally rooted in an historical event, Christ's vicarious sacrifice on the cross, paying the penalty of death for the sins of his people, his new human race. The Christian Faith and philosophy, theologically and philosophically, is firmly grounded in history. Its holy book, the Bible, is largely history. Greek philosophy and modern philosophy are firmly non-historical at best. It is human thought that is determinative for them, not a long history of man's response to God.

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Instead of man's thinking being determinative, it is only God's thinking that can be so. Man's thinking at best can establish gods made in man's image, and this is idolatry. All



thinking is presuppositional. If man presupposes himself, his logical conclusion, like Kant's, is that all we can know is our mind. If man presupposes God, then his presupposition is inclusive of all things because the God of Scripture is the Maker of all things. Like the sun that gives light to all things else, so our faith in the Triune God of Scripture gives light to all possible knowledge.

When St. Paul preached at Athens, as Van Til pointed out in *Paul at Athens*, he did not attempt to prove God nor Christ. He *declared* the reality of the Lord, not of his mind and its reasoning. This was at once offensive. They were ready to debate across the lines of differing rationalistic philosophies, but not against the presupposition of the Triune God, nor his revelation in history. They mocked Paul for presenting the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead (*Ac. 17:32*), for confusing purported history and philosophy, and for his very alien presupposition.

Modern man has carried the Hellenic priority of man's mind to its logical conclusion. This has meant, as Van Til has shown, that

in modern times man has boldly asserted that he can identify himself first before he speaks of God. He will identify God after he has first identified himself. And this is not merely a methodological matter, due to the fact that man must psychologically think of himself first before he can think of God. It is a matter of ultimate metaphysics. It is the idea that man is ultimate. Man as ultimate can and must identify himself in terms of himself. He must therefore also virtually use the law of contradiction as means by which to determine what is possible and what is impossible in reality. (Cornelius Van Til: *A Christian Theory of Knowledge*, 180. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Westminster Theological Seminary, 1954.)

If man is ultimate, then indeed, God must stand with his revelation at the bar of man's reason, as Carnell demanded. But, if God is ultimate, man's reason must think God's thoughts after Him, not replace the mind of God with his own.

This means that man's ideas of logic and knowledge are precisely that, man's ideas, and limited by the limitations of man's mind. As Van Til wrote:

human knowledge can never be completely comprehensive knowledge. Every knowledge transaction has in it somewhere a reference point to God. Now since God is not fully comprehensive to us, we are bound to come into what seems to be contradiction in all our knowledge. Our knowledge is analogical and therefore must be paradoxical. We say that if there is to be any true knowledge at all there must be in God an absolute system of knowledge. We therefore insist that everything must be related to that absolute system of God. Yet we ourselves cannot fully understand that system. (Cornelius Van Til: *The Defense of the Faith*, 61. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1955.)

Was a final system of logic achieved in Aristotle, one binding for all time, and on God? Has not history made clear that much

that man saw as impossible has become possible? To say this does not open the door to unlimited possibilities because we do not go from Aristotle to chance (a short distance), but to God.

Moreover, we cannot as Christians believe that man's sin affects only his will and not his reason. Clearly, a man is fallen in all his being. The mind is as prone to sin as is man's will. This means that we cannot think Biblically and as Christians and neglect the fact that man is in rebellion against God. This means that man's reason is as totally depraved, as is all the rest of man's being, *i.e.*, total depravity, meaning that all of man is infected by his sin. It is absurd, and a rationalistic error, to assume that the mind does not do more than process information. We can separate ethics and epistemology in the classroom but not in life. Anyone who believes that such a separation exists in practice is a good candidate for buying a gold brick. Scholastic philosophy followed Aristotle in its trust of reason, and Protestant philosophers who are rationalists are in this tradition and alien to the Reformation. The god of the rationalists is an idol made in their own image, a god who meets the requirements of man's reason. Some of these twentieth-century theological rationalists have had serious mental problems, which is not surprising. Playing god over God is a dangerous game.

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# Random Notes, 73

By R. J. Rushdoony

1. A major source of knowledge since the Reformation has been the writings of colonial agents, missionaries, merchants and travelers. Perhaps someone has written about this, but I am not aware of it. Anthropologists, historians and others used such written and oral sources. When I was young, I heard remarkable stories from such men. My father usually invited people he met to lunch or to dine with us, so I heard remarkable table talk. Very often, such people urged others to get acquainted with Y. K. Rushdoony, so we had a steady stream of people whose tales of strange places with now forgotten names still echo in my memory.

2. One of the most amazing things of our century has been the rewriting of history. Take, for example, Hitler and National Socialism. The only major item of truth remaining in popular conception with respect to its philosophy was that it was racist. It was a Leftist movement, and the left has a long history of racism, traceable to its Darwinian faith. In the 1930s, the Nazis shocked the world with abortion, euthanasia, homosexuality, and the "green" movement and its exaltation of nature above people, and much, much more. Now, opposition to these things is called "Fascist and Nazi!"

3. When Gene and Robin Newman were here recently, Gene reported on a very important fact, a speech by Prime Minister Netanyahu while in the U. S. He stated that religiously Islam was committed to jihad, a holy war against all others. I regard this as very important. Netanyahu is insisting that no peaceful solution is possible with such an enemy. Humanists are very prone to seeing all religions as equal, and this equalitarian faith is applied in one sphere after another. Islam's intransigence is smashing this humanist faith in equality as it rejects all forms of compromise. Equalitarian beliefs are being endangered as a result, and a major cultural shift is under way.

4. Something brought to mind today an incident of a good fifty years ago. It was spring branding time, and this one young husband, an Indian, was at the other end of the reservation rounding up calves and cows. The work went very well, and late at night, he left the camp to go to his wife. In his tent at the round-up branding site, he looked into his tent to find his wife and a big, brawny male, naked and asleep, with an empty bottle of liquor at their side. Realizing that he was no match for the adulterer, he reached in, grabbed the man's clothing, and put all of it on a nearby smoldering camp fire! He then rode back to the round-up site, slept there, and was far from the scene of the offense. Being drunk, the adulterer slept late; everyone else was up, and all he could do was to wrap one of the young women's dresses around his middle and try to sneak away to cat-calls, jeers, and much mockery. He never learned who had done this to him, and, for a strong and feared man, he became a joke.

5. Thanks to John Lofton, I was able to recently get a copy of Carl C. Cutler's *The Story of the American Clipper Ship, Greyhounds of the Sea* (1930), almost a cyclopedia on the subject.

It is one of the most exciting chapters in American history. The sheer existence the clipper ship represents an important index into the American character. How can anyone write a U. S. history textbook, or an account of the American character and expansion without mentioning the clipper ships? Those whose families, unlike mine, go back to those days have much to be proud of: they have a great past. One of our readers has a forbear who was a captain of one of the finest clipper ships.

6. I believe it is urgently necessary for Christian educators to think about the future of education. In earlier America, primary schooling was very strong in its emphasis on the basics. After grade school, a boy at age 14 would go to a summer academy to study such things as advanced mathematics and Greek, Latin, or Hebrew. He would then enter a university to graduate at approximately 18 years of age. Our Chalcedon Christian School 8th grade graduates who have taken the university examinations for high school equivalency have passed. When we all step up the curriculum to prepare students for the university at age 14 or 15, they will be ready for mature employment or professions early in life, thus making for earlier marriages. We must pioneer in education. This means absorbing high school courses into grades 6-8.

7. The ancient Stoic view of the good life was life in accordance with nature. For Christians, because nature has fallen, the virtuous life is in accordance with Jesus Christ and God's law-word. Charles Darwin, in *The Descent of Man*, held that "the standard of morality [is] the general good or welfare of the community." He saw the good of evolution as the rearing and pressuring of healthy and vigorous individuals. In other words, morality is an evolutionary product! Nietzsche took Darwin's premise to mean that evolution would lead to "a transvaluation of all values." This meant for him the radical abandonment of all Biblical standards. This is what is happening today in our courts, legislatures, and, too often, in our churches.

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# Urban Nations Update: Babel and Pentecost

By Steve M. Schlissel

At the Tower of Babel, God permanently judged man's efforts to achieve any unity outside of and/or opposed to his government and covenant. All such efforts must end in chaos and confusion.

There have been innumerable efforts to unify mankind apart from the Gospel, from the bizarre to the amusing to the frightening: from the language intended to unite us all, Esperanto (how many people do you know who speak Esperanto?), to the United Nations (oy vey!).

But there is no earthly principle upon which the diverse peoples of this planet can unite. Without a common faith, without allegiance to a transcendent, invariant, universal ethical standard, we end up with that condition found in America today: polarization of and hostility between races, genders, classes, ages, advocates of perversion and traditionalists — the list goes on. Every new "rights" group is an indication of compounded fragmentation and decay.

At Pentecost, God sent from heaven the only divinely authorized, and therefore the only efficacious, principle of unity, and that "principle" is a Person: the Holy Spirit of God. As our Prophet, Priest and King was anointed with "the Spirit without measure," the blessed Spirit poured down from our Head enthroned in heaven, falling down upon his people on earth.

Their speaking in different languages about the same subject ("the wonderful works of God"—*Ac. 2:11*) marked the God-authored point of unity for a race previously bound to division and ethnocentric obsessions. If God could make "the two" one (Jew and Gentile — *Eph. 2:14*), he could certainly make the Gentiles one with another. Here, then, is what Christ had in mind when he told the disciples to set their sights high, to the uttermost parts of the earth. The curse would be reversed in him: not only the curse pronounced upon our federal head, Adam, but also the one inflicted upon our race at Babel.

The unity of Spirit in the bond of peace effected by the death, resurrection, ascension, and sending of the Spirit of Christ, is one of the leading themes of the New Testament. What a remarkable and powerful testimony to the truth of the Gospel: the middle wall of hostility has been removed in Christ! Unfortunately, despite the admonition of St. Paul to "make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit" (*Eph. 4*), the church has too often lapsed into ethnocentricity. There is nothing intrinsically wrong, of course, with believers of a common culture and tongue uniting as church! But there is something wrong if we begin to think that our particular ethnic group or language is the one which will occupy the orchestra seats in heaven, with others lucky to get into the balcony.

At Urban Nations, God has graciously given us a reminder-in-our-faces of his universal design in sending His Son. We are

privileged to bring the Gospel—currently, as I write to people who speak the following first-languages: Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Creole, French, Hebrew, Hindi, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Tamil, Turkish, Urdu and Vietnamese.

He's given us a "reminder in our faces," and another one in our ears. He has been pleased to grant that, out of the many peoples we minister to, some Russian and Spanish speakers have joined our local body, Messiah's Congregation.

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*There is something wrong if we begin to think that our particular ethnic group or language is the one which will occupy the orchestra seats in heaven, with others lucky to get into the balcony.*

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At our mid-week prayer meeting we read a Psalm and make a brief comment. Then each gathered saint prays in turn. When Ursula's turn comes, she prays in Spanish. Only a few others in the room understand the words, but the humility and bestowed grace are so evident that the "Amen" offered by all at the end of her prayer is a hearty and sincere one. And when Yelena prays in Russian, no one else in the room understands. Yet, again, when she concludes with "Amin" (funny how that little word stays very nearly the same in so many languages; see the beautiful comment on its meaning in the Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A 129), a jubilant chorus repeats it. We close our gathering by praying the Lord's Prayer together in English and singing the Gloria Patri. This is a weekly experience charged with a unique current, courtesy of the Triune God in whom our unity is real, profound, eternal.

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# The Covenant Key

By Steve M. Schlissel



Shaul Mayer ben Yitzchak was the name given to me at my *bris*. *Bris* is the Yiddish word for covenant (*brit* in Hebrew) and it is the word used by Jews for the act of circumcision, God having identified the two in Genesis 17:10-13. Jewish sons are named at the *bris*, perhaps because naming in Scripture conveys the idea of new identity and new covenant life, just as circumcision speaks of regeneration (performed on the *eighth day*, *i.e.*, the first day after a completed cycle of seven, thus signifying a new beginning).

The practice of naming at circumcisions is quite ancient (see *Lk. 2:59* and *3:21*). Not surprisingly, Jews born in Diaspora are often given names in keeping with their surrounding culture (as, *e.g.*, in Jackie Mason's quip about "Tiffany Schwartz"). Jewish fathers, however, will "register" roughly equivalent Hebrew names for their children at religious ceremonies: at the *bris*, for boys, and at a naming ceremony in the synagogue, for girls. My given name is Steve Martin (yes, it helps when making reservations to use only my first two names), so Shaul Mayer was chosen as an equivalent. "Ben" means "son of." My father's Jewish name is Yitzchak ben Avraham Zvi. Thus, Shaul Mayer ben Yitzchak is Steve Martin son of Irving. (Above is a recent photo of three bens, the third being Jed, *a.k.a.* Yedidiah Zerachiah ben Shaul Mayer.)

My mother was born in New England and my father in Brooklyn, both of Eastern European Jewish immigrants. My grandparentage is right out of *Fiddler on the Roof*: Tradition! That is my culture.

Or perhaps I should say, that *was* my culture. And I offer this modification not only as one who now sees through Christian eyes, but also as one who is a third-generation American. There is this pattern, you understand: the first generation arrives here with their culture very much intact; the next generation tries to balance the pursuit of the American Dream with the old ways; the third generation has its cultural heritage eviscerated by American popular culture, particularly television.

This phenomenon, incidentally, is why I am not overly fearful of an increased Muslim presence in the United States. By the year 2,000 there will be for the first time more Muslims than Jews in the USA. Yet, as long as Muslim children are watching TV — and based on my experience with Urban Nations, they are — you can be certain of their assimilation into the vacuous wasteland of American pseudo-culture. American "culture," like the American language, maintains and expands its ascendancy by offering substitutes for every element of its competitors' systems, and whatever it can't replace, it simply absorbs. *Voila!* Every system of absolutes is consumed with ease by the modern behemoth of relativistic humanism.

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*In order for the church to seriously challenge Judaism, the church must evidence a relative fullness of covenant life.*

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This "three generations and you're lost" phenomenon accounts for more characteristics of the generation called "boomers" — at least in New York City, where a great number of turn-of-the-century immigrants settled — than is often recognized. It has contributed to their profound sense of rootlessness, their lack of a sense of familial history, of a past. Deep in the belly of this third-American-generation there resounds a coyote-like howl, a howl directed not so much outwardly ("Is there anybody out there") as hindwardly ("Is anybody back there?").

The spiritual vacuum among third-generation American Jews has resulted in many of them latching onto other traditions, even cults — *anything* for mooring. Jews being drawn to the Gospel today are being drawn preponderantly from a *secular* pool. Most Jewish mission agencies, therefore, are merely riding the crest of a wave of secularization. More power to 'em, but the Jewish *shtick* is really unnecessary. The above-mentioned sociological phenomenon is more responsible for their gaining a hearing than their donning of Jewish garb and their adoption of Jewish rituals. It is only the secularized that permit reapers in the field. Reaping remains very *sparse* among all but the most marginalized of my father's generation. And it is virtually non-existent, at all strata, among the seriously-orthodox Jews.

Declarations of "these are the end-times" which use the great number of twentieth-century Jewish conversions (some credible estimates are in the hundreds of thousands) as proof are injudicious and unconvincing. The real ingathering, spoken of in Romans 11 and elsewhere, must include — preeminently, I believe — the orthodox, the religiously observant, not just

“chicken-soup” Jews, *i.e.*, those whose identification as Jews is limited to an accident of birth and gastronomic preferences.

Orthodox Jews remain insulated and virtually unreachable. Humanly speaking (and I generally have difficulty speaking from other perspectives), the “safeguards” of rabbinical Judaism and tradition have nearly impenetrable strength, amazing and redundant strength. Much of that strength lies in what has rarely been reproduced among Christian communions: a pervasive sense of *covenant*. Like the Lutheran doctrine of “the real presence” of Christ in the Supper, the covenant is in, around, under and through every aspect of orthodox Jewish life.

Even among those who are not quite orthodox, the knowledge of what that covenant-consciousness produced in Jewish history leads them, as if by nature, to identify themselves with that history. For a serious Jew, the world is “Us (Jews) and Them (Gentiles).” Most of the Christian world, on the other hand, is divided (I almost ended the sentence there) between “My shibboleth and everyone else’s.”

In order for the church to seriously challenge Judaism, the church must evidence a relative fullness of covenant life. Until then, the orthodox Jew will not even bother to ask, “What have you got to offer?” To answer, “We have Christ,” is frankly of too little avail if the Christ of which we speak is wrenched from the context of the covenant he authored. God identified the covenant with Jesus himself when he spoke through Isaiah, “I will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles” (42:6; *cf.* 49:8).

I pray you will forgive me when I say that the Gentiles have too often hacked the covenant to pieces and strained it through a Hellenic sieve.

Christ does not come to us as a line touching a circle, but he comes into history, into our history, as the Lord and Savior of history, both Jewish and Gentile history. He comes to fill and to redeem the whole circle. It is a sound maxim that in hermeneutics, context is king. It is just as important to remember that Jesus is the King of context. All of Scripture and history and the future belong to him. Orthodox Jews cannot interpret Scripture properly apart from Christ; we cannot interpret Christ properly apart from Scripture — and that means all of Scripture.

There is no covenant where there is no covenant law.

I have written elsewhere about an experience I had 18 years ago. My friend and co-laborer, David Schildkraut (who was raised an orthodox Jew), and I were witnessing to two Chasidic Jews. As good dispensationalists, when the subject of the Law of God came up, we told them that God’s Law just does not apply in this dispensation. Their jaws dropped and they looked at us as if we were from Mars. Silence. The thought that God’s holy Law could simply be dispensed with filled them with a revolting horror. What sort of religion, they thought, could Christianity be if it makes Psalm 119 irrelevant, if that holy Psalm could no longer be looked upon as accurately expressing the soul of the covenant man?

They, of course, were right. And it is the Reformed Faith, especially, which recognizes the legitimacy of their viewpoint on this subject. It is also the Reformed Faith which has most highly cherished the hope of Israel’s re-ingrafting and which

has maintained an emphasis on the importance of the church’s role in the fulfillment of that hope. Charles Hodge wrote, “It is *through the mercy shown to the Gentiles*, according to Paul, that the Jews are to be brought in, which implies that the former are to be instrumental in the restoration of the latter.” He goes on to observe that the mutual relation of the Christian church to the Jews should produce in the minds of all the followers of Christ, “1) a sense of obligation, 2) a sincere compassion, 3) the banishment of all ill feelings of contempt toward them, and 4) an earnest desire for their restoration.”

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I would add a number 5: We should admit when the Jews have bested us and learn from them. I contend that in the matter of comprehensive covenant thinking, we need to learn quite a bit from the Jews. Until we do, much of what we say will remain abstract, one-dimensional and hollow. And did I mention unconvincing? The covenant is the key which can lead the church into paths of righteousness for His name’s sake, the key which can renew our power in the Spirit to conduct *Biblical* missions which endeavor to teach everything which Christ has commanded us (not just four or five points), the key to enable us to look lovingly upon our Christian brothers and sisters — even those who may not agree with all our jots and tittles. It is the key to the historical realization of that which was prayed for by our Lord: “May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” That unity is not uniformity; it is in the covenant, not in a corporation. The key is the covenant and it lies close at hand to the Reformed family of churches, yet it properly belongs to all who call upon His name. Employing this key will enable us to respond to the demand, “Show me the fruit!,” by pointing to a covenant cornucopia.

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*Steve Schlissel has been pastor of Messiah’s Congregation in Brooklyn, NY since 1979. He serves as the Overseer of Urban Nations (a mission to the world in a single city), and is the Director of Meantime Ministries (an outreach to women who were sexually abused as children). Steve lives with his wife of 23 years, Jeanne, and their five children.*

One of the things we are proud of is the many varied activities of our associates. Some of them are publishing important newsletters, and we take this opportunity to tell you of them.

1. ***The Lofton Letter*** by John Lofton, P.O. Box 1142, Laurel, Maryland 20725, e-mail address: JLoof@AOL.com, \$100 a year, monthly (20 pages).
2. Ian Hodge of Australia's Foundation for the Advancement of Christian Studies is an affiliate, and he publishes ***F.A.C.S. Report, Probe,*** and ***Christian Economics*** monthly, on a donation basis: write to him at P.O. Box 547, Ferny Hills, QLD 4055, Australia, Tel/fax 07-851-1265.
3. For those of you who read French, Jean-Marc Berthoud publishes several periodicals. For sample copies, send a donation and write to Jean-Marc Berthoud, Trabendan 16, Lausanne, CH 1006, Switzerland.
4. For the Chalcedon tapes, write to Christian Tape Productions, P.O. Box 1804, Murphys, California 95247. The twice monthly Easy Chairs are \$4.50 each, and the weekly Bible studies (two lessons on each tape), are also \$4.50. For a sample of either, send \$5; California residents add 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>% sales tax.
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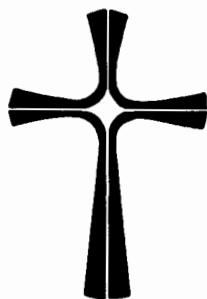
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