

# CHALCEDON Report

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

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# Praying Against God

By Rev. R. J. Rushdoony



Over the years, a certain type of problem has been encountered so often that my memory of each particular one is blurred. This is what happens: someone, a husband or wife, a father or mother, is faced with an ugly situation. The spouse is an unbeliever, often adulterous, or the teenage children are hostile to the Faith, involved in illegal

activities which can jeopardize the property, and so on and on. St. Paul says, "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart" (1 Cor. 7:15). Of lawless youths in the family, the godly parents must be on the side of the law (Dt. 21:18-21).

Do these people listen to God? No. Rather, they pray to God for a conversion and then act as though they must obey their hope but not God's word! They assume that their prayer is especially holy and carries more weight than God's word. They expect God to answer their prayers when they pay no attention to God's word.

Our love for an ungodly spouse or child cannot sanctify our refusal to obey God's word. In too many cases, the spouse whose sin and presence is tolerated in love corrupts the children. Have we done well by our stubborn insistence that our wishes and prayers must outweigh God's word?

Too often such praying people insist on seeing their position as the holy one. They will say that, in spite of their pastor's counsel and the word of friends, they have clung to their prayers for the spouse's or child's conversion. But their persistence is evidence of sin, not grace. If conversion later occurs, well and good (though it rarely does), but they must act in terms of God's law, not their hopes nor their prayers. In one instance, I asked, what would you do, if you were on a jury, and another person's son were on trial for murder? What if you knew that young man's mother and father were praying for his conversion? Would you convict, or vote for acquittal to help the mother? The answer was acquittal.

But this is evil. It is the enthronement of sentimentality over

God's law. It is not a sign of grace but of depravity to place our feelings and wishes above the law-word of God.

We are in deep trouble because too many people in the churches are praying against God and his word. They have exalted their feelings and their prayers to a position of ascendancy over God himself, and against his word, and they call their position a holy one.

There are times when God forbids us to pray about certain persons (1 Jn. 5:16). There are certain persons we are not to help (2 Jn. 10-11). God does not say he does nothing in such cases. Rather, he places limits on our freedom to pray.

Too often, praying is a way of saying, "My will be done." One determined mother routinely asked friends to pray with her for her very wayward son, saying, "I am determined that he come to know the Lord." She was in effect saying, "My will be done," and she was determined to nag God into compliance. Her prayers were not answered, and she became more and more a caricature of a Christian.

Prayer is no substitute for obeying God: it cannot replace obedience. More than one man or woman has told me that his spouse's stubborn insistence that his prayer be answered has done damage to the relationship. If you are disregarding God's plain word to pray for a miracle, do not be surprised if his answer is your judgment.

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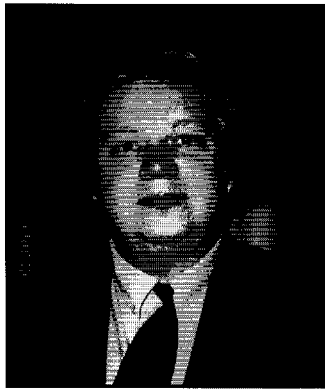
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# Chicken Little Goes to Church

By Rev. Andrew Sandlin



In their efforts to save mainline Protestantism, the fundamentalists back in the 20s ("fightin' fundies," as they were sometimes called) revived the spirit, if not always the knowledge, of classical orthodoxy in its defense of the Faith against heresy: Athanasius against Arius, Augustine against Pelagius, Luther against Erasmus. The fundamentalists stood boldly

against apostasy in the mainline denominations; and though most were eventually expelled or left of their own volition, their testimony to Biblical fidelity stands as a memorial to the Faith in the current of historic orthodoxy.

Today, even the most conservative churches can scarcely be inconvenienced by trifles like defending the Christian Faith against assaults from without and betrayal from within. A leading "conservative" Reformed denomination has decided individual churches may ordain women. *World* magazine creditably exposed a popular evangelical publisher intending to issue a "new" gender-neutral (read: feminist) New International Version (the publisher has since reneged), and included a comment from a prof at a chicken-little college parading under the evangelical banner to the effect that in 100 years, ordination of women in conservative circles will be the name of the game, with "patriarchalists" pushed to the "lunatic fringe." We learn too in the article that the prime "seeker-sensitive" (read: procedurally Pelagian) church in the country (prominently evangelical, of course) excludes from membership any who refuse to condone women instructing men in the church. More and more evangelicals deny the eternity of hell, and a few deny God's omniscience (perhaps they hope he's not aware of *their* apostasy). A world-renowned conservative evangelist pontificates that "God's hand is on" a decadent and polluted political administration, and several evangelical weenies (at least one of whom has no compunctions about condoning live-in celibate homosexuality) fawns fulsomely over the same administration. Most dispensationalists espouse the novel anti-"Lordship salvation" (read: antinomian gospel) . . . and the actions of their congregations show it. Some ostensibly Reformed Christians rabidly devour "consistent preterism" (read: consistent heresy) repudiating the physical second Advent of Christ and the physical resurrection of the Christian—it's the new wave in the Reformed world, somewhat akin to Rap music and body-piercing among modern pagans. The Anglican church caves in on the ordination of women issue, and several

hundred priests promptly join Rome, though the latter is not without its own severe theological erosion: The Pope conspicuously tips his hat toward Darwinism, thus accelerating the post-Vatican II rot.

Similarly, the bankruptcy of modern political conservatism was perhaps most recently and pervasively exposed in a *U. S. News and World Report* cover story (David Whitman, "Was It Good For Us?", May 19, 1997, 57f.) relating the injurious social consequences of, and hypocritically diffident attitude toward, pre-marital sex in modern culture. The author observes:

Conservatives, quick to decry sex between unwed teens and outspoken on many other sexual issues, turn suddenly shy when asked about adult premarital liaisons. Among those who declined to be interviewed for this article were William Bennett, editor of the anthology *The Book of Virtues*; Gary Bauer, head of the Family Research Council and a former aide to Ronald Reagan; John Podhoretz, a one-time speech writer for George Bush and deputy editor of the *Weekly Standard* ("he's not really comfortable talking about the subject," said Podhoretz's assistant); and Laura Ingraham, a CBS News analyst who was featured in a 1995 *New York Times Magazine* cover story on young conservatives.

Long ago conservatives (let alone libertarians, that is, antinomians with a vengeance) abandoned any semblance of Biblical fidelity, cheerleading rather for "natural law" and its modern insipid stepchild, "traditional values," than which few substitutes for Biblical law could be more ineffectual. Exodus 22:16, 17 and Hebrews 13:4 conservatives find irrelevant and inconvenient. Their cultural action is forever rearguard, *reaction*, lacking any moral absolutes or revelational rudder by which to navigate the sea of (im)morality in the modern world, content instead to toddle along fifteen years behind the "progressives" (read: God-hating covenant-breakers). In a few years, if the trend continues, conservatives—both political and theological—will silently drop vocal objections to extramarital heterosexuality while castigating homosexuality, then a few years more will jettison any public opposition to the latter, while castigating bestiality. When in the next century they no longer decry bestiality, we will have observed the utter evisceration of the conservative movement, slain on the altar of moral pragmatism, willing victim of a refusal to maintain explicit Biblical fidelity.

If, therefore, somebody today concludes that modern "conservatism" is nothing more than undeveloped liberalism, he may be forgiven for his galling perceptiveness.

There have, of course, been gratifying exceptions: in the 70s a substantial Lutheran denomination turned back apostasy in its midst (notably heavy doses of historical-critical agnosticism in its seminaries), and the largest Baptist denomination in the world, just a decade ago honeycombed with liberalism in its upper echelons and academic settings, has incrementally purged the apostasy and stands poised to recover its roots in historic, confessional Baptist Calvinism (all historic, Biblical Baptists are Calvinists). A few Reformed and Presbyterian denominations have remained true to the Faith and their heritage, though it is worth noting that they are almost always the smallest denominations. Gratifyingly, whole flocks of charismatic

churches are tapping the root of historic orthodoxy, shedding the objectionable aspects of their formerly primitivist religion, and many are coming into the Christian Reconstructionist fold. Moreover, numerous independent churches—not to mention the burgeoning home churches—enraged by the betrayal among the larger alleged conservative denominations, have gone their own way in seeking a vibrant Biblical religion. These latter are not without the hazards which always confront independency, but they are increasingly preferring the hazards of traditional independency to the betrayal of modern denominationalism (Steve Schlissel in a series in the *Chalcedon Report* is furnishing a decentralized denominational alternative that is catching on among the Reformed faithful).

But exceptions are just that, and by and large, conservatism in the main is undermining orthodox Christian religion. Under the banner of “relevance” (read: compromise) and “charitableness” (read: cowardice) the modern conservative church sprints headlong into apostasy.

The chicken-little conservatives wail, “But this is the modern world; we must be like ‘em to win ‘em.” Not only does it not occur to the chicken-littles that today’s modernity is tomorrow’s obsolescence (as though pragmatism, like hula hoops, will survive); they also apparently don’t recognize (or they refuse to acknowledge) that it is precisely Christianity’s *refusal* to accommodate to modern ideology and mores that preserves its life-giving distinctiveness. It was old covenant Israel’s *countercultural* stance that ensured its virility; it was the new covenant church’s *distinctiveness* that guaranteed its success in the old Roman empire. Chicken-littles’ pine for “relevance” usually masks a lust for worldly respectability, but when the church accommodates worldly culture, it deserves both the internal decay and external contempt it suffers. By contrast, the faithful church *challenges* the premises of modern, apostate culture at every point, as Blamires notes in his classic, *The Tyranny of Time*:

The supra-temporal stability of the Christian Church is a part of its essential character. The Christian is never one for whom Christian belief stands perpetually in the dock, under judgement, over against the accepted values of contemporary fashion. Rather the Christian is one for whom contemporary values and criteria, notions, and attitudes, stand perpetually in the dock, under judgement, over against the supra-temporal stability of the Christian Faith.

Chicken-littles excuse their treason on the grounds of groundless acrimony among the faithful: “The Calvinists and Christian Reconstructionists are forever fighting among themselves, so let’s be ‘Christ-like’ by ordaining women and homosexuals, eschewing six-day creation, and avoiding Biblical law” (impeccable logic: “Nixon tapped phones, so let’s become Maoists”). Few allurements to apostasy have been more lethally persuasive in the modern church than this: let us maintain charity, avoid controversy. Charity, indeed, is essential, the mark of the believer (*Jn. 13:35*); there is no genuine Christianity without it. But maintaining a Christianity *within which to practice charity in the first place* requires a vigilance about its

central truth claims, what Jude 3 calls “contending for the faith,” including the recognition of the Bible’s role in reshaping sinful culture—not the other way around.

The chicken-littles opine, “No creed but Christ” (read: “We want to embrace heresy while looking like good Christians”), or “Winning souls is more important than doctrine” (read: “People are more important than God”), or, “The heart, not the head, is what counts” (read: “My narcissistic godly goose pimples and warm Jesus fuzzies, not sound doctrine, are what counts”). The chicken littles get their sentimental, non-confrontational—and effete—religion served up piping hot in most modern conservative seminaries, filter it down into the “seeker-sensitive” churches, and thereby pervade all areas of modern conservatism with their ineffectual pabulum.

Ethelbert Stauffer observes in his sadly overlooked but potentially perceptive work *Christ and the Caesars*, that the factor of early Christianity to which we must attribute the vanquishing of the tyrannical Roman Empire was not its teaching of the incarnation of the Son of God, or gracious salvation by a sovereign God, vital though these teachings are, but rather the *truth* of Christianity amid a collapse of outworn, false religions, and the hypocrisy of a strictly enforced empire worship. It was the *truth* of the Faith, of the Scriptures, of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that gripped the early disciples and brought the mighty Roman empire to its knees. It is the *truth* of historic, orthodox, Biblical Christianity that will today grip Christ’s disciples and bring the mighty secular (and Islamic) empires to their knees.

It just so happens, however, that the chicken littles are not especially interested in the claims of truth.

What Brian Abshire terms the Greater Reformation must therefore originate elsewhere.

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# Preparation for Worship

By Rev. Mark R. Rushdoony



*I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.*

*In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;*

*But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*

(1 Tim. 2:8-10)

Paul had encouraged Timothy to pray for all races and classes of men because it was the will of the God and Savior of all men. It was specifically Paul's ministry to be an apostle to the Gentiles (vs. 1-7).

Paul here urges men everywhere to pray. Because there is one God and one salvation in Jesus Christ, all men must approach God in the same way. The mere fact that Paul encourages prayer everywhere, especially among Gentile believers, was an idea foreign to Jewish thinking. To Jews, all prayers went up from Israel, specifically from the temple. The assumption behind such an idea, of course, was that Israel was closer to God and had an intercessory role.

But Paul breaks out of such narrow thinking because there is "one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus" (vs. 5). All races, nations, and classes of men can come in faith to God through Christ. He not only allows them but instructs them to approach him as "Father." This urging of Paul for men everywhere to pray reflects his doctrine of the church and his desire for those who might resist. Paul knew it was time for a theology of the church freed from the parochialism of Hebraic exclusivism. Malachi had foreseen a time when God's name would be great among the Gentiles (*Mal. 1:11*). Christ had told the woman at the well in Samaria that soon the location of true worship would be a moot issue (*Jn. 4:21*). Paul's instructions were not just an admonition on proper prayer, but an exhortation that prayers be offered everywhere.

The lifting up of hands is an ancient sign of prayers being offered to heaven. It represents our lifting up our prayers to a God that dwells on high, who is not earthly. Holy hands denotes holy hearts, minds, and consciences ready for worship and prayer. Isaiah had told the Hebrews that God would not hear their prayer because their hands were bloody and not pure (*Is. 1:15*).

Men are to lift up their hands "without wrath and doubting." Two interpretations of these words have been proposed. One is that Paul is referring to murmurings against God. This would include impatience with our lot and doubt of God's providence. If that is the primary intent, Paul is

saying that men must pray with a confident faith. A second view is that Paul is commanding that men be at peace with other men without anger or strife. This may have been an instruction to reconciliation and may have referred to a particular dispute or tension between Jew and Gentile. If this is the intent, Paul is saying that if men look to their own purity before a holy God, their differences should resolve themselves.

If the men are specifically commanded to lift up their hands and hearts to God, women, though not leading in the church, must also prepare themselves to join in (see *Ac. 1:14*). One particular fault is warned against — preoccupation with dress. Paul's solution was that modesty, humility, and self-control be the rules, not show and pretentiousness (particularly before God).

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*Many see the specifics of braided hair, gold, pearls, and costly array and make them a pretext for external pietistic rules (usually expanded well beyond Paul's short list) of false "spirituality."*

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Men may have been offering up the prayers; but women had to prepare themselves, just as celebrants are to examine themselves prior to partaking the Lord's Supper. Modesty, humility, and self-control were *internal* controls. This must be emphasized because many see the specifics of braided hair, gold, pearls, and costly array and make them a pretext for external pietistic rules (usually expanded well beyond Paul's short list) of false "spirituality." Unless we see the limits on dress as coming from within the believer, rules can become a preoccupation.

There are limits to acceptable dress, but these limits cannot come from legislated controls, which quickly become outdated and irrelevant. The character of the believer must limit and direct dress. It is this meek and quiet spirit which is an ornament of great price in the sight of God (*1 Pet. 3:4*).

Dress ought to convey godly modesty, but the real ornament of a godly woman is her good works. Clothes do make a statement about the wearer. But more than taste or affluence, they reveal the heart, mind, and character of the person.

# The Rest of the Story: Update on the 1993 St. James Massacre in Capetown

By Brian M. Abshire



Long-time readers will remember our reporting the vicious massacre at St. James Church in South Africa, just months before the “free and democratic” elections handed that nation over to Marxist terrorists in 1994. St. James, a multi-racial, evangelical church, was deemed a danger to the terror-mongers. During one evening service, five Pan-African Congress butchers,

armed with assault rifles and hand grenades attacked during worship, indiscriminately killing men, women and children. Some will also remember the heroism of Charl Van Wycke, Frontline Fellowship staffer who chased off the terrorists with a tiny, five-shot, two-inch revolver.

Now as Paul Harvey would say, here's the rest of the story. Because of the very real dangers of ministering in South Africa, Frontline Fellowship workers are required to have firearms on them at all times. This is both legal and normal for modern-day South Africans. Though an officer in the South African territorials (our equivalent of the national guard), Charl is the least interested in guns, shooting or the military of Peter's staff (who are mainly ex-special forces types). Hence, since required to be armed, Charl self-consciously carried the smallest, lightest and most innocuous weapon possible.

The wisdom and foresight of Peter's requiring his people to carry weapons, even in church, was brought home during the massacre. The terrorists, like all cowards, believed they could perpetrate their butchery like wolves among sheep. However, in this case, at least one of the sheep had teeth of his own (albeit, pretty small ones!).

Charl caught up with the terrorists in the parking lot of the church. Firing at incredible revolver range, he actually missed all of them. But in God's providence, one bullet ricocheted off a car bumper, wounding one of the terrorists in the hand. Though he was not seriously wounded, this was enough to send the rest packing.

South African security forces eventually tracked the miscreants down to a “safe” house. In the ensuing gun battle, two of the terrorists were shot dead and two captured. However, identification was difficult, since all the terrorists wore black

balacava masks (much like the FBI and SWAT teams do in our country). However, there was blood on the ground from Charl's shot. And yes, you guessed it, DNA tests proved that one of the men captured was the same man that Charl had hit. The man was convicted and sentenced to thirty years in prison.

Now Charl is a courageous and dedicated Christian. While Christian duty may require him to shoot in defense of his brothers and sisters, his Christian ministry is missions and evangelism. Once the terrorist was convicted, Charl applied to one of the government's ministers for permission to go and talk with him about Jesus Christ.

The request went all the way up the bureaucratic channels before being finally being approved, the irony of which is that the terrorist commander who gave the order to attack St. James was now a member of Parliament. Now the new government of South Africa is very popular with the liberal press and a big part of their propaganda campaign is the “Truth and Reconciliation” commission. Amnesty for terrorists is now routinely given (though the fate of the “fascist,” “racist” former security forces of South Africa, who fought against the terrorists, is still in question). When the South African Broadcasting Network heard that a member of St. James's church wanted to visit the convicted murderer, they rubbed their hands in glee and decided to interview Charl, the terrorist and his former commander.

---

*The network thought him to  
be just another of the mushy-  
headed, bleeding-heart,  
butter-wouldn't-melt-in-his-  
mouth liberals with more  
feeling than brains.*

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Now, here is where the story begins to get funny. The situation at St. James had been in the news for years. Whenever news organizations had interviewed survivors, they self-consciously picked out the most mushy-headed members to put in front of the camera. Not to sound disrespectful, but when some members were asked what they thought of the terrorists and answered, “We just wish they'd come back to church again, but this time, without their guns,” I just had to shake my head. St. James, like most broad evangelical churches, lacks a comprehensive world view. OK, this kind of statement sounds nice and is full of warm, mushy sentiment. But evil is real, and God wants evil stamped out. That's why in the old days, before a person was executed for a crime, he was given a visit from a minister and a last chance to address the crowd to demonstrate repentance and ask forgiveness for his crimes. Murderers can be forgiven, but they still must pay the penalty for their crime.

The point is, the SABC didn't know that Charl was the man who had shot the terrorist and thought him to be just another of the mushy-headed, bleeding-heart, butter-wouldn't-melt-in-his-mouth liberals with more feeling than brains. When they interviewed him for the national news program, they asked him all sorts of silly questions, to which he gave concise, Biblical answers, testifying to the grace of God in Christ. Then the announcer, lowering his voice, asked Charl, "Now, there was one person who actually shot at these men. What do you think about this?" Now you know what answer he was looking for. He expected Charl to condemn the action and talk about love and forgiveness.

Charl looked the man right in the eye and said, "I would do exactly the same thing again. I was defending my church and my brothers and sisters." (While he didn't say it on the air, Charl also told me he now carries a bigger gun, with a bigger magazine, just in case!) He then launched into the Biblical basis for self-defense. From all reports, the interviewer did a double take that would credit an old Bugs Bunny cartoon! He was floored! So Charl kept right on talking about Christ, God's Law, etc. The SABC was running short of time that week and actually had to broadcast the entire interview, including Charl's outspoken Biblical witness, and the interviewer's shocked response. Charl also invited the former PAC commander to come to church, which before a national television audience, he could not gracefully refuse. (Scratch a terrorist, find a politician. Scratch a politician find a ??) Who says there is no justice this side of the millennium?

When Charl was able to visit the convicted terrorist, he brought him a Bible and some Christian books, most noticeably one about Hell. He uncompromisingly shared the gospel with him, urging him to repent of his sins, acknowledge Christ as his Lord and so escape eternal damnation. The terrorist is a hardened reprobate, and rejected the message, though he did find it amusing that his old commander, a convinced atheist, would be going to church.

The punch line of this story is that the terrorist has now appealed to the "Truth and Reconciliation" commission to have his sentence commuted. What he did, he claims, was a political act and therefore he ought to be released from prison!

Thus, Charl Van Wycke continues his ministry with Salt Shakers, bringing Biblical principles to bear on his crumbling nation while a convicted murder and a wicked government conspire to thwart God's justice. But there is no final escape for sinners. God will bring his righteous judgments against magistrates who flaunt his Law, just as he will the murderers they protect. These are hard times for South Africans of all races. The new government has found that the legions of terrorists they trained continue to rape, rob and murder, albeit now without political justification (though many did find gainful employment in the government itself). South Africa now has the dubious honor of having the highest crime rate in the world. Some cities are virtual war zones after the sun sets, with random acts of violence, car jackings, murders and robberies common. Meanwhile, the new government's bureaucrats wax fat on tax revenues while the poor, misguided folks who elected them continue living in squalor and poverty. Before the elections, black Africans in South Africa enjoyed the highest standard of living on the continent. Now, the suicidal

policies of Marxism and socialism are de-capitalizing the nation and giving the people the same hopelessness and destitution so common in the rest of Africa.

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*Scratch a terrorist, find a politician. Scratch a politician, find a ??*

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Meanwhile, the folks at Frontline Fellowship and the related ministries of United Christian Action and Salt Shakers, continue to wage spiritual war on the home front, bearing faithful prophetic witness against abortion, pornography, and humanism, even while continuing to minister to the suffering church in Angola, Mozambique and Sudan. Are they depressed about the future? Worried about today? Frightened by all the horrors of possible civil war? Not at all. These are post-millennialists we are talking about here. They know who is in control, and though few in number, are absolutely convinced that in time, Christ will be victorious. More than one person has told me of his great confidence in God's promises, even though, right now, things are pretty grim. But at least, as he said with a grin, you know who your enemies are! And there is every evidence that a genuine revival and reformation may be occurring in the churches. Some Christians, it appears, are finally waking up.

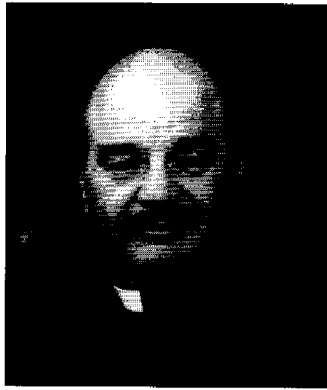
But they need help. Peter Hammond says they need more men like Charl Van Wycke. Men who are willing to put their lives on the line to protect God's people while bearing faithful witness of Christ. Men who are not afraid of standing up in troubled times and taking a stand, even if bullets and bombs are going off around them. Men who will take Bibles and medicine into Sudan, teach pastors in Angola and Mozambique, carry signs and petitions in South Africa. Men who can do more than talk about what needs to be done to set things right, but men who will DO what needs to be done. Maybe someone like you?

Peter Hammond is looking for A Few Good Men. And what amazes me is that he really does think he'll find them here, in America! That's right, he says that Americans have the drive, the motivation, the organizational skills that Africans lack. He needs workers in the fields, writers, administrators, secretaries, nurses, doctors and a lot of grunts to carry Bibles and medical supplies into the war zones. Peter promises rotten pay, dangerous working conditions, bad food, lousy accommodations and a task so great that it eclipses the imagination. But those called will be on the Front Line of God's victorious army reconstructing the entire continent of Africa.

For those who believe God may be calling them to work with Peter Hammond in Africa, contact Frontline Fellowship directly and ask for information: P. O. Box 74, Newlands, 7725 Cape, South Africa, Telephone (021) 689-4480; Fax (021) 685-5884; email: frontfel@iaccess29.

# Hellfire Is Not Enough

By Ellsworth McIntyre



A newspaper reporter recently asked me, "Isn't it child abuse to threaten little children with going to hell when they die?" The reporter claimed one of our parents complained to him that her child woke up terrified in the night, afraid of going to hell. Every administrator of a Christian school will hear this complaint during his career.

I have never known a child to be terrified about the prospect of hell. This should not be too surprising, because every good parent knows that no normal child worries about death. Death is just too far away, and besides, in our minds death is a reality that happens only to other people, even for adults. Incidentally, we adults, like children, play the same mental game. I still recall my mother at the age of 59 collapsing, after entering the funeral home to view my father's 65-year-old dead body. As my brother on one side and I on the other held her up, she moaned over and over again, "It wasn't a mistake; he really did die. I never thought it would happen to us." My brother and I knew exactly what she meant, because we shared her blindness.

Death is never real until it hits us personally. Until that time, we know as an abstract fact that we will die, but we don't really grasp it until it touches us personally. There seems to be a rule that the more directly we are involved with something we fear, the greater the impact upon us. My mother, for example, learned what all successful parents must. It was nearly useless for her to say, "If you don't stop that, you are going to get a spanking from your father when he gets home." That threat only caused a momentary lull in our mischievous activities, because Dad's coming home was very far away and the mischievous merriment was enticingly near at hand. Besides, Mother wasn't always consistent to follow through on the threat in any case, and there was much time for her to forget or forgive us. The danger was too distant, too easy to wish away. Mother soon learned a better way. She would pick up a piece of firewood and shout, "If you don't stop, I am going to whack you!" That worked, because she kept that promise too often to ignore. The prospect of the beating became just as imminent as the mischievous good times. In other words, if you wish to frighten a child, or most adults for that matter, both the reward and the punishment have to be immediate, and the more distant the less effective both the reward and the punishment grow.

Very small children between the ages of two and five do have nightmares, but these involve usually imaginary creatures that lurk under the bed or in the closet and threaten immediate harm. I have reared eight children, and they all went through

such bogeyman deliriums. None of them ever woke up worrying about something as distant as hellfire. Death never ceases to be a distant event.

I am in my sixties now, and death and hell seem closer, at least closer than when I was age six. But I can't say it frightens people my age any more than the young. Therefore, I tell my teachers to teach about hell, but not to bother to use death and hell as threats. It is much better to threaten them with the loss of a trinket, a reward, or such trifles, because such threats are very effective, if immediate and backed up consistently.

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*I have never known a child to be terrified about the prospect of hell. This should not be too surprising, because every good parent knows that no normal child worries about death.*

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If you wish to be an effective Christian teacher or parent, make your threats imminent, tangible and consistent. Don't bother about distant, inconsistent threats that only add stress and frustration to your life. Incompetent teachers earn contempt and laughter, instead of respect and obedience. You must guide your flock to safety and covenant keeping. The skill of herding little sheep takes about three years to learn as an intern at one of our schools, and if you have the patience and talent to develop it, can be turned into the wealth of a millionaire. I will even pay you a salary while you are learning how to do it.

Please send \$12 (postage paid) for a copy of my book, *How to Become a Millionaire in Christian Education*, from Nicene Press, 4405 Outer Dr., Naples, Florida 34112.

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*Dr. Ellsworth McIntyre is founder of Grace Community Schools and one of America's leading Christian educators.*

The editors apologize for the unseemly pull quote on page 23 of the August issue. Its appearance was wholly inadvertent.



# Urban Nations Update: The Dark Side of the Dream

*By Steve M. Schlissel*

We know that most immigrants are coming to America for economic reasons: there's far more opportunity to earn far more money here than they could ever have dreamed of having back home.

But many immigrants—however prepared they might have been to work, compete, sacrifice, scrape and scrimp in their pursuit of “the American Dream”—have failed to consider that their pursuit of “the dream” might lead their families into a nightmare. Their desire for “success” is understandable, even admirable. But the hidden costs are exacting a toll many were completely unprepared for. They simply neglected to put a column for “family” in their spreadsheet, or, having put it there, placed it last instead of first (under God).

Witness the case of Emil and Lana.<sup>1</sup> They came to America from Russia five years ago with their 11-year-old son, Kevin. (With a few exceptions, the families we know from the former Soviet empire have just one child, or none.) Arriving with enthusiasm and determination, Emil sought to become economically self-sufficient post haste. He borrowed money from friends to put a down payment on a small apartment building. He worked many hours and saw too little of his family. His net worth went up while his family was going down.

Kevin soon began using drugs; by the age of 14 he was mainlining heroine. His drug use was discovered during a routine medical examination. Upon learning this hard fact, Lana fainted. She called her husband who told her to handle it; he was too busy working to confront what was happening to him, to them. He preferred, at first, to dream on and drown the voice which declared: “Thou fool! This day thy family is required of thee!”

But they were from a background of atheism, without Christ, without covenant, without Christian education. Not surprisingly, they turned to a secular agency for help. Through groups there, it was discovered that often, after his mother had kissed him good night and turned out the light, Kevin would sneak out of the house, go down to Alphabet City (a tough part of New York, so named because it encompasses Avenues A, B, and C on the Lower East Side), cop and use drugs, then make it home in time for his mother to come into his room in the morning and find him in bed. They would then sit together at the breakfast table, the parents being utterly clueless as to what was really happening. Literally, while they were dreaming, a nightmare was becoming their reality.

When Emil and Lana's path crossed ours through Urban Nations, the Christian teaching of their ESL instructor, Bob Ciago, began to make a mark on them. They wondered if a spiritual vacuum at home had not contributed to their son's now being in a drug program upstate. They began to attend our

fellowship for immigrants each Lord's Day afternoon, began opening up to members of the church, requesting prayer, asking what they should do now, what they could dare hope for now. They were clearly wary of the secular program and its extremely limited focus. They began to develop in them a determination to get themselves right with God first. Smart move. Like the stewardess tells you at the beginning of each flight, “In the event of an emergency, if you're traveling with children, put the oxygen mask over your mouth first.” You won't be any good to them if you're gone.

While there has been no discernible “conversion,” it seems like we are looking at a work of the Lord in progress. This past Lord's Day, Lana told those gathered at the fellowship about an incident which she found to be very significant—significant as in “a sign.” She was downtown Brooklyn in yet another tough area of the city. Lana's maternal concerns decided to visit her right there in public: she was overcome by deep sorrow and it apparently showed. Suddenly she noticed a group of young black men coming toward her. They approached her and expressed sincere concern. It turns out they were all Christians and, upon hearing of her grief, they gathered around Lana and prayed for her and her family, right there on the spot. (I LOVE THIS CITY!!)

As Lana related the incident to members of Messiah's Congregation, an electric charge ran through the air and there was weeping in joyous recognition of the hand of the Lord. It was becoming increasingly evident to Lana and Emil that the answers to life's difficulties are not to be found in any dream, but in the reality defined by God in Christ.

Kevin joined his parents at the fellowship for the first time. He had been allowed a short time away from his residential “treatment” program to visit his folks. He's 16 years old now, but the consensus of the very hip, very aware Christians who met him was that he is not doing well, and will almost certainly “go down” again, short of a personal intervention by our Lord. The good news is, his parents seem to be adjusting the cells on the spreadsheet. Lana said to Emil, “We must make it our priority to be here every Sunday. This is where we belong. And if Kevin comes, good! But either way, we belong among these people.”

I wish I could tell you that Emil and Lana's circumstances are unique. They are not. We are seeing many indications of cultural and moral collapse among immigrants. But such is what the church was made for: Reality. We've been equipped to work in a really sinful world to do real rebuilding that will really last. Such rebuilding is done one family at a time. Pray that this family may be added to Christ's house by faith. I'll keep you posted. And post something to us, if you can:

## URBAN NATIONS

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<sup>1</sup> I have changed their names.

# Sudan Update: Western Equatoria Is Now Free

*By Peter Hammond*



The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has succeeded in fully liberating the whole of Western Equatoria. The fall of Bo, the last remaining Government of Sudan (GOS) garrison in the province makes Western Equatoria the first province of Sudan from which all the National Islamic Front (NIF) Arab forces have been eradicated. The distinctive red cross on blue and white, the Christian flag is now flying all over Western Equatoria.

The dramatic SPLA offensive, "Operation Thunderbolt," which began on March 9, 1997 defeated several GOS divisions and overran the network of Muslim garrisons, from Amadi and Lui to the important road junction at Jambo to the strategic town of Yei, the key border towns of Kaya and Kajo-Keji, the heavily fortified Lainya and the garrisons at Goja, Boje and Moga. This successful series of military thrusts was decisive as it firmly placed under SPLA control all the southwestern approaches to the Southern capital of Juba.

With the beginning of the rainy season, the swollen Kit River proved to be a considerable natural obstacle to the further advance of the SPLA forces — especially as the GOS forces had blown up the bridge. During April, however, the SPLA forces, under Commander Mayardit, managed to cross the Kit River and launched a series of lightning strikes against four GOS bases. The Arab forces fled in disarray and the SPLA have now advanced to within sight (and shelling range) of Juba.

The only outposts near Juba still under GOS control (at the time of writing) are Rejaf and Rokon. Two thousand troops from the defector Rieck Machar's SSIM forces (which have now joined the GOS), which were sent from upper Nile to help defend Juba, were intercepted and defeated by the SPLA. The SSIM suffered heavy losses and the survivors fled in disarray. The SPLA offensive has also isolated the GOS garrison towns in Eastern Equatoria, Torit and Kapoeta, which can be supplied only by air drops. These air drops can be sustained only for as long as the Juba air base is able to operate. Juba itself is now cut off, with the SPLA threatening both the road route and the Nile river route from Bor.

## New Offensives Launched in Bahr-El-Ghazal and Red Sea

With the GOS distracted by the threat to their Southern capital of Juba, the SPLA suddenly launched another offensive in May (Operation Deng Nhial) which captured the towns of Tonj, Warrap, Rumbeck and Gogrial in Bahr-El-Ghazal province. Rumbeck fell on May 1, after an intensive one-hour battle. Tonj was subdued in just thirty ferocious minutes, a few days later.

At the same time the SPLA, with their new northern allies in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), also made major advances in Eastern Sudan. The SPLA/NDA Red Sea Offensive overran all the GOS garrisons between Tokar and the Red Sea, including Algikh, Atirabi, Migileen, Bitay and Ateek.

Significantly, the tone of the NIF regime's propaganda from Khartoum has changed quite dramatically. The NIF spokesmen are now saying that their (GOS) forces are "holding their own" rather than the earlier "repelling the invaders"! The public is being prepared for future defeats and there is a continuous appeal for citizens to enroll in the Popular Defense Force (PDF) militia.

The minister for information, El Tayeb Mohamed Kheir, has been forced to admit that the GOS is facing some serious "difficulties" in the East. Kheir stressed that the fall of the threatened Tokar would not mean that Port Sudan (the absolutely vital road, rail and sea lifeline for Sudan) would be on the brink of falling, because, he noted, Tokar is 200 kilometers from Port Sudan! Observers have concluded that the NIF is apparently depending more on geographic distances than on any military abilities of its armed forces to protect their dictatorship!

At the time of this report, SPLA forces were also threatening the very strategic railway junction town of Wau in Bahr-El Ghazal and the hydroelectric power station at the dam near Damazin on the Blue Nile. Reportedly this hydroelectric dam provides more than 80% of the electricity for the national capital, Khartoum.

## War Intensifies in the Nuba Mountains

With the liberation of so many key towns in Western Equatoria and Bahr-El-Ghazal, the SPLA will be able to resupply their beleaguered forces cut off in the Nuba Mountains for over twelve years — once the dry season starts in October or November. Perhaps because of this threat, the NIF forces have intensified their efforts to annihilate the Nuba people.

The SPLA in the Nuba has succeeded in repulsing six of the eight massive military columns recently sent into the Nuba Mountains. However, the two GOS columns which got through devastated many villages, burning crops, vandalizing churches, destroying villages, looting livestock and murdering many villagers.

## Christian Flags Fly Over Newly Liberated Towns

During my latest mission trip to Sudan in May, it was my privilege to visit some of the newly liberated areas along the Yei river battlefield. At every town I saw the distinctive red

cross on blue and white Christian flags flying. There was a joyful atmosphere of thanksgiving to God for the remarkable series of victories the Christian soldiers had so recently experienced. Many soldiers related close calls and answered prayers during the recent battles.

Several SPLA officers, including commanders, commented that the turning point in the war was when the SPLA had accepted the appointment of our chaplains and decreed that all parades and operations were to be started with Bible reading and prayer.

"Our situation seemed hopeless two years ago . . . but as we have turned to God, He has begun to bless us with great victories," declared one officer. "Each chaplain is worth many brigades of soldiers — the chaplains have done a great work in inspiring and strengthening our men," said another. "These Bibles which you bring," observed one commander "are very important weapons in our fight for freedom. The Christian Bible is more powerful than the bombs of the Muslims!"

There are now six full-time chaplains and 36 assistants serving in the SPLA. To them Frontline Fellowship has delivered thousands of Bibles, hymn books, prayer books and other Christian books. The chaplains reported that hundreds of soldiers have come to faith in Christ in recent months.

### **Lui and the Legacy of Dr. Frazer**

One of my chaplains' services was held in the newly liberated town of Lui. Lui has been a very important and strategic missionary, medical and educational center in Western Ekuatoria. It was the birthplace of Christianity in Moruland. In 1920, Dr. Kenneth Frazer, of the Church Missionary Society, travelled up the Nile and felt led to Lui. He was a medical doctor, a teacher and a pastor; but he was also a decorated soldier who had risen to Major General by the end of the First World War. General Frazer implemented what has proven to be one of the most successful missionary campaigns ever. His strategy was to fulfill the Great Commission by ministering to body, mind and spirit. He started by opening up a hospital, then a school, then a church. Soon he had established nurses' training courses, teacher training programs and pastoral training. He also translated the gospels and Acts into Moru.

As I stood before the simple white cross which marked the grave of Dr. Frazer, I marvelled that what one man started could have accomplished so much. All around me was the evidence: a very large church, large schools, the hospital, teacher training college and nurses college. It was true that the Muslim government's bombing and occupation had forced the people to flee and had damaged many of the buildings, but Jesus Christ is the Resurrection and the Life. Christianity is the religion of the empty tomb. Out of death comes life — abundant life.

Today there are over 300,000 Moru Christians who belong to the Mundri Diocese, for which Kenneth Frazer laid the foundations. Many of the key Christian leaders in Moruland today received their education (and often medical treatment too) at Lui.

The signs of the Arab occupation were everywhere — trenches, gun emplacements, pill boxes, mine fields, the debris

of war, a newly painted Mosque and many vandalized graves. There were a shocking number of broken crosses in the graveyard by the Lui church. (However, I noticed that none of the Arabic signs on the graves of Muslim troops who had been buried in Lui had been disturbed at all.)

Rev. Jeffry pointed out the huge tree under which Dr. Frazer had first begun Bible studies and church services. "Dr. Frazer chose that tree to start the first Moru church because it was the same tree under which the Arab slave traders had bought and sold our people as slaves." I looked at the tree with renewed appreciation of God's work of creation which made such a magnificent tree and God's work of redemption (re-creation) which has rescued us from the slavery of sin and death.

We noticed that the memorial plaque which had been set up in front of the Redemption Tree had also been vandalized by the Arab invaders during their occupation.

I preached the Word to the SPLA soldiers at Lui, and prayed with them that the great work begun at that town would continue, that once again the hospital, schools, colleges and church would be fully operating to the glory of God and for the strengthening of his people in Moruland.

### **Medical Clinic at Mundri Is Operational**

Despite a critical shortage of equipment and medicines, the field medics and nurses who completed the Frontline Fellowship Medical Workshop in March have managed to maintain an operational clinic close to the Yei river. I was most impressed with how much they had accomplished, especially with all the hundreds of patients they have had to care for during the offensives of the last three months.

The clinic was clean, neat and efficiently run. There were over forty patients in the four wards. Most were soldiers with gunshot wounds. A few had been injured by landmines. Some were civilians injured by mines or mortars. One man was in a very severe condition from a car accident. He had multiple fractures and he had almost bitten his tongue off. The medics had effectively stitched his tongue back together again. (We transported this man back to the hospital at Maridi for further treatment.) Some of the patients had tropical diseases of one sort or another. One nine-year-old boy was the only survivor of three who had been blown up by a GOS mortar bomb. His mother and brother had already died and he had wounds in each arm and leg and on his body.

The chaplains had organized a special service at the Mundri clinic and well over 200 soldiers and civilians had gathered and were joyfully singing when I arrived back from Lui. After some hymns, prayers and greetings, I presented the Medical Workshop certificates to those medics present who had passed the written examination. They also received the first Red Cross/medical armbands and special medic packs with first aid materials. In all we delivered about 700 kilograms of antibiotics, pain killers, anti-inflammatories, fever-reducing agents, bandages, gauze and other vital medical materials.

The Mundri clinic urgently needs sheets (the patients are sleeping on reed mats on concrete floors — there are no beds or sheets and very few blankets available), eating utensils, mosquito netting for the windows, more paint (about half of

the clinic has been painted) and, of course, many more medicines, bandages and gauze. The medics are also looking forward to further training courses and medical teams to come and assist them.

The medical situation in Western Equatoria has become even more critical since the Red Cross suspended its flights. The Red Cross Hospital in Lokichoggio (Kenya) is the only fully equipped hospital (with X-ray machines, for example) available for war-wounded South Sudanese. The GOS and UN flight ban on most of Western Equatoria also means that there is no longer any opportunity to fly out patients. This makes it even more urgent that we provide the trained and motivated medics in Mundri with all the medicines they need to alleviate the suffering of the war-wounded in Western Equatoria. There are very few places where we can achieve so much with even so few resources as the Medical Clinic in Mundri.

### Literature Distribution and Leadership Training

It was a joy to deliver 1,050 Arabic/English hymnals (half went to the chaplains and half to the Episcopal church), 240 Avokayo hymnals, 2,050 prayer books in Moru, 40 prayer books in English and two boxes of other Christian books to the pastors of Western Equatoria. (This brings to over 26,000 the number of Bibles, hymn and prayer books and other Christian books in thirteen languages delivered to seven regions of Sudan by Frontline Fellowship, so far, this year.)

The recent dramatic advances by the SPLA are now also leading to other momentous upheavals, as hundreds of thousands of displaced people and refugees plan to return to their now liberated home areas.

The Diocese of Mundri is planning to restore the abandoned Bishop Gwynne College. This was the largest Bible college and theological seminary in Southern Sudan (it was named after the first Christian Missionary Alliance missionary to Sudan). Since the college had been so close to the battlefield it had been abandoned for the last decade. At present there are only three Bible colleges for all of Western Equatoria — and none of them are in Moruland. The rapid church growth and lack of adequate Bible training has led to a desperate shortage of trained pastors. Frontline Fellowship has been officially requested by the pastors of Mundri Diocese to help restore the Bishop Gwynne College. It would be a most strategically placed leadership training center and it would be far wiser to train pastors inside Sudan than to take promising students outside for their studies. Quite aside from the extra costs and the danger of many students choosing not to return to their home areas afterwards, study overseas tends to make such pastoral candidates less in touch with their future congregations. In fact, overseas study often robs indigenous churches of their most promising leaders — not only for a few years — but all too often for life. For these reasons we are determined to assist in establishing a Bible college in Sudan that will lay firm foundations for evangelism, discipleship, pastoral ministry and Biblical reformation.

### Flight Bans and Violating Air Space

On this mission trip, as on many others, the logistics were complicated by a flight ban by the GOS and UN over most of

Equatoria (the part where we are working!). We were told by our hosts that when the radio message came through that a plane was going to land that day, the local officials didn't believe it: "No planes come here any more. We're under a flight ban." Jeffrey explained: "No, it's a Frontline Fellowship team coming." To which they responded: "Oh! Frontline Fellowship," they just nodded. Apparently we have a reputation for routinely breaking UN and GOS rules and flight bans!

The drama that ensued over our return flight was another reminder of just how often we take the Lord's protection for granted on these (illegal) incursions into (the officially Islamic) Sudan. I was walking to the Zande Bible College for the last speaking engagement of my trip when I heard our aircraft — an hour early. I saw it coming in low and guessed that something was wrong when the pilot landed immediately without first circling the airstrip. I started running and collected my kit on the way.

At the airstrip the pilot was very nervous and impatient to take off. He had been warned by radio that the authorities in Khartoum knew about this flight. The GOS had forwarded official warnings that the aircraft did not have permission to enter Sudan airspace and that it would be intercepted and shot down if it continued. Within seconds we were zooming out at maximum speed at tree-top level — straight for the Zaire border. For several tense, prayer-filled minutes we scanned the skies for any sign of an enemy aircraft.

By God's grace we reached home safely. It had been another successful trip blessed by God: The medical clinic at Mundri was resupplied; the field medics had been equipped with first aid packs; 3,500 more prayer and hymn books in four languages were delivered; chaplaincy and church services had been held, including in newly liberated areas; our friends in Southern Sudan had been further encouraged; and important plans and preparations were discussed concerning future leadership training, educational and medical projects.

To those who made this trip possible and who prayed for it, "May the Lord abundantly bless and reward you."

Photographs and further details of the recent dramatic developments in Sudan are available upon request.

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*Peter Hammond is the Founder and Director of Frontline Fellowship and the Director of United Christian Action (a network of 20 Bible-based groups working for revival and reformation in Southern Africa). He is an international speaker, presenting about 400 lectures or sermons each year throughout Africa, Eastern Europe and America.*

*Peter is married to Lenora and they have been blessed with three children — Andrea, Daniela and Christopher.*

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# On the Moral Virtues and Evolving Professional Ethics: A Message to Physicians

By Miguel A. Faria, Jr.



## The Cardinal Virtues

It has been written by the great thinkers of the Western intellectual tradition that the chief moral virtues — the four *cardinal virtues* — are courage (or fortitude), temperance, justice, and prudence.

According to the modern philosopher Mortimer J. Adler, the four cardinal virtues are the virtues which constitute the moral character of a good

man.<sup>1</sup> While it is true that there are many other desirable traits (e.g., amiability, modesty, humility, and honesty), the man or woman who embodies the chief moral virtues possesses the moral fiber from which all other virtues flow.

In our present zeitgeist, in which the liberal elite dominates popular culture via control of the media, the support of the Hollywood establishment, and the intellectual air provided by academia, it is no accident that contemporary verbiage is dominated by cursory sound-bites (rather than ratiocination) and overused politically-correct clichés such as “fairness” and “consensus-building,” and new popular ethos such as the cult and worship of victimhood.

These trendy terms (and situations) appear to have been carefully selected to impersonate three of the old cardinal virtues: temperance, prudence, and justice. It would appear then that if we suffer from a dearth of a single virtue, a most likely candidate for that deficiency would be *moral courage*. And, again, if there is a single virtue doomed to moral atrophy and extinction, it would be courage (fortitude).

## Pragmatism and Instrumentalism

With the advent of post-Modernism and the gradual prominence gained by the philosophy of pragmatism originated by the American psychologist William James (1842-1910), moral value judgments, particularly during this decade of the 1990s, seem, like evanescent beauty, to be in the eye of the beholder. James rejected all transcendental principles despite the fact that he maintained a scholarly, lifelong interest in religion and psychic research.<sup>2</sup> Pragmatism instructs us that the truth of a proposition is not determined from miracles of faith or logical reasoning, but judged solely from its practical outcome. To my thinking, this is akin to Nicolo Machiavelli's axiom that in politics, as in war, the end justifies the means.

Pragmatism maintains that truth evolves as “discoveries are made and it is relative to time and place and purpose of inquiry.” The influential American educator, John Dewey (1859-1952) went a step further with his theory of instrumentalism (an offshoot of pragmatism), insisting that truth is merely an instrument used by man to solve his immediate problems, and that it (truth) must change as his problems change. “Thus it [truth] partakes of no transcendental or eternal reality.” What these learned gentlemen and their philosophies of pragmatism and instrumentalism imply is that there are no universal truths or absolute moral value judgments, only moral relativism and situational ethics. The impact of this doctrine on present-day ethical value theories in academia and among the cultural elite is obvious.

## Courage and Moral Fortitude

Courage, my friend, is enjoyed by those who possess the moral fortitude to endure hardships and pain in the pursuit of truth, regardless of the consequences. You see, it takes fortitude to persevere in the face of repeated obstacles, hardships, danger, stress, even disparagement from those who oppose a principled man's undertaking. The philosopher Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) discussed at great lengths both the mental and physical aspects of courage, and believed that a courageous and prudent man avoids the extremes of rashness on the one hand and cowardice on the other. He held that to be considered a courageous man, one must be aware of danger and experience fear while undertaking a courageous action. A man, then, must be keenly aware of his travails in life's journey and understand and overcome fear to have genuine courage and accomplish his quest for truth.<sup>3</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) also wrote about three aspects of courage: physical, mental, and especially, spiritual courage. Spiritual courage emanates from God and is necessary to endure the hardships of life.<sup>4</sup> The Jewish philosopher Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677) postulated that fortitude was necessary to persevere in any worthwhile undertaking; a task should be as difficult as it is noble. Paradoxically, James himself wrote of the necessity for an “iron will” to cope with the trials and tribulations of the human condition.<sup>5</sup>

## Medical Ethics

Why is all of this relevant to the present plight of medicine? Because the ancient ethical foundations of medicine laid down by our predecessors from Hippocrates (460-370 B.C.) to Thomas Percival (1740-1804) and other physicians and genuine medical ethicists have been (and continue to be) greatly eroded by those masquerading as free-marketeers but in reality are constructing the scaffold of corporate socialized medicine.<sup>6</sup> Contributing to this task are also many self-proclaimed, non-physician medical ethicists who provide the “moral” and “rational” basis for cost-containment and rationing in health care.<sup>7</sup>

These disparate groups (e.g., corporate elitists, collectivists, etc.), aided and abetted by entrenched bureaucrats in both the private and public sector, have unilaterally decided that health network megacorporations (motivated by the bottom line and

using the capitalist engine for cost-containment and rationing) may, under the aegis of government authority, impose managed competition on the American people (those receiving) and on devoted physicians (those delivering) medical care in the trenches of the American heartland. That is, they want to make big profits at the expense of both, but to do so, *they must first change the ethics of the noble profession of medicine*. And to accomplish this goal, they must sell us the erroneous idea that medical ethics evolves with time and may be tailored to fit the needs of specific conditions, *i.e.* the present situation or the post-Modern age. It goes without saying that for medicine, the supremacy of pragmatism and the acceptance of situational ethics will further erode medicine's idealism and altruism, the patient-doctor relationship and the veritable transmogrification of the ancient Hippocratic ethic to a modern, convenient, alterable, cost-effective, veterinary ethic.

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*The ancient ethical foundations of medicine have been greatly eroded by those masquerading as free-marketeers who in reality are constructing the scaffold of corporate socialized medicine.*

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To combat this strong, treacherous current will take virtuous physicians, imbued not only with courage and moral fortitude, but also armed with the *intellectual virtues* — namely, understanding, knowledge, and wisdom — that are assiduously cultivated and nurtured by a lifelong commitment to learning, perseverance, and a devotion to principle, duty, and individual responsibility. The 2500-year-old beneficent ethics of the medical profession and Hippocratic medicine do not need changing into a new veterinary ethic of corporate socialized medicine to fit contemporary ethos — and satisfy corporate greed. Like universal truths, medical ethics should be considered (and should remain) constant and immutable, not subject to the political expediency of the moment — or the pragmatism of the collectivist central planners.

Given the formidable obstacles that lie ahead, "it will take truly Renaissance physicians of the highest order and courage to surmount the titanic hurdles in their path and repel the Vandal hordes massing for the final onslaught, eager to breach the gates, to pillage and plunder the traditional practice of medicine, and sap its substance."<sup>8</sup>

Yes, it will take intellectual virtues as well as moral courage to repel the sundry Vandals who seek to impose on the nation the veterinary ethic of managed care and corporate socialized medicine. As physicians, we must prevent the perversion of our

time-honored ethics and the final dissolution of the sanctity of the patient-doctor relationship, while implementing the truly *individually-based, patient-oriented free-market approach* to medical care that is so desperately needed to derail the odious juggernaut of managed competition, a scheme that seeks to destroy the ethical practice of medicine — one of the great remaining legacies of Western civilization and the American way of life.

<sup>1</sup> Adler, M.J., *Great Ideas from the Great Books* (New York, 1969).

<sup>2</sup> *The Columbia Encyclopedia* (Mt. Holly, New Jersey, n.d.).

<sup>3</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics. On man in the universe*, L.R. Loomis (ed.) (New York, 1943).

<sup>4</sup> Aquinas, T. *Summa Theologica*. A.C. Pegis (ed.), (New York, 1948).

<sup>5</sup> Will, J.W. *Principles of Psychology* (New York, 1891). Cited by Rodning, C.B., "To Mark with Courage and Passion," *South Med J* 1991; 84(5): 619-621.

<sup>6</sup> Faria, M. A. Jr., "On the Ethics of Managed Competition," *J. Med Assoc.*, 1995; 84(4): 159-160.

<sup>7</sup> *idem.*, *Vandals At the Gates of Medicine — Historic Perspectives on the Battle over Health Care Reform* (Macon, Georgia, 1995), 240-242 and 255-263.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

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Editor's Note:

While we are quite skeptical of much of Western philosophy, we believe Dr. Faria's message contains valuable insights about the status of the present medical situation in the United States.

# Update from Macedonian Outreach

*By Haig and Vula Rushdoony*

*"Now may Our Lord Christ himself . . . comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work."*

*(2 Thess. 2:16-17)*

This passage from Scripture headed a letter received last month from one of our indigenous pastors in Bulgaria. In the letter, he conveyed to us solace for the passing into her Eternal Home of Vula Rushdoony's mother on April 12. He also conveyed thanksgiving for the food, money and clothing delivered by Outreach Director Vula and Secretary Linda Applegate on their two visits to Bulgaria.

This last mission to the Balkans was both the most rewarding and the most heart-rending ever taken by our Outreach officers. Rewarding in that they were able to touch at least 2600 people in that region with much-needed food, clothing and shoes. Heart-rending in that they saw poverty, including children without shoes, and the deterioration of a nation. The story of this venture with God follows.

## Albania

As you are well aware, Albania has been literally engaged in a civil war. Currently, there is an armistice with troops from Italy, Greece, Turkey and other countries occupying various regions of Albania to maintain "the peace."

With rare exceptions, all foreigners, including our missionaries in Southern Albania, were ordered out of the country during the civil war. The evangelical community in Greece housed many of these missionaries during their time of waiting. However, they are returning to Albania little by little.

During these troubled times, through outside sources, approximately 200 pounds of clothing were delivered to Albanian refugees on the Island of Corfu, Greece, or to those who remained in Albania. Also, money was given to buy food which was then distributed among the people in Southern Albania.

## Bulgaria

Outreach Director Vula and Outreach Secretary Linda participated in two missionary journeys, one in mid-March and the other in April, to distribute clothes, shoes, food and money to help the starving in Bulgaria. In all, forty-nine Gypsy congregations were provided bread for a month and six other congregations bread for two weeks, thanks to the overwhelming generosity of friends of the Outreach who responded to the call for "Food for Bulgaria."

During both visits, Vula and Linda found conditions worsening and were confronted with snow. Yet they found the cheerful, grateful faces of Gypsies, Armenians and Bulgarians with whom they met and worshiped. They found that children could neither attend school nor church as they lacked shoes. Another campaign was launched in the U. S., namely, "Shoes for Bulgaria." Again the response was great. Over 1400 pounds of shoes, clothes, and food have been shipped or taken to

Bulgaria this year. And more is on the way. Another finding was the need for medication of all kinds. Much has been received and some has been taken or shipped already. Remember that it costs \$2.25 a pound to ship any of this via surface mail and \$21.60 for four pounds via air mail! Air cargo shipments are no longer feasible because of unrealistic customs regulations.

The San Francisco Bay Area Armenian congregations, Apostolic and Protestant, have also been very responsive to the needs of Armenian Bulgarians. First, the San Francisco Armenian Congregational Church committed money to help the Armenians in Bulgaria. Secondly, during a joint commemorative service for the genocide of one-and-a-half million Armenians in Turkey in 1915, five congregations of the San Francisco Bay Area Apostolic and Protestant churches had a special offering for the Armenians. Money was taken by Linda and Vula and has since been sent to meet the needs of the Armenian people in Bulgaria. Armenian Apostolic and Protestant pastors have faithfully distributed money and food where needed most. Remember the letter from the pastor, cited in the opening of this newsletter? He reports that sixty families have already received assistance from the money taken by Vula and Linda. Another 140 families were helped in the next distribution.

Before and after their mission trips into Bulgaria, Vula and Linda sent more food, medicine and money for food from Greece to two other Bulgarian communities which helped fifty additional families.

The needs are endless in this land of high inflation where people are starving because they lack sufficient money to buy basic necessities. Last September, Vula exchanged dollars for levas at the rate of 270 levas per dollar. In March, the exchange rate was 1550 per dollar! Pray that the people will continue to stand firm in their faith and that help will continue to come so that they will survive the early spring months.

In a central Bulgarian church, Vula and Linda met with pastors of eighteen of the Gypsy villages during their first mission trip. After much prayer and praise, each pastor was given an amount of money according to the size of his congregation. As they all felt the need to be accountable to the Outreach and to the indigenous pastor who oversees the Gypsy ministry, each signed his name as he received the money. It was a very emotional scene of how Christ transforms a sinner's heart. Every Saturday, each pastor buys the quantity of bread needed. On Sunday, at the end of the church service, each family takes home the number of loaves needed for the week.

## Greece

Together with other Christians, Vula took clothing for people in the psychiatric hospital in Northern Greece. Clothing was also distributed to the refugee and orphan children and families of Northern Greece. In all, over 1000 pounds of clothes have been distributed in Greece this year.

Earlier this year, a teenage girl was brought to Boston's Harvard University Medical Center for treatment and later surgery. She is back home recuperating. Mr. and Mrs. Steve Sideris, friends of the Rushdoonys, took care of Kostantina and her mother throughout their stay here. Although the Outreach did not assist financially with Kostantina's transportation and stay here, it did make contact with Dr. George Koustas, a

Greek-American doctor, who laid the groundwork for Kostantina to come to America.

The Outreach, through the Child Society Benjamin, continues to support nine orphan children and to send clothing and food to refugee families. Part of the San Francisco Bay Area joint Armenian memorial service offering is also being used to feed Armenian refugees in Greece.

### Romania

During a recent trip to Southern California to attend a funeral, Vula found God reopening the doors to Romania. She met a group of Romanian Christians who knew one of the indigenous pastors there whom we know and have supported. Vula found specific needs and people to whom to send clothing and other necessities. Clothing has already been sent to Romania.

### Yugoslavia

Vula's mother's death on April 12 shortened this mission trip in the Balkans. Otherwise, both Linda and Vula had their visas ready to go to Yugoslavia from Bulgaria in April. They had planned to meet with doctors, former and future patients and refugees. Their inability to realize this trip has slowed the pace of bringing additional critical heart patients to the United States for treatment. However, the Outreach is in touch with the hospital there and is in the process of bringing at least two patients to the States soon.

### The United States

Scores of individuals and families have been instrumental in the continuous drive to feed Armenians, Bulgarians, Bulgarian Gypsies and Albanians. The doors thus far are open to continue to help whether through food, medicine, clothes and, most importantly, through God's Word.

We thank God for your prayers . . . for they indeed helped Vula and Linda to cross borders to deliver what needed to be taken. Your prayers helped them in a safe journey and through the severest winter in the Balkans in 100 years. We praise God for what little we could do "for as you have done it to the least of these . . . you have done it unto me," our Lord reminds us.

Meanwhile back at home base, we thank the Lord for the many, many people who give so graciously of their time to the Outreach. One of these is Outreach treasurer Joyce L. Benioff. Joyce spends innumerable hours keeping our books in order and making sure that we meet all the requirements for our nontaxable, charitable status. She keeps tabs on all the *designated* donations and keeps the advisory board abreast of any changes in the tax laws. We thank God for Joyce! And we thank you immensely, Joyce.

We covet your prayers and ask for your financial support for the continued work of the Lord through the Outreach!

Macedonian Outreach  
P. O. Box 398, Danville, CA  
94526-0398

Visit our Internet web site at:

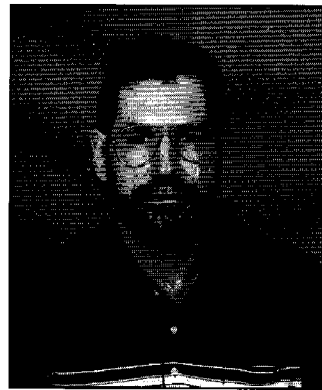
<http://www.acts.org/macedonian.outreach/>

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## In Praise of Sanctification

By Joseph P. Braswell



As Christians, we know only too well our imperfections and failings. We indeed continue to fall short of our calling to be holy as God is holy, to image him in our character and conduct. We daily struggle with sin and must continue to repent and confess our many trespasses. Genuine self-examination prevents us from succumbing to delusions of perfectionism. Instead, we readily acknowledge that we not only *were* wretched sinners who have been saved solely by the amazing grace of God through Jesus Christ, but that we yet continue to sin against a holy God, justly deserving by our *present* offenses his wrath and condemnation.

### Acceptance in Christ

As Christians we are *simul iustus et peccator*, being accepted and approved by God only *in Christ* and according to *his* righteous standing graciously imputed to us, while being in ourselves, by virtue of our sins (except they be mercifully forgiven), altogether worthy of reprobation and death — children of wrath. We know that we remain *semper peccator*, that we suffer many lapses in our character and conduct, committing grievous offenses against God and man in thought, word, and deed, in both sins of omission and sins of commission. We know existentially, in our own personal experience, the truth that we are forgiven sinners and that our sanctification remains a most difficult path that ever requires diligent effort as we struggle perseveringly (though without complete and total success) toward righteousness of life against remaining sin. We cannot but be humbled by the realization of how far short of God's holy standard we in fact fall and must accordingly remain *semper penitens*, fleeing for refuge to God's infinite mercy and seeking and imploring his grace through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### True Progress

Yet, if we are true Christians, we know as well that there is progress and victory, that righteousness is being realized and besetting sin is being overcome. We know that we are not *just* forgiven sinners, sinners no different from unbelievers save that *we* are graciously pardoned; we have experienced real change and bear real fruit of new life unto good works of true holiness. We know the power of the Spirit of God in our lives and a substantial healing of our sin-flawed characters. The struggle does not keep us at a standstill in the status quo of sinfulness;



our labors are not in vain as we wrestle with sin. Our daily repentance is not just godly sorrow for our continually errant ways, but brings forth amendment of life and the works befitting repentance. We indeed manage to *mortify* the old man and the works of the flesh to manifest the fruit of the Spirit. We walk in the Spirit and in the light in newness of life with new hearts and renewed minds, experiencing sanctification and growing in grace evermore approximating the image of Christ. No, we indeed are not just forgiven sinners; we are new men, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. We in fact experience that we, as Christians, are *ex quadam parte iustus*, while yet being nevertheless *ex quadam parte peccator*. Accordingly, while eschewing any temptation to self-righteousness and remembering always that we are saved solely by grace, we must recognize that God is renewing and transforming us so that we do indeed differ in practice from those whom he has not redeemed, for Christ is our justification and our sanctification, delivering us from the power and dominion of sin along with his removing our guilt and discharging our penalty. There should be some real evidence of God's grace in our lives.

While it is true that we can never say we have no sin (1 Jn. 1:8-10), it is wrong for us to concentrate so exclusively on our receipt of forgiveness that we disparage the overcoming of sin in our lives by progressive sanctification. Sanctification is no small thing and ought not to be treated lightly as though insignificant. It cannot compete with justification (as though, through the progress of sanctification in *making* us increasingly more righteous in character and conduct, our justification by the imputation of Christ's "alien" righteousness becomes less necessary and we become acceptable to God in ourselves), but it is to be duly appreciated in its own right as a wonderful gift of God, and it is to be *pursued* by us with all diligence as our holy calling.

### Maintaining Balance

Careful balance is called for here. We must not deceive ourselves about our sins, but we must also not despair of victory and think of ourselves as merely forgiven sinners. A morbid obsession and preoccupation with our sins can paralyze us. It can cripple our walk in paths of righteousness and is in fact a profound failure to acknowledge a glorious work of God with joy, praise, and thanksgiving. It is as equally false and self-deceptive for us to see ourselves as only sinners as it is for us to conceive of ourselves as perfectly sanctified and sinless. In both cases, we do not judge with righteous judgment in authentic self-examination wherein we think God's thoughts after him and appropriate his judgments. We are now *saints*, righteous ones who yet sin, not *sinners*, and this is not merely *nominal*; we are constitutively redefined as righteous. We are in the Spirit, not in the flesh, and our self-image must reflect this truth and reality. We must acknowledge the definitive break with sin and the flesh as those who have definitively *put off* the old man and have *put on* the new man of the renewed image of God in Christ. It is not simply the case that we have an imputed righteousness which is alien and extrinsic (outside us). We have been effectively transferred out of the sphere of existence under sin-power into the sphere of the Spirit of

righteousness that sets us free to be people of God and live unto him in holiness and righteousness with newness of life. We are to reckon as true this new state of affairs and be what we are. As light in the Lord, we begin (perhaps falteringly at first, with "baby steps") to walk as children of light (Eph. 5:8). The sons of God begin to conform to that image and act like sons (1 Jn. 3:13).

### False Self-Image

We can be hindered in our walk by a false self-image that robs us of the true confidence of overcoming faith. Our sanctification depends in large measure on our outworking expression of our self-conception, for "as [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Pr. 23:7). Paul's point in Romans 6 is that we are to recognize what is the reality of our new situation and to act on it, counting it as true and re-imaging ourselves in terms of it. We *are* made dead unto sin by our co-crucifixion with Christ (united to him and, in him, partaking of his death to sin), so we therefore are to reckon ourselves dead to sin by faith and live as those dead to sin and no longer bound to its service. There is a radical and principal difference between covenant-breakers and covenant-keepers that transcends a mere change in legal standing (our forensic *justification*) to reorient our very existence to life unto God, and this is an *existential* change in our condition that regenerates us and constitutes us as righteous, translating us from fleshly existence to *spiritual* life. Only as we act on this truth will sin have no dominion over us, for by failing to realize our death to sin, we operate under the false assumption that we continue under sin's effective sway in bondage to sin. By that false assumption we surrender ourselves to sin, allowing it to reign over us in virtual denial of the power of superabounding grace. We in effect acknowledge sin's claim over us and empower it to take possession of us by our ascribing to it a power and dominion it does not in fact possess. We deceive ourselves into being sinners and thus give place to sin in our lives.

### Biblically-Based Despair?

Some perversely justify this attitude of despair and resignation by appeal to passages such as Rom. 7:14-25 and Gal. 5:17. An erroneous interpretation of such passages justifies our "forgiven sinner" self-conception, seemingly warranting our *postconversion* confession that we are yet "carnal, sold under sin" (Rom. 7:14) and that, because "the flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh" in contrariety with each other, "we cannot do what we will" (Gal. 5:17). If we conceive of our present condition in these terms, this *defeatist* self-understanding prevents us from appreciating fully the force and power of God's constitutively redefining of us as those effectively set free from sin and made servants of righteousness. Thus, a proper understanding of these passages can aid us in understanding ourselves to be overcomers by faith. How ought we then to read these passages?

In Galatians 5:16 Paul has already informed Christians that if we walk by the Spirit, we will not fulfil the desires of the flesh, for we will be *led* of the Spirit (v. 18) to produce *fruit* of the Spirit (v. 22-23). Obviously then, it cannot be the case that

the flesh's lusting against the Spirit prevents the bearing of spiritual fruit or in any way circumvents our walking in the Spirit and the Spirit's leading us forward in this walk. The gist of 5:16-23 is that of overcoming the flesh and triumphing over it unto a *productive* spiritual existence in which works of the flesh are not manifested in our lives. The warfare of flesh and Spirit is not an internal struggle within the individual believer as between two opposing natures that equally constitute his concrete existence. Any such interpretation of v. 17 is contextually precluded. Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its lusts (v. 24).

Gal. 5:17 refers back to themes from previous discussion in Gal. 4:21-31: the epic redemptive-historical struggle between the children of the flesh and the children of the Spirit, between the children of the freewoman and the children of the bondswoman, between the Law-seed and the Promise-Seed. Paul has argued throughout the epistle in terms of a two-age cosmic-apocalyptic framework wherein the Mosaic Covenant (the Law) belongs to this world-order (the *old* creation-order) and to this present age, thus belonging to the order of *flesh* (cf. Gal. 1:4; 3:1-5; 4:4:3, 9-10; 6:14-15). This is the fundamental problem with the Law in light of the new-creational order in Christ of *Spirit* and explains why the Judaizing movement represents a return to that which is *weak* and *beggarly*. It is because Christ delivered us out of this old-creational age/order that he has redeemed us from the Law's jurisdiction, so that, as new-creational beings, we are not under the Mosaic Law.<sup>1</sup> Now, Paul broadens his criticism beyond the focus on only the Law to one which comprehends as well the more basic root-problem of *flesh* (of which *Law* is only a part and one form of manifestation). Having identified the problem of Law as a problem of *flesh*, Paul is no longer simply concerned with the Law as a sphere of existence; he now attacks the whole sphere of existence that is *fleshly* existence in citizenship in the old creation of this present evil age.

As we read Gal. 5:17, we must bear in mind that *flesh* is a concept intended to refer that constitutive sphere of existence in which the *old* (Adamic) humanity lives and moves and has its being. It is the solidarity of this humanity in its citizenship in this world-order that is under sin. Thus, *flesh* denotes a determinative relation to the Adamic world as the mode of human existence bound to the old order and participating therein.

### The Actual Meaning

Thus, Paul expands the perspective on the great cosmic struggle from that of the redemptive-historical warfare between the children of the Promise and the children of the flesh. He "mythologically" hypostatizes the concept of flesh (metaphorically reifying and personifying this human condition) so as to depict in an objectified projection the perennial struggle as at bottom the battle between the opposing *powers* of flesh and Spirit. Men are either subject to the reign of one or the other of these mutually exclusive and principally antithetical dominions, such that "ye cannot do the things that ye would." The desires created by the one stand contrary to those created by the other, and men are controlled and ruled by one or the

other, belonging to one or the other of these two jurisdictions. The power of flesh will not allow its slaves to bring forth fruit of the Spirit to righteousness and life (that which the Law is inherently incapable of giving); neither will the Spirit allow those who belong to his dominion to bring forth works of the flesh. For this reason the Galatians, if they truly belong to Christ, are not free to follow the children of the flesh, nor need they be subject to the Law in order to bring forth righteousness. Those in the Spirit are not debtors to the flesh and are not bound by the principles of a fleshly order — including Judaism.

In Rom. 7:14-25 we are not dealing with the experience of the Christian. The text deals with Old-Covenant Israel (Paul, as a Jew, speaks as representative of the Jews under the time of the Law). Israel under the Law remained *in the flesh* and thus recapitulated Adam's experience of transgression and slavery under sin. Israel, as covenant son, stood corporately as a second Adam, but as the people were sons of the first Adam, Israel could not overcome the common Adamic condition to which all men were subject (Rom. 5:12-14, 20). Sin empowered the flesh and held it in bondage, so that even the godly Jews — those rejoicing in the good and spiritual gift of the Law of God — experienced the existential condition of condemnation and death, unable to be subject to the holy Law in their carnal state. Experiencing their own impotence and belonging to a sinful people, they *knew* sin (Rom. 3:20) and therefore death and wrath, even amid the remission of sins. They longed for an end to the time of captivity in which they dwelt. The godly remnant of true Israel under the Old Covenant could only cry out for deliverance as the Law worked wrath and provoked transgression. The coming of Christ accomplished what the Law-economy could not do (Rom. 8:1-4), so that sin would not have dominion over those who are under grace rather than Law (Rom. 6:14). The *now* of Rom. 8:1 announces the great redemptive-historical transition from the Law-economy to the economy of the Spirit after Christ has come, signalling freedom to the captives and the ability to produce righteousness.

Thus, neither of these two passages affords any basis for believing that we remain merely forgiven sinners, that we — despite being justified — are yet in bondage to sin and should think of ourselves as helpless and wretched. Paul knows nothing of such impotency and gives no excuse to those who would continue in sin or fail to produce fruit of righteousness (cf. Rom. 8:1-14), and he repeatedly warns against such self-deception (Gal. 6:7-9). We would do well therefore to define ourselves as *saints* or *covenant-keepers*, not as sinners, emphasizing the reality of changed lives by God's empowering presence, and then strive to live up to that self-image in the outworking of that belief in our *praxis*.

### Victory in Living

A victorious Christian life is not lived above the fray, but in the midst of it. It is not without its momentary setbacks and defeats amid the overall advance. The victory in this life remains but a partial (rather than complete) overcoming of sin, being but the *firstfruits* that provide us with a foretaste of the reign of righteousness to come. We must not be lulled into the self-deluded complacency of perfectionism, but must remain

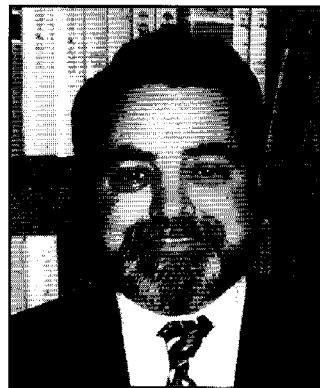
circumspect and watchful, diligently keeping the heart and resisting evil. Yet we must not disparage sanctification by a misplaced emphasis on the mercy of forgiveness, as though *it* were the be-all and end-all of our redemption. We must not despise nor discount the work of God in us. We must expect and work for victory (the glory of God by lives that are to the praise of the glory of his grace) and manifest, by the fruit of our obedience to God, the power of God in changing sinners into saints. As Christians we *ought* to be characterized by our theonomic obedience and not simply by the supposed forgiveness we have for our disobedience and carnality. The world ought to see the difference.

<sup>1</sup> It is a serious mistake to assume that Pauline statements such as this speak directly to the theological thesis of *Theonomy* in Christian ethics, as though Paul's anti-Law statements run counter to the Theonomic thesis and serve to refute it. Such an assumption is a category mistake that confuses the perspective of Biblical theology with that of systematic theology. Paul is not speaking here from a moral point of view about the eternal relevance and authority of the moral law (a theological concept and category in dogmatic systems — cf. *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, chap. 19). Were he doing so, his statements would apply to the Decalogue as much as to any other aspect or precept of the Mosaic economy. Paul speaks from a redemptive-historical perspective concerning the Sinaitic Covenant *in toto*, arguing against it as a *covenantal economy*. While he is not simply dismissing a *part* of the Mosaic system, such as the *ceremonial* law (according to a division of the whole into ceremonial, judicial, and moral laws), Paul is concerned with the whole Mosaic Law from a specific perspective which emphasizes its *cultic* character as *Old Covenant*: an order that is typological-anticipatory and provisional in nature. It is as Sinaitic-Covenantal Law given to Israel through Moses and defining the identity and story of *the Jews* that Paul dismisses it as outdated and terminated, and only in this sense does Christ/Spirit/faith replace Mosaic Law in constituting a *New-Covenantal* community that is not restricted to Jews. The righteous ethic (or *equity*) of the Law (*qua* moral law) remains in force, fulfilled in the Spirit by love, and it is the content of this ethic — not questions of identity and boundary — with which Theonomy (as a matter of the normative or deontological aspect of Christian ethics) is concerned. We may here note Paul's distinction between the *cultic*, symbolic significance of the "righteousness (*dikaioσύνη*) of the [Mosaic] Law," as it served redemptive-historically to set Jews apart from Gentiles in terms of covenantal status (the Jews as a peculiar, ritually holy people of God), and the "righteous requirements (*dikaïoma*) of the Law," as these set forth God's enduring standards of ethical behavior (the *regulative* function of the Law-ethic as opposed to the *constitutive* role of the Law within the Mosaic Covenant to Israel *vis a vis* the nations).

*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.*

# Introducing Westminster Biblical Missions

By Dennis Roe



## Our Calling

Westminster Biblical Missions (WBM) was born in 1973 in answer to a Macedonian call from Reformed believers in Korea and Pakistan. These believers were not asking for more missionaries, but for training so that they might finish the work of reaching their countrymen for Christ. A small group of men in the

United States saw in this a unique opportunity. They felt much more could be accomplished in this way, with God's help, than by the conventional method of relying on American missionaries to do the work of evangelism and church planting in foreign lands. A constitution was drawn up requiring that all of WBM's work would be true to the Word of God and the Reformed faith. The goal of WBM, then, became that of glorifying God by obeying the Great Commission to disciple the nations and do it after the pattern of Biblical Christianity, Reformed according to the Word of God.

Westminster Biblical Missions receives its name from its commitment to a Biblical approach to missions and its understanding of the Bible as set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. Being fully committed to this standard, WBM pledges to uphold it in faith and life. We hold to the absolute inerrancy of all Scripture, the infinite glory of the three persons of the Trinity, the creation of all things out of nothing, the fall of Adam into sin and the total depravity of the entire human race, the wrath of God upon sin, the absolute deity and sinless humanity of Christ, the saving work of Christ in behalf of those given to him of the Father, the bodily resurrection of Christ, the irresistible work of Christ's Spirit in drawing his own to himself, justification by grace alone through faith alone, the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, the preservation and empowering of the church in all ages, and the return of our Savior to earth to judge the wicked and exalt the redeemed. In short, it is the purpose of WBM to present the person and work of Christ to the nations so that glory might come to God the Father, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

## Our Vision

Westminster Biblical Missions is committed to planting and multiplying Reformed churches on the foreign field. To accomplish this, believers must be trained to teach their own people of Christ and his truth. The role of foreign missionaries should not be that of doing the work so much as that of

showing nationals how to do it—training them to stand in the Faith, defend the Faith, and spread the Faith. These principles of missions were ably set forth by John L. Nevius (1829-1893), a Presbyterian missionary to China, in his book *Planting and Development of Missionary Churches* (1885). Nevius called for the establishment of self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating national churches. This approach keeps national churches from dependency on foreign aid. When combined with training national believers in the Word, it is certain to have far greater results than anything a foreign missionary force could accomplish on its own. It is also incredibly cost effective. And, if the door should close to foreigners, the work will go on.

### Our Method

As the early church spread the Word, new believers were disciplined and shown how to complete the work of the Great Commission in their area. The apostles then moved on. Today, we see many missions at work, but without any goal whatsoever of establishing a national church. Most missions, Bible-believing ones included, are focused on their own efforts. It also seems to be that mission officials are reluctant to enter into controversy on the field. If nationals are to be trained to defend the Faith, however, it is essential that false gospels and false ideologies be exposed. WBM, therefore, opposes the false gospel of many Roman Catholic and Protestant churches on the mission field. WBM also opposes the apostasy found in the World Council of Churches. The ecumenical movement is everywhere today, and missionary agencies which do not confront its liberal social gospel on their fields are not faithful to Christ. It is a great delusion to think that mission work can advance without discipling or, if discipling be recognized, that it can be done without contending against the claims of false gospels and ideologies which, in the name of Christ, are seducing the hearts and minds of men.

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*The role of foreign missionaries should not be that of doing the work so much as that of showing nationals how to do it.*

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### Our Work

WBM accomplishes its purpose on foreign fields primarily through the Biblical education of promising young people in Korea, Pakistan, Hungary, and Mexico. In Korea, over 650 students are enrolled in Westminster School of Theology, founded in Seoul in 1969. Graduates have pioneered over 600 churches in South Korea and are presently working as missionaries in 15 other countries. They have had a powerful impact on government and society as well. In Pakistan our

theological seminary is building up the Lahore Church Council. Bible literacy centers have been developed to teach villagers how to read the Bible. Calvin Academy trains Christian children how to follow Christ, and yearly conferences reach thousands. WBM also has a strong publishing program of Reformed literature in Urdu. In Hungary students are being trained at Karolyi Gaspar Institute of Theology and Missions, begun in 1992 and now located in Miskolc. These young men are preaching the gospel and reviving churches in Hungary and Romania, areas formerly under Communist control. In Mexico, WBM is assisting in a work with the Tarascan Indians. In all these places, WBM is laboring by God's grace to promote the truth and train nationals to stand in the Faith and to reach the lost for Christ.

### Our Workers

WBM has a board which oversees its constitutional, personal, and financial matters. Its staff is headed by Rev. Dennis E. Roe, a minister in the Reformed Church in the United States. Dennis Roe is a decorated veteran of the Vietnam War and served other mission agencies before becoming general secretary in 1987. The fields are administered by field secretaries. Rev. Earl E. Pinckney oversees the Pakistan ministry while Dr. Robert S. Rapp supervises the work in Korea and Hungary/Romania. Rev. Pinckney and Dr. Rapp are ministers in the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). They have been with WBM from its beginning and have given pivotal guidance to the mission during its history. Dr. Rapp has written numerous articles and booklets over the years promoting missions and exposing the World Council of Churches. His two-volume textbook, *Biblical Theology*, is used throughout Korea as a standard reference work. Rev. Alexander David, a Pakistani national who oversees the Pakistan Village Ministry, is translating Reformed writings into the Urdu language. Other gifted leaders working with the mission are Rev. Sardar Ahmed Din in Pakistan, Dr. David Kim in Korea, Rev. Steven Bojtor in Hungary, and Dr. Max Lathrop in Mexico.

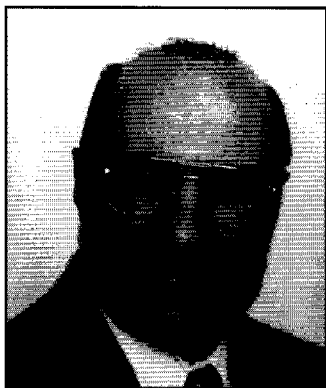
### Become Involved

Westminster Biblical Missions needs your help in carrying out its part in Christ's Great Commission. We seek men and women of God who share our vision to glorify God through the discipling of the nations to Christ. We want you and your church, first of all, to understand our work. We are in a spiritual battle. Therefore, we urge you to pray for us that we may remain faithful in our calling, courageous in proclaiming the whole counsel of God, and ready to enter new doors the Lord may be opening for us. We also ask you to give sacrificially to support our fields and the work of our staff at home. You will never find a better place to invest your missionary dollars. WBM will see to it that your gifts go in their entirety to the fields and projects you designate. We need dedicated churches which will stand behind us. Christ has ordained his church at home to build his church abroad. Please send all inquiries, letters, and gifts to:

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P.O. Box 602  
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# Capitalism: Friend or Foe?

**By Frederick Regnery and Walter Block**



**Professor Walter Block**

"The evil machine of capitalism." Numerous sociologists, leftist liberals, and social ethicists give detailed, convincing explanations on how the evils of free enterprise are responsible for the majority of our national and international problems (Bauer, 1991). They describe how profit is the driving engine of the corporate machine and claim that the self-interested businessman will stop at

nothing to attain profit maximization (Novak, 1986). He will keep wages down, exploit workers, and take advantage of Third-World resources all in the name of profit and greed. Unfortunately, social ethicists fail to reconcile self-interest and greed with the common good.

At last, the beauty of a free-market economy: Can there be a more perfect system that harnesses individual greed and selfishness, and puts them to work for the common good? Socialists fail to realize that were it not for free markets, many of our national and international problems would be accentuated rather than contained. These same liberals and sociologists point to Third-World conditions to exemplify capitalism's course of destruction (Sowell, 1983). They cite foreign investment, trading, and multinational corporations as tools that entrepreneurs use to exploit less developed economies. However, a common-sense analysis of this system and the mechanisms behind it show that the "invisible hand" of greed and profit actually supports the common interest.

An economic analysis searching for the root causes of poverty and economic underdevelopment in Third-World countries points not to foreign investment, or trade with First-World capitalistic nations, but to outmoded policies of the Third World itself. While, with some exceptions, the United States rewards innovation, creativity, and efficiency with profit, many Third-World countries are collapsing under a centrally planned economy. Instead of allowing Adam Smith's "invisible hand" to dictate people's needs and wants through supply, demand and consumer purchasing power, these economies entrust their needs to a single dictator or panel of experts (Novak, 1993).

Many critics of corporate policy, particularly in the U. S., center on trade with underdeveloped nations. They feel that since the U. S. is economically powerful, any trade is inherently unequal and exploitative. But if these trades did not benefit

both parties, they would not be made. In economic terms, any trade is mutually beneficial in ex-ante sense. These critics unwittingly insult Third-World countries by seeing them as incapable of recognizing a bad deal. If the trade did not benefit them, they would not make it. More importantly, trade is a necessary instrument for increasing people's standard of living. Envision a world void of trade. We would all need to be self-sufficient, with each person producing everything he needed. Obviously, this is economic lunacy—all people do not and cannot know how to do all things. Trade allows for division of labor and specialization, encouraging countries to allocate their resources to produce goods they have a comparative advantage in. This explains why so called cash-cropping is an economic benefit rather than a tragedy for many underdeveloped nations. When describing the causes of malnourishment, a sociologist recently said that "because of government incentives and foreign pressure, Brazil is abandoning traditional crops such as potatoes and black beans, for more exotic, export-orientated crops" (Rodney, 14). He obviously fails to comprehend the basic concept of comparative advantage. By producing the crops they are most efficient at farming and then trading for staples, they end up with more food than had they stuck to traditional foods. The Brazilians are not as stupid or easily manipulated as one might think.

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Apparently, any economic foreign relations are manipulative and unfair. The "humanitarians" are quick to criticize foreign investment, and multinational corporations in particular. In their view, these corporations overwhelm and exploit their economy and politics by underpaying workers to produce products the country does not need. In the words of an eminent social ethicist,

the political costs of foreign aid and investment may be higher than the economic benefits they bring. Indeed, many of the arguments for corporate investment, while reasonable in theory, do not apply in a region like Latin America, where the governments have neither the will nor the means to control or guide a transnational empire.... (Lernoux, 121)

Her argument is counterproductive. Common sense dictates that the "invisible hand" provides for the common interest much

better than a dictatorship. With supply and demand dictating resource distribution in a free market, dictators would no longer have the opportunity to make irresponsible economic decisions. Government intervention cannot compete with the checks and balances inherent in a market economy. A dictator stays in power by killing competition, which leads to inefficiency, increasing prices, and underdevelopment. On the other hand, multinational corporations stay in power by beating competition, and this results in increased efficiency, lower prices, and greater consumer choice. Profit maximization leads to consumer satisfaction. Multinationals should be a welcome alternative to a dictatorship's counterproductive motives. Yet another economic fallacy promoted by Lernoux and other "ethicists" concerns the types of industry promoted by multinationals as counterproductive to economic development:

Do you make refrigerators and air conditioners or shirts and shoes? Do you build sophisticated hospitals or rural clinics? By choosing to encourage foreign investment in such technologically sophisticated industries as television sets or computers, a Latin American country may actually be postponing any real hope of development. (*ibid.*, 143)

This confused logic, when implemented, only stunts economic growth. Any profits these corporations realize from cheaper production costs will be passed along. For example, production costs are cheaper for televisions in Latin America than in the U. S. If produced there, prices will fall, output will expand, and profits will increase. With U. S. citizens now paying less for a television, they will have more disposable income to spend on foreign goods. This increase in demand for foreign goods expands output in Latin America. This increased output means an increase in jobs. With more companies competing for labor, wages and the standard of living will rise. Although Latin Americans may have not needed televisions, they reap the benefits of the increased efficiency.

Finally, does labor exploitation occur when corporations take advantage of low-wage rates? Critics contend that corporate America constantly applies a downward pressure on wages to achieve profit maximization. Once again, this theory fails to take into account the most basic economic principles (Hazlitt, 1979). Prevailing wages are determined by the simple laws of supply and demand. A corporation can offer a wage either above, below, or equal to the current wage. If the wage is above, the worker is better off. If it is the same, his situation is unchanged. If the offered wage is below current wages, he will refuse the job, and corporations will have no option but to raise wages in order to entice workers.

In dispelling many of the myths accompanying foreign investment, multinational corporations, and capitalism, economic logic prevails over economically ignorant social ethicist rhetoric. While supposed experts attribute world poverty to the exploitative capitalistic machine, even an economics 101 student can understand that Third-World poverty actually results from the lack of free markets. A dictator or centrally planned economy in no way substitutes for a market economy whose "invisible hand" steers self-interest to the common good. Whereas self-interest and common interest are

at odds for a dictator, the two complement each other in capitalism. The argument for foreign investment as exploitation is false. On the contrary, we desperately need a global economy where market forces determine production and consumption.

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*Frederick Regnery is a student of Walter Block, economics professor at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA.*

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# A Look at the New Green Religion

By Lisa Tanner



Over the last several decades, we have seen a large increase in the volume of voices from the environmental movement calling for less pollution, more recycling, and annihilation of the forest and mining industries. These voices have been instrumental in the formation of such groups as Earth First!, The Sierra Club, The Audobon Society, and the Environmental Protection

Agency (EPA). They have pushed and applauded such legislation as The Wilderness Act and The Endangered Species Act. With these programs implemented, there has been increasing government control over human treatment of the environment. This control results in prohibiting people from building on their own property, improving their land, and from logging both public and private forests.

To understand the environmentalists' method of "saving" the earth, we must look at their foundational beliefs. Contrary to what most of the public assumes, they are not advocating the preservation of the earth for humanity. Rather, they are "preserving" the earth *from* humanity. Loud voices for the environmental movement such as Al Gore, Dave Fomman and David Brower expound on this, telling us that, "our civilization is, in effect, addicted to the consumption of the earth itself"<sup>1</sup> and is a "cancer" on earth. We are told that, "[w]hile the death of the young men in war is unfortunate, it is no more serious than the touching of mountains and wilderness areas by humankind,"<sup>2</sup> and that human suffering from drought and famine is tragic, "but the destruction . . . of other creatures and habitat is even more tragic."<sup>3</sup>

In essence, environmentalism has become a religion that requires the earth be worshipped and defended at all costs. While, "[w]e should be kind, compassionate, and caring with other people . . . Earth comes first,"<sup>4</sup> and "[h]uman happiness and certain human fecundity are not as important as a wild and healthy planet."<sup>5</sup> It is an attempt to make earth a wilderness. The voices of this movement claim that they have been too reasonable, too calm, and too understanding in their endeavor and now "[i]t's time to get angry, to cry, to let the rage flow at what the human cancer is doing to Earth, to be uncompromising."<sup>6</sup>

The cure for the "cancer" is a "leveling out," or decrease in the human population. As Al Gore says, "No goal is more crucial to the global environment than stabilizing the human population."<sup>7</sup> Paul and Anne Ehrlich put it this way: "The single simplest and most effective thing anyone can do to save

Earth . . . is to have no more than two children."<sup>8</sup> With the huge explosion in population, the environmentalists ask, how can the earth adequately provide for everyone? for, "[n]either hunting and gathering, nor subsistence farming could supply enough food for even today's 5.4 billion people, let alone the additional 4 to 9 billion increase in population size to which humanity is committed."<sup>9</sup>

However, when one looks at the numbers on paper, the feeling that these "eco-warriors" cannot do simple math surfaces. If one takes the land area of the state of Texas (262,015 square miles) and divides it by the approximate world population figure (5.4 billion), the result is that each person on the globe could fit in Texas with approximately 1352 square feet to himself. This may seem a bit crowded, but remember, the rest of the world is devoid of human life.

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*"When a chain saw slices into  
the heartwood of a two-  
thousand-year-old Coast  
Redwood, it's slicing into my  
guts. When a bulldozer rips  
through the Amazon rain  
forest, it's ripping into my  
side. When a Japanese whaler  
fires an exploding harpoon  
into a great whale, my heart  
is blown to smithereens. I am  
the land and the land is me."*

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It should be noted that the environmentalists have some validity to their assumption that wherever man is, there is destruction. Because man has sinned, he has caused a great deal of suffering from the first sin in the Garden of Eden, which brought a death, to the sins of individuals and nations today. Man has forgotten that he is to be a caretaker and instead has become a waster of the resources on earth. There is a balance between the views of those who believe that man may do whatever he pleases, and those who feel man should be annihilated. This balance is good stewardship through obedience and submission to God our Creator.

One of the recent scare tactics used by environmentalists to further their cause is global warming. They claim that global warming, the "greenhouse affect," is caused by an increase of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere which reflects more and more radiation back to the earth's surface, causing it to warm. We are told that the only way disaster can be averted is to monitor

and control the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> that is released into the atmosphere by humans.

It can be questioned whether there really is a disaster to be avoided. In the 1970s, a catastrophe was predicted in the form of an ice age; then, within 10 years, scientists began predicting a disaster in the form of global warming. Could they be wrong again? Dixie Lee Ray, in *Environmental Overkill*, tells us that "[g]iven the increase in carbon dioxide since the beginning of the Industrial Age, temperatures, according to the Greenhouse theory, should have gone up from 2 degrees to 4 degrees centigrade over the past 100 years. . . . The measurable overall increase is a trivial 0.5 degrees centigrade or less."<sup>10</sup>

Along with the scare of global warming comes the alarming "news" that there are holes in the ozone layer above Antarctica. These "holes" are made, or so we are told, by a build-up of CFC (chlorofluorocarbons) in the atmosphere. Because of this, many CFCs (such as freon) are being banned and replaced at great monetary expense. But the question can be asked, are there really "holes" in the ozone layer? Robert W. Lee doesn't believe so. He tells us that "[t]here is not, never has been, and cannot be a 'hole' in the ozone 'layer', since ozone simply waxes and wanes depending on sundry physical and chemical processes, most of them entirely natural."<sup>11</sup>

It can be correctly surmised that the environmentalists do not support the workers of the logging, mining and other large, "harmful" industries (yet many of these same people live in huge wood houses with beautiful wood floors, wear leather shoes, and fly in personal jets). It is universally understood by these ecologically concerned people that man must remember that he isn't above his animal ancestors, and that man's presumption has caused devastating damage to earth's fragile ecosystem. David Brower told a travel group in Whistler, British Columbia, "Loggers losing their jobs because of the Spotted Owl legislation is, in my eyes, no different than people being out of work after the furnaces of Dachau shut down."<sup>12</sup> Dave Forman, co-founder of Earth First!, makes the battle against these "exploiters" a personal one: "When a chain saw slices into the heartwood of a two-thousand-year-old Coast Redwood, it's slicing into my guts. When a bulldozer rips through the Amazon rain forest it's ripping into my side. When a Japanese whaler fires an exploding harpoon into a great whale, my heart is blown to smithereens. I am the land and the land is me. . . ."<sup>13</sup> These environmentalists view the advocates of industry as madmen that must be stopped before they destroy the earth. To them, it is a fight between good and evil, and they liken their fight for the preservation of "Mother Earth" to that of our forefathers' fight for the preservation of liberty. Forman, when speaking of the loggers' response to the way some environmentalists "monkeywrench," said, "Of course this call for 'fair play' [on the part of the loggers] hearkens back to the American Revolution, when the British complained that the American rebels didn't fight fair because they hid behind trees to shoot, and didn't stand out in the open, like men. The 'lobsterbacks' called Washington's troops cowards, just as loggers today call monkeywrenchers cowards."<sup>14</sup>

This movement also claims to provide the "reason" why our

young people are having so much trouble today. Gore presents it like this: "The froth and frenzy of industrial civilization mask our deep loneliness for that communion with the world that can lift our spirits and fill our senses with the richness and immediacy of life itself. . . . Evidence of this spiritual loss [with the earth] abounds. Mental illness in its many forms is at epidemic levels, especially among children. The three leading causes of death among adolescents are drug- and alcohol-related accidents, suicide, and homicide."<sup>15</sup>

It is no longer a question of whether these people are sincere, but a point of knowing where they are coming from so we can have the ability to successfully combat them. They worship the earth and will willingly sacrifice great numbers of humanity (excluding themselves!) in the name of population control; they (claim to) willingly sacrifice big industry and prosperous civilizations under the cover of "environmental management." This is The Green Religion!

Today should not be a time of compromise, not a time to give the land to earth-worshipping gurus, but a time to rely on God's guiding grace and to fight the good fight. We are not to worship the creation but the Creator. We are not to be subdued by the earth, but we are to have dominion over it (*Gen. 1:28*), not to void it of human life, but to fill it (*Gen. 9: 1,7*), and to be good stewards of the resources God has intrusted us with.

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<sup>1</sup> Albert Gore, *Earth in the Balance*, 220. Gore is a former Democratic senator, and current vice-president.

<sup>2</sup> David Brower, cited in Dixie Lee Ray, *Environmental Overkill*, 204. Brower is founder of Friends of the Earth and formerly served as executive director of the Sierra Club.

<sup>3</sup> Dave Forman, *The Confession of an Eco-Warrior*, 26. Forman is co-founder of Earth First!

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, 26.

<sup>5</sup> David M. Graber, cited in, Ray, Dixie Lee, *Environmental Overkill*, 204. Graber serves as a research biologist with the National Park Service.

<sup>6</sup> Forman, 20.

<sup>7</sup> Gore, 307.

<sup>8</sup> Paul and Anne Ehrlich, *Healing the Planet*, 3. Paul is Bing Professor of Population Studies and Professor of Biological Sciences at Stanford University. Anne is Senior Research Associate in Biological Sciences at Stanford University.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, 269.

<sup>10</sup> Ray, 17. Ray — former governor of Washington, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, assistant secretary of state in the U.S. Bureau of Oceans — has received many awards, including the United Nations Peace Prize.

<sup>11</sup> Robert W. Lee, "Ozone 'Hole': 'The Prize Eco-Scam,'" *The New American*, July 26, 1993, 7

<sup>12</sup> David Brower, cited in Dixie Lee Ray, *Environmental Overkill*, 104.

<sup>13</sup> Forman, 5.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*, 160.

<sup>15</sup> Gore, 220

<sup>16</sup> Foreman, 7.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, 26.

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# Do Technological Improvements Create Unemployment?

*By William V. Bandoch, Jr. and Walter Block*

In today's world there exists a widespread belief that new technology such as computers and machinery are creating massive unemployment and rendering human labor obsolete. This is not true. Ideally, having machines and computers do all our "dirty work" would make our lives much better. After all, isn't this why our primitive ancestors created the wheel?

Do technological advances create unemployment? According to Henry Hazlitt in *Economics in One Lesson*, the belief that on net balance new machines create unemployment is among one of the biggest fallacies in economic thought.

Ever since man discovered fire, the purpose of technological advancement has been to make life easier for everyone. If we accepted the assessment of technophobes, we'd be in quite a predicament. Why contact someone via the telephone when we could hire somebody to hand-deliver our message? Why send cargo from Philadelphia to Boston by railroad when we could hire an enormous number of men to carry it on their backs? The anti-technology argument seems ridiculous when you look at it this way.

What really happens when technological improvements and labor-saving machinery are introduced? Hazlitt provides an interesting scenario. A clothing manufacturer buys a machine that makes men's and women's overcoats for half as much labor as was previously used. Thus, half his labor force is dropped. While this may look like a clear loss of employment, one must remember that the machine itself required labor to make. Here, as one offset, are jobs that would not otherwise have existed. In the long run, the manufacturer will have increased his profits with the use of the machine. Hazlitt then states:

The manufacturer must use these extra profits in at least one of three ways, and possibly he will use part of them in all three: (1) he will use the extra profits to expand his operations by buying more machines to make his coats; or (2) he will invest the extra profits in some other industry; or (3) he will spend the extra profits on increasing his own consumption. Whichever of these three courses he takes, he will increase employment.

The consumers who buy the coats also save money. The machine has reduced the price of the coat, allowing the consumer to spend that saved money on other goods, thus providing increased employment in other areas. The bottom line is that machines bring an increase in production and an increase in the standard of living.

The technophobes see only the people who are being

unemployed with each technological advance. They fail to see the new jobs created in other areas.

Does the gain in employment from technological advances exceed the loss? In some cases, there is no doubt that the employment created by new technology is less than the unemployment destroyed by the decline of the products they displace, but in the majority of instances, the reverse is true. We must look at the long-run picture and the opportunities that arise from new technology. New-product technology is a net creator of jobs. These innovations do not merely replace the old products they dislodge from the market, but instead develop new and expanded markets of their own. The most successful product innovations, like the telephone, automobile, and television leave their predecessor products or services so far behind in terms of both output and employment that the comparison is almost impossible.

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*The technophobes see only the people who are being unemployed with each technological advance. They fail to see the new jobs created in other areas.*

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What worries technophobes the most is the one thing that should make them the happiest. Man's struggle with needless sweat and toil will be replaced by technology, much as the wheel enabled our ancestors to save time and energy.

There will always be those who insist on looking only at the short-term effects, while ignoring the long-run rewards. New and better ways of doing things have the potential to render hard, tiresome labor obsolete. If this happens, we will all be able to engage in meaningful work and play that enable us to make the best use of our natural abilities.

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*William V. Bandoch, Jr. is a student of Walter Block, economics professor at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA.*

The October issue will include a full report of the Chalcedon Conference on Christian Culture in Lusaka, Zambia.

# Taxes in the Electronic Global Market

By Sheldon Richman

A recent issue of *The Economist* proclaimed "the disappearing taxpayer." It acknowledged the difficulty governments are beginning to experience in taxing their citizens owing to two phenomena: the mobility of capital in the global marketplace and the shift of commerce to the Internet. The difficulty can only become more acute with time.

Advocates of big government fear these developments because they foresee nations competing to lower their tax burden in an effort to keep firms from moving away or to attract new ones. The so-called race to the bottom is abhorred by people who inexplicably equate high tax rates with progress. They also shudder to think that transactions over the Internet might go untaxed either because of anonymity or because of the lack of jurisdiction. Those who understand how inimical taxes are to freedom and prosperity take a different view and look on these developments with great anticipation.

Considering the ravenous nature of government, the last thing we should do is lose sleep over its inability to collect taxes. Europe is drowning in taxes (the French government takes half of GDP), and in the allegedly low-tax United States, the average person works till May 5 to pay all the tribute demanded of him. If globalization and technology can provide relief, we should be grateful.

But let's not celebrate too soon. True, there are some good signs. Capital mobility seems to have acted to cap taxes on corporate profits. Sweden's high personal income tax is causing companies such as the telecommunications firm Ericsson to think of leaving because of problems in attracting good people. Globalization seems to have restrained the growth in government spending in the 1990s. (Only the growth, not the absolute amount.)

Nevertheless, we must not underestimate the tenacity of governments or their will to maintain the gravy train. As competition drives down their ability to take wealth from producers, they will turn to an age-old solution, the restriction of competition. The effort to cartelize their operations will be called "harmonization" and will be presented as necessary to prevent governments from ruthlessly cutting tax rates to gain an advantage over others. If it hasn't happened so far, that doesn't mean it won't happen eventually. Good reason, then, to avoid the sort of union of governments that characterizes western Europe. The consolidated megastate, even if it means freer trade, is not a good idea. What it mainly will do is erect the mechanism by which nation-states will coordinate their efforts to milk the productive sector of society.

The upshot is that although competition among nations might put pressure on governments to cut and even abolish taxes, we can't rely solely on that possibility. We need to find ways to internally restrain the politicians, whose appetite for other people's money knows no bounds. We must not be fooled

by the perennial tax-cut talk that comes out of Washington. The cuts are typically meager and laden with conditions. You rarely hear talk about an unconditional lifting of the tax burden. Should anyone dare to suggest it, he will be shot down with the outcry: "How will you pay for it?" That, of course, is a bogus concern. The federal government takes close to 20 percent of GDP in taxes. How are we paying for the 80 percent it doesn't take? It's an absurd question. It's not the removal of taxes but government programs that cost people money. The way to "pay" for the repeal of taxes is to repeal programs. Most of what government does is forcibly transfer wealth from producers to nonproducers anyway. That's called theft.

The only way we will really restrain the policymakers is by way of a revolution in thinking. Early Americans were jealous of their liberty and thus rather tax-sensitive. A small tea tax made the citizens of Boston irate. The stamp tax more than irritated the American colonists. And it wasn't just that they had no representation in the British Parliament. The new country that came out of the revolution managed to live with very low taxes for quite a while. We could use that tax-sensitivity again. It was good enough to start a great country. It might just be good enough to restore a country to greatness.

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*Sheldon Richman is vice president of policy affairs at The Future of Freedom Foundation in Fairfax, Virginia, and author of its forthcoming book, Your Money or Your Life: Why We Must Abolish the Income Tax.*

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# An Important Letter to Chacedon and R. J. Rushdoony

*By Timothy M. Barrett, Esq.*

I have been meaning to write this letter for a long time, and being highly motivated this Sunday I thought now would be the best time. The reason for my motivation is that God the Spirit is busy working in my local body. Last week, two elders resigned after realizing that their embracing of the heresy of hyper-preterism was inconsistent with our church's doctrinal statement. This week, one of our remaining two elders spoke with eloquence and humility in showing why this heretical view was indeed heretical. Praise God! It is my understanding that this heresy is spreading like weeds in Reformed churches; thus, would you consider dedicating some space in *Chalcedon* to its refutation?

Of course, the events of the prior two weeks at my church are not what has caused me to desire to write to you. Rather, I have wanted to write and thank you for standing up for the truth found in God's Law-Word all these years, for giving us Generation-Xers shoulders we can stand upon to see further as we continue the expansion of our Lord's Kingdom. Your contribution to His Kingdom will not go unnoticed when the Kingdom is fully realized. In fact, I love to tell my friends that I look forward to being told I am worthy to stand guard on the walls of one of the ten cities God will give you to rule in the next life because of your faithfulness. I thank you for doing what you have done and what God will use you to do in the future.

Having said this, I would like to make a personal request. When you find the time and if you deem my idea to be worthy, would you consider writing a book that would essentially be a bibliography of the books you consider to provide the greatest value for the subject the book addresses? For example, a list of the greatest books that deal with supralapsarianism versus infralapsarianism, a list of the greatest books that deal with the philosophy of the Civil War, a list of the greatest books that deal with the history of the church, etc. You have to be one of the most well-read men I know, and with this book, you would aid countless millions in finding the books that strengthen our faith and build the knowledge of the faithful. If I can be of any assistance in putting together such a book, please let me know.

Also, I have recently put together an e-mail list-service for those who affirm Pastor Sandlin's 5-points of Reconstruction. Would you consider placing a small announcement-box in the back of the next *Chalcedon Report* indentifying the existence of this list? My goal for this list, as articulated in the list charter, is to provide a place where Recons can get network to discuss topics of interest, to ask for prayer, to seek counsel, and even to find a brother to stay with on vacation, a haven where we can advance Reconstruction without having to deal with its

detractors. However, a list such as this can be affective only if people know about it. If you are willing to do this, please place the following e-mail address in *Chalcedon*: Reconstruction-L@juno.com.

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*Timothy Barrett is an attorney in Norfolk, Virginia.*

## Classical Education?

*By R. J. Rushdoony*

An absurd notion, much too prevalent in Christian and non-Christian circles, is that what our schools need is a return to a classical educational curriculum. This makes about as much sense as a return to Greco-Roman religion in order to have a true revival of religion.

Classical education, in all its forms, Greco-Roman, medieval, Renaissance, and modern, is essentially and radically humanistic. Do we want this?

In 1935, I found a local library that carried the works of the older Bohn translations and the new Loeb texts of classical writings, and, determined to educate myself, I began, systematically and omnivorously, to read these works. I soon realized how wayward and evil the older schooling had been. These classics were simply the body of thought setting forth the paganism of old and its adoption by elements within Christendom. (I learned years later that Otto Scott had come to a similar conclusion.)

Consider the writings of the Greek tragedians, Sophocles and Euripedes. What is their essential message? It is a simple and evil one, namely, that man's fate is a perverse one because the gods have stacked the decks against mankind. A man, like Oedipus, is an innocent victim of the gods, who use him perversely to bring evil upon evil on him. If you want to hear the spirit of the Greek dramatists today, listen to juvenile delinquents and adult criminals justify themselves as the innocent victims of fate. That is what Greek drama was about.

In perpetuating these classics of old, not merely as documents of a failed culture but as timeless and enduring treasures of thought, the West has taken poison into its kitchen and fed itself with evil. The rebels against Christendom have been happy to center education on classical literature because thereby they have made a thoroughly anti-Christian force basic to education. To add to this, Latin has been studied rather than Hebrew and Biblical Greek, although the contribution of the latter two has certainly been very great.

There is a place for classical literature if we face it realistically for what it was—the culture of humanism, of cruelty, of slavery, of evil. We need to challenge the old assumptions also, *i.e.*, that Ciceronian Latin was better than medieval Latin. Why? Each was best adapted to its purpose, and church Latin had a greater subtlety as a philosophical and theological language.

Education is always future-oriented or it is dead. What faith

and what ideas do we need to command the future? It was to John Dewey's credit that he substituted a living, twentieth-century humanism for an ancient and less relevant one. It is absurd to go back to what Dewey had the sense to discard. What sense was there in learning the names of the Greek and Roman gods and the histories of their silly escapades? And what value is there in a curriculum designed in terms of a Greco-Roman culture? Is it not stupidity to adopt a curriculum which even our humanists had the sense to discard? What pretentious nonsense is it for a church to boast that its *Christian* school is given to a *classical* curriculum?

A curriculum must provide a course, a highway, for life and action. It must relate the faith of the school to the life of its times. If it does not make that connection, its students will in time lapse into the evils of modern popular culture as they encounter it on all sides. Is it happening? A graduate of a large Christian school, attending the twenty-fifth-year re-union, found the faith of most to be marginal. They had received a superior grounding in basic education, but the Christian context was not there except as an altar call at special services. What they had received was at heart a conservative version of Dewey!

Position Paper No. 216

## The Bankruptcy of Rationalism

By R. J. Rushdoony

Rationalism has often "proven" the existence of God with its use of reason, but the god verified by the rationalist's reason is the god of his imagination, and, for far too many people, this is the only god they know. The living God of the Bible is offensive to the moral sense of fallen men. The rough edges of fallen man's god are smoothed out until he becomes acceptable to reason, and also agreeable to the sinner's idea of what god should be.

The rationalistic philosophers of religion rarely if ever speak of the fall of man, nor of the effects of the fall on man's mind. Somehow, the philosopher is immune to sin! But the noetic effect of sin is very central to a Biblical doctrine of knowledge. Man's reason is not immune to the effects of sin. It is rather radically altered by it.

Sin alters man's perspective and warps it radically. Since original sin is man's will to be his own god, his own source of ultimate knowledge, and himself the determiner of good and evil, and law and morality, it follows that original sin is essentially related to man's reason. Man the sinner cannot tolerate the God of the Bible, only a god acceptable to his reason. Hence, the only god he can tolerate is the god of his imagination, one who approves of man's rationalism. The god of the philosophers is a particularly ridiculous idol.

The fall of man is basic to a true epistemology or theory of knowledge because the fall meant the radical warping of reason that constitutes rationalism. Before the fall, God was in communication with man. After the fall, the situation changed. In Van Til's words, "If God was to continue His communication with His creatures, it was either to be by condemnation or by atonement" (Cornelius Van Til: *An Introduction to Theology*, vol. I, 104. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Westminster Theological Seminary, 1947). Condemnation means the judgment, death, and reprobation of man. Atonement means that Christ's sacrificial death, vicariously dying for his elect, removes us from condemnation to life, from guilt to innocence. Our rationalistic theologians act as if there is no relationship between atonement and epistemology, and such an assumption makes them at best defective Christians if not indeed anti-Christian.

It is obvious, *first* of all, that man as sinner hates the truth. In this he is logical (and how he loves logic!), because the truth condemns him. It is for him so much easier to go by Aristotle than by the Bible, because Aristotle acknowledges no fall. If no fall is admitted into our theory of knowledge, then one's thinking is flawless, and we have a rational god presiding over rational man, and both are agreed on Aristotle's logic!

Thus, *second*, not only does fallen man hate the truth, he at best warps it when he is faced with the truth. "Man is assumed to be the final or ultimate reference point of predication" in such thinking, which is *univocal* reasoning. "In contrast to this we speak of the form of reasoning employed by the Christian who recognizes that God is the ultimate reference point of predication as *analogical* reasoning" (*ibid.*, I, 97, n.).

Because man's mind and will have been corrupted by the fall, his ability to think has also been corrupted. Failure to know God as the Lord means failure to know ourselves as creatures. We begin then with a false premise about ourselves and our ability to know.

Man's thinking has been corrupted by the fall, *third*, so that he now thinks of himself "as a metaphysically ultimate starting point" with his mind as normal (*ibid.*, I, 92.). The key to reality is not the mind of man but the mind of God. Man's mind is fallen and finite and by no means capable of understanding the world apart from God's written revelation. Even apart from sin, unfallen man could only think God's thoughts after him.

Amazingly, rationalistic theology has saturated the church in all its branches, Eastern and Western, Roman Catholic and Protestant. Too many theologians and religious philosophers assume that, until their rationalism came into play, man was ignorant of God, or knew him poorly. The arrogance of rationalism is the arrogance of original sin.

To say this is not to depreciate reason. It would be a foolish man who assumed that Abelard was a better thinker than St. Anselm. St. Anselm's premise was, "I believe in order that I may understand," whereas Abelard held that one should understand in order to believe, a rationalistic premise. Abelard's starting point was rationalism, Anselm's was Biblical. Not surprisingly, Anselm's philosophy was centered on the atonement.

Rationalism itself is evidence of the radical effect of the fall in that the world of epistemology, the theory of

knowledge, has shifted its center from God to man. Epistemology is now a semi-forgotten branch of philosophy because it is bankrupt. The modern stream of thought from Descartes through Hume, Kant, Hegel, Sartre, Wittgenstein and others is one of intellectual and moral bankruptcy and a despair of knowledge.

## Random Notes, 72

*By R. J. Rushdoony*

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1. Perhaps someone will write in the future on the great social revolution that was created by the Social Security Act in 1936. It was a time of economic depression. Countless Americans were doubled up, living with their parents; in some cases, more than one son or daughter returned with a family. This was an accepted response to crisis. The family represented social security. Then thinking changed, and the results were dramatic. First, the institution for safety and security shifted from the family to the state. Second, instead of a continual preparation by young and old for hard times, there was now a belief that the problem of future care and depressions would be solved by the state. Third, this made for a present-thinking, not a future-oriented people. By the 1970s, retired people were driving around with a bumper sticker reading, "We are spending our children's inheritance." Bragging about that was something new in history. Few people realize how dramatically Social Security changed the character of the United States. It was sad too how quickly the Christian resentment against it faded.

2. Driving by a high school the other day, seeing males and females alike with unkempt long hair, brought to mind the 1920s, the "flapper era," and bobbed hair for women. The media made much of it, but most people changed their ways very slightly. We knew one young woman who for business reasons, went with the new style. Little changed with most people because the farm depression of 1921 severely limited farm peoples, and a surface conformity marked urban peoples. A few publicity seeking preachers made much about this supposed threat to the life of faith. One large fundamentalist church specified a required length of hair for girls and women. Not surprisingly, in a fairly short time, this church went modernist. By majoring in minors, they had abandoned the Faith. Short hair was liberation then; now it is apparently long hair!

3. When I was a boy, almost everyone in our farm area spoke a foreign language at home, Swedish, Danish, Armenian, Portuguese, etc. No one assumed stupidity on anyone's part. Now our nanny state posits a stupid population. The generation before called cigarettes "coffin nails"; all the young people I knew recognized that tobacco was bad for you. Now, however, it is assumed that the tobacco companies are fooling the people about tobacco's harmful effects. I don't believe it. Those who sue the tobacco companies are playing the victimhood game.

Is there no end to this? A few days ago, I bought a sack of hen scratch. At the bottom of the invoice was this sentence: "I understand this feed is to be fed to animals for food for human consumption. Signature: \_\_\_\_." Is there any sanity out there in our statist wonderland? The purpose of this feed-sack statement is the avoidance of a sales tax. I think it was in the eighth grade that I was taught that the great Spanish Empire began its decline when it introduced the sales tax, which meant it had taxed everything else to the hilt and was now taxing sales. Soon thereafter, with the depression, various states instituted sales taxes, and nothing more was taught about its evils!

4. This is a true story, from about 25 years ago. It occurred in a small California coastal city. A young man, pretending to be a gas company employee, gained entry into a house, supposedly to check on gas leaks. He then robbed the housewife of her money and jewelry. She told the thief (and later the police), "If my husband had been home, he would have killed you!" This trusting wife was in her 80s, her husband over 90!

5. The life of John Rutter Carden of Barman Castle, Tipperary, Ireland is an interesting one. Born in 1811, Carden gained the castle when he came of age. The estate had been neglected and the Irish tenants had long paid no rent and were not about to pay now. Landlord killing was then common, and his tenants tried repeatedly to kill him, without success. Carden's nickname became, "Woodcock," because, like that bird, he was hard to hit. He even overpowered two would-be assassins, marched them to jail, and had them hanged. The castle was remade to withstand assaults, which followed, with the castle successfully defended in even floor-by-floor combat. The tenants admitted that "Woodcock" Carden was a reasonable landlord; they simply wanted to pay no rent. Carden had a swivel-mounted cannon among his attack-resisting weapons. Then, in his forties, "Woodcock" Carden became an Irish hero, to his tenants and others. He fell in love. The girl, Eleanor Arbuthnot, was only 18, and an heiress. "Woodcock" fell totally and hopelessly in love. He was also under the delusion that she loved him, and only the family, supposedly holding her prisoner, kept her from declaring her love. He pursued her in Ireland, England, and abroad; he tried to "rescue" her and was tried and convicted of kidnapping. Meanwhile, he impoverished himself; Ireland sang songs about him, and his tenants were proud of him! For many years one song, "Carden's Wild Domain," was very popular in Ireland. Carden died in 1866. As for Eleanor, she never married. Another interesting character from the same era but somewhat earlier, was the Peninsular war veteran, Colonel Charles de Laet Waldo Sibthorp of Lincoln, a member of an ancient family. He was the arch-conservative, a Tory to whom most Tories were liberals. He even dressed in the old Regency style. In 1822, when his older of five brothers died, he became the heir to the family estates. He hated change, feared and hated all foreigners, hated Roman Catholicism, loved the "rotten borough" system, and, while loyal to the monarchy, felt that Queen Victoria had done wrong in marrying Prince Albert, a German and a foreigner. The Queen never forgave Sibthorp nor ever visited Lincoln. Sibthorp opposed the Great Exhibition of 1851 because it was the doing of that foreigner, Prince Albert, and

he refused to attend it. He fought against the cutting down of good English trees to build the Crystal Palace. He also opposed the new system of transportation, railroads, and he refused to use them until all other means of transport disappeared. He was an early leader in conspiracy theories, and he saw Europeans, Jews, bankers, industrialists, and Jesuits behind events. In every area, he saw disaster ahead! In many ways an able man, he was a connoisseur of painting, a very able orator, and well-informed antiquarian; but he was fully unreasonable in his opposition to change. One person who followed Sibthorp's career in Parliament closely was the Russian novelist, Dostoyevsky. In *The Idiot*, he took Sibthorp as the model for Lebedev, who held that the railway system in Russia was the star Wormwood of the Book of Revelation!

## Letter To The Editor



Dear Friends at Chalcedon:

We are the Fifth Grade Class of Maranatha Christian Academy, in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. Throughout the year world history has been a part of our studies. We have, through studying the various countries of the world, learned of the blessings that come upon a nation when they recognize God as their King, and submit to His sovereign authority in every aspect of life — including government.

We have practiced keeping our brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the different parts of the world, especially those in the Sudan, in our prayers. This was one of the many reasons that our recent study of Africa has been so close to our hearts. Even more so, the news of your upcoming mission to the nation of Zambia has sparked a great deal of joy and enthusiasm among us. Throughout the last week we have taken up a class donation to help support your efforts. We thank God that he has presented us with the opportunity, not only to learn about history, but to actually become a part of making history in his name.

Please know that along with our donation come many prayers. We pray that your efforts will be guided by God, and that Zambia will truly reap the blessings of being a nation under God's supreme authority. Thank you for all of your hard work, and for allowing us to be a part of your efforts. May God bless you in all that you do!

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# A Tale of Two (Jewish) Boys

By Steve M. Schlissel



I met Shaul (sha-OOL) Mayer ben Yitzchak at Hebrew School, the Yeshiva of Bensonhurst. Jewish kids who attended public school (like me) were sent to Hebrew School in the afternoons in the hope that they would learn enough Hebrew to avoid humiliating dad at the Bar Mitzvah. Hebrew School was Monday through Thursday from 3:45 to 5 p.m., and again

on Sunday morning for a couple of hours. Most students cherished Hebrew School as much as time tacked onto a prison sentence, but there was some discernible value, even for rambunctious pre-teen boys.

For example, one of our instructors, Mrs. Berger, was pretty. And tactful. I remember one day a student asked her about Jesus. She was very careful to explain that Jesus was a good Jewish man, a rabbi of great wisdom. Modern Jews don't like bigotry and prejudice, you see. Mrs. Berger was a modern (pretty) Jew and did her share to foster peace between the two dominant groups of Bensonhurst: Eastern European Jews and Italian Catholics. (Protestants — I didn't know any personally — were a very tiny minority, regarded by the rest of us as Roman Catholic also-rans.) Mrs. Berger's kind words were the first non-epithetical ones we'd ever heard spoken by a Jew about Jesus. Before that we were simply taught that everyone's entitled to his religion, that if Christians want to worship idols, well, that's their right and we mustn't criticize them. They just don't know any better. But Jews . . . well, we're different. We have a special calling.

And a Jewish boy has to have his Bar Mitzvah. First, though, I'd have to get through Hebrew School. And that was far from automatic. It was easier for Shaul Mayer ben Yitzchak. He was a serious thinker. I suppose people would have considered this Schlissel to be one, too. After all, I had been in the "1" class throughout grade school, had skipped third grade altogether and was placed in the "SP" (Special Progress) program in junior high. But I kept getting into mischief. "Bad boy," some said. "Gifted under-achiever," others said. "Bored," I said. So I made my own amusements.

Sometimes others made them for me. Like the day Howard Jaffe—a boy with physical and speech handicaps neither I nor my classmates understood, handicaps which conferred upon him an envious immunity from penalties for impishness—called our beloved instructor "Mrs. Hamburger." Mrs. Berger needed more than tact to restore the roaring class after Howie's

comment. To my mind, Hebrew School was made for moments like that.

They weren't made for Magic Markers, however. The administration was much angrier about my providing a guiding line along the stairway wall than Mrs. Berger was for my laughing hysterically at Howard Jaffe's deliberate misnomer. Mr. Chasid — official Dean of Terror, infamous among Yeshiva of Bensonhurst students for his inimitable hallway holler: "*Sheket, yeladim!*" (Quiet, children!) — knew it was me. To this day, I don't know how he knew. Was it an informer? Was it my reputation? Or was it just a *look* that billboarded, "Guilty"?

One thing's for sure: Shaul Mayer ben Yitzchak didn't tell him. Shaul was a no-nonsense person. Though just a kid, he stood out as one interested in serious matters, even the answers to life. And Mrs. Berger's kind comments about Jesus, intended innocently by her to quickly and quietly put the subject to rest, Shaul and I found quite remarkable. She had uttered that Name, had even said something nice about him, and did not die! A door which had, for Jews, been marked "ENTRY FORBIDDEN," had, in that instant, become less foreboding. "Verboten" had not become "Welcome," it's true, but she had touched the fruit and lived. Then again, eating the fruit might prove to be a far different matter.

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*"You don't have to know everything," he used to say, "you just have to know where to find it."*

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At that time, of course, I had no idea where Shaul might range with the license he felt had been handed to him; our respective bravados were of different sorts. But I did try hard to understand him because I thought, I sensed, that at some level this guy was onto something. For example, while other Brooklyn kids would hypothesize *ad infinitum* about the "facts of life," offering as verities the most amazing theories of the method of human reproduction, Shaul calmly sought out the actual facts. Like the rest of us, he would *never* consider asking his folks, any more than he would ask Mrs. Berger. But Shaul had the *sechel* (wisdom) and the *chutzpah* (nerve) to go to the public library and borrow *A Catholic Parents' Guide to Sex Education*. If the dreaded word Catholic wouldn't have stopped other Jewish kids, the fear of humiliation at the check-out desk would have (humiliation, after all, is to 12-year-olds a mortal dread). Yet, Shaul, neck-stiffened in the right direction, was *determined* to find out the facts, the truth. "You don't have to know everything," he used to say, "you just have to know where to find it."

Finding the truth. That was his strange prepossession. That's what set him apart — in my view at least — what made him different, even a bit odd. Most newly pubescent kids from

Bensonhurst were content merely to speculate about those matters our parents never mentioned; they were not obsessed with finding out the truth. For them, it was process, not content, that mattered. But Shaul went right to the book. (To the right Book, as it turned out.)

Shaul's search for truth was not limited to the biological sphere. It was *life* he wanted to understand, especially its meaning — if there was such a thing. For a time he thought it quite a nice question whether there was. He wrote a poem shortly after his Bar Mitzvah:

Be it here, be it there  
Being has no matter.  
Truth exists in emotional lies  
And the lies appear much fatter.  
Books lie and looks lie  
A pen lies and a lens lies  
And I lie, but my lie  
Be truth to itself.  
For although the only existing truth  
Lies in what you feel,  
The only lies exist in truth  
So you'll never know what's real.

The *Catholic Parents' Guide* provided Shaul with info on the *how* of life (which made girls scarier than ever!); Shaul still wanted to know the *why*. My other friends were not chewing on ontological and epistemological challenges, especially not in Bensonhurst. Pastrami, yes; Sartre, no. So Shaul found himself in a tough position: he had great questions, but no one — certainly not me — of whom to ask the answers.

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*Striking, isn't it, how life-  
changes can sometimes be  
traced to unpremeditated, even  
nonchalant, remarks?*

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But he did have books. I did, too, though I didn't read much. The first book I remember reading cover to cover was *Son of Flubber* when I was in the sixth grade. It had a picture on the cover of Fred MacMurray bouncing through the air. Shaul's tastes were in a different league, veering in our teen years toward Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. While he got into Schopenhauer, I just got into trouble.

Eventually, Shaul did too. Perhaps I was a bad influence. About the time I began experimenting with "substances," Shaul began experimenting with what he had learned in *The Catholic Parents' Guide*. It was the '60s, after all, the days of the hippies and yuppies, the days of rejecting everything except the ephemeral. For me, they were days of despair. For Shaul, too. "I Can't Get No Satisfaction" began to speak for both of us. We experienced similar degrees of angst and frustration, but

chose dissimilar paths to relieve them. I went whole hog into hedonism, but Shaul kept up a search for the path which he hoped would lead to meaning; he kept grasping for an anchor behind the veil.

He was relentless. He pumped up on his reading and pumped out more poetry. I appreciated his efforts to understand life and I hoped that he would succeed. I had no such hopes for myself. For me, life was three things: 1) loneliness, 2) pain, and 3) substances to muffle 1 & 2. We both managed to survive the despair for a decade. While I was ready to call it quits on more than one occasion, Shaul refused to give up. Thank God, Shaul kept up the search. Through his reading, he had come to the conclusion that death held the key. Whatever meaning was to be found in life *had to* be found in the reality of death. That, he had learned, was the business of philosophy. But philosophy itself told him nothing about the other side of the grave.

Then Shaul began reading a Gideon Bible he had stolen years before from a hotel room in Massachusetts. He looked up every death-related passage, using a concordance he had sent away for from some TV evangelist. When he happened upon Ecclesiastes, Shaul concluded that the Bible was a very hip book. I agreed: "Vanity, vanity, all is vanity." Absolutely! It is hard to describe the comfort we experienced knowing that we were not the first miserable wretches on the planet! Of course, we didn't understand the significance of Solomon's analysis, but we were relieved beyond words to know that our observations about the futility of life were not original.

Shaul kept on reading, studying the Bible. He brazenly went beyond the border built by rabbinic Judaism, even reading what was called The New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (I told you he had *chutzpah*). "But," he insisted, "the New Testament is *very* Jewish." I was skeptical. "And didn't Mrs. Berger say Christ was a good teacher?" Striking, isn't it, how life-changes can sometimes be traced to unpremeditated, even nonchalant, remarks?

Shaul encountered Jesus Christ on the pages of the New Testament and believed. It was that simple. I embraced — or rather, was embraced by — that same faith, Abraham's joy and hope. After being obsessed with death, I found life through Shaul's search, a search that ended at the feet of our Messiah. Shaul's poem was wrong. Not *all* books lie. Truth exists. Now we knew the truth, and that not as a mere concept, but as a Person. Jesus Christ forgave us and turned us from our sins, from our futility, from our death. He wrote a new chapter for our lives. No. He wrote a new book: "Meaningful, meaningful, everything's meaningful!"

Jewish boy finds Christ.

I am Shaul Mayer Ben Yitzchak.

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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.*