

# CHALCEDON Report

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

### Contents:

<b>PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD</b> .....	2	
<i>Psychopaths</i> , by Rev. R. J. Rushdoony		
<b>EDITORIAL</b> .....	3	
<i>The Covenant Seed Is the Key to Kingdom Advancement</i> , by Rev. Andrew Sandlin		
<b>BIBLICAL STUDY</b> .....	6	
<i>They Who Labor in the Word</i> , by Rev. Mark R. Rushdoony		
<b>COUNTER-CULTURAL CHRISTIANITY</b> .....	7	
<i>Family Worship</i> , by Rev. Brian M. Abshire		
<b>METHODS ARE PRIMARY</b> .....	12	
<i>Justice in an Unjust World</i> , by Rev. Ellsworth McIntyre		
<b>MODERN ISSUES IN BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE</b> .....	14	
<i>The Biblical Basis for Home Schooling</i> , by William Einwechter		
<i>A New Family Lifestyle</i> , by Samuel L. Blumenfeld .....		17
<i>Urban Nations Update: Joy to the World</i> , by Steve M. Schlissel .....		20
<i>Christian Home Schooling: How It All Began</i> , by Quentin Johnston .....		22
<i>Four Generations of Lesson Plans</i> , by David Gamble .....		25
<i>Eight Grade Graduation Speech</i> , by Nancy Grasmuck .....		26
<i>Letter on the Scottish Free Kirk's Attack on Theonomy</i> , by Tim Harris .....		27
<b>POSITION PAPER NO. 222</b>		
<i>Rationalism and God</i> , by R. J. Rushdoony .....		28
<b>RANDOM NOTES, 77</b> .....	29	
<b>MY BACK PAGES</b>		
<i>Covenant Consciousness</i> , by Steve M. Schlissel .....		30

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### Chalcedon Scholars:

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

**Rev. Mark R. Rushdoony** is president of Chalcedon and director and a teacher at Chalcedon Christian School.

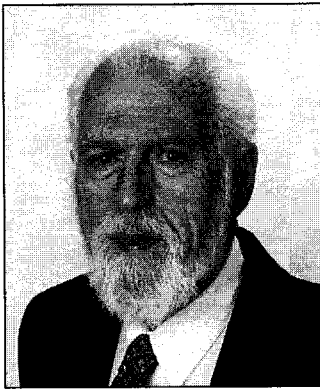
**Rev. Andrew Sandlin** is executive director of Chalcedon, editor-in-chief of the *Chalcedon Report* and the *Journal of Christian Reconstruction*, and president of the National Reform Association.

**Rev. Brian M. Abshire** is the pastor of Reformed Heritage Church, Modesto, California; a Chalcedon board member; and Chalcedon's conference director. He can be reached at 209-544-6132 or [Abshire@thevision.net](mailto:Abshire@thevision.net).

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# Psychopaths

By Rev. R. J. Rushdoony



Voltaire in *The History of Charles XII, King of Sweden* concludes his introduction with these words, "If some prince and some ministers find some disagreeable truths in this work, let them remember that, being public men, they owe the public an account of their actions; that it is at this price they purchase their greatness."

These words indicated the great intellectual revolution underway with the Enlightenment. According to this new view, kings, prime ministers, and rulers were "public men" who were accountable to the people. Previously rulers and all peoples were seen as accountable to God. Great men and small confessed their sins and did penance. Now, however, Christian man had been replaced by public man, a major and revolutionary change.

Accountability is now to man, to rulers, because both people and their rulers are seen as public men. The results are revolutionary and also deadly. Consider the implications: the great majority of Americans profess some kind of Christian faith, or at the least over 90% claim to believe in God. In spite of this fact, politics is now a religion-free realm. Religious symbols are barred from public places and the posting of the Ten Commandments in civil courts and state schools commonly excluded.

Now, religious faith is the major motivating force in human life and yet it is excluded from the affairs of state. The Ten Commandments are God's law, imperatives for Jews and Christians, and yet they are barred while pornography, abortion, and homosexuality are legal.

Christian man has been replaced by public man, officially denuded of religion and morality. Is it any wonder that we see a proliferation of psychopaths, their serial rapes, murders and other crimes, all committed without

conscience? Having by laws stripped citizens and state of Christian faith and morality, the psychopath is the logical result. It is an amazing fact that we do not have more psychopaths. The seeds thereof are to be seen in growing numbers of peoples.

Children are reared and educated in state schools stripped of Biblical Faith and morality. They are taught that values are not eternal but self-chosen, valid only for themselves. This is the mental framework of the psychopath, a total irresponsibility to God and to man. He is the logical product of our schools and culture and his numbers will only increase unless autonomy, self-law, is replaced by theonomy, God's law. Unless we have theonomy, men and nations will alike be governed by self-law, autonomy.

This leads to another implication. The modern state, by rejecting God and Christ, and God's law, seeks to impose its fiat will on everything, responsible to no higher power. The modern state has seen the rise of psychopaths because its stance is most conducive to it. Shortly after World War II, Frederick Moore Vinson, then chief justice of the U. S Supreme Court, held, "Nothing is more certain in modern society than the principle that there are no absolutes." For Vinson and others, moral and religious absolutes were replaced by fiat ones—their own words, laws and decisions. The implications of the position of the modern state have seeped down to school children, street gangs, criminals, business men, workers, and too many clergymen. An antinomian stance is now commonplace.

Voltaire held his anti-Christian views in secrecy, as it were, sharing them only with intellectuals. On one occasion, he silenced his visitors' anti-Christian talk when a servant entered the room. If his servant, he said, were to learn unbelief, what would keep him from cutting his, Voltaire's, throat some night and robbing him? The modern heirs of Voltaire are not as wise. They insist on de-Christianizing the world; they train up psychopaths, and they envision a great new world order as a result of their policies! They shall reap the whirlwind.

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# The Covenant Seed Is the Key to Kingdom Advancement

By Rev. Andrew Sandlin



The kingdom of God will advance in time and history. There is no question about that. What is the kingdom of God? It is God's righteous reign in the earth.<sup>1</sup> The Bible predicts a time on earth when a large segment of the population will be regenerated and profess faith in Christ, when the

law of God as expressed in the Holy Scripture will govern in all areas of life, and when peace and tranquillity will prevail as a result of God's blessings on the obedience of the godly. This kingdom will occur before the Second Advent of Christ.<sup>2</sup> The task of the people of God is to exercise dominion under God's authority using the Bible as their guide. This, in fact, is man's objective in being on earth in the first place. Man exerts godly dominion, beginning with himself, and by the power of the Spirit of God presses the claims of Biblical Christianity in all areas of life.<sup>3</sup>

## The Covenant Mechanism

God has furnished a mechanism for this objective. It is the covenant. This should not surprise us. As the Westminster Confession states, the covenant is God's means of dealing with man:

The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of him as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which he hath been pleased to express by way of covenant.<sup>4</sup>

While the covenant between God and man operated from man's creation (*Rom. 5:12-21*) and the divine pledge after the universal flood (*Gen. 9:1-17*), it comes especially to the forefront in God's calling of a specific people for his name—ethnic Israel and all gentiles willingly united to that body. We see this covenant idea summarized in Genesis 17 in the covenant ratification with Abraham. A covenant is a sacred agreement, secured by oath, and often by a bloody oath.<sup>5</sup> We recognize these elements plainly in the

institution of the Abrahamic covenant. But there is another factor. Covenants bind successors; they are multigenerational pledges and agreements.<sup>6</sup> This is a big part of what circumcision was all about under the old covenant administration. The children of covenant parents are bound by covenant to the God of their parents. They are subject to the same stipulations, and to the same covenant blessings and curses. One of the supreme covenant promises to Abraham was that his seed would "possess the gate" of its enemies (*Gen. 22:17*). "Possess the gate" denotes victory over and subordination of one's enemies. No doubt this was especially comforting to Abraham since his was a small clan amid large, fierce tribes and nations in Canaan. God fulfilled his promise by granting his seed the land of Canaan in subordinating the Canaanites to Israel as the people of God. But since the entire Bible is a new covenant book,<sup>7</sup> when we read the New Testament, we discover that the principal Seed to which the Old Testament referred was Christ himself. This is the message of Galatians 3. Christ and all united to him by faith are the true seed of Abraham. The seed is not limited to ethnic Jews (just as it was not so limited in the Old Testament era), but includes all of the people of God of whatever race. All of them are granted the covenant pledge given to Abraham, including the covenant promise that their physical seed will inherit the earth (*Rom. 4:13*).

## The Great Heresy

One of the most pernicious and evil doctrines ever to infest the church and sidetrack it from its dominion task is that of democratic individualism. This heresy has dominated American Christianity for the last 200 years or so and coincides with the democratic mentality gaining wide acceptance in about the same era. Simply put, it is the idea that nobody can decide for anybody else; every man (and eventually, woman and child), must decide for himself. Its most hazardous feature is perhaps the conviction that children are not bound by the covenant relation of their parents.

The heresy of democratic individualism assaulted the doctrine of original sin. In Christian soteriology (salvation doctrine), man stands judged of God because of his federal (covenantal) union with Adam; man is a sinner because his covenant representative Adam plunged the entire race into sin. In other words, Adam acted for the entire race whom he represented; this is the foundational teaching of Romans 5:12-21.<sup>8</sup> The heresy of democratic individualism, however,

held that this view was fatalistic and portrayed man in an excessively unfavorable light. While there are gradients of this heresy, it basically sees man as judged for his own experiential sins, and not for the sins of Adam. Of course, since the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer is analogous to the imputation of Adam's sin to all humanity (*Rom. 5:15-19*), soon the heresy led to the dismissal of Christ's imputed righteousness. Just as men were considered sinful because of their own sin, so they were considered righteous *because of their own righteousness*. This reintroduced the old Pelagian heresy of salvation by works.

No less pernicious, however, is what this heresy does to the solidarity between the redeemed and their covenant seed. It severs that bond and treats these precious lambs as little pagans. This heresy is rife among the evangelicals, fundamentalists, liberals, neo-orthodox, many Baptists, and even some Reformed, who should know better. God does not make covenants with individuals as individuals; God makes covenants with families as families. This is true from the records of both Testaments. Just think, for example, of the prominent household salvations recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. The covenant is a multi-generational matter.

### **Covenant Seed and Kingdom Advancement**

On the whole, the kingdom of God does not advance by great leaps. Rather, as the parables of Matthew 13 teach us (see also *Mk. 4:26-29*), the kingdom advances gradually and incrementally. It advances generationally. God forces his people to be covenantal if they are to expect to do great exploits for him *because an individual cannot accomplish much in a single lifetime*. But a family can accomplish a great deal over several generations. Compound interest is an illustration of how this is accomplished. Investing a small amount of money on a frequent, consistent basis can generate a large amount of revenue over a period of twenty to forty years. This takes a great deal of patience and self-discipline, however, and the modern heresy of democratic individualism despises patience almost as much as it despises the covenant. Rather, it suffers from the **lottery mentality**—putting in just a little time and effort in one episode and hoping against hope to hit the “lottery” of an exponential kingdom advancement.

But the kingdom is not advanced that way. It advances gradually, over many generations. The cult of instant gratification is a chief mechanism of the heresy of democratic individualism. It wants great spiritual exploits and it wants them now. Because it takes time to train children into a mature and full-orbed Faith and because it is so much quicker to grab an unsuspecting sinner off the sidewalk and drag him down to the front of the church where he can weep and wail and profess to “take Jesus home with him,” the democratic heretics opt for **lottery religion**.

Men are regenerated instantaneously, but the kingdom does not advance instantaneously, and the chief mechanism

of its advancement is not proselytization. Individuals come into the Faith in one of two ways. They are either proselytized, or they are born into a covenant family, hear the gospel and are regenerated. A church or sector of the church that relies principally on proselytization will never make great cultural strides *because it is forced to begin anew each generation*. By contrast, covenantalists can enjoy actual progress. Succeeding generations need not start from ground zero, but can carry the baton in the race of kingdom advancement just where they picked it up from their godly parents.

### **Covenant Seed or Conservative Politics?**

It is easy for even otherwise committed Christians to be lured away from this aspect of covenantal faithfulness. Conservative politics is a good example. Until the 1970s, most conservative Christians in the United States, carrying to the logical conclusion the heresy of democratic individualism, had retreated from the political and social spheres and had left these fields to the Devil and his troops. The Devil and his troops, of course, naturally obliged the Christians by appropriating this territory. In the 70s, as a result of the writings of men like R. J. Rushdoony, Christians began taking back the political and social fields. Unfortunately, most of them did not understand that if they were to achieve long-term accomplishment, they needed to recover not only a full-orbed Faith, but also *a covenantal mechanism for kingdom advancement*. Many of them seemed to adopt a right-wing version of one of the heresies of the Left, political salvation:<sup>9</sup> if we can just get the right men elected, we can solve all or most of the nation's problems. This is a dangerous illusion. If we expect to be successful over the long haul, we need to understand that conquest comes by covenant, not by politics. By no means am I asserting that Christians should not be politically involved. To forsake the field of politics is to abandon a part of the world to Satan and return to the pietistic bunker of earlier this century. We must realize, however, that there are no long-term political solutions; there are only long-term religious solutions; and, from a strategic standpoint, the supreme long-term religious solution is covenant faithfulness. This means, preeminently, transmitting the Faith to our covenant seed.

### **Covenant Faithfulness**

In light of this, I will make several suggestions for parental action:

1. **Treat your children as a gift of God (*Ps. 127:3*), his property (*Ex. 16:8-21*), and among the elect (*Gen. 17:7; cf. Dt. 10:15-16*).** Some refer to this as presumptive regeneration; I prefer the term presumptive *election*. If we are to take the promises of the covenant seriously, we must take the promises of the covenant *seed* seriously. This means that we do not treat covenant children as little pagans, in need of four or five conversion experiences

("Maybe this time, they really mean it"), and as many baptisms ("Maybe this time, they'll tire of getting wet"). We teach them the Faith, including the gospel, from their infancy (*2 Tim. 3:15*), trusting God to regenerate their hearts. We train them in the ways of the Lord, that is, the ways of the covenant. That is our parental responsibility. Regenerating them is God's sovereign work. We have no part in that work (*Jn. 1:12-13; 3:8*). We must understand that child training is anchored in the promises of the covenant, not in the experience of the child. Until we have objective evidence otherwise, we presume our children to be among the covenant elect, and we treat them as such. As Andrew Murray observes:

Abraham had not believed for himself alone, but for his child; as a father he had believed and received the child in faith from God; the sign of circumcision in the child was the seal to the child of the father's faith. *God dealt with father and child as one*; the father believed for himself and his child as one; the child had the same place in the covenant, and the same claim on the seal of the covenant, as the father....<sup>10</sup>

Note that this does away with the idea that the covenant administration of the New Testament era is somehow qualitatively or substantively different from that of the Old Testament era. It is the same covenant in essence.<sup>11</sup> Christian parents do not attempt to peer into God's eternal elective decrees; they stick faithfully to the covenant and let election take care of itself. In other words, they treat Christian children as *Christian* children.

**2. Get your children out of pagan state schools and into home schools or, if home schooling is not possible, Christian day schools.** Covenant people are not to learn the ways of the heathen (*Jer. 10:2*). The covenant seed is to learn the ways of God's law and covenant faithfulness all day long (*Dt. 6:4-9*). In the Devil's (*i.e.*, government) schools, they will learn the ways of rebellion and covenant unfaithfulness all day long. With the plethora of Christian textbooks and curricula today, there is simply no excuse for covenant children's attending Satan's synagogues. There was never an excuse in the first place, but sending them there these days is doubly inexcusable. Christian children require covenant education. As Van Til notes, "If we want a God-centered and truly Christian education, we will have to break away completely from the educational philosophy that surrounds us."<sup>12</sup> This is covenant counter-culturalism, and it is no option for Christian parents.

**3. Make sure you attend a church that treats your children as covenant members.** Churches that shuttle children off to "junior churches" and puppet shows and flannelgraph stories instead of inviting them to worship are not covenant churches. Churches that stress "youth

programs" that exclude parents from covenant training are not covenant churches. Churches that do not direct preaching and teaching to covenant children are not covenant churches. Churches that do not stress family worship are not covenant churches. Join a church that reinforces the family covenant, not a church that competes with it (see Brian Abshire's column elsewhere in this issue).

**4. Assure that your children are baptized and brought to the communion table.** Baptism and communion are covenantal signs and seals;<sup>13</sup> if children are covenant members, they need to receive the covenant signs and seals. Not to administer these signs and seals is in effect to excommunicate Christian children. This is just the opposite of what our Lord taught us to do (*Lk. 10:13-16*). I do not wish to incite a debate with my dear Reformed Baptist brethren or my dear Reformed anti-covenant communionist brethren.<sup>14</sup> My point is simply that if we believe in the covenant, I am convinced that we should practice covenant baptism and covenant communion. One thing is certain, however: it is infinitely preferable to train children as the covenant seed without baptism and communion, than to neglect to train them while administering baptism and communion.<sup>15</sup> By administering to covenant children the covenant signs and seals of baptism and communion, we are obeying God's commands and making a visible declaration about our children's covenant inclusion, as well as letting them know that they are accepted by our Lord.

**5. Teach your children that their main job in life is to glorify God by exercising dominion in the earth (*Gen. 1:27-28*).** This is why man is in the earth—to extend the kingdom of God by exercising godly dominion. From the standpoint of kingdom advancement, one main theme in that training is covenant training *itself*: in other words, we must train our children to train *their* children properly in the covenant. If we expect kingdom progress, we must practice multi-generational covenant training. The kingdom will not advance incrementally if we must begin anew in every generation; it will advance only if every generation can stand on the covenant shoulders of the last generation. This will not happen if we do not train our children to train *their* children in the Faith.

## Conclusion

Thinking that we can advance Christ's kingdom quickly and painlessly (the lottery mentality), or by political means (messianic politics) is dangerous. The chief means of kingdom advancement is covenant faithfulness, and a prime aspect of covenant faithfulness is proper training of the covenant seed.

Families and churches interested in kingdom advancement should concentrate the bulk of their energies there.

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<sup>1</sup> George E. Ladd, *Crucial Questions About the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids, 1952), 80.

- <sup>2</sup> Loraine Boettner, *The Millennium* (no loc., 1957).
- <sup>3</sup> Rousas John Rushdoony, *Law and Society* (Vallecito, CA, 1986), 428-430.
- <sup>4</sup> *Westminster Confession of Faith* (Glasgow [1646], 1976), Ch. VII, Sec. 1 (41).
- <sup>5</sup> O. Palmer Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants* (Phillipsburg, NJ, 1980), 3-15.
- <sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, 35-41.
- <sup>7</sup> Joseph Braswell, "Interpreting Prophecy: The Canonical Principle," *Chalcedon Report*, July, 1997, 26.
- <sup>8</sup> John Murray, *The Imputation of Adam's Sin* (Grand Rapids, 1959).
- <sup>9</sup> Andrew Sandlin, "Messianic Politics," *Chalcedon Report*, November, 1996, 2-5.
- <sup>10</sup> Andrew Murray, *How To Raise Your Children for Christ*

- (Minneapolis, 1975), 42, emphasis supplied.
- <sup>11</sup> See Walter Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, 1987), 231-235.
- <sup>12</sup> Cornelius Van Til, "Antithesis in Education," in ed., Dennis E. Johnson, *Foundations of Christian Education* (Phillipsburg, NJ, 1990), 3.
- <sup>13</sup> James Bannerman, *The Church of Christ* (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada [1869], 1991), 2:18-20.
- <sup>14</sup> For my views, see "In Defence of Reformed Paedobaptism," *Christianity and Society*, Vol. VI, No. 1 [January, 1996], 4-9, and "A Defence of Reformed Paedocommunion," *Christianity and Society*, Vol. VI, No. 2 [April, 1996], 21-24.
- <sup>15</sup> Though neglecting the signs and seals of the covenant is a grave matter indeed. See Gen. 17:14 and Ex. 4:24-26.

## BIBLICAL STUDY

# They Who Labor in the Word

By Rev. Mark R. Rushdoony

*Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, the laborer is worthy of his reward.*

(1 Tim. 5:17-18)



Paul quoted from the law or referred to it a great deal. He even, as here, quotes the Lord as upholding the use of the law. Those Christians who believe that the law was abolished by Christ's atonement and that it is no longer binding must explain away constant references to it in the

New Testament. It would have been dishonest for Paul to have repeatedly used the law to support his teachings if he believed it was now no longer binding. Rather, Paul here states the present responsibility of the church and uses Mosaic case law as his basis. Our Lord is quoted not as the ultimate authority (though as God he obviously is) but as the authority for applying this law to workmen. Paul then specifically applies it to ministers of the word. The Mosaic law was the standard. Its applications by Christ and the apostle are merely expressions of the binding precept of Scripture.

Elders of the church were to be given double honor, says Paul. His context is that honor, in the form of maintenance, be given to widows who have no family to

support them (vs. 16). If these were deserving of the church's support, says Paul, then ministers were worthy of double support. Self-imposed poverty by a minister is a false piety. Ecclesiastically imposed poverty Paul here equates with theft.

There were qualifications for this double honor, however. It was limited to those who ruled well. It is not the title one must honor but the workman who fulfills the responsibilities which the title conveys. To rule well is to rule under the authority of Jesus Christ in his kingdom. Each of us must rule in the name and authority of the King. Ministers of the word have a particularly critical role in conveying these qualifications for good rulers. This involves the two roles here mentioned—studying and teaching. To labor in the word is to study it and seek its meaning. It was a common Jewish expression to say that rabbis labored in the law. But efforts in the word should not be limited to the theoretical. Ruling elders were to insure that the word was taught to those in their charge. Study must manifest itself in the teaching of doctrine. Paul would later remind Timothy that the Scriptures he had studied from a child were "to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which in Jesus Christ" (2 Tim. 3:15). They were to be used, not for the esoteric exercises of intellectuals, but "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (v. 16).

Both the study of the word and its teaching require time and effort. One's respect for a faithful minister of the word reflects one's respect for the word itself. This respect must manifest itself in words and actions but also in that man's obedience. Paul is talking here about salary. The minister who rules well in studying and teaching the word deserves not only honor in the form of salary,

but double honor. Poverty is, as we have said, a false piety; but it is also a hypocritical piety when we impose it on pastors but not on congregations. Paul had just said that if any did not provide for the needy widows in his own household he had effectively denied the Faith and was worse than an infidel (v. 8). Yet if ruling elders are worthy of double the honor due widows, does not the church earn at least as strong a condemnation for denying elders their due?

Paul bases his instruction on Deuteronomy 25:4, which forbade muzzling an ox as it tread (threshed) the wheat. Attempts to compare ministers to oxen toiling in God's harvest miss the point. The prohibition against muzzling the ox was a case law—a specific example of the application of the law (in this case, that against theft). If God forbids us to deprive animals of their reward for labor, how much less are we to deprive men? In 1

Corinthians 9:10 Paul applied this law to men: a plowman who worked only on the expectation of payment. Denying the workmen, then, was both theft (as per the case law) and economically counterproductive to one's own purpose (getting our fields plowed). Ministers of the word are worthy of double honor, or salary. To the Biblical case law Paul added the words of Christ that the laborer is worthy of his hire (*Lk. 10:7*). If it is theft to benefit from the labor of a beast without providing for its needs, then to deny a man compensation certainly is. Paul here uses two lines of argument. The first says the elders' position of authority and efforts in the kingdom is deserving of double honor. The second line of reasoning is that to deny them this honor is theft. If you do not respect your faithful minister of the gospel, then do not compound it by stealing from him his due—double honor.

## COUNTER-CULTURAL CHRISTIANITY

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# Family Worship

*By Rev. Brian M. Abshire*

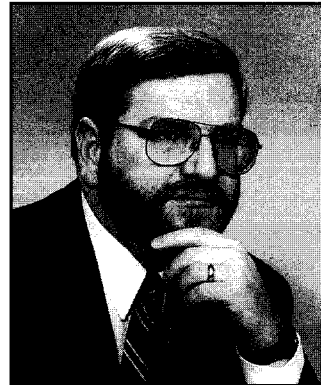
### Abshire Moves to California

Brian Abshire, Chalcedon Trustee, *Chalcedon Report* staff writer, and former pastor of Lakeside Church in Milwaukee has moved to Modesto, California to work more closely with us. Brian is now pastoring Reformed Heritage Church in Modesto, about an hour's drive from Chalcedon. Reformed Heritage has been a long-time friend of Chalcedon under the leadership of now retired pastor "Smoky" Stover, and Brian was his personal choice to continue the ministry there.

At this year's January Board meeting, Brian was appointed Conference Director. He will also be laying the groundwork for an Internet University, writing more for us, and teaching at Chalcedon conferences.

Brian's move brings a vital pastoral perspective to Chalcedon's ministry. R. J. Rushdoony has laid down a lifetime's work in the theoretical and intellectual aspects of Christian Reconstruction. Now it is time for a new generation of younger men to put those principles to work in practical situations. Brian's twenty years of pastoral experience and his genuine pastor's heart will help broaden our message and transform a generation.

Meanwhile Lakeside Church in Milwaukee is now looking for a replacement for Brian. Pastors interested in a growing, dynamic ministry with a solid history of applied Reformed theology should contact Brian Schantz at [bschantz@execpc.com](mailto:bschantz@execpc.com) or (414) 771-5758 for details.



**M**y wife Elaine makes Scrooge look like a spendthrift on a Vegas vacation. When she pulls a quarter out of her wallet, the image of George squints because it's been so long since he's seen daylight. But since she works full time running the house, home schooling six children

AND serving as my administrative assistant (I'm the only pastor in my presbytery who can legitimately chase his secretary around the desk) sometimes, despite herself, I can convince her to actually spend some money and eat out. (I could never understand her current reticence, since, when I was courting her, she loved eating at the fanciest, most expensive restaurants around. She explained it to me in simple terms: before we were married, I was spending MY money. Now, I'm spending OUR money, and that little pronoun change made all the difference.) Recently we took the kids to the Golden Arches where they have one of those big, built-in playgrounds. Elaine graciously consented to ordering two coffees (as opposed to just one cup we could share, since they give you free re-fills) and TWO super-sized Cokes for the kids. Then, to my amazement,

she splurged on letting them share a cinnamon roll! Wow, does this girl know how to party or what?

As we sat drinking our coffee, the kids went running through the playground, organizing a game based on a book one of them had been reading (Peter Capstick's *Maneaters*, and the game involved hunting the dangerous "animals" through the maze). Since it was the middle of the week, there were not many other children there, but the few who were, made up in noise for what they lacked in numbers. I was reminded again of the differences between Biblical child-rearing practices and those of contemporary Americans. Look, my kids are sinners by nature, just like everyone else's. But at home they are taught respect, self-control, obedience, etc. When they play, they have fun, and run around and do kid stuff. But the other children playing were literally self-absorbed little monsters, screaming, yelling, arguing, pushing, shoving, showing contempt for their mothers, ignoring basic safety rules and generally making a nuisance of themselves. The mothers sat by, oblivious to their children's behavior. Now granted, I am sure that someone, somewhere has done a research study demonstrating that mothers are 75% more able than fathers to handle the cacophony of little children. At the same time, repeatedly as I watch pagan children, it appears to me that they are out of control. After one obnoxious little snot stood toe-to-toe with his mother, defying her to discipline him, Elaine remarked, "Well, there's your argument for birth control." I respectfully disagreed: "There is your argument for parental control."

Granted, many of these moms are trying to do an impossible job, *i.e.*, raise children without any help from a husband. Either they are divorced, separated or were never married. Repeatedly, sociological surveys demonstrate that the children most at risk of drug abuse, violent crime, pregnancy or "pre-mature" death, are those from single-parent families where the father is absent. Even if physically present in the household, he is often emotionally and spiritually absent. He has abdicated his responsibilities, and his children pay the price. America is raising an entire generation of uncontrolled, self-absorbed, irresponsible, "sons of Hell" who threaten to destroy what remains of this culture.

### **Pagan Child-Rearing Practices Among Christians**

Pagan child-rearing practices infiltrate the covenant community as more and more Christians compromise with a secularized, hostile and aggressive humanism. Having abandoned a full-orbed, Biblical world view for a truncated, pietized and privatized religion, the Christian family has no defense against these pagan practices. Examples abound, but it is telling that the leading complaint of visitors to Lakeside Church is that we do not have a nursery for their children. Our children (about 45 of them), even the youngest, sit in worship with us. They sit quietly and reverently. The older ones (over 5) take notes. The younger ones draw pictures based on what

the pastor preaches (and there is usually one good, gory anecdote per sermon that serves as their artistic muse!).

But often visitors' children are squirmy, noisy, and generally undisciplined, sometimes even getting up during the middle of the service and wandering around the sanctuary (and on occasion, parents have had to leave the service because of the terrible behavior of their kids). Our children can worship with us because the fathers are all convinced of the importance of daily, family worship. They study the Scriptures and apply them on a daily basis at home. Our children learn how to worship literally at Daddy's knee. Therefore public worship is just an extension of what they have already been doing throughout the week.

### **Compromised Christian Families**

Compromised Christians on the other hand, develop their core values regarding marriage and family from a anti-Biblical perspective. Thus, they have no real understanding of what a child needs to grow into a responsible, self-governed, godly adult. Instead, "We mustn't discipline the little jewels because it might damage their self esteem!" Never spank or correct them, because that's barbaric and the new priesthood of psychology has given us better wisdom than the Scriptures. We must "reason" with the little tykes, appeal to their "better" natures, give them "time outs." And if they can't sit still, if they are disrespectful, disobedient and obnoxious, why that's the school's problem, or the church's, or anyone else's, but certainly not the parents'!

### **Men's Responsibility**

The man as the covenant head of the family bears the greatest responsibility. However, without having had a strong father figure at home, or a strong pastor in the pulpit, too many men just don't have a clue of how to be godly fathers. They then do what men have been doing since the time of Adam in the Garden: they push the responsibility off on somebody else ("But Johnny has to go to public school so he can play sports on a REAL team").

Happily, home schooling is a welcome counter-cultural trend. While all covenant children require a Christian education, home schooling offers the parents an incredible opportunity to take personal responsibility for their children. If for no other reason, home schooling has been a great boon in that it forces parents to make a direct, personal investment in their children's lives. They cannot console themselves by thinking, "That's someone else's job." Home schooling is a sacrifice, but it allows parents to be intimately involved with their children at every step of the education process.

### **Dangers for Home Schoolers**

However, there is a subtle danger even in home schooling. Every Christian home school curriculum has some sort of Bible module, whether it be Scripture



memory, general Bible knowledge, or some sort of Bible story book. And here is the problem. Sometimes, Dad can get the idea that since Bible study is part of home school, and Mom, by default, usually handles most of the home schooling chores, then he has just found another way of abdicating his responsibilities. Dads need to lead in family worship, and that means planning the time, and taking the time daily to do it.

Now many Christian families try to have some sort of “devotions.” Usually this means reading a little passage out of some devotional book, praying at meals and basically just leaving it at that. And granted, it’s better to do something rather than nothing. But real family worship is a greater responsibility than just mumbling a few words and getting on with the day.

## Reformed Family Worship

The *Directory of Family Worship*, adopted by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1647, is an important historical document, long forgotten by most Reformed Christians. It demonstrates powerfully the duties and spiritual responsibilities of the head of a house towards the family. It also humbles one as he meditates on how far we have fallen from the standards of our Reformed forefathers. Whether Presbyterian or Puritan, our spiritual ancestors understood the importance of family worship and raised up generations of warriors for the Faith. Though not without their faults (see my essay on the “Puritan Family” in the August, 1996, *Chalcedon Report*), their example demonstrates why they were able to exercise such a powerful influence on their world, while we today are too often influenced by the world.

The original *Directory of Family Worship* is available directly from Greenville Theological Seminary (P. O. Box 9279, Greenville SC 29604). Lakeside slightly edited its own version for easier reading by updating the language and breaking the long, complicated sentences down into more easily grasped principles. A copy of this is available on our web page ([www.execpc.com/~bschantz/Lakeside](http://www.execpc.com/~bschantz/Lakeside)). However, the principles are so vital to a living, Christian Faith that it is worth highlighting some of this document’s contents.

## Fundamentals of Reformed Family Worship

The General Assembly approved the *Rules and Directions* for family worship “for cherishing piety, and preventing division and schism.” The Scottish Church understood that the family is the foundation of social order both within the state and the church. No church has enough ministers to adequately train every child, just as no free state can afford the number of police required to monitor every citizen (though Washington certainly seems to think it worth the attempt!). Instead, the church recognized that the responsibility of teaching and catechizing the nation’s children fell to the family. If each family diligently and conscientiously trained its children in the doctrines of our holy religion, there would be a great unity of faith and practice. Values caught by daily, family worship when a child is young are likely to stay with him for the rest of his life. Furthermore, such

doctrines help a child avoid the sinful life decisions that destroy whole generations (*Ps. 119:9-11*).

The *Directory* sees the church’s role as not primarily educating the children, but ensuring that such education takes place in the home. It “appoints ministers and ruling elders in each congregation to take special care that these Directions be observed and followed.” Furthermore the leaders were to reprove or censure those who did not keep them.

If any family was found to be deficient, “the head of the family is to be first admonished privately to amend his fault; and, in case of his continuing therein, he is to be gravely and sadly reprov’d by the session; After this reproof, if he is found still to neglect Family-worship, he shall be, for his obstinacy in such an offense, suspended and debarred from the Lord’s Supper, as being justly esteemed unworthy to receive the sacraments until he amends his ways.” Family worship was a very serious duty. Today, with our low view of ecclesiastical authority, the fact that a man could be barred from the Lord’s Supper for failing in family worship may seem extreme. But the early Presbyterians knew something that modern churchmen have forgotten: if the family does not do its duties, the church cannot fulfill hers. Character is normally created in a Christian home. Bringing children up in the discipline and admonition of the Lord is fundamental to every other area of life (cf. *Eph. 6:1ff, Dt. 6:4ff*).

Today we substitute Sunday School, youth group, summer camps, etc., for family worship. Yet, these things, although certainly not evil in and of themselves, undermine the father’s responsibility. It is too easy to think that our obligations are being fulfilled when we turn our children over to someone else. My own sad experience as a youth pastor twenty years ago was that the parents expected me in a couple of hours a week to undo all the damage done to their children by statist education, R-rated movies, rock music and television. It just could not be done.

## Family Worship Requires Hard Work

Family worship takes time, effort and daily discipline. Over the years, as I have worked in various church and parachurch ministries, I have been conducting private surveys on a number of issues. It is no accident that the more developed the Christian education program in a church, the less actual time the family spends together in family worship. The more time, money and effort spent on Sunday school, the less catechized the children. Look, we are all “busy” people today with many demands on our time, energy and attention. It is just too easy to push off one job onto someone else, especially if no one is emphasizing its importance. It is especially difficult if we do not have clear directions as to what this duty entails.

Family worship begins with what the *Directory* calls “secret worship” or what some call today “quiet times.” The *Directory* makes it clear that national reformation can only occur when there is personal transformation. Therefore, every person was to be dedicated to personal prayer and meditation. Having been brought to faith in Christ through a parachurch organization known for its emphasis on “quiet times,” I have always appreciated the

leg up this gave me over many other Christians to whom the very concept seemed a mystery. Many people don't have a clue as to what a "quiet time" is. The *Directory* defines "secret worship" as the means "whereby, communion with God is enjoyed, and right preparation for all other duties obtained." In other words, it is quality personal time with God and nobody else. It is a time of praising God for his nature and being, meditating on his Law (*Jos. 1:8*) and being convicted of our sin. It is then a time of spiritual refreshment as we learn to cast all our burdens on him (*1 Pet. 3:5*), trusting in Christ and Christ alone for our salvation and forgiveness. It has been said, and it is true, that Christianity is not a religion but a relationship (*Jn. 17:3*). We love God's law because it is an expression of his character. My children obey my laws around the house because they love me and they know I love them. My laws are reflections of my character and values. How sad if my kids grew to love my laws, but neglected to love the law-giver! Secret worship is the time spent along with God, relating to him, enjoying his presence, glorifying his name. There is a significant difference between piety and pietism. Perhaps some of us, in reaction to the slushy sentimentality and subjectivity of modern antinomian, broad evangelicalism are at risk of losing something central to Biblical Christianity—a personal relationship with the living God!

### **Pastors' Obligation**

Pastors were required to exhort their congregations "to perform this duty morning and evening." Notice the terminology here: secret worship is not just a nice thing good Christians do. It is a duty that God himself requires. To fail to have regular secret worship is to fail God. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the head of every family "to have a care, that both themselves, and all within their charge, be daily diligent herein." So not only did Dad have to have secret worship himself, but he was required to make sure everyone else under his authority had it as well.

At Lakeside we enjoin our fathers to have their "secret" worship on the same passage they will use for family worship later in the day. This way, the father gets a chance to consider the passage of Scripture, get his own heart right before God, and have time carefully to consider how the Scriptures apply to his personal situation. Then when he brings the family together, he can share the word of God powerfully, because it has already had a chance to work in his own life.

### **The Duties of Family Worship**

Family worship is much like public worship, apart from the sacraments. When families convened for worship they were first to pray and praise God with special emphasis to the church and the kingdom, the family in general and "every member thereof." Next, they were to read the Scriptures. Third, they were to catechize the children and "uneducated" persons so that they "may be the better enabled to profit under the public ordinances, and made more able to understand the Scriptures when they are

read." Catechism is one of the most potent ways of internalizing truths. Years ago, we began with the Children's Catechism, a short, easy introduction to the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Confession. But one of our deacons at the time, Brian Schantz (now a ruling elder), questioned the efficacy of having to teach the children two different Catechisms. He showed up one Sunday afternoon with his two year old having memorized the first seven answers of the Shorter Catechism! I was so impressed I immediately dropped the Children's Catechism and began teaching my kids the Shorter as well. We had to work with our youngest ones quite a lot but made a game of it, and soon the oldest were memorizing three or four questions a week, on their own! Of course, they do not understand all that they are learning, and part of my job in family worship is to relate the Catechism answers to real life. Often in family worship, a question, concern or issue will arise directly from the text for that day. I then ask the kids leading questions until they see how the Catechism answer relates to that concern. Thus, my kids not only learn by rote, but also by organically internalizing the concepts into their daily life. This is what the *Directory* requires: "There should also be godly conferences for the edification of all the members in the most holy faith: as also, admonition and rebuke, upon just reason, from those who have authority in the family."

Hence, the *Directory* does not require the father to preach a sermon every day. Instead, the Scriptures are to be read, "and it is commendable, that afterwards [the family] confer, and by way of discussion make some good use of what has been read and heard." The *Directory* offers specific examples, such as "if any sin is reprov'd, the whole family is to be made aware and watchful against the same; or if any judgment is threatened, or mentioned to have been inflicted. . . , the whole family should fear lest the same or a worse judgment befall them." And, finally, if any duty is required or any comfort held forth in a promise, the family should stir up themselves "to employ Christ for strength to enable them to do the commanded duty, and to apply the offered comfort." In all of this, the "master of the family is to have the chief hand; and any member of the family may propose a question or doubt for resolution."

Family worship does not supplant public worship on the Lord's Day but rather encourages it. "On the Lord's Day, after everyone of the family apart, and the whole family together, have sought the Lord (in whose hands the preparation of men's hearts are) to fit them for the public worship, and to bless to them the public ordinances, the master of the family ought to take care that all within his charge repair to the public worship, that he and they may join with the rest of the congregation." Afterwards, the father is to spend the rest of the Lord's Day catechizing and discussing the sermon, finding practical applications for the family so that "they may confirm and increase their communion with God: that so the profit which they found in the public ordinance may be cherished and promoted, and they more edified unto

eternal life.” Hence we come full circle. A family instructed, admonished and encouraged in secret and family worship is ready to appreciate public worship. Squirmy kids in worship thus may well indicate a father’s abdicating his duties at home.

### Practical Application

There is of course more in the *Directory* that is of great value, but the main point here has been to demonstrate just how important family worship is to raising godly, dominion-oriented children. At Lakeside, we encourage people to begin by setting definite times every day when family worship can be held. We strongly encourage people to set aside two portions of the day. The first is in the morning, before we leave for work, school or other daily labors; the second, in the evening, either after supper or just before bedtime.

In the morning session, we encourage the heads of the household to convene the family after they have had their own personal devotions. This means getting up a little earlier than most of us are used to. Yet, many homes find that mornings are the most hectic and troubled time of the day. Beginning the day with family worship helps to focus our attention on what is good and right and proper.

We recommend the family start by singing a hymn together. Not every family is musically gifted, but every family can enjoy singing Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (cf. *Col. 3:16*). Don’t allow self-consciousness to rob you of praising God. You can do it and your family will be enriched by praise. At Lakeside we supply our families with the songs we will be singing for the next Lord’s Day service. This is to help very young children learn the hymns so they can participate more fully in the service.

After the hymn, the father should open with brief prayer. Though not required, we encourage families to pray the Lord’s Prayer together and then recite one of the great ecumenical creeds of the Faith (*i.e.*, either the Apostles’ or Nicene Creed is very good). Again, this is usually for the benefit of very young children. It provides the opportunity to learn important statements of Faith as well as giving them things to do (the more the children are included, the less tendency to be squirmy!).

Then the father should read a passage from Scripture. If the family has very young children, it is helpful to focus on narrative passages which tell a story. One can work through the Old Testament and the Gospels, giving children a broad overview of Scripture. When the children are older, didactic passages from the epistles are more appropriate. The family can discuss the points made in the passage with Dad making some practical applications from it.

At one time, we used to re-read the same historical narrative as told in a Bible story book. However, we found that these books come in uneven quality and need to be handled carefully. Eventually, our Dads found that they could re-tell the same story in their own words with better effect and fewer heresies, than most popular Bible story books. If one’s children are old enough, we allow them to read the Scriptures one verse at a time. In other

words, we try to get as many of the children involved in as much of the program as possible. This helps maintain attention spans.

Dad should focus on making some practical applications for the family. Many Dads have found that first having 15 minutes of private devotions on the same passage gives them the time and opportunity to think through the passage so they can teach it to the rest of the family. Preparation helps performance! (For more information about how to draw good, practical applications from a passage of Scripture, see my book *Get More from Your Bible*, Scripture Union Publishing, 130 City Road, London, EC1V 2NJ, 1988).

We then ask the children to pray for the specific needs of the family, church, friends, etc. We include a suggested prayer list of members of the church in our weekly bulletin. Sometimes, especially with children under four, the prayers are quite simple and Dad may need to help them word the prayers accordingly. But the children are often quick to pick up on the method. Dad then closes in prayer.

That’s it! Thirty minutes, tops. And the result is children who enjoy hearing and studying the Scriptures, singing Psalms and doctrinally sound hymns and praying for people they know.

In the evening, family worship consists of working on the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Confession. Here, brevity is the key. Fifteen minutes of sharing questions and answers on a daily basis will do more to help your kids learn and remember the Catechism than four hours once a week. Furthermore, it just brings everyone together on a common cause with the idiot box turned off. During this time, we also share about God’s providence during the day. We usually end by reading from a good children’s story book, then pray together and let the children retire for the evening.

Sometimes, in our hectic schedules, families just cannot manage to put it together in the morning. Some of our people swap the order, where they do a couple of Catechism questions in the morning with a short prayer, and then have the singing, praying, reading, etc., at night. This means that a lot of traditional church activities that go on during the week must be cut out. And really, is this so bad? What is of more value to the kingdom, a family having worship together, every night, where the children are learning the Scriptures from their father? Or endless committee meetings, activities, etc., that the average evangelical church requires of its members?

Personally speaking, my kids love family worship and are most upset if we miss it. It is not a burden because we try to make learning about God and his commands fun. They value the uninterrupted time with Mom and Dad and try to outdo each other in learning new questions from the Catechism. In fact, my oldest, when he was just seven, often got the Catechism book down to lead his younger siblings in impromptu family worship sessions of their own!

For those who have not had regular family worship, their children might initially resist this innovation. They will fidget, whine, complain, etc. However, just like any

other aspect of child-rearing, parents have to set the standard and enforce it. If we are consistent, they will be. The kids will test whether you are really serious about doing this. A few bottoms may sting until they finally get the message. But, again, don't be afraid to have fun! It is a duty, but also a great joy to worship the Lord.

The head of the house is responsible to God for caring and nurturing his family. Our family is the most important ministry God has given us. If you cannot handle this one, Scripture says you are not qualified for

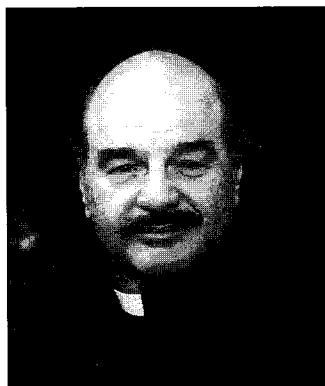
any other (cf. *1 Tim. 3:3ff*): "These exercises ought to be performed in great sincerity, without delay, laying aside all exercises of worldly business or hindrances, not withstanding the mockings of atheists and profane men; in respect of the great mercies of God to this land, and of his severe corrections with which He has lately disciplined us. And, to this effect, persons of eminency (and all elders of the Church) not only ought to stir up themselves and families to diligence. . . , but also to exhort all other families, where they have power and charge, to conscientiously perform these same exercises."

## METHODS ARE PRIMARY

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# Justice in an Unjust World

*By Rev. Ellsworth McIntyre*



**B**usiness justice is not what most economics professors believe and teach. To the businessman, justice means something entirely different. Since I have been both an academic and a businessman during my lifetime, I know the opinion each of these has of the other.

The businessman surprisingly admires the professor and thinks that the professor knows great and wonderful things hidden from ordinary businessmen. For this reason, businessmen seldom rear their children to join them in business. Their first choice for their children is a Ph.D. or similar credentials. It is only after the child demonstrates no scholarly aptitude that he is taken into the business by the disappointed parent. Consequently, the child is made thereafter to believe he has failed to live up to the expectations of his parents. Even if he becomes a millionaire, he believes he has been walled out forever from the great secrets within the hallowed halls of learning.

The academics, on the other hand, stand in amazement of the capitalistic system and envy the wealth of the businessman. The academics don't attribute the wealth of the businessman to intelligence. The academics think they could easily best their academic inferiors in business, but when and if the professor should try his hand at business, 99 percent or more of academics would fall flat on their faces. The proof of this lies in the answer to this question: how many institutions such as schools,

hospitals, churches, or the government run by academics operate efficiently? Answer: almost none. The reason is obvious to anyone who pays attention to the Scriptures, for the Bible counsels, "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called" (*1 Cor. 7:20*). In other words, by the blessing of God some men are equipped for a business career with the particular gifts necessary for success. These gifts are never bestowed by pointy-headed guys in academic robes.

The acquisition of these gifts originates outside history. There is no one-to-one relationship between a score on an intelligence test, teacher-made test, or the curriculum of a school that translates into a profit in the marketplace. The intelligence to create wealth is a gift from God no less than the mind necessary to earn a good grade on a report card.

It should therefore come as no surprise that there exist two different concepts of justice in the marketplace. Let me illustrate by the following true story what the businessman considers "just": When I was twenty-four years old, I had risen rapidly from the position of a rate clerk to sales manager of the Pittsburgh operation of an interstate trucking company. I was an unusual businessman in that I read a lot of academic works on economics and business. My head was full of theories about free-market capitalism. I had a heavy bias against trade unions and a contempt for the socialistic trend of the United States government. I imagined that the officers of my company shared these views. One day over lunch, I delivered a sermonette and capped off the dissertation with the following question: "Sir, before 1935, the trucking industry was not regulated, rates were not fixed by federal law, and certificates of licensure were not necessary to own and operate a trucking company.

Wouldn't you like to go back to those days before the government messed up the free market in trucking?"

The gray-headed one raised his eyes toward heaven and with a profound look of disgust on his face, replied, "Mac, you are out of your mind. I was around in 1935. My father was in the trucking business when I was a teenager. The good old days were horrible. They were a nightmare. Any stupid fool with a truck could haul freight and undercut your rate any time he wanted. Things are much better now with everything regulated."

I could see that I was losing my brownie points as a wise young businessman, so I mumbled, "Oh, I see what you mean. Thank you for giving me the benefit of your experience." In a effort to repair my image, I said, "Sir, I have heard stories of how, in order to keep your company in business, you rode on the front fender of one of your trucks with a double-barreled shotgun under your arm to break picket lines. So I guess you don't feel the same way about government favoritism towards labor unions, do you?" I leaned back in my chair and with a contented smile on my face, I just knew that this time I would score points as a deep thinker. My boss's eyes went toward the ceiling again, and this time he coughed out an uproarious laugh, "Hell, no, Mac, you have been educated out of your right mind. You should read less and think more. The labor climate is much better today. In those days, every junior criminal from every local had his hand out. All kind of deals were made under the table. Today with Jimmy Hoffa in charge we only have one thief to contend with and everyone pays the same wages." Then he added the cruelest cut of all, "You got a lot to learn, kid." Lunch over, I evaluated what I had just learned.

What follows is the businessman's idea of fair play or justice:

First, predictable prices are better. If you can know in advance the price or at least the price range that your competitors must charge, it takes a lot of mystery out of projecting future costs and resulting profits. In a totally free market, prices can be quite different from what is posted. There can be rebates to large customers and higher prices to others, making long-range planning difficult and the carrying of long term debt risky. How much money can you borrow safely in a unregulated market?

Second, predictable wage rates are also favored. For all of the same reasons as above, any fixed situation is far more advantageous than a situation in a constant state of flux. For example, an older established company could be forced to lay off older workers in order to hire more vigorous younger workers at a lower wage and to stay competitive with younger start-up companies. If the wage rates are constant for both older, larger companies and start-up companies, those older companies already in the market are protected from start-up competition. How big can a company safely grow in such a business climate that is not regulated?

Third, licensing by the government controls who can enter any field, be it medicine, trucking, or plumbing.

This is preferred and considered just by those businessmen already licensed and protected from start-up competition. In other words, the less free the market the more just in the eyes of those already in the marketplace. Therefore, when academics preach that the government should do something about unsafe trucks, unsafe food, health and safety of workers, uniform wage rates, workmen's compensation, the businessman moans and complains on the one hand, but deep in his heart he doesn't really care about these things nearly as much as he does about any stupid jerk coming into his marketplace and stealing his customers. *The businessman fears the free market infinitely more than he fears government regulations.* If the socialist academic were as smart as he thinks he is and wanted to crush the businessman, he would get the government as far as possible from the marketplace, but instead unknowingly the academic has provided a business climate that every successful businessman knows how to use to his advantage. Every successful businessman is too wise to speak publicly about such things. You have to learn these things over lunch talking to the men who know, something like a rite of initiation into the mysteries of the craft.

Finally, the man who rises to great power in business will think more often than he reads. The trade secrets are not written in books, but in the things people say and don't say. The trade secrets are known by what people do and don't do. If you must get all of your ideas from print and if you cannot read people, then you are not bright enough to succeed in business. Better stick to an artificial world where things are much simpler. The churches and schools are places where naive men and women can be sheltered from the hard realities of life.

Look around you at today's business climate. Whom are the environmental regulations helping and whom are they hurting? It is the huge land developers who can afford the legal staff and the investment to work around the regulations who are helped. Millions can be made while enjoying government protection from the small developer who cannot afford the lengthy and costly process to obtain building permits, environmental surveys and such things. Therefore, the college professor (secretly a Marxist) imagines in his diseased, envious mind that he is hurting the big capitalist. He isn't; he is helping the big guy by restricting entry into the market.

Ah, the wages of envy is higher prices, poorer products, lower wages and eventual strangulation of the goose that lays the golden egg!

Don't get me wrong. When morality fails, evil must be restrained by guns. Both the businessman and the academic must be checked and balanced by law. Not the law we learned at the feet of our teachers, however, but a stronger moral fiber is needed to nourish a truly just marketplace.

Let me offer the solution to the above problem. We must teach (by we, I mean Christian Reconstructionists) our children to measure all things by the law-word of God. If and when we raise up enough people who will

regulate themselves by God's law, our market can operate more freely and we can become more prosperous. The reason we need big government, big trade unions, regulated professions, and the rest is because we are an evil people who cannot live in a free market. We use both freedom and regulations to steal each other blind. The anchor that holds down the wealth that should be ours is our disobedience and envy. Given, however, enough students believing with all their hearts that the key to a golden age is to govern and be governed by God's law, much regulation from government could wither away. That promise that government will wither away was made by Karl Marx, but as we all know, under socialism and communism, government did not wither away but thrived like a malignant cancer.

Under the reign of Christ's law, the greatest good will come to the greatest number, and civil government will certainly wither. Then both the academic's and the businessman's concept of justice will be the same.

This is the long-term vision of Grace Community Schools. If we had about 10,000 schools educating pre-school children to read and believe the Ten Commandments, in one to three generations we could see a different world—a world that is more just.

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*Ellsworth McIntyre, one of America's leading Christian educators, is pastor of Nicene Covenant Church and founder of Grace Community Schools, and author of How to Become a Millionaire in Christian Education. He is available for speaking engagements, often without charge. For further information contact him at 4405 Outer Drive, Naples, Florida 34112.*

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MODERN ISSUES IN BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

## The Biblical Basis for Home Schooling

*By William Einwechter*

### The American Precedent for Home Schooling



In the early period of American history, home schooling was the primary means of education. As Christopher Klicka notes, "From the founding of this country by the Pilgrims in 1620 and the Puritans in 1630 to the late 1800s, most education took place in homes, with either the

parents or a tutor (usually a pastor) providing the instruction."<sup>1</sup> But with the rise of modern public schooling in the 1800s, the accompanying propaganda to justify it,<sup>2</sup> and the ultimate triumph of statist public education, home schooling died out almost completely in America. Today, the majority of the American populace (Christians included) believes what they have been told for the last one hundred years or so: state-controlled, taxpayer-financed public schools are the best possible means of education for children; that this is a lie is becoming more obvious with each passing year. Public education in America has become a colossal failure. With this failure there has been an increasing return (especially among Christian parents) to the pattern of home schooling as practiced by our forefathers.

### The Revival of Home Schooling

The return to home schooling among Christians is due in part to the decay of public education and the desire of parents to protect their children from the dangers and humanistic influences of the public schools. But the reason why Christian parents (such as my wife and I<sup>3</sup>) home school goes much deeper than the fiasco of the public schools and the promise of a superior education at home. They have chosen to home school their children because they believe that this means of education best fulfills God's will for them as parents. They are convinced that they are doing what God has called them to do in his law-word. The purpose of this article is to give a summary statement of the Biblical basis for home schooling.

### The Requirement of God's Covenant Law

God's covenant governs all of life for the believer. God saves men on the basis of his covenant promise, and governs his people on the basis of his covenant law. God is the originator of the covenant and as sovereign Lord he establishes the terms of the covenant. Entrance into the covenant is based on repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. For those who meet these terms (due solely to God's electing love and grace), the terms of life in the covenant are loyalty to God and obedience to his law. The Bible contains the revelation of God's law—the stipulations (commandments) that men are to follow in their love and service to God, and their love and service to their neighbor. The stipulations of the covenant set

forth in clear terms the path of obedience that the covenant people must walk if they are to be faithful to their Lord. Believers are bound by a solemn oath (for what else is true repentance and faith?) to submit to the Lordship of Christ and obey the stipulations of God's law.

Thus, the first duty of Christian parents in regard to the education of their children is to discern what God's covenant law requires of them. They must ask: What has God commanded concerning the education of the children that he has placed in our care? The stipulations of the covenant must govern all of our decisions relating to the education of our children. The next duty of Christian parents is to faithfully obey the commands of God without compromise or wavering. Accordingly, the starting point for Christian parents as they consider the education of their children is not the realm of pragmatic concerns, but the realm of God's covenant law. After all, they have taken an oath of allegiance to God, and they are required to obey all that he has commanded (*Dt. 10:12-13*). Being in covenant with God, they do not have the freedom to educate their children as they please but are bound to educate them in the way that God has specifically commanded. The law of the covenant is very explicit concerning the responsibility of parents in regard to the education of their children:

All these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children.... (*Dt. 6:6-7; cf. 11:19-21*)

...the Lord said unto me, Gather the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children. (*Dt. 4:10*)

The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law. (*Dt. 29:29*)

For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments. (*Psa. 78:5-7*)

He that spareth the rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes. (*Pr. 13:24; cf. 19:18; 23:13; 29:15, 17*)

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it. (*Pr. 22:6*)

And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (*Eph. 6:4*)

These verses place the authority and responsibility for education squarely in the hands of the parents. They also define the nature of education: children are to be taught the law of God and directed in how they may glorify him in all that they do in life. The stipulations of the covenant require parents to lead their children to love God with all their heart and mind, and to give them a comprehensive Biblical world view that will guide them in all spheres of life. The stipulations of the covenant law thus provide a solid basis for the practice of Christian home schooling. Let us consider more closely how this is so.

### **Family Responsibility**

First, God's law places the authority and responsibility for the education of children in the hands of the family rather than in the hands of the church or state. God has appointed three primary institutions for governing and ordering human life. In his word, he delineated the sphere of authority granted to each, and the duties assigned to each. Without question, God has given the responsibility for the education of children to the family. The state has no mandate from God to direct the education of the children within its borders. If the state does (as in the United States), it unlawfully transgresses into an area reserved by God for the family. The state has no business in education; the state-controlled public schools of today are a violation of God's law.

But what about the church? Doesn't the church have an educational mission? It most certainly does. The church is the bulwark of truth in the world, and it is the guardian of God's word. The church is to disciple the nations by teaching all that God has commanded. But God has not delegated the responsibility for the education of children to the church. This does not mean, however, that the church has no relation to the training of the children of church members. There is an indirect relationship. God has commanded the church to teach the Scriptures so as to equip believers to carry out the work and ministries committed to them by God. In regard to the education of the children of its members, the church equips the parents through the faithful exposition of the Bible so that the parents will be knowledgeable in the truth and prepared to teach their own children (cf. *Eph. 4:11-12; 2 Tim. 3:16-17*). The church helps to equip the parents to carry out their calling to be the educators of their children. But it is not the church's role to usurp the parents' position and assume the duty of teaching the children of covenant families.

### **Parental Instruction**

Second, God's law indicates that parents are themselves responsible to teach their children. A careful reading of the Biblical texts given above reveals that the parents are to be the primary teachers of their children. God's law is not fulfilled by merely providing for someone besides parents to teach their children God's truth and how it applies to all of life. No, God appoints the parents to be the teachers of their own children. God's law-word

is to be transmitted to children primarily in the context of the family and by the parents. This does not imply that parents can never employ the skills and knowledge of others for the education of their children. It means that the parents are the chief instructors of their children and all others serve as their assistants at their discretion.<sup>4</sup>

### Parental Discipline

Third, God's law commands parents to train and discipline their children through the consistent use of the rod and reproof. A very important part of a child's education is the development of self-control and also of respect for and obedience to authority. This is achieved in large measure through discipline. God has put the rod into the hands of the parents to drive far from him the "foolishness" that is in the child's heart (*Pr. 22:15*). For the rod and reproof to have effect they must be administered uniformly and faithfully by the one charged with the administration—the parent! This can only happen if the child is under the constant supervision of his parents.

### The Home as Instructional Center

Fourth, God's law establishes the home as the center for instruction and education. This is particularly plain in the texts of Deuteronomy 6:7-9 and 11:18-20. The physical location of teaching is identified with the home. In other words, the "school building" is seen as the family home, not another building in another locale. This does not mean that all education takes place within the confines of the four walls of the house, for the text speaks of learning in other settings. However, it does seem to stand against the idea of sending children out of the home to a designated building other than their own home.

### Training in Real-Life Situations

Fifth, God's law denotes that the training of children should take place in real-life situations and settings. Parents are to teach their children "when thou sittest in thine house, when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (*Dt. 6:7*). There is a time for formal instruction and a time for informal instruction, but all is to take place in the real-life setting of the family and the activities of daily life (worship, work, play, travel, buying, selling, decision-making, etc.). The goal of education is to prepare the child to glorify God in real life, so the setting for education ought to be real life. Most modern education departs from the Biblical model in that it seeks to teach children in the artificial environment of a school surrounded by their peers.

### Biblical Content

Sixth, God's law requires that the education of children be thoroughly Biblical. By this we mean that the starting point for knowledge is the recognition that all truth is God's truth and that every subject must be taught from the perspective of Biblical revelation. Since all facts are created by God (e.g., the facts of language, science, math, and history), then these facts can be rightly understood only if

we follow God's authoritative interpretation of these facts as given in the Bible. Education must be explicitly Christian if it is to be loyal to God's covenant. Hence, it is impossible for us to be faithful to our covenant vows if we allow our children to be educated by covenant-breakers in an anti-Christian environment (such are the public schools of this nation!). Each parent is responsible to make sure that his child receives a Christian education.

### Summary

It is on the basis of these principles derived from the covenant stipulations regarding the education of children that home schooling is built. Since the family is the institution charged with the duty of education; since parents are commanded to be the primary teachers of their children; since parents have been given the rod to discipline their children; since the center for the training of children is the home; since education is to take place in the real-life setting of the family; and since parents are responsible to give their children a thoroughly Biblical education, we can conclude that home schooling is not only an acceptable means of education, it is the best, because it conforms more closely than any other model to the commands of God to parents.

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher Klicka, *The Right Choice: The Incredible Failure of Public Education and the Rising Hope of Home Schooling* (Gresham, OR, 1992), 112.

<sup>2</sup> For an excellent and informative history of the rise of public education see, Samuel L. Blumenfeld, *Is Public Education Necessary?* (Old Greenwich, 1981).

<sup>3</sup> Linda and I have eight children (the Lord willing, number nine will have been born by the time this article is published) and we have taught all of our children at home from the very start. Home schooling has been a great blessing to us, but it has required much of us and has not always been easy. We teach our children at home because we believe this is what God requires of us as parents who are in covenant with him. Thus we are able to persevere through the tough times, knowing that God has called us to this work and will enable us and sustain us in teaching and training our children.

<sup>4</sup> Parents may need others (books and tutors, for example) to supplement their instruction in the more specialized areas of knowledge and skills. As children grow older, this need becomes more evident and significant. At the time when a young man embarks on his life's vocation, it is proper that, if necessary, he be apprenticed under the guidance of a Christian man skilled in that vocation. The contention that parents are the primary teachers of their children does not mean that they must be the *only* teachers of their children.

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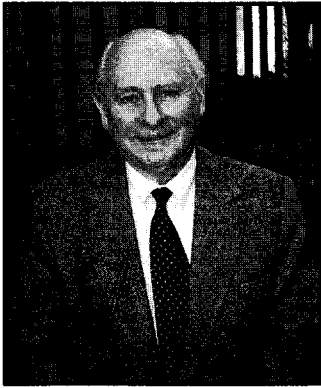
*William O. Einwechter (Th.M.) is an ordained minister and the Pastor of Covenant Christian Church. He currently serves as the Vice-Moderator of the Association of Free Reformed Churches and Vice-President of the National Reform Association. He is also the author of the books Ethics and God's Law: An Introduction to Theonomy, and English Bible Translations: By What Standard? and editor of the newly released Explicitly Christian Politics. He can be contacted at 9385 Royer Rd., Mercersburg, PA 17236; or by e-mail at WEinwechte@aol.com.*



# A New Family Lifestyle

By Samuel L. Blumenfeld

© Samuel L. Blumenfeld, 1997 From the book *Homeschooling: A Parents' Guide to Teaching Children*



During the past few years much has been written about the breakdown of the American family. Unwed motherhood, single-parent families on welfare, rampant divorce, child abuse, and spouse abuse have just about put the American family on the endangered species list. Even the word *family*

itself is undergoing redefinition. But in the midst of all of this gloom about the increase in dysfunctional families, a brand new model of a happy family is emerging in America. In fact, one of the most positive developments of the home school movement is the emergence of a new family lifestyle centered on child-rearing and education.

## Family Unity

In the home schooling family, education becomes the cement of family togetherness, a dynamic kind of togetherness that adds a new intellectual, spiritual, and cultural dimension to family life. Because the emphasis is on knowledge and the development of creative and productive skills, the family becomes a rich source of intellectual discussion and experience.

In home schooling, the family becomes a place where everyone learns. The younger children learn by hearing and seeing the older children being taught. And parents learn by teaching their own children subject matter that they may have forgotten or may never have learned. In a way, home schooling parents learn more than the children because they are in a position to expand their knowledge from a broader base that includes life's experiences.

The new family lifestyle is shaped by the fact that parents and children get to know one another very well. They spend more time together; they do more things together; and they become aware of each family member's idiosyncrasies, talents, and difficulties. The children, because of all the direct attention they get from their parents, develop a greater sense of emotional security and a knowledge that they are especially loved and appreciated because Mom and Dad are willing to devote so much time to them. Thus, family bonding is stronger and deeper than in the non-home schooling family.

## Maintaining Family Ties

When the children grow up and leave home, family ties remain as strong as ever, because they are based on the special bonding that produces rich, lifelong friendships among siblings. And when home schooled children get married, they have a model of family life that permits them to duplicate what they enjoyed as children and to pass it on to their own children.

The importance of family ties cannot be overestimated. We all know of adopted children who spend years trying to find their biological parents. And we've seen on television some of these emotional reunions in which mother and child who haven't known or seen each other in twenty or thirty years embrace each other in a way that seems uncanny. The yearning to be connected with one's blood relatives is the same yearning that connects us to the human race. Some children, abandoned at birth on a church doorstep or in a garbage can, will in adult life go to great lengths to find some knowledge of the mother who abandoned them. What a scar such abandonment leaves on the psyche of the child who becomes, as an adult, so obsessed with his origin!

That is why the home school family lifestyle represents such a powerful force, for it is a family lifestyle that is child-centered and child loving. Bringing up kids becomes the focal point of family life, and that is why the children are so well adjusted and emotionally secure. Home schoolers tend to enjoy kids and want to have many of them, because each act of creation produces a new human being who adds joy to the family. When a new son or daughter or sister or brother enters the family, that gives each family member an additional blood relative with whom to bond and share life's experiences.

## What Home Schooling Usually Prevents

Home schooling families seldom experience the traumas of teenage rebellion which occur when children develop values that conflict with the values of their parents. In home schooling, parents transfer their values to their children. In public schools, the values of that institution tend to replace the values taught at home, and today's public schools place great emphasis on changing children's values to conform to the values of the school. Social scientist Professor Benjamin Bloom of the University of Chicago made that objective very clear in his book, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* first published in 1958. He wrote:

By educational objectives, we mean explicit formulations of the ways in which students are

expected to be changed by the educative process. That is, the ways in which they will change in their thinking, their feelings, and their actions....

The evidence points out convincingly to the fact that age is a factor operating against attempts to effect a complete or thorough-going reorganization of attitudes and values....

The evidence collected thus far suggests that a single hour of classroom activity under certain conditions may bring about a major reorganization of cognitive as well as affective behaviors. We are of the opinion that this will prove to be a most fruitful area of research in connection with the affective domain.

In other words, the educators have made it very clear that their goal is to "effect a complete and thoroughgoing reorganization of attitudes and values" that the kids bring from home. Apparently, the educators disapprove of the attitudes and values that children acquire from their parents. And so, what the educators do is sow the seeds of rebellion and familial conflict.

Fortunately, the home schooling family need not worry about conflicting values which lead to teenage rebellion. The new family lifestyle is one of harmony and basic agreement between parents and children when it comes to values. This is particularly true among religious families where daily devotions and Bible readings create a strong spiritual unity among parents and children alike. In such families, where according to the orthodox tradition, the father is the spiritual leader of the family, his authority is respected because it relies on God for its source.

Obviously, therefore, the kind of lifestyle a home schooling family will have will depend greatly on its philosophical foundations. But all home schooling families have several things in common. The most important thing of all is that the home schooling family is master of its own time. The children of the family are no longer captives of the state, confined in the school during the best hours of the day, requiring the family to plan its activities in accordance with the school's schedule. And much of that time in school is spent being dumbed down, not educated.

### **Freedom and Independence**

Being free to determine how one is going to spend the day gives home schoolers an exhilarating sense of freedom and independence. The family, not the state, decides how to spend its time. It can actually be spent learning and developing one's intellect. Thus, the emotional and psychological benefits of declaring one's own independence from the state school gives the family an understanding of what freedom is all about. Freedom means being free of government coercion. That is the freedom that the Founding Fathers fought to obtain for all Americans. To them, the purpose of government was

to secure the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all Americans.

Freedom also provides economic benefits for the family. For example, home schoolers can take advantage of the off-hours at skating rinks, or will get a better rate from a music teacher who might otherwise not have students until they get home from school. In addition, the home schooled children have more energy for these activities. They are not exhausted and listless because of a day of confinement in the suffocating atmosphere of the public school. On the other hand, public schoolers, if they are involved in extracurricular activities, must do the work in the late afternoon when their energies and enthusiasm are not at their highest. The best hours of the day are spent in the drudgery of the classroom, and the worst hours of the day are given over to what children really like doing.

All of that is changed in home schooling. The academic work is usually completed by noon and the rest of the day can be spent in whatever activities the family wants to engage. Sometimes, if a morning field trip has been planned, the academics can be done at some other time. Also, the family can take advantage of off-season vacations or travel, thus avoiding crowds and saving money. The family goes on vacation or takes trips when Dad is free, not when school is closed. The calendar revolves around the family's needs, not the school's schedule.

### **Social Life**

Another important aspect of the home schooling family's lifestyle is its social life. In the family committed to public schooling, parents tend to develop their own social lives, and the kids through school friendships and activities tend to develop social lives of their own. This divides the family in a way that can cause serious problems. Kids can get into a great deal of trouble because of peer pressure in the school, and parents are often kept in the dark about what their children are really up to with their friends. Many children begin to develop intense friendships, some creating their own secret language in order to hide from their parents what they are doing with their friends, particularly of the opposite sex. Dating can lead to premarital sex, which may lead to unwanted pregnancies, diseases, abortions, unwed teenage motherhood, emotional traumas, jealousies, and physical abuse. The parents are usually the last to know that their son or daughter is in deep trouble. Children may get involved with drugs or gangs, which is the kind of desperate social life that has claimed the lives and souls of many youngsters.

In contrast, the social life of the home schooling family is positive and delightful. It is not a divided social life, but one built around a united family. Home schooling parents join support groups or develop friendships with other home schooling parents, and the kids are always there unless they are engaged in some activity with other

home schoolers. The kids have no secrets to hide from their parents, and the parents' lives are pretty open to the kids. Family members are not outside the family, each going in his own direction. Dating is discouraged as an open invitation to dangerous temptation; courtship is encouraged and parents try to match up their kids with other home schooled kids. Innocence is often maintained for as long as the children are under their parents' care and protection. The public schooler, on the other hand, is introduced to sex education in the preteen years. And when one examines the dysfunctional family, it becomes obvious that premarital sex is one of the premier causes of social trauma.

This doesn't mean that home schooled children never get into trouble. What it does mean is that home schoolers get into much less trouble than their public school counterparts because of the strong moral teaching at home. Home schoolers tend to be busy, creative, productive, independent self-starters with little interest in the kind of temptations that public schoolers are confronted with every day in school or on the bus. Public schoolers, being among a couple of hundred kids daily, away from parental supervision, and without much moral guidance from the educators, can easily fall prey to the seductive pressures of their friends.

Thus, the lifestyle of the home school family gives a sense of security and togetherness that keeps the corruption, temptations, and evils of the greater culture at bay. Parents decide what the children will watch on television, and usually the less TV the better. There are plenty of good videos that parents can get for their kids. This produces a healthy moral environment in which

parents enjoy their responsibilities as parents, and children enjoy the safety and warmth of a truly rich and fulfilling family life.

Homeschooling also encourages the development of family enterprises in which all members can take part. Many home schooling families have built home businesses that have helped make their families economically self-sufficient. This is important during a time of dynamic economic change in America. Home schoolers are in a good position to take advantage of all the new opportunities that are being created by the new technology. They can use their time to develop whatever interests them. Many pioneering home school families have become successful booksellers, magazine publishers, home school program developers, clothing designers, software developers, etc.

All in all, the new family lifestyle that home schooling has created is the most positive social development in America today. The rest of America can learn much from this healthy phenomenon, which a family can enjoy only when it rejects government schooling and discovers the greater moral, spiritual, and psychological benefits of home schooling.

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*Samuel L. Blumenfeld is the leader in U. S. homeschooling and phonics, and he has lectured on these subjects from coast to coast and abroad. State school authorities once called him statist education's "public enemy number 1."*

### Announcing New Chalcedon Positions

In its January meeting, the Chalcedon board established the following new positions:

R. J. Rushdoony: Chairman of the Board

Mark Rushdoony: President

Andrew Sandlin: Executive Director

Brian Abshire: Conference Director

### Sam Blumenfeld's New Book on Homeschooling Now Available!

*Homeschooling: A Parent's Guide to Teaching Children*, Citadel Press, 224 pages, ISBN 0-8065-1911-8, Paper: \$12 (CAN \$17).

To order: call 1-888-922-3000, or write: Literacy Unlimited, Inc., 31724 Railroad Canyon Dr., Canyon Lake, CA 92587.

This is a vital new book by one of the premier authorities on American education.

### Zambia Conference Messages in Audiocassette Album

Audio tapes of the messages delivered at the Chalcedon Conference on Christian Culture held in Zambia last June are now available, set in an attractive album. The cost is \$35.00 per album, plus postage and handling: domestic \$3.75 per set, foreign \$5.00 per set. California residents please add 7.25% sales tax.

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# Urban Nations Update: Joy to the World!

*By Steve M. Schlissel*

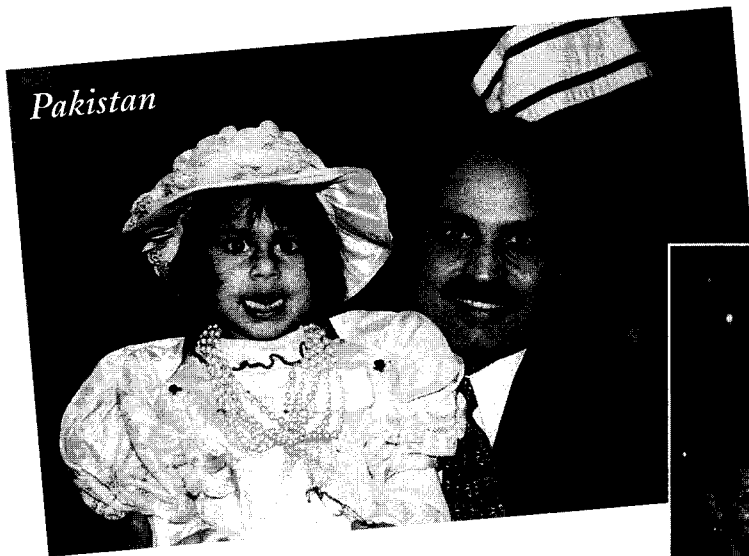
Our motto is "Reaching the world where the world's within reach." At no time in our brief history was the propriety of this motto more evident than at our 1997 Christmas party for Urban Nations students and their families. Nearly 200 immigrants from 22 different nations crammed into the small parish hall of the church used by Messiah's Congregation. Atheists, Hindus, ancestor-worshippers, Jews, nominal Christians and "others" arrived, decked-out and decourous, ready to eat, mingle, and celebrate.



We took full advantage of the cultural importance of Christmas in America to introduce our beloved immigrants to the Christ who often remains hidden behind the hubbub. Rev. Isaac Byrd and an entourage of musicians from his church, Reformed Christian Fellowship, performed, and also led the celebrants in singing traditional Christmas carols. The Spirit of God blessed abundantly, creating order and peace. The claims of

☪  
"Reaching  
the world where  
the world's  
within reach."  
☪





God were pressed as I delivered two brief messages (one at the beginning, one at the end), highlighting the power of God to save us through Messiah Jesus, and urging everyone to turn from their sins and find life in his name.

The photos on these pages are manifest evidence that God is answering your prayers on behalf of this ministry. Please continue to implore the Lord that he will use us to gather those whom he has chosen before the foundation of the world, that souls from every kindred and every tribe on this terrestrial ball would crown him Lord of All!

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# Christian Home Schooling: How It All Began

By *Quentin Johnston*

## The Foundation of Phonics



“Would you please ask her to read that again?” This was the almost incredulous question asked by a young pastor and former public school teacher. He had just witnessed what he had been confident, up to five minutes earlier, was impossible.

The year was 1966, and Rev. Paul Lindstrom was meeting with an out-of-town Christian educator. The reader was this man’s five-year-old daughter. Today, in 1998, this does not seem so remarkable, and the reasons for our nonchalance, to a great extent, can be traced to this cozy evening spent with friends in a Chicagoland suburb.

This single event was a catalyst in the formation of ideas on education that have greatly impacted the lives of nearly a quarter of a million children. What Paul Lindstrom discovered was the power of phonics. Educated by an establishment that was fast removing all traces of “traditional” teaching methods from the curriculum, Lindstrom had assumed that teaching was best left to the “professionals,” and that they knew best how to accomplish the educational task. Suddenly, here was the proof that they were wrong. From this encounter, he determined that he would have to establish an alternative to the public school system, with phonics at the core of the curriculum.

## School at Home

In nearby Hoffman Estates, Illinois, young Brian Barber was not doing well at school, and his parents were dissatisfied. Conversations with their friend Paul Lindstrom confirmed that there was a possible solution to their problem; it was decided that Brian should be educated at home, and so a home schooling program was begun. Soon, a fourth grade student from Chicago began to work with Dr. Lindstrom, and the program got its present name of Christian Liberty Academy Satellite Schools, shortened by most simply to CLASS.

As Dr. Lindstrom has noted in the past, “Home school programs are not a new concept. Correspondence schools have existed in the U. S. since the early 1900s,” with

several providing study material for missionaries and others out of the country. But while they tended to provide a student with single courses to augment public school curriculum, perhaps also due to a failing grade or early graduation, Christian Liberty Academy Satellite Schools were to be different. “Parents were encouraged to remove their K-12 children from public schools and, with or without local approval, simply teach them at home using a program that was specifically tailored to the individual student.”

## The Antithesis in Education

From the beginning, Dr. Lindstrom understood that the problem with the public school system was not just the shortcomings of the textbooks, curriculum, and experimental educational theories, but that the very system itself was a corrupting influence in the homes of Christians across the nation. Children were taught that they had to define the world and their values for themselves. The Faith of their parents was being systematically ignored, and philosophies antithetical to the Christian Faith were informing the world view modeled by most of the teachers. Little wonder that young adults were abandoning their churches and the faith they grew up in when they had been fed a steady diet of Marxism, Darwinism, and cultural nihilism, not to mention liberal and Arminian theology in their churches!

## The Beginning

Meanwhile, God opened doors for the Church of Christian Liberty so that in the fall of 1968, the newly organized Christian Liberty Academy opened its doors to K through ninth grade students. The doors were those of the basement of the church, but the 50-plus on-campus students soon began to prove what “Pastor Paul” (as he is affectionately known) instinctively knew—“Basics are Best.”

It was not long before the role of the home school ministry extended to every state in the Union, inquiries coming in on almost a daily basis. Reports of the quality of education children received were coming in almost as swiftly. Word of mouth, Mom telling Mom, Dad telling colleagues and fellow church members, the news of a better way of “doing it” was swelling the ranks of CLASS. One little known fact is that most of the early home schooling families from across the nation were recruited from among those involved with the “Remember the Pueblo Committee,” which was formed in 1968 by Dr. Lindstrom in response to the capturing of the U. S. Navy ship *Pueblo* by the North Koreans. These patriots,

determined to hold the State Department accountable for their disinterest in the treatment and release of the crew, organized rallies and distributed materials until the crew was released. Thus, in a real sense, activists who refused to allow civil government unrestrained sovereignty laid the foundation of the modern home school movement. Their principles, however, were soon to be sorely tried.

### **The First Confrontation**

Inevitably, the “sleeping behemoth” awoke; some of its choicest morsels were being whisked away before he could devour them! Home school parents would find letters in their mailboxes from local school districts asking why Johnny or Mary was absent from school. Charges of truancy, child abuse, and contributing to the delinquency of minors were leveled. A few parents were imprisoned; some children were made wards of the state and removed from home; protracted court battles became inevitable. The call went out for help and, as Dr. Lindstrom notes, he “along with many others, traveled from courtroom to courtroom throughout the 1970s,” speaking as an expert witness, defending the quality of the CLASS program, and upholding the right of parents to take care of the educational needs of their own children. Working with Dr. Lindstrom, and independently at that time, were John Whitehead, Michael Farris, William Ball, David Gibbs, and other attorneys to whom the Lord gave many significant victories. It was during this time that Paul Lindstrom met Dr. R. J. Rushdoony and like so many, including this writer, was permanently shaped by his message and his life.

With each new court case came interviews in the print and broadcast media, and with each new story came more new families, weary of the struggle, and yet invigorated by what they were reading and hearing. “If these kids can get their education back on track, so can my kids,” they reasoned. Soon other “entrepreneurs” entered the arena and a newly revived home schooling movement began.

### **The Phenomenal Growth**

God has been gracious since the small beginnings of 1967; as we cast an eye back over the past 30 years, we have much for which to be thankful. In 1985 the Lord sovereignly allowed the Church of Christian Liberty to purchase the former Arlington Heights High School. Into this 210,000-sq. ft., 12-acre campus moved CLASS, the day school (CLA) then numbering 175, and the church.

The Church of Christian Liberty was founded by Dr. Lindstrom in 1965, while he was a seminary student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois. Over the years, under God’s hand, he has shaped the church into a self-consciously Reformed and Reconstructionist hotbed of Christian activism! From the beginning, 50% of the income of the church was earmarked for missions work, and consequently the Church of Christian Liberty has long-standing mission commitments in countries as diverse as Japan, Russia, the

Middle East, Mexico, Korea, Hungary, and South Africa, with schools opened in Moscow and Surinam.

In 1995, soon after the Gulf War, CLASS families and others responded magnificently to the call for medical aid for children in Iraq who were suffering under the inhuman embargo placed on that country by the U. N. In seeking to put Saddam Hussain under political pressure, the U. S. in effect declared total war on the children of that nation. Although the U. S. Department of Treasury threatened to imprison Dr. Lindstrom and levy a \$1.2 million fine for breaking its rules by preaching the Word of God and visiting homes to pray for the sick while on an earlier trip to Iraq, they eventually capitulated to the thousands of letters and phone calls from CLASS families, and gave permission for the 24,000 pounds of supplies to be shipped for distribution by the thriving indigenous Christian church.

“Operation Good Samaritan,” as it was dubbed, illustrates the commitment that CLASS families have continually demonstrated to Christian activism. This, we believe, is no surprise. The CLASS curriculum developed for each child from his California Achievement Test scores emphasizes the Reformed world and life view, the only theological position that consistently leads Christians into meaningful and victorious interaction with the culture. As a result of using our curriculum materials, which includes many texts written and developed “in house,” we have received testimonies of Mormons being saved, children’s lives being turned from despair to hope in Christ, and students and parents turning from Arminian to Reformed theology.

The highlight of every year on the Arlington Heights campus is graduation week. We now have so many graduates from both the on-campus Academy and CLASS that we hold graduations on separate days. From all across the country, and foreign countries too, eager graduating students and proud parents make their way to their alma mater. Not only are CLASS students provided with a full-service curriculum and grading service, they can also travel to the Academy to receive their diplomas which are recognized by all colleges and universities. What a privilege it is to see so many home school graduates (806 in the graduating class of 1997)! What an honor to have a part in preparing them to take their place in their home, in their church, and in society!

### **The Future**

So what of the future? We cannot rest, we cannot slow down, we cannot tarry on the road. As Cornelius Van Til anticipated, men are becoming increasingly epistemologically self-conscious. The shape of the arguments has changed, but the root of the problem remains—sin. Our educational establishment is embracing an ever more radical, anthropocentric self-consciousness. The truth of Romans 1 is being militantly manifested in the schools and institutions of higher learning on a daily basis. The question for Christians is

no longer whether Johnny or Jane can read, or say a prayer in school, but whether parents will continue to allow their children to fall prey to the modern Moloch who devours their children one neuron at a time, and corrupts their thinking and their bodies. (Witness the boy-boy and girl-girl "marriages" conducted by a kindergarten teacher recently, or the Illinois teacher who systematically abused a thirteen year-old student, with the willing connivance of a school nurse who gave the girl contraceptive shots, knowing she was under age.)

The history of the church tells us that reformation will be built generationally through godly education, among other things. Christian parents cannot evade the responsibility of abandoning the public education system and either sending their children to good Christian schools, or to home school. There is no other option that can be justified.

Across the nation, and to a lesser extent, the world, home school materials are becoming increasingly available. However, with this comes an increasingly great danger. As home schooling has gone "mainstream," publishers of every stripe are flooding the market with curricula that ranges from the outstanding to "out to lunch." Every theological viewpoint is represented, or misrepresented, and this presents a unique challenge for the home school parent. Too often parents "experiment" with unproved texts, not knowing until too late that their child is floundering, or is imbibing neo-orthodox theology. CLASS addresses this very problem by providing "out of the box" a personally designed curriculum for each child, using tried and proven texts that inculcate into a student Biblical principles from the Reformed perspective.

The challenge is before us. The Reformed community must press on in publishing quality texts that tell the truth about every subject. As Dr. Rushdoony has pointed out, however, we must not uncritically embrace "Classical Education." This basic form of education gave us many of the problems we have today, in terms of inculcating young minds with Greek and other pagan philosophies. A new way of educating our children must be developed that abandons, once and for all, the public school model without aping the pagan classicists, and truly educates the next

### "Biblionomy as a Reformed Presupposition"

Audiocassettes of Andrew Sandlin's lecture at Westminster Theological Seminary-West, with questions and answers, is now ready for mailing from Chalcedon. This lecture puts to rest the notion that theonomy is chiefly a matter of Biblical interpretation and argues, rather, that it springs from a consistently Reformed bibliology. It is a key statement in the theonomy debate. The total cost for both cassettes is \$8.00, including postage. Contact Chalcedon for your audiocassettes today.

generation of covenant children in the ways of the Lord.

Christian Liberty is committed to such a development. We believe, in God's grace, that the future belongs to those who are educated for it. Consequently, we now serve about 35,000 students in CLASS, and a minimum of 15,000 others through Christian Liberty Press, the publishing arm organized in the 1980s; and we have 800 students in the on-campus Academy. Additionally, we have enrolled about 100 students in Whitefield College, our four-year home school undergraduate program, organized in conjunction with Whitefield Theological Seminary, Lakeland, Florida. Our continuing mission is to provide inexpensive, quality education to those who desire to prepare themselves and their children for their part in taking godly dominion in every aspect of life and thought.

Dr. Lindstrom reclaimed the motto of the Jesuits for Church of Christian Liberty and its ministries: *Ad Majorem, Dei Gloriam*. May we all seek to educate the next generation, and ourselves, to ensure we do all things "to the greater glory of God."

For an information packet on the CLASS program, please call 1-800-read-121, or visit our web site at <http://www.homeschools.org>.

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*Quentin Johnston, married to Pam, and the father of Lewis, was born and raised in Edinburgh, Scotland. He was involved in the pastoral oversight of a church in Edinburgh for fifteen years before coming to the U. S. to attend Whitefield Theological Seminary, Lakeland, Florida, at the invitation of R. J. Rushdoony. On completion of his M.Div., he accepted his current position as Associate Pastor of the Church of Christian Liberty, Arlington Heights, IL.*

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# Four Generations of Lesson Plans

By David Gamble



A long time ago, some very wise men gave us this very good advice: "On the Lord's Day, after every one of the family apart, and the whole family together, have sought the Lord (in whose hands the preparation of men's hearts are) to fit them for the publick worship, and to bless to them the

publick ordinances, the master of the family ought to take care that all within his charge repair to the publick worship, that he and they may join with the rest of the congregation: and the publick worship being finished, after prayer, he should take an account what they have heard; and thereafter, to spend the rest of the time which they may spare in catechising, and in spiritual conferences upon the word of God: or else (going apart) they ought to apply themselves to reading, meditation, and secret prayer, that they may confirm and increase their communion with God: that so the profit which they found in the publick ordinances may be cherished and promoted, and they more edified unto eternal life."

## The Father's Pastoral Calling

The very wise men at Edinburgh who issued this *Directory for Family-Worship* in 1647 were endeavoring to accomplish many things, not the least of which was this: they were endeavoring to get Dad to open his Bible, and teach his family the Word of God. Dad ("the master of the family"?!?!—apparently the lofty principles of political correctness had not made it to the shores of Scotland by 1647) is to see that his family is prayerfully prepared for public worship on the Lord's Day. After public worship, Dad is to engage his little scholars in "spiritual conferences" based on the morning's Bible lesson, catechism lessons being memorized, or other topics from the word of God. The very wise men at Edinburgh understood that if this godly practice of study and prayer and praise could be established on the Lord's Day, it would be an easy thing to have these wonderful "spiritual conferences" on the other six days as well.

In the Bible, children are commanded to honor their fathers and mothers. It is a difficult thing for children to honor the God of their fathers if they do not know the God of their fathers. It is a difficult thing for children to

respect the convictions of their fathers if their fathers have never spoken of their convictions. It is a glorious thing, however, when fathers open their Bibles in the midst of their homes. It teaches the children that their fathers have a God. It teaches the children that the God of their fathers has spoken infallibly in a book called the Bible. It teaches the children that there is truth, eternal truth, in this universe. It teaches the children that Dad's authority in the home does not derive from the fact that Dad is bigger, but that Dad also is under authority, God's authority, and that God appoints Dad to be his messenger to this home. It teaches the children that they belong, not to the state or the other would-be messiahs of the day, but to God, and that their future is in his hands. And as instruction in God's eternal word takes place in the home, it is an easy thing for other godly instruction to take place as well. This is good news for parents and children and grandparents and all those who love God's truth; it is bad news for America's state-church, the government school, as it stumbles and bumbles its way, with all the grace and elegance of a three-legged brontosaurus, to its well-deserved demise.

## Sacrifice for the Covenant Seed

Those of us whose motto once was "Don't trust anyone over thirty" are now well past that particular milestone, and we have begun to realize that we are not nearly so clever as we once imagined, and that those who have gone before us are much brighter than we once recognized. The very good counsel of the very wise men of Edinburgh calls upon us to sacrifice our ease and comfort today for the sake of our children's good today and tomorrow. If we have never made a habit of Bible reading and prayer and intelligent conversation with our children, now is an excellent time to begin.

The Psalmist taught us that God established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded (not requested) the fathers (generation one) to make known to the children (generation two), that the generation to come (generation three, not yet born) should arise and declare them to their children (generation four), that they (the fourth generation) might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments (*Psa. 78:1-8*). Here is an amazing thing: the fourth generation setting its hope in God because of the faithful teaching of the first generation; great-grandchildren keeping the commandments of the God of their great-grandfathers. Perhaps many of us don't know what we will be doing

ten minutes from now; how can we think in terms of four generations of children who have yet to be born? It's an enormous task, an awesome responsibility; a man who would in faith pursue it must have an all-powerful, all-sufficient God who can do more than he could ask or think.

Long journeys can begin with little steps. So, Dad, what did you teach your great-grandchildren today?

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*David Gamble, a specialist in Christian education, is the teaching elder at Grace Covenant Church in San Diego. The Lord recently blessed David and his wife Stephanie with the seventh student in their home school, Sarah Hope.*

## **Eighth Grade Graduation Speech**

*By Nancy Grasmuck*



Have you ever wanted something so badly that you said you would do anything to get it? Perhaps when you were younger you begged your parents to get you that shining new bicycle in the shop window on Main Street? You promised that you would never ask for anything ever again. Well, that's

kind of how it is with God. In the Bible it says that he has glorious gifts for us if we'd only ask for them in prayer.

Tonight I'm going to talk about the importance of prayer. God specifically says in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 to pray without ceasing. Mr. Rushdoony, my sixth, seventh and eighth grade teacher, started the day with prayer, prayed before lunch and ended the day with prayer.

Tonight I'm also going to cover three of the major points in praying: requesting the favor itself, being specific in what you ask for, and having faith that your request will be granted.

Luke 11:9-13 says, "And I say unto you, ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and the door shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he asks a fish, will he give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

These four verses are saying that God has many gifts to give. These gifts are to be received only by asking God for them in prayer. When we pray, we should be specific in what we are asking for. Instead of saying, "Lord, help

me today," pray, "Lord, I have a test today. Please give me the ability to remember and apply all the information I have learned." When I was in the third, fourth, and fifth grades, before every test, my teacher, Mrs. Tolle, would lead us in a meaningful prayer asking God to keep all the stored knowledge in our minds so that we could be proud when we received our grades. In those three years of school, I almost always did excellently on my tests and quizzes.

Perhaps you prayed to God about something that is unnecessary yet desirable. You thought that God wouldn't grant your wish but that it wouldn't hurt to ask. God's answer will definitely be "no." There is a saying, "Blessed is the man who expects nothing, for he will not be disappointed." Hebrews 11:6 says that without faith it is impossible to please God, but that he rewards them that diligently seek him. You must believe and trust that God knows best and will give you what he knows is best for you, so when he says "no," we must thank him for doing that. Remember to always ask no matter what, be specific and have faith. God will always do his will.

I'd like to share a poem with you. From the first time I read this poem it was my favorite:

**"The Difference"** (author unknown)

I got up early one morning  
And rushed right into the day.  
I had so much to accomplish,  
That I didn't have time to pray.  
Problems just tumbled about me,  
And heavier came each task.  
"Why doesn't God help?" I wondered.  
He answered, "You didn't ask."  
I wanted to see joy and beauty,  
But the day toiled gray and bleak,  
I wondered why God didn't show me.  
He said, "But you didn't seek."  
I tried to come into God's presence;  
I used all my keys at the lock.

God gently and lovingly chided,  
“My child, you didn’t knock.”  
I woke early this morning,  
And paused before entering the day,  
I had so much to accomplish,  
That I had to take time to pray.

Before I end, I’d like to say a special thank you to my parents and my family. My parents for their financial sacrifice in sending me to a Christian school, and my family, especially those who have helped me study for my tests and especially Christa, Mrs. Toepfer, who has helped me numerous times to learn my Bible verses and catechism questions. Thank you so much. Being at this

school for the last nine years has certainly left many memories, and has provided me with a good Christian foundation to further my education.

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*Nancy Grasmuck graduated from Chalcedon Christian School in June, 1997. She attended Chalcedon Christian School for nine years, kindergarten through the eighth grade. Nancy is 14 and the daughter of Karen, the kindergarten/first grade teacher at Chalcedon Christian school, and Randy Grasmuck, the Calaveras County under-sheriff. Nancy is one of six children, all of whom have attended or are attending Chalcedon Christian School.*

## Letter on the Scottish Free Kirk’s Attack on Theonomy By Tim Harris

In the November issue, Rev. Gentry’s article, excellent in content, sets a new height to his legendary gentleness in his treatment of the Free Church of Scotland. I know that our leaders have been encouraging us not to be so judgmental of other bodies (e.g. Randy Booth, *Chalcedon Report* “Open Letter,” #385 pp. 17 ff.), but is there not an occasional danger on the other hand that sheep may not be warned away from wolves? The carnal double-mindedness in which the Free Church appears to be stuck is seen from internal evidences in their theonomy position paper, which may be viewed on the web at [www.freechurch.org](http://www.freechurch.org).

They let the cat out of the bag early on their horror at the thought that theonomy would abolish their beloved socialized medicine—the mere suggestion of which is to them an “outlandish notion” which would make it easy to write off theonomy as “the product of the fevered imagination of cranks, and not worth wasting time considering.” Then there is the “possible disastrous effect on our public profile if we are seen to tolerate such views.” Image is what these men are really about. Tut, tut, tut, they say; what will the world think of us now?

They claim the Confession; but the Westminster Larger Catechism on Ten Commandments already gives the lie to their peculiar twisting of the notion of the eternal moral law as “summarily comprehended” in the Ten Commandments, making it mean “exhaustively comprehended and identical to.”

Isn’t it odd that they shift back and forth between original intent of the authors, and “as interpreted by our church’s decree” as it suits them? Thus, to get the notion of “general equity,” they cite the usage of the phrase from

the Romans up to the time of the Assembly. But when it comes to the duties of the civil magistrate toward idolatry, etc., then the “Declaratory Act XII of 1846” is operative.

They say they believe in natural law. But then, why don’t they read and understand von Mises? Why are they mired in pre-Adam Smith (one of their own countrymen) yet willing to opine authoritatively on economics in an international forum? They make the old Siderian mistake in arguing from the premise that “Israel’s civil law prohibited the sale of land” (*Lev. 25:23*). From this they conclude that theonomy’s valuation of property rights, based on the eighth commandment and its explication, “demonstrates that theonomy has a right-wing political bias towards free-market economic conservatism.” Then, having concluded, however absurdly, that A causes B, they finish it out by inferring that A probably causes C and D as well: “is there not good grounds for believing that its views on crime and punishment are due, not to sound exegesis and theology, but to the same political bias?”

They know that they need some answer on the law question, but lacking any answer that satisfies, they suggest looking further into . . . Meredith Kline! They do not know what Kline is about; they have not yet discovered the fundamental incompatibility between Kline and men that they pretend to extol, like Van Til and Murray. But they have heard that Kline provides an intellectual antidote to theonomy, and that is good enough for them. They solemnly forbid theonomy to teachers of their church, but are willing to publicly point the way to someone they have not yet read, studied, or understood!

Is it not obvious that these men are just a bunch of slimy socialists that, in self-deception, have fooled themselves into thinking that their own carnal lust and self-righteousness is actually a love of the holy? (The communist friends that Rush recently described with

respect at least weren't pretending to be orthodox Presbyterians!)

It makes one wonder. Already a century and a half ago, Thornwell expressed exasperation at the Free Church's stupid communications re slavery: Does it reach a point where one says, "There is no hope for this group"?

POSITION PAPER No. 222

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## Rationalism and God

*By R. J. Rushdoony*

Rationalism is either indifferent or hostile to history, and some historians see history as irrational. This judgment is revealing, because for them all things are divided into either the rational or the irrational, as though the universe can be so divided. Reality, though, is not limited to these two categories, nor is rationality the criterion by which reality is to be judged.

The problem with rationalism is apparent in many scholars, and an example of it is Etienne Borne, a French Roman Catholic scholar. His study of *Atheism* is a curious one in that atheism is discussed in non-Biblical terms. There is thus no discussion of Psalm 14:1, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good." Psalm 14:1 tells us, *first*, that the fool is a vile person, the meaning of *nabal*. He is contemptible in his person and in his thinking. Second, the fool is a corrupt man whose works are abominable. For Borne, however, as a professor of philosophy, the atheist is not a fool but a thinker facing valid problems. Paul tells us, "the carnal mind is enmity against God: For it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (*Rom. 8:7*). Is the atheist a sinner in theology but an earnest and sincere doubter in philosophy? Can he be God's enemy, despising God's law, and yet a careful and unbiased reasoner in philosophy? Rationalism apparently lacks "common sense"!

Of Hegel, Borne wrote,

But Hegel did not do what he set out to do. He claimed to be writing a fifth gospel, that of pure reason, substituting the God of the philosophers and the scientists for the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, for the God felt in the heart. [Etienne Borne: *Atheism*, p. 44. New York, NY: Hawthorne Books, 1961]

This is as close as he comes to seeing the clear antithesis between rationalism and Christianity. Borne recognized that for men like Auguste Comte the death of God meant the freedom and true birth of reason (*ibid.*, p. 111). Borne, like modernist Protestantism, assumes the autonomy of reason as the critical judge of all things.

Now a curious fact accompanies all theories of the autonomy of reason as the judge of all things. Whether in the thinking of Auguste Comte, with his humanistic "church," or with Roman Catholicism, or modernist Protestantism, there must be a strong church because there is at best a very weak "God." For most humanists, their church is the state or the school.

Borne, in discussing St. Thomas Aquinas, noted,

But for him, the most scientific of theologians, the simple fact of atheism is itself sufficient to establish an important preliminary conclusion: God is not immediately knowable in and for himself, for if God were immediately evident there would be no atheists. A stricter philosophical argument confirms this commonsense inference. (*ibid.*, p. 21)

This is an amazing statement. Psalm 14:1 makes very clear that the atheist is a base and contemptible person. Psalm 19 tells us of the inescapable knowledge of God, for, as v. 1 declares, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." St. Paul in Romans 1:18-22 tells us that the knowledge of God is *inescapable knowledge* which men suppress in their unrighteousness, because they are evil. The Bible never argues for the existence of God because it is much more inescapable than the knowledge of the sun.

We must therefore insist, as against the rationalists, that the existence of God is not a matter for proof but the very ground for all proof and for all reason. To begin with rationalism and the "proofs" of God is to substitute an imaginary god for the living God.

But all too many theologians and philosophers by-pass the Bible to give us a god that satisfies the criteria of autonomous man and his rationality. They bypass the God of Scripture because he is totally alien to the god of reason. If man is ultimate, and if his reason is the arbiter of reality, a basic premise of rationalism, then man is the judge over all things, and no authority can be claimed for anything contrary to autonomous reason. There is a vast difference between reason under God and autonomous reason. But man is a creature of God, and he is not nor can be autonomous. Moreover, as a sinner, man has a

vested interest in making himself autonomous, and his reason the judge. Rather than facing the Judge, man claims to be his own judge! Autonomous man insists that the God of Scripture does not exist, and he offers the world a better god. The Bible, God's revelation, becomes an account of man's development in his awareness of being. The religious experiences of the prophets of old were supposedly colored by their cultural limitations, and

by their lack of scientific and philosophical maturity and knowledge.

Moreover, the rationalist will make no note of the noetic effects of sin. Man can make his own norms and standards, and these are best corrected by man, not by God.

All this means that the religion of the tempter, Genesis 3:5, is replacing the revelation of God Himself. Man prefers his own versions of revelation, and he is determined to be judge over God than to be judged by him.

## Random Notes, 77

*By R. J. Rushdoony*

1. In a little book of *Table Graces* published by Peter Pauper Press in 1986 are these two lovely ones:

I'd be as impolite a child  
As impolite could be.  
To eat and forget to say  
A thank you, Lord, to Thee.

I like this one very much to be said before grace:

No ordinary meat—a sacrament awaits us  
On our daily spread,  
For men are risking lives on sea and land  
That we may dwell in safety and be fed.

2. My father loved the dinner table, not because he enjoyed food, because he was indifferent to it, but for the table talk, with us or with visitors. Whether humor or serious discourse prevailed, all was welcome except for doom and gloom. Dinner table always meant an intellectual feast.

He was also very absent-minded. Dinner usually began with a very hot soup, and my mother would warn him of it. And yet, always, he would take a hot spoonful without thinking and burn his mouth, exclaiming to my mother, "Why didn't you warn me?" She would answer, "I will next time," and we children would laugh to his puzzlement!

3. The maliciousness and willful blindness of sinners continues to amaze me. Again and again, I have written that theonomy, or Christian Reconstruction, does not believe in a top-down society because we believe in conversion, not coercion, in regeneration, not revolution; but it makes no difference to these critics, no matter how we repeat it.

Again, Andrew Sandlin in a lecture at a seminary had a faculty member relay a "question" through a student which accused us of being "anti-evangelical," of having no concern for the salvation of peoples, only their control. Now any issue of the *Chalcedon Report* reports on our interest or activity in a variety of missionary and evangelical activities all over the world, in Africa, Asia, Latin America, at home, everywhere. Such malicious

blindness is startling.

4. Christmas comes often to mind all through the year because of my habit of saving the most lovely Christmas cards, and those with thoughtful notes, to use as bookmarks, sometimes for years. I picked up a book now to cite in my writings and found in it a card and note from sometime in the 1960s, and it left me with grateful memories.

Age does bring back memories, and this is good. At 82, I have many treasured memories, and many happy expectations of time and eternity. I like very much the Biblical description of death as being gathered to one's fathers. To see those venerable saints of old is an exciting thought.

Meanwhile, we are looking forward to our family reunion at my brother Haig's home. (He and his amazing and wonderful wife Vula usually host from c. 45 to 80 of us.) Haig and Vula usually head up our Macedonian Outreach Missionary work. To give you an idea of their character, for Christmas 1997 Vula prepared a banquet and invited into their home c. 40-50 people, refugees and others.

My father had the same old country sense of hospitality. He readily and freely invited people for dinner, or, with out-of-town people, to stay with us, and my mother never complained about all the extra mouths to feed on limited funds. The children were expected to help, especially with washing and drying the dishes. How many, many remarkable tales I heard from people from all corners of the world! To this day, any reference to some of these out-of-the-way peoples, such as the magnificent Lors, brings marvelous memories to mind.

5. Words have always interested me, their use and histories. Take, for example, our English word *priest*; it is a corruption of *presbyter*. In Puritan America, churches were seen as God's family on earth: the pastor was called father, and the members brothers and sisters. (If you remember Melville's *Moby Dick*, the old Puritan preacher is called Father Maple.) With the Roman Catholic migration to the U. S., a change took place. Roman Catholic priests were called Mr. or Don or its equivalent in European languages. Roman Catholics in the U. S. adopted the American usage to call their priests "father," whereupon Protestants dropped the term. Baptists especially continued the usage of

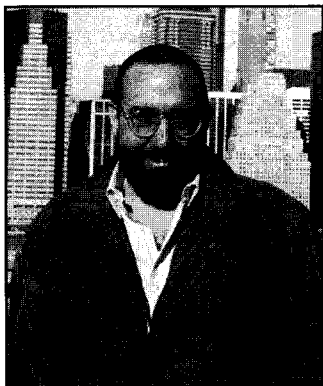
“brothers” and “sisters” for members. In the Presbyterian circles, however, the older usage prevails in legal language in that members of a presbytery are “fathers” (pastors) and “brethren” (lay elders).

7. An important saying of Hillel was this: “Where much law is, there is much living.” Without law, it follows, little life is possible.

8. A great proposition of the faith as set forth by Wyclife and the Lollards was simply this: “No dominion without grace.” Domination and tyranny go hand in hand with sin, but dominion presupposed God’s law and grace. The great evil of the modern age is its continuing attempts to gain dominion without grace. The results are uniformly evil.

## Covenant Consciousness

By Steve M. Schlissel



*A*m *Yisroel chai*, the people of Israel live, is an oft-recited dictum, an anthem, of the Jews.

A small group of Orthodox rabbis made the news recently when they held a press conference to declare that the Orthodox *alone* are true Jews. It was the fact that they would say such a thing that made it

news. For, traditionally, every Jew looks on every other Jew as equally Jewish, though not equally faithful. The Orthodox have always been the default definers of Jewish ways and practices, but those deviating from Orthodox practice were never regarded as non-Jewish, only as non-observant. That is, there was a comprehensive set of obligations incumbent upon them as Jews, whether or not they met those obligations.

This view of things puts the covenant before the people, and the people before the individual. *Am Yisroel chai*. And every Jew is born and raised to view himself as part of that people. Not for an instant may a Jew think of himself as having meaning, value, or even existence, apart from the called community. Edith Schaeffer might call this a way of seeing; Billy Joel would call it a state of mind; I call it covenant consciousness, and it is the missing element in today’s Christian world.

This Jewish “way of seeing” involves three things which appear (some would say supernaturally) in the psyche of every Jew. One, the primacy of the covenant. It is the covenant which gave birth to you, not vice versa. You are a product of the promise and grace of God. The covenant he made with our ancestors has now come down to you. The covenant came first; therefore, it comes first.

Second, that covenant means there is a calling upon you, as there is upon every other covenant descendant. That calling is all-embracing and comprehensive. You

may never escape that calling. Whether you obey it and abide in it, or resist it, deny it or leave it, it is that which God has placed upon you as an objective obligation, telling you what you must believe and what you must do. This is sealed forever in your circumcision. When a non-observant Jew returns to honor his long-neglected covenant obligations, he is given an honored title: *baal teshuvah*, or, master of repentance. He has returned to that calling which always stood outside and above him.

Third, you cannot fulfill this calling or honor this covenant apart from the community. It is not you as an absolute individual whom God has called, but you as a member of a people. *Am Yisroel chai*.

This consciousness stands in rather stunning contrast to the hyper-individualism which characterizes the church at the close of the twentieth century. One might even say that we Christians have managed to reverse the order: First, me and God (my decision is the critical factor). Second, a church (if I choose to join one, which I might or might not regularly attend). Third, a word from God, a Law-Word. Today, it’s every man for himself.

Rather than seeing the church as the covenant community, we tend to see it as a collection of individuals who have done God the great service of deciding to believe in Jesus. Is it any wonder that the church is virtually impotent in 1998? We have lost even the ability to say “We.” Have you ever noticed that the media report the views of every conceivable segment of our society as those of a community, every segment, that is, except the Christian. “A spokesman (“spokesman”?) for the gay community said . . .”; “The science community responded with . . .”; “The African-American community is up in arms over . . .”; “The Polish community mourns the loss of . . .”, and so on. Listen as you might, you will never hear, “The Christian community [insert anything here].”

This is not the fault of the media so much as it is our own, which makes it all the more a travesty. For of all discernible groups on earth, Christians are to be those who have transcended every other principle of unity, having discovered a greater unity in Christ. Of all people, we should be the very model of community. The Pentecost miracle was designed to demonstrate that the

Babel curse was being reversed, and henceforth men would find “reunification” in declaring the wonderful works of God (every Christian’s pleasant pastime). Christ came to destroy the dividing wall of hostility between Jew and Gentile, to make one new man out of the two. How is it we have managed to fragment to the point where we cannot identify ourselves as a Christian community, while the Jew is inescapably bound up to a view of himself as part of a people?

The answers to this question are thick and complex. Surely a principal reason is that we Christians are a people convinced that it is adherence to truth which most genuinely unites. Once creed is placed above breed, unity is less easily manifested than when the standard is a skin color, a nationality or a particular behavior. But there are other factors which come into play.

After the Enlightenment in the Christian West, God was effectively made the ultimate “Outsider,” assigned a place with the unknowable. He may or may not exist, but if he does he can not communicate with us. In one swoop, the word of God, as that which intelligently interprets reality, and the God of the word, who is the source of reality, were eliminated from the chessboard. It was thence left to the individual players on the board to vie for the right or power to impose meaning on life and the universe. The Age of Romanticism completed the rejection of the objective in favor of the subjective. Since then, we are allowed only to offer views which are “true for me.”

Rising alongside secular subjectivism was religious subjectivism. Revivalism in the United States and elsewhere marked the triumph of the view that only they are Christian who have had some more or less remarkable (subjective) experience. Unity was henceforth to be discovered in common experience, not in common adherence to objective truth. Secularists were/are all too happy to endorse this view of religion, for nothing will more surely keep God’s claims out of the public square than the common conviction that his revelational authority is to be restricted to the individual soul. “Everyone’s entitled to his opinions.” Religion thus becomes a matter of mere personal preference.

As the teeth of Christianity were being extracted by Western society, the church assisted in the procedure. As alien starting points of “truth” were advanced, the church largely capitulated. Evolutionism was opposed in the most meager manner before gaining wholesale acceptance, and egalitarianism was adopted as if it was what we’ve always believed.

Another major factor impacting our consciousness has been the concept of “true church” (as opposed to faithful, or healthy, churches). This notion, that there is one true church, has too often been interpreted to mean one true denomination.

Is there any legitimate hope that Christians can ever be a community? Yes, indeed, there is, and it is necessary that we begin working toward that end by thinking in terms of covenant. The covenant idea in Scripture sweeps us into the realm of the manageable and the objective, in terms of which the subjective then has value and meaning.

It delivers us from morbid introspectionism, on the one hand, and presumptuousness on the other. It guards us from relativism, on the one side, and arrogance, on the other. The covenant is the key by which we might be enabled to think of ourselves as a Christian community, with varying expressions of the covenant found therein, some more, some less, faithful.

Such thinking begins not with subjective experience, but rather with the objective covenant calling. Every person lawfully baptized has the same objective calling placed upon him. This is the heart of the matter and must be the starting point of our thinking about Christianity and the church. For calling, you see, is God-initiated. When an adult convert or a covenant child is baptized, each is brought to a meeting with Christ wherein the Name of the Triune God is placed upon him, and at which time he is formally brought under the all-encompassing obligations of the covenant: to believe all God has said and to obey all God has commanded.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that this obligation rests upon all covenant members alike, for this is the very foundation of discipleship, yea, the foundation of all correct preaching. Klaas Schilder has well said that “in the arena of preaching, the covenant idea has reserved all seats” and that all preaching “in fact has to take its starting point in the covenant.”

All men outside Christ stand with Adam under God’s wrath and curse in the broken covenant of creation. To them we declare God’s command that they repent and come into the New Covenant, the new relationship established by God in Christ, in whom all promises are yea and amen. All men who are lawfully baptized in the Triune Name are in the New Covenant, the new relationship opened up by God through Christ.

This does not mean that all are elect, in the narrow sense, or that all are saved, in the subjective sense. All, however, are under the objective requirements of the new Covenant. It is absolutely essential that there be an objective ground to the covenant, else all is lost from the start. For who can speak infallibly about the election or regeneration of any other? The secret things belong to the Lord, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children, that we might believe all he has revealed, and that we might obey all that he has commanded.

Proper thinking about Christianity, therefore, must start with the covenant. To take our starting point in election is to begin with the unknowable; to take our starting point in regeneration is to begin with the unproveable. But to take our starting point in the covenant is to begin on the most solid of all ground. For in the covenant, God’s conditions of favor, and God’s threats of punishment, may be freely declared, without fear of contradiction. Covenant thinking begins with God’s requirements, not with my experience.

It is not surprising that those who take their starting point in election stumble at the idea of conditions. Paul’s “if” statements in the New Testament pose insurmountable difficulties for them. “He has now reconciled you . . . if you continue in the faith” (*Col. 1:22-23*). But here Paul

merely echoes his Savior, who had said “to those Jews who had believed Him, ‘If you abide in my word, then you are truly My disciples’” (*Jn. 8:31*). The condition is genuine. If you continue, you’ll inherit what is promised. If you do not, you will inherit what is threatened. For the doctrine of election is not revealed to obviate the covenant, but to assure us that those who do continue, do so because of the determination and power of God himself, not because of any goodness or merit inherent in themselves. Election establishes grace, not license, and the covenant is the guardian of grace and righteousness.

If this be so, then we can see that in the New Testament era we have circumstances quite analogous to those in the Old Testament. We have a people of God, objectively considered, a New Israel, yet a people very uneven in their responses to God’s calling. Some believe and obey blamelessly, as did Elizabeth and Zacharias (*Lk. 1:5,6*). Some deny the sovereign Lord who bought them (*2 Pet. 2:1*). And there are those who occupy every point between the poles.

The Westminster Confession is undoubtedly correct when it says of the elect and the reprobate: “These angels and men, thus predestinated, and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.” But just who occupies these categories is known to God alone. We are called to administer God’s covenant, not God’s election. And in the covenant there is movement, both in and out.

This way of seeing, this state of mind, this covenant consciousness, means that we recognize that—yes, even in the New Covenant—there are covenant keepers and covenant breakers, those who carefully observe the precepts and doctrines of our Lord, and those who do not. We cannot with certainty determine if “professors” are or are not elect; we certainly must observe if they are or are not faithful (*1 Cor. 5:9-13*).

Down to a case: The Roman Catholic Church is properly regarded as the New Covenant equivalent of Northern Israel which, compared to Judah, had twice the population and nearly three times the territory. But she was unfaithful. God sent prophets to her again and again, but the Northern Kingdom loved idolatry and remained apostate. Yet there were God-fearers dwelling there. Similarly, as long as the Roman Church continues to exist, she may be regarded as Northern Israel, in covenant, but daily breaking the terms of that covenant, standing in need of being called to repentance according to the terms of that covenant. (Sadly, Rome has been joined in her infidelity by perhaps the greater portion of North American mainstream Protestantism.)

Those Reformed churches which have held fast to the historic creeds and confessions must learn to think of themselves, not as the sole heirs of the covenant, but as the definers of correct covenant faith and practice. As such, they properly call upon all professing Christians to become Reformed, for the objective terms of the covenant are most diligently complied with in our communions.

We must always be open to correcting our faith and practice if it is shown to be less than God requires, or if

it presumes to ask more than God demands. Until now, however, no objector has succeeded in demonstrating that the Reformed Faith, as a whole, is anything other than thoroughly God-honoring and Biblical. Thus, with clear conscience, we call all to come inhabit its halls and precincts. Jerusalem is a fair city. All the while we recognize that there are other cities in Judah, and yes, there is even a Northern Kingdom. We look forward to their repentance and the cessation of their idolatries, so provocative to our God.

In the meantime, we think it is judicious to borrow a frame of mind from the Jews. When I was a (non-observant) boy, I was riding my bike on a high holiday. It didn’t occur to me that this was contrary to Jewish practice; I was just a dumb kid with a day off from public school. I rode from Bensonhurst (where all kinds of Jews lived) over into Boro Park (where two kinds of Jews live: Orthodox and ultra-orthodox). Just about everyone in Boro Park was in *shul* (synagogue). But one observant Jew on his way to *shul* taught me a lesson in covenant I will never forget, and that without a word. An imposing figure, he was tall and wide, dressed in a white shirt with a black suit and a black silken robe, a long beard and *payoth* (side curls, as per their reading of *Lev. 19:27*). When he saw me, a Jewish boy (the face, even then, was a dead giveaway), riding through a Jewish community on one of our holy days, he stopped still in the middle of the street. With a pained look upon his face, he held out his hands, palms up and out toward me, and shouted with his eyes alone, “How could you? You’re a Jew. What are you doing desecrating the day God gave us?” I was not my own.

The most orthodox Jews do not regard themselves as the only Jews, just the most observant. They long for others to join them in covenant faithfulness. So, too, in the New Israel, there are covenant observers, and (alas) covenant breakers, but also a great middle. We can’t repair the walls until we know where they are. We cannot say *am Yisroel chai* until we know who the people of the New Israel are, and what God requires of them. Then we Reformed can look at them, square in the eye, and plead with them to become masters of repentance.

We hope to offer more on covenant thinking soon.

P. S. Those who send gifts of \$150 or more to Messiah’s Congregation, 2662 East 24th St., Brooklyn, NY 11235, may request a ten-tape set of sermons on The Lord’s Prayer, delivered by moi in Messiah’s pulpit. Simply ask for the tapes when you write. Three of the messages (“The Community of the Forgiven,” “Kids Are ‘Us,’” and “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly”) deal with the subject of covenant consciousness.

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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 24 years, Jeanne, and their five children.*



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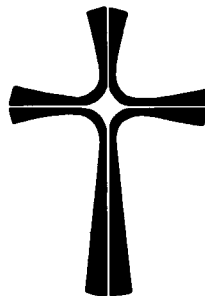
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*The Chalcedon Report is published monthly and is sent to all who request it.*

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**CHALCEDON**

P.O. Box 158  
Vallecito, CA 95251

Phone (209)736-4365 or Fax (209)736-0536  
e-mail: [chaloffi@goldrush.com](mailto:chaloffi@goldrush.com); <http://www.chalcedon.edu>