

CHALCEDON

Report

No. 411, OCTOBER 1999

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INTERNATIONALISM



R. J. Rushdoony on
Non-Interventionism as a
Constitutional Principle

Andrew Sandlin on
the Tyranny of
Political Internationalism

Herb Titus on
"The Clinton Doctrine"

plus . . .

Peter Hammond on
the Amateurization
of Missions

Joseph Braswell on
Ligonier Apologetics

Craig Dumont on
"I Have a Problem,
I Don't Want to Change,
Please Help,"
or,
Why I Don't Waste
My Time Counseling

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Worldview Student Conference**

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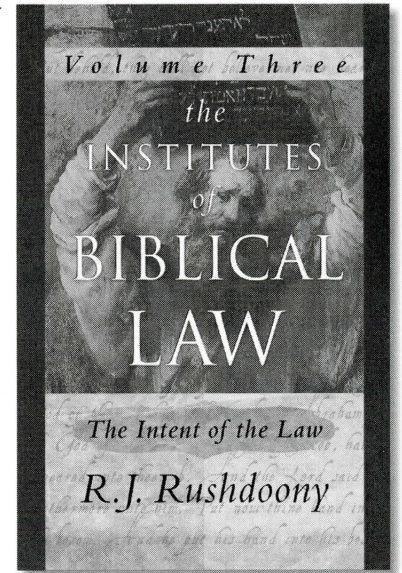
Rousas John Rushdoony's

The Institutes of Biblical Law, Vol. III: *The Intent of the Law*

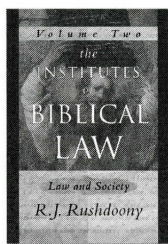
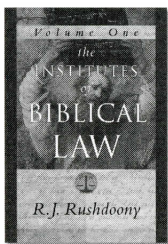
“God’s law is much more than a legal code; it is a covenantal law. It establishes a personal relationship between God and man.” The author first summarizes the case laws. Rushdoony tenderly illustrates how the law is for our good, and makes clear the difference between the sacrificial laws and those that apply today. The second section vividly shows the practical implications of the law. The examples catch the reader’s attention; the author clearly has had much experience discussing God’s law. The third section shows that would-be challengers to God’s law produce poison and death. Only God’s law can claim to express God’s “covenant grace in helping us.”

The *Intent of the Law* is third in a series: Volume I describes the law in terms of the Ten Commandments. Volume II is subtitled *Law and Society*. Volume III illustrates that God’s grace extends to all of the reader’s life,

including hot-button issues that make moderns wince. It illustrates how the law applies to our lives and the lives of those around us and the freedom it brings. The book prepares the reader to think Biblically about modern situations and to share Biblical perspectives with those around him. The practical applications and the beauty of presentation make the book an ideal gift for someone unfamiliar with God’s law. The short chapters and gentle presentation are suitable for study groups or homeschoolers. Both the author’s love for God and God’s tender mercy towards us shine throughout the book.



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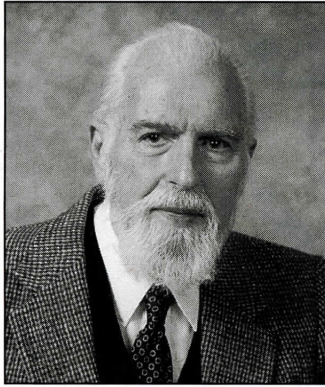
A Monthly Report Dealing With the Relationship of Christian Faith to the World

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Twentieth-Century Plans of Salvation

By Rev. R. J. Rushdoony



Over the centuries, a variety of plans of salvation have governed men. The most common in antiquity has been salvation by politics, as in ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome. The classic statement of this salvation was Plato's *Republic*.

In the twentieth-century, this plan was in full force, and its early prophet was Woodrow Wilson, with his dream of world salvation by means of a world state. Wilson's work was the prelude to the greatest growth of imperialism.

Another twentieth-century plan of salvation has been education, statist humanistic education, and its prophet was John Dewey. Statist education, he believed, would remake man and create the true humanistic society. World peace and prosperity would prevail.

Other plans of salvation were also in evidence. After prophets Freud and Jung, men would be remade and would learn to live in peace with their sin. Wilson and Dewey hoped to overcome evil by their philosophies, whereas Freud and Jung saw redefining man and sin as the solution.

Other plans of salvation have also been in evidence. As the twenty-first century looms, all are clearly failures. They cannot intelligently nor morally define good or evil, nor successfully change men into a new creation.

The twenty-first century thus begins with a great challenge and a heritage of moral failure, a failure which time and history have not solved, but only magnified. There is no evidence of a resort to the Biblical solution. Salvation is not by human action but by God's grace. Statist grace is, however, what man wants. Every session of a

congress or parliament sees billions appropriated as the manifestation of statist grace. Grace is now essentially monetary, rather than religious.

The world has become catholic or universal in its claims while the church has become provincial. It is time for a change.

Religions of state, school, money, or the like are proven failures and will be increasingly more so. The world rejects salvation in rejecting Christ.

We need to be speaking openly and freely about false plans of salvation if the twenty-first century is not to be a continuation of the twentieth-century, an age of death and tyranny.

It is an error of the twentieth-century to limit salvation to man's soul. It means that and much, much more. It is the regeneration also of every area of life and thought by the power of God and the submission of all things to the Triune God and His law-word. The world has become *catholic* or universal in its claims while the church has become *provincial*. It is time for a change.

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.

The *Chalcedon Report*, published monthly by Chalcedon, a tax-exempt Christian foundation, is sent to all who request it. All editorial correspondence should be sent to the editor-in-chief, 1385 Roaring Camp Drive, Murphys, CA 95247. Laser-print hard copy and electronic disk submissions firmly encouraged. All submissions subject to editorial revision. email: sburns@goldrush.com. The editors are not responsible for the return of unsolicited manuscripts, which become the property of Chalcedon unless other arrangements are made. Opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of Chalcedon. It provides a forum for views in accord with a relevant, active, historic Christianity, though those views may on occasion differ somewhat from Chalcedon's and from each other. Chalcedon depends on the contributions of its readers, and all gifts to Chalcedon are tax-deductible. ©1999 Chalcedon. All rights reserved. Permission to reprint granted on written request only. Editorial Board: Dr. R. J. Rushdoony, Chairman of the Board and Publisher; Rev. Mark R. Rushdoony, President; Rev. Andrew Sandlin, Executive Director and Editor; Walter Lindsay, Assistant Editor; Susan Burns, Managing Editor and Administrative Assistant. Chalcedon, P. O. Box 158, Vallecito, CA 95251. Telephone Circulation (8 a.m.-4 p.m., Pacific) (209)736-4365 or Fax (209)736-0536; email: chaloffi@goldrush.com; http://www.chalcedon.edu; Circulation: Rebecca Rouse. Printing: W. W. Hobbs Printing, Ltd.

Cover design by Chris Ortiz/The Creation Group. Call (919)844-3688.

The Tyranny of Political Internationalism

By Rev. Andrew Sandlin

Ancient Political Localism and Internationalism



The ancient world empires (Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome) were all “internationalist” in scope, if not in rationale. All were dedicated to encompassing and assimilating other nations, making them tributaries and, in many cases, reorienting their populace to the religion and social distinctives of

the empire. “The ancient dream of one world characterized Babel, Assyria, and Chaldea,” Rushdoony writes, “and nations were broken, populations shuffled to break down national ties, and young men of conquered countries trained to high office to help hold the loyalties of their people and give a cosmopolitan and international character to the Empire. The diversity of leadership and the shifting of populations would lead to a ‘melting pot’ society whereby the unified world concept would take root” (Rousas John Rushdoony, *Thy Kingdom Come* [Fairfax, VA (1970), 1978], 7). This has been the program of political internationalism for several millennia.

As a “tribal” commonwealth, the ancient Hebrew state was distinctly *anti*-internationalist. Its divinely revealed objective was not the domination of other nations, but the worship of and obedience to God within a specifically circumscribed territory. It was to be a light to the other nations, who would recognize in Israel God’s sovereignly chosen people to whom He had committed His glorious law (*Dt. 4:6-8*). The Hebrew commonwealth and its law structure was a highly decentralized political system. God’s plan for Israel’s political dimension was strong household authority with an appellate system consisting of representatives chosen from families (*Dt. 1:13-18*). When Israel sinfully coveted a king like the pagan nations about them, God required Samuel to remonstrate with His covenant people, reminding them of the severe cost of state bureaucracy (*1 Sam. 8:1-22*). God’s pattern for the Hebrew commonwealth was *localism*—*anti*-internationalist by its very nature.

The Roots of Modern Political Internationalism

The political course of the modern world is the outworking of ancient internationalism. The French

Revolution was one of the earliest acts of mass political violence justified by abstract principles: liberty, fraternity, and equality. The ideology of the French Revolution prohibited the limitation of its principles to France; the goal of every modern revolution is the violent recasting of every society possible on the basis of abstract principles. These principles spring almost exclusively from the European Enlightenment and its militantly secular program of creating a godless heaven on earth. When given free reign, it always produces a Satanic hell on earth. The communist states of the twentieth century are prime examples. We of the West should not be too smug in this recognition, because modern Western democracies are no less dedicated to this secular ideology—they are simply dedicated to a more benevolent version of it. Their goal is the secularization of the world, usually by the instrument of externally peaceful but nonetheless strong-armed politics, and a relentless propaganda. Nonetheless, as NATO’s recent war against Serbia proved, democratic internationalists are no less averse than communistic internationalists to employing political violence in a quest for world domination. The assaults on a sovereign nation’s territory are almost always justified with high-sounding phrases like “making the world safe for democracy,” “protecting universal human rights” or “opposing ethnic cleansing.” Political internationalists are hypocrites, however. The same political internationalists who savagely bombed Serbia sat idly by while defenseless Rwandans were massacred to the tune of a thousand a day in 1994. The leaders of Western democracy suffer from selective moral outrage. Clearly, some other motive than “protecting universal human rights” is at work here.

Evil Political Alliances

Further, with the stated objective of “protecting universal human rights,” political internationalists are often quite willing to blatantly violate God’s law prohibiting alliances with godless nations (*Ex. 23:28-33*). In World War II, the United States created an alliance with the Soviet Union against Hitler, and in the Gulf War she created an alliance with Kuwait (and other Islamic nations) against Iraq. In the latter case, she did this despite the fact that there is more freedom for Christianity in Iraq than in most other Islamic regimes, and despite the fact that this alliance meant that the United States would likely be maneuvered into assaulting Christian churches in her assault on Iraq—and this is precisely what happened. From a Biblical standpoint, nations are limited to jurisdiction within their own borders.

The Validity of Private Economic Internationalism

This has nothing to do with private trade. The Bible nowhere prohibits peaceful trade across borders. In other words, political localism does not prohibit private economic internationalism. *Political* economic internationalism is another matter. When politics uses the powers of economic coercion (allotments of money confiscated by and for the state, *i. e.*, taxes) to prop up (or tear down) other sovereign states (like the United States' "Mexico bailout"), it has stepped into territory the Bible prohibits. And make no mistake: *nations that intervene with other sovereign nations economically will not hesitate to interfere with them militarily*. Private economic internationalism liberates the societies involved in trade; political economic internationalism *enslaves* the societies whose civil governments meddle in economics.

The Secular New World Order

Secular Western democrats in this century from Teddy Roosevelt to Woodrow Wilson to George Bush to Bill Clinton are dedicated to a New World Order. At the end of the recent war against Serbia, British Prime Minister and Bill Clinton wannabe, Tony Blair, exulted in *Newsweek* ("A New Moral Crusade," June 14, 1999, 35):

The consequences of our success in Kosovo will not be felt in Europe alone. As I said in *Newsweek* in April, we need to enter a new millennium where dictators know that they cannot get away with ethnic cleansing or repress their peoples with impunity. Imagine how Saddam will react to this victory; imagine the reactions of other dictators who are tempted to resolve their political problems by terrorizing their own people or attacking their neighbors. They will now know that when we say we will act, we are serious. We now have a chance to build a new internationalism based on values and the rule of law.

In other words, "We are laying down a police-state ultimatum to all you rogue nations out there: fall into line with our politically internationalist pipe dreams, or we'll bomb you into submission." This implies, among other things, the erasure of localism, sectionalism, and nationalism, and the installation of a one-world civil government (subordinating all other governments); a one-world court; a one-world banking system; and, eventually, a one-world police state. Interestingly, these objectives are not fundamentally different from those of Marxism. Marxist Communism and Western Democracy are simply rival versions of political internationalism. Both are relentlessly dedicated to world domination—by political violence, if necessary.

Many citizens of Western democracies are not political internationalists at heart, but are easily lured into the mentality of political internationalism by elitist politicians intent on nothing less than a worldwide power grab. The

political instability of other sovereign nations, the suffering of her citizens at the hands of a totalitarian regime, the poverty resulting from foolish statist economic policies—all of these seem like good warrant for political invasion of one sort or the other. *But they are not.*

The Limited Role of Civil Government

The Bible is quite clear about the role of civil government. The civil magistrate is to suppress and punish external evil in terms defined strictly by God's law; thereby, he protects the judicially innocent (*Rom. 13:1-7*). For most practical purposes, this reduces to the early American trio of the defense of life, liberty, and property (not to be equated with the French Revolution's liberty, fraternity, and equality). Implied in the defense of this trio is a defense from foreign invasion—the protection of borders. None of this includes the commitment to invade any other nation's borders—even to eliminate "human rights abuses." Tyranny committed by the civil magistrate (like all tyranny) is evil, but invasions of sovereign nations by other sovereign nations bent on correcting "human rights abuses" usually create a new (and often greater) tyranny all their own. The Biblical approach, in terms of modern language, is to be "hawks" when protecting one's own borders and "doves" when penetrating another nation's borders. This is sometimes called isolationism. It is not. It is non-interventionism.

The Necessity of Religious Internationalism

While the Bible forbids political internationalism, it most emphatically advocates and requires religious internationalism. Christianity is a catholic (or universal) religion, and the church of Jesus Christ is an international phenomenon. In fact, the only substantive distinctive between the older and newer administrations of the covenant of grace is the internationalization or globalization of God's covenant plan. That plan no longer concentrates on ethnic Israel, but on the international church of Jesus Christ. This means, among other things, that Christians are required to spring into action to defend their oppressed and persecuted brethren throughout the world (*1 Cor. 12:26*). To oppose internationalist political involvement is not to deny internationalist religious involvement. In the recent war in Serbia, for example, numerous Christian ministries (for example, Macedonian Outreach) responded to the refugees and victims of war (and especially the victims of the savage NATO bombing). Further, the church is urged to pray diligent imprecations (godly curses) against tyrants in Belgrade—and in Washington, D. C. (*Rev. 6:9-11*). Christians are required to assist their brothers (and even their non-brothers (*Lk. 10:25-37*) in every way appropriate to their own calling and capacity. They are required to press the claims and dominion of their sovereign King, Jesus Christ, throughout the world with the goal of making disciples of all nations and subordinating them to Christ's authority

(Mt. 28:18-20). Thus, *the proper internationalist response to political tyranny is not military invasion, but religious invasion.*

This has nothing whatever to do with political internationalism. Each nation brought under the authority of Christ and His law retains its own distinctives and mores. Religious internationalism does not entail political uniformity—in fact, it virtually demands political *diversity*. The only One World Government the Bible knows anything about is the government of Jesus Christ (Is. 6:9).

Political internationalism, whether Marxist or Western, is almost always an assault on *Christian* internationalism. It is an attack on the sovereign, universal claims of Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures. Tyrants lust to control

the world politically in order to resist Christ's control of it religiously (Ps. 2). In other words, modern politicians want to play God. But God has no rivals—and the glorious prophecy of Daniel 2 is that the single final world empire is that of Jesus Christ—a highly decentralized political order anchored in a highly “centralized” religious order—centralized in the Person of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

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.

CONFERENCES FOR THE YEAR 2000

Chalcedon is in the process of developing our conference schedule for next year.

We would appreciate suggestions from our readers and supporters.

If you would be interested in having a Chalcedon conference in your area, please contact our administrative assistant, Susan Burns, at (209)532-7674 or sburns@goldrush.com.

We will use your input in deciding topics for the conferences as well as locations for the conferences.

Thanks for your support and for your help!

Chalcedon Vision Statement

Chalcedon labors to articulate in the clearest possible terms a distinctly Christian and explicitly Biblical solution to the prevalent evils of the modern world. Our objective is nothing short of setting forth the vision and program for rebuilding the theological fortifications of Christian civilization. These fortifications have been eroded by the forces of humanism and secularism over the past three centuries. We are not committed, though, merely to reproducing a glorious Christian past. We work to press the claims of historic Christianity as the Biblical pattern of life everywhere. We work for godly cultural change across the entire spectrum of life. We strive to accomplish this objective by two principal methods.

First, Chalcedon is committed to recovering the intellectual foundations of Christian civilization. We do this in two main ways, negatively, we expose the bankruptcy of all non-Christian (and alleged but compromising Christian) systems of thought and practices. Positively, we propose an explicitly Biblical system of thought and action as the exclusive basis for civilization. Only by restoring the Christian Faith and Biblical law as the standard of all of life can Christians hope to re-establish Christian civilizations.

Second, Chalcedon is dedicated to providing the tools for rebuilding this Christian civilization. We work to assist individuals, families, and institutions by offering explicitly Biblical alternatives to anti-Christian ideas and practices. In the way we guide Christians in the task of governing their own spheres of life in terms of the entire Bible: in family, church, school, vocation, arts, economics, business, media, the state, and all other areas of modern life.

We believe that the source of godly change is regeneration by the Holy Spirit, not revolution by the violence of man. As God regenerates more and more individuals, and as they reorient their lives and areas of personal influence to the teachings of the Bible, He employs them to advance His kingdom and establish Christian civilization. We believe that God's law is the divine pattern of sanctification in every area of life, but it is not the means of justification; man is saved by grace, not by law. The role of every earthly government—including family government, church government, school government, vocational government, and civil government—is to submit to Biblical law. No government in any form can make men Christians or truly obedient; this is the work of God's sovereign grace. Much less should civil government try to impose Biblical law on an unbelieving society. Biblical law cannot be imposed; it must be embraced.

A guiding principle of Chalcedon, in fact, is its devotion to maximum individual freedom under God's law. Chalcedon derives its name from the great ecclesiastical council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451), which produced the crucial Christological definition of Jesus Christ as God of very God and Man of very man, a formula directly challenging every false claim of divinity by any human institution: state, church, cult, schools, or human assembly. Christ alone is both God and man, the unique link between heaven and earth. All human power is therefore derivative; only Christ may announce that “All power [authority] is given unto me in heaven and earth” (Matthew 28:18). Historically, therefore, the Chalcedonian creed is the foundation of Western liberty, setting limits on all authoritarian human institutions by acknowledging the validity of the claims of the One who is the source of all human freedom (Galatians 5:1). Consequently, we oppose top-heavy, authoritarian systems of government which are, by definition, non-Christian. We advocate instead a series of independent but cooperative institutions and a highly decentralized social order.

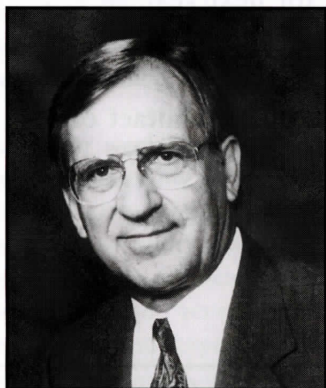
Chalcedon is an educational institution. It supports the efforts of Christians and Christian organizations to implement the vision of Christian civilization. Though unapologetically Reformed, Chalcedon supports the kingdom work of all orthodox denominations and churches. Chalcedon is an independent Christian foundation governed by a board of trustees, Christian men in accord with Chalcedon's vision statement. The foundation is not subordinate to the authority of any particular denomination or ecclesiastical body.

The “Clinton Doctrine”

By Herbert W. Titus

Well, I think there's an important principle here that I hope will be now upheld in the future, and not just by the United States, not just by NATO, but also by the leading countries of the world through the United Nations. And that is that while there may well be a great deal of ethnic and religious conflict in the world . . . that whether within or beyond the borders of the country, if the world community has the power to stop it, we ought to stop genocide and ethnic cleansing.

President William Jefferson Clinton,
Responding to a question by CNN's Wolf
Blitzer on June 20, 1999



As soon as NATO stopped bombing Serbia and the Serb forces pulled out of Kosovo, the light blue flag of the United Nations was raised over Pristina, the capital of Kosovo. As the KLA, the nationalist “liberation” force of the Kosovar Albanians will now be forced to lay down their weapons and

lower the Albanian Flag, Kosovo will be run by bureaucrats of other nations commissioned by the UN, not by the Albanians, much less the Serbs.

Already, agents of America's Federal Bureau of Investigation have been flown to Kosovo to investigate “war crimes.” And America has announced the offer of a \$5 million reward for information leading to the capture of Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian President accused of war crimes. The next step, most assuredly, will be to place Mr. Milosevic on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted list.

This is the Clinton Doctrine in action. American armed might is to be employed for the “common interest” of humanity, not the national security or national defense of these United States of America. The proclaimed end of the war over Kosovo has signaled to the world that national boundaries and domestic jurisdiction mean nothing. With the “end” of the war over Kosovo, we are told, the age of the nation-state has come to an end.

The beginning of the end was 1948, when the United States and its World War II allies forged the United Nations, the purpose of which was to do away with war and to marshal the armed forces of the world to protect the “common interest.”

Within two years, this grandiose purpose of the United

Nations was put to the test—in Korea. When President Harry Truman called up American troops to fight for the United Nations on the side of the South Koreans, he called the “War” a “police action.” Why?

No More War

After the adoption of the UN Charter, there could be no more war, because the United Nations claimed total jurisdiction over the whole world. Thus, if the armed force of any nation were deployed in the name of the UN, it would be no different “legally” than when that nation would send its police force into a city or country to enforce its domestic criminal law.

So President Clinton and his Balkan allies—charging Milosevic with “crimes against humanity”—sent in the bombers, as if they were a high-tech SWAT team of the FBI assigned to wipe out the New York City Mafia headquarters and degrade its “hit” squads. Not surprisingly, after the “SWAT team” had done its job, the FBI showed up to conduct its investigation.

By design, then, the United Nations Charter has displaced the Congress of the United States with the United Nations Security Council, or some other ruling international council of a “regional alliance” of nations, such as NATO. They no longer need an American President to go to Congress to obtain a declaration of war, as required by Article I, Section 8, Clause 11. For in the world governed by the United Nations Charter—there is no war that can be declared.

This deliberate displacement of Congress went unnoticed in the United States Senate at the time of the ratification of the UN Charter, because members of the Truman administration assured the Senators that the President could not assign even one American soldier, airman, sailor, or Marine to serve under UN command without the express consent of Congress.

No such express consent has ever been given to an American President, even though there are statutes on the books requiring such consent. And while American servicemen still execute an oath of office swearing to “preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States,” they are—and will continue to be—court-martialed, unless they abandon their oath in order to serve under UN command—as in the case of Michael New. So long as the United States remains in the United Nations this policy will not change.

The Billion Dollar Bailout

For several years now, a few members of the House and an occasional Senator have called for the withdrawal of

the United States from the United Nations. In late June, 1999, however, the United States Senate voted by 98 to 1 to pay America's past-due "debt" to the UN. (Later, claiming that he had made a "mistake," Senator Robert Smith of New Hampshire changed his vote from "aye," to "nay," making the final tally 97 to 2.)

*... the United Nations
Charter has displaced the
Congress of the United
States with the United
Nations Security
Council....*

The only initial dissenting vote was cast by liberal Democratic Senator Paul Sarbanes of Maryland who objected to the bill because it conditioned the debt payment upon the UN's implementing "reform" to reduce fraud, mismanagement, and waste that has plagued it for years. Only a United States Senator would believe that an unelected bureaucracy—which lines its pockets through fraud, mismanagement, and waste—would reform itself.

The "debt" that the United States allegedly owes to the UN are "dues" fixed by the UN. These "dues" are, in fact, taxes levied upon the American people by an international body which is not composed of representatives elected by them. Thus, by imposing "dues" upon the United States as a member nation, the UN indirectly claims jurisdiction to tax the American people just as the English Parliament claimed back in 1765 when it passed the Stamp Act.

The only difference between now and then is that the American people have no leaders to raise the battle cry—"No Taxation Without Representation!"—against this unconstitutional UN tax. Instead, Congress is so accustomed to ignoring the Constitution, that it cannot even insist that a UN dues assessment is a "bill for raising revenue" and that Article I, Section 7, Clause 1 requires that, "All bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives."

An Illegitimate Covenant

To understand this congressional betrayal of fundamental constitutional principle and procedure, one must return to 1948. In the Preamble of the United Nations Charter, the United States government and allied governments claimed to create the United Nations in the name of "The Peoples of the United Nations."

By invoking the authority of the "People" to propose the formation of a new world government, the architects of the United Nations sought to establish the United Nations on the same foundation as the government of the United States of America. But they left out a crucial step. While the government of the United States of America was proposed in the name of "We the People of the United States," it did not become that government until it was *ratified by the people* through *constitutional conventions* held in *each* of the sovereign and independent *states*.

The United Nations Charter has never been presented to the people of any member nation for ratification. Instead, it was submitted to each member nation's government officials for approval, thereby bypassing the people. In addition, only the original Charter was submitted for approval, as if it were just a treaty.

In the United States, the original Charter was approved by the two-thirds vote of the United States Senate, as required for the ratification of treaties under Article II, Section 2, Clause 2. But new member nations have been added without Senate approval. Indeed, the Charter explicitly provides that it may be amended by vote of the member nations and that such a vote binds other member nations to that amendment, even if their UN representatives did not vote for it.

Such unilateral power to amend and to add members is not the hallmark of a treaty, but that of a permanent covenant. Because the United Nations Charter is not a true treaty, it cannot be the supreme law of the land, even though ratified by the Senate as provided in Article VI, Clause 2 of the Constitution.

To the contrary, because the United Nations Charter is, by its own terms, a civil covenant, it must be ratified by the people, just as was the case with the United States Constitution. Having not been so ratified, the United Nations Charter is illegitimate and void.

Conclusion

There is only one constitutional response, then, to the United Nations. The President and the Congress must withdraw the United States from the United Nations and require the United Nations to withdraw from the United States. Only by taking such action can the national sovereignty and independence of these United States of America be preserved, and the "Clinton Doctrine" be erased. Otherwise, Kosovo will become a precedent justifying other nations to bomb America and punish her for "crimes against humanity"—as soon as those nations have the "power" to do so.

Herbert Titus is a constitutional attorney and President of Forecast Foundation. He can be reached at Forecast Foundation, 2400 Carolina Road, Chesapeake, VA 23322, (757)421-3365.

**Rev.
Ellsworth
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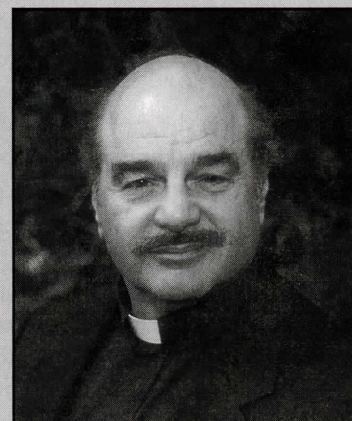
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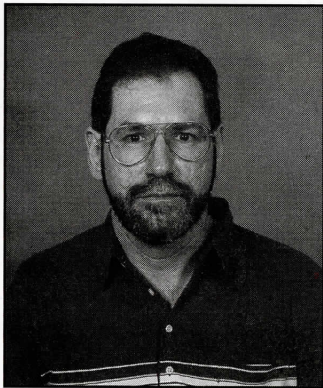
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Ligonier Apologetics: A Case of Cognitive Dissonance

By Joseph P. Braswell

Editor's Introduction:

We were saddened to hear of the untimely passing of Joseph Braswell on March 22, 1999. Joseph was one of the leading Reformed thinkers of our generation, and his grasp of Van Til's epistemology and apologetics was profound. We had several articles in our files that he had submitted before his death. Below is one of them.



The Ligonier school of classical, evidentialist apologetics¹ is schizophrenic. On the one hand, it (rather surprisingly) concedes so much to Van Tilian presuppositionalism that, upon hearing or reading what *is* granted at the outset, one may wonder precisely what the controversy is between

these two schools of apologetics. On the other hand, it proceeds to erect an epistemology wholly at odds with what it has previously conceded, adopting a form of empiricist foundationalism as the justification for its rejection of the alleged fideism in Van Tilianism and its advocacy for the rational-evidentialist approach to the epistemic justification of religious truth-claims. We shall now examine these two disparate hallmarks of Ligonier thought in greater detail.

Its Presuppositionalism

The Ligonier apologists explicitly state at the outset that, ultimately, experience is intelligible only because the God of the Bible exists and because humanity and the cosmos are what Scripture asserts them to be. Facts and logic depend upon God; without God's existence, there could be no argument, no rationality, no knowledge of anything whatsoever. Unbelievers can only know truth because they possess actual knowledge of God that they are suppressing, because—despite their ethico-religiously motivated state of denial and repression (self-deception)—they do, in fact, believe in God and thus presuppose the God of Christian Theism in all their

truth-yielding knowing-activity. Moreover, though Ligonier apologetics, in its concern to reconstruct natural theology, tends to stress the concept of *mediate* natural revelation, the Ligonier apologists concede that there is also *immediate* revelation. In speaking of the actual possession of a true knowledge of God and of the dependence of all knowledge upon the theistic/creationist ontology as our actual epistemic situation (the truth of Christian Theistic worldview as the transcendental condition for the possibility of any knowledge, the necessary context of all knowing), the Ligonier apologists sound like Van Tilians.

Its Evidentialism

Unfortunately, the Ligonier group does not stop here. They accept a foundationalist epistemology based upon a positivistic empiricism, even though they have already conceded that what is given to the senses in empirical knowledge depends for its intelligibility upon the transcendental presupposition of God. For them, empirical knowledge is primary; theological knowledge is inferential, to be justified by evidence provided by established empirical facts that both believer and unbeliever accept in common. Here the shift is to the idea of *mediate* revelation to the virtual exclusion of immediate revelation. The truth of theological propositions is a conclusion to be derived from the truth of certain empirical propositions; the existence of God—the truth of the Christian Theistic worldview—is justified by drawing valid inferences from empirical evidence.

What are we to make of this odd state of affairs among the Ligonier group? If they are quite serious in asserting that their appeal to facts and logic presupposes a Christian Theistic worldview, that they are actually self-consciously presupposing certain elements of the Christian Theistic ontology in their presentation of the evidence, then, at bottom, they are guilty of the same circular reasoning and “fideism” for which they criticize Van Til. Their reasoning is circular and therefore, by their own standards, a case of fallacious question-begging. They argue in a circular fashion to the extent that, true to their concessions to the transcendental underpinnings of their rational-evidentialist arguments that are provided by a distinctively Christian Theistic metaphysic, they do not truly consider the empirical phenomena as simply *given* and intelligible-as-such, requiring no further (*i.e.*, metaphysical) explanation and thus metaphysically neutral, value-free, and nontheory-laden. Do they, or do they not, see the

evidentiary value of the facts as basic and self-evident, as self-justifying? They seem to want it both ways.

Common Ground

Of course, once the Ligonier apologists actually get going in their apologetic presentation, despite all the preliminary concessions that appear so Van Tilian, they sound as though they are, after all, treating the facts as self-evident and basic, as self-explanatory; they sound very much like antimetaphysical positivists. Were they only treating these facts as *contextually* basic (*i.e.*, relatively so within finite contexts of argument and objection), there would be no quarrel between them and a Van Tilian. The Van Tilian agrees that there is common-ground between believers and unbelievers: the metaphysical common ground provided by the actual epistemic situation in which all operate and by which all come to know whatever truth they do obtain. It is a common epistemic situation that is grounded in the ontological fact—the real state of affairs—that all men inhabit and share God's world and must operate within this given world of theistic facts and laws. In light of this common ground, the Van Tilian agrees that we can begin within the finite context of discussion that is constituted by the fact that the unbeliever, despite his epistemological presuppositions, will assent to the validity of the law of causality, the law of noncontradiction, *etc.* and accept these as true premises—common-ground assumptions—from which we can proceed to argue.² We can rationally argue with the unbeliever precisely because he is the image of God and, by virtue of his living in God's world, must possess moments of truth, knowledge that corresponds to what is (*i.e.*, the way God's world is). The image of God is the point of contact; we have all facts in common with the unbeliever metaphysically. Accordingly, empirical evidence does impress him, as do sound arguments, within a context in which he possesses moments of truth altogether incompatible to his antitheistic presupposition of autonomy, moments of truth that he possesses precisely because he at bottom believes in God and knows the world to be what Scripture says it is, rather than (as he claims in his self-deception) the product of impersonal chance. There is, in other words, by virtue of common grace and the inconsistency—the epistemological dualism or tension—common grace produces in the unbeliever a *limited* context in which we—believer and unbeliever—can formally agree in practice on certain principles; otherwise there could be no understanding or communication, no possibility of the unbeliever's following of our argument at all. The apologist can thus begin where the unbeliever is at (appealing to his acceptance of facts and logic), provided that the apologist will, at some point, place the finite context that he may have used as a "starting point" within the absolute and ultimate context of the plan of God. The Ligonier strategy of dealing with the unbeliever is quite consonant with a Van Tilian approach, provided that we, at some point, confront the unbeliever with his inconsistency, challenging

his use of facts and logic (which are, after all, *theistic* facts and logic) and pointing out to him that this area of formal agreement does not follow from his worldview and cannot be ultimately justified in terms of his antitheistic presuppositions. At some point (though there are no hard and fast rules stipulating precisely *when*), we must examine presuppositions, engaging in a transcendental argument concerning the necessary conditions that make intelligible experience and knowledge possible and critiquing, by means of the consequences that logically follow from them, those false presuppositions that a transcendental analysis lays bare for criticism.

Is this stance on the use of relative contexts as initial points of encounter all that the Ligonier apologists intend? Their appeal to the distinction between proximate and ultimate starting points (a Van Tilian distinction!) would seem to indicate that this uncontroversial position is all that they have in mind, that they merely wish to treat certain facts and principles as contextually basic, contextually determined. If, however, they merely intend to assert that the basic beliefs with which they start are contextually (relatively) basic, they again would be guilty of the circular reasoning that they think is fallacious, and they are at pains to avoid the question-begging that they mistakenly ascribe to any and all circularity.

This distress over circularity is clearly the result of subscribing to a foundationalist view of linear inference (straight-line inferences from a foundation of logically primitive, *basic* beliefs), for contextualists (in common with coherentists) believe that philosophical arguments are always ultimately circular, though in a nonquestion-begging way. Moreover, as much as we would like to believe that they after all agree with Van Til, they really do buy into foundationalism by virtue of their insistence that we must argue from ostensibly common-property (neutral) facts if we are to be rational and not fideists. Their argument for the law of noncontradiction (which is really the argument of Aristotle—a foundationalist) also demonstrates that they are foundationalists. In common with foundationalists, they seem to believe that the law is a basic belief, a logically primitive axiom (and note that their argument makes it self-justifying: it is justified whether one believes in God or not, and it leaves no room for asserting that all argument depends upon God).

Foundationalism's Flaw

It is safe to conclude then that the Ligonier apologists are epistemological foundationalists, appealing to facts and logic as basic beliefs. Now, the apologist who is a foundationalist must take one of two positions. First, he may hold that belief in God's existence is a basic belief. However, if he adopts this position, then how can he argue for God's existence, inferring God from other basic beliefs (as per the notion of *mediate* revelation)? A basic belief cannot be derived from other basic beliefs. The only possible alternative to such an untenable position for the foundationalist is, quite obviously, for him to deny that

belief in God is a basic belief. This position, however, denies what the Ligonier apologists initially conceded: that there is *immediate* natural revelation. If he maintains that belief in God is basic, he must either hold that this is a basic belief *alongside* (coordinate with) other basic beliefs (e.g., beliefs due to direct observation—immediate experience) or else he must concede that our belief in the reliability of logic and first-hand experience is dependent upon—inferred from—the basic belief in God (as Descartes held). In the latter case, empirical beliefs are not truly basic; in the former case, he has made those beliefs that are also basic alongside belief in God *independent of God*—autonomous, self-explanatory beliefs that require no justification within a theistic context (again, denying the Ligonier apologists' concessions to presuppositionalism).

The problem with foundationalism is that it is simply unworkable in the formulation of a theory of knowledge. Its only defense presupposes unidirectional linear inference and then argues the impossibility of an infinite regress. The chain of inferences, reasoned back from conclusions to their premises, must stop at some point or else epistemic justification would be impossible and total skepticism—the *reductio ad absurdum* of any epistemological proposal—would result. However, we cannot justify all our allegedly inferential knowledge from any reasonably proposed set of ostensibly basic beliefs (bearing in mind that any belief that is to qualify as a basic belief must be self-justifying—indubitable).

Van Til's Contextualism

Van Til, however, does not offer us a different variety of foundationalism. Instead, he offers us a form of contextualist epistemology that situates us in the City of God as the ultimate context. Whereas foundationalism is at bottom *impersonalistic*, contextualism is personalistic in its emphasis upon the role of a sociology of knowledge and what has been called the social construction of reality: the socially determined conventions of rationally interpreting our experience (*i.e.*, *rationalizing* it, whether in an original or analogical sense) that is involved in the idea of a correspondence of judgments among a community sharing a worldview or metanarrative tradition—a common symbolic universe of discourse or language-game that constitutes (again, whether in an original or analogical sense) a field of meaningful, *intelligible* experience. Non-Christian contextualism, however, places this sociology of knowledge against the ultimate context of cosmic impersonalism (a backdrop of meaningless, *brute fact*), making man the ultimate personal reference-point. It must deal with the fact of diversity within the City of Man (competing groups, different traditions—a multiculturalist cultural relativism) that inevitably causes it to lapse into historicism and absolute relativism. Situation within the City of God (with knowledge based upon revelation) alone satisfies the conditions of Augustine's theistic argument from the idea of truth (in his *On Free Will*): (1) Truth must transcend the human situation (*i.e.*, against the Academicians *qua* conventionalists, man cannot be the

final reference-point), and (2) truth requires someone—a person—to “opine” it and assert it (against the Platonists, truth is a property of judgments and requires an intelligence). Augustine, by this transcendental argument, shows that Christian Theism, using the Christian ideas of transcendence and immanence, brings together what non-Christian philosophy could not: absoluteness and relativity. Truth transcends finite human societies and history, and is universal and cosmic, because creation itself—being the product of the eternal, infinite, self-existent Creator-God who is exhaustively personal and Absolute Personality—is, in its covenantally constituted character, encompassed in the metanarrative that is the Word of God (by which all things were made and all things consist), and the Word of God (His covenant revelation) is the tradition—the story—of the City of God, providing it with its worldview, its transcendently grounded reading of the world. Only such a distinctively *Christian Theistic* version of contextualist epistemology grounds knowledge in the thoroughly personalistic context of the communion of the City of God with the economic Trinity within the covenantal context and the general-revelatory situation of the ontologically “logocentric,” *Word-constituted* world this God has created, a theistic-factual world that is to be interpreted through the “glasses” of the special revelation (Scripture) He has given, as covenant-correlate to general revelation, to the City of God.

¹ This refers to the apologetic position set forth in R. C. Sproul, John Gerstner, and Arthur Lindsley, *Classical Apologetics* (Grand Rapids, 1984).

² The form of argument would then proceed along the following lines. The apologist would assert that there is no alternative to accepting facts and using logic, to constructing sound arguments based upon evidence; in this manner if we are to make any sense whatsoever of the world, though this way of interpreting and concluding itself makes sense only upon the presupposition of the Christian Theistic metaphysic. The initial step may simply be based upon the TINA argument as to why we must employ the philosophy of fact and the philosophy of logic that we are employing, leaving aside, for the moment, the ontological foundations. That is, we need only elicit the unbeliever's agreement to that which *we* know to be a distinctively Christian view of fact and logic, asking him to stand with us on our ground as the only alternative to absolute skepticism, pointing out from his practice that he normally thinks and acts in this manner anyway as he engages in living in the world. He generally accepts the normativity of these canons of discovery. At some point, however, we must bring up the matter of ontological grounding (how only Christian Theism justifies this way of using facts and constructing logical arguments) and demonstrate that his own presuppositions fail to account for such appeal to fact and logic.

The late Joseph Braswell did undergraduate and graduate work in philosophy at the University of South Florida, but his real interest was in theology and Biblical studies. He published several articles in various journals (including the Westminster Theological Journal, The Journal of Christian Reconstruction, and the Chalcedon Report).

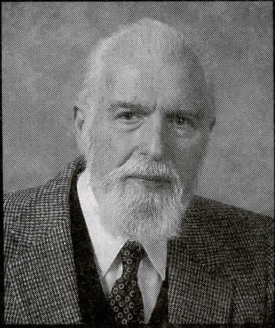
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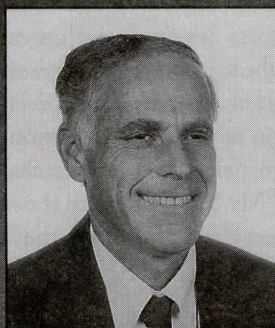
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The Amateurization of Missions

By Peter Hammond



Despite the hard realities and desperate needs of the mission fields, we are increasingly seeing the amateurization of missions. More and more Christians are pouring into the mission fields—but for very short periods of time and for very superficial goals.

I have been astounded to come across large tour

groups (calling themselves “missionaries”) travelling across the world just to spend four or five days “in the field”! The high costs of international air travel would seem to make such short visits cost-ineffective. Even more incredible is how most of these short-termers have undergone no selection procedure and received no training, and thus are ill-equipped to benefit the local believers. In most cases, these religious tourists have a lower grasp of Scripture than, and a spiritual maturity that is dwarfed by, the local believers to whom they presume to come to minister.

Most people understand that doctors, engineers, and, in fact, every other profession, need proper training to be able to do their work. Yet for some obscure reason, many Christians seem to think that any churchgoer can be a missionary! The flood of untrained, ill-disciplined, and unaccountable, lone-ranger, supposed “missionaries” into Third World countries is disastrous. Many don’t even know enough of the local culture to realize how much damage they are doing to the Christian cause.

Cross-Cultural Challenges

I have seen many female missionaries in trousers, or even shorts, ministering in rural Africa. They seem oblivious to the fact that all the local Christian women wear only dresses. Nor could they possibly realize how offensive their dress (or lack of it) is to their hosts. Once a team of six American medical missionaries flew out to work with us in Mozambique. As they arrived in Malawi, police detained the two women for wearing trousers! The women didn’t even have a single skirt between them in their luggage. We had to go into town to buy some dresses for the ladies before the police would release them!

African cultures value politeness and hospitality highly. So unless you probe and ask lots of penetrating questions, you will never know that you have offended your hosts.

They will continue to smile and be friendly even as the door slams firmly shut to further ministry. For example, in Africa, it is generally considered a disgrace for a man to have long hair. This is not only cultural, but Biblical: “Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him” (1 Cor. 11:14). Yet, you will see many longhaired and ponytailed men heading out “to evangelize the pagans in Africa,” oblivious to what a “stumbling block” they are. The present fad of body-piercing seems to have invaded the church as well. I have met Christians heading out to the mission field with nose rings, belly rings, tongue studs, and who knows what other body mutilations. It’s not that these piercings are unknown in Africa or Asia. In fact every pagan culture practices it. The Hindus and animists in particular practice body piercings and tattooing extensively. However, once converted, they repent and turn away from such abominations. It is generally quite easy to tell the difference between a Christian and a pagan in Africa: by how they dress and by how they treat (or mistreat) their body. The Scriptures are clear: “You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh . . . nor tattoo any marks on you: I am the Lord” (Lev. 19:28). Earrings on men in the Bible were a mark of slavery (Ex. 21:6; Dt. 15:17). The pagans (1 Kin. 18:28) saw cutting of one’s own flesh as an act of worship to demon idols. For a Christian who recognizes that his body is a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16-17) to defile himself with the pagan practice of body piercing is not only tragic but blatant rebellion against God. How then can you expect African Christians to respect longhaired men with ponytails and earrings—who presume to come and teach them?

Helping or Hinderin

Often our appearance or actions undermine the message we bring. One “mission team” that came to assist some good friends of ours started arguing with the established missionaries over divisive doctrines, then they asserted “a woman’s right” to have an abortion! Finally, they complained about being given physical work. “We came here to minister,” protested the ponytailed team leader. “Physical work is part of our ministry,” answered the mission leader. The young team leader stood up on Sunday morning before the whole congregation and protested the way his team of volunteers had been forced to help with the building extension of the mission station. “We came here to preach the gospel, not to lay bricks. Look at my hands,” he pleaded. “My hands are like those of a little girl. God didn’t make my hands to handle bricks!”

The incredible thing is that every year thousands of such undisciplined and unteachable selfish individuals jet into mission fields around the world . . . to help!

Religious Tourism

I first came across the term “religious tourists” in Romania. A pastor was relating to me the bizarre story of 89 Californian Christians who had flown in to “minister” in Romania! Naturally, none of them spoke Romanian. Neither did they have transportation. They were totally dependent upon their local hosts, whom they presumed they were coming to help. On Sunday morning they all wanted to speak at the main service. Each was given two minutes to bring greetings! So began a seemingly never-ending procession of 89 religious tourists delivering their greetings through an interpreter—with successive camera flashes accompanying. These visitors never seemed to consider just how much their large tour group had imposed upon their Romanian hosts for transportation, accommodation, food, and interpreters. “We never saw these people in the dark days of persecution,” declared one pastor. “They’re not missionaries—they’re religious tourists!”

There have recently been groups of up to 29 Americans and Europeans flying in on a single aircraft to one location in Sudan. When I asked how long they were going in for, they proudly announced, “Two or three days—maybe even four!” I could only stand in amazement at their superficial understanding of what is needed in missions. “What do you plan to accomplish?” I asked. “Oh!” one man answered, “We plan to hand over some relief aid and buy some slaves!”

So this is now what missions are coming to: large groups of people flying halfway across the world to hand over some relief aid, say a few nice words, and set some slaves free! And in just a few days they fly back home thinking that they are now missionaries! They have no real grasp of the people to whom they are going, they have no understanding of the religious worldview of the people they are evangelizing, and they have never bothered to study the history of the nation they say they are sent to. They are untrained, unprepared, unaccountable, and even unaware of the way the local people perceive them.

Without knowing the local language or staying long enough to know what is really going on, how can they be sure that those people sitting under the tree really are slaves? Do they know what the correct price and exchange rates are? Once they set the slaves free, how can they be sure that they will not be re-enslaved again? Would they even know if they were being deceived in an elaborate plot to enrich certain slave traders? Those who fly in only for the day cannot be certain of the answers to any of these questions. The mission fields are too complex for amateurs.

What Makes a Missionary?

Of course, a mission worker’s training should not stop

when he reaches the field—in fact, it must never stop. It takes an average of 2 years or more for a trainee field worker in Frontline Fellowship to qualify as a Field Worker. This training will include many courses such as the Great Commission Course, Discipleship Training Course, Biblical Worldview Seminar, Muslim Evangelism Workshop, First Aid courses, and participation in many outreaches, including street evangelism, Muslim evangelism, and Bible smuggling into restricted-access countries. There are required reading lists, written assignments, and practical tests. All of these are important components of a comprehensive program to prepare effective missionaries for ministry in war-torn Muslim or Communist countries. Frontline’s selection and training procedure is fairly unique in its blend of intensive Biblical instruction and practical outreach within an apprenticeship program.

Those who are easily upset by irritations, loss of sleep, or unfair treatment and those who are moody, easily discouraged, and depressed are not suitable for missions. Missionaries must be emotionally stable and self-disciplined. In the mission field, high levels of stress, heat, and cross-cultural frustration often aggravate relationship difficulties. The closeness of living, travelling, and working conditions intensifies interpersonal conflicts. Missionaries tend to be strong-willed people, so potential clashes can undermine the mission team and projects. There are two major problems here: dependant people who need constant support and direction and sap the energy from a team; and independent people who divert the team’s energy as they pull one way and another to pursue their own agendas.

Missionaries need to be inter-dependent (team players), relinquishing their own interests for the good of the team. They need to be self-starters, self-reliant, and self-sacrificing. The harsh terrains, hot climates, and primitive conditions of most mission fields require healthy and fit missionaries who can endure and be effective in adverse conditions, and who can cope with and recover from debilitating sicknesses.

It is amazing how many people volunteer for missions who have never done any ministry at home! It is essential for all missionaries to have extensive ministry experience at the home front before venturing into cross-cultural missions overseas.

Obstacles abound. Frustrations, disappointments, and discouragements are occupational hazards and part of our job description. Missionaries need endurance—a willingness and capacity to suffer hardships, discomfort, opposition and worse. Sacrificial service is more eloquent than many sermons.

Peter Hammond is the Founder and Director of Frontline Fellowship and the Director of United Christian Action (a network of 20 Bible-based groups working for

revival and reformation in Southern Africa). He is an international speaker, presenting about 400 lectures or sermons each year throughout Africa, Eastern Europe, and America.

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

Frontline Fellowship
 P. O. Box 74
 Newlands 7725
 Cape Town, South Africa
 Tel: (011-27-21) 689-4480
 Fax: (011-27-21) 685-5884
 E-mail: frontfel@gem.co.za.

MACEDONIAN CALL FROM PETER HAMMOND

I desperately need more staff. We definitely do not have enough qualified people to be able to handle the tremendous opportunities and invitations of ministry before us. I need someone with experience in book ministry, to run our "Christian Liberty Books" ministry; and we need an office manager who can juggle the many demands, matching available resources, vehicles, and personnel to the tasks at hand according to the priorities (this would free me up to do the writing, pioneering, and other ministry that I need to concentrate on). We always need more field staff, and administrative staff, but there is a wide-open opportunity for expanding our tape ministry, pastoral training, leadership training, Bible teaching, etc. The opportunities before us are so unprecedented, and I fear that we may be missing many windows of opportunity by not having sufficient resources and personnel to respond to them adequately.

This is a Macedonian Call: come over and help us!

Yours for Reformation and Revival,
Peter Hammond

To contact Peter Hammond
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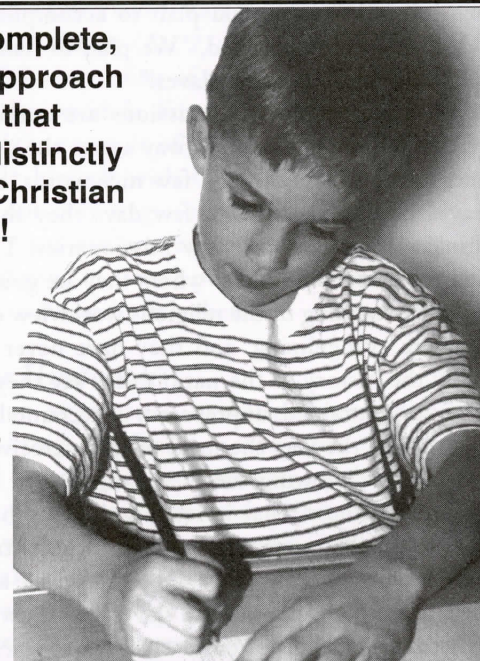
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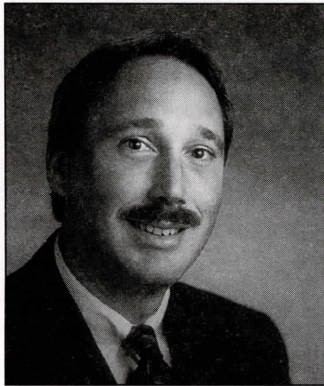
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“I Have a Problem, I Don’t Want to Change, Please Help”

Just one of the myriad reasons I don’t waste my time counseling

By *Craig R. Dumont*



Some time back, Dr. Lanny Johnson shared with me the conclusion he had reached after years of providing counsel to people seeking his help. Ostensibly they were seeking solid advice in various matters; however, in reality most were foraging for magical solutions that conveniently avoided any moral

and ethical change in their lives. They were saying in effect, if not directly by words, “I have a problem, I don’t want to change, please help!”

The powerful reality of this truth was hammered home a short time later when I asked him to meet with a mutual friend of ours who was facing a problem and had come to me requesting advice. The problem was clearly articulated, understood, and agreed upon and, based upon the circumstances, Dr. Johnson provided a well thought-out solution that our friend acknowledged as being the route out of his predicament. Everyone was thankful that the Lord had provided experienced and wise counsel that would produce a concrete, quick, and good resolution. Problem solved . . . Not! Unfortunately, our friend proceeded as if we had never discussed the situation and continued to pursue the very actions that had caused his discomfort. He struggled with hardship and difficulty for another year and a half. This was a clear-cut case of the “I’ve got a problem, I don’t want to change, please help!” syndrome.

The Lust for Magical Solutions

Our society is full of people who know they have problems, but are too much in love with their unethical, immoral, or just down right stupid lifestyles to actually want to change. Oh, they may say they hate those problems and will entertain multitudes of solutions with a passion—as long as those solutions are magical and instantaneous, rather than ethical and applied. The majority of people want to eliminate problems without giving up the cause of their problems. They desire to reap what they have not sown!

The *Wall Street Journal*, July 17, 1999, carried a story

illustrating this very fact. The Oglala Sioux Indian council has banned liquor sales on their reservation because their people have a propensity to succumb to drunkenness and alcoholism. However, as is always the case, there is someone who will provide the opportunity—for a price—to those who choose to seek it out. In this case, there is a town (population 22) located just two miles from the reservation border that exists solely to sell liquor to Indians. Last year the town rang up over three million dollars in alcohol sales almost exclusively from the Indian clientele who live in the poorest county in the nation.

Alcohol abuse has devastated the Oglala Sioux tribe, and they have recently poured out their anger on the merchants who sell the liquor. They have vandalized and burned stores and marched in protest against the sale of alcohol. The local drug-and-alcohol detox center “is nearly 80% Sioux Indians, many of whom relapse into drinking after completing the center’s 30-day program.” There is a problem of great magnitude here.

But despite the protests, vandalism, and constant calls for help, they are wedded to their problem because they love the behavior that produces it. “I have a problem, I don’t want to change, please help!” cries the Oglala Sioux Indian. The *Journal’s* article summarizes it thus:

The result for Whiteclay [the town selling the alcohol] is an odd dynamic between merchant and customer, one in which business owners and Indians are dependent on—and hostile toward—one another. All that binds them together is alcohol.

“That’s one of the things we find so disturbing,” says Mr. Loomis, the detox counselor. For the Oglala Sioux, “the attitude is going to be, ‘I hate you—and I’ll take one of those’ [a drink].”

There you have it, in a nutshell. The very thing that binds them together is their problem. And they can’t change that because that would mean changing the actions and choices that got them there! They are truly bound. They live with their sorrows, broken lives, and hatred; but please don’t ask for change, just line up the beer!

If the results weren’t so tragic and if this were an isolated example of man’s desire to pursue death rather than life, it would be humorous. But the results are tragic and it definitely is not an isolated example. It’s the rule. And it’s as rampant in the church as out.

Spiritual Quick Fixes

One example of this mentality or syndrome within the church (at least within charismatic and Pentecostal circles) is the attraction to and fascination with spiritual quick fixes at the altar. Almost weekly the call goes out to bring your problems to the altar and receive prayer to solve the situation. Now, acknowledging that God continues to perform miracles despite ourselves, and without in any way denigrating prayer or opposing the Biblical requirement to pray one for another, it must be noted that a significant majority who respond to these invitations are plagued by problems that are the direct result of continuous bad choices they have made, habits they have established, and even open rebellion to God's Word.

For instance, many come forward to receive prayer to solve financial problems, but have no intention of changing the way they handle their money. Their hope is that God will help them hit the lotto. Others come to find relief from stress and worry, but they continue to pursue the very activities that the Bible says will cause worry and anxiety. Still others want a "healing touch" and dismiss out of hand any change of attitude or action that are at the root of their health problems. Then there are those who want God to solve all their marital problems without actually having to take time to apply His marriage laws. They want God to save their children, even though they will not take time to teach their children the Bible and have absolutely no intention of removing them from the synagogues of Satan (government schools). Of course, they all desire a "deeper experience" with God without the bothersome requirements of daily prayer, Bible study and meditation, and all that annoying obedience stuff.

Magic Versus Ethics

Keeping with the prevailing spirit of the times, these Christians pour down to "altars" telling God they have a problem, and then ask Him to perform a miracle so that the problem will go away and so they don't have to change. Nice, neat, and easy. Christian magic in lieu of Christian ethics; "slain in the Spirit" for a few moments vs. walking in the Spirit every day. This is the spiritual version of "I've got a problem, I don't want to change, please help!" Again, simply put, they want to reap what they haven't sown. Worse, despite knowing that the fruit of their illegitimate sowing is and will be problems of increasing magnitude, they are more determined than ever to repeat their actions.

It is a humanistic dream and goal, going all the way back to the Garden of Eden, to believe in and seek a radical disconnection between a cause and effect. God said, "Eat this fruit from this tree and die." The serpent and then Adam and Eve proclaimed God a liar. "I shall not surely die," decided Eve, "the problem of death is

unrelated to my action." The human race, when accepting this verdict, is at war with God. We seek to establish our own law—the law of no consequences—over God's law that specifically states that He will bless or curse as a direct result of our actions. Problem-solving without change is a fiction, a fantasy that is as powerfully seductive as the myth of the fountain of youth—and just as empty.

Rather than continuing the charade of "ministry" and even encouraging people to enter deeper and deeper into problems and bondage, we should proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ: Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is life and life more abundantly. And He requires not only the confession of a problem, but repentance accompanied by *change*: "Go and sin no more." "If you love Me, keep My commandments." The Apostle James puts it this way:

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the word, this one will be blessed in what he does. (*Jas. 1:22-25*)

The time is coming, and now is, when God's people must condition their hopes and expectations by His Word alone and stop dreaming the world's dreams. We must stop playing the roles of court magician and stage actor and start proclaiming the Word of God which clearly says, "You do have a problem. You must change. Christ can help, but it is through ethical application of God's Word, which the Spirit of God Himself empowers you to do."

As Dr. Johnson so pointedly, but accurately, put it, there is no time to waste in giving counsel to those who continue to live lives of fantasy. I have found this to be true. To those who say, "I have a problem, I don't want to change, please help," my response is, "Please leave my office and come back when you want to act like a mature Christian."

Craig Dumont is the pastor of Okemos Christian Center in Okemos and also the Grand Ledge Christian Center in Grand Ledge, MI. He writes a regular column called "Biblically Speaking" for The Towne Courier community newspaper and presents Biblical principles of government at a weekly Luncheon Lecture Series at the State Capital to Senate aids, lobbyists, and business leaders. He can be reached at (800)290-5711 or lwcog@tcimet.net.

A Report on the Christian Worldview Student Conference

By Zechariah Rousas Wagner



The Christian Worldview Student Conference is a ministry of Calvary Reformed Presbyterian Church of Norfolk, Virginia. This conference is designed to bring young adults from all over the world together for good, solid, Reformed teaching. It has attracted the grandchildren of R. J.

Rushdoony, the sons of Andrew Sandlin and Steve Wilkins, as well as the children of Douglas Wilson and Steve Schlissel. Not only have students come from across the United States; many have traveled from Switzerland, Canada, South Africa, and New Zealand. Conference students have been blessed by the teachings of learned men such as R. J. Rushdoony, Andrew Sandlin, George Grant, Steve Wilkins, Douglas Wilson, Gary De Mar, Steve Schlissel, and Richard Ganz, to name a few. The conference provides many young Christians with the opportunity to study and apply the tenets of God's living Word to every aspect of their lives. By the grace of God, the Christian Worldview Student Conference will continue to be a viable means of reconstructing our society. This year's conference attracted 325 students (excluding counselors).

What Went on This Year?

George Grant masterfully tied Scottish history to the founding of the United States. He recounted the history of early Scottish tribes and their significant role in the War for American Independence. Blood was stirred by the many suspenseful stories of men like Thomas Chalmers. These early Christian saints and heroes provide each Christian, young and old, with a clear testimony of undaunted courage and faith in the God of Scripture. Dr. Grant's lectures undoubtedly ignited a righteous admiration for those men who have faithfully gone before us.

Steve Schlissel, the Flame-Keeper of the Covenant, delivered both stern and humorous lectures. He specifically addressed the responsibility of each Christian to recognize and maintain the antithesis between the kingdom of God and those who live in

darkness. Students were forced to question their personal participation in modern trends, including body piercing and hair-dyeing. Rev. Schlissel gave hope to young Christian women who are fearful of simply becoming "house cats" by providing numerous accounts of women in the Scriptures who were intricate means of sustaining and restoring the antithesis. Young men were exhorted to remove themselves from the tomfoolery of the world and assume the responsibility of godly men. Biblical responsibility demands that each man adhere to the antithesis and present a stalwart example to those around him. Each man must become a living testimony of Christ's headship. Rev. Schlissel admonished each individual to promote unity among believers while exercising a holy separation from the world. After discussion with other students, I firmly believe that his message is now and will continue to be acted out in the church universal.

Howard Phillips, a wonderfully intelligent and politically-minded man, brought a slightly new aspect of learning to this year's conference. His personal testimony was extremely helpful for me and others like me who have political aspirations. Mr. Phillips offered guidelines to aid young politicians in achieving their goals. He also addressed the possible necessity of sacrificing personal ambitions in order to live Biblically. Mr. Phillips sacrificed considerably throughout much of his political career and has both cheerfully and humbly resigned public popularity to stand faithfully before the Lord. He possesses a full understanding of Biblical accountability and Christian duty. His life is a splendid example of courage and faithfulness that serves as an encouragement not only to aspiring and established politicians, but to every kingdom-minded Christian.

Gerry Wisz was one of the most insightful speakers I have ever heard. He primarily focused on economic issues with a specific emphasis on Wall Street. Although Wall Street is in need of reformation, Christians should not necessarily avoid the stock market. For many students, Mr. Wisz's presentation was likely their first introduction to the stock market. He spoke of his personal trading and the methods of trading that are most productive. He also provoked students to reconsider the benefits of budgeting personal affairs. Mr. Wisz's lectures forced each student to re-examine his misconceptions about Wall Street. Once again, students clearly saw that every endeavor is to be subject to Scriptural scrutiny.

Calvin Beisner addressed Christian stewardship in relation to environmentalism. Mr. Beisner exposed numerous environmental concerns as both fraudulent and grossly exaggerated. He emphasized Biblical accountability and stewardship while stressing the importance of personal responsibility rather than state action. Biblical stewardship is the necessary means of preserving and restoring our environment. God has supplied His people with scriptural guidelines that are instrumental to the reconstruction of society. Through our diligent prayer and supplication, our King will bless His covenant people in their efforts to reform their surrounding culture.

Why Is This Conference So Big?

The instruction received at the conference is profound and highly concentrated. Each student is given the rare opportunity to feast spiritually on the wisdom and understanding of our leading Reformed thinkers. This is the most attractive aspect of the Worldview Conference. We are given a great amount of intellectual and spiritual food, and we are likewise given the means to use that food so that we can produce fruit. We are treated like adults and expected to perform like adults. If young people lack Biblical armor and are inadequately trained to defend the Faith, there can be no realistic hope of capturing the culture for Christ.

The Lord has continued to bless the work of the conference. Many students, past and present, will attest to the mighty impact of the conference upon their lives. My older sister and I are examples. The conference has served a vital role in our lives and has proved to be a mighty blessing. I have been both encouraged and uplifted by those of like mind. I have developed strong friendships that will last a lifetime. My appetite and love for learning has heightened as the Lord works graciously to quicken my heart. The conference has taught me not only to meditate on sound doctrine, but also to apply that doctrine. I can honestly say that through the work of the Holy Spirit this conference has been used to further my sanctification tremendously.

The following example shows that the conference is a powerful force in the lives of others as well. There was an accident on the way home from the conference. As a result, one young lady fell into a coma for two days. When she awoke, the first thing she said was that she wanted to attend the conference again the following year. A boy suffered a broken neck and, just after the completion of surgery, expressed his desire to attend again.

This conference is a glimpse of the Christian future, and the future is bright indeed. The conference is a rally of Christ's army. Although this conference is a look into the future of Christendom, it is also a look into its past. These speakers emulate the work of Christ and once

more bring to light the work of men like Augustine, Calvin, Edwards, Girardeau, and Spurgeon. If your children are foundering in their faith because they have no direction, send them to this conference. It will help supply your children with the necessary tools to conquer the kingdom for our risen Savior and King, Jesus Christ!

Zachariah Rousas Wagner, being 17 years old, is better known as Tarayn's younger brother. Zack is a member of Reformed Heritage Church, of San Jose, CA, pastored by Brian Abshire. He has been home schooled since the third grade and plans to begin correspondence courses with Whitefield College this fall.

Next year's Christian Worldview Student Conference will be held July 3-7. For more information, contact Byron Snapp at Calvary Reformed Presbyterian Church, 403 Whealton Road Hampton, VA 23666 (757) 826-5942 or crpc@visi.net.

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Non-Interventionism as a Constitutional Principle

By R. J. Rushdoony

(Reprinted from *This Independent Republic*, Thoburn Press, 1978)

The Constitution of the United States is very clearly a non-interventionist document. The non-interventionist premise is apparent, not only in its various articles, but in the doctrine of *express powers* also. Whatever the Supreme Court interpretations of the Constitution may be, it is clear that the intention of the framers, and the language of the document itself, is the language of express powers.

Let us examine, specifically and briefly, some of these aspects of non-interventionism. First of all, Amendment IX re-enforces this already implicit concept by explicitly prohibiting federal intervention in the self-government of the people. The premise of this is a concept of government very different from that prevalent today. Government is primarily self-government, and the civil order is but one form of government among the many, which includes family, church, school, society, and voluntary associations.

Second, intervention in the self-government of the states and, by implication, of their constituent units, the counties, is forbidden in Amendment X. Accordingly, internal improvements were long considered unconstitutional by many presidents and legislators. Amendment XIV has been used to nullify this concept, but the original intent and the language of that amendment were not so construed. The current welfare economy is, of course, interventionist in essence and alien to this constitutional provision.

Third, interventionism in foreign affairs, decried by Washington in his Farewell Address, was written into the Constitution. Article I, Section 8, makes possible universal military conscription, but for the stated purposes only. These stated purposes are (1) to execute the laws of the Union, (2) to suppress insurrections, and (3) to repel invasions. Conscribed men thus could not be used in foreign wars and until 1917, this was the law of the land. This provision was rendered a nullity by the actions of Wilson and the Supreme Court.¹ Nonetheless, if the Constitution be regarded as authoritative, the burden of illegality with respect to subsequent foreign policy rests on the federal government.

Non-interventionism was thus, as we have seen, a constitutional provision with respect to persons, states, and foreign wars. It was, fourth, a principle with respect to religious policy, Amendment I being designed to prevent the intervention of the federal union into religious matters, either to establish a federal policy or to interfere in state practices.

Fifth, non-intervention with respect to money was imposed on the states as well as the federal union in Article I, Sections 8 and 10. The premise of Andrew Jackson's constitutional struggle against the second U. S. Bank was this belief. Since the Civil War, and especially since the establishment of the Federal Reserve System, this principle has been by-passed. The Constitution had been fought, before ratification, as a hard-money document. Its opponents saw clearly that paper money had no legal standing or lawful place under it.²

Sixth, the Monroe Doctrine, December 2, 1823, made two fundamental applications of this principle of non-interventionism: (1) the non-intervention by foreign powers in the Americas, and (2) non-intervention by the United States in the affairs of Europe. Both aspects are now by-passed.

Seventh, the Polk Doctrine, announced on December 2, 1845, developed this principle further by means of a three-point platform:

1. The people of *this continent* have the right to decide their own destiny.
2. We can never consent that European powers shall interfere to prevent such a union (of an independent state with the U. S.) because it might disturb the "balance of power" which they may desire to maintain upon this continent.
3. No future European colony or dominion shall without our consent be planted on any part of the North American continent.³

Since the Russo-Japanese War, however, the U. S. has been extensively involved in balance of power politics.

Eighth, interventionism with respect to property has become the rule rather than the exception. In various ways and by many federal agencies, property is subjected to federal intervention daily. One such instance is urban renewal. The Fifth Amendment declares: "No person shall be . . . deprived of . . . property . . . without due process of law, and nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation." Urban renewal condemns private property for private use. In 1954, in *Berman v. Parker*, the Supreme Court made this possible by ruling: "The concept of the public welfare is broad and inclusive The values it represents are spiritual as well as physical, esthetic as well as monetary." Urban renewal, by taking property from some for the profit of others, has

thus been conducive to the oligarchic development which the founding fathers feared.

The basis of this change from non-interventionism to interventionism in constitutional theory is a sociological approach to the Constitution. Its original intent is supplanted by present demands. As Kik has observed, "The Supreme Court is limited to the intent of those who composed the First Amendment. Otherwise, we are no longer under a *constitutional* government."⁴ In terms of this new mode of interpretation, it has been repeatedly noted, we are less and less under the Constitution and increasingly under the Supreme Court.

The roots of this trend must be sought, however, elsewhere than in the Supreme Court, which to a large extent mirrors a cultural phenomenon. Its origins are religious. Even as the origins of the republic were in Christian faith, so its decline is rooted in developments within the life of the church. In the past century, churches have steadily developed a principle of interpretation which, not surprisingly, has taken root in society at large, and in the courts. The Bible and the various creeds have been interpreted, not in terms of their original intent, but in terms of contemporary science, politics, economics, and cultural mores. The original meaning has been clearly suppressed or by-passed to make way for modern requirements. Instead of dropping the creed or Bible, its authority has been used to justify

new contents by means of interpretation. The conclusion is a simple one: If men deal so with the things of God, why not so with the Constitution? Is there then cause for complaint if the Supreme Court applies modern religious methodology to law? The issue, thus, is basically a loss of character as a consequence of a loss of faith. The Constitution still stands, basically the same document despite certain amendments, and its character has changed little in the past fifty years. The interpretation thereof has changed, reflecting a now deeply rooted revolution in American faith and the newer approach will certainly be reflected at the polls and in the courts, but it will be settled first of all in the religious decisions of men. Inescapably, history is the outworking of religious commitments.

¹ John W. Burgess, *Recent Changes in American Constitutional Theory* (New York, 1933), 59ff.

² George Bancroft, *History of the Formation of the Constitution*, II (n. p., n. d.), 132, 291, 313, 380, 408.

³ James D. Richardson, ed., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, IV* (Washington, 1904), 398f., see also Richard B. Morris, ed., *Encyclopedia of American History* (New York, 1961, rev. ed.), 192f.

⁴ J. Marcellus Kik, *The Supreme Court and Prayer in the Public School* (Philadelphia, 1963), 27. See David Leslie Hoggan, *Conflict in 1937: The Supreme Court, the Federal System, and the Constitution*.

Letter on Louisa May Alcott

I read Sally Walker's article in the August, 1999 *Chalcedon Report* and have some comments. I think the article was really well written; but I had a hard time figuring out what her ultimate goal in writing it was. Plus, she used the words of the characters in Louisa May Alcott's books, but she did not look at the actions of those characters. Although these women seemed like modern day feminists in what they said, they didn't in their actions. Rose, in *Rose in Bloom*, did want to be independent; but she also was submissive to men and did things that were fitting for a woman to do. She wasn't married and she was rich, so it was proper for her to go out in the world and try to make a difference. It was the same way with Jo before she married (although she was not rich). Jo went out and tried

to earn a living doing jobs that are proper for women, such as being a companion, a teacher, and a writer. Once she married, she settled down and took care of her own children, in addition to taking other lost children into her own home and teaching them. Her husband helped her with this, so she wasn't trying to be independent from him. I think Sally Walker had a good idea and was right in her theology, although a little idealistic, but she didn't take all things into account.

She is right that Louisa May Alcott was a Transcendentalist but I don't think that anyone reads her stories to gain great knowledge or for moral guidance.

Sincerely,
Rebekah Turnbaugh

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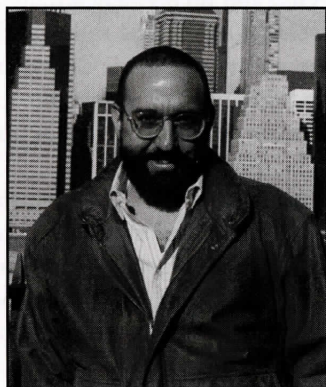
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Law and Order (Part 1)

By Rev. Steve M. Schlissel

Note: Part 2 of Law and Order will appear in November. Rev. Schlissel's series on worship will resume in December.



The laws in our nation—indeed, in Western civilization—will increasingly favor and reward those who practice and/or advocate homosexuality and other loathsome behaviors. What too many remain blithely unaware of is that the same laws which favor revolting behavior *must* disfavor righteous behavior. As

homosexuals emerge from the closet, Christians will be stuffed into it.

This is why: Laws exist, always and in every case, to serve an order. Think about it: the reason that even the Levitical *laws* are changed (St. Paul argues in Hebrews) is because there has been a change in *order*. “For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law” (*Heb. 7:12*). Laws are made to serve an order. If the order is changed, the laws must also change.

The tricky thing about our American circumstance is this: the order has been changed while Christians have been asleep at the wheel. There has *already* been an inversion of assigned values in the public square. A society's order, you see, is always revealed by what is permitted in its public square, and the respective valuations there assigned to various beliefs and practices. Laws are then drafted and enforced to preserve and advance this public square order. The laws of our nation, then, will—they *must*—follow the new order.

In the Beginning

Again, let me explain why this is so. Think of how things were at the beginning. God didn't just create the world, He ordered it: the Lord created things into a specific covenantal order, into an explicit hierarchical order. The Lord ruled over all, and Adam was His vicegerent. God placed woman beside man as his helper. And all living creatures were under Adam and Eve.

The laws given to Adam and Eve were meant to preserve and advance the God-ordained order in fruitfulness and blessedness. Obedience to His revealed law-word would cause the created order to flourish.

Disobedience to His law-word, on the other hand, would be a revolt against God *and* His created order. Submission to God is bound up with submission to His order, a submission manifested through obedience to His Word. Those who want His kingdom to come show it by seeing to it that, as far as they can ensure, His will is done on earth as it is in heaven. We obey God, in part, in the hope that His order will be re-established. The law is always the means to an end, to an order.

Thus, in the beginning the order was God above all, man joyfully under God, woman lovingly under man, and the animals at the bottom. Sin was introduced first as a subtle, then a direct, revolt against God's order. That first sin was not some abstract violation of a principle. It was a full-tilt assault designed to overturn God's created order through a dismissal of His law-word. Our Dutch theologians have pointed out that the order introduced by sin was a perfect inversion. The lyrics of “Sympathy for the Devil” express a truth: for Satan, “every cop is a criminal and all the sinners saints . . . heads is tails.” The devil puts good for evil and evil for good. The serpent, most cunning of the beasts, sought to replace God as the definer of reality and reality's order. Directly under the serpent was the woman, functioning as though she were the covenant head of humanity. Abandoning his own calling, Adam sheepishly followed woman into ruin. And from their new order, God was functionally and altogether excluded. The revolution brought about a perfect inversion.

The living and true God did not accept this new order. The serpent, man, and woman were cursed *and put back in their place*. God reinstated His order: God was God, the Ultimate Definer; man was restored as head of the household (with severe complications); woman was returned to her domestic calling (with severe complications); and the serpent was put on the bottom (with a sentence of doom directed against the one who animated him).

CREATED ORDER	SINFUL INVERSION	RESTORED ORDER
GOD	Animal (serpent calls the shots)	GOD
Man	Woman (functions as head)	Man
Woman	Man (culpably follows)	Woman
Animals	God (excluded)	Animals

The first step in every revolution is to get rid of the competition. Since God's law-word not only defines the way things ought to be ordered, but also reveals how the order may be maintained and how we might flourish in terms of it—because this is true, revolutions must, like the one in the Garden, first discount the authority and normativity

of His Word. Once God's Word is excluded, brothers and sisters, God Himself is excluded, for from that point we are left at best with nothing more than a cacophony of voices, all claiming authority to define reality. Once God's Word is excluded as authoritative and normative, all that remains is politics and power grabbing. We live in a political world when we deny it to be God's world. When we deny God's law, we deny the path to God's order. Law and order are inseparable ideas.

Ranked Out/Out-Ranked

When we think "law and order," we ordinarily take order to mean a state of peace and serenity. That is the second sense of the word. What we ought to have in mind is its first meaning: social position, rank in the community. That's where the critical relationship between law and order is discovered. For law is always in order to an order, and the order is brought about through its advocates being rewarded and its opponents being punished. That's what laws facilitate: the promotion of behaviors approved by the order and the frustration of behaviors which are not.

Law is never neutral. It necessarily proceeds from a particular worldview and seeks the establishment of an order in harmony with that view. Worldviews proceed from religious presuppositions. Law, then, must be seen as a tool by which a societal order is generated and/or established. In all societies, the righteous are the justified ones, those in accord with the prevailing religious sentiment and expectations. These favored ones are rewarded by law. Conversely, the wicked, those regarded as a threat to the order, are punished.

There is a painful ignorance concerning law, *per se*, among modern Americans. Examples abound, but two close at hand are Kosovo and Littleton. One searches nearly in vain for meaningful discussion concerning the legality or constitutionality of these actions: all public discussion is restricted to a consideration of its wisdom (or lack thereof), or its efficacy. The default attitude of Americans now is, "The constitution (the law) be hanged." And in the wake of the Littleton tragedy, one popular talk show lady said that even though the Constitution grants the right to bear arms, "Enough is enough." She was applauded. Americans clearly have no patience for anything—custom, convention, or Constitution—which stands in the way of what they want. Though she'd be surprised to hear it, the host's attitude is first cousin to the spirit of the Littleton murderers: "Law be damned."

It is little wonder that we find such attitudes when American Christians—those who above all others on earth ought to recognize the relationship of law and liberty—are so averse to even God's law that they can't recite the 10 Commandments without help. The result of this studied ignorance is that we are now poised to welcome anti-Christianity as the official religion of the American public square, with laws establishing anti-

Christianity not far behind. Remarkably, a Trojan horse is no longer necessary: we open the gates for those who have told us that they are going to eradicate us. "Come right in," we say.

Rousas Ha'Naviy (The Prophet)

In 1965, R. J. Rushdoony saw as inevitable what many then thought was unthinkable: homosexuals would emerge as the great object of liberal solicitude and the new standard for measuring "tolerance." Rushdoony saw this for what it was: part of a major religious shift in the West, away from Biblical Christianity and toward anti-Christianity. "If there is no God and no divinely ordained law, then not only does perversion have equal rights with morality, but actually truer rights, because Christian morality is seen as an imposition on and a dehumanization of man, whereas perversion is an act of liberty and autonomy. . . ."

From prophecy to fulfillment in 24 years: This month, 1500 lesbians gathered in Washington, D.C., to coordinate their agenda to advance degeneracy as our society's salvation. To do this, they said, they must be allied with all "rights" causes in the consciousness of American people. According to one news report, a speaker said that the activists had to "work to connect the dots of the 'isms' that oppress us . . . and build the America that we desire." What they mean is that they don't want to have their "cause" viewed as separable from any other "justice" issue. One lesbian explained the agenda: "Progressivism seeks a world with universal social, racial, and economic justice; we seek the right to be fed and sheltered, to love and be loved, and to live without fear. . . . We recognize the centrality of economic inequity, class, and gender in all forms of oppression." Marx refuses to stay dead. And America is poised to bid him enter. They've lost the voice which can say "No." With most Christian offspring in government schools, they won't soon recover it.

Lesbian Congressthing Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), the keynote speaker, asked, "How do we go about creating the world in which we want to live?" (Of course, in their view, God has not done that.) It answered, ". . . Do things publicly, first in small numbers, then in greater numbers, until that is just the way it is." The only distinction homosexuals have as a group is perversion. Get ready to see lots of it. For, presumably, the things Baldwin wants done in public include the singing of songs like that led by Karen John, a NOW officer, talking about how much she loved masturbation, "even near the Xerox machine." They also advanced public safe-sex demonstrations and sex-toy parties at colleges. You can bet your bottom dollar that such will be commonly seen in short order.

The Old Squeeze Play

"This town isn't big enough for the both of us," is not only a good line for a Western movie; it's an accurate axiom describing the religion of the public square. Two

hostile religions cannot receive equal treatment. At most, one will be accommodated in terms defined by the other. Today, anti-Christianity has won the battle for presence in the public square.

And—not to depress, but to inform you—it isn't likely to get better any time soon. The three major means by which anti-Christianity came to its current position continue to hold sway over the minds of most professing Christians in the USA. Compromising (and compromised) churches are supported by ignorant Christians, modern anti-Christian media is the unchallenged source of news for most Christians, and government schools continue to be the de facto choice of American Christian parents for indoctrinating their offspring. (Focus on the Family, arguably the most influential evangelical organization in America, in the August, 1999, issue of their magazine, encourages its millions of readers to “rebuild hope for public schools,” when they should be screaming, “Fire! Get out!”)

The naïveté of modern Christians concerning the religious character of the so-called “Culture War” is astonishing. Culture, Henry Van Til taught us, is simply “religion externalized and made explicit.” The institutions of a society are born to and raised by the shared religion of that society. At one time our institutions were explicitly and implicitly Christian. This manifest truth has been altogether lost on our generation, thanks to the above-named conduits of anti-Christianity (churches, media, schools). We have been raised to believe that culture is religiously neutral rather than religiously determined. While we were sleeping, our national religion has changed. A big step in this process was the theft of America's actual history, replaced by a revised and sanitized, anti-Christian version.

The Real Thing

Our actual history began, “In the Name of God, Amen.” These were the first words of the Mayflower Compact, which went on to speak of the voyage to plant the “first” colony as having been undertaken “for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith.”

Throughout the founding period there was no doubt that it was a Christian land that was being established. The Constitution of Maryland required that officeholders provide “a declaration of belief in the Christian religion,” and until 1851, defined freedom of religion this way: “[I]t is the duty of every man to worship God in such manner as he thinks most acceptable to him.” Therefore, it went on, “all persons professing the Christian religion, are equally entitled to protection in their religious liberty.” It further allowed that “the Legislature may, in their discretion, lay a general and equal tax, for the support of the Christian religion.”

The Constitution of Vermont was even more specific: “[N]or can any man who professes the Protestant religion, be justly deprived or abridged of any civil right, as a citizen.” Presumably, such protection did not apply to

atheists. In promoting the free exercise of religious worship according to conscience, this Constitution recognized limits: “[E]very sect or denomination of people ought to observe the Sabbath, or the Lord's Day, and keep up, and support, some sort of religious worship, which to them shall seem most agreeable to the will of GOD.” The Ten Commandments, effectively banished from the public square today, were not only honored in the public square at our founding, but the commandment regarded by many today as the most “controversial,” the Fourth, was actually written into various state constitutions, its observance regarded as belonging to the very foundation of proper social order.

The Constitution of New Hampshire (1784), after guaranteeing the unalienable right to worship God according to conscience, goes on to say: “As morality and piety, rightly grounded on evangelical principles, will give the best and greatest security to government, and will lay in the hearts of men the strongest obligations to due subjection; and as the knowledge of these, is most likely to be propagated through society by the institution of the public worship of the DEITY, and of public instruction in morality and religion; therefore the people of this state have a right to impower, and do hereby fully impower, the legislature to authorize from time to time, the several towns, parishes, bodies-corporate or religious societies within this state, to make adequate provision at their own expense, for the support and maintenance of public Protestant teachers of piety, religion and morality.” The Massachusetts Constitution (until 1863) had nearly identical provisions. It was thought a thing perfectly proper—indeed, necessary—to use the power of the state to propagate religion, and not just any religion, but the Protestant religion.

The Connecticut Constitution (until 1818) saw the interests of the state as being bound up in the interests of the Church: “[T]he free fruition of such liberties and privileges as humanity, civility and Christianity call for, as is due every man in his place and portion . . . hath ever been, and will be the tranquillity and stability of Churches and Commonwealth; and the denial thereof, the disturbances, if not the ruin of both.” The North Carolina Constitution (until 1876) held “That no person who shall deny the being of God, or of the truth of the Protestant religion, or the divine authority of the Old or New Testaments . . . shall be capable of holding any office or place of trust or profit in the civil department of this State.” And the oath of office used in Delaware (until 1792) read, in part: “I . . . do profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ His only son, and in the Holy Ghost, one God, blessed forevermore; I do acknowledge the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be given by divine inspiration.”

In 1892, Justice Brewer, of the US Supreme Court, examined all of the (then 44) states' constitutions, along with abundant other evidence, and concluded, after a careful review, that clearly, “this is a Christian nation” (cited by Gary DeMar in the 7/99 issue of *Biblical*

Now and Then

That was then, this is now. Today we believe that America was founded in a way designed to ensure that the civil government in all its ministries would remain free from religion, especially Christianity. Such radical historical revision does not bode well for our short-term future. A Biblical example of a people in the grip of amazing historical revision can be found in John 8. There, our Lord told the Jews who had believed in Him, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." To this they responded, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"

I don't know how many times I've read this statement uttered by my ancestors, but I can tell you that every time I do, even now, it robs me of my breath. This is a most stunning instance of willful blindness! Never slaves? This was a nation born from slavery. And the God who delivered them had instituted numerous measures to ensure that they'd never forget it. These measures went beyond the Passover rituals which were a catechism for Israel's youth: "I do this because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt" (*Ex. 13:8*). These measures included more than the ceremony of the redemption of the firstborn, with its provided meaning: "In days to come, when your son asks you, 'What does this mean?' say to him, 'With a mighty hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.'" God did more than provide Israel with these ceremonial reminders. He inscribed their history as slaves at the very head of their Constitution, the Ten Commandments: "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." Never slaves? God put it in the Ten Commandments a second time: "Remember that you were slaves in Egypt" (*Dt. 5:15*).

Never slaves? Throughout Israel's history, they returned to—and were turned over to—bondage and servitude again and again. Whether by chunks, as during the period of the Judges, or en masse, as unto Assyria or Babylon or Persia or Greece. It is hard to say without a calculator whether they had spent more time in or out of bondage. Never slaves? Even while the Jews in John 8 were speaking, they were suffering under the brutal heel of Rome!

One is tempted to say, "If this was not recorded in the Bible, I'd be hard-pressed to believe that anyone could so thoroughly revise their history." But, upon reflection, is Israel's revision really that much different from what we have done in America? If anything, our revisionism is a worse case. They did it on the spot, without consideration. We, in contrast, have—for the last 140 years—slowly, deliberately, and systematically sought to eradicate every vestige of evidence of our explicit Christian origins from our national consciousness. The long effort is finally, for the time being, triumphant. The revisions have won out in the pulpits, the media, and the

schools of our land. You'd simply never know that we were ever a self-conscious Christian nation for our first two centuries. A big eraser has been at work.

But it has not left a blank slate. The public square has not become neutral; it's been turned over to the advocates of another religion, viz., anti-Christianity. The ACLU has, this month, won another case requiring the removal of a religious symbol. This one concerned the ichthus on the seal of little Republic, Missouri. Last year the ACLU won another lawsuit against another Missouri municipality. The City of Florissant, MO, was forbidden by a US District Court from displaying a nativity scene at Christmas-time in front of the Florissant Civic Center.

Irrationale

In explaining the rationale for their aggression in seeking to remove religious symbols from government properties, ACLU spokesman Deborah Jacobs said, "It is important to remember that religious displays on public property send a message that anyone who is not a member of the religion being celebrated by the government is a second-class citizen." Well, of course, this is quite right and as it should be. That is clearly the understanding of our Founders when they made explicit mention of our preference for Protestant Christianity. Others could be received, but all were expected to abide by Christian law.

My, how things have changed. Miss Jacobs went on to explain, "People who put nativity scenes on their front lawns, proclaim that theirs is a Christian home. People who put menorahs in their windows proclaim that theirs is a Jewish home. Neither of these messages is one that any city government should send."

Well, what message should they send? What's this I hear? President Clinton officially declaring the month of June to be Gay and Lesbian Pride Month? Hmmm. And what's this I see? Secretary of State Madeline Albright swearing in a militant homosexual to be Ambassador to a 98% Roman Catholic country (how very diplomatic!). And who is that holding the Bible during the ceremony? Why, none other than James Hormel's sodomite partner. (Would that it had opened to Leviticus 20:13.) And what's this I see in San Francisco? Is that Mayor Willie Brown, Jr., raising the rainbow flag, symbolizing gay pride, at City Hall? Yes, it is. Now, does all this send a message that those who do not support gay "rights" are "second-class citizens"? It sure does. And we sure are. Because a new religion is being served in the public square.

We'll continue this topic soon, but first, Lord willing, we'll conclude the series on worship.

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 25 years, Jeanne, and their five children.

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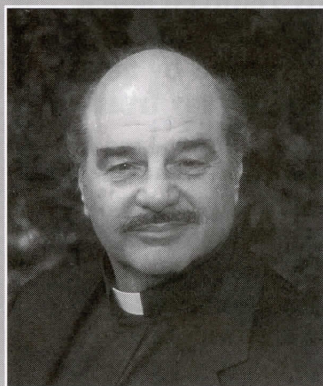
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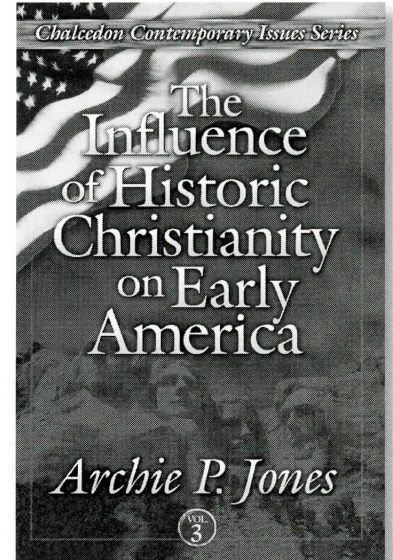
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