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# Chalcedon report

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FAITH FOR ALL OF LIFE FAITH FOR ALL OF LIFE FAITH FOR ALL OF LIFE

## AUTHENTIC REFORMATION AND REVIVAL

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*The Financial Value of God's  
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A Monthly Report Dealing with the Relationship of Christian Faith to the World

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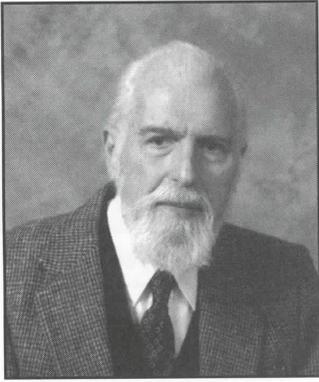
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# The Coming of the Spirit

By Rev. R. J. Rushdoony

(Reprinted from Systematic Theology, Volume 1, pp. 319-323)

**I**n the Old Testament, it is God the Spirit Who is most present. It is He Who speaks through the prophets and holy men, and it is He Who is the comfort and strength of covenant men. The repentant David prayed, "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me" (*Ps. 51:11*). In spite of this, we can speak of the post-resurrection era as the time of the coming of the Holy Spirit. The reason for this appears in our Lord's own words:

7. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away. For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.
8. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:
9. Of sin, because they believe not on me;
10. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;
11. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.
12. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.
13. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he

*will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

*14. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. (Jn. 16:7-14)*

Our Lord speaks plainly of the coming of the Spirit in some unusual sense. He is not here referring to Pentecost, but to something far greater and broader. Our Lord says that He Himself must leave His disciples and this world. It is expedient, profitable, and necessary to bring together the purposes of the Triune God that God the Son leave, and that God the Spirit come. The word translated as *expedient* is *sumphero*, which is used also by Caiaphas in John 11:50. Caiaphas declares that it is expedient or profitable for Christ to be sentenced to death; only so can the purposes of their national history be realized. Our Lord now says that His departure and the Spirit's coming are necessary to God's purposes. Our Lord had previously pointed to that coming and its greatness (*Jn. 7:37-39*). Now, with His atoning work and resurrection completed, the Spirit can come.

The Spirit is called *Parakletos*; the word has reference to an advocate or legal assistant in a court

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of law; such a person is a comforter to one who is accused; he is, however, a prosecutor of the guilty also. Here the Spirit plainly functions as both the Comforter and Advocate of Christ's members, and also as a Judge and Prosecutor of Christ's enemies: "[H]e will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." The word *reprove* is *elencho*, which can mean rebuke, also convict. *The Spirit convicts the world.*

We see here the significance of this coming of the Spirit. The Spirit from creation has been active in creation. Now Christ has come, and He has set forth God's sovereign claim on all men. Jesus came preaching "the gospel of the kingdom of God" (*Mk 1:14f.*). By His death and resurrection, He became the head of the new humanity (*1 Cor. 15:20-50*). Now the Holy Spirit comes to prosecute that witness of Jesus Christ in the hearts of all men.

*First*, He will reprove or *convict* the world. Christ had come, and the world crucified Him. Moreover, it was not the world at its worst that crucified Christ. The Jews were the most moral, the best educated, and the most disciplined people of that era. With all that, they were at heart humanists and sons of Adam, unregenerate sons. The depravity of man was manifested in this fact, that the fallen world, at its best, crucified Christ, and the fallen world since continues to reject Him and to give assent to that judgment by their refusal to know Him as Lord.

Morris' comment on this text is very good:

*The world is guilty, but it requires the Spirit to sheet this home. The Spirit convicts the world in two senses. In the first place He "shows the world to be guilty," i.e., He secures a verdict of "Guilty" against the world. But in the second place we should take the words to mean also that the Spirit brings the world's guilt home to itself. The Spirit convicts the individual sinner's conscience. Otherwise men would never be convicted of their sin.<sup>1</sup>*

Churchmen are too accustomed to seeing the relevance of the faith, of Christ, and of the Spirit to the believer only, forgetting that the relevance is cosmic. Clearly, the coming of the Spirit means that the Old Testament presence is now an expanded and worldwide one. The Spirit will not allow the world to forget Christ; He works in the hearts of all men, including those not yet evangelized, to bring forth conviction, a recognition of their guilt and their rebellion against Almighty God.

*Second*, the world is convicted of sin, because it will not believe on Him (*Jn. 16:9*). The emphasis is on Christ. He is very God of very God, He against Whom mankind is in revolt. The world prefers to

make its sins vague and abstract when sin is personal; it is against God the Son, the incarnate Son, Who came to be the head of the new human race. The world may daydream about a new paradise, but, in all its being and actions, it works to re-create the old Babel and the new Hell. Then and now, the world's best and worst cry out, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (*Lk. 19:14*).

The world would like to forget about Christ, and a sleeping church seems all too ready to help the world to forget Him. The Spirit, however, will not permit it. He convicts the world of sin, all sin, and supremely its sin in relation to Christ.

*Third*, the Spirit convicts the world of righteousness, "because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more" (*Jn. 16:10*). Righteousness and justice are the same words. The world outside of Christ seeks to establish a humanistic doctrine of justice: social justice, human rights, equal rights, etc. All of this is injustice, not justice. Christ's death and resurrection set forth justice; His ascension is the triumphant procession of the King of Justice to His throne. Because man the rebel deserves to die, Christ's death witnesses to the righteousness and binding force of God law for all time. Because Christ arose from the dead, and by His power makes us alive in Him, we know that "the just shall live by faith" (*Rom. 1:17*). Because of His ascension, we know that God's righteousness and law are forever on the throne.

Fourth, the Holy Spirit convicts the world of judgment, *i.e.*, of the reality of God's judgment. The word *judgment* is, in the Greek, *krisis*, separation and division. "The prince of this world," he whom the fallen world sees as its leader in revolt against God, Satan, is judged. The cross and the resurrection are the defeat of Satan and his world.

The world, however, refuses to acknowledge God's judgment, although their entire being witnesses to it; they suppress and hold down that truth in their unrighteousness, their fanatical adherence to injustice (*Rom. 1:18*). They have no liking for Calvin's sentence, "Without judgment there can be no God." They are determined on creating a judgment-free or justice-free world. The philosopher Walter Kaufmann, in his insistence on man's autonomy from God, called for a world *Without Guilt and Justice*.<sup>2</sup> Let there be no conscience and no judgment! Heine's rejection of repentance for sin was a direct insult against God and His righteousness or justice: "The good God will pardon me, for that's His job."<sup>3</sup> Since Heine's day, his sentence has become a half-wit aphorism among the ungodly.

The Holy Spirit makes this judgment on Satan and the ungodly resound in their hearts. Hence the world of the unregenerate is the world of neuroses, psychiatrists, and psychoanalysts. Guilt is declared by Freud to be a primitive relic lingering in man's psyche since the days of the primal horde, but guilt haunts all fallen men as a very present and personal fact. The Holy Spirit convicts men of their need for and their actual judgment by the court of Almighty God.

Up to this point, the work of the Holy Spirit, *i.e.*, convicting men of sin, justice, and judgment, is a work in relationship to the world outside of Christ. Now, our Lord turns to the Spirit's work in relationship to His humanity, the people of the covenant. While Christ is with them, His followers rely on Him, and they cannot bear the thought of separation. He is the Lord, the miracle-worker, and the Savior. They cannot think of life without His physical presence. Until He leaves, they cannot do the "greater works" (*Jn. 14:12*), the worldwide conquest, which is their calling. How shall this be done?

Our Lord declares, *fifth*, that the Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of truth" Who shall guide His people "into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me:

for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (*Jn. 16:13-14*). The Spirit leads men into all *the Truth*, Jesus Christ, (*Jn. 14:6*). The Greek reading, according to Westcott, is "the truth in all its parts."<sup>4</sup> The Spirit's guidance is not of Himself: it expresses the one will of the Triune God.

The Spirit's communication is an amazing one: "whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." Some have limited this to an understanding of "the whole Christian way."<sup>5</sup> No doubt, it seems to some to open the door to unrestricted new prophecies and revelations, and some have indeed so interpreted it. What does it mean? The fall of Adam I is the fall of all the sons of Adam I; the life and righteousness of Adam II [Christ] is the possession by grace of all the sons of Adam II, of all His members. The sons of Adam I cannot transcend Adam I; in the words of Thomas Boston, they cannot leap out of Delilah's lap into Abraham's bosom. Likewise, the sons of Adam II cannot transcend Adam II. Thus, the limits of His word are their limits; there can be no new revelations. There can be and are gifts of wisdom and light which enable men to see the meaning of those words, and their light on our times. To say that "the wages of sin is death" (*Rom. 6:23*) is a very simple and necessary forecast of things to come. To develop its implications fully and specifically in relation to prayerlessness, inflation, ignorance of Scripture and especially of God's law (*Dt. 28*), politics, family life, business, the arts and sciences, and all things else requires "the Spirit of truth." Even more, it requires that we glorify Christ even as the Spirit of truth does.

The coming of the Spirit thus unleashes powerful forces in history, forces of conviction and growth. History cannot be stagnant. The pool of Bethesda had healing only when the angel "troubled the water" (*Jn. 5:4*). Today, the Holy Spirit is troubling the waters of history, as He has since Pentecost. That troubling is conviction and judgment for the ungodly. Churchmen who draw back from the troubled waters remain impotent. Those who in Christ and in the power of the Spirit move into the troubled waters alone know the power of His salvation and victory.

<sup>1</sup> Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1971), 698.

<sup>2</sup> Walter Kaufmann, *Without Guilt and Justice* (New York, NY: Peter Wyden, 1973).

<sup>3</sup> "Ilico," *No More Apologies* (London, England Religious Book Club, 1941), 76f.

<sup>4</sup> B F. Westcott, *The Gospel According to St. John* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans [reprint], 1954), 230.

<sup>5</sup> Morris, *op. cit.*, 701.



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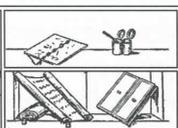
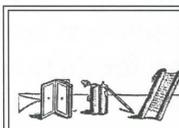
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# Editorial

## Comments 1

By Rev. P. Andrew Sandlin



**Introduction:** Some have suggested that from time to time I include shorter editorial comments rather than the standard article-length editorial. The initial presentation of this arrangement appears below. Feel free to mail or e-mail your comments, suggestions, and criticisms.

### Prophetic Preaching

Over the past twenty years or so, there has been a big emphasis on “expository” or “expositional” preaching. This is the practice of preaching straight through the Bible (or a portion of it) sequentially, exegeting a particular portion and expounding it. This surely is an acceptable way to preach, and it has a long history. For instance, Chrysostom in the ancient church preached this way.

Advocates of this sort of preaching, however, often criticize those who do not preach this way. Anything but their way is considered substandard, or even not preaching at all. But this is hardly the case. In the Bible itself, there are clear examples of this type of preaching. In the Old Testament, Ezra stood up publicly and read the law; and this is an important part of public worship. In the New Testament, Jesus entered the synagogue and commented powerfully on a pre-selected text from the Old Testament to be used for that Sabbath day. None of the sermons recorded in Acts, however, is, strictly speaking, expository. None is “exegetical.” If you look at the sermons of Jesus and Paul and Peter, you will find that they are generally *summaries* of and *applications* of Biblical truth. They did not take a few Old Testament verses and expound them. Rather, their entire life was *suffused* by the Old Testament and, therefore, virtually everything they said in their sermons was Biblically grounded.

Their preaching was Spirit-filled, Old Testament-based, direct, urgent, immediate. It was *prophetic*; they were not speaking what they considered an antiquated word and simply “applying it” to the contemporary situation. Rather, they assumed that the ancient Word

was *designed* for the contemporary situation. This is the sort of preaching that we need today.

Virtually all Biblical preaching is *topical* in the sense that the preacher addresses a specific topic and weaves scriptural truth into his preaching.

Some liberals use the fact that New Testament preachers (and writers) did not quote the Old Testament verbatim as proof that they did not hold what is today termed verbal inspiration. It teaches nothing of the kind. It teaches, rather, that the Old Testament was such a part of their thinking and entire life that they spoke it with ease without any attempt at scholastic accuracy.

### Adults’ “Junior Church”?

A long-time friend and I were recently discussing the frequent practice of many evangelical churches these days of holding a separate “junior church” for children and teenagers during the “adult” worship service. This compounds the error of the “graded Sunday school” with the elimination of covenant children from corporate worship altogether: they never hear the Word of God preached by the minister. There is, of course, no Biblical warrant for this, and plenty of Biblical warrant against it. When the Word of God was publicly declared in the Old Testament era, all members of the church, that is, those within the visible covenant, were to be present, even infants (*Dt. 31:9-13*). In the great Feast of Pentecost and the onrush of the Holy Spirit accompanying Peter’s preaching in Acts 2, it is declared that the promise of salvation is not merely to adults, but to their *children* (v. 39). It is impossible to imagine that the listeners’ children were not present on this occasion. Most or all of the early New Testament churches met in homes. Is it reasonable to suppose that all of the children were shuttled off to a separate section for some other “Old Testament lesson,” while the adults heard a different message? The greatest refutation of this removal of children from public, corporate worship, however, is not even

in the *pattern* we observe in the Bible, but in the *theology* that the Bible communicates: The Bible does not wrench the covenant child from the covenantal context of the visible church. There is no “junior church,” and there is no “junior covenant.” The covenant is one, and the church is one.

I told my long-time friend, “It would perhaps be even more Biblical if the *adults* were dismissed for the preaching of the Word, and the covenant *children* remained to be instructed in the Faith.”

Now there’s an interesting idea.

## Civil Asset Forfeiture

Some of the most evil laws ever devised are the so-called “civil asset forfeiture” laws, both federal and state. The premise of these laws is the perverse doctrine of “eminent domain,” that the state ultimately owns everything. As an entirely logical implication of eminent domain, civil asset forfeiture means that property used in suspected illegal acts may (or must) be forfeited to the state. The eye of this antinomian hurricane is the Great War on Drugs, which in actuality is The Great War on Citizens and their Property. In many states, property used — or thought to be used — in the commission of drug-related crimes can simply be seized by federal or state authorities — this means your car,

your boat, even your house. The horror stories of how these wicked laws have destroyed peoples’ lives are too legion to mention here.

The Bible teaches that the earth and all property ultimately belong to God, not the state (*Ps. 24:1*). God has placed earthly property into the hands of man, His creature made in His image (*Ps. 8*). Man is the *steward* of God’s property. In the Bible, property is owned by individuals or families. The state may legitimately own very little property, in fact, no more than can be purchased by a miniscule poll tax (*Ex. 30:11-16*). The state today is a thieving institution that must be put back into its place.

State stealing is still stealing.

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(Rom-16:20a)

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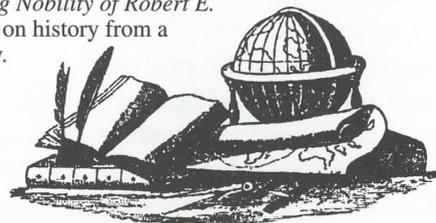
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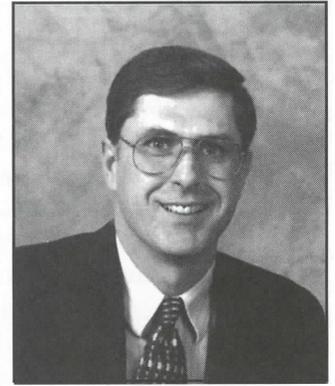
**HERB TITUS** is a former law school dean at Regent University. He is currently a practicing attorney, specializing in constitutional litigation and strategy. He has lectured throughout the United States, hosted a radio program, and authored the book, *God, Man and Law: The Biblical Principles*. He will speak on the first amendment from a Christian worldview.

**STEVE WILKINS** pastors in Monroe, Louisiana. He is author of the tape series, *America: The First 350 Years* and a book, *Call of Duty: The Sterling Nobility of Robert E. Lee*. He will lecture on history from a Christian worldview.



# Causality vs. Regeneration

By  
Rev. Mark R. Rushdoony



It is difficult for the modern mind to accept the possibility of substantive revival and lasting reformation. Christians are not immune from the modern tendency to limit their thinking to strict causality, the idea that every effect has a specific cause.<sup>1</sup> The history of Karl Marx, the biology of Charles Darwin, and the psychology of Sigmund Freud are all based on an evolutionary view that sees all development as a long string of effects based on prior causes. Man is viewed as a product of these environmentally determined causes. Man is then no more than a particular effect of a series of biological, social, and historical processes.

Such naturalism sees no place for the divine or miraculous. Life is seen only in terms of the conditions and experiences of the present and past. To the Indian way of thinking, man is so completely controlled by his past that the sum total of all his effects, his Karma, is inescapable. He might go through many reincarnations in an attempt to work out the burden of his Karma before he escapes into Nirvana, which is not seen as a type of heaven, but as oblivion. Man, in such a view, can escape causality only by means of integration into nothingness. The West has sought to escape its perceived burden of causality in other ways, such as Marx's revolution, the Darwinist's use of science as a tool of control, and psychiatry's attempts to control thought and consequent behavior.

When Christ told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (*Jn. 3:3*), He offered an alternative to blind causality. Nicodemus was naturally incredulous. His response to the idea of a new birth and a new citizenship was, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" Nicodemus did not see how a man could become a new man, how he could undo all that he was and all the effects of the causes which made him what he was.

Nicodemus did not merely have trouble with a new theological term, *born again*, but with the idea

of regeneration. How can a man have a new beginning, a fresh start, as Christ's language implied? It was not just the biological impossibility that Nicodemus questioned but the idea that this new birth could really remake a man into a citizen of the kingdom of which Christ spoke.

Christianity is about regeneration, God's putting new life into men's cold, dead souls. The regenerate is no longer the sum of what made him what he was, but is a new creature in Christ, ethically a new man. Christianity is based on regeneration, on God's changing men from what they are in themselves and their context to what He would have them be. Christianity sees God as the primary cause and redeemed man, restored to fellowship, as exercising dominion under Him in His Kingdom. Environment (as in Freud and Darwin) or historical process (as in Marx), when made ultimate, make men perpetual victims. Dominion men, under God, can be more than conquerors through Jesus Christ and His salvation. Christ was speaking to Nicodemus of regeneration, a new life as a new man because God, as the primary cause, supersedes simple causality.

The new birth makes new men, new creatures who are enabled by God's Spirit to serve their Redeemer. This regeneration is the beginning of man's restoration, the starting point of man's life of faith. Is it not to be viewed as the end point of God's dealing with the regenerate in this life? Man, Christ told Nicodemus, was born again to be a citizen of the kingdom of God. Citizenship has its loyalties, duties, and an obligation of law-keeping. These responsibilities are more pronounced when the Sovereign of the kingdom is under attack by those who would dethrone Him and elevate another.

Unregenerate man can see and know the facts of Christ's work, but they mean nothing to him without the Holy Spirit's supernatural power of regeneration. This puts our status, that of the church, and the kingdom of God within the realm of God's eternal decree. If we see our own salvation as

*Such reform and revival must not, therefore, be anticipated as future effects of human causation, but of God's eternal will. God is in the business of changing men. When He ordains it, they will believe and repent.*

the will and act of God, we must view reform and revival as coming from God and not as the effect of primarily human causation. Such reform and revival must not, therefore, be anticipated as future effects of human causation, but of God's eternal will. God is in the business of changing men. When He ordains it, they will believe and repent. To look at the world or the church and somehow project the potential for revival and reformation as one would project potential sales or population growth is to claim the ultimacy of human causality rather than God's regeneration. If you believe your regeneration to repentance and faith was solely by the power of God, you must believe in this power as the sole determiner of all men's regeneration.

If we believe in God as the first and primary cause, we will believe that great things are possible; to believe otherwise is to deny God's regenerating power. Moreover, if we believe that our salvation is an objective legal status before a very real God, we

will believe in the objective reality of God as the ultimate cause of all things, including the future of men and nations. Marx, Darwin, and Freud saw man and his environment as the limits of causality. They trapped man in a world of their own perceived limits. God frees men by regeneration and makes them new creatures in Jesus Christ. Before we can believe in reformation and revival, we must believe in God's miraculous regenerating power.

<sup>1</sup> R. J. Rushdoony, *The Biblical Philosophy of History* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2000). See Chap. 4, "Regeneration and History," for a discussion of causality vs. regeneration as it applies to history.

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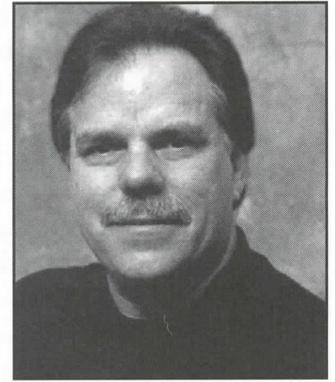
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*"That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things which is the head, even Christ." Ephesians 4:14*

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# Authentic Reformation and Revival in Northern Iraq

By Rev. Douglas Layton



**R**eformation and revival have not only been redefined or confined to the status of historical footnote, but in many cases relegated to the realm of the impossible. This is especially true when referring to what are commonly known as “unreached nations” or “closed countries” such as we find in the Islamic world. It does not even cross the mind of most pastors that a Muslim country might become “Christian” and radically transformed. They either do not believe it is their job to undertake this task in Muslim nations, or they simply do not believe it possible. They reason that to see true revival and reformation is difficult enough in a country like America which has strong democratic institutions, but is far more difficult where the entire society is built around an anti-Christ religion such as Islam. Couple this with the fact that Muslims tend to be rather violent when one tries to change their society, and you have an impossible situation — or so we are told.

There are some things we must remember: the thought of whole nations in the Islamic world embracing Christ and making His laws and commands pre-eminent does “cross God’s mind.” God is not merely interested in the redemption of individuals, but in the transformation of each element of the society in which godly individuals reside. He not only desires this for America but for every nation on earth. “Disciple the nations” is the great commission. Since this is the command of God to the church, it must, therefore, be possible. We forget that many Islamic nations were once Christian. Many experienced reformation and revival long before there was a Great Awakening in America or a German or Swiss Reformation. Luther and Calvin had yet to be born when whole nations we now call Turkey, Syria, and Egypt were important centers of a vital Christian faith. Can it be so again?

After nearly thirty years of mission experience in the Muslim world, I am totally convinced we can see the spiritual awakening of whole Islamic societies and that we must be “missionary” reformers in the true sense of the word. When the mission I direct starts working in a country, we are not merely interested in winning some

souls to Christ, planting a church, or doing some social work. While these are all noble and needed, we believe a far higher goal should motivate every missionary endeavor — the complete reformation of society. Such was our goal when we began work in Northern Iraq (Kurdistan) at the end of the Gulf War. In 1992 there was no living church in the region. There were virtually no true believers; and because Saddam Hussein controlled Northern Iraq, there was no missionary activity.

I have discovered a very important truth about God — He is very smart. God has a strategy which, if followed by God’s people, will result in the destruction of Satan’s grip on the Muslims of the world. Northern Iraq is a perfect example of God’s strategy. In 2001, ten years after the end of Desert Storm, very little has changed in the Middle East. Saddam remains in power. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait continue to be vulnerable. Only one thing has changed — the Kurds of Northern Iraq are in a protected zone in the northern region of their country, and are now free from the dictatorship of Saddam. An entire nation of people — known to the world as the “People without a Friend” — became wards of America at the conclusion of the Gulf War. They had no schools. The art community was devastated. Business was annihilated. Food was gone. There was no medicine. Everything was in ruin.

My brother, a colonel in the army, became deputy commander of Operation Provide Comfort, the project aimed at saving the Kurds of Northern Iraq. He invited me to see the undertaking up close. So, wondering what God was up to, I went. I have worked for many years in the Muslim world and never seen an opening like this one, a whole nation in the heart of the Middle East ripe for the gospel.

The Kurds had been told by Saddam Hussein that Allah (the Islamic name for God) had ordered him in a dream to utterly destroy them. He announced on radio and TV that Allah had given him an “anfāl,” a Koranic term meaning permission to destroy, against the four million Kurds of his country. Saddam Hussein then became the first person in history to use

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chemical weapons against his own people. He ordered his army to “kill every man, woman, child, beast, plant, and living thing” in the Kurdish area of Northern Iraq. The rest of the Muslim world stood by while he attempted to fulfill this mandate from Allah. But America, at least thought of as a Christian nation, stepped in and offered protection, and soon many church-affiliated organizations arrived to serve in practical, meaningful ways. As a result, the Kurds became the Muslim world’s most receptive group to Christianity overnight. Many Kurds now hate Islam and are searching for truth.

After realizing the vital role the Kurds might play in God’s scheme of things, I wrote *The Kurds in the Bible*, which tells their true Biblical history (they are descendants of the ancient Medes) and recounts some of their past encounters with God. It instantly became one of the most popular books in the Kurdish world. There are now 85,000 copies in print and requests for hundreds of thousands more.

We then sought a place of service that would make us indispensable to the nation. The Kurds suffered terrible genocide at the hands of Saddam Hussein. They were afraid America would abandon them and leave them to die. I began to speak on their behalf in churches across America, asking everyone not only to pray but also to call or write their congressmen to seek protection for the Kurds. I even testified on their behalf before the U.S. Senate. After several years I became close friends with many Kurdish leaders.

I was once asked by the Kurds’ president what I wanted in exchange for my help. I told him all I wanted was the right for his people to worship and serve God in the manner their consciences dictated. He told me that was fair enough and promised religious freedom. There is now no Muslim region with more religious freedom than Northern Iraq.

As things stand, the number of believers in Kurdistan has grown from zero in 1991 to hundreds in 2001. There are Christian fellowships in every major city, five Christian bookstores, and four Christian printing presses. The “Jesus Film” has been shown on national TV and the book *Kurds in the Bible* was made into a three-week prime-time television special. We broadcast nationwide Christian radio programs eight hours a day, and the government has given us large tracts of land for churches and Christian ministry centers.

Most exciting is the new classical Christian school system we are establishing in all the major cities of the nation. This is being accomplished in collaboration with Dr. George Grant and the Franklin Classical School in Tennessee. Because their education system was destroyed in the war, Kurdish leaders were thrilled

when we offered to set up this American school system, even though it is run by the church and teaches the Bible. In fact, all the leaders asked us to enroll their children; hence, we are now educating the future leaders of the nation. Following is a letter from one of our missionaries when the first school was opened:

*The most difficult part of starting this school had to have been the selection process! We definitely learned our lesson to not give out so many forms. The response to the school was overwhelming. I literally had people chasing me down to get a form for their son or daughter. The level of education and social status of the parents who applied for their children was really remarkable. We had just about every doctor, many university directors, engineers, and cabinet ministers, as well as the President’s assistants. We made the best possible judgment for our first students and posted it on the Ministry of Education’s announcement board. On the day after the announcement, Abram (one of our pastors) was at the Medical University and found himself surrounded by a group of doctors and the directors of the university. They were asking him questions and talking about their children. One doctor whose son had been accepted said “my son was up all night praying in the name of the holy Quran (Muslim scriptures) that he would be accepted.” Abram said “Well tell him to get ready, tomorrow he will be going to school and studying the Bible!” ...all the doctors burst out laughing.*

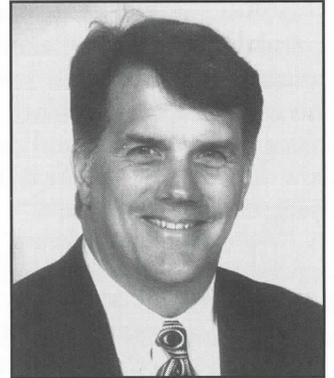
We believe we will one day control the entire education system of the nation. From there we will move on, with God’s guidance, to other spheres of society until all reflect His glory. Yes, we can see true revival and reformation in the nations if we want to and are willing to pay the price. Christians of vision before us have witnessed it, and there is no reason why we cannot see it again today. God is opening doors. We have access through the Holy Spirit to the mind of Christ and, with God’s strategies, nothing is impossible. We want America to be a righteous, God-fearing nation again, but the Lord wants all nations to be righteous and God-fearing — including those in the Muslim world.

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*Douglas Layton is an ordained minister who lives in Nashville, Tennessee, with his wife Marilyn and two children, Robbie and Anne. He has served the Lord in missions for the past 30 years and traveled extensively in more than 40 countries. Mr. Layton has written several books and teaches throughout the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. He currently serves as director of Servant Group International, a mission working to protect and enable pastors, believers, and churches in traditionally Muslim countries to impact their nations with the gospel. He can be contacted at [info@servantgroup.org](mailto:info@servantgroup.org).*

# Jonathan Edwards and Spiritual Experiences

By Rev. Monte E. Wilson III



Many people arrive at church as if they were about to embark on a sanitized and boring packaged tour of an ancient religious ritual. They behave as if the relevance of these rituals for today's worshipers can be appreciated only by those who specialize in archeological digs through the musty liturgical practices of people who were best forgotten. An alien watching from above would have no idea that these Christians have any concept of stepping into the special presence of God Almighty: a God Whose majesty, glory, and power are so infinite in holiness and all perfection that, if He revealed too much of Himself to fragile humans, they would be reduced to drooling, vegetable-brained idiots. No, if Christians really believed that they stood before the throne of Jesus Christ, surrounded with angels and archangels, joined to the Church Triumphant in heaven and the Church Militant throughout the world, they wouldn't show up in their Sunday best but with crash helmets, kneepads, and first-aid kits.

Consider. Moses sees God, kicks his shoes off, and starts stammering about how God should send Aaron. After conversing with the Law-Giver on the mountain, Moses returns to the people and they beg him to veil his face: the reflected glory is just too much for them to bear. Isaiah sees God, crawls under a church pew, and begins blubbering about how he needs his scummy mouth washed out. Jeremiah hears God and tells the Almighty that he's just a kid and not up for the rough and tumble life of a prophet. Paul hears God, is knocked off of his donkey, and blinded by the light of glory. John is taken up into heaven and, upon meeting the angelic messenger, he falls on his face as dead. These are not pretty pictures. People "see" God and they are struck with terror. Holy God, plus sinful me, equals...dead me.

Tragically, Christians have historically gone through long periods of time where they forget Who God is. We then begin relating to Him primarily on a purely intellectual plane. He is a theological concept or proposition. Or, if we do think of Him as a Person, we reflect upon Him as a far distant uncle who has gone away and won't return for years and years...we hope. There are few thoughts of "seeing" Him or of encountering Him in any way whatsoever. Consequently,

rather than being the living, breathing Body of Christ, the institutional church becomes a club, a classroom, or an entertainment center. We become heartless, powerless, savorless, and Christ-less. Amazingly enough, from time to time God in His mercy and wisdom pours out His Holy Spirit upon us, who, upon getting reacquainted with Him, are then revived from our stupor. This is when we break out the crash helmets.

Sadly, many Christians today have been taught that spiritual experiences (you know, when the individual actually feeeeeels God's presence moving within) and any accompanying supernatural events ceased when St. John died. One well-known theologian even wrote that emotions came when Adam fell into sin. God, he writes, is Pure Thought. No emotion. Great. Like science officer Spock in *Star Trek*, our God is a Vulcan. ("This is not life as we know it, Jim.") Contrary to this theologian who is smuggling stoicism into the church under the guise of Biblical theology, I believe the Bible teaches that where there is no moving of the affections and no religious experience whatsoever, there is probably no true faith. As Jonathan Edwards wrote:

*As there is no true religion where there is nothing else but affection, so there is no true religion where there is no religious affection. As on the one hand, there must be light in the understanding, as well as an affected fervent heart; or where there is heat without light, there can be nothing divine or heavenly in the heart; so, on the other hand, where there is a kind of light without heat, a head stored with notions and speculations with a cold and unaffected heart, there can be nothing divine in that light, that knowledge is no true spiritual knowledge of divine things. If the great things of religion are rightly understood, they will affect the heart.*

*(On Religious Affections, Section III.I)*

Revivals produce emotions. Conviction of sin, thoughts of eternity without God, the offer of grace in Jesus Christ — can I truly grasp these realities and not have my emotions stirred? Am I going to stand in the presence of God and say, "My...isn't this interesting?"

The problem is, how do I know if a particular experience is from God or not? How can we differentiate between authentic and spurious spiritual experiences?

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There are counterfeits, demonic experiences, and psychological disorders. When someone announces that God is pouring out His Spirit in Toronto, how can we know if this is the case or not? When people by the thousands are falling down laughing and calling it a gift from God, how do we know if, in fact, this is the Holy Spirit or an epidemic of mental illness?

“Monte, Monte, Monte. It’s easy. If the religious experience causes me to feel intensely spiritual, then I know it is God.” Not really. This doesn’t tell us anything one way or the other. Such intensity can easily be self-induced. However, even if it is not self-induced, the experience could be the result of mass hysteria, an evil spirit, or some other source than God.

“But the experience made me praise God as I have never praised Him before.” All right, I believe you. But such behavior does not prove one way or the other that one’s experience is of God. Remember how the crowds yelled, “Hosanna to the Highest!” as Jesus rode through the streets on a donkey? Less than seven days later they were yelling, “Crucify him.” So much for the experience that led to their praise the week before.

“Okay, okay, okay... I know. If the experience is accompanied with Bible verses flooding the brain, it has to be from God.” No, it doesn’t. I have heard cult members spouting scores of verses while claiming to be moved by the Holy Spirit — and they denied Jesus was God!

“I know my experience is from God because it happened while I was reading the Bible.” Maybe yes, maybe no. This proves nothing. Many of us have had some fairly ludicrous thoughts and emotions spring into consciousness while reading the Bible.

“But my body went rigid/limp on the floor.” And? What does this prove? The same physical manifestations happen in séances. By the way, one of Edwards’ tests for true spiritual experiences was this: if the experience can be found in the Scriptures then it may be of God. If the experience is not mirrored somewhere in the Bible, it isn’t from God.

“What about feelings of love?” I know this may shock some of you, but this proves nothing, one way or the other. Most of us have met some very loving New Agers.

“Zealous attention to religious duties?” Maybe yes, maybe no. The Pharisees were zealous in their attention to religious duties.

“I’ve got it. When you know right down in the *bottom of your knower* that this is the work of God, then it is, in fact, the Holy Spirit.” Confidence proves nothing. We have all been confident of certain “words” or “impressions” or “leadings” only later to be embarrassed. No one is more confident than a fool.

One of Edwards’ great concerns as a pastor during the Great Awakening was that, in the middle of all the supposed manifestations of God’s presence, people were losing one of the key ingredients of holiness: self-distrust. When we begin thinking that we are so spiritual that we cannot be deceived, then we are in trouble. No one is above deception. The heart is deceitfully wicked. It will jump to defend

our pride, ridicule those who question us, and justify any experience or belief we feel necessary to our ego.

Edwards and the evangelist George Whitefield both constantly warned of wild fire. “Satan will keep men secure as long as he can. But when he cannot do this he will endeavor to drive men to extremes so to dishonor God and wound religion” (Edwards). People who are used by the enemy to sow wild fire through fantastic experiences, words from God, and the like most often believe that they are being led of the Holy Spirit. The fact that they lack sobriety and self-distrust should sound a loud alarm to all who encounter them.

## On Religious Affections

In our nation’s infancy, there was a tremendous outpouring of God’s Spirit, now referred to as the First Great Awakening. George Whitefield preached up and down the seaboard to scores of thousands of people. Thousands professed to have been converted by God’s grace and faith in Jesus Christ. Early on in his meetings, as well as in those of other ministers, there were physical manifestations such as crying out and falling down.

Upon hearing of these phenomena, pastors in Great Britain wrote Jonathan Edwards, pastor of a Congregational church in Massachusetts, about what was happening. Edwards was a leader in the Great Awakening and highly respected on both sides of the Atlantic. He is considered by both Christian and non-Christian historians to possess one of the greatest minds ever produced in the United States. It was under his ministry that the Great Awakening began, when he preached what is now one of the most famous sermons ever delivered, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.”

Edwards was a perfect choice from which to seek an evaluation of what was happening. He was witnessing the revival first hand. As a pastor, he would be concerned with long-term fruit. As a theologian, he would be sensitive to orthodoxy and orthopraxy. And Jonathan was no frothing-at-the-mouth Pentecostal ranter. In fact, he read many of his sermons from a manuscript.

Edwards’ answer to the questions put to him about the Great Awakening and the accompanying physical manifestations is found in “A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections.” (My copy of the treatise is found in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Volume I, and was published by Banner of Truth, 1979.) The arguments that I recited in the beginning of this article were basically taken from Edwards’ insights in this treatise.

Before we look at Edwards’ arguments and see how critical it is that revivals remain grounded to the Word of God, it is critical that we understand the spirit in which Edwards’ wrote:

*The true saints have not such a spirit of discerning, that they can certainly determine who are godly, and who are not. For though they know experimentally what true religion is, in the eternal exercises of it; yet these are what*

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*they neither feel nor see, in the heart of another. There is nothing in others, that comes within their view, but outward manifestations and appearances: but the Scripture plainly intimates, that this way of judging what is in men by outward appearances is at best uncertain and liable to deceit. . . . They commonly are but poor judges and dangerous counselors in soul cases, who are quick to and peremptory in determining persons' states, vaunting themselves in their extraordinary faculty of discerning and distinguishing, in these great affairs: as though all were open and clear to them. They betray one of these three things: either that they have had but little experience; or are persons of a weak judgment; or that they have a great degree of pride and self-confidence, and are so ignorant of themselves. Wise and experienced men will proceed with great caution in such an affair. (Part II, Section XII)*

### **“Showing What Are Distinguishing Signs of Truly Gracious and Holy Affections.”**

*True religious affections (experiences) are grounded in Who God is, not what He has done or will do. True affections are founded on the moral excellency of divine things, not on any conceived relation they bear to self, or self-interest. (Sections I,II,III)*

Someone who has truly had a converting experience will have, as his foundational commitment, a dedication to glorifying God as God because He is God, regardless of what happens to the person. Holy people love holy things primarily because they are holy, not because these things will make the person healthy, wealthy, and wise.

Edwards opens his *Treatise* by noting the importance of trials to testing our alleged experiences. Not only does the trial cause the difference between false religion and true religion to appear, it also reveals the genuine “beauty and amiableness” of true faith. Those who profess to have experienced God but who wither and die under trials are proven to be that stony ground to which Jesus referred.

### **“Gracious affections arise from the mind being enlightened rightly and spiritually to apprehend divine things.” (Section IV)**

*Holy affections are not heat without light; but evermore arise from some information of the understanding, some spiritual instruction that the mind receives, some light or actual knowledge.*

Edwards is saying here that the soul rises according to the level of enlightenment. Read of Jesus' discussion with the two disciples after His resurrection (Lk. 24). What “warmed” their hearts? It was when He opened the Word of God to them.

If you wish to have deeper experiences with God, “to increase in heat,” then you must walk in the

“light.” Seek God in the Scriptures: don't seek experiences for experience's sake.

### **“Gracious affections are attended with evangelical humiliation.” (Section VI)**

Note the word “evangelical.” Edwards has rightly discerned that there are other forms of humility. False experiences engender pride masquerading as humility. “Look at my experiences. Am I not honored, special, holy, approved of?” Edwards' rebuke is right on the mark here: these people are “full of the glory of their own humility.”

*And, when, instead of keeping their eye on God's glory, and Christ's excellency, they turn it on themselves. They entertain their minds by viewing their own attainments, their high experiences and the great things they have met with, which are bright and beautiful in their own eyes. They are rich and increased in goods in their own apprehensions, and think that God has an admiring esteem of them, on the same account, as they have of themselves. This is living on experiences, and not on Christ; and is more abominable in the sight of God than the gross immoralities of those who make no pretense of religion. (Part II, Section XI)*

*However he may use humble terms, and speak of his experiences as of the great things God has done for him, and it may be calls upon others to glorify God for them: yet he that is proud of his experiences, arrogates something to himself, as though his experiences were some dignity of his. And if he looks on them as his own dignity, he necessarily thinks that God looks on them so too. . . . (Part III, Section VI)*

When God grants some conscious measure of His presence, we are humbled. We become more teachable, more concerned with the welfare of others, and filled with greater courage to stand for the truth, whatever the cost to our own reputation. Moreover, the more we see of God in the light of this experience, the more we see our misery, shortcomings, and sinfulness. Think back to Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Paul, and John.

### **“True religious affections are attended with a change of nature.” (Part III, Section VII)**

Those who have experienced God in a saving manner are said to have been born again, converted, raised from the dead, transformed, partaken of the divine nature, dead to sin, raised to newness of life, and so forth. This will be true of all subsequent authentic spiritual experiences: the process of transformation will be continued.

**“Another thing wherein those affections that are truly gracious and holy differ from those which are false is beautiful symmetry and proportion.” (Part III, Section X)**

If our experiences do not cause us to grow proportionately, something is wrong. Consider the infant whose head keeps growing at a rapid rate while the body remains quite small. Or what of the heart that is enlarged and the brain remains the size of a thimble? Not a picture of health, is it? And yet how often is this the case with so many who claim to have incredible experiences with God?

*[T]he higher gracious affections are raised, the more is a spiritual appetite and longing of the soul after spiritual attainments increased: on the contrary, false affections rest satisfied in themselves. (Part III, Section XI)*

The more we “see” Him, the more we wish to be like Him. The more we love Him, the more we wish to love Him. The further up in God we go, the more we are aware of how far we still have to go.

During Pentecost, the Apostles were blessed with a special outpouring of God’s presence. However, two chapters later they are back in another upper room begging God for more. The filling of the Holy Spirit is not like a bow that with single propulsion speeds the arrow toward the target. It is more akin to the winds of the sea, continually moving the boat toward its destination.

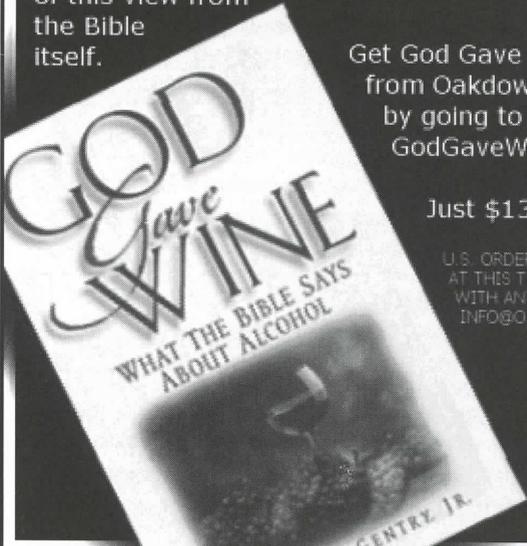
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**“Gracious and holy affections have their exercise and fruit in Christian practice.” (Part III, Section XI)**

People who have encountered God increase in their obedience quotient. When the Spirit fell at Pentecost, the crowd cried out, “What must we *do*?” The Holy Spirit makes us witnesses in word and deed. Paul never mentions passivity as a fruit of the Spirit! Works are both a testimony to our conscience (1 Jn. 2:3) and to the world (light, salt, leaven). Wherever the Great Awakening erupted, orphanages, hospitals, and schools followed. In the end, the only way to know if our experience is from God is the fruit such experiences produce for the glory of God (Jn. 15).

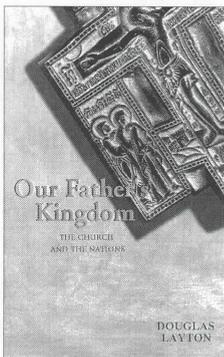
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P. Andrew Sandlin

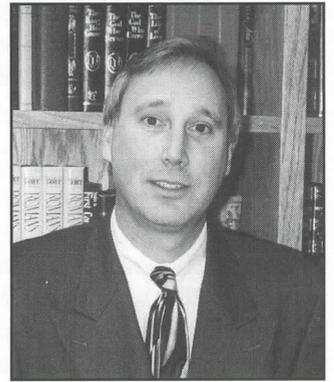
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# The Financial Value of God's Law

## Part Two: Marriage Laws

By Rev. Craig R. Dumont, Sr.



*Macroeconomics: The study of the overall aspects and workings of a national economy, such as income, output, and the interrelationship among diverse economic sectors.*

*Microeconomics: The study of the operations of the components of a national economy, such as individual firms, households, and consumers.*

*It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is right for him.... So the Lord God caused him to fall into a deep sleep. While the man was sleeping, the Lord God took out one of the man's ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. Then the Lord God formed a woman from the rib that He had taken from the man. He brought her to the man. The man said, 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She will be named woman because she was taken from man'; That is why a man will leave his father and mother and will be united with his wife, and they will become one flesh. Genesis 2:18-24*

*But remember the Lord your God is the one who makes you wealthy. He's confirming the promise which He swore to your ancestors. It is still in effect today. Deuteronomy 8:18*

Last month I wrote of the financial value of God's law on a macroeconomic scale as I focused on property laws and national wealth production. De Soto, in his marvelous book, *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs In The West And Fails Everywhere Else*, proves beyond doubt that when nations implement God's laws, they financially flourish and witness unprecedented capital formation and corresponding wealth generation.

This month I want to look at the financial value of God's law on the microeconomic scale; specifically, how Biblical marriage laws enhance the financial well-being of individual households through greater earnings, power, and wealth accumulation.

In a book that Harvard University found unfit to print,<sup>1</sup> Linda J. Waite and Maggie Gallagher, the authors of *The Case For Marriage*, build an exhaustive and irrefutable case that married people are "happier, healthier and better off financially," than either single people or those couples who are cohabiting without the benefits of marriage. This is heresy in a culture that hates God's law

and demands the right to "do what is right in their own eyes" and professes to be able to create a lawless utopia.

Indeed, Waite and Gallagher prove that marriage is not equal to "alternative lifestyles," but qualitatively exceeds them by statistically significant margins. Even as "cohabitators began demanding the sexual and social rights of the married [and] courts became increasingly sympathetic to the view that it is unconstitutional discrimination to treat married and unmarried couples differently [and as] welfare and public-housing policy created marriage penalties ... and wider social institutions have all increased their approval of divorce dramatically," *The Case For Marriage* empirically demonstrates that people who get and stay married will earn more, keep more, and pass on more wealth than those who reject marriage.

In their chapter titled "The Wages of Wedlock," the authors cite study after study proving that "marriage itself makes men more successful. In fact, when it comes to earnings, for men, getting and keeping a wife may be as important as getting an education."<sup>2</sup> One survey shows that the average millionaire has been married to the same woman for twenty-eight years and "Ninety-two percent of the millionaire households in America are composed of a married couple, and these millionaire couples have less than one-third the divorce rate of nonmillionaire couples, [therefore] we can conclude that here is another factor that distinguishes the millionaire mind — the ability to choose the right mate for life. Being divorced doesn't exclude one from becoming and remaining a millionaire — it just makes it significantly more difficult."<sup>3</sup>

Again, pointing to numerous studies, Waite and Gallagher note that "the wage premium married men receive is one of the most well-documented phenomena in social science. Husbands earn at least 10 percent more than single men do and perhaps as high as 40 percent more. The longer men stay married, the fatter their paychecks get, relative to single men's earning power." Of course this means that wives too "are financially better off than single women, despite wives' lower personal earnings, because they share their husbands' earnings."

This is not simply an American phenomenon, but is true in every country studied. Economist Robert Schoeni has done extensive work in comparing men's earnings in 14 developed countries and has concluded "married men earn much more than unmarried men." In the U.S., the earnings margin between married men and those who had never married was

an astounding 30 percent! Further, “the longer men are married, the bigger the wage premium they receive ... *For the male worker, a wife is a secret weapon, giving him, over time, a powerful competitive advantage over his unmarried coworkers.*” (Emphasis supplied.)

Tellingly, the financial outlook of a man changes according to how steady his marriage is. For instance, when a marriage breaks down, the husband’s wage premium erodes, while a married man’s earnings’ advantage is largest where his marriage is most secure which, as Waite and Gallagher write, provides “further evidence that something about being married leads to higher earnings.”

I need to point out that it’s not just single people who come up financially short compared to their married counterparts,<sup>4</sup> but those who “cohabit” (*i.e.*, live in open sin flouting their fornication) cannot compete financially either. “Cohabitation produces some, but not all, of the benefits of marriage for men.” [Actually it produces very few of the benefits. CRD] According to economist Kermit Daniel, “[C]ohabiting men receive just half the earning premium of marriage.” As the authors point out, most cohabitations are relatively short-lived (two years or less) and are constructed upon the sexual relationship alone, which means it is inherently self-centered. Cohabitation’s biggest attraction is that there are no well-defined responsibilities, hence there is no need to plan for the future. This means that cohabitation produces an existential relationship where the “partners” “have a shorter time horizon than spouses do.” Of course, one of the defining characteristics of people who have accumulated a high net wealth is the ability to think and act long term. “Most millionaires look to the future. They are very likely to compute the lifetime costs and benefits of various activities.”<sup>5</sup>

Thomas J. Stanley, in his highly touted book, *The Millionaire Mind*, has an entire section dedicated to the choice of a spouse and one subsection entitled, “The Economic Productivity of Marriage.” Here he writes:

*Studies have consistently found a significant correlation between length of marriage and wealth accumulation. One study of over twelve thousand respondents is particularly illuminating (Janet Wilmoth and Gregor Koso, Does Marital History Matter? The Effect of Marital Status on Wealth Outcomes Among Pre-retirement Age Adults). The authors found that “consistent participation in marriage results in significantly higher wealth.” Conversely, those people who are not married continuously over time have a propensity to accumulate lower levels of wealth during their adult life cycle.... The positive correlation between length of marriage and level of wealth is very strong and holds true throughout all education and income groups in America.*<sup>6</sup>

One important direct result of long-term commitment, responsibility, and planning within the marriage covenant is a finely tuned version of the division of labor, or as Waite and Gallagher put it, the “power of specialization.” This power of specialization is as profitable within a family as it is within a company:

*Married men earn more because, within marriage, they specialize in making money. Even when wives work full-time at demanding careers, they typically do the vast*

*majority of the housework, child care, and family work, arranging holidays and family events, keeping in touch with family and friends. As a result, almost all husbands specialize to some extent in earning money — they do more of the earning and less of everything else than do wives. So married men have more time to devote to work because of their wives’ time and effort getting dinner, doing the laundry, and driving the car pool to soccer. Economic theory argues that this is one reason that husbands make more money: They specialize, with the support of their wives, in earnings.... Married people, who can take advantage of specialization are more productive together than either would be as a single individual. The power of specialization applies not only to goods that are produced and traded in the marketplace (*i.e.*, earnings) but goods that are produced and consumed within the household. Both kinds of production can increase a couple’s net worth....<sup>7</sup>*

Again, Stanley confirms this premise when he writes:

*What is it about marital status that affects one’s level of wealth? According to the research conducted by Wilmoth and Koso, legal marriages have certain institutionalized features that are conducive to accumulating wealth, an important one being the division of labor within the marital relationship.*<sup>8</sup>

Waite and Gallagher follow up their “division of labor” passage with this simple yet powerful observation that seems to elude common sense these days: “The close working relationship between a man and a woman in marriage seems key to increasing men’s earnings.” In the absence of a Christian culture which understands and emphasizes the harmony of interests (husbands and wives are called by God to develop and share a close working relationship because their goals are in harmony with one another for the glory of God; they are not to view marriage relationships as zero-sum conflicts), the authors of *The Case For Marriage* stick out like a rose among the thorns. Harvard, which has ceased to function as a “university” (which implies “a harmony of interests”), now strives for “multi-versity” status by viewing and promoting conflict as the foundation for progress and has a natural hatred for any work that demonstrates God’s harmonious design for men and women and the way His perfect law displays His purposes!

God created man and woman to work together in harmony. Indeed, it was God Himself Who declared, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is right for him.” The man immediately saw the harmony to be enjoyed in this relationship as he responded in awe, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She will be named woman because she was taken from man.” All Christians are familiar with the following revelation that Jesus quoted some 4,000 years later: “That is why a man will leave his father and mother and will be united with his wife, and they will become one flesh.” Marriage was and is to be the normative state of living for both men and women. The man was to fulfill the mandate to work and his wife was to be a helpmate, coming up beside him to assist him in his calling. In other words, man was created first for work and

dominion and then given a wife as a blessing in his life. The wife in Proverbs 31 is an incredible helpmate working in harmony with her husband, a woman who truly “builds up her house with her hands” rather than tearing it down. Accomplishing God-appointed work is actually the central (but by no means only) aspect of marriage; therefore, it should not surprise us that financial benefits are so much a part of the marriage covenant!

Man’s work was to be undertaken as one flesh, “yoked together” for life (2 Cor. 6:14). A yoke is a tie that binds two creatures together in pulling burdens, or in doing work. They also share as one in the blessings. The Christian is to do all things to and for the glory of God; so it is within this marriage covenant that God places so many of His blessings, financial and otherwise (indeed, Waite and Gallagher point out that married couples experience dramatically better health, have a far happier sex life, and are happier in all aspects of life than non-married or cohabitating couples). God’s law sets forth lifetime marriages that reap lifetime rewards — remember, the average millionaire couple has been married twenty-eight years with many averaging thirty-eight years.

Marriage is God’s proclaimed institution that provides the means for health, education, and welfare — now testified to so convincingly through the research and writings of authors like Waite, Gallagher, and Stanley. What God orders and institutes, He also sets His blessings upon, and it takes money to provide for the health, education, and welfare of a family. Hence, the institution of marriage is the ordained vehicle, so to speak, that is used by God to generate, accumulate, and pass on wealth.

Further, God gives man His law to protect His divine institution. God’s law declares, “You shall not commit adultery,” and the case laws set up the parameters for legitimate sexual relationships within the covenantal bonds of marriage. While polygamy is recognized and, therefore, dealt with by God’s law (Ex. 21:8-10 and Dt. 21:10-17) as an aspect of man’s sin and fallen status, it is clearly set forth not only in Genesis 1:27 and 2:21-24, but also in Matthew 19:5, 1 Timothy 3:2, and 1 Corinthians 7:2 that monogamy is assumed as the God-ordained standard, bringing stability and continuity to the marriage.

Biblical law likewise recognizes the financial importance of marriage; and one of the first steps in progressing toward marriage is the aspect of man’s putting his money where his mouth (or heart) is through a dowry. The dowry was one year’s wages that a man gave to the father of his bride-to-be as a financial safeguard to her and any children that would come from their union. The bride’s father was to invest the dowry and hold it separately for his daughter either to pass on to her children or to use in case the man divorced her or left her for any reason. Right from the beginning of a marriage, the idea of wealth creation (work) and accumulation (savings) was very important.

The squandering of the dowry was one of the sins of Laban, as was noted by Rachel and Leah in their response to Jacob’s request to leave the land they were in.

*Rachel and Leah answered him, “Is there anything left in our father’s household for us to inherit? Doesn’t he think of us as foreigners? Not only did he sell us, but he has used up*

*the money that was paid for us. Certainly, all the wealth that God took away from our father belongs to us and our children. Now do whatever God has told you.” (Genesis 31:14-16)*

Laban had viewed the dowry as a sale price, which would have made his daughters slaves or foreigners, rather than as the means of protecting his daughters and investing in their future and their children’s future. He had “used up” or squandered the money because he thought it his to use as he pleased, which was not the case, and there was nothing left for his daughters or their children to inherit. For that reason (and others), “God took away” that wealth, a fact clearly recognized by Rachel and Leah.

Briefly we should touch on something that truly magnifies the financial value of God’s law, and in this case I’m using the term “law” not simply as specific “you shall do this” and “you shall not do that,” but rather as God’s entire revelation set forth in His Word. Current wisdom has it that children are wealth consumers and destroyers; therefore, it is more than suggested that if a couple desires to gain in wealth, they should limit the number of children they bring into the world. Waite and Gallagher make one observation in the “Wages of Wedlock” chapter that contradicts this assertion. Research shows, they say, that “the more children a husband had to support, the more productive a worker he was”;<sup>9</sup> therefore, earnings and net worth increased in proportion to the number of children he had.<sup>10</sup> (Thankfully I now have eight. Perhaps this means I can look forward to producing and earning five times more than the average married couple with 1.5 children!)

This is simply a recognition of God’s command to His people to see that:

*Children are an inheritance from the Lord. They are a reward from Him. The children born to a man when he is young are like arrows in the hand of a warrior. Blessed is the man who has filled his quiver with them. He will not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the city gate. (Ps. 127:3-5)*

Integral to the blessings and prosperity of the patriarchs was the promise of many children. One of the benefits that comes with having many children is the responsibility and the opportunity to look further into the future. Just as an archer looks *forward* to where his arrows are being launched, so too does a father *look forward into the future* to where he is “shooting” or aiming his children. All children have their unique gifts and abilities from God, and all have different futures set before them. The wise father will spend time discerning his children’s gifts and abilities and will, therefore, spend time *considering the future* and how they can exercise dominion for Christ. His understanding of and concern for the future means that he invests in his children’s strengths, building up their skills and abilities, all of which contribute to a type of wealth creation and formulation that cannot be confiscated. The more children a man works with in envisioning the future, the more productive he becomes simply because he spends more time thinking, planning, and working for that future.

*God's laws are beautiful to behold  
and hold a financial value that we  
should not overlook.*

It cannot be overstated that the more future-oriented a man (or married couple) is, the more likely it is that wealth will accumulate. As R. J. Rushdoony points out, "Work, the ability to work productively and *with foresight*, is an aspect of our natural inheritance as men created in the image of God. Because in fallen man this ability is afflicted by the curse, it is a supernatural inheritance when with our redemption and obedience work is again under a blessing. *Work then becomes a blessing which inherits blessings (Dt. 28:1-14, emphasis supplied).*"<sup>11</sup> In other words, as Christians we work for the future benefit of our children so they may extend God's kingdom, but even as we sow into them (future orientation), God has made them an inheritance (present reward) for us.

God's laws are beautiful to behold and hold a financial value that we should not overlook. When the best-selling books in the nation extol His laws as the paths to prosperity and wealth, albeit without referencing them, why are Christians not glorying in them and setting them before the nations with confidence (or even living them personally)? While I'm grateful for the outstanding work of De Soto, Waite, and Gallagher,<sup>12</sup> Christians have had a best seller in their hands for years that has set forth the foundations for prosperity. God's Word is the Sword of the Spirit and we should wield it with confidence that it shall produce results.

Whether it's in marriage laws or in property laws:

*The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.*

<sup>1</sup> For the incredible account of how and why *The Case For Marriage: Why Married People Are Happier, Healthier, And Better Off Financially* was rejected for publication by Harvard University Press, see Stanley Kurtz's editorial, "What Harvard Finds Unfit To Print" in the 10/18/2000 *Wall Street Journal*. Kurtz points out that this book was hailed as "the most important book in the family field that has been published in many years" by one of Harvard's own internal scholarly reviewers. However, Harvard has an incredible commitment to Catharine MacKinnon, the radical feminist (they've published four of her books), "whose core argument is that male sexual desire is a close cousin to rape — whether women consent to sex or not." Ms. MacKinnon has stated that, "What in the liberal view looks like love and romance looks a lot like hatred and torture to the feminist." Waite and Gallagher's book refutes such nonsense on its face. Harvard also pushes homosexuality to the extent that they also published Leo Bersani's book, *Homos*. In this "scholarly" book, Bersani "explores gay sadomasochism and pederasty. Mr. Bersani's point is that homosexuality, by its very nature, disrupts society — and that this is a good thing." This was

granted Harvard's "seal of approval" while "the most important book in the family field" was shot down just before going to press.

<sup>2</sup> Linda J. Waite and Maggie Gallagher, *The Case For Marriage: Why Married People Are Happier, Healthier, And Better Off Financially*, "The Wages of Wedlock," 99.

<sup>3</sup> *The Millionaire Mind*, Thomas J. Stanley, 234-235.

<sup>4</sup> Upon reflection, it seems that a celibate monk taking a vow of poverty may be redundant!

<sup>5</sup> For what amounts to an incredible journey through Proverbs and Biblical law, read *The Millionaire Mind* by Thomas J. Stanley. The book is not written from a Biblical perspective, but all the principles could have been derived directly from Scripture. Stanley consistently points out that the greatest difference, if not the defining one, between the wealthy and non-wealthy is their perspective of time.

<sup>6</sup> *The Millionaire Mind*, 235.

<sup>7</sup> *The Case For Marriage*, 102 and 114.

<sup>8</sup> *The Millionaire Mind*, 235.

<sup>9</sup> *The Case For Marriage*, 103.

<sup>10</sup> While it would take far too much space to develop here, this may also give us an insight into our culture's infatuation with preserving abortion: perhaps more powerful than the desire for wealth is our insatiable search for leisure time! If there is a direct correlation between children, work, and productivity, we have a real crisis in the making. Eliminate the children and eliminate the incentive to work hard and be productive. It's not that more children equals less wealth — history itself proves this is nonsense; rather more children equals more and better work and frankly, we'd rather be playing. The very corporations that value productivity and responsibility in their workers the most are also the ones who constantly undermine the source of those traits by supporting policies and organizations that subvert the institution of marriage and the children marriages should produce. No matter how much emphasis we place upon a "work ethic," if it is divorced from Biblical Christianity, it will only produce activity, not productivity. Witness the collapse of so many companies, such as Xerox and a host of others, even as they promote the 24/7 workcycle (24 hours per day, 7 days per week). It may be true that Xerox, along with other examples, have incredible financial problems, but this is as much an effect as it is a cause of their problems.

<sup>11</sup> *Institutes of Biblical Law*, Vol. 2, "Inheritance and Work," 191.

<sup>12</sup> I know that De Soto is a confessing Christian, and it is my understanding that Waite and Gallagher are as well. May God bless them as they continue to expose the beauty and greatness of God's law in all areas about which they write.

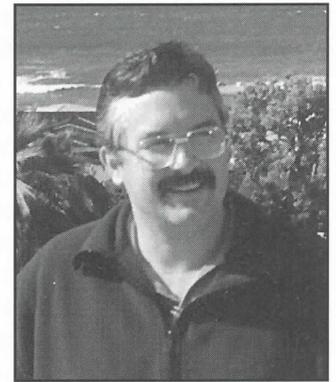
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# The One, the Many, and the Mythology of Science

By John B. King, Jr.



## Introduction

The objective of the present article is to compare the worldviews of ancient mythology and modern science in order to show the deep mythological structure of the latter.<sup>1</sup> Such a comparison is both interesting from an academic point of view and has great apologetic value. In particular, since opponents of Christian theism have tended to dismiss Christianity as mythological and unscientific, establishing the linkage between mythology and modern science returns the charge upon these naturalistic detractors, thus providing both defensive and offensive value. To this end, therefore, it will be shown that, unlike Christianity, ancient mythology and modern science share deep philosophical structures and that Christianity, by contrast, presents a distinct and demythologized view of the cosmos. To begin this discussion, it will be necessary to consider some implications of God's triune nature.

## Formal Considerations (Philosophical Structure)

Because God is a triune being, God is eternally one and eternally three. Accordingly, within God's being the one (unity) and the many (particularity) are coeternal, equally ultimate, and mutually conditioning. Moreover, since God's image is necessarily impressed upon His creation, the one and the many are equally derivative within the created order and thus equally basic to a Christian epistemology. However, when God's triune nature is denied, one loses the metaphysical basis upon which unity and particularity harmoniously relate and is, therefore, driven to one of three basic philosophical frameworks: radical particularity, radical unity, or a dialectical tension between unity and particularity. Consequently, since these limited options are quickly exhausted in human thought, mythology, and science necessarily utilize the same basic paradigms and, therefore, share common philosophical structures.

If the first option (radical particularity) is chosen, the universe is conceived as an aggregate of disconnected parts (or events) subject to no unifying law and, therefore, driven entirely by chance. As a result, the universe reduces to a sea of brute particulars, involving a radical conflict at each and every point.

On the mythological plane, this is the worldview of ancient polytheism (such as Babylonian mythology) in which the various gods battle one another for supremacy. On the scientific plane, this outlook becomes manifest in Darwinian evolution and the survival of the fittest. Thus, due to a common rooting in chance, Darwinism and ancient polytheism share a common mythological structure with both views positing an upward evolution from the waters of chaos. Needless to say, for such a viewpoint, the lack of an objective order destroys any basis for human knowledge.

If the second option (radical unity) is chosen, the universe is conceived as a seamless whole devoid of concrete particulars and thus devoid of any real tension or mechanism. Accordingly, in this perspective, the universe reduces to a blank and amorphous unity, which erases all distinctions and thereby eliminates the uniqueness of each and every event. On the mythological plane, this is the view of Vedantic Hinduism in which the various particulars — be they gods or daily events — are reduced to phenomenal manifestations of the Brahman, the all pervading, universal spirit. On the scientific plane, this is the view of Einstein's unified field theory which attempted to collapse all events into phenomenal manifestations of a single deterministic field. Thus, due to a common monism, Einstein's field theory and Vedantic Hinduism share a common mythological structure with both views reducing events to surface phenomena of underlying deterministic (and cyclic) fields. Needless to say, for such a viewpoint, the lack of objective differences destroys any basis for the observation and correlation of discrete particulars (*i.e.*, data). This lack of distinctions also produces a confusion between the subject and object of knowledge. Thus, scientific data becomes both illusory and subjective due to a lack of discreet objects and subjects. Since scientific theories are thereby stripped of their substance and reduced to a mind game, the basis for a meaningful science again vanishes.

Finally, if the third option (dialectical tension between unity and particularity) is chosen, the universe becomes the product of an eternal struggle between order and chaos which operates through a dialectical tension. Thus, such a theory posits a

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fractured universe which derives from the interplay of antagonistic forces. After all, in such a universe there is a basic tension at each and every point as order seeks to mold the chaos, and chaos seeks to burst the forms of order. On the mythological plane, this is the worldview of Taoism in which the events of life arise from a dynamic struggle between yin and yang. On the scientific plane, this view is encapsulated in the Copenhagen interpretation (*i.e.*, complementarity) of the wave-particle duality in quantum mechanics. Thus, due to a common dualism, both Taoism and the Copenhagen School of quantum mechanics share a common mythological structure in which events reduce to a dynamic struggle between order and chaos. For such a viewpoint, of course, the presence of two equally basic, independent, and antagonistic principles destroys any unity of conception. Moreover, since this position is simply a schizophrenic composite of the two positions outlined above, neither of these principles (order or chaos) could provide an adequate basis for knowledge even when taken by themselves. To the extent that chaos dominates, concrete reality opposes all order, and to the extent that order dominates, such order dissolves all concrete reality. Thus, even if one could escape the tension of these opposing principles, he would still be faced with the alternative of knowing nothing about anything (chaos) or else knowing everything about nothing (order). Needless to say, the basis for a meaningful science vanishes completely on such premises.

As should be evident from the preceding discussion, ancient mythology and modern science share common philosophical structures. Thus, despite its pride in rationality and objectivity, modern science is simply a repackaging of ancient myth. The reason for this identity is simple. When the Trinity is denied, one's thinking is driven toward one of three basic philosophical frameworks, and since these limited options are quickly exhausted in human thought, science and mythology necessarily utilize similar paradigms.

### **Material Considerations (Cosmic Impersonalism)**

However, the connections between science and mythology run deeper than the formal considerations of philosophical structure and extend to a material identity as well. In particular, when science and mythology are substantively considered, both are seen to posit an ultimate impersonalism (cosmic impersonalism). After all, in its attempt to personify nature, mythology necessarily confuses God with creation. Accordingly, since God is thereby made dependent upon a finite and impersonal world, what mythology actually achieves is not the personification of nature but rather the impersonification of deity. Since mythology is therefore fundamentally impersonal and naturalistic, modern science is simply a more consistently impersonal species of

myth. When the reason for this common impersonalism is traced to its root, it is seen to derive, once again, from a rejection of the Triune God. Thus, in addition to the formal similarities of philosophical structure, the material identity of cosmic impersonalism also springs from a denial of the Trinity. To demonstrate this point, it will be necessary to examine some deeper implications of God's triune nature.

In this regard, the primary consideration is the recognition that God's triune nature establishes His infinite personality and thus a philosophy of cosmic personalism. Because God is both one and many, He has community within His own being and is both personal and rational. Since the Triune God can compare (oneness) and contrast (manyness) within His being, He is internally benchmarked and thus internally self-defined. Accordingly, since God defines Himself in terms of Himself alone and not in relation to a finite, impersonal world, He does not become dependent upon such a world and is not thereby reduced to a finite, impersonal level. On the contrary, since God emerges as an infinite person, He possess infinite knowledge and power and is capable of affecting a rationally ordered creation. Thus, by preventing a mythological confusion between God and creation, God's triune nature guards His infinite personality and simultaneously establishes a demythologized and well-ordered cosmos. So understood, God's triune nature establishes the necessary and sufficient basis for an objective science grounded in an ultimate cosmic personalism. Given this fact, the denial of the Trinity not only accounts for the common philosophical framework (formal identity) between mythology and science, but also accounts for their common impersonalism (material identity). Thus, modern science *is* mythology due to its identical combination of formal (philosophical structure) and material (cosmic impersonalism) characteristics.

That impersonalism is the hallmark of mythology can be seen from the fact that in every case considered above, concrete personal existence derives from abstract impersonal principles. After all, despite the surface differences between the various mythologies, they are merely different variations upon the impersonal themes of being (spiritual unity and order) and nonbeing (material plurality and chaos). Thus, in Babylonian cosmology there is an upward evolution from nonbeing to being as the feminine waters of chaos give birth to a masculine spiritual order. In Hindu mythology, by contrast, there is a downward fall from being to nonbeing in which a masculine spirit produces a feminine material world through a process of differentiation. Finally, in Taoist cosmology, there is a continuous struggle between being and nonbeing with a masculine heaven and a feminine

earth locked into an eternal, procreative tension. In all cases, however, the underlying principles are abstract and impersonal with the adjectives “masculine” and “feminine” providing no more than a poetic overlay. In short, regardless of which theory is chosen, personality has no rooting in such a universe and, therefore, reduces to an epiphenomenon. Consequently, since modern science moves in terms of these same philosophical structures and imbibes the same cosmic impersonalism, modern science *is* mythology.

## Historical Considerations (Theological Degradation)

Moreover, beyond this thematic and topical analysis, the common impersonalism of mythology and science can be seen by considering the historical development of mythology and thus its gradual transformation into the latter. To begin this discussion, it will be helpful to consider the work of the world renowned historian of religions, Mircea Eliade. According to Eliade, archaic cultures evidence a devolution from monotheism to polytheism in which the new gods are identified with immanent forces in the universe (Eliade, 118-128). Initially, these primitive peoples worship a personal god who is a celestially structured supreme being, in other words a god of the sky or the heavens. However, over time the supreme being becomes more remote and less important as a result of man’s increasing preoccupation with the immanent “natural” forces of his daily life. As these forces become progressively more important, man divinizes them with the result that his religion degrades into a crude and impersonal polytheism:

*We may add that the same situation is found in the religions of more civilized peoples, that is, of peoples who have played an important role in history. The Mongol name for the supreme God is Tengri, which means sky. This Chinese T’ien means at once the sky and the god of the sky. The Sumerian term for divinity, dingir, originally meant a celestial epiphany — clear, brilliant. The Babylonian Anu also expresses the idea of sky. The Indo-European supreme god, Dieus, denotes both the celestial epiphany and the sacred (cf. Sanskrit div, to shine, day; dyaus, sky, day; Dyaus, Indian god of heaven). Zeus and Jupiter still preserve in their names the memory of the sacredness of the sky. The Celtic Taranis (from taran, to thunder), the Baltic Perkunas (lightning), and the proto-Slavic Perun (cf. Polish piorun, lightning) are especially revealing for the later transformations of the sky gods into storm gods.*

*There is no question of naturalism here. The celestial god is not identified with the sky, for he is the same god who, creating the entire cosmos, created the sky too. This is why he is called Creator, All-powerful, Lord, Chief, Father, and the like. The celestial god is a*

*person, not a uranian epiphany. But he lives in the sky and is manifested in meteorological phenomena — thunder, lightning, storm, meteors, and so on. This means that certain privileged structures of the cosmos — the sky, the atmosphere — constitute favorite epiphanies of the supreme being; he reveals his presence by what is specifically and peculiarly his — the majesty (majestas) of the celestial immensity, the terror (tremendum) of the storm.*

*The history of supreme beings whose structure is celestial is of the utmost importance for an understanding of the religious history of humanity as a whole. We cannot even consider writing that history here, in a few pages. But we must at least refer to a fact that to us seems primary. Celestially structured supreme beings tend to disappear from the practice of religion, from cult; they depart from among men, withdraw to the sky, and become remote, inactive gods (dei otiosi). In short, it may be said of these gods that, after creating the cosmos, life, and man, they feel a sort of fatigue, as if the immense enterprise of the Creation had exhausted their resources. So they withdraw to the sky, leaving a son or a demiurge on earth to finish or perfect the Creation. Gradually their place is taken by other divine figures — the mythical ancestors, the mother-goddesses, the fecundating gods, and the like. The god of the storm still preserves a celestial structure, but he is no longer a creating supreme being; he is only the fecundator of the earth, sometimes he is only a helper to his companion (paredros), the earth-mother. The celestially structured supreme being preserves his preponderant place only among pastoral peoples, and he attains a unique situation in religions that tend to monotheism (Ahura-Mazda) or that are fully monotheistic (Yahweh, Allah). (Eliade, 120-122)*

*It is useless to multiply examples. Everywhere in these primitive religions the celestial supreme being appears to have lost religious currency; he has no place in the cult, and in the myths he draws farther and farther away from man until he becomes a deus otiosus. Yet he is remembered and entreated as the last resort, when all ways of appealing to other gods and goddesses, the ancestors, and the demons, have failed. As the Oraons express it: “Now we have tried everything, but we still have you to help us.” And they sacrifice a white cock to him, crying, “God, thou art our creator, have mercy on us.”*

*The divine remoteness actually expresses man’s increasing interest in his own religious, cultural, and economic discoveries. Through his concern with hierophanies of life, through discovering the sacral fertility of the earth, and through finding himself exposed to religious experiences that are more concrete (more carnal, even orgiastic), primitive man draws away from the celestial and transcendent god. The discovery of agriculture basically transforms not only primitive man’s economy but also and especially his economy of the sacred. Other*

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religious forces come into play — sexuality, fertility, the mythology of woman and of the earth, and so on. Religious experience becomes more concrete, that is, more intimately connected with life. The great mother-goddesses and the strong gods of the spirits of fertility are markedly more dynamic and more accessible to men than was the Creator God...

And yet their worshipers — primitives and Hebrews alike — had the feeling that all these great goddesses and all these vegetation gods were unable to save them, that is, to ensure their existence in really critical moments. These gods and goddesses could only reproduce and augment life; and they could perform that function only during normal times; in short, they were divinities who governed the cosmic rhythms admirably, but who proved incapable of saving the cosmos or human society in moments of crisis (historical crisis among the Hebrews).

The various divinities who took the place of the supreme beings were the repository of the most concrete and striking powers, the powers of life. But by that very fact they had become “specialists” in procreation and lost the subtler, nobler, more spiritual powers of the Creator Gods. In discovering the sacredness of life, man let himself be increasingly carried away by his own discovery; he gave himself up to vital hierophanies and turned away from the sacrality that transcended his immediate and daily needs. (Eliade, 125-128)

As can be seen from Eliade’s discussion, pagan religions degenerate into polytheism in an attempt to fill a void left by an overly transcendent god. In particular, since such a god is thought to lack immanence and hence relevance, this transcendent god is pushed into the background and replaced through an attempted divinization of the more immanent and concrete forces in the world. Moreover, since these immanent forces remain natural and impersonal, they lack the “subtler, nobler, more spiritual powers of the Creator Gods” and therefore become subject to human manipulation through magic, the pseudo-science of the ancient world.

However, as the philosophical development tends toward a greater and more conscious impersonalism, these so called “divinities” are later collapsed into phenomenal manifestations of impersonal fields. Thus, in India the crude polytheism of the Vedic period (2000 - 1500 B.C.) gave way to a more philosophical monism of the Upanishads (800 B.C.-500 A.D.) and of such later writers such as Sankara (eighth century A.D.) and Ramanuja (eleventh century A.D.). P.T. Raju writes:

*Taking both geography and history into account, it is now the practice of writers to trace Hinduism to the Mohenjo-daro civilization (4000-3000 B.C.), an*

*adequate picture of which is still not easy to give. All that is assertable in a general way is that the civilization very likely knew some form of yogic meditation, that it had some form of Shakti (Mother Goddess) worship, and that it had the cult of animal worship also. The Aryan tribes began invading India sometime between 2000 and 1500 B.C., conquered the early settlers, driving them toward the South, and then conquered the South also. At the same time they began to superimpose their own religion on the religions of the conquered, which were many, as the different tribes followed their different religions and worshipped different gods and goddesses. In this process of superimposition, the religion of the Aryans themselves began to be transformed. The gods of the non-Aryans, like Shiva, became identified with the gods of the Aryans, like Rudra, through similarity of forms and functions. But the original Vedic gods continued to occupy a higher place than those of the non-Aryans. When the Aryans finally established their monotheism of the Brahman, this pure demythologized religion was given the place of the highest prestige, and all the other forms of worship, both meditative and ritualistic, were interpreted as subsidiary to the worship and realization of the Brahman.*

*The evolution of the worship of the Brahman reveals an interesting development of the religious life and thought of the Indo-Aryans. They were first polytheists, worshipping through sacrifices (not necessarily animal sacrifices) to gods such as the Fire-god, Wind-god, the god of death, the Dawn, Varuna the god of the Waters enveloping the world and ruling in the highest heaven, the god of clouds called Indra, and so on. The Aryans were what are philosophically called hylozoists, consubstantialists who made no distinction between spirit and matter, or animatists who worshipped the natural forces as living, thinking beings like themselves without distinguishing between the animating and thinking spirit and the body. This religion may be called animatism as distinct from animism, in which man distinguishes between spirit and body and worships the former. Both animatism and animism are forms of polytheism. But the latter, when the spiritual conception is enlarged, elaborated, and developed into that of the Brahman, can become monotheism or even monism. The idea of the anima in a body is found in the concept of presiding deity or simply deity of the earth, sound, eye, and so on of the Upanishads.*

*Next, as a logical development of religious thought and practice, we find what Max Muller called henotheism or the worship of each one of some of the gods as the highest and supreme. This tendency shows the Indo-Aryan mind was wavering between one god and another in the attempt finally to fix one as the Supreme. Such gods are Varuna, Prajapati, and so on. From this henotheism the Indo-Aryan mind advanced to the monotheistic conception of the Brahman, which*

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was taken by some religious thinkers like Guadapada (c. sixth century), and Sankara (eighth century), as nonpersonal and monistic. (Raju 2,3)

On the basis of the preceding discussion, the historical development and philosophical trajectory of mythology can be readily assessed. As shown by the respective works of Mircea Eliade and P. T. Raju, mythology is seen to degenerate from a personal monotheism through a crude polytheism to a more abstract monism (or dualism) and thus toward an increasing impersonalism. In terms of this orderly progression, therefore, there is only one development consistent with the internal logic of mythology, namely the impersonal world of modern science. Consequently, when considered from the perspectives of philosophical structure, impersonal content, and historical development, ancient mythology and modern science are seen to be identical in all vital and crucial respects. Thus, modern science *is* mythology since it partakes of the same philosophical structure, is animated by the same impersonalism, and forms the logical *telos* of mythology's historical development.

## Conclusion

Consequently, it is both hypocritical and short sighted for modern scientists to dismiss Christianity as myth. After all, since modern science is the most rigorously consistent form of mythology, such a charge reveals a profound lack of awareness. Moreover, such a dismissal is also short sighted since it is precisely Christianity which sets forth the demythologized world upon which true science depends. However, in setting forth the cosmos as ultimate, modern science implicitly divinizes the universe (*i.e.*, produces a mythological confusion between God and creation) and therefore sets forth an ultimate impersonalism. In so doing, it destroys the personal basis for a rational cosmic order and a receptive human mind, both of which are essential to the scientific enterprise.

In Christianity, by contrast, God's triune nature ensures that God is self dependent and therefore independent of the created order. God's infinite personality is not reduced, nor is the creation divinized by a mythological confusion between God and creation. God remains God, and the cosmos remains the demythologized product of His handiwork. It is rationally ordered as a result of God's fully conscious (omniscient) and all powerful (omnipotent) personality. Moreover, since man is created in

God's image, it is precisely God's infinite personality which establishes man's finite personality, and thus a receptive, scientific mind. Accordingly, science works precisely because Christianity is both true and personal. Given this fact, the long term health of science and culture depends upon the willingness of modern scientists to renounce their current mythology and embrace the Triune God.

May God be pleased to grant such repentance for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen

## References

1. Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics* (Boston: Shambhala, 2000).
2. Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane* (New York: Harvest, 1957).
3. P. T. Raju, *The Great Asian Religions: An Anthology* (New York: Macmillan, 1969).

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<sup>1</sup>In the years since R. J. Rushdoony wrote *The Mythology of Science*, the apologetic target has shifted somewhat. Previously, apologetic encounters with scientists centered around the philosophy of Western materialism. Today, however, Eastern spiritualism is gaining an increasing foothold in the scientific community. Indeed, while a strong current of Western materialism still remains (as evidenced by the never ending search for "fundamental particles"), there is an ever-growing tendency to interpret the results of cosmology and quantum mechanics in terms of various fields. Moreover, since these fields are thought to be nonmaterial, and all embracing, the attempt is often made to harmonize these field interpretations with Eastern spiritual concepts. Thus, due to the fact that the apologetic target has broadened somewhat, a broader approach will be needed in future discussions of faith and science. It is the purpose of this article to provide a rough outline of the problem in order to highlight some of the necessary considerations involved in a broadened apologetic. For the reader wishing to learn more about this new trend in science, Fritjof Capra's *The Tao of Physics* is strongly recommended since it is masterfully written and constitutes perhaps the first popularly written synthesis of physics and Eastern mysticism.

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# The Sovereignty of God

By Rev. William O. Einwechter



**A**lthough most Christians today would acknowledge (though some would do so only grudgingly) the sovereignty of God, few have a solid grasp of the meaning of it. This is not surprising, given the woeful state of theological knowledge in the church, which, in turn, is due to the absence of theological study and reflection in the church. Many a sermon and writing is devoted to the love of God, the immanence of God, etc., while subjects like the sovereignty of God are sorely neglected. Yet, how unbalanced and detrimental this is, considering the fact that the sovereignty of God is one of the most prominent doctrines of Scripture, and one of the most important for understanding the nature of God's relation to His creation.

## Definition of Sovereignty

Our English word "sovereign" is used both as an adjective and a noun. As an adjective, it describes some person or thing that is above or superior to all others, making him or it supreme in rank, power, or authority. As a noun, it refers to a person or group (e.g., a state) that possesses the supreme authority to rule or govern others; hence, a monarch, king, or ruler. Consequently, the idea conveyed by the noun "sovereignty" is that of the status or quality of being a sovereign, *i.e.*, one who has rule and dominion over others due to his position of having supreme authority. The words "sovereign" or "sovereignty" do not appear in the Authorized Version (KJV), but synonymous terms do. Words such as "authority," "power," "dominion," and "rule" translate the Hebrew and Greek terms that express the notion of sovereignty. For example, the Hebrew root *mlk* expresses the idea of reigning as king (as a *sovereign*), and the related concepts of dominion, rule, kingdom, and kingship. Another Hebrew root, *mshl*, conveys the sense of ruling, lordship, and dominion. In the New Testament, the Greek word *exousia* refers to authority, power, and jurisdiction in relation to the rule of others, as well as to power to do as one pleases and the ability and strength to carry out one's

plans and purposes. The idea of sovereignty is found in these and other Biblical terms, and it permeates the Scriptures.

## The Meaning of the Sovereignty of God

When Christians speak of the sovereignty of God, they mean His absolute right of dominion over all His creation; that He is the supreme Monarch of heaven and earth because as Almighty God and Creator He is infinitely exalted in rank, power, and authority over *all*. Sovereignty speaks of the divine kingship whereby God exercises His unrestricted power to govern all of His creatures exactly as He sees fit for ends that He alone determines. A. W. Pink expresses the meaning of divine sovereignty in magnificent terms:

*The sovereignty of God! What do we mean by this expression? We mean the supremacy of God, the kingship of God, the Godhood of God. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that God is God. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the Most High, doing according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, so that no one can stay His hand or say unto Him, What does Thou? (Dan. 4:35). To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the Almighty, the Possessor of all power in heaven and earth, so that none can defeat His counsels, thwart His purposes, or resist His will (Ps. 115:3). To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is "The Governor among the nations" (Ps. 22:28), setting up kingdoms, over throwing empires, and determining the course of dynasties as pleaseth Him best. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the "Only Potentate, the Kings of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15). Such is the God of the Bible.<sup>1</sup>*

*The sovereignty of God in Scripture is absolute, irresistible, and infinite. When we say that God is sovereign, we affirm His right to govern the universe, which He has made for His own glory, just as He pleases. We affirm that His right is the right of the Potter over the clay, viz: that He may mould that clay into whatsoever form He chooses.... We affirm that He is under no rule*

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*or law outside His own will and nature, that God is a law unto Himself, and that He is under no obligation to give account of His matters to any.*<sup>2</sup>

The sovereignty of God, simply stated, is His right to do according to His will, His power to accomplish His will, and His authority to govern His creation as His will determines.

## **The Basis of the Sovereignty of God**

The basis for the doctrine of the sovereignty of God is both theological and textual. *First*, the sovereignty of God is deduced from His attributes. The Scripture teaches that God is independent (self-sufficient and self-contained), meaning that He is the ground of His own being, needing no one or no thing to cause Him, sustain Him, complete Him, or help Him. He is independent in regard to His will and power, exercising both without aid or guidance from any other. In this, God is completely separate from all His creatures because they are by nature ultimately dependent on Him for all things. The contrast between God, the self-sufficient one, and His creatures, the all-dependent ones, establishes Him as the highest Lord and supreme Governor. There can be no criterion above or beyond God that can define or determine Him; no power that can control Him or limit Him; no court that can sit in judgment of Him; no law outside of His own holy nature that can direct or bind Him. God is also infinite in His being — infinite in power, knowledge, wisdom, and holiness. These perfections of His nature establish His right to supremacy in the governing of those who are finite in all respects. As Charnock explains, “God therefore being an incomprehensible ocean of all perfection, and possessing infinitely all those virtues that may lay claim to dominion, hath the first foundation of it in his own nature.”<sup>3</sup>

*Second*, the sovereignty of God is manifest in the doctrine of the divine decree. The word *decree* expresses the Biblical teaching that God has determined by the counsel of His own will a plan that encompasses all His creation, both animate and inanimate. According to Scripture, God’s decree governs all things and is single, eternal, unchangeable, unconditional, wise, and all-inclusive. Only one possessing total sovereignty could ordain and bring to pass all events, creatures, destinies, *etc.* But there could be no divine decree such as this if there are competing wills, rights, powers, and dominions in heaven and earth. If Almighty God and His will are not ultimate, then He is not Almighty, and for

that matter, neither is He God (perhaps a *god*, but not *God*).

*Third*, the works of God determine His sovereignty. God carries out His decree by the works of creation and providence. By creation, God establishes His ownership of all things and His right to govern all things, *i.e.*, His dominion over all. “The sovereignty of God naturally ariseth from the relation of all things to himself as their entire Creator, and their natural and inseparable dependence upon him in regard to their being and well-being.”<sup>4</sup> The doctrine of providence teaches that God is actively exercising His authority and power in the creation, and this ensures that the plan of God will come to pass in time and history. Divine providence entails both the preservation of the creation and the government of the creation. Not only are all things dependent on God for their being; they are also dependent on Him for their continued existence. Furthermore, Scripture says that God is the King of all the earth, governing in all the affairs of men so that His counsel will come to pass. Since He is the Creator and the King of kings and Lord of lords, the supreme Potentate of heaven and earth, all must humbly bow to his authority.

The texts of Scripture that teach the doctrine of God’s sovereignty are too numerous to list here. May this compilation suffice to reveal the extent of the Biblical witness to this great truth:

*Sovereign Will: ...who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will (Eph. 1:11; cf. Ps. 33:10-11; 115:3; Is. 14:24-27; 46:10-11; 55:11; Dan. 4:35; Rom. 9:11-19; 11:33-36; Eph. 1:4-5; 3:10-11; 2 Tim. 1:9; Heb. 6:17).*

*Sovereign Power: Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me? (Jer. 32:27; cf. Jer. 32:17-19; 27:5; Gen. 17:1; Job 40:1; 42:2; Ps. 89:8-13; 135:6; Is. 40:12-26; Lk. 1:37; Rom. 1:20; 9:19; Rev. 1:8; 4:8).*

*Sovereign Authority: For the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great king over all the earth (Ps. 47:2, 7-8; cf. Ps. 2:4-11; 93:1-2; 103:18; Dan. 4:25-26, 34-35, 37; 7:13-14; Rom. 9:20-21; 13:1; Eph. 1:20-21; Mt 28:19; 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 1:6; 17:14).*

## **The Application of the Sovereignty of God**

The doctrine of the sovereignty of God applies to every creature and every sphere of life because this doctrine reveals the relationship of God to His whole creation: His will determines it, His power creates

and sustains it, and His authority governs it. All that God is and all that He does is within the context of His own complete sovereignty. The following applications are representative.

*First*, the sovereignty of God directs all His works. The works of creation, providence, and redemption are carried out irrespective of the counsel, will, or power of any of His creatures. The universe exists as it does solely because God so willed it. The history of the world has transpired and will continue to unfold in exact conformity to the plan of God for He is present to govern all events and actions of all His creatures. The work of redemption is based solely on the will and power of God. He alone determined the plan of salvation; He alone brought it to pass in Christ; and He alone determined to whom it would be applied and on what terms. God did not consult men on the matter; neither did He surrender any aspect of His sovereignty to men for the accomplishment of redemption. The effecting of man's salvation displays the sovereign power, wisdom, love, mercy, and grace of God.

*Second*, the sovereignty of God means that His revealed law is the standard of ethics for all men in all spheres. The moral law of God is based on His own perfect nature and is the binding rule of conduct for those whom He has made in His image and for His own glory. As law is the will of a sovereign for His subjects, so Biblical law is the will of the Sovereign of heaven and earth for His subjects — all of mankind. And since God's sovereignty is comprehensive (He rules over all), so His law is also comprehensive in its reach, governing all spheres, actions, and associations.

*Third*, the sovereignty of God indicates that all human authority is derivative. Men can only have a measure of authority to govern others if God first grants it to them. There is no *exousia* (authority, power) but of God! The granting of authority to men does not entail the surrender of the least element of divine sovereignty. The delegation of authority is so that men might serve as ministers of God's authority for the sake of His glory and His kingdom. Thus, those who rule over men in any sphere (family, church, or state) are under God's law and completely answerable to Him in the use of their authority. Other men are not bound to obey the unlawful commands (*i.e.*, those commands that command what God forbids or that forbid what God commands) of God's subordinates lest they be guilty of disobeying their supreme Sovereign.

## Conclusion

The doctrine of the sovereignty of God reveals the glory, power, and dominion of God, and ought to cause all of His creatures to bow to Him in humble adoration and to walk before Him in complete submission. R. J. Rushdoony beautifully states the practical implication of God's sovereignty:

*What does it mean then to believe in sovereignty, government, and providence as a Christian? It means that my life and being are under the sovereignty and government of the all-wise and most holy Trinity, whose ordering, preserving, and government of all things is for His own purpose and glory, and my only joy and purpose is to acknowledge that sovereign, governing providence, and to rest in its sufficiency. It means that, in every area of life, I must acknowledge and establish rule, law, and authority only in terms of his law word and in faithfulness to His Kingship. This means that, in every area of life and thought, I must assert the crown rights of Christ the King and bring all things into captivity to Him.<sup>5</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> A. W. Pink, *The Sovereignty of God* (Edinburgh, [1928] 1961), 20.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, 22.

<sup>3</sup> Stephen Charnock, *Discourses on the Existence and Attributes of God* (Grand Rapids, [1853] 1979), 2:367.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, 2:369.

<sup>5</sup> Rousas John Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology* (Vallecito, 1994), 211. The quotation is a fitting tribute to the life and work of Rev. Rushdoony. He, perhaps, more than any other in our generation pointed out the usurpation of divine sovereignty by autonomous man. He taught that no man or institution is sovereign, and that only the law of God can serve as a standard for all spheres of life.

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*The doctrine of the sovereignty of God reveals the glory, power, and dominion of God, and ought to cause all of His creatures to bow to Him in humble adoration and to walk before Him in complete submission.*

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