

# ChalcedonReport

MINISTRY NEWS FROM THE CHALCEDON FOUNDATION® FEBRUARY 2020

## Men of Faith Build: We Are Steadily Creating a New Society, If We Don't Lose Focus

“Men of faith build; men whose faith is dying, and they dying with it, have instead an urge to destroy. The vandals now destroying the Rome of humanism are its own sons.”<sup>1</sup>

For decades, most people perceived humanism to be more powerful than it is, and now, without realizing it, those same people, and their children, are slowly destroying the “Rome of humanism.”

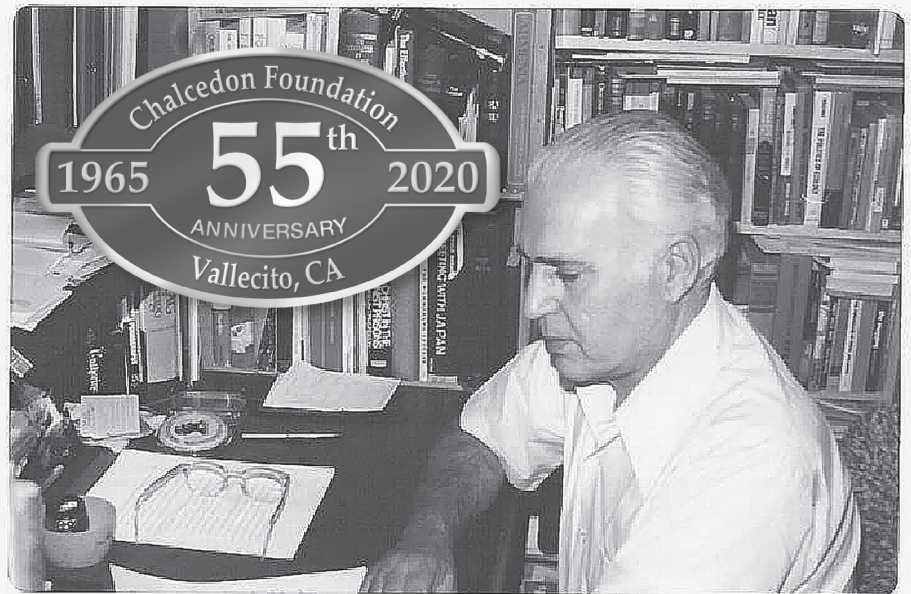
What Rushdoony once wrote regarding the revolutionary movements of the 1960s are applicable to today's generation since they are the offspring, and grandchildren, of the 60s radicals.

[T]he situation today is what it is not because we have social problems, nor because we have evil in our midst. The problem is that the godly are in retreat, retreat from action and therefore from godliness. The problem is us.<sup>2</sup>

This is history repeating itself only because Christians did not displace the ideas driving the revolution.

Why is that? It's because overall, Western society felt no compulsion to do so. They could rest on a few hundred years of Christian moral capital and did not reinforce a Biblical worldview nor prepare a new generation to build upon it. The end result was subversion and influence by the enemies of Christ while the West numbed itself in modern comfort.

Whenever a civilization loses its faith, it begins to live, not in terms of responsibilities and the future, but in terms of the present pleasure.<sup>3</sup>



The only resistance we saw was the Religious Right, which is now a weaker version of its former self. Without opposing Christian involvement in politics, the problem with the Religious Right was its misplaced emphasis on politics as a cultural solution, as Rushdoony notes:

*Politics cannot produce character: Christianity must.* The decline of faith is a decline of character and a decline of character is the forerunner of political decay and collapse. Christianity has an obligation to train a people in the fundamentals

of God's grace and law, and to make them active and able champions of true political liberty and order.<sup>4</sup>

A central part of the mission of the church is discipleship, but we have limited the meaning to a Christian version of self-improvement instead of training a people “in the fundamentals of God's grace and law, and to make them active and able champions of true political liberty and order.”

Both political conservatives and the Religious Right believe that a Republican controlled Federal government will result in less statism, but that would

not happen with the depletion of spiritual capital and the decline of self-government. As Rushdoony held, the culture, faith, and ideas of a people are intertwined:

The basic capital of any society is in the realm of faith and ideas, and, inescapably, because man is a unit, his faith and ideas have very practical consequences: they create a culture.<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, the people are not yet ready to rule, and only Biblical Christianity—specifically Christian Reconstruction—can prepare the citizenry for true societal transformation. So long as conservative Christians place their hope in political solutions, they'll never see the powerful truth staring them in the face: that the objective of Christian rule is not the takeover of the civil government but rather the taking back of government by way of self-government:

Without strong, self-governing Christians taking back self-government under Christ in health, welfare, education, and more, we cannot return by politics to less statism.<sup>6</sup>

### **The Mission Is Christian Education**

At every level, a central mission of the church is education, whether it's a pastor teaching a congregation, a professor instructing students, or a father preparing his children for godly dominion. Discipleship is for dominion just as all that we are given is not for our squandering but for the advancement of the Kingdom:

The gifts God gives us, whether of wealth or of talents, are not for our sakes but for the sake of His covenant. The goal of life is not our enrichment but the Kingdom of God.<sup>7</sup>

This outlook is what the West is losing because it is not being reinforced by modern Christianity, which is why we're seeing the resurgence of socialism, especially in the United States. After decades of the failures of socialism, much of America still desires it. How can this

be? Rushdoony explains:

Socialism grows as Christian independence declines. As long as people are slaves within, they will demand slavery in their social order.<sup>8</sup>

The problem we have is that modern man is a "slave within," and we will not see changes in the social order so long as that remains our reality. Therefore, we need "regeneration not revolution," and regeneration is the starting point for Christian education. This is why Rushdoony referred to the Christian school movement as "the Quiet Revolution of our time, and the great and enduring one."<sup>9</sup>

When you think in these terms you realize that we've made a great start with decades of Christian education by way of Christian schools and homeschooling. As the sons of humanism are destroying the city of man, so the sons of God are being prepared to expand the City of God. In this way, Rushdoony sees a new society developing:

The new growth is definitely all around us. The Christian school movement is the most conspicuous example. Since covenant children belong in covenant schools, Christians are steadily creating a new society by means of Christian education. A highly disciplined, better trained, and truly educated youth is in the making.<sup>10</sup>

The dominion mandate means more than a change in the culture. It is the "manifestation of the sons of God" as described by the apostle Paul in the eighth chapter of his letter to the Romans:

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of

corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. (Romans 8:18-21)

The Greek word used by Paul for *manifestation* is *apokalupsis* which means a revealing or revelation. It's the same word used in "The *Revelation* of Jesus Christ" in Revelation 1:1 which for most Christians is viewed as a time of destruction and therefore something to fear. Such an outlook grossly diminishes the victory of Christ in history. Rushdoony writes:

There is a vast difference between seeing the end of the world as only *destruction* as against the view of it as a *transformation*. Post-millennialism sees it as transformation, and the transformation includes our regeneration, our dominion work of sanctification and more.<sup>11</sup>

Therefore, though mysterious, the progressive manifestation—revealing—of the sons of God which leads to the liberty of creation must have practical implications. Of course, Rushdoony sees this in terms of dominion:

The apocalypse, manifestation, or revelation of the sons of God is their exercise of godly dominion over all things, bringing all things into captivity to Christ. It is thus wrong to sit back and wait for God's apocalypse if we do not effect our own where God requires it.<sup>12</sup>

This is what makes the mission of the Chalcedon Foundation so vital to our times, because the primacy is placed upon Christian education for the sake of godly dominion and not simply pietism or personal sanctification with no application to society. As Rushdoony held, his mission was to "move man to faith and action" by way of Christian scholarship<sup>13</sup> with the secondary objective of Christians embracing their responsibility by way of Christian schools and homeschooling. Such a faith should lead to Christian Reconstruction:

By faith in Him, a generation is growing strong and holds a promise of reconstruction.<sup>14</sup>

## God's Law The Means To Victory

God's law is a plan and prescription for dominion in all of life. It is a statement of the means to victory by Christ's covenant people in their daily lives, in education, the family, the school, the arts and sciences, our vocations, in church, state, and everywhere else.<sup>15</sup>

How do you instruct a generation in godly dominion? You teach them the law of God. How do you neuter a generation so that humanism or paganism can rule? You teach them antinomianism.

The atheist hates the idea of God not for intellectual reasons or that the arguments for the existence of God are blatantly invalid. Rather, the unbeliever resists the revelation of God because of the implications of His existence. In other words, "If God exists, Christ is His Son, and the Bible is His command Word, then I am responsible in this world."

The same holds true for the Christian who forsakes God's law for another version of Christian morality—usually one based in sentiment more so than commandment. The contemporary Christian resists the validity of God's law because of the implications. In other words, "If God's law is valid for today, then I am responsible to it."

This is what Rushdoony saw as the main problem behind modern man's psychological problems: an evasion of responsibility, with the primary responsibility being that of godly dominion:

Inescapably, man is that creature who has been created to exercise dominion over the earth and to subdue it, to create tools and institutions whose purpose it is to enable man to bring all things to their proper development in the Kingdom of God.<sup>16</sup>

Rushdoony equated this responsibility with maturity, so whether Christian or unbeliever, sin is a rebellion against God's inescapable mandate for man:

Man was created into maturity, and his sin is a resolute but futile attempt

to escape from maturity. However, while man may fail to meet his responsibilities, he can never escape them.<sup>17</sup>

The shorthand for this school of thought is "Christian Reconstruction," and it's a term that both inspired and disturbed modern Christians. For some, the responsibility of dominion was too big a responsibility for the church to handle while others, inspired by the message, made a good showing but ended up like the seed sown on shallow ground.

Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. (Matthew 13:5-6)

No doubt, godly dominion is a massive undertaking, but that is why we are filled with the Spirit and commanded to walk in the same (c.f. Gal. 5:16):

In Christ, man is restored to his original calling, and, by the Holy Spirit, empowered and guided in the fulfillment thereof. We must therefore say that *man is most truly himself, as God intended him to be, when he fulfills his vocation by living in the Spirit.*<sup>18</sup>

If Christians look only to themselves for the ability to fulfill God's calling to dominion, then they will certainly resist such a message. If they embrace the message without the long-term view of postmillennialism, they will likely burn out in the face of persecution and a lack of support. Rushdoony wrote,

I find a common failing: people start a good work, and because it does not succeed in producing the desired result overnight or at least very quickly, they give up, they quit, they turn back after having made a good beginning.<sup>19</sup>

This year marks the 55th anniversary for the Chalcedon Foundation, and as a ministry, we are grateful for the leadership of Mark Rushdoony, Martin

Selbrede, and Ford and Andrea Schwartz for not being dissuaded by resistance, persecution, or the amount of financial support. The importance is the mission of Christian Reconstruction, as Mark Rushdoony wrote:

"Christian Reconstruction" came to describe my father's view of the responsibility of Christian citizenship in the Kingdom of God. It would prove to be the "big idea" for which Chalcedon stood.<sup>20</sup>

Let's face it. Men are moved more by what they see than what God can do through us. After 55 years of teaching and proclaiming the message of Christian Reconstruction, what is the most important action we can do now? Is it too late for things to turn around? The cultural decline seemed to pick up pace, so what should be our next step?

Above all, plant the seeds, sow the Word, establish truly Christian churches, free and independent Christian schools. Establish a Christian family life, and a godly operation in your farm or business life. The times may look bad for making a start, but there is no harvest without a planting.<sup>21</sup>

What we must do now is what we have always done while not being disturbed by the world around us, for greater is He that is within us than he who is in the world (c.f. 1 John 4:4).

Our battle is not for nationalism or a return to an idealized American past. Nor are we desirous of a return to first century Christianity. We are called to "arise and build" (c.f. Neh. 2:20) with our attention fixated on the task at hand and the future it will create:

Men of faith build: their eyes are on the future, not a return to the past.<sup>22</sup>

We cannot lose focus on the mission, but we must also continue to spread the message and expand our outreach. During the year of our 50th anniversary, we declared that God will give us fifty more years, and now, we are five years into that. The future will be what we in God's power and providence will make of it.



The Rome of humanism is burning along with its inflated morality, politics, economy, and more. Like the recent wildfires of Australia, smoke is flooding into everyone's eyes everyday, but while men grow fearful and dismayed at contemporary history, the responsible Christian will continue unabated in his dominion work. They will build.

Wise men will keep the smoke out of their eyes and build. The whole world is ours to conquer in Christ. This is our duty and our calling, and we shall do it.<sup>23</sup> 🇺🇸

1. R. J. Rushdoony, *Faith & Action: The Collected Articles of R. J. Rushdoony from the Chalcedon Report, 1965-2004*, Volume 1 (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2019), p. 514.
2. R. J. Rushdoony, *A Word in Season: Daily Messages on the Faith for All of Life*, Volume 5 (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2014), p. 8.

3. R. J. Rushdoony, *A Word in Season: Daily Messages on the Faith for All of Life*, Volume 2 (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2011), p. 4.
4. *Faith & Action*, Volume 1, p. 161.
5. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law: Law & Society*, Volume 2 (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1982), p. 151.
6. R. J. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology in Two Volumes* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1994), p. 1142.
7. R. J. Rushdoony, *Deuteronomy* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2008), p. 140.
8. R. J. Rushdoony, *Tithing & Dominion* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1979), p. 4.
9. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Philosophy of the Christian Curriculum* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2001).
10. *Faith & Action*, Volume 1, p. 514.
11. R. J. Rushdoony, *Romans & Galatians* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1997), p. 138.

12. *ibid.*, p. 137.
13. *Systematic Theology*, p. xv.
14. *Faith & Action*, Volume 1, p. 514.
15. R. J. Rushdoony, *In His Service: The Christian Calling to Charity* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2009), p. 4.
16. R. J. Rushdoony, *Revolt Against Maturity* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1977), p. 9.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
18. *Systematic Theology*, p. 307.
19. R. J. Rushdoony, *A Word in Season: Daily Messages on the Faith for All of Life*, Volume 4 (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2012), p. 47.
20. *Faith & Action*, Volume 1, p. xix.
21. *A Word in Season*, Volume 2, p. 18.
22. *Faith & Action*, Volume 1, p. 514.
23. *Faith & Action*, Volume 1, p. 516.

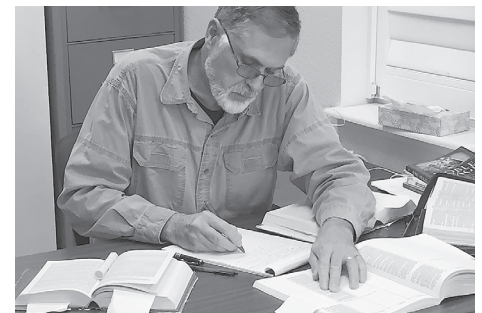


## Domestic Abuse & The Church

**Videos are now available** from the 2019 Spring Conference held at Church of the Living God in Moulton, Alabama featuring three lectures plus a question and answer session with Chalcedon Vice-President, Martin Selbrede.

Although this conference was called "Domestic Abuse and the Church," it also focused attention on a wider range of abuses, particularly abuse by clergy and churches.

**Watch the First Lecture at <https://bit.ly/2R73dj0>**



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Our objective is to help equip Christians to apply their faith and "take back" government by means of Biblical self-government, and we need your financial support to help continue this mission. Please take a few moments today to prayerfully consider supporting Chalcedon with your tax-deductible giving. For 55 years, it's been supporters like you that have made the difference. We've enclosed a self-addressed, postage-paid envelope to make it easy, and you can also donate online at:

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