

# ChalcedonReport

MINISTRY NEWS FROM THE CHALCEDON FOUNDATION® FEBRUARY 2025

## This is How We Should Live

The answer to the Great Antinomianism is clear cut: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4). It is that every word that man must hear, believe, and obey. It is the infallible word, and there is not another kind of word from God.<sup>1</sup>

Is it possible to reduce the thinking of R. J. Rushdoony, or Christian Reconstruction, to a single idea? For the critic, Rushdoony represents the primary source material for a frightening religious dystopia of unelected clerics who rule an unwilling population with Old Testament law as their public policies. Over the years, this conspiracy theory appears almost seasonally particularly with presidential election cycles.

For critics within Reformed circles, the critique is typically leveled at theonomy taking God’s law too far and/or the postmillennial over-confidence of Christian dominion.

Both critiques miss the fundamental idea in Rushdoony’s thought, which is that man shall live by every word that proceeds from God’s mouth (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4), and like it or not, there are implications for such a comprehensive world and life view. We would argue the implications are most certainly the victory of God in history.

### Good, Acceptable, and Perfect

When our Lord retorted to Satan that man shall live by every word of God (Matt. 4:4) the obvious reference was the law, the prophets, the psalms, and the wisdom literature, i.e., the Old Testament. Now, as New Testament believers, we have in addition the gospels and epistles which are equally God’s infallible word and replete with God’s revealed will for His people. Therefore, they are also part of every

word that proceeds from God’s mouth, and as God’s prophetic people, we are to continually cast aside humanistic thinking that we might better understand and apply God’s thought to every area of life as it says in Romans 12:

1. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Was that not Rushdoony’s mission? Did he not devote himself to proving that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God for all areas of life and thought? For him, this was how a Christian expresses dependency upon God’s every word and submits himself to it:

To pick and choose at God’s word is to place ourselves above it and to reduce it to a resource for man to use. The true prophet stands on the whole word of God, without reservations. Christ as the faithful prophet answers Satan each time with Scripture, declaring, “It is written” (Matt. 4:4,7,10).<sup>2</sup>

### Taking Back by Self-Government

Of course, it’s much easier for the Christian to think of God’s Word only in terms of matters of the heart, but the end result is the cultural decline we’re witnessing today. For Rushdoony,

he was driven to understand how the Scriptures speak to every sphere of life, not simply our individual sanctification, as important as that is. When Rush was once asked how he writes his book, he prefaced his answer with a simple description of the central motive for his scholarly calling:

I’m always studying because I’m interested in something. I want to explore something. I want to know what God’s Word is for it.<sup>3</sup>

This is why he saw his own work as merely scratching the surface of the work that needed to be done. To rethink all areas of life in terms of God’s Word is beyond the capacity of a single scholar, or even a single ministry. This is a calling for all of us as we look for ways to apply God’s Word utilizing the tithe as a means to underwriting Christian institutions, charity, and other dominion work.

We are to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God, and this has implications for every area of life and thought. What came about by the quiet revolution of Christian schools and homeschooling must now extend to more areas of life as we “take back” government by self-government in terms of God’s law-word. 🇺🇸

1. R. J. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology in Two Volumes* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1994), p. 23.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 284.

3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5XbPcuiXZ2Q>

# Can Eschatology Be Made Practical? Chalcedon's Leadership Makes That Case.

Mark Rushdoony and Martin Selbrede sit down to discuss "eschatons."

If there is any doctrine that can easily go off the rails it is eschatology. If there's any teaching that will draw a crowd, it's one that promotes how current world events reveal that we're nearing the end of all things. As you'll see momentarily, there is a more insightful way to view eschatology and one that will truly shape the future. This was the topic of a recent *Chalcedon Podcast* episode on "Eschatology & Restoring God's Order."

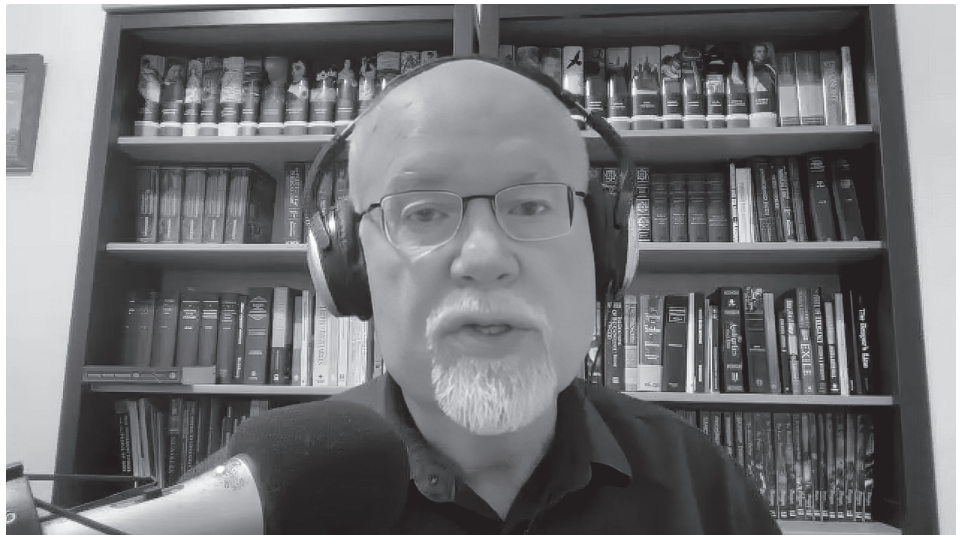
Inspired by R. J. Rushdoony's concept of *eschatons*, Mark Rushdoony and Martin Selbrede discussed salient points about how ethics shape both human history and our own lives, which begs the question as to why mainstream evangelicals have limited eschatology to what Martin referred to as "cosmic eschatology," i.e., the end of time and creation, which gives us no ethical imperative. We're simply uninvolved observers awaiting the pyrotechnics of the end times.

## Eschatons: The Harvest of Ethics

In this episode, Martin began by defining "eschatons" as endpoints or harvests—the culmination of actions and ethics sown over time. He explained that eschatons are not limited to the ultimate cosmic end but are present throughout history, impacting individual lives, institutions, and nations. These harvests manifest as blessings for obedience or curses for disobedience, illustrating the inseparable connection between ethics and eschatology.

"Eschatons are all over the Bible," Martin said, pointing to historic examples but noting that these eschatons are found in our own lives. He asks:

What is our eschaton? Do we use our time properly? Three score and ten years is the span of time of a man, approximately, according to Psalm 90. What will you be doing with that time? What's that time going to be like?



"We must focus on constructing righteous foundations that can endure."

By detaching ethics from eschatology, he warned, we risk trivializing eschatology into mere speculation, losing its practical guidance and spiritual depth. This also fosters sensationalism and false hopes. "When ethics is put into place as the engine that drives eschatons," he explained, "we align with Scripture's simple but profound directive: 'Do this and live; do this and die.'" This alignment restores the power of eschatons to guide believers and societies toward God's intended order.

## Judgment as Part of Redemption

While many view God's judgments as only punitive and as end points in themselves, they actually have a redemptive purpose, as Mark Rushdoony noted: "All of God's judgments serve to destroy the works of man, frustrate Satan's efforts, and reestablish His divine order." With this understanding, we shift the focus from fear to hope, and our faith resides in God's commitment to restoration.

Mark critiqued the pessimism that we see in eschatological perspectives such as dispensationalism, which portrays church history as a long series of failures where the only victory is at the end

with the intervention of Christ as a radical break in the redemptive timeline. Instead, Mark asserted, "The failure of humanistic orders prepares the way for God's Kingdom to take root and flourish."

## The Role of Historical Perspective

"We often can't recognize an eschaton until we look back," Martin said, "but history consistently demonstrates God's sovereignty over human affairs." Both Martin and Mark emphasized the importance of historical perspective in understanding eschatology. Martin cited examples from biblical and modern history, such as the fall of the Soviet Union. These events, he argued, represent eschatons that redirect humanity toward God's purposes.

Mark added that eschatology should inspire humility and diligence when interpreting history. He cautioned against overconfidence in predicting how God's plans will unfold, reminding us that even the disciples misunderstood Christ's mission until after His resurrection. "We must avoid arrogance in eschatological matters," he said. "God's timeline and methods often defy human expectations." We don't seem to learn this lesson.

## Building on Godly Foundations

Both Mark and Martin stressed the need for Christians to build on Biblical foundations rather than relying on humanistic systems destined for collapse. Martin warned against leveraging corrupt institutions for temporary gains, emphasizing the importance of establishing systems rooted in Biblical principles. “When the root is evil, the fruit will be bad,” he said. “We must focus on constructing righteous foundations that can endure.” This is the essence of Christian Reconstruction.

Mark echoed this sentiment, calling Christians to responsibility and active participation in God’s Kingdom. “The work of Christian Reconstruction begins with individuals, families, and education,” he said. “We cannot simply hope to preserve the status quo; we must lay the groundwork for a society aligned with God’s law.”

Mark and Martin agreed that God’s sovereignty is the cornerstone of eschatology. Mark described God as the absolute monarch, combining legislative, judicial, and executive authority. “If we believe God is on His throne,” he said, “we must act accordingly, aligning our thoughts and actions with His authority.”

## Practical Eschatology

Martin went on to emphasize that eschatology is not merely an abstract theological concept but a practical guide for daily living. He noted that every individual, institution, and society is constantly moving toward an eschaton. “God’s revelations about the future are not for our amusement,” he said. “They are meant to empower us to work faithfully for His Kingdom, knowing that our labor is not in vain.” This focus on responsibility reinforces the covenantal thrust that actions have consequences, whether blessings or judgments.

Mark elaborated on this point, stating that eschatology provides a framework for understanding accountability. He explained that recognizing eschatons in contemporary history, such as the collapse of ungodly institutions, should inspire Christians to build alternatives rooted in God’s law.



“The failure of humanistic orders prepares the way for God’s Kingdom to take root and flourish.”

“Our labor is not just about survival,” he said. “It is about advancing God’s kingdom and preparing the ground for future generations.”

Whether ancient or modern history, the interplay between ethics and eschatology should be clear. Martin noted how the neglecting of the land Sabbaths in ancient Israel led to her captivity in Babylon. “Ethics trumps historical assumptions,” he said. “God’s patience does not negate His justice. When the time comes, the consequences of disobedience are unavoidable.”

Mark reflected again on the fall of the Soviet Union as a modern example of an eschaton. “When humanistic systems collapse, they pave the way for God’s order to take root,” he said. “These moments in history remind us of God’s sovereignty and the futility of opposing His will.”

## Reconstructing Society

Mark and Martin both emphasized the need for Christian Reconstruction as a response to the failures of humanistic systems. Martin argued that Christians must move beyond passive engagement, taking active steps to rebuild society on Biblical foundations. “The modern church often focuses on preserving the status quo,” he said. “But we are called to reconstruct every area of life according to God’s law.”

Mark stressed that this work begins with individuals and families but extends to education, economics, and social

governance. “The foundations we build today will determine the future,” he said. “We must prioritize obedience to God’s law, even in areas where it challenges societal norms.”

## The Future of God’s Kingdom

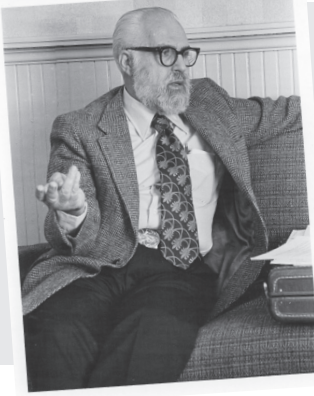
The podcast episode concluded with a hopeful vision of the future, rooted in the certainty of God’s promises. Martin reminded us of Isaiah’s prophecy that “of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end.” He emphasized that God’s kingdom has grown steadily since the time of the apostles and will continue to expand despite opposition.

Mark echoed this optimism, urging Christians to remain faithful in their work. “God’s plan is bigger than any single moment in history,” he said. “Our responsibility is to trust in His sovereignty and labor diligently for His glory.”

Once again, a truly Biblical worldview can bring us great encouragement as we better understand both the power of God’s sovereignty as well as the power of our own obedience. There are many more eschatons to face both individually and collectively, but God’s law and covenant provide us with the necessary tools to fulfill our responsibilities in advancing Christ’s Kingdom in history. 🙏

If you’d like to listen to the full podcast episode, just visit <https://tinyurl.com/ChalcedonPodcastEp51>





***“To believe in God means to believe that He, not man, is the ultimate Lord and ruler over all things. It means to trust Him for our salvation, and for our todays and tomorrows.” ~ R. J. Rushdoony***

## **God and the Future** by R. J. Rushdoony

*A Word In Season: Daily Messages on the Faith for All of Life, Volume 3, pp. 9-10*

A few years ago, a prominent professor stated, “The future had not yet happened and therefore cannot produce any effect in the present.” Many people agree. The future, they hold, is open to all kinds of possibilities, and to all kinds of lifestyles, and there is nothing to bind man in any fashion.

As Christians, we cannot agree with this at all. The future, like the past and present, is totally governed by God. According to Acts 15:18, “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” God, God’s law, and God’s judgment govern and determine the future, and nothing happens apart from the providence of God.

In fact, the ground of Christian confidence is that God, made known to us as our Lord and Savior in Jesus Christ, absolutely governs and determines all things, and that the future comes from His hands. It is not the communists, ungodly men anywhere, or man in any form who determine the future but only God Almighty.

This was the confidence of the Psalmist in Psalm 46. The world of his day was an extremely violent one, violent in earthquakes and disasters as well as in the warrings of men and nations. The confidence of the Psalmist in the face of all

these frightening developments was in the grace of God and the certainty of His government: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.”

To believe in God means to believe that He, not man, is the ultimate Lord and ruler over all things. It means to trust Him for our salvation, and for our todays and tomorrows. It means that we love God as our Lord and Savior, and that we look to Him for our deliverance. It means too that we fear God rather than man and the state, and that we conform ourselves to God, not man, because God alone is Lord and Savior.

Thus, if we profess to believe in God, we will show it as we look to the future in terms of God, not man. All too many who claim to be Christians see the future as supposedly dominated by antichrist, and their faith is thereby manifested. God never for a moment surrenders the government of the universe to anything or anyone, and we had better believe it: He requires us to. He alone is God, and beside Him “there is none else” (Isa. 45:22). 🇺🇸

### **Ways You Can Help Chalcedon**

**Engage with Our Content:** Read and share our articles, podcasts, and videos with friends and family. It not only enriches your understanding of Christian Reconstruction but also helps spread these ideas to a wider audience.

**Host Study Groups:** Organize small groups in your community to discuss the principles of Christian Reconstruction. These gatherings can serve as a powerful tool for education and outreach, creating a local support network for our cause.

**Donate Financially:** Your financial support is vital for us to continue our work. Regular donations help us to plan and execute projects more effectively, including publishing new materials and maintaining our online presence. Consider setting up a recurring donation to provide steady support.

**Pray for Our Work and Mission:** Prayer is the foundation of everything we do. Please pray for Chalcedon, its leadership, and its mission to educate and apply the message of Christian Reconstruction. Your spiritual support is invaluable.

By taking these steps, you can make a significant difference in helping us achieve our goals and spread this message. Together, we can work towards a society that reflects the faith for all of life.