

# ChalcedonReport

MINISTRY NEWS FROM THE CHALCEDON FOUNDATION® JUNE 2025

## “We’re All Rushdoony-ites Now”

Although many borrowed his ideas without citing him as their source, Rushdoony remains one of the most important Christian thinkers of the modern era, and we believe his influence will only increase as the collapse of humanism continues.

In a recent interview for Canon Press, Doug Wilson noted how a good many influential thinkers—notably Francis Schaeffer—borrowed a great deal from Rushdoony without citing him. To this day, the distancing continues, but the ideas are still seen. Even online, much of the social media squabbles are happening with those who surely have more than one Rushdoony volume on their shelves, but one cannot fault Rush for the way his ideas are handled.

### The Big Idea(s)

What is the big idea that Rushdoony gave us? It’s nothing less than the biggest idea which is always the Kingdom of God, but Rush provided blueprints for a greater realization of Christ’s rule in every sphere of life and thought. In other words, men speak much about the Kingdom of God, but one is hard pressed to determine what is meant by the phrase. Is it heaven? Is it God’s providence over all things? Or is it limited to the church or reduced to the political sphere?

For Rushdoony, everything about covenant, law, and kingdom spoke directly to man’s responsibility in history, and in that sense, it’s a main reason for the opposition he received. How can man usher in the Kingdom of God? Rushdoony never claimed such. Instead, he admonished faithfulness and obedience on the part of Christians to the other big idea: the law of God.

As one greatly influenced by Dr.

Cornelius Van Til, Rush took the next step after Van Til’s conclusion that we are left with two options in man’s epistemological pursuit: autonomy or theonomy, and with that, Christian Reconstruction emerges. Rushdoony devoted himself to answering the question of what a theonomic approach would look like.

### Schaeffer

Returning to Doug Wilson’s interview, he puts forward Francis Schaeffer as the prime example of one who borrowed from Rushdoony without citing Rush in the footnotes:

Francis Schaeffer learned an enormous amount from Rushdoony, and it doesn’t come out in the footnotes. What he did is he cleaned Rushdoony up, made him ready for prime time. If I learn something from Rushdoony, I say his name. Well, Schaeffer didn’t do that. He just sort of borrowed the idea, took the idea, and made it palatable to the mainstream and did an enormous amount of good. But we’re all “Rushdoony-ites” now because of the whole evangelical world, Francis Schaeffer was the one who brought evangelicals around to being pro-life at all.<sup>1</sup>

And what is Schaeffer’s most popular work? Arguably, that would be the documentary and book *How Should We Then Live* (1976) arriving just three years after the publishing of Rushdoony’s *Institutes of Biblical Law*. As Wilson noted, these ideas were made ready for

the prime time of evangelicalism, and no doubt Schaeffer still helped to bring others to discover both Rushdoony and Van Til.

### Too Radical for Footnotes

The point here is not to give credit where credit is due but rather to take inventory of where we are right now, and what should be the way forward? The times have changed dramatically since the early 70s, and what was once “too radical for footnotes” is now the only position absolute enough for a society knee deep in moral mud and blown by the fierce winds of philosophical and religious confusion.

In short, the baton was passed to us by Rushdoony, Van Til, North, Bahnsen, et al., and the challenge we have is to keep the mission and vision alive to help inspire and equip a new generation to apply their faith and do the work of Christian reconstruction.

There is also our continued prophetic role as we sustain the critique against humanism wherever it appears. If judgment begins at the house of God (1 Peter 4:17), then let the light of God’s law-word be continually shone on all that we do and say. Rushdoony left us with so many tools for the work of dominion, and Chalcedon remains as a ministry that’s still greatly needed. Let’s run with the vision and continue building! 🏗️

1. <https://x.com/canonpress/status/1923147489059700944>

# A Reading Group for “Domestic Abuse and the Church”

Kyle Shepherd

In April 2019, Martin Selbrede presented a three-part lecture series, “Domestic Abuse and the Church,” in North Alabama. In these lectures, Martin details the nature and anatomy of abuse, how an abuser pursues the process of grooming and manipulation prior to actual perpetration, and the all-too-frequent response of the church to ignore or suppress the victim. He also works through how the heart of God is directly against abusers, and demonstrates that Scripture requires us to strenuously pursue justice for the victim in order to bring about healing. After the three core lectures, Martin held an extended session of questions and answers from conference attendees covering a wide range of topics.

It’s a common temptation for us to take the spiritual riches that have been entrusted to us, listen to or read them carefully, recommend them to others, and place them on the shelf, letting what we have learned fade from our minds. But of course we have a responsibility to not bury our talents, and “unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required” (Luke 12:48). The more biblical response must be to take what we have learned, put it into action in our own personal lives, and then teach it to others.

With this in mind, I set out earlier this year to take Martin’s lectures, delivered at the congregation I attend, convert them to a written format, and then organize and lead a study group on Sunday afternoons—working through the articles a few paragraphs at a time. The goal is to raise the level of education and awareness in our local congregation as to the issues of abuse, healing, and justice—and to be faithful stewards of the information entrusted to us in April 2019.

To convert Martin’s lectures from video format to a print format, I



Kyle Shepherd (left) leading a Sunday afternoon study group at the church he and his family attend.

leveraged the whisper.ai transcription engine to transcribe all four of his abuse lectures in about an hour. Next, I worked through each transcript while listening to the original audio, adding citation information, Scripture quotations, and editing as I went so that the text was easier to read yet without losing any information. I also added subheadings to break up the content and make the reading experience flow better. I then printed off copies for participants at our local congregation. Every other Sunday after lunch, we gather together and read through the article—a few paragraphs at a time—followed by any discussion.

Speaking of the impact of Martin’s teaching, one participant commented,

We are learning that the church has for too long tried to stop their ears and close their eyes and hide from abuse situations when sadly abuse of all kinds is as prevalent inside the church walls as it is outside. It’s time the church be the church and protect the hurting who reach out.

A mother of several young children commented,

Church is no place to let your guard completely down to oppressors just because it’s a place of worship. . . . it can also be the perfect opportunity for abusers to sneak in and appear just like everyone else to gain trust with an alternate end goal in mind. We absolutely have to be able to spot the wolves in sheep’s clothing. Truth and justice for the oppressed is always of higher importance than keeping up a high and mighty façade of your church body. The church should be the place that anyone with trauma from abusers should find true refuge and dedication to reach justice for the oppressed from their fellow believers. No case is to be completely shut down because of someone’s high regard they’ve previously had for the person being brought into question. Especially, children should not be dismissed as immature or overreactive—and not fully heard and supported when bringing any concern to your attention. 🙏

**Martin Selbrede’s lectures, “Domestic Abuse and the Church,” are available from the Chalcedon website at [chalcedon.edu](http://chalcedon.edu).**

# Christian Education Without Borders: A Night with Italy's Homeschoolers

Andrea Schwartz

Chalcedon has a broader reach than is often assumed. Since Rushdoony and the Chalcedon Foundation were based in the U.S., and much of the debate surrounding Christian Reconstruction was focused in the States, one might overlook the fact that Chalcedon continues to serve believers in South America, Australia, Africa, and Europe who hunger and thirst for the Word of God and to be used to serve the Kingdom of God effectively.

In January of this year, Giorgio Modolo, a Christian Reconstructionist in Italy, contacted me about participating in a Zoom meeting for believers in his country to discuss Christian education, specifically homeschooling. I agreed immediately as there is no other topic I'd rather talk about, and Christian education is in my wheelhouse. I was anxious to serve our Lord for those seeking more in Italy.

Through my email exchanges with Giorgio, I received a greater understanding of the situation in Italy and how they experienced similar struggles as we did here in the U.S., but their circumstances are very different.

For example, America has the option of Christian day schools along with homeschooling, but that is not an option in Italy. In fact, unlike the U.S., most of those who homeschool in Italy are not Christians—they are simply disgusted with the poor performance of the state system and want something better for their children.

Giorgio put me in touch with Gioele, who would serve as my translator. Although many there are bi-lingual, they wanted to make sure the attendees truly understood the seriousness of God's calling on parents to steward their children's education in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. As of 2025, it should be clear that Christian education is a command, not a suggestion.



**SCUOLA PARENTALE CRISTIANA: PERCHÉ?**

Incontro con **ANDREA SCHWARTZ**  
**Mamma homeschooler, autrice, conferenziera, collaboratrice di**  
*chalcedon.edu*

**Prima parte:**

- La filosofia dell'istruzione cristiana: fondamenti biblici e visione del mondo
- Il ruolo dei genitori nell'istruzione
- L'esperienza di Andrea e aspetti pratici

**Seconda parte:**

- Q&A
- Domande programmate
- Domande dei partecipanti

**Quando:**  
SABATO 29 MARZO 2025, ORE 21:00.

Il codice per il collegamento **ZOOM** verrà inviato prima dell'evento a quanti aderiranno.

Evento promosso da [www.cristoregna.it](http://www.cristoregna.it)

I sent Gioele my talk in English, and he translated it into Italian, putting red dots after certain sentences or phrases to indicate where I should stop and allow him to translate. We met together online a week prior to arrange the event as best we could. After that, the three of us prayed that the Lord would be gracious as we knew how unstable Wi-Fi can be.

Saturday, March 29th at 1 pm Pacific Time is when the meeting began, with the Italians participating eight hours later in the evening for them. They would also experience a loss of an hour that weekend due to their time change, but twenty-one Zoom accounts were in attendance with many showing up as couples. I estimated about thirty people participated, and that would be a good sized crowd in person where I live!

Our plan and preparation worked wonderfully. I adhered to my red dots and Gioele translated. The only glitch was that I loved hearing the Italian spoken, and had to remember when it was time for me to resume.

After giving a brief history of my Italian roots—and my experiences with homeschooling—I dove into the

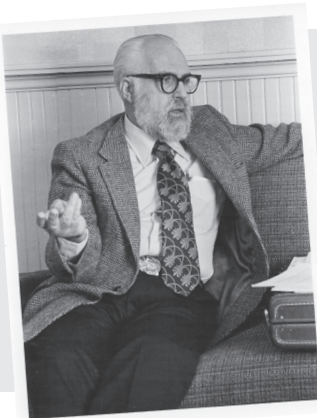
framework for establishing a homeschool on biblical grounds: a homeschooling mindset, discussing a biblical worldview, and emphasizing that no experience was necessary other than the desire to obey God and rear faithful children. During the presentation, the only videos that were on were mine, Gioele, and Giorgio. Giorgio, from my point of view, was a great “cheerleader” as he continued to clap his hands in agreement, give me thumbs up, and flash a very satisfied smile as though what was being said was what he had hoped for.

After the formal part of my talk, there was a time for questions and answers, which were well-thought out and demonstrated a true desire for application. Some on the call were already active in homeschooling their children, while others were just beginning the journey. Since the Q&A was unscripted, I often forgot to give Gioele time to translate. He was patient with me and afterwards admitted that he was quite exhausted, but from my perspective his work was flawless.

By the time I said “goodnight” to them, I still had hours to go before it got dark here, so I had opportunity to consider that so many abroad share the desire to advance the Kingdom of God.

We agreed to meet again, and that they would partition the talk into parts to place on YouTube for those who couldn't attend the meeting. I also received a number of Facebook friend requests the following day from some of the attendees. They all were gracious, and I'm grateful to have new friends, with some requesting that I mentor some of the Italian homeschooling mothers.

We can talk about the detrimental aspect of modern technology and its deficits, but I, for one, am thankful that I was able to minister without jet lag! In fact, I left the meeting invigorated and look forward to more interactions. 🙌



***"Lawless men create a lawless world, and no authoritarian power over them can make them any different in their heart. Only a reformation, the regenerating power of God, can make man into a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17)."***

***~ R. J. Rushdoony***

## Changing Things by R. J. Rushdoony

*A Word In Season: Daily Messages on the Faith for All of Life, Volume 7, pp. 40-41*

In the days before Columbus and Luther, Europe was in the midst of moral and social anarchy. Authority, in both church and state, was bypassed, and the state, to maintain itself, became more and more tyrannical. Cardinal Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II, said in 1454: "Christianity has no head who all wish to obey. Neither the Pope nor the Emperor is rendered his due. There is no reverence, no obedience. Thus we regard the Pope and Emperor as if they bore false titles and were mere painted objects. Each city has its own king. There are as many princes as there are households."

This moral anarchy resulted in political tyranny. When men are not morally responsible, they can neither command obedience from others nor give it to those above

them. They are lawless, and brute force begins to rule in their world.

Solomon tells us of man, "[A]s he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). Lawless men create a lawless world, and no authoritarian power over them can make them any different in their heart. Only a reformation, the regenerating power of God, can make man into a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17).

We need to work for changes in our politics, economics, education, and in every other sphere. These changes, however, will be futile unless the heart of man is changed. Our moral and social anarchy comes from the heart of man, and the change must begin there. 🙏

**SAVE on the 7-volume set of *A Word In Season* during our Summer Sale!**

## Have You Discovered Our Podcasts?

Visit our website today, and you'll find loads of episodes of the **Chalcedon Podcast** and the **Out of the Question Podcast**. Rushdoony himself may have been the first "podcaster" with his popular **Easy Chair Series**, and we're continuing that effective media approach as we tackle relevant topics that we believe can inform, empower, and equip for godly dominion.



Visit [Chalcedon.edu](http://Chalcedon.edu)

## 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.

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