

ARISE & BUILD

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THE POWER OF GOD IN THE MIDST OF THE MUNDANE

BY CHRIS ZIMMERMAN



Dr. Rushdoony has written volumes on the “marching orders” of victory accomplished through the very practical

application of God’s law in our lives. By our redemption, our covenant work of dominion is restored and commanded from the throne. But the question that is facing any reader of Dr. Rushdoony’s works is this: “Now that you know *what* it says, what are you going *to do about it?*” This sort of in-your-face responsibility is often the roadblock to many who wish to make the faith one of a personal, pietistic lifestyle choice instead of the blessed commands of our King.

But many may be left wondering just what their contribution may be in forwarding the Kingdom. Life, they suppose, just doesn’t seem to have the power that we read about in examples such as Daniel or Joseph. After all, I’m just a [occupation here] and it doesn’t seem to do much. Quickly, this sort of thinking can spiral into something self-defeating. Rushdoony once said,

Self-pity, as I have often said, is the worst cancer that afflicts humanity.¹

With this in mind, this writer intends to share a couple of specific examples of the mighty power of God in the midst of the supposed mundane to forward His Kingdom. What follows is in no way a boasting on my part, except to boast in the Lord (Psa. 34:2, 2 Cor. 10:17). I can assure the reader that I am

no Daniel, but we all have the promise of our Lord that “greater works than these shall he do” (John 14:12). We must also bear in mind the insightful words of Matthew Henry, “He who notes Providences will have Providences to note.”

BE DELIBERATE

A few years ago, my family and I exited from Washington state following an intense study of most of the other 49 with a deliberate plan to plant ourselves somewhere where our dominion work may, Lord willing, make an impact for generations to come. The thinking was very much in accord with the Biblical laws of inheritance where the prior generation is looking to maximize the family’s impact for generations. A spreadsheet was built, metrics discussed, and a decision was made. That move happened two years ago to a rural community with a population of about 40,000.

Shortly after, we stumbled into our first battle: the local library was making a very deliberate attempt to ban the carrying of firearms within their building. They were doing this under the auspices of “protecting the children” but in the successive meetings it was made clear that the overall goal was to ban firearms from the library altogether as nearby districts had already done. Since the duty to *protect life* is part of the sixth commandment, our family found itself on the front line of this battle. The leadership of the library was waging this effort under the wrong section of the state laws as justification of their “authority” and it

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was already a forthcoming agenda item for the board.

This is where prayerful strategy came into play. Often, Christians will face a problem and say, “Well, I don’t know what to do so I will pray about it.” But, what saith the Word of God?

And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward. (Exod. 14:15)

Rushdoony’s brief comment should be properly considered for the massive impact it should have in response to this sort of thinking,

God is impatient also with prayer where action is needed, or where prayer is not accompanied by action or works.²

Here is the context we now found ourselves in: residents for only about a year in a new place, passionate about the Second Amendment but facing a library board bent on violating it, and no clear plan of attack on our part. A quick “breath prayer,” as Rushdoony liked to call them, and I was sending an email off to the county commissioners on this issue. Our county had declared a sanctuary status for the Second Amendment, so I wanted to bring this to their attention. Regardless of their response, our family was planning to attend the library meeting and speak against this issue, even if we were the minority. What followed was nothing short of the power of God.

First, our family spoke against this ban from Scripture and presupposing Scripture in all of our speeches. *Second*, the commissioners then threw their weight against the gun ban and we all watched as the once confident board suddenly crumbled with the matter tabled for a future meeting. Month after month, more people from our community began showing up at the board meetings to voice their disapproval until the largest meeting room in the facility was over capacity. A protest rally was organized twice in the library parking lot where we listened to multiple speakers calling for the board’s replacement.

Then God granted the complete victory: after nearly six months of battle on this issue, the library board made a formal statement that they would be dropping this matter completely and would not even be enforcing the “no weapons” policy they *already had* on the books. Our responsibility was to speak God’s truth with real implications, leaving the consequences up to Him. We then saw more doors open.

The board positions have term limits with two rotating off within weeks. I was faced with the question of whether I would throw my hat into the ring of people applying for board membership. Our family learned long ago that when God opens a door, no matter how ill-equipped you may feel, walk through it so, in faith, I did.

When the time came for the county commissioners to vote on new members for the library board, they were considering more than ten names, including mine. What followed was a unanimous vote in favor of appointing me to the board. Shortly after serving in my first meeting as a board member, I was then subsequently voted in as the chairman of the very board we had been battling recently. Given this new sphere of responsibility, I have worked to establish a good rapport with the staff (Exod. 12:49) and challenged many of the long running actions of prior boards (Luke 12:11–12), always seeking to explain the why behind my recommendations. This means that like Daniel or Joseph, we must be deliberate in action and watch for the victory (Joshua 23:10).

BE DILIGENT

The planned move to our new home also required that I leave my employer of ten years to start from scratch with a new one. This career move is always a step of faith as you adjust to what the new employer needs. Rushdoony told a story to illustrate what true faith looks like,

Some forty years or more ago to illustrate the meaning of faith on an isolated Indian Reservation, I was with a fine old

Indian, we were on wagon and horses pulling it and we came to the river. And I wondered if the ice in nearly fall could hold us. To go through and have the ice break would mean we would get wet, there was snow on the ground everywhere, it would be miles before we could get somewhere to a fire and we'd freeze, we'd die before that happened. The old Indian got off and looked at the ice and he said given the heavy freezes of late the ice would be thick enough to support us and the wagon and the load of wood we would be later be bringing down. I could have said I believe you, but no, I think I'll cross some other way if there is another way to cross. But by agreeing to go with him I showed faith in his judgment, I put my life on the line. Now that's what Biblical believing means: putting your life on the line. Putting our lives in our Lord's hands in total faith, stepping out on the ice. The Gospel of John summons us to place our lives totally in Christ's hands, this is believing, this is faith.³

The interview process was no less a step of faith. After the initial phone interviews, I recall vividly coming out of the three-hour, in-person interview and telling my wife that, while I brought all of my technical expertise to bear, there were some things I could not answer so it would be God that would have to open the door to that company. That's exactly what happened: I was contacted shortly afterwards, offered a salary that was in effect a pay raise, and asked how soon I could start.

Another door was opened, and we walked through it.

I have now been with my employer for just over two years with the power of God manifested abundantly. I daily prayed for wisdom and strength from the Lord to serve this new employer as unto Him. Scripture commands,

Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheri-

tance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. (Col. 3:22–24)

The man who was my initial supervisor was quite exacting. He had little tolerance for mistakes, resulting in tension when a problem arose for which you didn't have an immediate solution. On multiple occasions I recall exhausting my knowledge on a problem only to make a prayerful educated guess which turned out *to be* the solution. I distinctly remember praying, "Lord, I fall at your mercy in this ... there is none else that I can do," and took another look at the problem. To men, I looked like the hero when it was God who granted the victory. Likewise, I recognized that this supervisor was sinful, as I was, and my service took the form of Colossians 3:22–24 where I didn't see him in the day-to-day, but Christ.

As these daily providences were noted, I shared them with my family so they, too, would see the mighty works of God.

We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. (Psa. 78:4)

BE HUMBLE

The news later came that my supervisor decided to leave the company to pursue other options. That was followed by a phone call where he mentioned how he felt I was "awesome" and would make an excellent supervisor to the team. I was later approached by the executive leadership asking if I would be willing to step into this role should it be offered. I was stunned: I had only been with the company for about a year's time with little feedback on my performance, striving to maintain a Scriptural mindset, and now I was facing the prospect of management! I recall another breath prayer as I went to speak with the executives, "Lord, please grant me wisdom in this meeting."

But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then

shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. (Luke 14:10,11)

I told the leadership that I was honored to be considered for this position and, if selected, I would be happy to serve in this capacity. At the same time, if they found a more qualified candidate that would in no way detract from my level of service to the company.

Later, the executive leadership chose another candidate from our team to fill in this role and I was now set to continue serving the Lord by serving this new man. My new supervisor almost immediately requested from the executives that I be promoted to Team Lead. Over the subsequent weeks and months I made it clear to my new supervisor that I saw my role as one of handling the day-to-day to free him up to set the vision for the team and interact with the executive leaders. As I applied myself in this new role, the day came where my supervisor said that he felt it would be better that he and I switch roles with plans already underway. Again, door after door was opened while I have simply focused on serving yet being sensitive to providences of God as He works in, through, or around me.

WHAT NOW?

May these testimonies of God's works serve to encourage the reader to action. This is the mission of Chalcedon: bringing the law-word of God to bear in every area of life and thought, pressing forward the crown rights of Christ the King. Recognize that the Living God is working *now* in the world, including your life.

Be deliberate: with your knowledge of God's law through Rushdoony's writings comes the responsibility to apply it including stepping through the doors that God opens before you in faith in Him. As you are faithful in the smaller things, don't be surprised when bigger opportunities are given. Are you standing before those in any authority? Remember

His promise to be with you in the battle if you will be faithful to Him.

Be diligent: recognize that we are in a war and we will see setbacks according to His purposes but persevere by the power of the Holy Spirit to walk faithful in what God's Word says.

Be humble: remember that all that we know is by the grace of God toward His redeemed. We are being sanctified by the Holy Spirit through His Word, but we are not fully sanctified in this life so understand we are all recovering sinners prone to mistakes.

Finally, develop a mindset to see the providences of God in your life and the lives of those around you. It will be through these eyes of faith that the mighty works of God, which we are duty bound to share with others, will be manifest in abundance. The Christian that does this will be encouraged to continue walking in the power of His might and none will be able to stand against him. In so doing, you will become another Daniel or Joseph.

Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. (Deut. 28:6) 🙌

1. *Deuteronomy*, "Honoring Life" (Lecture on Deut. 5:16), <https://chalcedon.edu/resources/audio/honoring-life>.
2. *Exodus: Unity of Law and Grace*, "God's Honor and Glory" (Lecture on Exodus 14:15-22), <https://chalcedon.edu/resources/audio/gods-honor-and-glory>.
3. *The Gospel of John*, "The Word was Made Flesh II" (Lecture on John 1:4-14), <https://chalcedon.edu/resources/audio/the-word-was-made-flesh-ii>.

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RECONSTRUCTION LIFE

BY JOSEPH M. GRAHAM



If you feel like you've got a lot of work to do, you're right.

Over a decade ago, my family and I experienced a full-blown reformation. In the middle

of a transfer to a new duty station, I was to attend jet training in Mississippi. For some very particular reasons, we decided to buck the traditional military housing route and placed our young family (of 5 children) in a travel trailer for the length of training. We purged ourselves of many distractions and spent much more time together learning and growing. The Lord used that time to bring about many changes and started us on a path of reconstruction.

The most crucial principle that stuck with me is that reconstruction is not a dusty academic concept. Instead, reconstruction is the pictures we hang on the walls, the sounds that fill our home, the people we spend time with, the businesses we start, the events in which we participate, the church we choose to attend, the conferences to which we travel, the families we host for supper, the games we play together, the traditions we start, and every way our lives are intertwined. Reconstruction is a form of life.

READ RUSHDOONY

I remember seeing the blue bumper sticker when I bought my first book from Chalcedon. There was Rush's head with a slogan meant for a hashtag. It's a good thing they didn't tell me how many books he wrote because I'd probably have felt swamped! The overall concept of a reconstruction life came from Rush's commentary on Romans,

In Hebrews 10:38, the use of "the just shall live by faith" has reference to sanctification. In *all* these instances, the word is *live*, not be *saved*; it is thus more

inclusive. We must remember also, as I pointed out in *Salvation and Godly Rule*, that the very word salvation is inclusive of far more than simply being assured of heaven; it means health and victory, here and now and forever more.¹

It occurred to me that there was a stark difference between the concept of the possession of faith and the activity of faith. "The just shall live by faith," meant just that—the life of faith. This brought me to a reality that I was becoming very familiar with throughout my reading and reformation.

I'M IMMATURE

When I see pictures of myself from years ago, I look at that young man and think, "Wow, he needs to get it together." I know what that young man is thinking about and doing with his time, and I know he could be using it much more wisely. I want to kick him in the rear sometimes. I honestly hope I never lose this perspective because it helps me remember that there is a never-ending task ahead of me.

Reconstruction starts with the man in the mirror. He has to get his act together, repent of his sins, focus on the reformation of self. Even as I continue to grow and mature and conquer old foes, new ones never stop sneaking up.

This makes me realize that I've got a lot to learn! The benefits of homeschooling abound because there is so much to learn about our history and society. We can learn together while accomplishing a major task of reconstruction.

LEAVING AN INHERITANCE

The concept of inheritance is inescapable, and the life of reconstruction cannot neglect this heritage. We are both the beneficiaries and grantors of legacy.

"Our lives are not our own. We are bound to others, past and present, and

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by each crime and every kindness, we birth our future.” - David Mitchell²

Our legacy is more than the collection of assets on the balance sheet. It is the heart of our life’s message—the total sum of values and vision we leave to others. The approach we take to money, property, business, culture, faith, identity, and virtue are the elements of the legacy that we receive, develop, and pass along to others.

As I became more astutely aware of the impact I was going to leave, my attention began to focus more and more on the relations I already possessed.

MARRIAGE TO A DIFFICULT MAN

I have a great appreciation for my wife, which has grown over the years. The Christian life is hard and challenging, especially when your faith is the kind that presses against a pagan and pseudo-Christian culture. Marriage is a garden bed for the life of reconstruction, and my wife has labored diligently now for over two decades raising children. She is now watching many of the fruits of those labors launch into the culture, assaulting hell’s gates.

Spending years living in the trenches of daily home life requires us to attend to our marriage as a fundamental relationship in the home. The life of reconstruction regularly takes my focus outward, which is only possible when home life is nurtured. A critical legacy that will be left from life is marriage. Attending to it is fundamental.

Thankfully, my wife is engaged in measuring relational unity in the home. I depend on her to let me know when there are turmoils that need to be addressed. We work together to keep short accounts and leverage resources if we need more help to repair relational breaches.

Recently I had several very depressed children when the entire spring and summer calendars got axed from COVID-19. We took the opportunity to take a long-range perspective on the crisis and

see what weaknesses it exposed in our home and businesses. We met regularly to focus on the current situation and find deliberate tasks that we could parse out amongst the family. People teamed up or were assigned, security, food, storage, fuel, communications, transportation, finances, records, etc. It didn’t immediately remove the pain of the situation but finding a way to overcome the situation brought us all together. This helped us heal as a family.

A RISING TIDE

I make my children do a lot of hard things. I believe that when you set low goals, you’re not as encouraged when you hit them. If they are to become accustomed to the life of reconstruction, they better learn that it’s going to be hard. Sometimes I make them read hard books. Regularly I’ll require them to do something that stretches their time or abilities. I’m that kind of dad, and I like it. I also love to help them figure out ways to accomplish that task in a way they might not have thought about before. I think this has a lot to do with my entrepreneurial spirit, but I’ll let them accomplish tasks in creative ways.

When my 15-year-old daughter Caydence was early in her reading years, I gave her a much harder book to read than she was capable of reading. Along with the assignment came expected tears and frustration. Sometimes my wife is leery when I provide the kids with an exceptionally difficult task; she doesn’t like to see them frustrated and fail. But I want them to experience challenge, even failure. If we don’t become accustomed to failure, we are too likely to never engage in any endeavor because it might not succeed.

In this instance, I let Caydence struggle with the book for a while, then I gave her an idea. I told her, “You know, that book is on audiobook. You could listen to it being read while you follow along. That’ll count.” That was a quick decision! Suddenly there was a new way to accomplish the task.

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Since 1965, the Chalcedon Foundation has served as the founding and leading ministry for the message of Christian Reconstruction, which is simply the mission of advancing the Kingdom of God in every area of life. Now, fifty-five years later, the need for this message and ministry is greater.

Our objective is to help equip Christians to “take back” government from the state by means of Biblical self-government and to apply their faith to every sphere of life and thought. We’ve already

gained significant ground through helping to restore Christian education, but it’s time to move into other spheres by God’s grace, law, and power.

We desperately need your help to continue this mission, so please take a few moments today to prayerfully consider supporting Chalcedon with your tax-deductible giving. We’ve enclosed a self-addressed, postage-paid envelope to make it easy, and you can also donate online at:

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