

ChalcedonReport

MINISTRY NEWS FROM THE CHALCEDON FOUNDATION FEBRUARY 2018

How God Provided a Home for Chalcedon

by Mark Rushdoony



My father searched for a home for Chalcedon long before its official creation in 1965. He had long hoped to create some sort of a

study center, library, college, or seminary and had spoken to many people about it over the years. He visited a number of western states and canvased virtually every area of California, hoping to find either an existing facility he could use or inexpensive rural land to build upon.

This expansive vision was, in God's timing, to be delayed for a season. Chalcedon started very small, and operated for over ten years out of our home. The classes my father taught took place at various locations in Los Angeles and during my father's extensive travels, which gave him an audience that was dispersed around the United States, as well as throughout a number of foreign countries.

Chalcedon in Los Angeles

The first home of Chalcedon at its founding in 1965 was our rented house in Woodland Hills (a suburb on the northwestern edge of Los Angeles). We moved to that location because an informal group of Goldwater conservatives had pledged some support. Finding a home for my father's library that was affordable was difficult, so a group of volunteers enclosed the roofed lanai to house at least a part of it. When the landlords disclosed that they wanted to sell the house, my parents bought a home a few miles away in the adjacent



The main office building on the Chalcedon campus, which also houses the Chalcedon Chapel.

Canoga Park area. Once again, a group of volunteers built an additional room to house the growing library.

Soon after this acquisition, property values began to increase, more than doubling in a few years. Property taxes also rose yearly. Many homeowners were soon paying more in property taxes than they were paying in actual mortgage payments. It was common for people to sell because they were no longer able to afford their homes.

My parents were justifiably concerned that they would be priced out of their home as well, and so they began looking for rural property once again. Because of his wide-ranging travels, and the spread of his writing through the *Chalcedon Report* newsletter, my father did not really have strong ties to Los Angeles as a base of operations. This was a good thing, given that

various properties in the vicinity which had existing facilities were either too expensive or too dilapidated to consider for relocating the ministry.

Chalcedon's Relocation to Vallecito

In 1975 my mother saw a northern California property listed in a southern California newspaper: a Depression-era gold mine on one hundred acres with a ten-year-old home. My parents arranged to be shown the property and proceeded to drive 6½ hours north to Vallecito in Calaveras County, California, which had been made famous by Mark Twain's first commercial success as an author, his 1865 short story, *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*.

A hard rain made the trip difficult, and (as they would later enjoy relating) each of them got discouraged and decided it was best to turn back, but each

did so at different times in the journey, with the other in turn suggesting they might as well keep going.

They loved the property, green from the rains, as well as the very rural nature of Calaveras County, which at that time did not have so much as a single traffic light.

My parents initially decided the property was outside their budget, because they did not want a thirty-year debt. But a few weeks later, the agent called them and said the property was available at a reduced price. Even then, an agreement could only be reached contingent on the county's agreement to a proposed subdivision of the property. Subsequently, my parents bought sixty acres with the house, Chalcedon purchased twenty acres, my sister and



Chalcedon lawn being used as a landing site for a patient to be flown to a major trauma center.

brother-in-law, Martha and Bob Coie, bought ten acres, and Fred Vreeland, a Chalcedon supporter in New Jersey, bought the final ten acres. My parents began construction of a library building on their property that winter.

The timing of finding the Vallecito property was providential. Their house in Canoga Park escalated in price between 1971 and 1975, but prices in rural counties like Calaveras were still very low. Moreover, in 1978 a voter-led initiative (Proposition 13) reduced property tax rates by 57 percent and limited the rate of tax increases for as long as a given property was held by the family. My parents were thus able to afford a rural property, purchase land for Chalcedon,



Visitors are often surprised at the size of Chalcedon's warehouse contained in the main building.

and (within two years) see their tax rate permanently pegged to that low value.

Visitors to my parents' home during that time will remember the assortment of chickens, guineas, and peacocks that roamed the property. For a number of years, I helped Dad run cattle on the property. We then butchered them and distributed the meat to employees and local church families.



The roadside sign listing times for church services at Chalcedon Chapel (first pastored by R. J. Rushdoony and now by his son Mark).

A road was cut into the Chalcedon property and a small building with an apartment and office was finished in 1977. Later two garage-sized warehouses were erected nearby. For a number of years the *Chalcedon Report* was printed locally and mailed from the tiny Vallecito Post Office. Our volume of mail kept it off a list of small post offices that were regularly threatened with closure in those years.

A few years later Fred Vreeland donated his parcel (which had highway frontage) to Chalcedon, and a building was erected on it in 1991. That structure initially served as home to Chalcedon Christian School (K-8) which operated from 1981–1999. Since the school's closure, the building has been used for Chalcedon's offices, shipping department, and the Chalcedon Chapel.

For years, the old playfield on the Chalcedon premises has been used as the landing site for regional air ambulance helicopters when EMS responders deem that injuries potentially require a full trauma center. Two of R.J. Rushdoony's great-grandchildren were once air-lifted from there to a children's hospital in Sacramento after their car slid off an icy road and crashed (both of them recovered completely). 🙌

The Chalcedon Foundation “Hath Foundations”

by Martin G. Selbrede



I’ve asked Mark Rushdoony to pen some reflections on the history of Chalcedon at its current location.

One of the reasons for my doing so is that in our digital world, replete with virtual reality and cyberspace locales, we are prone to lose touch with a sense of place. Americans’ grasp of geography is, at best, miserable, and likely to deteriorate even further as we continue to delegate physical awareness to our smart phone GPS apps.

It was pointed out that Chalcedon supporters have unwittingly driven right past the foundation on Highway 4 in California ... friends of the ministry who, had they known, would have stopped by to visit. Part of the problem is that Vallecito is so tiny, you’ll miss it if you blink while you’re driving through it.

Dr. R. J. Rushdoony often pressed a very important point that is often missed in an age focused on information technology: land is one of the most responsible forms of wealth. (Cash, being liquid and demanding little in respect to stewardship, is the most irresponsible form of wealth.) This is a point he hit upon not only in lectures and sermons, but also in his writings on both economics and in his seminal series, “The Theology of the Land,” published as a key part of his two-volume *Systematic Theology*. Man came from the dust of the ground, and humanism seeks to detach us from the land (except as it is considered from a collectivist, statist perspective) ... yet humanism insists (inconsistently) upon chaining us to the primordial ooze of Darwinism as our “true” origin.

As Mark noted in his comments, his father’s wide-ranging ministry didn’t require a location in a central metropolis like Los Angeles. Further, the power of ideas can overcome apparent geographic barriers. Yet, it was still fitting that a



Vallecito is located in the foothills of the Stanislaus National Forest.

ministry that proclaimed the importance of “the theology of the land” be more than just a website in cyberspace. In point of fact, the weekly broadcasts of Mark’s current sermon series emanate from the Chalcedon Chapel, where his father served in the pulpit for decades. There is a sense, then, of generational succession tied to the place, and to the Kingdom purpose the place has enabled. We can, after a fashion, adapt the words of Tolkien concerning Chalcedon’s location: “there is good rock here.” We do so because our Rock is not like their rock.

There is one map that the Chalcedon Foundation always appears on: the one drawn up by the Southern Poverty Law Center every year. Their nonsensical “hate group” designation for Chalcedon doesn’t appear to carry any weight with the pilots of medivac helicopters, however, who have long used the Chalcedon property for emergency operations (as Mark has commented upon in his article, and for which he has provided a dramatic photo taken during an actual operation at the Chalcedon facility). You see, there is something to be said in favor of land—in some instances, it even helps to save lives.

Dr. Rushdoony had often pointed out that Ezra and Nehemiah thought in terms of the future, and so planned for future growth in terms of a victorious faith. This was obvious insofar as the wall being constructed around Jerusalem would provide for a population ten times

larger than what had actually returned from Babylon. One can discern the same thinking behind the Chalcedon premises: there is room for future growth there.

The Chalcedon land itself bears silent testimony to the future that Dr. Rushdoony saw in seed form on his horizon. What shape will that future take, and what part will this particular place in Vallecito play in that future? Those are stories that are not yet written. They can only be answered by those who walk by faith, not by sight. Up until now, God has caused Chalcedon to “grow up out of its place” (Zech. 6:12). How long will it stay in Vallecito, a place more insignificant in California than Bethlehem was in Judah (Micah 5:2)? Or will the day of small beginnings augur something big in Vallecito, which may have yet to see the full impact of God’s consecrating it for His purposes?

With God, all things are possible.

Our calling in the meantime is to be faithful stewards over both the work of Chalcedon, and the provision God has given the ministry in respect to our faithful supporters, and finally, with respect to the home God has provided Chalcedon as the ministry continues to equip the church militant for informed service in the Name of her Risen King.

God’s purposes, which embrace the whole world, cannot be constrained to a county known primarily for Mark Twain’s eponymous jumping frog. Ought not our prayer to be this: that just as the light of God’s Word continues to propagate uncompromisingly from Vallecito (and other faithful ministries teaching the whole counsel of God), that this light grow and be replicated in every home across the land? This surely is the burden of Isaiah 4:5: “And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence.”

Hero in America Might Debut at Major Film Festival

by Martin G. Selbrede



As post-production goes into high gear with *Hero in America: Dr. Kishore and the Epidemic of Greed*, the last scheduled

interview was captured on film on January 19, 2018, to complete principal photography. This revolutionary documentary, created to capture and vastly extend the story told in the pages of *Faith for All of Life* over the last four years, is shaping up to be a game-changer. As the final magazine article prepares to go to press in the March-April 2018 edition of that magazine (the eighteenth article in this unprecedented series), we are pleased to report an exciting development concerning the movie.

The Full Frame Documentary Film Festival, one of the most important documentary film festivals held in the United States, is now in its twenty-first year. This year's festival will be held in Durham, North Carolina, between April 5 and 8, 2018. The director of *Hero in America*, Joaquin Fernandez, was able to get our documentary entered into the competition, which means the film may qualify to be premiered at this crucial industry event. Apart from its own suite of awards (sponsored and in-house), films doing well at the Full Frame Festival have a leg-up in other venues as well. (It is reported that Full Frame is a "qualifying festival" for other awards, such as the Producers Guild of America Award and the short subject documentary category for the Academy Awards, making it a gateway for the most compelling documentary films of the year.)

The subject matter of *Hero in America* certainly elevates it to the sphere of cultural relevance, considering the massive scope of the tragedy. But



Photo By Caroline Culler (User:Wgreaves) - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=10576954>

the film is unique in not only properly exposing the core problem but also the unforgivable devastation arising in the wake of state action against Dr. Punyamurtula S. Kishore, the addiction medicine pioneer who had revolutionized the treatment of this deadly scourge. The film moves from darkness to light (a rarity considering the subject matter) by pointing the way forward to the long-sought solution that was taken off-line in September 2011.

Medical authorities of the highest caliber appear on-camera to uphold Dr. Kishore's integrity and validate the results of his work. Gripping testimony from former patients and co-workers put a stake deep into the ground, making the all-important human connection, anchoring the narrative in real life. The "three acts" comprising this documentary unfold in such a way as to convey the fact that *this is not just another addiction film*. This joint collaboration between Great Commission Films and the Chalcedon Foundation is intended to put forth the

answers ... something either woefully missing in other films, or sadly tied to the deadly status quo and the phony "gold standard" promoted by powerful lobbies intent on maintaining their monopolies.

There is no question that this has been one of the largest projects that Chalcedon has ever undertaken, intended to illustrate how Biblical principles, when faithfully applied, change our world for the better. Restoring lives that are utterly lost to addictive drugs, or in bondage to status quo treatments with substitute narcotics, is a huge undertaking. Why should Kingdom men and women shy away from the deepest problems in our culture when we're able to bring light into the darkest corners? Big Pharma and Big Government have enjoyed free rein and the toll on the world only worsens.

It is time for the world to see Christian Reconstruction in action, and this film will play a major part in realizing that goal. 🙏