

ChalcedonReport

MINISTRY NEWS FROM THE CHALCEDON FOUNDATION® JUNE 2020

Connecting Christians: The Next Step in Chalcedon's Mission

By Lee Duigon

With so much of the world's business shut down in The Great Quarantine of 2020, Chalcedon board member Ford Schwartz has undertaken a big job—doing his best to make sure Chalcedon's many supporters are able to connect with the ministry ... and with each other.

"These are the most incredible, wonderful, gifted people I've ever talked to in my life," Ford said. "I've learned so much from them. To me, this is the magic of Chalcedon."

He's phoning them all, one by one: everybody who's a regular donor to the Chalcedon Foundation. It's a long list.

Ford has been a Chalcedon board member for twenty years. The supporters, he said, "are a great benefit to the ministry. Because of their donations, we can predict our income and pay bills. But more than that, it's a way of putting yourself into a ministry you love."

Much of his inspiration is provided by Chalcedon's founder, the late R.J. Rushdoony—"who very quickly put at ease this idea that pastors have a calling above and beyond everyone else's. If you have a calling, it's *your* calling. Wherever you are, whatever you do, you have a calling to carry out your business in a righteous way." We are reminded of St. Paul, who taught that the church has many members, all with different functions but all working together for Christ's Kingdom (for instance, 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, 12: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same



Chalcedon board member, Ford Schwartz, and his wife, Andrea (Chalcedon's resident education expert)

spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all ... For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body...").

You don't have to be a pastor to be a servant of the Kingdom. That's a big part of Chalcedon's message: we all serve the same Lord, each in our own way.

The Role of Chalcedon's Website

A great deal of work by a great many people has gone into the creation and construction of Chalcedon's website, www.chalcedon.edu/. In addition to daily posts and updates, it features videos of sermons and lectures by Chalcedon's president, Rev. Mark Rushdoony, and our chief in-house scholar, Martin

Selbrede, a complete magazine archive covering several decades' worth of books and articles by R.J. Rushdoony and Chalcedon's staff and free-lance contributors, and an extensive library of books that can be read online, many in Kindle or hard copy.

And if you click "Connect" (<https://chalcedon.edu/connect>), you'll have free access to some special resources: Homeschooling Helps, with videos; Chalcedon podcasts; the Chalcedon Teacher Training Institute, for homeschooling families; and the Men's Roundtable—weekly sessions featuring mature discussion of some of R.J. Rushdoony's lectures. These are recorded so that users who've missed a session can view it later. The Teacher Training Institute features readings, lectures,

position papers aimed at enhancing viewers' ability to convey and mentor "a Biblically consistent and orthodox worldview over every area of their lives."

You'll run out of years before you run out of resources on Chalcedon's website.

Ford is working to make all of Chalcedon's supporters aware of these resources and help them learn to use them. Frequently he has to connect the supporters so that they can receive our regular email updates and notifications. Many supporters need help in getting set up; and one by one, he's providing it.

Building a Fellowship

"God in His providence," Ford said, "has spread out our people widely, all over the country, all over the world. True, it does make it harder to round them up. Some of them are rather isolated, and we're working to bring these isolated supporters into contact with others.

"Modern communications technology has made it much easier for them to share their faith, once they learn how to use that technology. The Chalcedon website can help them with the heavy lifting—even if it's just a relatively little thing, like arranging for them to receive the regular emails."

The technology, he said, has been a blessing.

"It used to be very hard, sometimes very expensive, if not impossible, to ship to faraway people the books and materials they needed," he said. "Shipping a whole crate of heavy books to a rural Christian school in Kenya—you can imagine how hard that could be.

"Now it's much easier. Now we've got the books archived online: people everywhere can now read them and use them, if they have a computer handy.

"In ancient times, the Romans built good roads all over their empire; and the early Christians used those roads to spread the Word. Now we can use the wonderful roadways of the Internet.

"We have so many solid supporters in our ministry, and now they have the means to communicate and fellowship together, no matter where in the world they are."

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There is so much that needs to be taught, he said. And so much to be learned.

"We discovered, for instance," Ford said, "that a lot of Christians, and Christian-owned businesses, weren't getting together. Why weren't they doing business with each other? We had to find out; and my wife, Andrea, went online and *asked* that question. She took a survey, and we got answers.

"Some said they just didn't want to negotiate that hard with Christian brothers, and didn't want to go to court and sue a Christian business if they were unsatisfied. Some businessmen said, 'I don't want them [Christian customers]: they always want the lowest prices and whatever I do is not good enough.'"

R.J. Rushdoony, he said, "has the answer for them. Neither side is being taught how to apply God's law-word to make it work in a fallen world full of broken people. This is why it's so important to explain and teach *how* God's law works. Rushdoony's teaching is so profound, so rich. He was miles ahead of anybody else in teaching this."

Ford cited the example of a Christian who started a security and alarm business. "His whole life changed when he realized what Rushdoony was saying. One calling is not higher than others. It's *your* calling. This man learned how to apply the Word to his own business—and then to his business community."

Who Are Chalcedon's Supporters?

What Ford wanted to do most in this interview was to share snapshots, as it were, of some of Chalcedon's supporters whom he's contacted and

counseled so far. They are of all ages, many different professions and careers, ministry supporters for decades and newcomers, too. We will not mention them by name, to protect their privacy. We'll just show the snapshots.

"We have a Florida pastor who's been with our ministry for thirty years," Ford said, "and is currently consulting with Christian businessmen on ways of solving problems that are Biblical, applying faith and the Word to business and to dealing with government resources. This guy reads everything! I'm always amazed by his knowledge. This man is bringing the faith into the lives of businessmen." (You don't have to go to Central Africa to be a missionary.)

"There's a woman who's been with Chalcedon forty years, since she joined a study group and began to listen to Rushdoony's lectures, back in the 1970s and 80s. She's been sharing with me her life, a life guided by God's Word, with so many challenges and so many wonderful things that have happened to her."

Ford recalled an experiment attempted by some of Chalcedon's early donors and supporters who were eager to hear Rushdoony in person. They set up a community—not a commune—called "the Ranch," for that purpose. The Ranch didn't prove to be permanent; but still the Word was preached. And heard.

"Once upon a time we had to go around and knock on doors if we wanted to talk to people," Ford said. "It wasn't the most efficient way to go about our mission. We couldn't reach everybody. Individuals want to meet others of like mind, but they wound up asking, 'Where are the people who are interested?'"

"Well, now we can knock on doors in Kenya, thanks to the new technology."

One question that he's often asked by new supporters, Ford said, is "We're so outnumbered—what good can we do?"

"Rushdoony's answer was that they may be outnumbered, but they're so much better prepared, more so than their parents, that many of them will wind up in positions of great influence—doctors, lawyers, government. What we see does not mean that we are not having an impact on the culture."

He recalled a board meeting Chalcedon had, years ago, around the time of George W. Bush's election as president ("the hanging chad election"), which featured a major surprise.

"A reporter from *Rolling Stone* showed up at that meeting," he said. "*Rolling Stone!* And he was there because they thought that we had turned the election in Florida"—the state whose votes proved decisive in the outcome.

More Snapshots

"It's an incredible anointing," Ford said, "to get to talk to the people who've supported Chalcedon over the last fifty years. We've seen what has been done, and we look forward to what God can do with it in the future.

"I've got so many stories from these people's lives, that now, when I'm talking to newer people, I have so much more context to share with them."

Ford himself is over 70, but many of the supporters he's been talking to are older than that. But he looks to the example of Rushdoony: "He never let his age get in the way."

So let's close with a few more snapshots.

There's a woman in Virginia "who got involved from her now-deceased father's avid interest in the ministry. Now she's in a women's study group based on Andrea's 'Institutes' teacher training."

In Tennessee there's an airline pilot, not yet 30 years old, who has just ordered quite a few Chalcedon books to study while the airline is shut down. "He's hoping to find the right like-minded girl to marry."

In Maryland, "A young man had an argument with a well-read Christian, which he lost badly. This loss ignited his reading, as he then knew he had a lot to learn. Now he's a long-term supporter with a full Rushdoony library."

In North Carolina, a long-term supporter "was at a church with a school which Rushdoony defended as an expert witness." (In the 1970s R.J. Rushdoony traveled all over the country to defend homeschool families and church schools from efforts by unfriendly governments to shut them down.) The supporter was

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at first "lukewarm towards Christian Reconstruction but has supported it ever since, in honor of what Rushdoony did when they needed him."

A supporter in Georgia, "in management at a huge waste dump," listens to Rushdoony's lectures in his car as he commutes back and forth to work.

An 88-year-old California woman, with her husband in a care facility, had no computer, no email address. "But she had just been given an iPhone," Ford said, "and I let her know she could go to our address and get our updates on her phone. She joyfully called back later that day with an email address, and we got her updates set up."

An avid jogger in Colorado, 80 years old, very active in her local church, loved Martin Selbrede's articles on Dr. Punyamurtala Kishore's revolutionary new treatment for opioid addiction, for which his home state of Massachusetts persecuted him. This supporter writes poems to love and honor God.

There are many, many more, Ford said, and they know "Our culture is facing horrendous problems just now. But those with a Biblical understanding have the answers to those problems; and God has us all spread out to force us to share those answers." 🙏

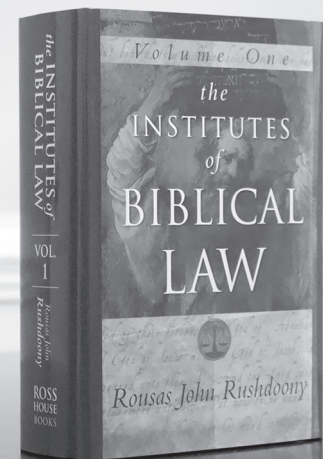
Lee is the author of the *Bell Mountain Series* of novels and a contributing editor for Chalcedon's periodicals. Lee provides commentary on cultural trends and relevant issues to Christians, along with providing cogent book and media reviews. Lee has his own blog at LeeDuigon.com.

Chalcedon Releases the NEW Edition of *The Institutes of Biblical Law, Vol. 1*

After receiving the publishing rights from Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, we embarked on a long, tedious process of republishing this important book by correcting longstanding typographical errors as well as making it more usable by adding extensive indexing not found in the original.

The new edition features a general index, history index, Scripture index, and a works cited index which makes this volume an even more useful tool in the work of reconstruction.

We're thrilled to have the complete rights to this book, and it's available now for purchase at our site!



1046 pages with indices

Get your copy today at ChalcedonStore.com

Our Threatened Freedom

During an unprecedented time in modern history, citizens are witnessing the overreach of civil government—especially at the state and local level—and Chalcedon is meeting them with a message we've always taught.

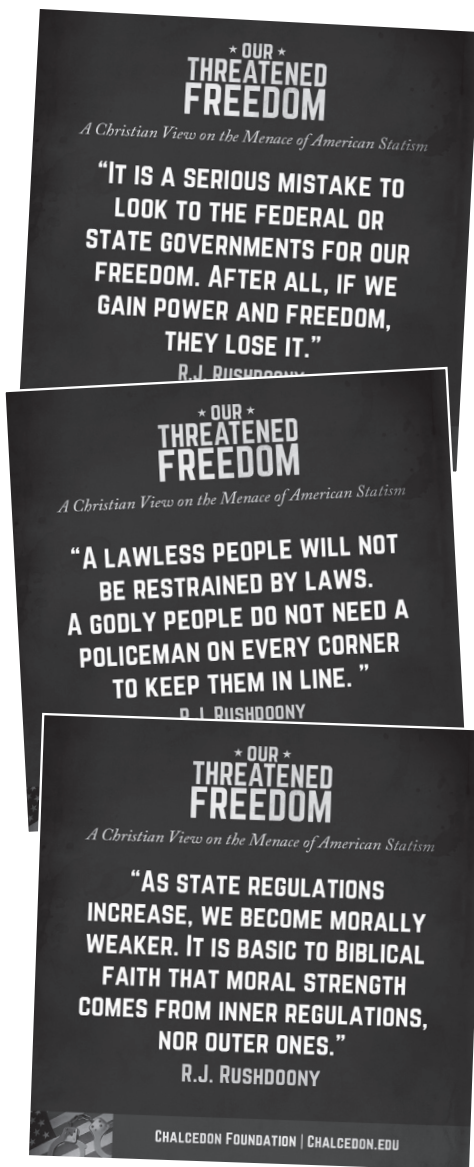
Someone recently commented on our Facebook page asking what we were doing in light of the present “tyranny.” The reference is to the actions by governors, mayors, police, and the like during the current lockdowns. Truth be told, we're doing what we've always done because the menace of statism is hardly a novelty. One would be hard pressed to find another Christian organization so dedicated to the issue as Chalcedon has been since 1965.

One of the problems, however, that we've experienced throughout the decades is the ignorance that the average citizen—and the average Christian—has about the ever-present threat of statism. Now, with the introduction of a possible pandemic, that threat of statism is suddenly very real.

In our recent episode of the *Chalcedon Podcast*, Mark Rushdoony said, “Now people are seeing the problem. They're seeing the overreach. They're seeing this authoritarian assumption that the government can do anything it decides is necessary and good. And the Constitution is in effect a dead letter to them. They've even extended it to churches, which in the long run, I think, may be a good thing because it's important that people see government overreach... more and more Christians now are aware of the problems of statism than they were six or eight weeks ago.”

The Answer!

For Chalcedon, this represents another opportunity to communicate our message to more and more Christians as they look for answers moving forward. Obviously, the restrictions will be lifted, but a precedent has been set. Will the average Christian look to politicians as the answer, since it was politicians—even conservative ones—who threatened their freedom?



Rushdoony's books provide us with endless citations that are challenging Christians online.

The answer is always Christian Reconstruction, and what we've been given through this crisis is an opportunity to teach fellow believers about the realities of statism and the solutions that the Scriptures provide us.

On page 33 of *Sovereignty*, Rushdoony writes, “[W]hat God requires of us is to take back government from the state by our tithing to finance Christian reconstruction, and by our own actions in our spheres of life.”

The problem is the first tendency of many is to revolution, protest, and rebellion which represent short term solutions that do not consider the future. Again, Rushdoony writes, “Opposition does little good without Christian reconstruction in terms of God's law-word.” (Ibid., p. 32f).

Doubling Our Efforts

Christians reach for politics because they believe politics holds promise for a faster solution than any long-term strategy such as Christian Reconstruction. However, they're also learning that they should've been wiser in their past by taking steps to better secure their jobs, save more money, store basic household necessities, and strengthen their immune systems. These are all examples of a long-term approach based upon forward thinking. Is Christian Reconstruction that much of a stretch?

This is why the most important thing we all can do is to double our efforts in communicating Christian Reconstruction to an audience that's more willing to hear.

It's also a great opportunity to share resources with others such as Rushdoony's book *Our Threatened Freedom: A Christian View on the Menace of American Statism*. We've recently shared many “memes” on social media based upon citations from the book which are catching on with new viewers daily!

We've also focused the last two episodes of our new podcast on this topic, and if you've not heard those, then visit <https://chalcedonpodcast.libsyn.com>.

There are also video versions of our podcast which are available on our YouTube channel at <https://youtube.com/RushdoonyTV>. Avail yourself of these and please share them! 📺