

Faith for All of Life
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FAITH FOR ALL OF LIFE

PROCLAIMING THE AUTHORITY OF GOD'S WORD OVER EVERY AREA OF LIFE AND THOUGHT

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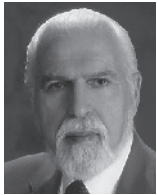
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Vouchers, Freedom and Slavery

By R. J. Rushdoony

(Reprinted from *Roots of Reconstruction* [Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1991], 446-449.)



In the early years of the twentieth century, the Fabian Society of England came out strongly in favor of state aid to independent

Christian schools. When a board member resigned in protest, George Bernard Shaw rebuked him strongly. Nothing, Shaw held, would more quickly destroy these schools than state aid; their freedom and independence would soon be compromised, and, before long, their faith. Events soon proved Shaw to be right.

In the United States, a remarkable and vigorous Christianity developed early and has had a worldwide impact, in missions, education on every continent, and its development of many charitable and reform agencies. Since World War II, a phenomenal growth of Christian and homeschools has taken place which now commands thirty-three percent of all primary and secondary school children and is growing steadily each year. This movement is one of the most remarkable developments in American life in the twentieth century. It now faces total disaster, not from the statist's own ranks. A growing number of well-meaning leaders are seeking Federal or state aid by various means, notably the voucher plan.

The fact is that some years ago the courts established a very firm premise, namely, that, wherever state aid goes, there state controls must follow, even if Congress by law declares against such

"The Lord's work requires the Lord's tithe, and gifts and offerings over and above the tithe. Nothing better reveals commitment than giving. No commitment means no giving, and little commitment means token giving."

controls. No agency of state can relinquish the necessary civil control over agencies using or receiving tax funds. To receive any state funds whatsoever is to receive state controls.

Thus, to channel statist or taxed income in any way into the hands of Christian or homeschools is to surrender their freedom and to exchange it for civil controls. A variety of schemes have been proposed to circumvent such controls, but they are evasions and are not likely to be tenable in court. Many legal precedents, including the Grove City College case, make clear that a very remote "cause" is routinely used to vindicate controls. We must remember that not too many years ago federal control over a restaurant was asserted because the salt in the salt shaker was a part of interstate commerce.

On the practical side, no more inefficient use of money exists than in any statist undertaking. On the other hand, Christian and homeschools are financed usually with superior economy and very cheaply. To ask for vouchers or anything

else from statist sources is to ask for higher taxes. In one country, home-schooling mothers have asked to be paid as state teachers! The whole drift into a socialist mentality is a startling one.

Today a remarkable and far-reaching Christian renewal is in evidence in the United States and elsewhere. If our humanists today were as shrewd as G. B. Shaw, they would abort the Christian renewal by giving it state funds.

The Lord's work requires the Lord's tithe, and gifts and offerings over and above the tithe. Nothing better reveals commitment than giving. No commitment means no giving, and little commitment means token giving.

There is a correlation between finances and commitment. In the 1950s, some American Christian schools began to provide free tuition to needy children, only soon to find out that all their discipline problems were within this group. When the conditions were altered, and either these needy students had to work out part of this tuition, or else their parents so worked, the discipline problems usually ended. Normally, what costs a child or a man nothing, he treats as nothing.

Christian education is an urgently necessary aspect of Christ's Kingdom and its work. Children and their schooling are the key to a people's future. To make a humanistic state the controlling force in Christian education is a tragic mistake.

But, complain many, we are over taxed by the state, have heavy family

financial burdens, must support the church, and are taxed to support the state schools. It is too much of a burden then to pay for our children's Christian schooling! Precisely! It is a burden. But remember, although deer and fish are clean animals, they could not be used in the sacrifices to God. Only those domestic animals could be used which cost a man something in labor or in money. The Lord does not make things easy for us. If we are going to re-establish a Christian society, we are going to pay for it in more ways than one. A responsible people cannot be created without cost.

It is easy to understand the voucher plan by looking at existing examples of it, such as the welfare system, food stamps, and the like. All have the same premise: in the name of need, freedom and responsibility are surrendered, and dependence is called a virtue. The Israelites in the wilderness longed for the leeks and garlic, the melons and the slavery of Egypt, because slavery removes responsibility and the problems of freedom. God sentenced that generation to die in the wilderness.

If the voucher plan succeeds, all groups, of course, will be eligible: humanists, Muslims, New Agers, any and all who want their own schools. This is legally a logical consequence. But historically it has been Christians who have most thrived under freedom. It is the Christian homeschool and church school which have grown most dramatically; nothing else compares with them. Christianity has done best where most free of the state and its controls. It will be a sorry day when Christian education becomes another special interest group. There are no Biblical precedents for any such step.

The law of the tithe tells us what we must do. The Levites normally received the tithe (although the tither

could administer it himself), and the Levites gave ten percent of the tithe to the priests for worship (Num. 18:25, 26). Ninety percent was for Levitical use. The Levites had broad functions, including the fact that they were the teachers (Deut. 33:10). When we restore God's laws of tithing, we can re-establish the Christian strength in worship, health, education, and welfare, and we will have done it in God's way. I fear that any other solution will bring God's judgment upon us. Remember that God told Samuel that Israel had rejected Him in seeking man's rule and man's laws. Because of this, their sons and daughters would become servants of the state power; they would be heavily taxed, and their property would be expropriated. In time they would cry out to the Lord in their distress, but, said Samuel, "the LORD will not hear you in that day" (1 Sam. 8:18).

Are we working to place ourselves in a condition where the Lord will not hear us? Are we so covetous of the state's mess of pottage that we will sell our birth-right for it? Do we have money for our pleasures but not our children's schooling? Will we in time de-Christianize our home and Christian schools in order to meet federal standards? It amazes me that men who profess to hate socialism want to espouse the voucher plan! But such blindness is common. Businessmen who hate socialism demand various subsidies, as do workers and their unions, farmers, and others. Each group wants socialism for itself only, and so too do all too many churchmen now. They want vouchers to free them from financial problems, forgetting that they thereby surrender freedom. They assume that the answer to our problems lies in the state, forgetting how bankrupt morally and financially the state is!

"Arise, O LORD, let not man prevail" (Ps. 9:19). 

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The Head Tax: The Only God-Endorsed Civil Tax

By Dr. Robert Fugate



One of the key doctrines rediscovered by the Protestant Reformation was the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture (*sola Scriptura*).¹ This doctrine may be defined as: “Scripture contained all the words of God he intended his people to have at each stage of redemptive history, and that it now contains everything we need God to tell us for salvation, for trusting him perfectly, and for obeying him perfectly.”² Now let’s apply this definition to the Biblical worldview—something not typically done by theologians. Since the Scriptures are sufficient for teaching people to please and obey God perfectly, then they must be regarded as being sufficient—not only for individual persons—but also sufficient for the God-ordained institutions, i.e., the family, the church, and the state. Furthermore, since Christ’s lordship is comprehensive (Matt. 28:18; Acts 10:36; Col. 1:18; Ps. 2:6–12; 110:1–3), His Word must be authoritative in every area of life, thought, and culture.

One important area of life to which Bible-believing Christians have been extremely slow to apply the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture is taxation. A miniscule number of pastors or theologians teach their congregations or students what the Bible says regarding taxation. Yet taxes affect all of us every day of our lives. In fact, some calculations suggest that the average American must toil from January 1 to August 12 (224 days) just to meet all costs imposed by federal, state, and local governments!³

Yet we are told that we live in a “free” society! Do civil governments have God-given authority to tax people with every form of tax they dream up, at any rate they deem appropriate at the time? There have been cases in America and Europe in which “rich” individuals were taxed at over 100% of their annual incomes. R. J. Rushdoony’s assessment is surely correct: “The modern humanistic state sees itself, as did the ancient pagan state, as the basic and ultimate power. It holds that it has the ‘right’ to tax, confiscate, or seize properties and assets at will,”⁴ and “Plato’s dream of rule by philosopher-kings has always appealed to elitists who see themselves as little gods whose wisdom and abilities make them fit to rule over all others.”⁵ We desperately need God’s infallible revelation in the area of taxation. Humanism (which is based on man’s depraved mind and depraved motives) is bankrupt and tyrannical.

The primary theologian who taught the Biblical worldview, applying the Bible to the area of taxation, was Rousas Rushdoony.⁶ Rushdoony taught that God has revealed infallible truth to us regarding His will for civil taxation. It is particularly found in the Biblical law that institutes the head tax. Subsequently, some theologians have challenged Rushdoony’s view of the head tax and have led many to abandon his insights. The present essay will review the Bible’s teaching regarding the head tax. A subsequent essay will build upon this foundation, critiquing the arguments and interpretations of Rushdoony’s critics.

The Head Tax/Poll Tax

The Old Testament records at least eleven different kinds of taxes imposed in Israel (excluding taxes imposed upon Israel by foreign nations).⁷ Of these taxes, only the head tax was instituted and endorsed by God.⁸ Let us examine the Bible’s teaching regarding the head tax.

Exodus 30:11–16 records the historical account of God instituting the head tax (also called a poll tax). The head tax is also referred to in several other Biblical passages (Ex. 38:25f.; 2 Kings 12:4–16; 2 Chr. 24:4–14; Neh. 10:32f.; Matt. 17:24–27). We will begin our study with Exodus 30.

11 The LORD also spoke to Moses, saying, 12 “When you take a census of the sons of Israel to number them [Num.1], then each one of them shall give a ransom for himself to the LORD, when you number them, so that there will be no plague among them when you number them. 13 “This is what everyone who is numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel is twenty gerahs), half a shekel as a contribution to the LORD. 14 “Everyone who is numbered, from twenty years old and over, shall give the contribution to the LORD. 15 “The rich shall not pay more and the poor shall not pay less than the half shekel, when you give the contribution to the LORD to make atonement for yourselves. 16 “You shall take the atonement

money [silver] from the sons of Israel and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting,⁹ that it may be a memorial for the sons of Israel before the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves” (Ex. 30:11–16 NASB).

Five Principles of the Head Tax

1. Commanded: Payment was obligatory.
2. Who: Every¹⁰ male,¹¹ age twenty and older,¹² was taxed.
3. Frequency: The poll tax was originally paid at a (military) census;¹³ subsequently, it was not connected with a war or census, but was paid annually (2 Chr. 24:5f., 9; Neh. 10:32).¹⁴
4. Amount: The poll tax was a fixed, flat fee (½ shekel¹⁵ or *beka* of silver¹⁶)—not a percentage—for rich and poor alike. “It had to be small, since a large amount would be oppressive for the poor, and it had to be the same for all, to avoid the oppression of the rich. Thus discriminatory taxation was specifically forbidden.”¹⁷
5. Purposes: (a) to be a (civil) atonement (i.e., covering, protection¹⁸); (b) to finance the tabernacle (initially its construction and furnishing) and later the maintenance of the temple (2 Chr. 24:5f., 9 // 2 Kings 12:4f.;¹⁹ Neh. 10:32). Since the head tax always supported the tabernacle/temple (rather than supporting a military census designed to muster an army), this was obviously its primary purpose.

2 Kings 12:4–16 // 2 Chr. 24:4–14

During years of apostasy the temple fell into disrepair. King Jehoash/Joash ordered the priests to collect each man’s “census tax”/“census money” (2 Kings 12:4 NET, NKJV, NIV, NAB, etc.²⁰) and use it to pay for the needed temple

“One important area of life to which Bible-believing Christians have been extremely slow to apply the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture is taxation. A miniscule number of pastors or theologians teach their congregations or students what the Bible says regarding taxation.”

repairs. The parallel passage describes this census tax as “the tax authorized by Moses the LORD’s servant ... the tax that Moses, God’s servant, imposed on Israel in the wilderness” (2 Chr. 24:6, 9 NET). The census/head tax was collected “from year to year” (2 Chr. 24:5).

Interestingly, the text sharply distinguishes between this census tax (i.e., the head/poll tax), which was deposited into the temple treasury, and the money that was to be given (“belonged”) to the priests, which was not brought into the temple (2 Kings 12:16).

Note also that in these passages the census tax is not connected with a military census or mustering the army for war. However, the same head tax was still in force over six hundred years after Moses instituted it.²¹

Neh. 10:32f.

After Israel returned from the Babylonian Captivity, Nehemiah reinstituted the head tax.²² The head tax was paid “yearly” (Neh. 10:32). Thus the book of Nehemiah confirms that the head tax was again in force over one thousand years after Moses had instituted it.²³

The Relationship Between Temples and Taxes in the Ancient Near East

“Whereas we normally associate ‘taxes’ with an obligatory payment to the government and ‘tithes’ with the temple, the situation was not so segregated in the ANE [ancient Near East].”²⁴ In the ancient Near East temples were collection points for state taxes.²⁵ To cite only one example, consider Persia. “As agents of the Persian Empire, temples were incorporated into the government-regulated system of land tenure and the network of tax-gathering organizations. Temple administrators, therefore, were de facto tax collectors for the state ... An obvious advantage to collecting royal taxes at the temple was the implied sanctioning by the resident deity.”²⁶

Even in ancient Israel “the temple was a likely collection point for state taxes.”²⁷ The list of temple officials confirms this.²⁸ Later in Israel’s history, “when Israel/Judah no longer enjoyed independence, the rebuilt Second Temple probably served as a central collection site for government taxes.”²⁹

Furthermore, “In the ancient Near East court and archives generally were located in temple complexes, and this was true of ancient Israel as well. Deuteronomy 1:16–17 states that judgment is God’s prerogative, and Deuteronomy 17:8–12 ordains that the central court be located in the Temple.”³⁰

The *Anchor Bible Dictionary* concurs with the assessment that the Jerusalem Temple had both a “religious and political significance.” It devotes three columns to the political function of this temple, noting:

These religious-political dynamics clearly functioned on an economic level as well. The Temple with its treasures and treasuries was a national bank of sorts. It was a stronghold, safely situated in the most defensible part of the Jerusalem landscape ... The side chambers of the Temple ... held at least some of the revenues of the state ... It was

instrumental in establishing both divine and royal power.³¹

In the light of New Testament revelation, we learn that Israel's tabernacle and temple signified both Christ's priestly/ecclesiastical ministry (administered in the Old Testament through Levi) and His kingly/civil ministry (administered in the Old Testament through Judah) (cf. Ps. 110). The tabernacle and the temple housed the Holy of Holies, which was God's throne room, containing only the Ark of the Covenant, which was God's throne. The Holy of Holies was God's governmental center, both civil and ecclesiastical.³² God, as King of Israel, ruled from His throne room in the tabernacle/temple. The tabernacle/temple thus represents the whole Kingdom of God.

The New Testament also teaches that the Sanhedrin, which was the civil power in Israel (under Rome's control), met in the temple.

In light of the civil aspect of the temple, it was quite natural that the Jewish civil poll tax was brought to God's house/palace.³³

Is Matt. 17:24–27 the Mosaic Head Tax?

The key New Testament passage regarding the head tax is Matt. 17:24–27:

24 When they had come to Capernaum, those who received the temple tax came to Peter and said, "Does your Teacher not pay the temple tax?"³⁴ 25 He said, "Yes." And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?" 26 Peter said to Him, "From strangers." Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free. 27 "Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea,

cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money³⁵; take that and give it to them for Me and you" (Matt. 17:24–27 NKJV, italic added).

Temple Tax in Matthew 17 Was Not an Innovation

Some scholars note that the various Jewish factions of Christ's day were divided with regard to paying the temple tax. They then proceed to suggest that the temple tax in Matthew 17 may have been a recent innovation, rather than based on Exodus 30. But, even if it were the case (and I'm not suggesting that it is) that there was some innovation in Matthew 17, might the innovation be something besides the temple tax itself? For instance, enforcing the temple tax by civil sanction may have been an innovation.³⁶ Also, if the amount of the tax changed, that would be an innovation.³⁷ Thus, even if there was disagreement regarding the temple tax and perhaps even some innovation, this does not prove that the temple tax itself must be viewed as an innovation. Indeed, several scholars adamantly affirm that the temple tax in Matthew 17 was mandated by Biblical law:

"The tax was rooted in the law (Ex. 30:13) and therefore was not merely traditional."³⁸

"The paying of this tax was not a merely human regulation but a divinely instituted requirement."³⁹

In sum, it is quite probable that Matthew 17:25–27 concerns the same head tax/temple tax that was instituted by Moses in Exodus 30.⁴⁰ Thus this passage provides further confirmation that the Jewish people recognized the continuing applicability of the head/census tax for 1,500 years.

Who Is Exempt?

Jesus teaches that God (like human kings) does not tax His own "sons." Who are these exempt "sons" of God the King (i.e., His royal family)? There are two common answers.

1. The exempt "sons" are all Israel. However, this view suffers from several difficulties:

- It implies that non-covenantal Gentiles—not God's covenant Jews—are to be the sole financiers of the Jewish temple—a dubious notion (Ezra 4:3).⁴¹
- "A Jew, with experience of taxation under the Herods, would not think it true that Jewish kings do not tax Jews."⁴²
- If the temple tax in Matthew 17 is Biblically mandated, then Jesus would be encouraging all Jews to break the Mosaic Law.
- This view is out of harmony with an important aspect of the eschatological theme in Matthew's Gospel: the Kingdom is being taken from covenant-breaking Israel (Matt. 8:11f.; 21:43; 24:1–35⁴³; indeed, at least twenty-two chapters in Matthew's Gospel depict Israel's failures).
- "There is no example in literature of citizens being called 'children'."⁴⁴
- Jesus made a sharp demarcation between God being His Father (John 5:17ff) and the devil being the father of the unbelieving Jews (John 8:39, 44; cf. Matt. 3:7–10).

2. A second common interpretation of the exempt "sons" suggests that they are Jesus and His disciples (and, by implication, all Christians). This view also has its difficulties:

- This view presupposes a discontinuity in the people of God from the Old Testament to the New Testament—a view inimical to the Reformed faith and covenant theol-

ogy (Rom. 11:16–24, 26, 28; cp. J1 2:28–32 with Acts 2:17–21; cp. Amos 9:11f. with Acts 15:16f.; cp. Jer. 31:31–34 with Heb. 8:8–10). (However, this view is consistent with the unbiblical hermeneutic of dispensationalism.) Furthermore, in this view, the implied discontinuity between the people of God would have begun while the old covenant was still in effect—since Matthew 17 takes place prior to the inauguration of the new covenant (Matt. 26:28).

- It is not true that God never taxes His people; He certainly did tax them (Ex. 30; 2 Kings 12:4–16 // 2 Chr. 24:4–14). Even God's obligatory tithe/s may be viewed as a divine tax upon His people (although it is not to be forcibly collected by either church or state).
- If the point of this passage is that all Jesus' disciples were exempt from the temple tax but they should not use their liberty to give offense, then why is no mention made of Jesus' disciples (except Peter) paying this tax?⁴⁵
- Jesus and the writers of the New Testament consistently distinguish between Jesus' unique Sonship and the sonship of believers.⁴⁶ This interpretation obscures this consistent Biblical distinction.
- This view, combined with our previous discussion of the head tax being the only God-instituted and God-endorsed civil tax, implies that Christians are not obligated to pay any civil tax. Does this conclusion really comport with the rest of Scripture (Rom. 13:6f.)?

In light of the weaknesses of these two views, we should look for a better interpretation.

3. Although Jesus uses the plural "sons," He is referring only to Himself.

- The plural is simply derived from the analogy to earthly kings (which occurs in the plural) and their sons.
- Matthew 17 has just recorded God the Father declaring on the Mount of Transfiguration that Jesus—in contrast to the disciples and Moses and Elijah—is "My beloved Son" (Matt. 17:5). Thus this view (unlike view #2) properly distinguishes between Jesus' unique Sonship and the sonship of believers.
- The very question of paying the temple tax was asked regarding Jesus alone (Matt. 17:24–25a).
- After Jesus asserted His immunity from His Father's temple tax, He performed a miraculous sign that confirmed His immunity (Matt. 17:27).⁴⁷

Thus in Matthew 17:25–27 Jesus is teaching that, "just as royal sons are exempt from the taxes imposed by their fathers, so too Jesus is exempt from the 'tax' imposed by his Father [i.e., the poll or temple tax] ... since he is uniquely God's Son [v. 5], therefore he is exempt (v. 26). The focus of the pericope is thus supremely christological."⁴⁸

Summary

God has given us an infallible revelation of His will regarding civil taxation. That revelation is found only in God's written Word, the Bible, which is sufficient to instruct us how to please God in all areas of life ("thoroughly equipped for **every** good work," 2 Tim. 3:17).

The head tax is: (a) a mandatory civil tax;⁴⁹ (b) levied upon every male (age twenty and older); (c) paid annually; (d) a fixed, flat fee (not a percentage) that is a low enough amount that every man can afford to pay it.

By cutting off additional sources of funding, the Bible's system of limited taxation prevents civil governments

from transgressing their God-ordained jurisdictions and usurping the jurisdictions of family and church. Such limited tax revenues foster liberty by preventing the state from becoming a welfare-warfare, "big brother" state. It also precludes nations from having the financial resources to fund a world government. Truly, God's wisdom far exceeds man's folly (1 Cor. 1:19–21f.; 3:19; Rom. 8:5; 12:2; 2 Cor. 10:5; cf. wisdom and folly in Proverbs)! May Christ's church proclaim His all-encompassing, absolute truth, His law-Word, at such a time as this—for His glory and for the extension of His conquering Kingdom! 🏰

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1. For an explanation and a Biblical defense of the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture see Robert E. Fugate, *The Bible: God's Words to You* (Omaha, NE: Lord of the Nations, LLC, 2012), 334–345.

2. Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 127.

3. "Cost of Government Day" (<http://costofgovernment.org/cost-government-report-a98>). And this total cost does not include what economists call "opportunity cost." Cp. "Tax Freedom Day" (<http://taxfoundation.org/article/special-report-no-198-tax-freedom-day-2012>).

4. Rousas J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law, Vol. 3* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House, 1999), 23. For a Biblical discussion of eminent domain see Robert E. Fugate, *Key Principles of Biblical Civil Government* (Omaha, NE: Thy Word Is Truth Publishers, 2007), 125–128; available at LordoftheNations.com.

5. Rousas J. Rushdoony, *Exodus* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House, 2004), 446.

6. Rousas J. Rushdoony, *Exodus* (Vallecito,

CA: Ross House, 2004), 443–446. Idem., *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, vol. 1. (n.p.: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1973), 281–283. Idem., *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, Vol. 3 (Vallecito, CA: Ross House, 1999), 23f. Idem., *Law and Society* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1982), 696f. Rushdoony asserts, “Those who deny the application of Exodus 30:11–16 must then say that God gave no taxing power to the state, or else that at this point God left all taxing power to the state” (*The Institutes of Biblical Law*, 3:24).

7. Robert E. Fugate, *Toward a Theology of Taxation* (Omaha, NE: Lord of the Nations, LLC, 2009). Much of the present article is taken from this monograph. It is available at LordoftheNations.com.

8. One must be careful not to commit the naturalistic fallacy, i.e., attempting to derive *ought* from *is*. Just because certain kings of Israel and Judah *did* impose many different types of taxes at various times in their history does not mean that they *should* have imposed these taxes. Furthermore, in terms of valid hermeneutical methodology by which we interpret historical narrative genre, the text itself must indicate that God approved of a particular taxation practice before we can endorse it.

9. “The service [work] of the tent of meeting” does not refer to the sacrificial service, but to its construction (Ex. 38:25–28; 39:32), which was to be more of a permanent “memorial” (Ex 30:16) (Umberto Cassuto *Commentary on the Book of Exodus* [Jerusalem: Magnes, 1967], 394f.; William H.C. Propp, *Exodus 19–40*, AB [New York, NY: Doubleday, 2006] 479; Nahum M. Sarna, *JPS Torah Commentary: Exodus*, 196). Subsequently, the poll tax was used for the maintenance of God’s palace (2 Chr. 24:5f., 9 // 2 Kings 12:4f.).

10. In one place R. J. Rushdoony asserts that the poll tax (which was first levied at a military census) was not mandatory for the priests and Levites (who were not subject to military draft, Num. 1:47–50; Ezra 7:23f.) (*The Institutes of Biblical Law*, 1:282). (In a subsequent article we will discuss a less likely interpretation of Matt. 17:25f., which suggests that the king’s “sons” who are exempt

from taxation are Jesus’ disciples—and maybe all Christians.)

11. Women were not taxed separately because the family was treated as a covenantal unit, and every family was represented in the civil sphere by its male head. Furthermore, women were not part of the Israelite army (see the following endnote).

12. Twenty was the age of military service (Num. 1:3; 26:2). According to Josephus, the poll tax was levied on every male of military age, i.e., ages 20–50 (*Antiquities of the Jews*, 3:8:2 §194–196; 18:9:1 §312; cf. D. A. Carson, “Matthew,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. F. E. Gaebelein [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984], 8:393). Of course, women in Israel were not conscripted for military service. The Old Testament does not give a maximum age for military service—only requiring every man to be able to go to war and handle weapons (Num. 1:3; 2 Chr. 25:5). Levites retired at age 50 (Num. 8:25; 4:3).

13. David’s census (2 Sam. 24 // 1 Chr. 21) served two purposes: levying taxes and registering men for military service (or sometimes for forced labor) (Robert E. Fugate, *Toward a Theology of Taxation*, 23–25). The poll tax may have enabled Israel’s leaders to obtain “an accurate census without actually counting anyone” (William H. C. Propp, *Exodus 19–40*, 476).

14. It is significant that subsequent Scripture designates the head tax of Exodus 30 as “the levy [tax] fixed by Moses the servant of the LORD on the congregation of Israel for the tent of the testimony . . . the levy fixed by Moses the servant of God” (2 Chr. 24:6, 9 NASB) and “census money” (2 Kings 12:4). This head tax was to be collected “from year to year” (2 Chr. 24:5); cf. “yearly” (Neh. 10:32).

15. A shekel is not a coin, but a unit of weight, particularly used for gold or silver. The Old Testament shekel probably weighed between 11–13 grams (ABD 6:907); cf. 10–14 grams or 0.4 oz (*New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis* [NIDOTTE], ed. W.A. VanGemeren, 5 Vols. [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997] 4:237); 11.4 grams or 0.4 ounces (ISBE 4:1054); an average weight of 11.4 grams

(Nahum M. Sarna, *JPS Torah Commentary: Exodus* [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991], 196); 14.5 grams, i.e., 0.5 oz (*Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, eds. David N. Freedman, et al. [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000], 1203). The Penta-teuch refers to the standard measure known as “the shekel of the sanctuary” (Ex. 30:13, 24; 38:24–26; Lev. 5:15; 27:3, 25; Num. 3:47, 50; 7:13–86; 18:16) (see NIDOTTE, 4:237). There may also have been royal standards (2 Sam. 14:26).

16. “Money” (*keseeph*) means silver. Thus silver was the money in which the Jewish poll tax was to be paid (Ex. 30:16; 38:25f.).

17. Rousas J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, 1:282. “The Tabernacle belongs equally to every Israelite, irrespective of one’s social status or wealth. As all human beings are equal before God, there is to be one standard contribution from all, to be neither exceeded nor reduced” (Nahum M. Sarna, *JPS Torah Commentary: Exodus*, 196). Furthermore, in Biblical law all citizens are juridically equal before the law (Dt. 27:19); thus judgment must be impartial (Dt. 1:17; 16:19; 2 Chr. 19:6f.; Pr. 24:23), not favoring either the rich or the poor (Ex. 23:3, 6; Lev. 19:15).

18. “By means of this tax, the people placed themselves under God as their King, paying tribute to Him, and gained in return God’s protecting care” (Rousas J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, 1:281f.), “that they suffer not defeat in battle” (J. H. Herz, ed., *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs: Exodus* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1930], 357). See George Bush, *Commentary on Exodus* (repr.: Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1993), 494f.

19. “The notice that funds were not employed to manufacture the vessels used in the temple ritual—basins, snuffers, bowls, trumpets, and so on (cf. 1 Kings 7:38–40, 45–47)—indicates that the funds were used only for [temple] repairs” (Marvin A. Sweeney, *1 & 2 Kings*, OTL [Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2007], 353).

20. Numerous commentators connect this census tax with that instituted by Moses in Exodus 30; for example: T. R. Hobbs, *2 Kings*, WBC [Waco, TX: Word, 1985], 152; Marvin A. Sweeney, *1 & 2 Kings*, 352;

Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *2 Kings*, AB (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 137; August H. Konkel, *1 & 2 Kings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 512; Iain W. Provan, *1 And 2 Kings*, NIBC (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 225; Donald J. Wiseman, *1 and 2 Kings*, TOTC (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 236; Robert L. Hubbard, *First & Second Kings*, EBC (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1991), 184; John Gray, *1 & 2 Kings*, OTL, 2nd rev. ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1970), 585; Carl F. Keil, *1&2 Kings, 1&2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, 3 vol. (repr.: Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975), 1:366.

21. James Ussher dates the remodeling of the temple at 857 B.C. (*The Annals of the World* [1658; repr.: Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2003], § 539).

22. The Jews who returned from exile covenanted to pay 1/3 shekel (Neh. 10:32), rather than the 1/2 shekel (Ex. 30:13). One explanation for the discrepancy is the extreme poverty caused by famine and by oppressive Persian taxation (Ezra 4:13; 7:24; 9:9; 6:8; Neh. 5:1–5; 9:36f.; Esther 10:1). A second explanation is that this later Babylonian-Persian shekel was based on a heavier standard (21 grams); thus 1/3 of the later shekel was equal to 1/2 of the earlier Phoenician shekel (14 grams). Cf. Edwin Yamauchi, “Ezra, Nehemiah,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (EBC), ed. F.E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1988), 4:742; R.A. Bowman, “The Book of Ezra and the Book of Nehemiah,” in *The Interpreter’s Bible*, ed. G.A. Buttrick, 12 vols. (New York, NY: Abingdon, 1954), 3:764; Leslie C. Allen and Timothy S. Laniak, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, NIBC (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 143.

23. James Ussher dates Nehemiah’s work at 454 B.C. (*The Annals of the World*, § 1243).

24. Marty E. Stevens, *Temples, Tithes, and Taxes* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006), 98. Stevens pioneers new ground in this study.

25. *Ibid.*, 98–113.

26. *Ibid.*, 107.

27. *Ibid.*, 123 (referring to pp. 98–113).

28. The temple “gatekeeper” (Hebrew shoer) was actually a temple gate clerk or account-

tant, responsible for safeguarding the contents of the baskets placed at the thresholds, and perhaps assaying the items deposited, assigning value, and crediting the account of the depositor. The temple “scribe” (sopher) was the storehouse accountant, functioning as counter, recorder, ledger-keeper, and enumerator for the temple storehouses (Marty E. Stevens, *Temples, Tithes, and Taxes*, 172, 71–77).

29. *Ibid.*, 113. “Because most of the money contributed to the synagogues was transported to the main sanctuary, one might even say they were ‘branches’ of the central repository” (110).

For historical documentation of the incredible wealth in the second temple in Jerusalem see p. 143. We read in the Old Testament that David’s golden shields were stored in Solomon’s temple (2 Kings 11:10 = 2 Chr. 23:9; cf. 2 Sam. 8:7 = 1 Chr. 18:7).

Stevens even believes that in the ancient Near East the temple functioned as financial intermediary, being a collector, user, and disbursing of goods and financial services (167–172).

30. Baruch A. Levine, *JPS Torah Commentary: Leviticus* (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 27.

31. “Temple, Jerusalem,” *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (ABD), ed. D.N. Freedman, 6 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 6:361.

32. Rousas J. Rushdoony, *Exodus* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House, 2004), 444.

33. Rousas J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, 1:283. Rushdoony asserts that the poll tax supported the civil order, i.e., “the state, its military power plus its courts,” but not the social order (which was supported by tithes).

34. The Greek word translated “temple tax” (in NKJV, NET, NIV, NAB, etc.) is *didrachmon*. A *didrachmon* is “a double drachma, two-drachma piece (two *didrachmon* = 1 stater) monetary unit of the Aegean, Corinthian, Persian, and Italian-Sicilian coinage system; a [silver] coin worth two Attic drachmas, but no longer in circulation in NT times; it was about equal to a half shekel (two days’ wage) among the Jews, and was the sum required of each person annually as the temple tax; even though this

tax was paid with other coins, the amount was termed a *didrachmon*” (BDAG, 241f.). This is a case of metonymy, i.e., a figure of speech in which the coin formerly used to pay the temple tax is used to represent the temple tax itself.

35. The Greek word translated “piece of money” is *stater*, which was “a silver coin = four drachmas (approximately equal to four days’ wages)” (BDAG, 940).

36. Alfred Edersheim states, “It had only been about a century before, during the reign of Salome-Alexandra (about 78 B.C.), that the Pharisaical party, being then in power, had carried an enactment by which the Temple tribute was to be enforced by law. It need scarcely be said that for this there is not the slightest Scriptural warrant” (*The Temple* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969], 72f.).

37. John Nolland argues that the amount of the temple tax doubled from Exodus 30 (*The Gospel of Matthew*, NIGTC [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005], 723f.).

38. George Beasley-Murray, *Matthew* (Fort Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1984), 75.

39. William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew*, NTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1973), 679. Cf. Matthew Poole, *A Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 3 Vols. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, n.d.), 3:82.

40. D.A. Carson, “Matthew,” EBC, 8:393. Josephus directly connects the first century temple tax with Moses’ commandment (*Antiquities of the Jews*, 3:8:2 §193–196; cf. 18:9:1 §312). Cf. the Mishnah (*Shekalim*, especially 1:1, 3, in Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah* [London: Oxford University Press, 1950], 152).

41. According to the Mishnah, no religious tax was to be received from a Gentile or a Samaritan (*Shekalim* 1:5; in Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah*, 152). This Mishnah passage cites Ezra 4:3 for Biblical support.

42. Alfred Plummer, *An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1956), 245.

Continued on page 23

False Flags

Martin G. Selbrede



Paul C. McGlasson cuts a sympathetic figure should you first encounter him bucking modernism as described so pointedly in R. C.

Sproul's valuable book, *Renewing Your Mind*:

One well-respected professor at a theological school changed his mind and took a stand against the atheism of his colleagues. A scandal erupted. He refused to resign. He was on tenure and thus could not be fired. He was consequently stripped of his classes and assigned to a new office—in a janitor's closet.¹

McGlasson himself reports witnessing a previous case of what he calls “theological fascism” involving a seminary instructor “accused of ‘mentally raping’ the students” because he was “reading from the King James Psalter as a devotional to begin class.”² That same instructor was further accused of “verbal abuse” for “expounding the Sermon on the Mount,” particularly the Lord's commands concerning divorce.³ That instructor was subsequently “banned from all public teaching and stripped of all roles in the faculty governance of the seminary. *All without any due process, without any public hearing.*”⁴ [emphasis added]

You would think that a man having gone through what McGlasson did, who has witnessed what McGlasson has seen, would be the very last person to inflict similar injuries upon faithful co-laborers in Christ. Surely McGlasson, of all

people, would guard against repeating such enormities at any level, in any context, through any vehicle. He would never be the one who “automatically applies the harshest measures” to others, having preached openly against such conduct.⁵ Least of all would we expect McGlasson to dispense with due process in regard to Christian polemics, let alone Christian civility. Moreover, you would think that McGlasson would therefore shun what he calls a “hermeneutics of evasion”⁶ in responding to the work of others who name the name of Christ. In fact, you would be led to believe that McGlasson operates by his own stated principle that “there is simply no excuse not to hold the Christian ministry in the world today accountable to the highest standards of excellence.”⁷

But you would be mistaken.

False Flags

Up until now, books critical of the work of Chalcedon and other ministries of like mind have been mounted where they *should* be mounted: upon the exegesis of Scripture. Such undertakings naturally invite responses at the same level: the text of Scripture. The most prominent critique was a 400+ page volume written by sixteen seminary professors⁸ which prompted a detailed reply the following year.⁹ Despite the ebb and flow, the passionate exchange of ideas (of admittedly variable quality and accuracy found in books of this genre) has been marked, however imperfectly or inconsistently, by explicit appeals to God's Word.¹⁰ With the publication

this year of Paul McGlasson's new book, *NO! A Theological Response to Christian Reconstructionism*,¹¹ this appears to no longer be true.

McGlasson states that “the theological response I am offering here to Christian Reconstructionism is a serious one.”¹² The back cover affirms that his book “is based primarily on careful exegesis of Scripture.” The back cover endorsements inform us that “Paul McGlasson's response to this theology is clear, charitable, forceful, and biblical” (Mark A. Noll of Notre Dame), that “McGlasson is fair but scathing in his biblically based, evangelical, and theologically well-informed critique” (William H. Willimon of Duke Divinity School) as he “uses Scripture and a wide array of Christian thinkers past and present to debunk this false vision of the church” (Mark Tranvik, Augsburg College).

These assured reports of ostensible fairness, charitableness, clarity, and exegetical care interweave with the tone of the book's first four chapters, where it seems that McGlasson is taking extreme pains to accurately lay out his opponents' case by picking four “representative” books and summarizing their content “as objectively as possible”¹³—Cornelius Van Til's *A Theory of Christian Knowledge*, R. J. Rushdoony's *Institutes of Biblical Law*, Francis Schaeffer's *A Christian Manifesto*, and *Christian Reconstruction: What It Is, What It Isn't* by Gary North and Gary DeMar. As McGlasson affirms, “there is no point arguing over a position unless it is being

accurately represented: surely the reader expects nothing less.”¹⁴

And therein lies the problem.

The unwary reader could easily believe that he’s getting exactly what he’s been led to expect (accurate representations,¹⁵ fair, charitable, well-informed handling of the data, and exegetical care) and will naturally reach McGlasson’s conclusion concerning the purported tenets of reconstruction, “that they must be rejected, not debated.”¹⁶ The book’s eight short chapters (averaging a mere 14 pages each) further underscore the author’s view that he’s dealing with easily detected heresies that can be exposed in short order and dispensed with.

But in virtually all relevant particulars, this book is flying under a false flag.¹⁷ It so grossly misrepresents key positions with which it interacts (often asserting the precise opposite of the facts) that the only valid reason to devote ink to it is for the teaching opportunity such a response might present to our readers. We submit the following in the prayer it will be found edifying, although it departs from our primary emphasis (to actively guide and act, rather than to react). Perhaps in this case, a suitable reaction can itself be proactive in applying the Word of God.

McGlasson’s Introduction

McGlasson uses two examples to prove how influential Christian Reconstructionism has been. The first is the presidential candidacy of Texas governor Rick Perry: “Put simply, Christian Reconstructionism [sic], as a religious movement, was there to launch a major campaign for the presidency of the United States.”¹⁸ The second is Milton Gaither’s listing of R. J. Rushdoony as one of “the three pioneers of the modern homeschooling movement.”¹⁹

“But in virtually all relevant particulars, this book is flying under a false flag. It so grossly misrepresents key positions with which it interacts (often asserting the precise opposite of the facts) that the only valid reason to devote ink to it is for the teaching opportunity such a response might present to our readers.”

The second claim is credible.

The first one is incredible. Informed Reconstructionists oppose “salvation by politics” and are firmly anti-statist. Here in Austin where Perry actually governs, Reconstructionists favor Ron Paul (while well-intentioned purists seek someone even further removed from Perry)—and this orientation is evident nationwide. The associative leap made by McGlasson jumps straight into the void.²⁰

McGlasson then lists the four books he’ll interact with, followed by his argument premised on canonical considerations in which the Bible’s “pattern of truth”²¹ is to be discerned, against which he previews his objections to the four books he will examine shortly.

Chapter 1: Epistemological Dualism

McGlasson attempts to put Cornelius Van Til’s *A Christian Theory of Knowledge* under the microscope. By the third page of discussion McGlasson promotes the concepts of brute factuality and neutrality that Van Til so vigorously opposed. While McGlasson cites Van Til’s view that “modern thought as a whole has a profound predicament

which it cannot under any circumstances solve within the resources at its command,”²² he never actually refutes Van Til on that key point.

Further, we first encounter here a pattern to be repeated for each of the four targets: that McGlasson purports to analyze each one in about 14 pages and then thoroughly debunk them in about the same amount of space. Previously, Van Til warranted an entire 1971 book, *Jerusalem and Athens*,²³ 498 pages, with two dozen contributors analyzing, pro and con, his ideas. It took Greg Bahnsen over 750 pages to put Van Til’s apologetic method into its most accessible form,²⁴ while ten scholars contributed to *Foundations of Christian Scholarship*,²⁵ which carefully elaborates Van Til’s ideas and their implications in different disciplines, a study over 350 pages long. But consider McGlasson’s counsel to reject the ideas he opposes without debate: would you buy and read any of the above books after McGlasson has poisoned the well against them? Is this a fair sifting of all the relevant evidence, or does McGlasson operate closer to the “cavalier dismissal” approach that D. A. Carson identified?²⁶

A lot depends on whether McGlasson conceives of Van Til’s position correctly and fairly, and if his extremely brief critique actually confronts Van Til’s position in a fatal way. Neither of these appears to be the case. Back in 1976, Dr. John Frame put his finger on the first problem: “The idea that Van Til’s apologetic substitutes proclamation for argument is frequently denied in Van Til’s writings, but is nevertheless one of the most prevalent misunderstandings of his position.” McGlasson adopts this misunderstanding.²⁷ It is not his only misunderstanding of Van Til, whom he later associates with Protestant

liberalism²⁸ and Gnosticism.²⁹ It is troubling that a “serious” book stumbles in so many regards in representing a major thinker’s views with any reasonable accuracy.

McGlasson denies that a covenant was ever made between God and Adam, least of all a covenant involving dominion of any kind.³⁰ He later states, “There is of course no mention of a ‘covenant’ with Adam in Calvin, again for the simple reason that there is no mention of such a covenant in Scripture.”³¹ Such a notion is “a fiction [and] certainly not found in the Bible.”³² This is interesting because elsewhere McGlasson loves to quote the other Reformer, Martin Luther – but apparently not on this issue! Luther held that Hosea 6:7 does explicitly speak of a covenant between God and Adam, while Warfield’s analysis³³ of this issue (in which Warfield ultimately agrees with Luther after exhaustively sifting all the relevant evidence) shows that this understanding goes back many centuries. In fact, several theologians that McGlasson quotes favorably in his book (Marck, Turretine, Bavinck, Luther, Warfield) disagree with McGlasson’s (and Calvin’s) claim. Is McGlasson’s case a house divided,³⁴ or merely a case of selective use of evidence, which would normally point to the logical fallacy of special pleading?

McGlasson has criticized “cultural Christianity,” Abraham Kuyper (Van Til’s forerunner), and the concept of “worldviews” before,³⁵ and in this new book he opposes further Van Til’s rejection of neutrality (perhaps most mockingly when he inquires what difference there could possibly be between a Christian hydrogen molecule and a humanist hydrogen molecule).³⁶ Yet McGlasson’s comments elsewhere suggest he opposes the concept of

neutrality ... at least neutrality as he defines it.³⁷ He also makes statements that precisely mirror assertions he roundly criticizes when made by a Reconstructionist.³⁸ Notwithstanding these earlier (perhaps unguarded) statements, he now appeals to the “rhythms of Biblical truth”³⁹ in general, and Philippians 4:8 in specific, to prove that Van Til’s alleged dualism (!) is rejected by St. Paul, informing the reader that Paul validates humanistic culture in this passage because of the apostle’s choice of two specific words. On the basis of this verse, McGlasson condemns Van Til’s position as “a serious distortion of the Pauline gospel, a distortion which strikes at the heart of the mystery of grace.”⁴⁰

But is McGlasson’s view of Phil. 4:8 correct? Nineteenth-century exegete A. R. Fausset argues that the word *virtue* is used by Paul in a different sense than the heathen term *excellence*.⁴¹ Lightfoot’s 1868 commentary points out that Peter’s use of the same term involves a special sense, not the classical (humanistic) meaning,⁴² while other commentators note the moral (not cultural) dimension of the terminology.⁴³ Renowned exegete H.A.W. Meyer’s 1883 commentary refutes McGlasson’s view quite vigorously, explaining that Paul’s terminology “shows the contrary, as it means no other than *Christian morality*.”⁴⁴ Lutheran expositor R.C.H. Lenski, in his 1937 commentary, concurs: the terms “are, of course, to be regarded from the Christian standpoint like the other terms. Paul is not using the terms employed by pagan, namely Stoic, moralists; Christian exhortation does not need to borrow from pagans, it is rich in its own linguistic right.”⁴⁵ When confronting Lightfoot’s conjecture that this passage might possibly teach that some value may be found in

heathen morality, Lenski begs to differ: “none exists there for the Christian.”⁴⁶ Fortunately, all these commentaries were written well before Reconstructionists arrived to pollute discourse. But then again, perhaps these commentaries should be added to the [quickly growing] list of books to reject rather than to debate.

Of all the misrepresentations populating McGlasson’s treatment, perhaps the most astonishing is this: “I think it is highly significant that *preaching the Word* is scarcely even mentioned by Van Til, or by any of the Christian Reconstructionists after him.”⁴⁷ Regarding Van Til, see Bahnsen for the defense,⁴⁸ but when McGlasson extends this claim to *the only Christians who take the Great Commission seriously, who fully believe it can actually be fulfilled*, he is operating by a standard of fairness you will be unable to discover in the Scriptures. McGlasson’s reduction of Christian Reconstruction to carefully selected passages from authors who are writing on explicitly narrow topics creates a straw man of colossal proportions. This situation only worsens as one progresses further through his book.

Chapter 2: Mosaic Law and Society

I belabored a discussion of McGlasson’s first chapter (with some references to later comments of his) to illustrate a fundamental problem with his approach, a problem that persists in subsequent chapters of his work. In “analyzing” Rushdoony’s *Institutes of Biblical Law*, McGlasson will resort to rewording Rushdoony’s position if the Mosaic law in question isn’t sufficiently abhorrent to be worthy of condemnation by simply quoting the literal scripture. Because McGlasson rejects a “fundamentalist” approach but wants to tie his views to “canon,”

he quotes St. Augustine as a reliable guide for “knowing when to take the words of the Bible as literal or figurative expressions.”⁴⁹ Because McGlasson agrees with Augustine, he lauds the church father’s *On Christian Doctrine* as a “brilliant treatise,” particularly when Augustine says “that whatever appears in the divine Word that does not literally pertain to virtuous behavior ... you must take to be figurative. Virtuous behavior pertains to the love of God and of one’s neighbor” [ellipsis in original].⁵⁰ On Augustine’s authority, we can pit scripture against scripture and safely ignore Christ’s statement that “upon these two commandments hang all of the law and the prophets.”

In this light, Rushdoony’s position leads to “an unspeakable nightmare of death, repression, violence, hatred, bigotry, discrimination, and yet more death,”⁵¹ evidently because it creates “a dystopia of all-too-human origin”⁵² by being based on the laws of God. This makes one wonder why McGlasson quotes Luther approvingly when the Reformer says that if he were emperor, he wouldn’t be bound by Moses, yet he “should be free to follow him in ruling as he ruled.” Would Luther be free in following all of Moses if God’s law is a prescription for spawning wicked dystopias? Wouldn’t McGlasson say of Luther what he says of Rushdoony’s view: “I do not believe this barbaric new world order needs any special condemnation from me. As a religious ideology of bitter anger and fanaticism, it is filled with such malice, ignorance, bigotry, prejudice, and toxic hatred of the human race that it clearly stands self-condemned.”⁵³ Significantly, McGlasson arrives at this conclusion after only three short pages.

We must first note that whereas Rushdoony distinguishes between godly

dominion and ungodly domination, McGlasson mixes the two and doesn’t understand the world of difference between them. If you don’t grasp this, you don’t understand Christian Reconstruction and are attacking a straw man. McGlasson doesn’t understand this.

Second, McGlasson insists that Rushdoony is primarily interested in abstract principles drawn from the law, when in fact Rushdoony is a lethal critic of abstractions of any kind in theology, as his *Systematic Theology* makes crystal clear.⁵⁴ Rushdoony even alienated proponents of The Principle Approach to American education, rightly or wrongly, because of his opposition to abstract principles, which he saw as being in sharp contrast to the concrete Person of Christ. (Rushdoony actually sounds like McGlasson in repeatedly asserting the person of Christ as the proper focus of our faith, but you would never learn this by reading McGlasson.) In short, it is Rushdoony who argues for concrete application of the laws of God as written; it is McGlasson who actually extracts abstract principles when he follows Augustine.

Third, McGlasson pits the Ten Commandments against the rest of God’s law, citing the case of Christ’s encounter of the rich young ruler as a strong proof.⁵⁵ But one of the commandments Christ lists is *not* among the Ten Commandments: *apostereisis*, “defraud” or “withhold,” is what Christ holds against the ruler. Is McGlasson even aware that his own appeals to Scripture actually dismantle his position?

Fourth, McGlasson excoriates the entire concept of homeschooling. In a society where homeschooling dominates, he sees disaster looming:

You may or may not consume contaminated beef; you may or may not get

your prescribed medicine, a placebo, or a dangerous narcotic; and since your butcher and pharmacist are home-schooled in their field, the chances are high that mistakes will be made. ... Your surgeon will be home-schooled in the latest techniques of surgical procedure, or at best educated at church; ... *Fathers and mothers* will now train the next generation of particle physicists, microbiologists, literary critics, neurologists, brain surgeons, linguists, international diplomats, oceanographers, specialists in sustainable architecture, and wildlife managers.⁵⁶

You might now appreciate how McGlasson handles other matters after reading the scorn he heaps upon the results of faithful homeschooling parenting and discipleship.⁵⁷ In the paragraphs in which the above quotes were extracted, McGlasson also laments the loss of government regulation, never *once* mentioning that deregulation in Christian Reconstruction is *always coupled* to the abolition of limited liability laws. Statist regulation addresses the irresponsibility subsidized by such laws, which sever actions from their consequences in the business world. The reaffirmation of full liability incentivizes maximum responsible conduct among men. But McGlasson esteems such marvelous things in God’s law to be a strange thing (Hos. 8:12). Small wonder that the abolition of poverty (Deut. 15:4) in God’s way remains beyond McGlasson’s grasp: he expects the state to solve the problem, and cites Psalm 72 as proof (!).⁵⁸

For this reason, it is McGlasson’s views that lead to a large state apparatus, not the views of those Christian Reconstructionists whose views he unaccountably misrepresents.⁵⁹ The massive growth in civil government that McGlasson predicts under God’s law flies in the face of the strict financial

limitations Scripture places on state taxation (see the first of two essays by Dr. Robert Fugate appearing in this issue of *Faith for All of Life*). A warped and partial understanding of Reconstruction necessarily leads to a warped assessment of it. This accounts for his bizarre claims about Christian Reconstruction being focused on the past and not the future,⁶⁰ when anyone familiar with Rushdoony knows his strong published opposition to a past-oriented approach and his promotion of a future orientation in all things.

In short, McGlasson's take on the matters with which he deals with fall little, if anything, short of a series of theological hit-and-runs that propagate a false understanding of the positions with which he interacts. This is most evident in the case of Van Til and Rushdoony, but his later treatment of Francis Schaeffer, Gary North, and Gary DeMar aren't too far behind in these regards. While I could easily write ten times as much by way of analysis and refutation of McGlasson's claims, we need to move on.

Chapter 3: Cultural Christianity

The reader has grasped the weaknesses of McGlasson's attempted rebuttal of Christian Reconstruction as touched on briefly above. It is actually easier from this point forward to discuss what McGlasson gets *right* in the subsequent chapters, rather than where he errs (by misrepresentation, or faulty exegesis of the Biblical texts). In regard to Francis Schaeffer, McGlasson makes a good point that *if* Schaeffer is calling for civil disobedience at some threshold level of oppression, he should at least *define* what that point is, rather than leave the matter open and (admittedly) vague. We can certainly agree with McGlasson here. In this, McGlasson was paying attention and drawing a reasonable conclusion.

Where McGlasson and Schaeffer fail to see eye-to-eye is when Schaeffer apparently treats the United States as a totalitarian regime. McGlasson sees the U.S. government as sufficiently benign (or beyond the legitimate scope of Christian critique *a lá* Schaeffer) that he and Schaeffer end up talking past each other. This diversity of view provides some background as to why Schaeffer and McGlasson end up so far apart. In fact, the seventh chapter of McGlasson's book (in which he responds to Schaeffer) is all over the map theologically. It appears he hasn't been able to pin down *his* precise target either. The best McGlasson can do is condemn Christian violence, doing so in a context that looks estranged from Schaeffer's views (and thus serving as a straw man once again).

Chapter 4: Christian Political Domination

There is at least one point that McGlasson makes in dealing with Gary North and Gary DeMar's book that isn't difficult to agree with: that the book's claim that nobody understood the doctrine of the covenant until 1985 is "astoundingly bold" and even "arrogant."⁶¹ I tend to agree. Unguarded statements like this do populate the writings of Gary North. So, McGlasson is paying attention, at least at this point.

But note the bold subhead above: the word *domination* is there, not the word *dominion*. Again, this is a distinction that McGlasson needs to make but does not. Things go downhill from here, and I suspect that in *this* case (where the two authors are among the living, unlike the other three targets McGlasson has chosen to analyze), we might expect North and DeMar to charitably point out the deficiencies in McGlasson's brief critique. (Such a response could fill a book; if Greg Bahnsen were still alive, it would fill two.)

As is the case with the other writers with whom he interacts, McGlasson appears to be unaware that many of the views he pits against those writers *are actually held and promoted by those same writers*, especially as they involve the question of the advance of the Gospel across all cultural boundaries and barriers. McGlasson thinks his targets are unmindful of this or that text, citing the scriptures in question, but in many cases those texts are well-known calling cards for Reconstructionists. Ignorance of reconstructionism's distinctives (despite having critiqued these four books) has led to this persistent anomaly throughout this book.

In other words, the debilitating weaknesses of McGlasson's workmanship cry out for *full debate with Reconstructionists* rather than the *wholesale rejection* he prematurely advocates. We could then learn why McGlasson quotes Matthew 5:18 and 5:20 but inserts an ellipsis for verse 19: "Therefore, whosoever shall loosen even the least of these commandments and teach men so shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Since McGlasson claims that Jesus alone is competent to speak concerning the law, surely this profound comment of our Lord's shouldn't be edited out and left on the cutting room floor.

We could then move, point by point, page by page, to set the record straight. I believe that Rev. Paul McGlasson, and the men who endorsed this new book of his, owe that much to his potential audience: to replace a false flag with a true one, and not put his fellow Christians in a janitor's closet.

Is this not what the living Christ would command: that we speak the truth one to another? 🏴‍☠️

1. R. C. Sproul, *Renewing Your Mind: Basic Christian Beliefs You Need to Know* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998) 3rd edition, 78. Dr. Sproul reveals the professor being targeted to be Paul McGlasson in the associated endnote found on page 214.
2. Paul C. McGlasson, *Another Gospel: A Confrontation with Liberation Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1994), 81.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., 82.
5. Paul C. McGlasson, *Canon and Proclamation: Sermons For Our Times* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 90.
6. McGlasson, *Another Gospel*, 56f., in which the author finds it “utterly dismaying” that so many theologians “could so openly mishandle the text of Holy Scripture.”
7. Paul C. McGlasson, *Invitation to Dogmatic Theology: A Canonical Approach* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006), 170.
8. William S. Barker & W. Robert Godfrey, ed., *Theonomy: A Reformed Critique* (Grand Rapids, MI: Academie Books, 1990).
9. Gary North, ed., *Theonomy: An Informed Response* (Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1991). See also Greg Bahnsen, *No Other Standard: Theonomy and its Critics* (Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1991).
10. If only because various formal and informal logical fallacies and abortive appeals to consensus or dubious “tenor of scripture” arguments were too easily rebutted, as participants to such dialogues came to learn. As a result, imprecision in expressing ideas became its own penalty, and the general level of discourse tended to slowly improve as a result of such intramural exchanges. The tendency for theonomists and Christian Reconstructionists to continually redirect the focus back onto the Scriptures has already served a beneficial purpose, apart from any other consideration of the merits of such convictions.
11. Paul C. McGlasson, *NO! A Theological Response to Christian Reconstructionism* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012). The word “NO!” stands in letters 2-1/4” tall on the front cover.
12. Ibid., 6. McGlasson asserts the same on page 3: “I will offer a serious theological critique of this set of ideas.”
13. Ibid., 3.
14. Ibid., 3-4.
15. McGlasson assures us that his representations are taken, “not from critics of the movement, but from the sources themselves” (Ibid., 70). As we shall see, he might have done better to use inferior secondhand sources given the unaccountable mutilation the primary sources suffer at his hands.
16. Ibid., 70. McGlasson is not “convinced that theological debate would be the faithful response.”
17. Some readers might have expected such issues in the opening sentence written by McGlasson in the book (page ix), which credits Rodney Clapp as the volume’s editor. To the extent this critique is sound, Clapp would need to join the author and his endorsers in sharing responsibility for the false flag being flown.
18. Ibid., 2. McGlasson asserts this on the grounds that an August 2011 prayer rally, which Gov. Perry attended, was organized by the New Apostolic Reformation, which he believes “is in fact a branch of Christian Reconstructionism.”
19. Ibid., 2, referring to Gaither’s book, *Homeschool: An American History*, which states that Rushdoony’s influence in this arena has been “direct and powerful.”
20. It wasn’t until the last half decade that such dubious missteps were starting to be noticed and openly corrected by the secular critics of Christian Reconstruction. The Christian observers appear to be far behind the secularists in revising erroneous ideas such as these.
21. Ibid., 7. McGlasson follows his mentor, Brevard S. Childs, in this regard.
22. Ibid., 13. McGlasson cites Joseph Butler’s 1736 treatise in favor of his approach, leading to the Scottish Rationalism later inherited by Warfield in his conduct of apologetics at Princeton.
23. E. R. Geehan, ed., *Jerusalem and Athens: Critical Discussions on the Philosophy and Apologetics of Cornelius Van Til* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1971).
24. Greg Bahnsen, *Van Til’s Apologetic: Readings and Analysis* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing, 1998).
25. Gary North, ed., *Foundations of Christian Scholarship: Essays in the Van Til Perspective* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1976, 2001).
26. D. A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1984), 120.
27. McGlasson, *NO!*, 15-16, 24.
28. Ibid., 114.
29. Ibid., 62, 80-82.
30. Ibid., 20, 73.
31. Ibid., 67.
32. Ibid., 112.
33. John E. Meeter, ed., *Selected Shorter Writings of Benjamin B. Warfield, Volume 1* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1970), 116-129, in an essay entitled “Hosea 6:7: Man or Adam?” first published in 1903.
34. A serious problem is that McGlasson’s “canonical approach” puts special store by the concept of church consensus over the centuries, so readers encountering his claims in the context of his approach will easily draw faulty conclusions (namely, that McGlasson is presenting the data correctly, without omitting any important details).
35. Paul McGlasson, *Invitation to Dogmatic Theology: A Canonical Approach* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006), 260-262.
36. Paul McGlasson, *NO!*, 77.
37. Paul McGlasson, *God the Redeemer: A Theology of the Gospel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 93: “There is no neutral humanity ... our relationship to God cannot be somehow neutral.”
38. Ibid., 94: “Indeed, there is no true life apart from this relationship [with God]. To be sure, there is some manner of existence, of eating and drinking, of work and sleep, of birth and death. However, in the gospel of the Kingdom God determines that existence in the old world of human sinning has no meaning and purpose, and therefore has no future. The first aspect of divine judgment is therefore a resounding “No!” to the possibility of true life in the old world, the world of

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Creedal Culture and Education

By Bojidar Marinov

“Except ye believe, ye shall not understand.”



Augustine said these words when commenting on John 7:17, interpreting the words, “if anyone is willing to do His will” as meaning, “if anyone believes.” And Augustine said that belief is the prerequisite to “know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself.” Faith is the tool to understanding teaching. Augustine also referred to the Old Testament, Isaiah 7:9, which he interpreted to mean, “If you don’t believe, you won’t understand.” Many years later, Anselm of Canterbury expanded on the statement, agreeing with Augustine that “I believe that I may understand,” and developed a Christian epistemology based on self-conscious faith which produced rational understanding of reality (as over against the mystical, irrational faith of his predecessor, Eriugena). This new epistemology earned him the fame of being the father of scholasticism, an intellectual movement in the church which unfortunately ended in complete theological confusion and irrelevance, but not before it produced some of the finest minds and works of Christendom—like Thomas Aquinas and Erasmus of Rotterdam—and also laid the intellectual foundation for the theological studies of the Reformation.

The church wasn’t always faithful to this principle of faith as the foundation of knowledge. Neoplatonism and Aristotelianism crept into the church from the very beginning, and dominated the academic endeavor and the system of

education. Despite the imperfections, this was a revolutionary change from the Classical view of knowledge and learning. The perfect Classical man couldn’t be “prejudiced” by his beliefs; he had to approach reality “as a child,” without any *a priori* beliefs or presuppositions, and thus learn and acquire knowledge. Augustine rightly interpreted the Bible’s injunction: What is not of faith is sin, and therefore knowledge that is not based on faith is not righteous knowledge. Understanding came only from faith; and, as Anselm showed in his writings, understanding could then expand upon faith and discover the world as it is, not as what the fallen human heart and mind sees it.

The “I believe” phrase which Augustine and Anselm used was not used arbitrarily. Neither did it have just a generic meaning, something like the modern concept of vague, general belief in a God who is seldom defined in either His person or His work in history. Augustine lived and worked in an era entirely characterized and influenced by the church councils. Between A.D. 50 and the time of Augustine, there were at least a dozen smaller councils and two ecumenical Councils (Nicaea, A.D. 325 and Constantinople, A.D. 381). Augustine himself laid the theological foundation for the Council of Ephesus in A.D. 431 (a year after Augustine’s death) by his treatises on the Trinity and on the Pelagian heresy. And the specific “product” of the Councils were the creeds; statements starting with *credo*, “I believe,” and outlining the specific

points of the Christian faith.

“I believe,” *credo*, had a very specific meaning for him and his contemporaries: It meant a *creed*, a specifically worded confession of faith which described who God was, and what He has done in history for the redemption of the world, as well as the specific expectations of the future. “I believe” couldn’t mean just “I have some feeling about some vague reality out there”; it meant very specifically, “I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and in Jesus Christ His only Son and our Lord,” etc., etc. “I believe” had specific meaning, boundaries, and applications, and when Augustine said, “You must believe in order to understand,” he meant that specific meaning, boundaries, and applications, and nothing less than that.

Anselm himself, devoted to building clear and logical Christian apologetics based on faith, did not mean faith “in general.” In fact, in his time, the eleventh century A.D., “faith” was *the* faith, the *Holy* Faith of the Fathers, defined by the Creeds. All pagan religions extinguished and defeated, “faith” meant only the Christian faith, and the rest was “faithlessness.” And for a scholar like Anselm, that faith had to be clearly defined, communicable, and communicated, for it to be able to produce the “understanding” he wanted to build in his works. Again, he had to go back to the creeds, not to a vague and undefined “faith,” which deserved rather the name “superstition,” not “faith.”

And for both men, that faith that

produced understanding was not simply an academic exercise; they had formidable enemies to deal with in practice. Augustine had against him the still powerful remains of the old paganism, as well as the new heresies, Gnosticism and Arianism, and especially the heresy of Pelagius which was so attractive to many because of the strong moral character of its author, Pelagius. For most of his literary career Augustine was fighting on all fronts to preserve orthodoxy, while at the same time striving to build its foundation. (Very symbolically, he died in Hippo besieged by the Arian Vandals.) Anselm's time was free of paganism and heresies, but he had to fight the statist agenda of the English kings inherited from the older tribal laws of Normans, Saxons, and Franks. Two exiles and almost constant opposition to build the church into a universal body subject only to King Jesus—against the attempts for royal control over it—forced him to carefully define and formulate his beliefs, as only opposition and tribulations can do. For the two men, Augustine and Anselm, faith had to be specific, clear, and a tool for action; otherwise they wouldn't have the moral fuel to stand firm against all odds.

The creeds of Christendom thus became the foundation of both men's understanding. When they said "I believe," they meant *credo*, the creed. Christian epistemology was based on the Christian creeds; and therefore the whole Christian worldview had to be based on the creeds. The two men lived in a culture that could be defined as a *creedal culture*, based entirely on specific, communicable and communicated faith. And therefore their learning, understanding, and wisdom were *creedal*, that is, based on the creeds. The Christendom that emerged from their work, and from the work of the other Fathers and teachers of the church, was

similarly a creedal culture; it was defined by a faith—or, rather, the Faith—not by geography, or blood, or force, or the blind clash of historical forces. There certainly were many old pagan and classical influences, but in general, by common consent, learning, education, and understanding were based on faith. Whatever was not of faith was sin, and therefore for the civilization to avoid sin, it had to define itself and everything it did, and everything it knew and understood, in terms of the faith.

It is important to note that it is not the faith itself that built Christendom. An individual can have personal faith in the Redeemer, but that of itself won't make him a Kingdom-builder or a culture-warrior. More is necessary than simply faith; a new system of thought and knowledge is needed which will lay that faith as a foundation upon which the structure of knowledge and wisdom is built. Faith that does not produce theoretical understanding and practical blueprints for action is an irrelevant faith, a simply mental consent to propositions, but not faith of the heart. That's why Augustine and Anselm, and those who followed them, did not stop at simply faith, but insisted that *faith produces understanding*, which is needed for the righteous to build the Kingdom. I believe, with a specific objective: *in order to understand*.

Consequently, Christianity lost the cultural war not when the faith was lost; in fact, there has always been in the society a strong element of personal, individual faith. It was when Pietism convinced the church that faith doesn't have to lead to understanding, and certainly doesn't need to lead to a *comprehensive* system of knowledge about reality, that Christianity lost its power and its cultural momentum. When the practical, comprehensive worldview of the society got divorced from the *credo*,

from the faith of the Bible, a large part of life was now left to seek other foundations, not faith. But whatever is not of faith is sin. And therefore, even the most pious Christians were misled by Pietism to only apply the categories of sin and righteousness to their personal lives, but never apply them to their cultural practices, and to the cultural practices of the society. Culture now could be based on anything else but faith.

The Reformed churches resisted this trend for longer than any other brand of Christianity. By the mid-twentieth century, though, they succumbed to the broadly evangelical influence. That's why, when in 1959 Henry Van Til published his book, *The Calvinistic Concept of Culture*, it was deliberately ignored in Reformed circles. No wonder. Its main thesis was that "culture is religion externalized." To accept this thesis was to accept the thesis of Augustine and Anselm that faith rules over all of life. The Reformed seminaries in the late 1950s couldn't afford this old-fashioned concept to raise its head again. Faith had its own limited realm; the rest was left to natural law, humanistic law, socialism, paganism, or to the theologically correct but highly vague idea of "general equity."

If Henry Van Til's book was deliberately ignored, another book, *Foundations of Social Order* by R. J. Rushdoony, was ignored because it went way beyond anyone's ability to grasp its thesis. It was published in 1968, nine years after Van Til's book. By that time Reformed theology was dead in all the Reformed seminaries; only vestiges of it remained.

The Foundations of Social Order was, and remains, the most unique book ever written in the history of Christendom. Nothing like it has been written before, and nothing like it has been written since. Christian and non-Christian historians have generally agreed on at

least one thing about creeds and history: they are not connected in any meaningful, comprehensive way. A few non-Christian historians—Harold Berman and his *Law and Revolution* being a good example—have mentioned that the Christian creeds have been instrumental in shaping the legal views and therefore the legal structure of the West. But a general study of how the creeds formed the West and its unique outlook has always been lacking; the reason being that both Christian and non-Christian authors are eager to constrain the significance of the creeds to the church and the history of theology. Even Philip Schaff in his three-volume work, *The Creeds of Christendom*, confines their value and use to the church.¹ The view of the creeds has been dualistic; creeds were separated from history, and history was left to follow its own course, independent from the development of Christian theology and the perfection of the faith of the saints.

Rushdoony challenged that outlook, and he is the first author ever to create a systematic study of how the creeds of Christendom became the foundation for the worldview of Western civilization. Based on his Reformed faith, he clearly saw that *ideas have consequences*, and that the transformation of the pagan empire into the civilization of Christendom had its foundation in the formulation of what Christians believed about God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, about the two natures of Christ, the history and the nature of redemption, the church, etc. The creeds were not just for the church; they were the foundations of social order as we know it today, in every area of life. What we believe about politics—and therefore how we act in the political realm—will be determined by what we believe about the Trinity and the nature of redemption. What we believe about economics—and therefore

how we act in the economic realm—will be determined by our beliefs about God, Jesus Christ, and His salvation. What we believe about any area of life, be it science, family, education, technologies, international relations, psychology, arts, etc.—and therefore how we act in all these areas of life—will be determined by our creeds. When Christianity set out to create a creedal culture, that creedal culture was not to be limited to the church and the personal faith of the individual. Anything not of faith was sin; and therefore everything had to be based on faith, and that faith had to be carefully formulated and communicated. Everything, including politics, and economics, and law: all life had to be based on faith, and therefore creeds mattered to all of life.

Rushdoony didn't limit his analysis to one book only. His life work can be summarized with one sentence: *application of faith to all of life*. Therefore, it was to be expected that when he approached the subject of education, he would use the same principle: discover and analyze how the faith of men informs their view of education, their system of education, and their goals for education. His book, *The Messianic Character of American Education*, exposed the “faith” principles behind our modern public education; it is based on a secular “creed,” not on any rational ideas, as claimed. But even more important, Rushdoony not only exposed the religion behind public education, he also laid the foundation for a Christian curriculum. In *The Philosophy of Christian Curriculum*, he was the first of the Christian educators in the twentieth century to actually go back to the tenets of the faith to find out how a Christian education is to be built. He made sure that before he went to the specific technical issues for studying individual subjects, he had the principles for the overall method, system,

and goals of education grounded in our faith, as informed by the gospel. Chapter 4 of the book was especially informative for those who went to work in that field, as one can judge by its title: “The Curriculum and the Resurrection.”

A mother who has school-age children wrote me recently to express her disappointment with the modern curricula offered on the homeschool market. She had a “feeling,” she said, that all that was offered—whether full programs or specific plans for specific subjects—was just the same non-Christian stuff, with the same non-Christian philosophy in its foundation, with the same non-Christian presuppositions, baptized in Bible verses and Biblical rhetoric but lacking the essence of the Biblical worldview. Some curricula went directly to the Classical world—literature, art, and poetry—for information and learning, as if the Greeks and the Romans can give us something which Christianity can't. Others use modern math, science, or history textbooks that don't even make the effort to claim they are Christian. Others revolve around a specific political or historical or ecclesiastical point which the authors claim to be a Christian issue without proving so from Scripture. The mother said she couldn't identify what exactly makes her believe that there was a problem with all these materials—for she admitted to not being trained enough to recognize hidden presuppositions and philosophies—but her intuition was telling her so.

Her intuition is correct. I have observed the same problem. My children have been enrolled in an online school for some of their subjects—they wanted to experience the thrill of intellectual competition with other children—and in many instances they saw their instructors fall short of a Biblical understanding on many of the issues. The economics and business classes were a

serious failure: the instructors did not have any idea of what Biblical economics was, taught definitions and laws that came right out of Paul Samuelson and John Kenneth Galbraith, and treated taxes and government intervention in the economy as a technical, not an ethical issue. The school was nominally Christian, and all instructors were professing Christians. My children, having grown in a family where Biblical economics, social theory, and law are part of our family devotions, were not in danger; they could easily identify the fallacies, and where they couldn't identify them, they at least had enough Biblical sense to smell a rat. But most of the other children had no training that would protect them against the un-Biblical presuppositions and views of the equally untrained teachers.

There are many more examples throughout the nation of Christian school and homeschool curricula and study plans that are un-Biblical. Something is missing in our Christian education. And what is missing is ... the Christian faith. And I don't mean the Christian faith as individual faith of parents, children, and teachers. I mean the Christian faith as the foundation of our curriculum and our system of acquiring and teaching knowledge and understanding. Our curriculum is not based on *credo*, on "I believe" as a concrete, communicable, and communicated faith which starts from the very being of God, His works in history, and His promise for the future. At the end, as the mother I mentioned above has noticed, the education professing Christians give to their children is simply a version of secular education baptized in Bible verses and prayers.

This situation, of course, did not come out of nowhere. It is the product of at least two centuries of *creedless* Christianity or, rather, Christianity

which has lost its understanding of the significance of the creeds for the building and formulation of its presuppositions and worldview. Over the last two hundred years, "faith" has come to be defined as some kind of mystical gnosis, a "relationship with Jesus," an unnatural experience which supposedly places the individual on a higher plane, above the material world of everyday activity, social interaction, and cultural endeavor. While some churches still recite the early creeds, and even include in their service responsive reading of questions and answers of sixteenth and seventeenth century catechisms, there is no systematic teaching how these creeds and catechisms are supposed to build the understanding and the worldview of the church members outside of the church, in real life. Consequently, Christian teachers and professors—and creators of curricula and textbooks—seldom stop to formulate their worldview, and then self-consciously build their curricula and textbooks on the basis of that worldview. At the end, the product is education which bears the name "Christian" but has all the characteristics of the pagan education in the broader culture.

Redeeming education will take much more than simply pulling Christian children out of public schools and teaching them at home or in Christian schools. It will take much more than adding the Bible to the curriculum, or peppering the textbooks with Biblical verses. It will take a return back to the *credo* as the self-conscious foundation of all thought and action.

At least three principles need to be restored in education:

It will take, *first*, a clear realization of the importance of the nature of God for both the method and the content of the education. The Trinity, the principle of the equal ultimacy of the One and

the Many,² must be laid as the foundational principle for the learning plan for every discipline. I have explained in another place³ the difference between what I call "Greek" and "Roman" methods of learning and education. Each one of these methods is based on elevating either the one or the many in importance. A Christian curriculum must be specifically geared toward both treating every subject as a world of its own, a legitimate separate part of God's creation, with its own harmony, beauty, laws, and legitimacy, deserving to be studied and enjoyed for the sheer joy of observing God's order in thinking and knowledge; and at the same time, it must be able to show the relation of that subject to all other subjects and knowledge, and its usefulness to exercising righteous dominion over the earth.

Second, a clear understanding is necessary of how education must be built on worshipping God and not man. As Rushdoony pointed out in *The Foundations of Social Order*, by elevating the principle that the "Word became flesh," and was not merely "united to man" (as in Nestorianism), worship of man was condemned. Modern education looks at man as the active agent in learning and education; the Word is simply "united" to man's mind. But such foundation for learning is tantamount to worshipping man, by elevating man to the position of a creature freely able to reach and get knowledge. This denies revelation as the foundation of all knowledge; logic, rational method, empirical method, scientific method, and other methods are the true foundation.

And *third*, the curriculum must be specifically geared toward building a free man. By declaring Christ to have two natures, divine and human, the early Councils denied the state, or

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Are You Ready?

By Andrea Schwartz

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. (1 Peter 3:15)



In my time as an active homeschooling parent, my children reported “cross-examinations” by some adults regarding my qualifications as a home educator. My girls were not at a loss regarding how to respond, because they were prepared with a ready answer.¹ The same was true when, because of a flexible schedule, we were out and about during regular school hours. Rather than dread potential questions, we were ready to give an answer suitable to the circumstances and the persons making inquiry.

As homeschooling is still not a mainstream activity, many contemplating removing their children from state schools are fearful of being challenged about their decision and avoid potential detractors. What if, instead, they were eager for the interaction and had a ready answer in place?

I believe we have limited the admonition in 1 Peter 3:15 strictly to theological arguments with atheists or unbelievers, and dismissed (or avoided) opportunities to explain our choices or actions at a more personal level. In any and all circumstances, we need to be prepared to live out and teach that the law-word of God is applicable to all areas of life and thought, and we should be ready to give an explanation as to how this is true. Where we shop, where we vacation, how we pursue recreation, all should connect to the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20) and our call to be salt and light (Matt. 5:13–16).

I cannot think of a better goal for any homeschooling mother than to be able to attest that she prepared her children to *be ready always* with answers to both mundane and abstract questions of life. If a child cannot give a ready answer, the mother must teach him how to discover the answer. So, for the child who is repeatedly questioned about not being with other children, a ready answer might include, “Oh, I have plenty of interaction with other kids my age at church, karate lessons, ballet class, or just spending time with other homeschooling families and people in my neighborhood.” You’d be amazed at the effect on adults when a young person, looking them squarely in the eye, provides an answer in a respectful, unflustered fashion. It usually bolsters the case for homeschooling!

How Do You Know What You Don’t Know?

Although many begin the process of Christian homeschooling with godly motives, those motives are often incomplete or misguided. Because parents are, themselves, often products of statist education, they don’t have a clear concept of how to make their homeschool environment different from the public school alternative.

For example, when I speak to forlorn homeschooling moms about the troubles they are having, the complaints usually come in the form of, “I cannot get her to finish her math,” or “He doesn’t really want to answer the questions at the end of the textbook chap-

ter.” In other words, they are having procedural issues with their children. More obvious (at least to me) is that they have merely taken the public schooling mindset and relocated it to their kitchen table. And why shouldn’t they? They have not yet acquired a truly Biblical philosophy of education. They’ve been to the homeschooling conventions, visited the exhibit halls, and have become convinced Christian education is all about getting the right books (complete with teacher’s manuals) and following them exactly. In an effort to justify their educational choice, they load up with materials, and have inadvertently become slaves to the very educational system they are trying to avoid.

Parents need to know what the statist model truly is and why it should not be emulated.² If they are unable to make this apologetic to themselves, how will they deal with their children when they encounter resistance, stubbornness, and rebellion?

A Case in Point

A friend contacted me recently about a young mother of three who was struggling with her decision to homeschool. She was seriously considering sending her oldest child back to public school. I was asked to give her a call. After playing “phone tag” for a couple of days, we finally connected. I asked her to tell me what was going on.

She explained that she was finding it difficult to get through all the lesson plans for the various subjects she covered on a daily basis. There were

times when her daughter's reluctance frustrated her and she was ready to give up on the process entirely. Additionally, she was concerned that she wasn't giving enough time to her younger children. She told me, in no uncertain terms, that the reason she was homeschooling was because she felt *obligated* to—that she would never have started if her daughter's previous public school experience had not been so bad. The list of exactly how bad wasn't short! The tone in her voice when she said “obligated” indicated that she felt embarrassed and ashamed that this was her reason.

When she was through I asked, “Since when is doing something out of obligation a bad thing? You sound as though fulfilling your *duty* as a mother to properly educate your child is somehow demeaned because obligation is your motive.” This woman's attitude is all too prevalent in our culture. Simply put, doing something out of obligation—in this case responding to God's call on her life—was of lesser value than doing something because of an inherent love for the activity.

When I made further inquiry, I discovered that her reluctant student was all of five years old and she was being subjected to a syllabus that was overly academic and tedious. I assured her that for a five year old, she needed to concentrate on Biblical character training, phonics, and basic arithmetic. Additionally, spending time reading to her children, encouraging discussion, and filling their days in exploration of God's world would be far more advantageous than trying to fulfill the expectations of curriculum designers and lots of “seat work.” Most importantly, I let her know that her struggles were evidence that *she* was the one who needed more training.

The Three R's

Why are reading, writing, and arithmetic important? If parents cannot give

“a ready answer” to this question from a Biblical worldview, they have failed the directive in 1 Peter 3:15. Rather than dreading the questions of their children, their family, friends, neighbors, and members of their church as to *why* they've taken this unconventional route of home education, they should (along with teaching the basics) prepare themselves to be the best apologists for family-based Christian education. Without a firm mission statement and goal in place, how will they know if (when) they've deviated from their initial path or even arrived at their destination?

That is why homeschooling parents need to spend as much time educating themselves as they do their children. It won't work successfully any other way. In the long run, whether or not someone can diagram an English sentence, translate entire passages of Cicero from Latin to English, generate flawless geometric proofs, be able to describe in detail the process of photosynthesis, or tout a high SAT grade will not demonstrate their qualifications as a godly husband or wife. These will not be good indicators of integrity, honesty, and perseverance. If the focus remains fixed on academic achievements alone, in isolation from godly character development, whatever successes result will not necessarily produce dominion-oriented Kingdom builders.

Since we are all products of our culture and our upbringing, we have to evaluate all our premises and perspectives through the lens of Scripture. While this is a straightforward task, it is not necessarily easy to accomplish, especially when the persons in need of training are busy trying to train their children. This would seem to indicate that the modern practice of extensive professional teacher training prior to placement in a teaching position is superior. Quite the contrary! The most

important thing that anyone has to teach is to glorify God by loving Him and keeping His commandments. This task *should not* be placed in the hands of anyone who is not fully committed to this goal.

In *Intellectual Schizophrenia*, R. J. Rushdoony relates the story of an Armenian mother who took her son to school and entrusted him to the teacher with these words, “His flesh is yours, but the bones are mine.” He pointed out that there was a double significance in these words. First, the teacher was given authority to teach and discipline, keeping in mind that the child belonged to the parents, who were delegating their authority. Second, the flesh of the child was to be molded (either by instruction or correction) as necessary, but the basic structure remained with the parents. Rushdoony commented:

Such education, while often seriously faulty, had a still healthy premise in that it did not assume the right to *re-make* the child, but rather sought to develop him in terms of the family's and society's culture. Modern education is increasingly careless of the flesh but claims the bones of the child, i.e., the right to re-create the child in its own image. When the school is given the flesh but not the bones, the school serves as a cultural agency and limits its function to education. When the school claims the bones, it declares that right belongs to the school and pre-empt's the function of home and church.³

Parents have the dual function in a homeschooling setting to deal with both the flesh and the bones of their children.

Rushdoony has this to say,

The sovereignty of God in education requires us to reorganize all education in terms of Biblical faith and presuppositions, to assert the crown rights of King Jesus in every area of life and thought, and to yield unto our Lord His due obedience in church, state,

school, home, vocation, and in all of life. Nothing short of this is Christian. The doctrine of God's sovereignty requires it.⁴

Too much of what has been categorized as Christian education has failed to meet this standard. The answer, especially in homeschool settings, is for parents, themselves, to become *better teachers!*

Teacher Training

**Call to me and I will answer you,
and will tell you great and hidden
things that you have not known.**
(Jer. 33:3)

God has promised wisdom to those who seek Him and learn and follow His word. The very same steps that enable someone to become a faithful servant of Christ are required to be a good teacher. A teacher of any subject or discipline must make a self-conscious decision to present the content with the primary, active intent to demonstrate how the student uses the knowledge acquired to glorify God. Many of the women I mentor express concerns that there is so much that they do not know. Their desire to provide a true godly, discipleship education for their children is outweighed (in their minds) by their lack of theological training. They are quite surprised when I offer (as part of the Chalcedon Teacher Training Institute) to help them become theologically educated. When I share with them how to get started, they are amazed with how easy Chalcedon has made it for them to begin.⁵

In the end, being able to think, speak, and act in a deliberately Biblical fashion is a life-long pursuit. So there never comes a point when a teacher has *learned enough*. Rushdoony, in his chapter "The Teacher As Student" has this to say:

Learning involves, among other things, discipline, a desire to learn, and com-

**"In the end, being able to
think, speak, and
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munication. We cannot give others a desire to learn if we do not have it. Most good teachers enjoy studying. A teacher can teach pupils *how* to read, but a *love* of reading comes in part from a teacher who shares it ...

The teacher who does not grow in his knowledge of his subject, its methodology and content, is a very limited teacher, and his pupils are "under-privileged" learners ...

Our teaching must be well organized and systematic; if we ourselves are not prone to being orderly in our thinking, our teaching will not be so. Thus, the superior teacher is always disciplining himself in order to pass on disciplined learning to his pupils.⁶

And that is why teacher training needs to be an ongoing task for the home educating parent. Whereas it is somewhat easy to stay ahead of students in their earliest stages of learning, when children reach the point where they are doing extensive reading on their own and formulating questions, only a prepared teacher will be able to infuse a Biblical perspective into her answers. Unless you constantly upgrade your own understanding about current issues in light of Scriptural mandates, you will not be able to give your students the necessary tools so they can *always be ready*.

The Holy Spirit is the teacher of "all truth." Only those who by the Spirit know Christ as Lord of their salvation can know Him as the Creator, and the Lord of all arts, sciences, and learning.⁷

Getting Ready


**O how love I thy law! it is my
meditation all the day. Thou
through thy commandments hast
made me wiser than mine enemies:
for they are ever with me. I have
more understanding than all my
teachers: for thy testimonies are my
meditation. (Psalm 119:97-98)**

As a teacher, nothing is more gratifying than witnessing when your students *get it*. What a privilege it is to be present when your time, efforts, and prayers result in their thinking Biblically and putting legs to their faith (1 John 3:4).⁸ Remember that you cannot impart what you do not possess. So, rather than lament your perceived inadequacies, learn alongside your children. The best cure for *inability* is *acquiring ability*. By making the objective to understand all areas of life and thought through the glasses of Scripture, you can't help but impart that to your pupils.

Remembering that the goal is to raise up a generation *ready to give an answer for the hope that is within them*, it is good to be reminded that:

Children are a God-given inheritance for our conquest of the world for Christ. They are a means of subduing the earth and exercising dominion under the Lord. If we give our children to state or private schools which are not systematically Christian in all their curriculum, we are then giving the future to God's enemies, and He will hold us accountable for laying waste our heritage. We thus must have Christian schools and Christian homeschools for the Lord's children. We are commanded to "bring them up in the nurture and the admonition of the LORD" (Eph. 6:4). This is a necessary step for that great consummation of God's will, announced beforehand for us in Revelation 11:15:

The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our LORD, and of his

Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.⁹ 

Andrea Schwartz is the Chalcedon Foundation's active proponent of Christian education and matters relating to the family. She has authored four books dealing with homeschooling, the biblical trustee family, and teaching children about the faith. She oversees the Chalcedon Teacher Training Institute (www.ctti.org) and continues to mentor, lecture, and teach. Visit her website www.WordsFromAndrea.com. She lives in San Jose with her husband of 35 years. She can be reached by email at lessons.learned@yahoo.com.

1. It always amused them that there was no routine grilling of students in state schools about their teachers' qualifications.

2. Rushdoony's *Messianic Character of American Education*, *Intellectual Schizophrenia*, and *The Philosophy of the Christian Curriculum* are good places to start. Sam Blumenfeld's *Revolution through Education* and *Victims of Dick and Jane* cement much of Rushdoony's thesis. In the documentary realm, Colin Gunn's *IndoctriNation* has an excellent segment visually depicting the roots and premises of what we know as public schools.

3. R. J. Rushdoony, *Intellectual Schizophrenia* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, [1961] 2002) 133–4.

4. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Philosophy of the Christian Curriculum* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1981, 2001) 115.

5. Visit www.ctti.org. This program is tailored to individuals and/or groups who wish to make a concerted effort to be the best teachers for their children with an on-the-job training mindset.

6. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Philosophy of the Christian Curriculum* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, [1981] 2001), 132–4.

7. Ibid, 135.

8. Now that I am no longer actively homeschooling, I experience this with the women I mentor. There comes that point where I know that they have turned the corner and are thinking Biblically.

9. R. J. Rushdoony, *In His Service* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2009), 20.

Fugate ... Head Tax cont. from page 9

43. For exegesis of the Olivet Discourse that conclusively demonstrates Matthew 24:1–35 applies to the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70 and not to the second coming of Christ (which is discussed in Matt. 24:36–25:46), see R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NICNT) (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007); cf. France, *The Gospel of Mark* (NIGTC) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002). France surpasses all commentaries I have seen in demonstrating that every passage in Matthew's Gospel using the language of Psalm 110 or Daniel 7:13f. refers to the rule of Jesus Christ from the Father's right hand (i.e., while He remains in heaven, not a rule commencing with the second coming of Christ).

44. Grant R. Osborne, *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 663.

45. If one should ask why Jesus paid Peter's tax, we offer a two-fold answer. First, "the didrachma, worth one-half a stater or shekel, was seldom minted at this time; and probably two people joined to pay a tetradrachma ('a four-drachma coin,' v. 27) or shekel" (D.A. Carson, "Matthew," EBC, 8:393; cf. *didrachmon*, BDAG, 241). Second, since Peter had to go catch the fish and use the found coin to pay Jesus' tax, Jesus, in essence, used the excess amount to pay Peter for his labor. This is in keeping with Jesus' practice of not wasting leftovers after performing a miracle (John 6:12f.).

46. Jesus is ontologically the Son of God (i.e., in His being or eternal existence); whereas believers are adopted children of God. "These two kinds of relationships, viz., that of Jesus and that of the believers, to the Father, must not be identified ... Jesus never speaks of 'our Father,' so as to identify himself with his disciples, but distinguishes between 'my Father' and 'your Father'" [John 20:17] (Herman Ridderbos, *The Coming of the Kingdom* [Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1962], 237). Only Jesus is the unique, Divine Son of God (Matt. 17:5). The temple was His "Father's house" (Luke 2:49), and He is greater than the temple (Matt. 12:6).

Indeed, Jesus' physical body was the new "temple" (i.e., the dwelling place of God), in contradistinction to Herod's Temple (John 2:19–22; 1:14; Col. 2:9; cf. Rev. 21:22).

In John's writings Jesus' unique Sonship is also emphasized by the Biblical Greek term *μονογενής* (*monogenēs*)—the only one of its kind (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9).

47. The miracle of the coin in the fish's mouth should be seen in its historical context. "The [Roman] Emperor's sovereignty extended to what was in the sea. Hence the fishing industry on bodies of water such as the Sea of Galilee was tightly regulated through the sale of contracts to fishermen and taxes on what was caught, processed, and transported" (Warren Carter, "Matthew Negotiates the Roman Empire," *In the Shadow of Empire*, ed. Richard A. Horsley [Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2008], 131). Thus the Lord Jesus was demonstrating that He, not Caesar, is the real sovereign over creation, including the sea and the fish (cf. Jesus' miracles of multiplying fish, Matt. 14–15).

48. D. A. Carson, "Matthew," EBC, 8:394 (Carson emphasizes the Christological application, but he holds view #2 above). For representatives of view #3 see: Herman N. Ridderbos, "His appeal to His sonship was rather a messianic claim ... Jesus therefore regarded Himself as exempt from the duty to pay the temple tax" (cf. Matt. 12:1–8) (*Matthew*, BSC [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987], 329; cf. *idem.*, *The Coming of the Kingdom*, 237, 304); Matthew Poole, "This tribute is gathered for my heavenly Father. I am his Son, I am not bound to pay it. ... [Jesus] first asserted his immunity ... and by this miracle he also confirmed his immunity" (*A Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 3:82; cf. Matthew Henry); Alfred Plummer, *An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Matthew*, 246.

49. Interestingly, "The head or poll tax was once the basic civil tax in some American colonies" (Rousas J. Rushdoony, *Law and Society*, 696).

Selbrede ... False Flags cont. from page 15

revolt against God.” He goes even further on page 96: “God condemns the world of human sinning because he judges life in the power of sin not worth living ... life in the new world of God is the only life in which human beings can experience the fulfillment of their being. ... We are certainly in no position to assess the possibilities of life in revolt against God with any measure of truth.”

39. McGlasson, *NO!*, 79.

40. *Ibid.*, 79-80.

41. Jamieson, Fausset & Brown, *A Commentary Critical, Experimental, and Practical on the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1973), Vol. 3, Part 3, p. 437.

42. John B. Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians* (London & Cambridge: MacMillan and Sons, 1868), 160.

43. W. Robertson Nicoll, *The Expositor's Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1983 reprint), Vol. 3, 468. Also Ellicott's *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, n.d.), Vol. 8, p. 87, F.C. Cook, ed., *The Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1981 reprint of the 1871-1881 Charles Scribners original 10-volume publication), Vol. 9, pp. 635-636.

44. Heinrich Augustus Wilhelm Meyer, *Meyer's Commentary on the New Testament* (Winona Lake, IL: Alpha Publications, 1979 reprint of 1883 T & T Clark edition), Vol. 8, p. 170. Meyer adds a technical note on page 173: “It is to be noticed that the predicates in verse 8 do not denote different individual virtues, but that each represents the Christian moral character generally, so that in reality the same thing is described, but according to the various aspects that commended it.... That it is Christian morality which Paul has in view, is clearly evident from ver. 9 and from the whole preceding context. Hence the passage cannot avail for placing the morality of the moral law of nature (Rom. 2:14f.) on an equality with the gospel field of duty...”

45. R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, and to the Philippians* (Minneapolis,

MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1937), 883.

46. *Ibid.*, 883-884.

47. McGlasson, *NO!*, 82.

48. Bahnsen, op. cit., 42, 68, 494, 571, 713, 731-32.

49. McGlasson, *NO!*, 97.

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Ibid.*, 42.

52. *Ibid.*, 32. McGlasson elsewhere acknowledges the “divine origin” of the entire Mosaic law (p. 90), but since that contradicts what he elsewhere asserts, this is probably an editorial error.

53. *Ibid.*, 86.

54. R. J. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1994), Vol. 1, pp. 71-74; 111-113; 115-118.

55. McGlasson, *NO!*, 89.

56. *Ibid.*, 84, then 83 at second ellipsis.

57. It is somewhat jarring, then, to read elsewhere in *NO!* that various “worldly ideas of status, rank, and privilege are totally foreign to God's new world” (p. 122). They're not very foreign to McGlasson's critique of homeschooling, however.

58. *Ibid.*, 131-32. This is, of course, a Messianic psalm, but McGlasson applies it to Solomon and implies that Solomon delivers the poor from poverty by (presumably) wealth transfer—not from his own treasure trove, but by taxing Israelites to do so. As Henstenberg's commentary points out, the deliverance involves judicial matters and the restoration of the original goods to the poor man that were misappropriated by theft.

59. *Ibid.*, 68-69.

60. *Ibid.*, 124. McGlasson “exegetes” the term “reconstruction” to arrive at this incongruous conclusion. This is what D. A. Carson would call a *word study fallacy*.

61. *Ibid.*, 65.

Marinov ... Creedal cont. from page 19

the church, or the family, or any other human institution, the right to speak authoritatively in any absolute sense.

This meant that man and his mind were not to be defined by any human institution. Education's goal, then, is to train

the child to first seek knowledge under God, and then on the basis of this to learn and train how to act and interact in the human society. Much of modern education—Christian or not—subjects education to the needs of a specific institution (church, family, state) or gives education pragmatic goals (be a good citizen, be a successful entrepreneur, build a career, have academic excellence). But institutions and economic/political excellence must always be secondary, and “seeking the Kingdom and its righteousness” must come first, for an education to be truly Christian.

While we have made a lot of progress in terms of opposing the education of the secular state, our modern Christian education is still far from where it is supposed to be. And the greatest problem is we have creedless Christianity which can't define what it believes in. As long as we have that, we will have creedless education which is based not on faith but on inherited presuppositions from our pagan world. And whatever is not of the Faith, is sin. 🚫

A Reformed missionary to his native Bulgaria for over 10 years, Bojidar preaches and teaches the doctrines of the Reformation and a comprehensive Biblical worldview. He and his team have translated over 30,000 pages of Christian literature about the application of the Law of God in every area of man's life and society, and published those translations online for free. He currently lives in Houston with his wife Maggie and his three children.

1. Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 6th ed., 1996), 8-9.

2. R. J. Rushdoony, *The One and the Many: Studies in the Philosophy of Order and Ultimacy*.

3. Bojidar Marinov, “Math Education: The One and the Many.” (<http://bit.ly/MathOneMany>).

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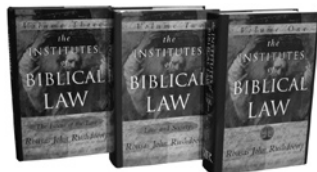
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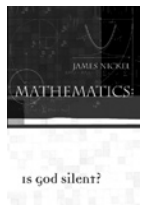
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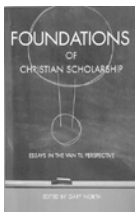
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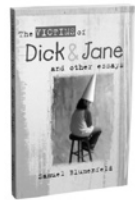
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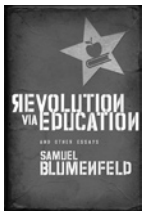
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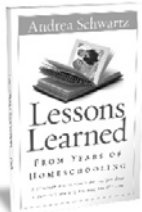
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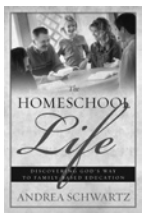
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By Andrea Schwartz. After nearly a quarter century of homeschooling her children, Andrea Schwartz has experienced both the accomplishments and challenges that come with being a homeschooling mom. And, she's passionate about helping you learn her most valuable lessons. Discover the potential rewards of making the world your classroom and God's Word the foundation of everything you teach.

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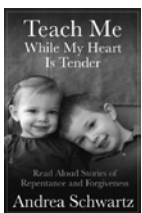


The Homeschool Life: Discovering God's Way to Family-Based Education

By Andrea Schwartz. This book opens the door to *The Homeschool Life*, allowing parents to see the glorious potential in this life-changing, God-honoring adventure. It offers sage advice concerning key aspects of homeschooling, while never losing the central focus of applying the Word of God to all areas of life and thought. The author provides

practical insights for parents as they seek to provide a Christian education for their children.

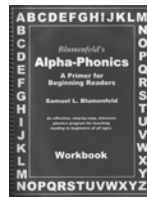
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Andrea Schwartz has compiled three stories drawn from her family-life experiences to help parents teach children how the faith applies to every area of life. They confront the ugly reality of sin, the beauty of godly repentance, and the necessity of forgiveness. The stories are meant to be read by parents and children together. The interactions and discussions that will follow serve to draw families closer together.

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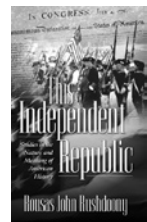


Alpha-Phonics: A Primer for Beginning Readers

By Sam Blumenfeld. Provides parents, teachers and tutors with a sensible, logical, easy-to-use system for teaching reading. The Workbook teaches our alphabetic system - with its 26 letters and 44 sounds - in the following sequence: First, the alphabet, then the short vowels and consonants, the consonant digraphs, followed by the consonant blends, and finally the long vowels in their variety of spellings and our other vowels. It can also be used as a supplement to any other reading program being used in the classroom. Its systematic approach to teaching basic phonetic skills makes it particularly valuable to programs that lack such instruction.

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This Independent Republic

By R. J. Rushdoony. Important insight into American history by one who could trace American development in terms of the Christian ideas which gave it direction. These essays will greatly alter your understanding of, and appreciation for, American history.

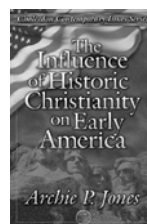
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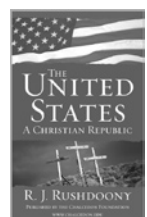
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Biblical Faith and American History

By R. J. Rushdoony. America was a break with the neoplatonic view of religion that dominated the medieval church. The Puritans and other groups saw Scripture as guidance for every area of life because they viewed its author as the infallible Sovereign over every area.

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By R. J. Rushdoony. The author demolishes the modern myth that the United States was founded by deists or humanists bent on creating a secular republic.

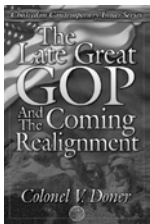
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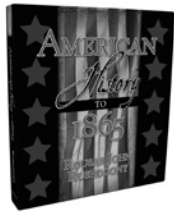
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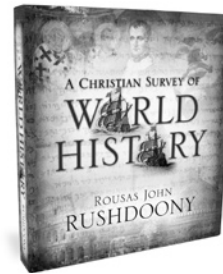
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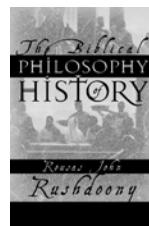
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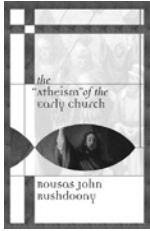


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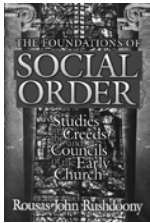
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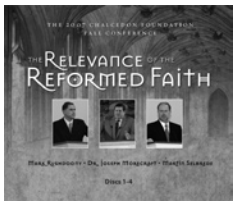


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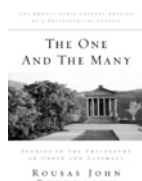
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By R. J. Rushdoony. This work discusses the problem of understanding unity vs. particularity, oneness vs. individuality. "Whether recognized or not, every argument and every theological, philosophical, political, or any other exposition is based on a presupposition about man, God, and society—about reality. This presupposition rules and

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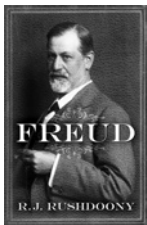


Revolt Against Maturity

By R. J. Rushdoony. The Biblical doctrine of psychology is a branch of theology dealing with man as a fallen creature marked by a revolt against maturity. Man was created a mature being with a responsibility to dominion and cannot be understood from the Freudian child, nor the Darwinian standpoint of a long biological history. Man's history is a short one filled with responsibility to God. Man's

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The Cure of Souls:

Recovering the Biblical Doctrine of Confession

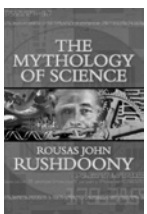
By R. J. Rushdoony. In *The Cure of Souls: Recovering the Biblical Doctrine of Confession*, R. J. Rushdoony cuts through the misuse of Romanism and modern psychology to restore the doctrine of confession to a Biblical foundation—one that is covenantal and Calvinistic.

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By R. J. Rushdoony. This book is about the religious nature of evolutionary thought, how these religious presuppositions underlie our modern intellectual paradigm, and how they are deferred to as sacrosanct by institutions and disciplines far removed from the empirical sciences. The "mythology" of modern science is its religious devotion to the myth of evolution.

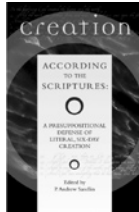
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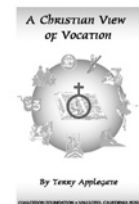
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Larceny in the Heart: The Economics of Satan and the Inflationary State

By R.J. Rushdoony. In this study, first published under the title *Roots of Inflation*, the reader sees why envy often causes the most successful and advanced members of society to be deemed criminals. The reader is shown how envious man finds any superiority in others intolerable and how this leads to a desire for a leveling. The author uncovers the larceny in the heart of man and its results.

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By Terry Applegate. To many Christians, business is a "dirty" occupation fit only for greedy, manipulative unbelievers. The author, a successful Christian businessman, explodes this myth in this hard-hitting title.

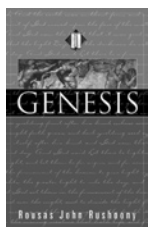
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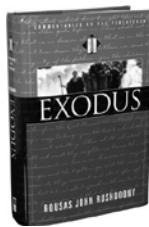


Genesis, Volume I of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

By R. J. Rushdoony. In recent years, it has become commonplace for both humanists and churchmen to sneer at anyone who takes Genesis 1-11 as historical. Yet to believe in the myth of evolution is to accept trillions of miracles to account for our cosmos. Spontaneous generation, the development of something out of nothing, and the blind belief in the miraculous powers of chance,

require tremendous faith. Theology without literal six-day creationism becomes alien to the God of Scripture because it turns from the God Who acts and Whose Word is the creative word and the word of power, to a belief in process as god.

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Exodus, Volume II of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

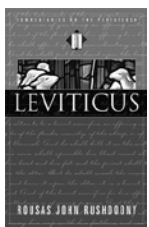
By R. J. Rushdoony. Essentially, all of mankind is on some sort of an exodus. However, the path of fallen man is vastly different from that of the righteous. Apart from Jesus Christ and His atoning work, the exodus of a fallen humanity means only a further descent from sin into death. But in Christ, the exodus is now a glorious ascent into the justice and dominion of the everlasting Kingdom

of God. Therefore, if we are to better understand the gracious provisions made for us in the "promised land" of the New Covenant, a thorough examination into the historic path of Israel as described in the book of Exodus is essential. It is to this end that this volume was written.

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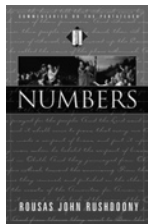
By R. J. Rushdoony. Much like the book of Proverbs, any emphasis upon the practical applications of God's law is readily shunned in pursuit of more "spiritual" studies. Books like Leviticus are considered dull, overbearing, and irrelevant. But man was created in God's image and is duty-bound to develop the implications of that image by obedience to God's law. The book of Leviticus contains

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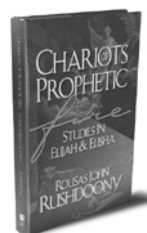
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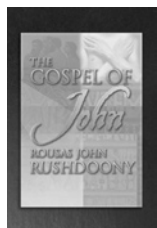
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and was resurrected. His life cannot be understood apart from this, nor can we know His history in any other light.

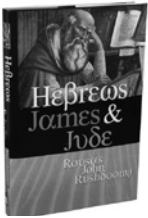
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Romans and Galatians

By R. J. Rushdoony. From the author's introduction: "I do not disagree with the liberating power of the Reformation interpretation, but I believe that it provides simply the beginning of our understanding of Romans, not its conclusion.... The great problem in the church's interpretation of Scripture has been its ecclesiastical orientation, as though God speaks only to the church, and commands only the church. The Lord God speaks in and through His Word to the whole man, to every man, and to every area of life and thought.... This is the purpose of my brief comments on Romans."

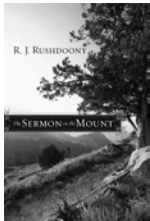
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Hebrews, James and Jude

By R. J. Rushdoony. The Book of Hebrews is a summons to serve Christ the Redeemer-King fully and faithfully, without compromise. When James, in his epistle, says that faith without works is dead, he tells us that faith is not a mere matter of words, but it is of necessity a matter of life. "Pure religion and undefiled" requires Christian charity and action. Anything short of this is a self-delusion. Jude similarly recalls us to Jesus Christ's apostolic commission, "Remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 17). Jude's letter reminds us of the necessity for a new creation beginning with us, and of the inescapable triumph of the Kingdom of God.

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Sermon on the Mount

By R. J. Rushdoony. So much has been written about the Sermon on the Mount, but so little of the commentaries venture outside of the matters of the heart. The Beatitudes are reduced to the assumed meaning of their more popular portions, and much of that meaning limits our concerns to downplaying wealth, praying in secret, suppressing our worries, or simply reciting the Lord's Prayer. The

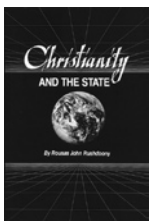
Beatitudes are the Kingdom commission to the new Israel of God, and R. J. Rushdoony elucidates this powerful thesis in a readable and engaging commentary on the world's greatest sermon.

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Taking Dominion



Christianity and the State

By R. J. Rushdoony. This book develops the Biblical view of the state against the modern state's humanism and its attempts to govern all spheres of life. It reads like a collection of essays on the Christian view of the state and the return of true Christian government.

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Tithing and Dominion

By Edward A. Powell and R. J. Rushdoony. God's Kingdom covers all things in its scope, and its immediate ministry includes, according to Scripture, the ministry of grace (the church), instruction (the Christian and homeschool), help to the needy (the diaconate), and many other things. God's appointed means for financing His Kingdom activities is centrally the tithe. This work affirms that the Biblical requirement of tithing is a continuing aspect of God's law-word and cannot be neglected.

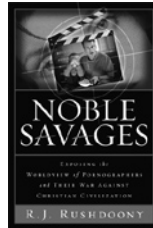
Hardback, 146 pages, index, \$12.00



Salvation and Godly Rule

By R. J. Rushdoony. Salvation in Scripture includes in its meaning "health" and "victory." By limiting the meaning of salvation, men have limited the power of God and the meaning of the Gospel. In this study R. J. Rushdoony demonstrates the expanse of the doctrine of salvation as it relates to the rule of the God and His people.

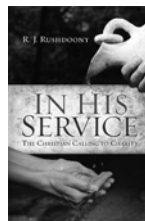
Paperback, 661 pages, indices, \$35.00



Noble Savages: Exposing the Worldview of Pornographers and Their War Against Christian Civilization

By R. J. Rushdoony. In this powerful book *Noble Savages* (formerly *The Politics of Pornography*) Rushdoony demonstrates that in order for modern man to justify his perversion he must reject the Biblical doctrine of the fall of man. If there is no fall, the Marquis de Sade argued, then all that man does is normative. What is the problem? It's the philosophy behind pornography — the rejection of the fall of man that makes normative all that man does. Learn it all in this timeless classic.

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In His Service: The Christian Calling to Charity

By R. J. Rushdoony. The Christian faith once meant that a believer responded to a dark world by actively working to bring God's grace and mercy to others, both by word and by deed. However, a modern, self-centered church has isolated the faith to a pietism that relinquishes charitable responsibility to the state. The end result has been the empowering of a humanistic world order. In this book, Rushdoony elucidates the Christian's calling to charity and its implications for Godly dominion.

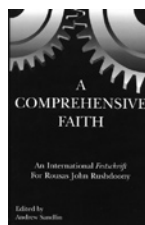
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Roots of Reconstruction

By R. J. Rushdoony. This large volume provides all of Rushdoony's *Chalcedon Report* articles from the beginning in 1965 to mid-1989. These articles were, with his books, responsible for the Christian Reconstruction and theonomy movements. More topics than could possibly be listed. Imagine having 24 years of Rushdoony's personal research for just \$20.

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A Comprehensive Faith

Edited by Andrew Sandlin. This is the surprise *Festschrift* presented to R. J. Rushdoony at his 80th birthday celebration in April, 1996. These essays are in gratitude to Rush's influence and elucidate the importance of his theological and philosophical contributions in numerous fields. Contributors include Theodore Letis, Brian Abshire, Steve Schlissel, Joe Morecraft III, Jean-Marc Berthoud, Byron Snapp, Samuel Blumenfeld, Christine and Thomas Schirmacher, Herbert W. Titus, Ellsworth McIntyre, Howard Phillips, Ian Hodge, and many more. Also included is a foreword by John Frame and a brief biographical sketch of R. J. Rushdoony's life by Mark Rushdoony.

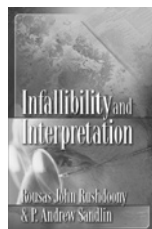
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By William Einwechter. This monograph takes on the doctrinal defection of today's church by providing Christians with an introductory treatment of six vital areas of Christian doctrine: God's sovereignty, Christ's Lordship, God's law, the authority of Scripture, the dominion mandate, and the victory of Christ in history.

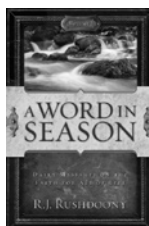
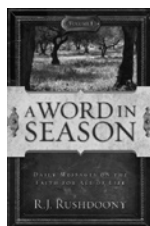
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Infallibility and Interpretation

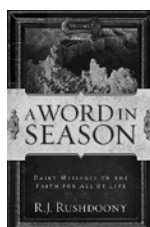
By R. J. Rushdoony & P. Andrew Sandlin. The authors argue for infallibility from a distinctly presuppositional perspective. That is, their arguments are unapologetically circular because they believe all ultimate claims are based on one's beginning assumptions. The question of Biblical infallibility rests ultimately in one's belief about the character of God.

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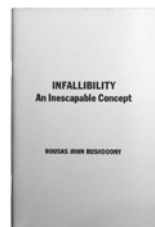
introspective musings of a Christian pietist; what you'll discover are the hard-hitting convictions of a man whose sole commitment was faithfulness to God's law-word and representing that binding Word to his readers.

The multi-volume series is taken from over 430 articles written by Rushdoony over the span of 25 years (1966-1991) for the California Farmer, an agricultural periodical that provided him a regular column entitled "The Pastor's Pulpit."

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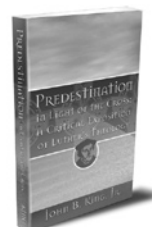
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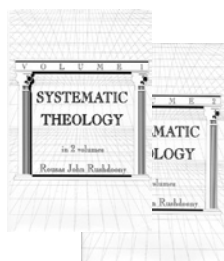


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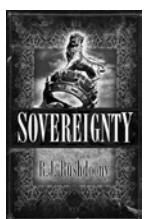
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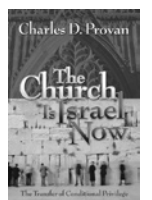
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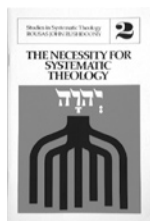
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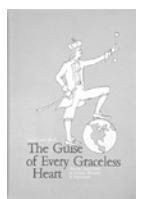
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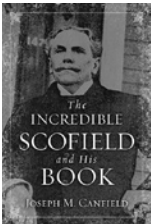
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Keeping Our Sacred Trust

Edited by Andrew Sandlin. The Bible and the Christian Faith have been under attack in one way or another throughout much of the history of the church, but only in recent times have these attacks been perceived *within* the church as a healthy alternative to orthodoxy. This book is a trumpet blast heralding a full-orbed, Biblical, orthodox Christianity. The hope of the modern world is not a passive compromise with passing heterodox fads, but aggressive devotion to the time-honored Faith "once delivered to the saints."

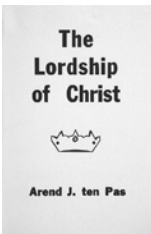
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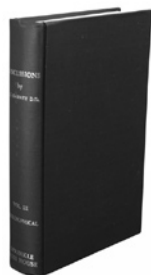


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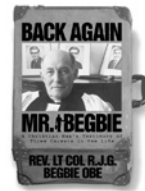
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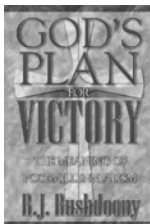


Thine is the Kingdom: A Study of the Postmillennial Hope

Edited by Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr. False eschatological speculation is destroying the church today, by leading her to neglect her Christian calling. In this volume, edited by Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., the reader is presented with a blend of Biblical exegesis of key Scripture passages, theological reflection on important doctrinal issues, and practical application for faithful Christian living. *Thine is the Kingdom* lays the scriptural foundation for a Biblically-

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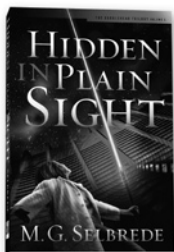
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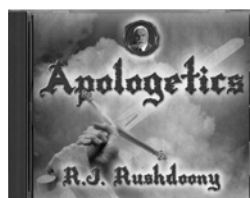
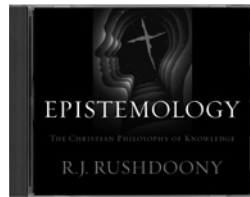
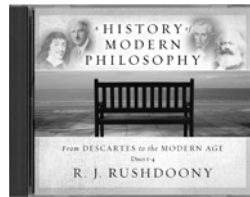
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