

Faith for All of Life
January/February 2014

FAITH FOR ALL OF LIFE

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

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Subscriptions are \$20 per year (\$35
for Canada; \$45 for International).
Checks should be made out to
Chalcedon and mailed to P.O. Box 158,
Vallecito, CA 95251 USA.

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Liberty is Not License

By Mark R. Rushdoony



Liberty must be understood within moral limits or it becomes as oppressive and destructive as any centralized tyranny.

Freedom of speech has never been taken to allow any right to shout “Fire!” in a darkened theater, and the Second Amendment’s protection of the right to keep and bear arms has never been construed as an absolute right to use those weapons against others.

All of our actions are governed by moral constraints. The only real question is “What moral code dictates those restraints?” But morality is necessarily a religious concern because it deals with the concept of right and wrong in terms of one’s understanding of a truth that transcends the individual and his actions.

The Christian View of Authority

A moral ethic that limits man presupposes a transcendent authority. The Christian view is that God is, as the Sovereign Creator, man’s absolute authority.

The Bible tells us we have a problem, the fact that we are sinners, rebels against the authority of God. In Genesis 3 Satan tempted Eve to assert her own authority over God. Satan had impugned the truth of God’s Word and His motive, claiming that He only forbade the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because He knew it was to Adam’s and Eve’s benefit to eat its fruit. If they ate it, they would uncover God’s lie and find themselves equal to God.

God, said Satan, was selfishly keeping them from their full potential. Satan’s offer to Eve was that she and Adam would “be as gods knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3:5).

To “know” good and evil there means to determine it for yourself. A god does not know things by rational understanding; a god knows because he determines. Eve’s first sin, before she took the fruit, was this desire to be autonomous, to determine for herself what was right and wrong, “good and evil.”

Guess what? It didn’t work. Eve had no more right to create her own moral code after her sin than before. All sin since then repeats that first one. Like Eve, we have an *authority problem*; we rebel against the authority of God and do so under the absurd pretense of our own. How often have you heard someone respond to a declaration of God’s Word with a statement that begins, “But I think...”?

The Humanistic View of Authority

If Scripture presents us with a sovereign God whose authority is absolute, humanism is the system of thought that places ultimate authority, right, or prerogative in man. We are familiar with administrative chain-of-command charts. If you created such a diagram of authority for your worldview, God would presumably be at the top.

If God is removed as the highest authority, you have humanism, man as the highest authority. The forms of humanistic order will differ, but the

common factor is that all see man as the ultimate authority.

Humanism tends to two extremes. The first is anarchism where the individual is the ultimate authority. The second is some form of statism where collective man is the ultimate authority.

Statism, some form of collective authority, always wins out over individual rights because the state presents itself as the highest collective voice of “the people.” In doing so, their abstract group is assumed to have a greater right than any individual.

Man’s Moral Context

The moral context of man is the revealed Word of God. That is where man finds his necessary environment. He can not survive outside it any better than a fish can survive on dry land. The Christian must present this fact to men living in Adam’s rebellion: they are fighting a losing battle against reality. The gospel of salvation necessitates the preaching of God’s law and man’s sin, because without man’s sin, his humanism sees God’s law as a restraint on life, not its context. He sees sin and rebellion as normative, and his rejection of God’s law-word as a manifestation of his freedom. He defies God because his concept of his own autonomous authority repudiates that of God, so liberty is seen as a license for his self-will. He will see liberty as the absence of moral standards. Having rejected the moral authority of God, he will see all ethical demands as the illegitimate demands of some religion, ideology, or group. Once he sees himself as a

free moral agent, he will see his own immorality as a civil right and, beyond that, as a mark of his superiority.

Every Ideology Is Authoritarian

Look for any system's concept of authority. You cannot avoid it. Every ideology is authoritarian because it is based on a view of ultimate authority. If the authority is transcendent in God then all human authority is limited and man can only have secondary rights under God. If authority is immanent in the world, then that earthly power dictates who must yield and there is no inalienable right that transcends it. The authority of any system is the god of that system.

Any concept of either authority or liberty that is not self-consciously placed under God is certain to be abused because man is a sinner who needs to conform to God's law lest his sin causes him to abuse his legitimate bounds.

All authority can be abused. The authority of parents, teachers, the church, or civil magistrates can be used in accordance with the authority of God and His law, in which case it will be benign and contribute to the blessing of all concerned. If such authority is abused, however, it can create a hellish nightmare for all involved.

When our laws ceased to be Biblical they began to be oppressive because they lost any sense of boundaries. We now suffer under government that refuses to acknowledge boundaries. It is now an agent of tyranny that still mimics the rhetoric of liberty.

Liberty, too, when exercised under the discipline of the law of God can be a benefit to the individual and a source of material and social blessings to an entire culture. When liberty is abused to the point of license, however, it leads to the degradation of individuals and the social order. When our liberty became license

our self-government began to collapse, and this void was replaced by civil legislation to save us from ourselves.

God's law is an absolute touchstone by which we can recognize righteousness (or *justice* as the terms are synonymous in Scripture). Once we deny this absolute measure of justice, we are lost in a wilderness of relativity. We will then be left with either the individual's concept of justice or the state's arbitrary definition of justice. Inevitably, the state has its way.

The question we must ask of every philosophy, ideology, or system is "Where does its authority reside?" If it is in man on any level, it is a humanistic system. Authority must be in God. I was in a group recently that was discussing Romans 13. One person repeated the common but simplistic view that Paul's requirement of our subjection to the magistrate's authority as from God was an absolute injunction to submission, ignoring the fact that Paul specifically placed God's authority, not the magistrate's, as supreme. He placed the magistrate in a chain of authority under God; Paul in no way gave total license to the magistrate in the civil realm any more than he did to the elder or parent in the church or the family. This is the problem when we ignore the authority of God—some other authority will fill the void. To the extent that we deny the authority of God, that of men replaces it.

When Theoretical Liberty is Actual Servitude

To the humanist, freedom is *from* God and His law. Man's freedom is, in theory, unlimited and absolute. But instead of freedom from all government, such humanism always leads to statist government. Just as Satan promised Eve god-like status only to enslave her in sin, the state uses its claim to

represent collective man to enslave all. Modern civil government seldom represents the negative terror to "him that doeth evil" that Paul speaks of in Romans 13:4, but tends to see itself as a positive force defining the rights of that abstract group they call "the people," or the disadvantaged, or the little guy, or the disenfranchised. When their ambitions are global in scope, they claim to represent an even larger abstract group—"mankind." The statist who believes that government embodies the nation and its people will always answer a claim of *individual* rights with *collective* rights, and will always claim to represent a larger collective group than you do.

Man's freedom can only exist within the context of God's authority. Man's authority is limited because he is under that of God, and his liberty is limited because he can never play God. Man has no absolute freedom either as an individual or as a collective in the state. He cannot claim a legitimacy to his sin and say it is an aspect of his self-defined freedom. Neither can his government.

As individuals, we know our freedom is constrained by our finances, responsibilities, and the rights of others. Likewise our liberty is also limited by the moral order into which we are created.

All man's liberties are limited. The two great limitations on man are that he is, *first*, a creature, not a god, and *second*, that he is a sinner. These are the realities of our moral existence, and we ignore them at great peril. A fish is not freer when it escapes to dry land. Likewise we are not freer when we ignore our creaturehood and sinfulness. When we do so we only become outlaws in God's moral order, and the future for such rebels is a bleak one. 🐟

Liberty from Abuse

by Martin G. Selbrede



To be guiltless of the blood of all men, we must follow Paul's example: we must not fail to proclaim the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:26–30) and follow it (Psalm 103:18, Matt. 5:19, James 1:22f.). This entails an awareness of what God has revealed across all sixty-six books of the Bible. Tragically, between today's *perpetual kindergarten syndrome*¹ among professing Christians and our general ignorance of the Old Testament, we are ill-equipped to bring that whole counsel to bear on critical matters. This kind of *theology deficit disorder* can wreak considerable harm inside the church no less than in the culture at large. Ignorance is not bliss.

One of the purposes of God's law is to restrain evil. God's sanctions against certain acts limit the circle of harm and, where possible, provide redress and restitution. In particular, God's law provides the framework for *freedom from abuse* and *liberty from tyranny*. In regard to abuses emanating from those holding spiritual authority, God's primary sanction is permanent removal from office. The widespread failure to apply this Biblical sanction leads to a world of untold misery for countless victims throttled by institutional machinery working overtime to keep restitution and restoration inaccessible to them.

The original context of Paul's assertion of being guiltless involves the sheep in God's flock and their relationship to the overseers that Paul was addressing:

Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. (Acts 20:26–30 KJV)

We see here the duty enjoined upon the overseers (to feed all the flock) being contrasted with the conduct of subsequent leaders (who would not spare the flock). The shepherds of grief would presumably arise out of the circle of overseers. Paul had been sounding this warning for three years (as verse 31 affirms), so serious was the matter of shepherds who would mislead and mistreat the flock. The Apostle John's battle with Diotrephes, "who loved to have the preeminence" and who excommunicated those not adhering to his wishes (3 John 9–10), illustrates the massive scale of this problem.

Virtually everyone is aware of the abuses and subsequent cover-ups plaguing the Roman Catholic Church, where priests implicated in abusive conduct are quietly relocated to unsuspecting new congregations where the abuse often recurs. Modern evangelicalism in America

has its own list of distinguished perpetrators who, once exposed, made tearful confessions to their supporters (via pulpit or television cameras or both).

In virtually all cases, the restoration of the leader to his former station has been a dominant part of the evangelical package. The trappings of accountability are in the service of protecting the ministry under the guise of protecting the flock. The dual principles of forgiveness and restoration are dutifully applied, and many proof-texts (which support these two principles in general) are cited as if they apply not only to congregants but also to fallen church leaders *in respect to their office*. If, however, we consider the whole counsel of God, a very different picture emerges: an extraordinary picture grounded on nothing less than God swearing an oath against His Own life to confirm the immutability of His counsel on precisely this issue.

Because God's direct counsel on the question of shepherds who've inflicted harm on *anyone* in their flocks is located in the middle of a poorly understood Old Testament book, few are the churches that know of it. Of the churches that know of it, even fewer will consider applying it. As a consequence, we do not see *freedom from abuse* today. At best, we see a mechanism kick in that, pious window-dressing notwithstanding, works for the *freedom of the abuser*. This often compounds the harm to the sheep still under the leader's hand.

Before we dig into the Old Testament, we must forcefully remind ourselves of the particularly heinous nature of abuse emanating from a Christian

leader in respect to the injured party. All such leaders evoke a profound trust among their supporters: each of them is seen as God's man doing God's work and being above reproach. The flock looks up to its shepherd and his authority. Consequently, when abuse arises, the victim's relationship with God is often mortally wounded. Victims with the courage to expose a powerful leader often pay a high price: they grow more isolated while the leader's supporters grow in solidarity. Mind-searing, incapacitating depression and post-traumatic stress syndrome are endemic among such victims. There are documented cases where the victims of clergy abuse committed suicide as the ecclesiastical tables were turned against them.² As Paul affirmed of the implicated leaders, they will not spare the flock. Those who support such leaders share their leader's indifference toward the sheep.

The Good Old Boy System

For some years I've been collaborating on a major book project that was set in motion when a famous (and still active) missionary initiated an attempted sexual exploitation of the victim nearly ten years ago. As bad as the original incident was, the aftermath involving the handling of the situation by churches, counselors, and parachurch organizations made it worse. One of my tasks was to work through the exhaustively-documented evidence prepared by the victim and to extract the dominant patterns embedded in that mass of ugly details.

The victim, no slouch in respect to researching such behavior after the incident, had purchased and read 121 books on the issue of clergy abuse, totaling 27,949 pages of material. You can see that mountain of books in the accompanying photo. In addition to those books, the victim had meticulously annotated several thousand pages

of journal reprints. This one person had arguably researched, written, and edited enough material to earn two, if not three, doctorates on this one topic. The source material identified the problem clearly enough, but until the victim encountered the writings of Dr. R. J. Rushdoony, no actual solution was evident because everyone else, without exception, adopted either antinomian or humanistic assumptions.

Martin Selbrede in February 2010 compiling over 130 systemic failures by more than two dozen Christian institutions in their handling of a single attempted sexual exploitation perpetrated by a noted missionary. The 121 books at the right were read by the victim in an effort to regain sanity after encountering the stone wall of ecclesiastical collusion for nine straight months.

What the victim experienced firsthand were various well-known tactics that are routinely applied whenever someone steps forward with a report of this nature. The victim had 58 key encounters (6.5 per month) with churches, parachurch ministries, and counselors concerning the incident. To understand the significance of the results of these encounters, you need to learn the *vocabulary of collusion*, which puts a name to each of the eight major tactics usually deployed against the victim to frustrate justice. We'll step through these tactics so you can understand the systemic nature of what happened in those 58 documented encounters.

The first three tactics are self-explanatory: *Denying the Problem, Ignoring the Problem, and Minimizing the Problem*. The remaining five tactics require further elaboration. No originality is claimed for this breakdown. I am adapting ideas from a well-known source³ and modifying them for the sake of clarity.

Role Reversal involves thoughts or behaviors that treat victims as perpetra-

tors and perpetrators as victims ... what some psychologists call Reattribution of Blame. Turning the victim into a troublemaker and scapegoat saves an abuser's colleagues from feeling grief over their own betrayal and from having to take responsibility for the effects of his behavior and betrayal on others and the church. Such slander of the victim "is a form of murder" and works to discredit the victim by destroying his/her reputation and integrity.⁴

See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil involves shaming of self or others for even thinking about, speaking about, or listening to anyone who is speaking about, the abuse.

Passing The Buck entails an endless game where persons at every level and capacity of an organization rationalize that the work of investigating an incident and holding a perpetrator accountable belongs somewhere else. The buck often gets passed back to the demoralized victim, who must resume the exhausting search for justice all over again. Worse yet are churches that pass the responsibility for dealing with dangerous perpetrators and the damage they cause back to God Himself. This is done by invoking cheap, meaningless platitudes which "heal the wound of My people slightly" (Jer. 6:14, 8:11).

Let's Pretend (also known as *Out of Sight, Out of Mind*) means doing church while refusing to acknowledge the elephant in the room. If the victims and their advocates talk about the elephant, then the problem is theirs. If they do not, then there is no problem.

Let's Make a Deal concerns offering a victim or advocate something, either tangible or intangible, to keep quiet. Silence is mandated: the victim must keep the situation a secret, usually for some alleged greater good (e.g., protecting the ministry and/or its work). "If you will just go quietly to another congregation,

we won't tell anyone that you were involved in a scandal." "If you'll agree not to take the perpetrator or denomination to court, we'll pay you for the damage done."

Now you know the eight basic elements of the *vocabulary of collusion*. Let's put that information to use and see what happened when the victim sought justice over the course of nine months with the Christian community (this is a tabulation I performed as a collaborator on this project):

The Documented Track Record

Encounters with Churches/Ministries/Christian Counselors..... 58

Ignore the Abuse Incidents.....	12
Role Reversal Incidents.....	18
Pass the Buck Incidents	19
Deny the Abuse Incidents	10
Minimize the Abuse Incidents.....	21
See No Evil Incidents	8
Let's Pretend Incidents.....	12
Let's Make a Deal Incidents.....	4
Outright Rebukes of Victim.....	8
Failures to Connect	4
Rejections of Biblical Restitution or Godly Justice.....	10
Withdrawal of Offers to Help	4
Loss of Credibility Charged Against Victim.....	1
Promises Broken to the Victim.....	4

Total Moral Failures of the Church*..... 131

Average Number of Church Encounters Per Month.....	6.5
Average Number of Moral Failures Per Church Encounter	2.25

*This number excludes *Failures to Connect*, which were recorded only to fully tabulate the victim's attempts to reach out for help.

In light of this abysmal track record, involving highly respected churches and para-church ministries, we can be blunt: this serious problem will persist so long as antinomianism persists. Can you imagine seeking justice and being



Martin Selbrede in February 2010 compiling over 130 systemic failures by more than two dozen Christian institutions in their handling of a single attempted sexual exploitation perpetrated by a noted missionary. The 121 books at the right were read by the victim in an effort to regain sanity after encountering the stone wall of ecclesiastical collusion for nine straight months.

rebuffed 131 times over nine months in the multitude of ways shown above? This happened despite the fact that the perpetrator fully admitted guilt in the matter. Still, no Christians knew what to do: they just wanted the victim to go away. The perpetrator was, in effect, protected (and remains so to the present day) and lost relatively little, while the victim incurred enormous personal expenses and emotional devastation in the wake of the trauma inflicted by the antinomian churches.

The first problem that antinomianism brings to the table is failure to secure restitution. The rickety engine of Churchianity stands idly by while the victim sinks under the growing burdens and expenses incurred by the perpetrator's and church's conduct, but leaps into action to support the perpetrator (whether a missionary, priest, pastor, or parachurch leader). The modern church shortcuts restitution and thus invalidates the injury inflicted upon the victim. The damage done to the victim is more severe than words can express or restitution can restore, often involving a crisis of faith, total isolation, loss of all hope, complete helplessness, a blocked future,

and worse. Without a serious theology of restoration (such as Derek Carlsen⁵ had started to build in 2006), the situation will remain bleak.

The second problem is equally serious. Although the modern church drags its feet in respect to the restoration of the victims, it almost always makes the restoration of the perpetrator its highest priority. There is a self-serving jargon that drives this process (appeals to supposed accountability programs, allusions to King David's situation, the unwarranted application of Scriptures about forgiveness and restoration to the matter of church office, etc.). All of these gambits operate in total ignorance of God's own view. And it is to Ezekiel 34 that we now turn, to grasp what God has to say about this most invidious epidemic.

Taking God's Oath Seriously

It is common, of course, to dismiss appeals to Ezekiel 34 with a cavalier retort such as "That's the Old Testament!" This hostility to Ezekiel 34 is remarkable in its own right (since Jesus in John 10 is appealing precisely to this passage), but it further involves the critic in denying the validity of God's oaths. Does

this approach suggest a God-honoring submission to His Word?

Ezekiel 34 elaborates on a theme expounded in Jeremiah 23 and Zechariah 11, namely, shepherds who fail in their duties to protect the flock entrusted to them. In the key passage of Ezekiel, it is God Himself who speaks:

Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. (Ezek. 34:7–10 KJV)

The oath is contained in the phrase “As I live, saith the Lord God.” We often encounter this phrase in the third-person, such as by a prophet like Elisha:

And Elisha said, As the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee. (2 Kings 3:14)

But in Ezekiel, there are instances when God swears the oath Himself. The meaning of this oath is surprising, and in fact should strike us with awe. Puritan commentator William Greenhill points out that God is saying, “Let me not be the living God, but be laid aside as some idol or false god, if I do

not punish these shepherds which have dealt so with my flock.”⁶ A. R. Fausset adds that “*as I live* is the most solemn of oaths, pledging the self-existence of God for the certainty of the event.”⁷

God swears oaths to confirm the matter being sworn to (not that modern Christians will necessarily accept that God can actually keep His oaths, most notably with respect to Isaiah 45:22–23). The writer of Hebrews regards the divine oath as signifying that God’s affirmations are permanent, fixed, and never subject to change.

For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath. (Heb. 6:16–17)

It naturally follows that God’s policy respecting shepherds who harm the flock is immutable. God has staked His Own existence on the eternality of His counsel as set forth in such passages.

If we decide that what God has laid down as an eternal rule in Ezekiel 34 no longer applies, having been somehow superseded by something else, God’s oaths mean nothing: He simply doesn’t mean what He says. The Lord’s words of confirmation are no better than the popular self-maledictory oath uttered by children: “Cross my heart and hope to die, stick a needle in my eye.”

For Christians who accept the word of God as The Word of God, His oaths should be to them “an end of all strife,” putting the matter being confirmed beyond any debate or dispute. We would then treat the confirmed matter with as much solemnity as God showed in putting His Own existence on the block to verify that His pronouncements have permanent validity.

What the Lord Confirmed by an Oath

The failure of the shepherds to protect and feed the flock entrusted to their care has at least six aspects (which we’ll elaborate on later):

The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. (Ezek. 34:4)

The exact reversal of this situation (which begins with the demotion of these shepherds as required in Ezek. 34:10) is laid out farther on in the chapter:

I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment. And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats ... Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. (Ezek. 34:16–17, 22)

How, precisely, does God save His flock so that they should no more be subject to the shepherds who have inflicted harm on the sheep? The answer once again is found in verse 10: God calls for the *permanent removal* of such shepherds from their office. Then the sheep can never again fall prey to the men who have violated the trust that God has reposed in them as leaders of His people. What is declared here is “a freedom from bad shepherds,” as R. J.

Rushdoony noted.⁸ Where it's faithfully applied, the potential for recidivism disappears.

Let us consider the text of Ezekiel 34:10 and examine what 350 years worth of solid Bible scholarship had to say about its meaning and implications.

A Parachute of Lead

When executives leave a corporation, they hope to make their exit while wearing a golden parachute—a wonderful severance package replete with pensions, bonuses, and dividends regardless of their performance in office. But when God calls for the demotion of shepherds who have failed to protect their flock, the parachute is not made of gold, but of lead.

“They shall be deprived officio et beneficio—both of the work and of the wages. They shall cease from feeding the flock, that is, from pretending to feed it. Note, It is just with God to take out of men's hands that power which they have abused and that trust which they have betrayed. But if this were all their punishment, they could bear it well enough; therefore it is added, ‘Neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more, for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, which, instead of protecting, they had made a prey of.’” (Matthew Henry)⁹

In such a state of things, plainly the first act of mercy to the flock must be the removal of the unfaithful shepherds. (Rev. F. Gardiner)¹⁰

They are as far removed from their office as can be. (Jakob Raupius, 1655)¹¹

“Neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more.” Here is a fourth punishment; they should be deprived of those opportunities they had to enrich themselves: they made a prey of the flock, eating the fat, clothing themselves with the wool, and killing those that were fed, they made advantage of the flock, only seeking themselves, not the good of it; but they should not do so

any longer. ... Being once delivered, they shall no more be spoiled and devoured by such tyrants as they were, but shall enjoy liberty and safety ... “Behold, I am against the shepherds;” I will call them to account, and have satisfaction for all the wrong and violence they have done; I will deprive them of their sweet morsels, and throw them with shame out of their places. These are severe judgments, which God swears, by no less than his own life, that he will bring upon them: God commits great trust unto them, and when they are unfaithful God visits severely for it. (William Greenhill)¹²

The Lord will demand His sheep of them; and because sheep have been lost through their fault, He will depose them from the office of shepherd, and so deliver the poor flock from their violence. There is nothing said about the punishment of the shepherd, but simply that the task of keeping the sheep shall be taken from them, so that they shall feed themselves no more. (Carl F. Keil)¹³

The trust reposed in a man of God is a stewardship, and God is clear that “it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (I Cor. 4:2). Their mission is the care and protection of the flock, and no exceptions to this covenant of protection are to be admitted. Nobody is special in this regard, or gets a pass respecting God's standards and what He requires. As Dr. Morecraft wisely observed, “We must never think that we and God have a special arrangement other than His covenant.”¹⁴

The shepherds thus demoted shall not feed themselves by working as shepherds “any more.” Period. God conceives of no temporary “step down” from the reins of spiritual authority. Their authority in respect to the flock has been forfeited once for all. Such deposed individuals must find another line of work for themselves: the flock shall no longer be their source of food ever

again. Even liberal expositor Walther Eichrodt made clear that such shepherds were to be “cashiered” (dismissed from service with disgrace) “and the sheep torn out of their greedy hands.”¹⁵ To oppose God's oath-backed policy is to trample His pledging of His Own life underfoot.

Some might seek to evade the force of this conclusion by postponing the deliverance because God said that He *will* require the flock at their hand (implying a future event) but A. R. Fausset declares that translation to be faulty: the clause should be rendered “I require the flock at their hand”—as in *now*.¹⁶ This better rendering is also adopted by Lange.¹⁷ Besides, one must question the value of a deliverance that's indefinitely postponed.

That the deliverance is not to be postponed follows from Ezekiel 34:16–17, as Lange noted,¹⁸ for the shepherds having been discharged from their office are now on the same level as the flock, wherefore God now says “Behold, I judge between sheep and sheep.” Should such men genuinely repent,¹⁹ they may rightly be restored to fellowship and communion but not restored to office.²⁰

Addressing Objections to the Lead Parachute

Objections to looking to Ezekiel 34 for guidance fall into several basic categories. The first objection is that the shepherds in view in that passage are political rulers (kings) and not spiritual rulers. The objection is based on the fact that Jeremiah 2:8 apparently distinguishes shepherds (“pastors” in the King James Version) from the priests and prophets, so that the men being demoted are kings and princes, not spiritual leaders. A closely related objection is that Psalm 119:96 doesn't apply here: the commandment is *not* exceedingly broad and we shouldn't apply the notion of general equity to this passage.

Nevertheless, let the consensus²¹ of Biblical scholarship speak to these objections:

The prophecy in Ezekiel 34 is kept very general, and does not connect itself closely with specific occasions and circumstances, hence admits (apart from its typical bearing on the experience of Israel, outward and spiritual) of manifold applications to all states, churches, families; and with justice, for it is really designed for all that could be named figuratively shepherd and flock, like a mathematical formula which expresses a law that may be applied to innumerable cases. (Heinrich Schmieder)²²

The shepherds of Israel were the chief rulers, both political and ecclesiastical, princes, magistrates, prophets, priests, and Levites. (William Greenhill on Ezek. 34:2)²³

Those that are set over the people in church or state are shepherds, and ought to be like unto them towards their flocks. They should govern them gently, protect them constantly, provide for them carefully, and feed them faithfully, and seek their good diligently. (William Greenhill on Ezek. 34:6)²⁴

Even scholars who held that the shepherds are the kings acknowledged that the spiritual component of their reign remained the emphasis. Patrick Fairbairn is representative of this line of thinking concerning the king:

He was the head of a theocracy which, from its very nature, was predominantly spiritual in its aim, and sought nothing in comparison of the moral and religious interests of the people ... Bearing this in mind ... we have a sufficient explanation of what seems at first a peculiarity in the passage before us—its charging upon the kings all the evils that had befallen the heritage of the Lord.²⁵

Further, applying this passage to kings but not Christian ministers would mean that God's standards for kings

are much higher than His standards for leaders of His flock. St. Paul would probably have some strong things to say about that claim.

One final objection should be addressed, which arises from those who cite King David's case as a parallel to Christian leaders who have "fallen" (a weasel word²⁶ if there ever was one). If David can continue in office, it is argued, then Ezekiel 34:10 cannot be applied: we must follow the example set in David's life.

But that alleged "parallel with King David" would only be a true parallel if the "fallen minister" were to offer his youngest child up to die: *then* the situation would actually match David's situation. However, if the minister were to offer up his youngest child to die, that act in itself would disqualify him from the ministry. No man can ever enjoy "parallel status" with David without adopting the whole Davidic package deal announced by the prophet Nathan, and no one can shoehorn himself into David's situation without becoming a moral monster to his own family.

Dressing All the Wounds

There are as many kinds of abuse as there are sinful impulses in the heart of man. Physical, emotional, spiritual, sexual, and ecclesiastical abuse must never be depersonalized or smeared with the vocabulary of collusion. Where abuse has in fact occurred, it must be dealt with in a godly way. Ezekiel 34 can help us grasp the manifold facets of such abuse and harm that can be inflicted on one or more sheep.

Consider Lange's comments on Ezekiel 34:3–4: "What should have been protection had turned into simple domination."²⁷ The "weak" became that way either "through sickness or over-driving." The "driven away" were driven away "in consequence of harsh treatment." The Hebrew phrase used of the

victim's resulting mental state denotes "to lose one's self." In response, "God procures for the suffering sheep justice against the malicious,"²⁸ namely, the loss of the leader's office which provided the power base from which the abuse was launched.

But if we fail to take God's oath seriously, and move to retain individuals in capacities where the harm they inflicted can be repeated, we will have placed ourselves firmly on the side of injustice. Small wonder that the modern church is filled with the walking wounded (see R. J. Rushdoony's *The Cure of Souls* for valuable insights on how to reverse this deadly trend). Deuteronomy 16:20 reads "Justice, justice shalt thou do," not "Injustice, injustice shalt thou preserve and protect."

When God's law lays out the parameters for restitution, we note a remarkable thing: many kinds of restitution involve restoring more to the victim than was taken or lost. When the victim received the restitution, they realized that God had their back! He really cared for them, as the overabundant scale of the restoration testified. God *valued them* by making good their loss *in a concrete way*: not only the loss of property, but the loss of time as well.

Imagine now a situation where a person's life has been ruined by the actions of a Christian leader, actions that make clear that the covenant of trust has been violated. Such harm to the victim might easily defy efforts to quantify it because its impact can encompass every dimension of life. Where loss of time and opportunity has been inflicted, one could see how a five-fold restitution based on Biblical precedents could follow. Whatever the incalculable harm is, the restitution would need to exceed it by a factor of ten before the victim can know that God is truly "the repairer of the breach" (Isa. 58:12).

Imagine that the first step this hypothetical church or ministry takes is to relieve the leader of his office: this in itself represents justice to the victim in light of Ezekiel 34:16. “Mercy to the flock imperatively required the execution of judgment upon those who had betrayed and injured them,” explains Fairbairn.²⁹ The freedom this unleashes is most precious, putting the healing process on track. Betrayal of any number of sheep greater than zero must trigger these sanctions. This replaces humanistic mechanisms (countless regulations to manipulate the environment to counter the effects of today’s limited liability slap-on-the-wrist mindset) with something infinitely better: God’s answers, deeply rooted in the concept of full liability.

But now imagine a very different but altogether more common scenario: the church turns the victim into a pariah while retaining and protecting its spiritual leader. By circling the wagons, that church has renewed the assault on the victim’s personhood on an exponentially larger scale compared to the original transgression of boundaries. To fail to remove the leader from office *is collusion* and involves the church or ministry in *collusion against God’s law* as well as collusion against the victim. To protect the transgressor is to harm the victim (and often spawn future victims). R. J. Rushdoony often put it this way: mercy to the perpetrator is hatred toward the victim. As with the sons of Eli, the protected parties will wax worse, provoking God to place more severe sanctions onto the household that failed to intervene (1 Sam. 3:13–14).

And this is what motivates *the removal of candlesticks* by the Lord Who walks in the midst of them (Rev. 1:13, 2:1, 2:5). “The LORD watches and is displeased, for there is no justice. He sees there is no advocate, He is shocked

that no one intervenes” (Isa. 59:15–16 KJV+NET).

The victim of such abuse can be likened to a bruised reed or a smoking flax. The Lord has revealed the end game for all such as these: “A bruised reed shall he not break, and a smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth justice unto victory” (Matt. 12:20). Christians who dismiss God’s law and scoff at His swearing against His Own life won’t hesitate to break the bruised reed and quench the smoking flax, to marginalize the victim and aggrandize the abuser (with or without a timeout in the corner). But Christians who put God’s law and justice first, who repair the breach rather than whitewash it (Ezek. 13:1–15), who make liberty from abuse and mercy to the injured their first priority, He will honor. Such men work to insure that “they shall neither hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain” (Isa. 11:9, compare Heb. 12:22).

There are, then, two paths to take. One path will take you to justice and victory. The other leads to destinations that are unprintable. 🚫

1. Martin G. Selbrede, “The Perpetual Kindergarten,” *Faith for All of Life* May-June 2007, 14–19.
2. In a particularly notorious example when such statistics were first being recorded, one Mrs. Marcia Bezak hanged herself a week before her testimony against a minister was proven to be true. It appears that her case is the tip of an inadequately-reported iceberg.
3. See <http://www.takecourage.org/defining.htm> for the original formulation by Dee Miller. While I disagree with Ms. Miller on causes and cures, I believe her work on the dynamics of collusion is valuable. It has stood the test of time. But like virtually all other researchers, she advances humanistic solutions to problems of a moral nature. You cannot manipulate the institutional environment (via educational conditioning, regulatory mechanisms, etc.) to solve a moral problem. Antinomianism lacks the power to

offer moral answers and can mount no consistent challenge to spiritual incest. This fatal disconnect is bridged only when the entire Word of God is consistently applied.

4. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1973), 567.
5. Derek Carlsen, “Rape and the Victim’s Sexual Purity,” *Christianity and Society* 16:1, Summer 2006, 52–54.
6. William Greenhill, *An Exposition of Ezekiel* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1994, orig. publ. 1645–1667), 685.
7. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, *A Commentary Critical, Experimental, and Practical on the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1973), Volume 2, Part 2, 217.
8. R. J. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1994), Vol. 2, 761.
9. Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (McLean, VA: MacDonald Publishing Company, n.d.), Vol. 4, 950.
10. Charles John Ellicott, ed., *Ellicott’s Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, n.d.), Vol. 5, 299.
11. Carl L. Beckwith, ed., *Reformation Commentary on Scripture* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2012), Vol. 12, 167.
12. Greenhill, op. cit., 685.
13. C. F. Keil & Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, reprinted 1983), Vol. IX, Part 2, 85.
14. Joseph C. Morecraft III, *Authentic Christianity: An Exposition of the Theology and Ethics of the Westminster Larger Catechism* (Powder Springs, GA: American Vision Press/Minkoff Family Publishing 2009), Vol. 4, 367.
15. Walther Eichrodt, *Ezekiel* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, [1966] 1970), 471.
16. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, op. cit., 333.
17. John Peter Lange, *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Ezekiel & Daniel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, reprint n.d., Eng. Orig. 1874), 316.

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Economic Liberty in America: A Legacy of the Pilgrims

Dr. Paul Jehle, Executive Director, Plymouth Rock Foundation



The Pilgrims, in their quest to be *stepping-stones* for freedom, had almost everything go wrong as they attempted to plant a colony in the new world. By the time they reached the shores of New England, they were poor, had barely enough provisions for the first winter, and began to die at an alarming rate. With such beginnings, it is no wonder we don't associate economic prosperity with them.

Dr. Charles Wolfe, historian on the Pilgrims, makes the observation that there were no less than six steps of freedom taken by the Pilgrims. At the time, they were developed out of necessity, but with the advantage of hindsight and providential insight, they are the consequences of their commitment to practice the simple truths of the Bible. Dr. Wolfe put it this way:

[I]t occurred to me that they (the Pilgrims) had taken six bold steps to liberty, that these are steps which each generation of Americans must continue to take ... that together these six aspects of liberty, result from the application of ... Christian self-government.¹

The steps Dr. Wolfe identifies begin with *spiritual liberty*, the recognition of personal sin and conversion to the Christian faith. The second step is *religious liberty*, where they withdrew from the state supported church and formed their own church covenant. The third is *political liberty* in writing the Mayflower Compact. Fourth, the *defense*

of liberty was seen in their willingness to protect their lives by building a palisade wall around the plantation.² Dr. Wolfe highlights their *economic liberty* as the fifth step. The sixth, *constitutional liberty* (1636), was the writing of their Constitution, securing protection for the freedoms they had begun to practice.

The Council of New England, the joint-stock company, represented businessmen willing to invest in planting a colony (called Adventurers). The Planters were those willing to go, including members of the Pilgrim Church of Leyden. The economic contract was a bit one sided. It recognized the right to a profit by the Adventurers but did not recognize such a right by the Planters.

The agreement between the Adventurers and Planters required the sharing of profits, but the Pilgrims insisted on privately owning their homes, gardens and lands they would develop.³ However, this agreement was changed at the last minute by Thomas Weston and Robert Cushman, the Pilgrim agent. William Bradford describes this in *Of Plimoth Plantation*: "[T]he chief and principal differences between these and the former conditions, stood in those two points; that the houses, and lands improved, especially gardens and home lots, should remain undivided wholly to the planters at the seven years' end. Secondly, that they should have had two days in a week for their own private employment, for the more comfort of themselves and their families, especially such as had families."⁴

They were now being forced to share their homes, gardens, and land in a communal arrangement as well as their labor. In essence, the redistribution of labor *and* wealth was forced upon them. Though they did not like it, due to the time and their condition, they had to accept it. Lands and labor had to now remain in a common storehouse until 1627, and instead of having two days for their private employment (and profit), six days a week was to be devoted to the common store.

The Pilgrims knew by the experience of Jamestown (planted in 1607) as well as their experience in England that unless private property and labor were respected, there would be little incentive to work. The prevailing notion in England was that all use of land and labor was government-granted because the profit-motive was sinful. When the Pilgrims arrived in 1620, *there was no trust in a free market*.

Bradford speaks frankly when he says he retells these problems, "that their children may see with what difficulties their fathers wrestled in going through these things in their first beginnings; and how God brought them along, notwithstanding all their weaknesses and infirmities."⁵ They purchased a ship called the *Speedwell*, but had to sell it for much less than it was worth when it proved to be un-seaworthy (due to being over-masted.) Several returned, and extra people and supplies had to be crammed aboard the *Mayflower*, causing a loss of both time and money.⁶

After arriving at Cape Cod, they wrote the Mayflower Compact to govern themselves and preserve unity due to the fact that they were off course from their original Patent. Then half the company died the first winter. The growing season became one of survival, and without the providential help of Squanto, who could speak English, and who taught them how to fertilize the corn in the sandy soil of New England, the small Pilgrim band would not have survived.⁷ The Peace Treaty with the Natives was essential in protecting the relationships with the local inhabitants, and it was enacted by the Pilgrims as an extension of the principles of covenanting they had practiced in both their church (Scrooby—1606) and civil (Mayflower—1620) covenants.

Even without much of a first harvest, the Pilgrims celebrated the first Thanksgiving in 1621 with ninety of their Native neighbors. The Natives brought most of the food. During the next year, 1622, Mr. Weston proved to be unfaithful in his promises or business priorities. When the *Fortune* arrived in the fall of 1621, it had thirty-six individuals with not enough food to sustain them, let alone the others who were already there. Bradford summarizes: “[T]hey never had any supply of victuals more afterwards (but what the Lord gave them otherwise), for all that the company sent at any time was always too short for those people that came with it.”⁸

Bradford relates their condition of near starvation when he says of the second harvest “[I]t arose but to a little ... partly because they were not yet well acquainted with Indian corn (and they had no other), also their many other employments; but chiefly their weakness for want of food, to tend it as they should have done ... so as it well appeared that famine must still ensue,

the next year also if not some way prevented, or supply should fail, to which they durst not trust.”⁹

The Pilgrims Embrace a Free Economy

In the Spring of 1623, Bradford, as Governor, and others with him, realized that unless something was done to make them productive and self-sustaining, they would starve. Bradford’s analysis, in counsel with others, demonstrates Biblical reasoning and the application of Scripture.

“So they began to think how they might raise as much corn as they could, and obtain a better crop than they had done, that they might not still thus languish in misery ... the Governor (with the advice of the chieftest amongst them) gave way that they should set corn every man for his own particular, and in that regard trust to themselves ... And so assigned to every family a parcel of land, according to the proportion of their number ... This had very good success, for it made all hands very industrious, so as much more corn was planted than otherwise might have been by any means the Governor or any other could use ... The women now went willingly into the field, and took their little ones with them to set corn; which before would allege weakness and inability; whom to have compelled would have been thought great tyranny and oppression.

“The experience that was had in this common course and condition, tried sundry years and that amongst godly and sober men ... that the taking away of property and bringing in community into a commonwealth would make them happy and flourishing; as if they were wiser than God. For this community (so far as it was) was found to breed much confusion and discontent and retard much employment that would have been to their benefit and comfort. For the young men, that were most able and fit for labor and service,

did repine that they should spend their time and strength to work for other men’s wives and children without any recompense. The strong, or man of parts, had no more in division of victuals and clothes than he that was weak and not able to do a quarter the other could; this was thought injustice. The aged and graver men to be ranked and equalized in labors and victuals, clothes, etc., with the meaner and younger sort, thought it some indignity and disrespect unto them. And for men’s wives to be commanded to do service for other men, as dressing their meat, washing their clothes, etc., they deemed it a kind of slavery, neither could many husbands well brook it.

“Upon the point all being to have alike, and all to do alike, they thought themselves in the like condition, and one as good as another; and so, if it did not cut off those relations that God hath set amongst men, yet it did at least much diminish and take off the mutual respects that should be preserved amongst them. And would have been worse if they had been men of another condition. Let none object this is men’s corruption, and nothing to the course itself. I answer, seeing all men have this corruption in them, God in His wisdom saw another course fitter for them.”¹⁰

Bradford’s “Ingredients” for a Free Economy

Bradford identifies several reasons why socialism (common ownership of labor) and elementary communism (common ownership of land) did not work, even among the most godly people. We can deduce at least the following from his discourse describing their 1623 decision.

1. In a common ownership of labor and land, people tend to become lazy, not wanting to work, thus *private property* must undergird a free and productive economy.

2. Under socialism, people tend to

make up excuses why they can't work, thus *private profit* is a key ingredient in a free economy as well.

3. Communal living breeds discontent, for all tend to want what others have, but refuse to work for it; thus *welfare must be voluntary (private charity) rather than forced (government charity)*.

4. Socialism is built on pride and a presumed external equality in an open or ignorant refusal of God's plan in the Bible so that differences between the young, adult, or aged are not respected. *A free economy is built, in contrast, on the respect and dignity of individual differences.*

5. Though some look at the profit motive as corrupt, it is imperative to see that it is man's nature that is corrupt, including those who hold office in government. *The free market, in contrast, is built on personal incentive and self-interest in order to overcome one's naturally corrupt nature.*

6. Ultimately, God's design for the economy rests on *voluntary choice*, which is far more productive than government force and the redistribution of wealth.

Prayer: Key to the Success of a Free Economy

Bradford adds a seventh characteristic necessary for the success of a free economy. He states the Pilgrims had to "rest on God's providence ... (the) need to pray that God would give them their daily bread ..."¹¹ In other words, without prayer even a good economic system will fail. Why did he make prayer a key ingredient?

Immediately after they reapportioned the land and labor according to private family units, a drought ensued, threatening the very crop they now planted under a free and voluntary system! "I may not omit how, notwithstanding all their great pains and industry, and the great hopes of a large

crop, the Lord seemed to blast, and take away the same, and to threaten further and more sore famine unto them. By a great drought which continued from the third week in May, till about the middle of July, without any rain and with great heat for the most part, insomuch as the corn began to wither away though it was set with fish ... Upon which they set apart a solemn day of humiliation, to seek the Lord by humble and fervent prayer, in this great distress."¹²

This day of prayer was conducted on a Wednesday. Bradford relates that God "was pleased to give them a gracious and speedy answer, both to their own and the Indians' admiration that lived amongst them. For all the morning, and greatest part of the day, it was clear weather and very hot, and not a cloud or any sign of rain to be seen; yet toward evening it began to overcast, and shortly after to rain with such sweet and gentle shower as gave them cause of rejoicing and blessing God. It came without either wind or thunder or any violence, and by degrees in that abundance as that the earth was thoroughly wet and soaked and therewith. Which did so apparently revive and quicken the decayed corn and other fruits, as was wonderful to see, and made the Indians astonished to behold. And afterwards the Lord sent them such seasonable showers, with interchange of fair warm weather as, through His blessing, caused a fruitful and liberal harvest, to their no small comfort and rejoicing. For which mercy, in time convenient, they also set apart a day of thanksgiving."¹³

The conversion of Hobbomock, a Native who lived near the Plantation, occurred after this day of prayer.¹⁴ Both Pilgrims and Puritans, by 1694, had traditional spring days of humiliation, fasting, and prayer, followed by days of thanksgiving for answered prayer in the fall. The topics of these annual procla-

mations included a humble petition to God for economic prosperity of private businesses and as a consequence, the community as a whole. This annual practice did not stop until 1894.

As Dr. Wolfe so ably points out, the evidence of prayer is in its fruit. "Each family was free at last to own its own land, and keep its own production. The result, a tripling of the best previous output! Look at how much they planted year by year: in 1621, 26 acres; in 1622, 60 acres; in 1623, 184 acres!"¹⁵ This exponential production continued and they were virtually without want, becoming a community that lent to others in need rather than one being in need of borrowing new supplies on a regular basis, just as God promises in Holy Scripture.¹⁶

A Trading Post and Grist Mill as Examples of Economic Liberty

By 1627, when the original contract under which the Pilgrims operated was renegotiated, the Pilgrims had opened up trade with the Natives and Dutch at Aptuxet. Bradford states "that they might better take all convenient opportunity to follow their trade, both to maintain themselves and to disengage them of those great sums which they stood charged with and bond for, they resolved to build a small pinnacle at Manomet, a place 20 miles from the Plantation, standing on the sea to the southward of them ... all which took good effect and turned to their profit."¹⁷ This Aptuxet Trading Post has now been recreated and serves as a demonstration of the free enterprise economy which used wampum (from the coahog shell) as a medium of exchange (money).¹⁸

Then, in 1636, John Jenney of Plimoth Plantation built a Grist Mill outside the palisade walls of the town, where he could enjoy the fruit of his labors. Bradford relates this fact in his work "how they did pound their corn

in mortars; as these people were forced to do many years before they could get a mill.”¹⁹ Not only did John Jenney construct a mill to grind corn and receive payment for his work, but he had a virtual natural monopoly on the production of corn. He became a wealthy businessman.²⁰

Experiments with the “Just Price” and “Wage Ceiling”

To appreciate the bold decision by the Governor and his Council within the Plymouth Colony to allow each family to produce “for itself,” we must examine the government-controlled economy that was initially practiced by the Puritans (and the Pilgrims to some degree). The Puritans did not tend to separate from the practices of England. As Gary North observes, “[T]he question of what constituted a truly godly economic system did not immediately disturb them ... what little economics their leaders brought with them was basically the economics of the medieval schoolman ... Thus, it is not surprising that the first two generations of leaders in New England should have fallen back upon ‘tried and true’ medieval economic concepts.”²¹

Two such concepts brought by the Puritans to New England and subsequently implemented by the Colonial government was the *just price* and *wage ceiling*. In such an economic system, personal profit is viewed as sinful, and thus to curb the corrupt sinful nature of man, the government, a presumed objective institution, was to set both the “just price” as well as the “wage ceiling” for various vocations. In essence, the wages of various vocations (through licensing and inspections), along with the proper price of a commodity (profits could not exceed 33%), were set by, as well as regulated (with punishments), by the Colonial government.²²

The Failed Example of the Saugus Iron Works

The failed result of this socialistic system, inherited from medieval times, can be seen in an analysis of the Saugus Iron Works, begun in 1644 south of Boston. Government incentives for private investors were used to make it work. But a government control of supply and demand will put even the best business into extinction. The conclusion as to why the Saugus Iron Works was finally abandoned, after nearly four decades of trying to make it work, were chronicled by historian E. N. Hartley.

In the total mass of data on the ironworks, it is a shortage of operating capital that stands out above all else. The Undertakers, and those who followed them, all decided in time that they would not or could not continue to advance money or supplies ... For this, two key factors seem to have been responsible. One was the high cost of production ... In a normal situation high costs could have been absorbed in higher prices for the goods which were sold. This, however, was ruled out by the ceiling price imposed by the General Court. The second factor was the import of iron from England. Between the one and the other the proprietors were literally squeezed.²³

Suffice it to say, that the “experiment” of the Pilgrims and especially the Puritans with socialism, only enhanced the decision of the Pilgrims early on to abandon it to survive. The Puritan “failure” of economic socialism was on a much larger scale. The only reason the Pilgrim colony implemented such radical measures as a free economy earlier was because they followed their “separatist” tradition, “reforming without tarrying for any.” By the eighteenth century, the practice of socialism was all but abandoned by everyone due to its dismal failure.

In Conclusion

In modern terminology, within the first century of our nation’s existence, the Pilgrims, followed by the Puritans, experimented with the forced common ownership of property, price controls, and minimum wage laws. The result was a documented, dismal failure of such practices. The Pilgrims and then their larger Puritan neighbors discovered by experience that the free market, taught in the Scriptures, was the best system, only to have it threatened again by the mercantile trade laws of George III beginning in 1760—the result of which was our War for Independence.

Though always small, and often only a footnote to the history of America, our Pilgrim forefathers had the wisdom as well as the fortitude and courage to boldly go where no one was going either in England or in the wilderness. As a result, they opened up trade with each other and the Natives which made all more wealthy. The increase of capital (wealth) was of greater importance than immediate profit (riches). This resulted in a legacy and inheritance that eventually led to full independence and freedom, secured under the law of the Constitution of the United States. 🇺🇸

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1. Charles Hull Wolfe, *Pilgrim Paradigm for the New Millennium*, Letter from Plymouth Rock, Vol. 23, Issue 1, January/February, 2000, 2, Plymouth Rock Foundation, Plymouth, Massachusetts—www.plymrock.org.
2. Ibid., 2–4.
3. Gary North, *Puritan Economic Experiments* (Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1988), 8.
4. William Bradford, *Of Plimoth Plantation*, edited by Samuel Eliot Morison (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), 41.

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Fragmented Reality and Missions

By Bojidar Marinov



Most American missionaries suffer from a very serious handicap when they go to another culture: lack of understanding of foreign cultures. I don't mean a lack of understanding of the details of the cultural habits and customs and folklore, but lack of *covenantal* understanding, of the religious foundations of a culture which would oppose—intellectually and psychologically—the preaching of the gospel.

Before a missionary moves to preach to individuals, he needs to understand what it is in the thinking of every individual that paganism of every kind—whether it is Marxism, or Islam, or Buddhism, or the polytheistic cults of India—destroys. American missionaries often find themselves in a situation where they can't correctly evaluate the thinking, the values, the incentives, and the expectations of their local listeners. Most of the time American missionaries go to a foreign nation with the conviction that local people are just like Americans in everything they think and value and expect, except that they "don't know about Jesus." So the solution is just to tell them about Jesus, and make them make a profession of faith, and condition them to attend church regularly, every Sunday morning, and preferably Wednesday night. In all other respects, they are expected to act like Americans, from their understanding of reality to their commitment to moral rules, to their commitment to work and

grow and develop spiritually and economically in every area of their lives.

But it never works. And it never works mainly because there is a very marked difference between the mentality of an American and the mentality of a Frenchman or a German, for example. Or between an American and an Eastern European. And especially between an American and a Chinese or a Kenyan. The difference is mainly in the fact that different nations have different cultural histories. And since "culture is religion externalized,"¹ different cultural history means different religious history.

Why Americans Can't See

It may be arguable that America is indeed a Christian nation today. I would say it still is: not necessarily in its laws and its governmental structure and practices, but certainly in the overall worldview background, inherited from the Reformation. In this, the United States as a nation has something that other nations don't: a very distinct religious—and therefore cultural—legacy which is based on the Reformed interpretation of the Bible. It is in everything Americans do and think and speak. Of course, it is mixed with pagan ideas—and that has been the case for most of the church throughout the centuries.

But America is unique with its very special legacy, and that uniqueness is very often the obstacle preventing American missionaries from understanding what has been destroyed in the thought of their local listeners by the pagan religious background of their local culture. Their local listeners are not

Americans, and much more needs to be repaired in their worldview before they fully understand what the missionary is talking about, and before they are able to apply it in practice in their lives and culture.

American missionaries seldom think in terms of world-and-life view, they seldom think in terms of *ideas have consequences*, and, sadly enough, they seldom think in terms of *faith has consequences*. Cultural practices are taken for granted, as divorced from cultural worldviews, and therefore an American missionary seldom stops to consider that a thorough reconstruction of worldview is needed in his listeners, one that will lay the ax at the root of their belief system and help heal the wounds caused by that belief system. A pagan belief system is never culturally neutral or harmless; it always brings with itself destruction in the very thinking and the very perceptions of its victims.

Why Pagans Can't See

The most important destruction a pagan religion brings to a culture's worldview is the destruction of the concept of a *unified reality*, and with it, the destruction of the concept of the *possibility of knowledge*.

It is seldom realized by both modern Christians and non-Christians that the one unique view Christianity brought to the world was the idea of a unified reality that was also comprehensible and knowable to man. By nature, most pagan religions and ideologies believe in a *fragmented reality*, that is, reality which is not interconnected, and

there is no set of unique principles that control reality from one end of the universe to the other, from the big galaxies to the smallest atoms, from the individual heart to the government of a nation, from the personal will of a man to the scientific and economic efforts and enterprise of collective human groups. In non-Christian thinking, the world is broken into separate spheres, and different principles control the different spheres. The connections between those spheres or areas are largely mystical and unsearchable; in fact, they are specifically declared non-existent in many cases, and therefore making such connections is almost a heresy for the pagan mind.

The first and obvious example of such belief in fragmented reality, of course, was the polytheism of the ancients against which the *Shema Israel* and the First Commandment warned:

Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!
(Deut. 6:4)

I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me. (Exod. 20:2–3 ESV)

The main issue, of course, in the First Commandment and the *Shema* was worship: only one God, the Maker of heaven and earth, was to be worshipped. But faith and worship are not separated from one's view of reality; to the contrary, *it is faith and worship that define one's view of reality*. So when a person or a culture adopt a faith in multiple deities or in multiple spirits and nature forces which compete against each other, that person or culture by necessity develops a fragmented view of reality which rejects the idea of a unified set of principles governing all reality. How polytheism affects one's view of reality can be seen in 1 Kings 20:26–30 where the Arameans believed that Jehovah was

only God of the mountains but not of the valleys; therefore, a battle against the people of Jehovah would be easily won in the valley rather than in the mountain. The apostates among the people of Israel built altars in high places, believing, apparently, that certain places or aspects of reality are more saturated with the presence of divinity than others. Fustel de Coulanges demonstrates that for the ancient Greeks, Romans, and Hindus, polytheism meant not simply worship of many gods, but also that all these gods had their own designated, well-defined realms where only they accepted worship, and where they could exercise their divinity. In fact, the different gods had such limited jurisdictions that they couldn't even accept worship from humans who did not belong to those jurisdictions.² Faith in one God by necessity led to belief in a unified reality; the abandonment of that faith led to the destruction of that belief.

A more advanced form of the philosophical notion of fragmented reality was the dualism found in the ancient world mainly in the teachings of Zoroastrianism, but later developed in different religious and philosophical forms by the Gnostic heresies, and later by Kant, Nietzsche, Marx, Engels, etc. The “dialectics” of our modern philosophy is an attempt to build a unified philosophy on the basis of what is in fact a fragmented worldview where two worlds—of mind and of matter—operate on entirely different and sometimes even opposed principles. The result is the same when it comes to understanding reality: reality is broken into different spheres, and each sphere has its own principles of operation. There isn't one God ruling over all, and therefore there isn't one ruling principle over all.

Such a view of fragmented reality is natural to paganism but it has also crept into the church and its theology in

many ways, ever since the early church. In our modern world it has found expression in the different humanistic doctrines that are thriving in many churches today. The best examples are dispensationalism which fragments history into different economies of God's work on earth; and the two-kingdoms theology which fragments the civilization into two spheres—of grace and of nature—which operate under different principles and therefore different laws. Neo-orthodoxy and existentialism have also worked to destroy the concept of unified reality in theology, and thus reduce Christianity to a basically pagan religion dressed in a theologically correct robe.

One God, One Reality

The philosophical consequences of this view are that the world is unknowable and incomprehensible to man. If there isn't one operational principle that rules over all, then there can be no knowledge of the world that can be reliable enough for man to be able to know anything with certainty. If the world is broken into insulated areas with their own sets of operational principles, then man is left without a way to know anything that can help him make decisions for his life and for the life of his society.

The ethical and cultural consequences of such a view are that there is no reason to postulate one unified law, one unified ethical system that governs man and his society, and *all* men and *all* societies. Under such a view, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to make any connections whatsoever, and especially connections between faith and law, or between worship and practical ethics.

Very often what new converts do in the church is not connected in any meaningful way to what they did outside the church. Their new faith in God and Christ does not fundamentally change their understanding of the

world: it is still focused on themselves rather than on Christ. Especially in cultures that are economically destitute, God exists for the sole reason to provide them with a living, and that according to their old habits and patterns and ways to make a living. He is not the Lord; He is just a better insurance agent to assure the success of their own ways. Such is often their “testimony”: *God is always there for me*. And the center and the focus of that testimony is *for me*. In more advanced cultures, God exists for the sole reason to support whatever government programs there are for redistribution of wealth. In a universe that is fragmented and has no unifying principle to govern it, the only factor that matters is the closest one to man: himself and his needs and desires.

As R. J. Rushdoony pointed out when discussing the subjectivism (fragmented reality) of the modern mind, “Life, order, meaning, and objective [unified—B.M.] reality were being withdrawn from the world outside of man. The only truly knowable world was in the confines of man’s mind.”³ Rushdoony aptly titled his study of that particular aspect of modern humanism, *The Death of Meaning*, revealing the main truth of all fragmented reality: it destroys every meaning, of life, of language, of existence, or ethics. The conclusion of his study is that such a mentality produces a “world of nothingness.”

And that “nothingness” is what a modern missionary has to understand, theologically and covenantally, and to deal with in his preaching, before he can successfully instruct his listeners in the gospel.

Contrary to accepted opinion, Reformed missionaries abroad are just as guilty of ignorance concerning this problem; and they are just as guilty of actively perpetuating the problem by

presenting to their listeners a truncated, incomplete gospel. The Reformed doctrines are today presented not in their fullness of what Bucer called “the Christianization of all of life,” they are presented as merely the “doctrines of grace.”

God’s grace is, without any doubt, an integral part of the doctrines of the Reformation, but it is hardly the central aspect which defines them. To focus on grace as the defining characteristic of the Reformation is like defining a tasty dinner by the function and the movements of the utensils at the table: “A dinner is a function of forks.” Forks are only an instrument, just as grace is only an instrument. The meal is the substance of the dinner; and the substance of the gospel is not that man receives grace but that the Kingdom of God has been established, and that everything is being made subject to Christ (1 Cor. 15:1–28). Preaching only God’s grace without His Kingdom only adds to the confusion and the destruction caused by the humanist philosophies and religions. It is still focused on man and his needs—specifically his need of salvation—not on the sovereignty of God. Reality is still fragmented, except that God is simply invited to add His humble effort to produce just a little bit of coherence in saving His people from the chaos and confusion of history.

The result of such preaching is that their listeners look at the Christian God in just the same way they look at any other god they have, be it personal deities, or the state, or the lottery. The world operates under different cosmological and ethical principles for its different aspects, and it is considered naïve among many Christians to expect that the same ethical principle governing, for example, the upbringing of children will continue to operate in governing a nation, or in starting a business and en-

gaging in commerce. Different laws, and different gods, for the different realms of reality. When you hear about missions which have died shortly after their American founders went back home (many more than the success stories we hear about every now and then), you can safely bet the missionary did nothing to change their view of reality.

The solution to this problem is to start a mission not based on attracting people to Christ, but on uncompromisingly proclaiming the sovereignty of God, and the Kingdom of Christ as the new reality in which the whole world, including the unbelievers and their cultures, operates. This will take a comprehensive covenantal understanding of what the Bible says about the world, and a covenantal understanding of the fragmented reality that a pagan culture teaches its subjects. A focus on “love,” “grace,” “provision,” “salvation,” will not only be misguided but also dangerous to the mission. Only a focus on making all things subject to Christ, in everything, from the soul of man to his culture and society, will make a missionary a true missionary. As long as our missionaries continue reinforcing the fragmented reality of pagan thinking, our foreign missions will be spinning their wheels, producing very little of value, wasting God’s money.

So the next time you have to decide whether to support a missionary or not, ask yourself: Is that missionary opposing the fragmented reality of the pagan worldview on that culture, or is he enhancing it by his preaching? Is his focus on the Kingdom of God and the sovereignty of God or on the benefits His listeners will get from the gospel, whether salvation, grace, healing, peace of mind, or temporal successes? Is he preaching God as the sovereign Lord of their culture, in whom all reality is

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A Strategy for Freedom

Rev. Paul Michael Raymond

“As it is apparent to all that a prince is constituted by God to be ruler of a people, to defend them from oppression and violence as the shepherd his sheep; and whereas God did not create the people slaves to their prince, to obey his commands, whether right or wrong, but rather the prince for the sake of the subjects (without which he could be no prince), to govern them according to equity, to love and support them as a father his children or a shepherd his flock, and even at the hazard of life to defend and preserve them. And when he does not behave thus, but, on the contrary, oppresses them, seeking opportunities to infringe their ancient customs and privileges, exacting from them slavish compliance, then he is no longer a prince, but a tyrant, and the subjects are to consider him in no other view.” ~ Act of Abjuration 1581—The Dutch Declaration of Independence



By 1566 the Calvinists of the Netherlands had just about enough oppression as they could stand from Philip, King of Spain, and the Duke of Alva, his henchman. As a result, many fled the Netherlands to Germany and began regrouping as resistance fighters under the leadership of William of the House of Orange. The Dutch Revolt was then poised to commence in actuality.

In 1581, the Dutch drafted what is known as the Act of Abjuration and declared their independence to the known world. Even though the Dutch had always accepted princes and rulers to govern them, they required them to hold to a covenantal contract of set conditions in order to insure their liberty.

A Political Covenant

The contract held the prince and his nobles responsible to a very particular law-standard. They were required to “govern by law and reason, and protect and love them as a father does his children” in accordance with Scripture. The contract was a binding covenant agreement between the prince and his people created to insure that all rule would be in accordance with God’s law and His Holy Word, and would

remain in conformity with the Dutch “chartered privileges, ancient customs, rights and liberties.” This contract was a comprehensive Christian covenant theory of law, society, and politics drawn together from Scripture and the Calvinistic political teachings of that day. To neglect the contract and its stipulations was to negate the princely office of the king, identifying and declaring him a tyrant. This was the situation in the Low Countries by the mid-sixteenth century.

The many offenses leveled against the Dutch Calvinists by Phillip included high property taxation, quartering of soldiers in individual households, confiscation of private property, and various other assaults on freedom. However, it was not only the Calvinists who were in the crosshairs of Spanish tyranny, but also the Catholics. This led to a temporary federation by the two groups against Spain. As Philip’s tyranny escalated so did the rebellion, and by the mid-1570s the Dutch Calvinists took the lead with the aid of Genevan advisors.

The Genevan advisors consisted of Calvinists among whom was Theodore Beza, whose writings on the rights of rulers gave concrete direction as to what a ruler should be if liberty was to survive. Other men such as Hotman, Mor-

nay, Coornhert, Viret, and Johannes Althusius, taking the writings of Calvin and Beza to their logical conclusion by applying them, were also very profitable to the Dutch for the reformation and reconstruction of the culture. Coupled with this counsel of the Genevan advisory team, and through a deluge of pamphlets, sermons, and position papers, the Dutch gained wide support in the fight against the tyranny of Spain. That support was necessary to gain a foothold against Philip’s encroachment on Dutch liberty.

Author John Witte explains these historical developments.

Initially, many apologists saw the Revolt as a proper vindication of the people’s ancient rights, liberties and privileges that had been set out in hundreds of medieval law codes and charters that still governed them. The most important of these documents were the so-called Joyous Entry of 1356 and the Grand Privilege of 1477, both of which came in for endless recitation and discussion. These old treaties ... provided something of a digest of the rulers’ duties and the peoples’ rights, including their right to civil disobedience and organized self-defense in the event of tyranny.¹

To give Spain clarity as to what the Dutch desired and what God had

commanded of the prince, William of Orange demanded that the “privileges, rights and freedoms that have been handed down to us” be restored.² William called the rights of the people divine and natural, given directly by God. He made it clear that “God has created men free and wants them to be governed justly and righteously and not willfully and tyrannically.”

Legal scholar and theologian, Johannes Althusius gave the Calvinists of the Netherlands additional concrete strategies and tactics through his writings. It is interesting to note that most of the passion for liberty and justice came as a result of sermons and pamphlets. It was through the medium of the verbal and written word that the people were educated as to what was right and just according to the Word of God and how the magistrates had violated those Divine Standards. Althusius’ two-volume work on *Civil Conversations of 1601* codified a system of ethical techniques on how to speak and listen. This was a detailed Christianized work on rhetoric designed, no doubt, to aid in the articulation of liberty and the truth of God’s law for speeches and sermons, but also for the writing of tracts and pamphlets. His work was used as a training guide for the masses so that they would be better able to argue effectively on various social matters, most notably the church and the state.³ He also wrote a massive work on politics in 1603 (*Politica*) and a three-volume work, *A Theory of Justice*, in 1617. In these books Althusius set forth a comprehensive theory of legal, political, and social order and how they were to be understood in light of the sovereignty of a ruler and the liberty of the people.

The Sanctuary of the Conscience

Together with the work and advice of the Genevan authorities, the Dutch were able to claim their liberty, setting

the stage for the American Declaration of Independence in 1776. It was from the document of the Dutch that Thomas Jefferson drew both his ideas and his writing of the American Declaration of Independence. Religious rights were always yoked to general liberty and especially liberty of conscience. If a magistrate were to violate any of these rights, it was to signify a tyrannical move to total oppression.

Althusius stated,

For the magistrate or anyone else to invade the sanctuary of conscience is to impugn the sovereignty of God. For the magistrate to impose a penalty on the thoughts of men is to obstruct the work of the Holy Spirit.⁴

Quoting Beza, Althusius wrote,

Rulers were made for the people, not the people for the rulers. The people can exist without the ruler but the ruler cannot exist without the people.⁵

While a single act of violation was not immediately met with resistance, it was an indication to the faithful that a pattern may be emerging. That in turn invoked a verbal and written outcry lest the rulers imagined that the oppressive move was acceptable. If the oppression was not remedied by the verbal outcry and the tyranny continued, then resistance was permitted and even encouraged.

The Dutch were not lawless libertines. They were peace-loving Calvinists and therefore understood the rules of resistance, which were patterned after Calvin’s doctrine of interposition. Interposition, commonly known as the doctrine of the lesser magistrate, is what prompted the Dutch to call upon the Duke of Orange, William. Under the leadership of lawfully elected magistrates, resistance took on a completely legitimate form.

These resistance paradigms were

basic for the American War for Independence of 1776. John Witte refers to Thorold Rogers’ review of John Lothrop Motley’s three volume work, *The Rise of the Dutch Republic: A History*, and George Henty’s *By Pike and Dyke: A Tale of the Rise of the Dutch Republic*.

I hold that the revolt of the Netherlands and the success of Holland are the beginning of modern political science and of modern civilization ... To the true lover of Liberty, Holland is the holy land of modern Europe.⁶

Witte continues:

The analogies between the Dutch revolt and American Revolution still remain striking to historians today, and it remains undeniable that the Dutch experience was inspirational to a number of American founders. John Adams, for example wrote, ‘the originals of the two republics are so much alike, that the history of one seems but a transcript of the other.’⁷

Thomas Jefferson’s draft of the Declaration was almost a carbon copy of the Dutch declaration with only minor adjustments to address the specific charges of tyranny by England’s King George III. James Madison argued that the “example of Holland proved that a toleration of sects dissenting from the established sect was safe and even useful.”⁸ That the American idea of independence, albeit eclectic as it was, gained its basic tenants from the Dutch Calvinists is without debate.

By the mid-1600s John Milton had taken the lead for liberty, setting forth a plethora of tracts, pamphlets and various writings. Among the pamphleteers of Milton’s age were Sir Edward Coke, John Lilburne, Richard Overton, and William Walwyn. While many of these men have been long forgotten, their work stands as the foundation of English and American liberty.

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Teaching What is Good

by Andrea Schwartz

But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. **Older men** are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. **Older women** likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the **young women** to love their husbands and **children**, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own **husbands**, that the word of God may not be reviled. Likewise, urge the **younger men** to be self-controlled. Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an **opponent** may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us. **Bondservants** are to be submissive to their own **masters** in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior. (Titus 2:1–10 ESV)



At some point each of us fits the description of one of the persons mentioned in Titus 2. We are either needing instruction or giving instruction, and sometimes both at the same time. The prerequisite to fulfilling each of these roles in a righteous manner is an understanding of the law of God and having a humble spirit. Paul's words presuppose that a covenant community is a necessity in the life of a believer. And, of course, it matters what doctrine holds this community together.

Today the word mentoring is thrown around quite a lot in both Christian and non-Christian circles. It is important to be clear what makes for a godly mentoring relationship and what the goals are for deeming one as successful. First and foremost, there must be true fellowship.

Fellowship is only properly understood in terms of a common bond to Christ. Without this bond, it isn't accurate to categorize all relationships among people as fellowship. If the unifying factor of our Savior (our "Fellow") is missing, it is more correct to classify these sorts of relationships as *associations*. In our day, not all who

profess belief in the King of kings have an allegiance and faithfulness to every word that proceeds out of His mouth (the law). That is why Christians often have less "fellowship" with folks they attend church with for years, but attend a conference miles away from their home and have almost "instant fellowship" with other attendees.

For a mentoring relationship (for that is what Titus 2 suggests) to be beneficial to both parties, each person must have an allegiance to the law-word of God and be attentive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Mentorship is a two-way street. In the same way that a home-schooling teacher benefits as much, if not more, from instructing her students, a mentor's involvement with mentees enhances and deepens her own faith. And the comparison to teaching is not an idle one, as the older woman/younger woman relationship involves not only instruction, but care and concern. The words of Titus 2 are specific applications of other passages that instruct the Body of Christ to care for one another (Gal. 6:10; Matt. 25:31–46, etc), and caution must be taken by those who would place themselves in the role of teacher or counselor.

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing. (James 1:19–25)

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. (James 3:1)

To be clear, these relationships are meant to encourage Biblical self-discipline and self-government on the part of

the younger person in the relationship. Thus, those who would step up to the plate to act as mentors, must be grounded in God's law-word, and outwardly demonstrate such by their fruits, so as to enhance the Body of Christ rather than undermine or corrupt it.

Initiating a Mentoring Relationship

As I've assumed the "older woman" role with women I've mentored, there were times that I was approached and asked formally to be a mentor. In other cases, the relationship was established by regular interactions where a woman would ask for my advice. At other times, I saw a need and inserted myself into a person's life so as to test the waters to see if the woman was open to having a mentor.

I have established ground-rules in these relationships. First and foremost, I only want to deal with women who are serious about applying the faith to all aspects of their lives. I am not interested in dilettantes who merely want to hear themselves talk and use me as a sounding board to gripe about those they think are the source of their problem.

This is not to say that I avoid women who have serious issues in their lives. I relish the opportunity to assist, but only if I sense willingness on the part of the mentee to learn and apply what has been learned. Instead of attempting to "fix" the situation (a mistake I made early on), I use our times of conversation to listen and teach what the Word of God has to say about circumstances surrounding the problem(s). Sometimes rather than approach the issue head-on, I will have a woman read a particular article, essay, or book that will give her a context for her circumstance. Weeks or months may go by before we interact again. In the interim, I expect her to address some of the surface issues that we've talked about in order to eventually deal with the deeper ones.

There comes a point in the relationship when, in addition to being mentor and mentee, we establish a genuine friendship. It is a friendship that is mutually beneficial in that I often learn from her and put into perspective how many of my earlier choices and decisions as a young mother were ill-advised and at times self-serving. I am not shy in sharing my own shortcomings and how I was helped by those who mentored me.

Advice for Mentoring

Reading and digesting Rushdoony's first volume of *Institutes of Biblical Law*¹ is a must when it comes to being a Titus 2 Mentor. This allows the counselor to avoid bringing in personal biases and attitudes when hearing a woman explain her circumstances. The goal must always be to enable her to be more like Christ rather than more like me. The pride factor must be acknowledged. Who of us doesn't want to be looked up to as an expert, full of wisdom? Learning to actively listen and ask appropriate questions, and patiently listening for the answers, is the method by which the mentor helps another discern sin—either by her or against her. Even though there are times and situations that may not have an obvious solution, helping another bear her burden and helping her see the Lord's hand in a particular trial is a vital aspect of mentoring. The goal is to: *Show myself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in my teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned* (vv. 7–8).

Advice for Being Mentored

You should assess the spiritual maturity of the person you are considering as a potential mentor. You will be baring your soul to this person, often revealing personal issues and private concerns. Spend time observing her behavior, her speech, and the fruits of her efforts, such

as how her children behave and how she interacts with her husband, etc. Take note of her commitment to Scripture and gain assurance that her *modus operandi* is to steer you toward God's Word. Make sure that she will not indulge in "pity parties" with you.

Some Personal Examples

During my early years in the faith, I had some bad experiences with mentor-types and some exceptionally good experiences as well. There were those who wanted to remake me into their image. Those interactions were often stifling and my husband was adamant that I discontinue those relationships. On the other hand, when I was regularly interacting with someone of genuine wisdom, he was eager for me to spend time discussing problems I faced.

#1 Within the first year or so after my conversion I began a mentoring relationship with an older woman at an evangelical church. Having lost my mother while in high school, this was my first experience with someone much older than I taking a particular interest in me. It was awkward but nice. She didn't shy away from the circumstances of my life prior to my coming to faith in Christ. I came to understand that my husband and I were of special interest to her because of some activities her son was involved with.

Immediately she put me on her program of daily devotions, her Bible study program, and Scripture memorization. Since her husband was not a church-goer, and her son had left the faith, her advice and guidance was much more about transforming me into the sort of persons they were not. Any time I failed to attend all church functions, and keep up with my "quiet time," and doing my memorizing, I felt as though I was failing Christ. My husband could see that I was changing, but not in a way that was genuine to me. After some intense discussion between the two of us, he helped me realize that this woman was

attempting to remake me in her image, rather than allow me to hear from the Holy Spirit.

#2 Years later, when my family became close with the Rushdoony family, Mrs. Rushdoony (Dorothy) assumed the role of my spiritual mother (mentor). At the time I had two children. It was a very organic process that blossomed as our friendship developed. In many ways, she became like a grandmother to my children. I knew this was a woman who would “tell it to me straight” and had as her concern that the law-word of God would be honored and applied in her life and mine.

Dorothy was not one to engage in “pity parties” or anything of the sort. I knew that I should come to her only after I had consulted the Scriptures and prayed about any adverse circumstance I found myself in. She never took sides—that is, other than the Lord’s side—and would help me work my way through whatever was troubling me. I still remember one of the most pointed conversations I ever had with her (or anyone else for that matter) as I bemoaned the fact that I was failing to get pregnant after my husband and I had determined to have another child. Her response: “What makes you think that you create eternal life?”

She correctly spotted that I was feeling sorry for myself and was eager to have someone sympathize with me. But she cared too much for me to let me off the hook so easily. You see, Dorothy had wanted to experience pregnancy all her life and had accepted the reality that it wasn’t God’s plan for her. Rather than bemoan her own situation, she was concerned to return me to the straight and narrow road of being content in whatever circumstance I found myself in.

What a delight it was when I called Dorothy early on the morning of June 2, 1992, to let her know that a baby girl named after her had been added to our family.

Out in the Open

Married women should not hide their involvement in a mentoring relationship from their husbands. The mentoring relationship is meant to be compatible with a woman’s marriage since the duty of a Titus 2 woman is: *to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled* (vv. 3–5).

That said, there are times when conflicts within a marriage can make it difficult for a woman seeking help to announce to her husband she is seeking counsel. It is here where the mentor must tread carefully, so as to *not* disrupt the order of the family while providing guidance to assist in repairing the breach. When at all possible, I attempt to use hospitality to develop a relationship between us and the couple. Just having a younger couple witness the interactions of those married (in our case for almost four decades) and hear stories of how we’ve dealt with inevitable differences of opinion helps tremendously to open up fruitful communication between them.

In a like way, mentoring unmarried women is not designed to usurp parental responsibility. A mentor is not a secret relationship and is not meant to replace a person’s mother or father should they still be alive. This is important because many a family breach can be rectified with the help of a mentor. The command to honor one’s parents has more to do with the calling of mother than the personality of one’s mother and an “older woman” can often help a woman re-establish a good relationship with her mom.


Sowing and Reaping

After years of parenting, many of us acknowledge that if we were given the chance to do things differently with

one or more of our children, we would. Often, one or more of our children stray from or abandon the faith of the family and this can be a source of continual grief. But, since God has called us to minister to the Body of Christ, there are other “sons and daughters” who can benefit from the lessons we have learned and we can make a valuable contribution in their lives. Along the way, God, in His mercy, may well have a mentor/friend come into the lives of our prodigal ones and help them by assisting and counseling them back to faithfulness: *For here the saying holds true, “One sows and another reaps”* (John 4:37).

In the end, Titus 2 is really a call to community, a community that builds each other up while dealing with the real dynamics which occur when not fully sanctified people interact with each other. It is a good reminder that interactions among brothers and sisters in the faith are to reflect that they share the same Father and that the sacrifice of His Son (our Brother) unites us even when personality clashes and differences of opinion occur between us. This perspective directs us to “act like family”—a godly family—with each other. And, the reason is given to us:

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you. (Titus 2:11–15) 

Continued on page 26

Christian Reconstruction... and Fantasy?

by Lee Duigon

“Each of you also represents a history of God’s providence, one that has brought you to where you are today. You and I have our distinct roles in God’s Kingdom ...”¹ ~ Mark Rushdoony



Among other things, my small role in God’s Kingdom is to write fantasy novels—inspired first and foremost by the Bible itself, but also by the work of R. J. Rushdoony and his teaching of Christian Reconstruction.

That may strike some of you as preposterous. After all, one of the obvious characteristics of a fantasy is that it isn’t true. But then Jesus Christ told parables. These were not true in a literal sense: Our Lord never said, “I knew a man who had a prodigal son.” They were short, fictional stories told to teach the truth—to illustrate a Biblical principle in terms that could be easily understood by ordinary people.

A fantasy novel can be—but often, in this fallen world, is not—a long fictional story that presents truth from an unexpected angle so that it can be seen as fresh and new. A Christian fantasy will illustrate truth already encountered in God’s Word. Well, at least it should do that. The works of C. S. Lewis, notably *The Screwtape Letters* and the *Chronicles of Narnia*, are well-known examples.

God’s Providence at Work

I have written, and continue to write, a series of Christian fantasy novels, beginning with *Bell Mountain*.² This is God’s providence at work. If R. J. Rushdoony as a young man had not discovered the theological writings

of Cornelius Van Til, and become Van Til’s friend and fellow-laborer; if he had not been led by them to build up his own teaching of Christian Reconstruction; if he had not gone on, with the providential help of others, to establish his own ministry, the Chalcedon Foundation; if an editor at Focus on the Family had not suggested to me that I ought to get in touch with Chalcedon; if I had not been taken on by Chalcedon as a reporter and editor; if I had not immersed myself in Rushdoony’s writings when I joined; and if another editor at Chalcedon had not suggested that maybe the ministry ought to try publishing some fiction in addition to its many books on theology and its application to life—if any of those things had not happened, I would never have written *Bell Mountain*, and you would not be reading this. I see God’s providence in this, every step of the way.

Christian Reconstruction preaches the imperative to bring all of life under the lordship of Christ, to reclaim the culture for Christ’s Kingdom: hence Christian schooling instead of public education, Christian marriage and family life, Christian self-government in the life of every individual, public policies brought into line with God’s laws, and so on. This would also include the reclamation of our popular culture, which today is widely perceived as some kind of God-free zone—you can check your Christianity at the door when you enter a movie theater or open a book.

Fantasy fiction is one of the dominant sectors of the Young Adults Fiction market. But when it comes to fantasy, what are these young readers reading?

If you visit the Goodreads website, you’ll find a page for “Young Adult Novels of 2013 ... vote for your favorites.”³ Here you’ll see the leading candidates for the honor, complete with book covers and descriptive blurbs. I examined the top ten.

Six of the top ten were stories set in a future dystopia, a la *The Hunger Games*. Featured themes included “a single girl ... who can command the power of angels”; teenage “alchemists” in love; teens with assorted super-powers; a girl who is “part-angel”; and teen “demigods” interacting with pagan Greek gods and goddesses. On and on.

It looks like here is a portion of our popular culture badly in need of Christian input.

Oh, there are books marketed as “Christian fantasy.” I don’t want to snipe at other authors who probably mean well, but a lot of these books sound dreadfully similar to the ones on Goodreads’ list. Some of them suggested novelized video games. I salute the authors for trying, but depictions of teens with super-powers strikes me as an effort headed in the wrong direction.

God Is In Charge

I decided early on to rule out both magic and super-powers from my stories. Not only is “magic” overly hard to distinguish from witchcraft; it has

also become, for many fantasy writers, a too-easy way to get things done. And why titillate and tempt young readers with visions of “powers” that make them superior to adults? So the characters in my stories are ordinary human beings for whom there are no magical shortcuts. They must be courageous and strong without being able to fall back on quickie spells and hexes or superhuman abilities.

Rushdoony’s vision is steeped in “Reformed thought,” which may be briefly defined as a presupposition that “God is in charge”—of everything.⁴ Although my characters have neither magic nor super-powers, they are God’s servants, and thus able to call on a source of power infinitely greater than those available to secular fantasy heroes and heroines—the power of God.

I allow in my stories nothing that the Bible does not allow. Those who serve God receive their strength from Him. He raises up protectors for them—sometimes the most unlikely protectors they can imagine. Because God’s Spirit is active in the fantasy world, as it is in the real world, there is always the possibility of repentance, reformation, and redemption. I’ve made redemption a major theme in these books—and by no other agency than the sovereign grace of God. An assassin devotes his life to safeguarding the children he was sent to kill. Heathen chiefs and warriors come to God. A cowardly traitor becomes a selfless man of God. A servant of the false god sacrifices his life in the service of the true God. There are, of course, Biblical examples of all of these.

All my characters are able to proceed, in spite of obstacles and hazards arrayed against them, because God is for them.

Taking God at His Word

Another key element in Rush-

doony’s teaching is “to take God seriously, to take God literally, at his word.”⁵

In *Bell Mountain*, at the start of the adventure, the only persons who take God at His word are the two children, Jack and Ellayne. The adults—even men who love God, and have studied the scriptures—are unable to take God’s word literally. But quite a few of them learn to do so.

Because these books are fantasy, set in an imaginary world following its own unique arc of history, I couldn’t give its people the Bible that we know. They had to have their own scriptures, going back to ancient times: God’s word to the people of another world that He created. Although the fantasy world’s scriptures differ from ours because its history is different—the imaginary world is still in what we might call “Old Testament times,” having yet to meet its Savior—its scriptures proclaim the same God, the same immutable moral laws handed down by God, that we find here, in the Bible.

The protagonists in my novels advance by putting their trust in God and obeying His word. Characters who do otherwise, in the long run if not in the short, don’t prosper. Because Jack and Ellayne obey God, even when they don’t understand why He wants them to do certain things, they come under God’s protection.

Throughout all the books, I have tried my utmost to tell a story that is faithful to the teachings of the Bible. Sometimes obedience to God is hard. Sometimes those who try to obey God don’t seem to be prospering at all. But it would be presumptuous of me to try to mirror the whole Bible in a series of fantasy novels.

An Assumption of Victory

Christ’s lordship over the earth has already been proclaimed, Rushdoony taught: and so for Christ’s people there

is “an assumption of victory.”⁶ God’s word will not return to Him without having fulfilled its purpose.

This “assumption of victory” empowers my characters. They carry on with their work even in the face of disaster. When the Thunder King besieges Obann City with the mightiest army the world has ever seen, King Ryons, still just a boy, sets out alone, obeying God’s command to go to Obann. His own tiny army of converted Heathen, now bereft of their king and having no idea whether he is even still alive, nevertheless obey a divine command to march out of their safe refuge in Lintum Forest to confront King Thunder’s horde, many times their number. These things they do, not out of a death wish, but by faith. God has promised never to forsake them; and they, like Abraham and Joshua, believe His word.

Restoring the Balance

Rushdoony taught that each and every sphere of government, including church and state, is established under God and accountable to God as the one and only ultimate authority. No one sphere of government is to reign over the others.

In the *Bell Mountain* novels, the Thunder King has proclaimed himself a god, claiming supreme authority over both state and church—indeed, over every aspect of his subjects’ lives. That should strike modern readers as alarmingly familiar. We have seen both hard totalitarianism—think of the Berlin Wall, or North Korea, or any other one of numerous terrible examples—and also a softer king, whose tools of domination include food stamps, speech codes, public schooling, and a worship of “diversity” that insists on uniformity of thought and employs various means of coercion to get it. The Thunder King has mastered both kinds of totalitarianism.

Obann has a monopolistic church, the Temple, and an oligarchic state. The separation of the two is a façade: in Obann, the Temple and the Oligarchy are hand-in-glove together. This has rendered the Temple, and Obannese religion in general, spiritually dead.

So, in addition to having to fight for survival against the Thunder King, God's servants in Obann struggle to achieve a great revival of religion—not only in their own country, but also to deliver God's word to the Heathen nations. For the whole earth is the Lord's, and they that dwell therein: God means to have the love of all the people He has created. For the Bible's "Jew and Gentile," read "Obannese and Heathen."

God is using His servants—and using the Thunder King, too—to break open the Temple that has become a prison for His word, so that it can be known to all mankind. God's Holy Spirit will not be restrained by man. Church and state will be brought back to their rightful places in God's scheme of things, and tyranny will be replaced by liberty.

It Wasn't Easy

The hardest thing about writing these novels was to write the stories in such a way that "the religious element" was organic to the story and impossible to separate from the events being described—not just pasted on to the surface, as seems to be the case in much of what is marketed as "Christian fiction." But what was difficult when I started on *Bell Mountain* has grown less and less difficult as the story marches on. By now, I couldn't write them any other way. Even so, I still can't quite find words to describe how hard it was to achieve this effect.

I have not dared even to try to make the Lord a "character" in the story: that belongs to the Bible alone. But I have tried to make His presence felt through-

out, chapter by chapter, book by book. The reader will judge whether I've succeeded.

So there you have it—fantasy novels inspired by the Word of God, by R. J. Rushdoony's theological teachings, and by such resources of the imagination as God has given me. It's territory reclaimed for Christ's Kingdom—maybe only a square inch or two. But "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty ... and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are" (1 Cor. 1:27–28)

Like the characters in my own stories, I must walk by faith. 🙏

Lee Duigon is a Christian free-lance writer and contributing editor for *Faith for All of Life*. He has been a newspaper editor and reporter and is the author of the *Bell Mountain* series of novels.

1. Mark Rushdoony, "The Vision of R. J. Rushdoony," <http://chalcedon.edu/research/articles/the-vision-of-r-j-rushdoony/>
2. For descriptions of the books in my "Bell Mountain Series," visit my blog, <http://leed-ugon.com>, and click "Books."
3. http://www.goodreads.com/list/show/7362.YA_Novels_of_2013
4. Rushdoony, *ibid*.
5. *Ibid*.
6. *Ibid*.

Selbrede ... Liberty cont. from page 10

18. Lange, *op. cit.*, 320.
19. The critical need to work toward restitution would be a key part of any such repentance, but restoration to spiritual authority remains off the table. The repentant offender is the one who refuses to take up the reins of leadership again.
20. The thief on the cross next to Jesus was forgiven but nonetheless suffered the temporal consequences of his deeds, consequences which he (being truly repentant) endorsed. Christ's parables about stewards and husbandmen never speak of restoring those who violate their trust: such restora-

tion is an alien concept premised on turning forgiveness into a self-serving abstraction rather than a concrete reality.

21. A few commentators take the view that the shepherds are exclusively political in nature. G. Currey is representative in taking Jer. 2:8 as the basis for this minority view. Cf. F. C. Cook, ed., *The Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, [1871–1881]1981), Vol. 6, 144. See also A. R. Fausset in this regard (*loc. cit.*) as well as Carl F. Keil (*op. cit.*, 81–82).

22. Lange, *op. cit.*, 324.

23. Greenhill, *op. cit.*, 682.

24. Greenhill, *op. cit.*, 683.

25. Patrick Fairbairn, *An Exposition of Ezekiel* (Minneapolis, MN: Klock & Klock Christian Publishers, [1851 T. & T. Clark] 1979), 369–370. See his extended discussion beginning on page 367.

26. According to this dangerous view, the "fallen" leader just needs to live out the defiant chorus of a song by the band Chumbawumba: "I get knocked down, but I get up again; they're never gonna keep me down!" The convenient wedge used to secure such illegitimate restoration also fits the lyrics of a more famous song: "All you need is love." If all you need is love, you surely don't need God swearing about something or other in Ezekiel 34!

27. Lange, *op. cit.*, 318.

28. Lange, *op. cit.*, 321.

29. Fairbairn, *op. cit.*, 370.

Jehle ... Pilgrims cont. from page 14

5. *Ibid.*, 46.

6. *Ibid.*, 52–54.

7. *Ibid.*, 81, 85.

8. *Ibid.*, 102.

9. *Ibid.*, 112.

10. *Ibid.*, 120–121.

11. *Ibid.*, 121–122.

12. *Ibid.*, 131.

13. *Ibid.*, 131–132.

14. Nathaniel Morton, *New England Memorial* (Boston, MA: Congregational Board of Publication, 1855), 64–65.

15. Wolfe, *Paradigm*, 4.

16. See Deuteronomy 28:12.

17. Bradford, 193.
18. See Percival Hall Lombard, *The Aptucxet Trading Post* (Bourne, MA: Bourne Historical Society, 1968). See also www.bournehistorical.org/aptucxettradingpost.html where the recreated Post can be visited.
19. Bradford, 145.
20. The recreated Grist Mill, along with the John Jenney House in Plymouth can be visited, see www.jenneygristmill.org.
21. Gary North, *Puritan Economic Experiments*, 23.
22. *Ibid.*, 24–40.
23. E. N. Hartley, *Ironworks on the Saugus* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), 270.

Marinov ... Fragmented cont. from page 17

focused, or is he leaving his listeners to trust other gods as well, whether the state, or luck, or science, or their cultural habits?

The answers to those questions will determine whether your money was allocated wisely, for the glory of God, or not. 🏰

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. Henry Van Til, *The Calvinistic Concept of Culture*, <http://bit.ly/HVanTilCCC> or <http://veritasdomain.wordpress.com/2011/12/05/free-book-on-pdf-calvinistic-concept-of-culture-by-henry-van-til/>
2. Fustel des Coulanges, *The Ancient City*, Book I, Chapter 4. See <http://socserv.mcmaster.ca/econ/ugcm/3ll3/fustel/AncientCity.pdf>.
3. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Death of Meaning* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2002), 18.

Raymond ... Strategy cont. from page 19

Conclusion

What the Dutch sought during this tyrannical period of history was a redefinition and reconstruction of society along the lines of Biblical truth. It would be a mistake to define these men as anything but Dutch Calvinists who were advancing the ideology of Christian Reconstruction in Europe. Using God's law as the standard for cultural transformation, these reformers were mostly theonomic, especially in holding princes and magistrates to their political covenant obligation.

Their strategy was simple: resist the tyrant by educating the masses, to gain more and more support for liberty under God. They accomplished this through sermons and pamphlets. These were not just any kind of sermons, nor were they simply gospel salvation tracts. These were cutting expositions of what God had ordained for princes and people and what was actually taking place in Holland. There was no mincing of words. These Calvinists wrote with passion and were so persuasive that, even after two hundred years, the American colonies were affected by their work.

Our strategy should be similar. God has already given us the pattern for our generation by the successful pattern of past generations. Christendom must renounce the two-kingdom doctrine and its monastic pietism that has infected too many churches, and band together in order to advance the Calvinistic view of liberty under God. Perhaps we Christians who are committed to the comprehensive scope and meaning of the Great Commission can use the successful patterns of the past so that our nation can once again regain its rightful place as a godly city upon a hill.

Rev. Paul Michael Raymond is the pastor of the Reformed Bible Church in Appomattox, VA, and founder of the Institute for

Theonomic Reformation (www.hisglory.us).

1. John Witte, Jr. *The Reformation of Rights* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 145–146.
2. *Ibid.*, 148.
3. *Ibid.*, 152—*Civilis conversationis libri duo recogniti et aucti* by Johannes Althusius.
4. Johannes Althusius, *Politica*, VII. 4–7 XI.33–45, XXVIII.14, 37–73.
5. *Politica*, Preface; Pol IX.3–4; Pol XVIII.8 18–20.
6. Witte, *The Reformation of Rights*, 203; See footnotes 149–150.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.* See also *Church and State in the United States* in 3 vol. by Anson P. Stokes.

Schwartz ... Teaching cont. from page 22

Andrea Schwartz is the Chalcedon Foundation's active proponent of Christian education and matters relating to the family. She's the author of five books dealing with homeschooling and the family. Her latest book is *Woman of the House*. 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 37 years. She can be reached by email at lessons.learned@yahoo.com.

1. While not every woman who seeks counsel from me ends up reading and digesting vol. 1 of Rushdoony's *Institutes*, those who do experience a richer understanding of God's Word and are better able to assume the role of a Titus 2 mentor in the future. For those who find the sheer size of the book intimidating, I encourage them to take it a section at a time, while making use of the research portion of the Chalcedon website (chalcedon.edu/research/) and listen to corresponding lectures for each section.

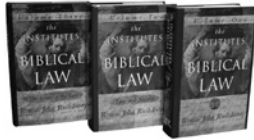
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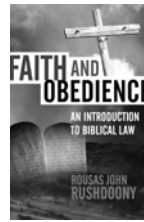
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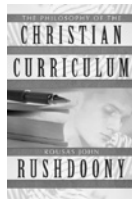
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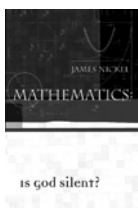
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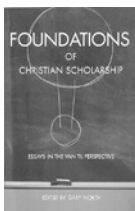


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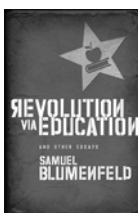


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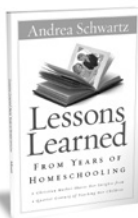


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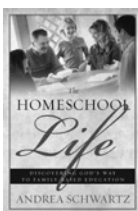


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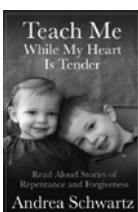


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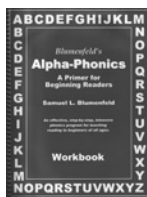


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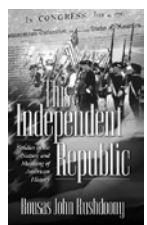
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By Sam Blumenfeld. Provides parents, teachers and tutors with a sensible, logical, easy-to-use system for teaching reading. The Workbook teaches our alphabetic system - with its 26 letters and 44 sounds - in the following sequence: First, the alphabet, 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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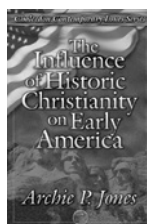


The Nature of the American System

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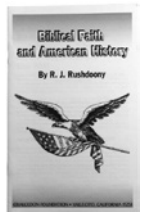
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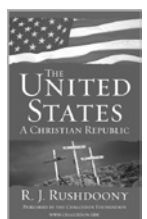


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By R. J. Rushdoony. America was a break with the neoplatonic view of religion that dominated the medieval church. The Puritans and other groups saw Scripture as guidance for every area of life because they viewed its author as the infallible Sovereign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

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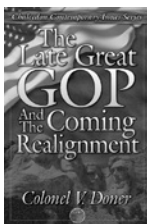
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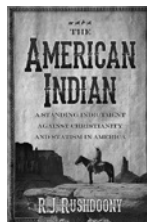


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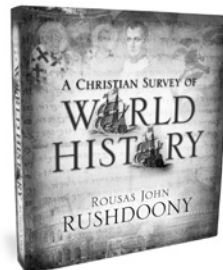
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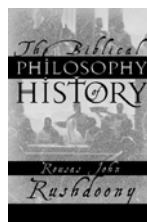
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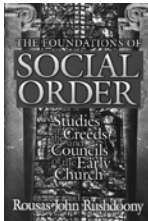
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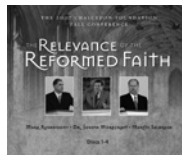
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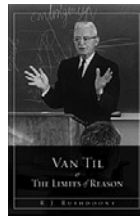
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Van Til & The Limits of Reason

By R. J. Rushdoony. The Christian must see faith in God's revelation as opening up understanding, as thinking God's thoughts after Him, and rationalism as a restriction of thought to the narrow confines of human understanding. Reason is a gift of God, but we must not make more of it than it is. The first three essays of this volume were published in a small booklet in 1960 as a tribute to the thought of Dr. Cornelius Van Til, titled Van Til. The last four essays were written some time later and are published here for the first time.

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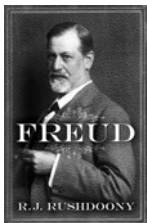


Revolt Against Maturity

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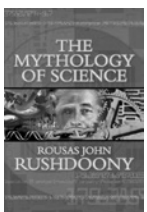
By R. J. Rushdoony. In *The Cure of Souls: Recovering the Biblical Doctrine of Confession*, R. J. Rushdoony cuts through the misuse of Romanism and modern psychology to restore the doctrine of confession to a Biblical foundation—one that is covenantal and Calvinistic.

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Christian's walk is impeded by the remains of sin. This volume is an effort in reversing this trend.

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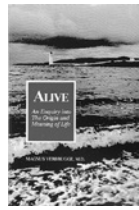
Science



The Mythology of Science

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.

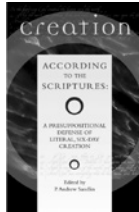
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Alive: An Enquiry into the Origin and Meaning of Life

By Dr. Magnus Verbrugge, M.D. This study is of major importance as a critique of scientific theory, evolution, and contemporary nihilism in scientific thought. Dr. Verbrugge, son-in-law of the late Dr. H. Dooyeweerd and head of the Dooyeweerd Foundation, applies the insights of Dooyeweerd's thinking to the realm of science. Animism and humanism in scientific theory are brilliantly discussed.

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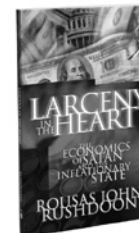
Economics



Making Sense of Your Dollars: A Biblical Approach to Wealth

By Ian Hodge. The author puts the creation and use of wealth in their Biblical context. Debt has put the economies of nations and individuals in dangerous straits. This book discusses why a business is the best investment, as well as the issues of debt avoidance and insurance. Wealth is a tool for dominion men to use as faithful stewards.

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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.

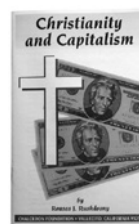
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By Terry Applegate. To many Christians, business is a "dirty" occupation fit only for greedy, manipulative unbelievers. The author, a successful Christian businessman, explodes this myth in this hard-hitting title.

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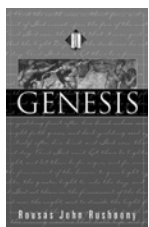


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By R. J. Rushdoony. In a simple, straightforward style, the Christian case for capitalism is presented. Capital, in the form of individual and family property, is protected in Scripture and is necessary for liberty.

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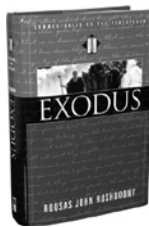


Genesis, Volume I of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

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,

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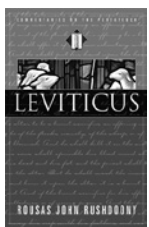
Exodus, Volume II of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

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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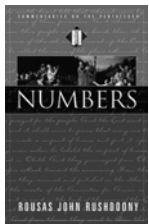
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By R. J. Rushdoony. Much like the book of Proverbs, any emphasis upon the practical applications of God's law is readily shunned in pursuit of more "spiritual" studies. Books like Leviticus are considered dull, overbearing, and irrelevant. But man 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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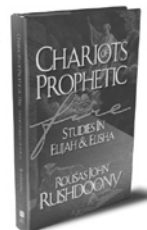
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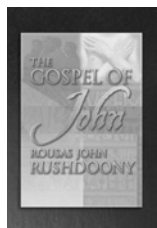
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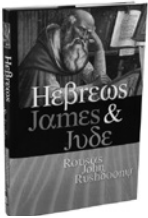
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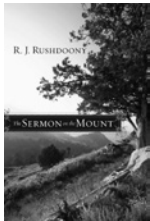
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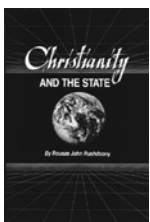
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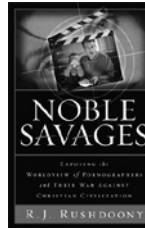


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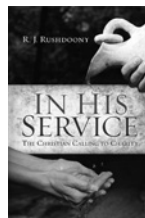


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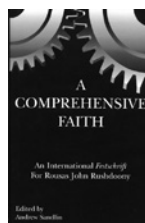


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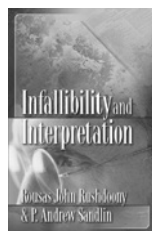
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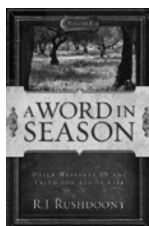
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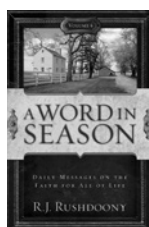
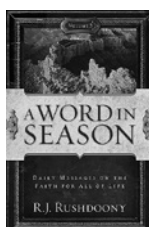
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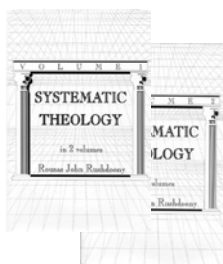
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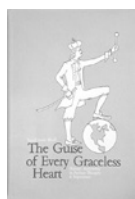
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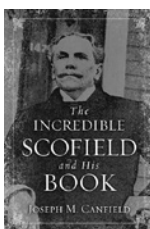


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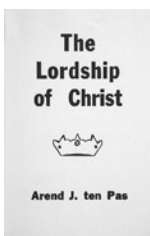


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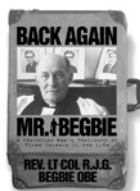


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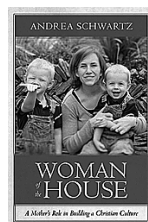
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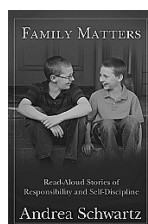


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