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FAITH FOR ALL OF LIFE

PROCLAIMING *the* AUTHORITY of GOD'S WORD OVER EVERY AREA of LIFE and THOUGHT



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May/June 2018

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Kingdom Leadership

By Mark R. Rushdoony



Each of the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) records a private exchange between Jesus and the disciples. It began with a question for which the disciples have often been criticized. In Matthew 18:1 the disciples asked Jesus, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

Part of the problem we have in understanding Scripture is that we read and discuss it in small snippets, often dividing a single discourse or account into multiple parts. Each part is then treated as a distinct morality tale. In order to create separate, single-themed moral lessons, it is often necessary to not only over-simplify the Word itself, but to characterize the context in order to match the presumed moral lesson. One of the ways this is done is to read motives into the story which we can then condemn as sinful. If that ascribed motive is incorrect, however, we have missed the point of the account altogether.

The word for *great* in Matthew 18:1 can imply a literal or figurative meaning. It can refer to size but here it likely refers to age, figuratively then, an *elder*, or leader. Many commentators see this question as prideful. It is noteworthy that Jesus never reprimanded the disciples for the question. If pride was the motive for the question, then we can understand the teaching on humility, but Jesus specifically addresses the question of both greatness in the Kingdom (Matt. 18:4) and leadership (by the analogy of the shepherd in Matt.

18:11–13), indicating the legitimacy of the question.

A “Good Question”?

Why might the disciples bring up the issue of greatness or leadership in the Kingdom? Assuming pride and self-exaltation was the motive neglects the context that Matthew himself gives: Jesus had just spoken of His death (Matt. 17:22–23). Previously, He had Himself spoken of the greatness of those in the Kingdom (Matt. 11:11) and noted there would be those who were both *great* in it as well as *least* based on their regard for His law (Matt. 5:19).

The disciples could not ignore Christ’s reference to His death. It was not prideful to wonder how they were to operate without the Lord, and Jesus never reprimanded them for the question. The disciples did not understand something important and asked the Lord. The exact nature of the Kingdom was not clear; they probably assumed a civil manifestation, with some form of a political structure. If Jesus was not going to be there as the king, it was logical to ask: “Who will be in charge? If it is us, what will the organizational flow chart look like?”

Rabbinical Views of the Kingdom

It is important to remember that all Jews believed in a messianic Kingdom. The rabbinical writings had speculated on the nature of that Kingdom. They often focused on the material blessings and prosperity of a revived Jewish state, but the certainty of a Kingdom was not questioned.

The rabbinical teachings also

included a system of rank in the Kingdom, which is not hard to understand given the elevation of religious orders over the common people. Alfred Edersheim noted that one rabbinical example compared God’s favorites to spoiled children who could get anything they wanted from Him merely by asking. Another rabbinical story Edersheim relates concerned a rabbi who prayed for the sick child of another rabbi. When the child revived, the father of the healed child told his wife not to consider the praying rabbi as any greater than he, because the praying rabbi was like a servant of God whose immediate access gave him more opportunities to ask, whereas he was, as a lord, without such opportunity.¹

If it was not the rabbinical views that were their frame of reference, then the analogy of a Kingdom itself conveyed a structure and chain of command. Without Jesus, how would that leadership, even among the disciples, look? It was an obvious question, and the answer about service and servanthood did speak to the nature of leadership (different than the religious leadership they knew).

Mark adds a detail of interest. This question was discussed by the disciples as they traveled (Matt. 9:33ff.). Again, they were not reprimanded, as if their conversation had been inappropriate in any way. Mark says that Jesus sat down and called the twelve around Him, then explained, “If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.”

All three of the synoptic gospels

record what Jesus then did. He set a small child amongst their small group. Matthew then quotes Jesus as saying, in part,

Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 18:3–4)

The *conversion* here spoken of is not that religious conversion for which we use the term, but rather the core meaning of conversion, which is a turning around, a reversal. Jesus was saying they had to completely change their thinking about the Kingdom itself. And, regarding “greatness,” or eldership, a humbling was necessary. The humbling was not primarily contrasted to a demeanor of pride Jesus saw in the disciples, however, but from the existing example of religious leadership to that of a new model for the Kingdom of God.

All the examples of religious leadership then known represented an ostentatious formality, an expectation of deference. All the religious orders dressed distinctively, they were known to all from a distance. Jesus was telling the disciples to change their thinking about leadership.

Sitting on the ground is perfectly normal for a child. They do not have any ideas about forms or being shown deference, such as being given preferred seats (compare Luke 14:7–11). He then went beyond using the child as an illustration of the demeanor of leadership and used him as a directive of behavior:

And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a

All the examples of religious leadership then known represented an ostentatious formality, an expectation of deference. All the religious orders dressed distinctively, they were known to all from a distance. Jesus was telling the disciples to change their thinking about leadership.

millstone were hanged around his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. (Matt. 18:5–6)

To *receive* meant literally to “take by the hand,” which implies a helpfulness in any number of ways. To *offend* can mean to cause to sin or fall away or to distrust those they should be able to trust. This refers to children, of course, but includes all the “little ones” in the *ecclesia*, all who are part of the Kingdom. The primary context is the leaders of the church who, having completely changed their conception of leadership, were willing to take others by the hand and help them wherever necessary. The great offense is taking advantage of that position of service. The millstone was not a Biblical punishment but a particularly harsh Greek penalty that is used to convey the harshness of judgment on those who abuse their position in the church. As such it is a warning against the antinomian readiness to “forgive and forget” abuses by the clergy in the name of love.

Get off Your High Horse

Jesus used another illustration of leadership, one more familiar to the disciples, that of the shepherd caring for his flock (Matt. 18:11–14). The analogy is of a shepherd searching out a single lost sheep. A solitary sheep is not only

an easy target for predators; it can die from the panic of finding itself alone. Failure to go help a wayward member of the flock was to abandon it to a likely death.

My father witnessed the contempt of cattlemen for both sheep and sheepherding while living in a remote area of Nevada in the 1940s and 50s. The Indians took to cattle ranching because it involved herding cows by horse. The cattleman was aloof from the herd, could leave it when necessary, and merely had to move the herd mounted on a horse as needed. The shepherd worked on foot and had to live very close to his sheep, often handling them to doctor or birth them. It was a round-the-clock job; the sheep were wholly dependent on the work ethic of the shepherd. The lanolin in the wool attracted dirt, so the shepherd was covered in a greasy film not unlike that which accumulates on a stove top or hood. The shepherd smelled like his sheep and was held in contempt by the cattlemen. A standing indictment of a cattleman to a misbehaving boy was the claim that he would never amount to more than a lowdown sheepherder. Cattlemen act as lords over their herds, while shepherds had to live amongst their flock and get dirty. This was the difference Jesus spoke of. If He was speaking to Western ranchers, He might have said, “Don’t be like the religious leaders you see; get down off your high horse and help the people of God like a shepherd.”

John’s Realization

John obviously realized Jesus was talking about offending more than children. He brought up something that had recently occurred (Mark 9:38, cf. Luke 9:49). John related that he and other disciples had reprimanded a man for casting out demons in the name of Jesus. John obviously was concerned that he had *offended* this man. Jesus

confirmed this conviction by saying they ought not to have done so because “he that is not against us, is for us.”

That is the only rebuke of the Lord in this account, and John invited it by questioning his own recent behavior. What John questioned was not his demeanor (proud or humble) but his behavior, whether he had “lorded” it over this man and *offended* him by an improper assertion of authority and jurisdiction.

Faith and Action

Throughout the prophets, when Israel and Judah devolved into blatant idolatry, the charges against them were largely two-fold: apostasy for having violated the covenant, and disobedience, the measure of abandoning the covenant. Obedience, not theology, was the reoccurring demand. Too many Christians emphasize theology for the wrong reason. They want to discuss it endlessly with others who do so, or to point out the errors in the theology of others. Theology, in its plainest meaning, is “God words,” and our understanding of God is never to be primarily academic or used as a polemic but should be the basis for sanctification, a growth in grace which is characterized by obedience to God’s Word. John’s reaction was not his understanding of what Jesus said, but whether his actions had violated those command words.

“The Matthew 18 Principle”

It was out of this discussion of a leadership that more resembled a shepherd getting down and helping his flock in very practical matters that Jesus brought forth what is often referred to as “the Matthew 18 principle” or just as “Matthew 18.” Unfortunately, it is often referred to in a vacuum, transcending all other factors. But God’s Word to us is meant to be practical, not abstract, which is why Jesus used such concrete

examples as a child and a shepherd.

It is one thing to say humble yourselves and serve others, even the weakest. That is a reference to our own behavior. But what if those brothers are not very easy to serve? What if that person, in fact, creates a problem? How do you get through that?

The reference of Matthew 18:15 is to a brother who “trespasses” against us. That word is *hamartia*, which means a missing of the mark. It refers to a personal offense against *you*, not a sin against God, so it does not refer to a crime against God’s law such as murder or theft.

A few years ago, a woman at a Christian college accused a man of rape. She was ordered by the school to forgive him because he was repentant. “Matthew 18” was specifically invoked, and she was threatened with discipline if she refused to forgive and drop the charge. Those were the only options offered her by the school. This type of misuse of Matthew 18 is, unfortunately, very common. In reality, the bullying of this woman was a blatant example of the misuse of power that all of Matthew 18 addresses. The resolution process Jesus outlines was meant to address personal problems with others in the family of God, not to negate the justice of God.

The model of leadership in the church of our Lord’s day was a false one. On another occasion Jesus would describe those men as locked out of the Kingdom of God (Luke 13:24–30). To follow their model was to follow error. The leaders of the church would be those who took others by the hand, who got off their high horse and cared for the flock, even if it meant acquiring some of the unpleasant dirt and stink of real-life problems. 🐾

1. Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. Book IV, Chapter III.



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Jean-Marc Berthoud's *In Defense of God's Law*¹

Reviewed by Martin G. Selbrede



The Preface that the late Pierre Courthial wrote for Jean-Marc Berthoud's book *In Defense of God's Law* sets the tone for the

entire work. The following section from that Preface bears repeating here for our purposes:

... The Word of God, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, is inseparably Law-Word and Gospel-Word. Like the Gospel, the Law reveals to us the holiness of God together with His mercy, and the grace of God together with His justice.

The Pharisees loved to esteem themselves servants of the Law—which they twisted to their own ends, and to which they added or substituted their human traditions—to the detriment of the Gospel which they destroyed. Similarly, [today's] Antinomians push forward the Gospel—which they diminish and “superficialize” under pretext of exalting it—to the detriment of the Law which they obscure ...

The Law of God is revealed as much in the New Testament as in the Old, and is pertinent to every sphere of life: personal, conjugal, familial, social, economic, scientific, political, etc. Yet, in our day, it is derided, ridiculed, and discarded even by that institution which God has set up to be the “pillar and buttress of the truth,” even by those whom God calls to be the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world!” In the following pages, Jean-Marc Berthoud equips us with Biblical, Christian principles for regaining, teaching, and



Jean-Marc Berthoud at the Pierre Viret fountain in Lausanne, Switzerland

putting into practice this Law, which God has given in order that we may walk in it.

Berthoud's work is divided into two major sections, *Foundations* and *Battles*, and concludes with four helpful appendices, the most remarkable of which surveys J. Gresham Machen's *The Majesty of God's Law*. We'll dive into the *Foundations* section first.

Foundations

The first part of Berthoud's book is divided into nineteen chapters, the bulk of which address common criticisms and misunderstandings concerning the law of God from a Biblical perspective. All major objections to anchoring Christian ethics upon the law of God are dealt with in considerable depth.

While the chapters putting forth an apologetic for the law against various popular critiques dominate this section, they are interwoven with chapters setting forth a positive exposition of the law. The latter include compelling examinations of Psalm 119 (“a hymn to the Law of God”), the law of God as a figure of Christ, and the proper use of the law in the Christian life. Two of the *Foundations* chapters focus on practical considerations, the second of which is addressed to pastors.

“The simple fact that God enjoins us to love Him and to love our neighbor should cause us to understand the impossibility of separating love for God from His commandments, or of separating love for our neighbor from the divine law that requires it.” Of course,

God's law doesn't put this love into our hearts, and Berthoud cites Romans 5:5 to dispel that misconception. In other words, the author takes pains to show the damage wrought in the Christian life by separating love from obedience to God's law, while protecting against the opposite error of artificially erasing the distinction between them (which implicitly evicts the Holy Spirit from the sanctification process). Love and obedience go hand in hand in the same sense as righteousness and peace have kissed one another (Ps. 85:10).

In dealing with John 1:17, Berthoud points out the fallacy of pitting Christ against the law. The text in the ESV reads, "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." Berthoud's comment is on the mark:

Nothing in this text implies *opposition* between Law and Truth, nor between Moses and Jesus Christ, and furthermore, not between law and grace. A development in revelation and in the efficacy of grace does not imply any contradiction or opposition. Moreover, this is admirably proved by Scripture when the apostle Paul affirms that the law is nothing else than "the embodiment of knowledge and truth" (Rom. 2:20).

The supposed opposition of the law to grace and truth is wholly manufactured by the antinomian critic. Some scholars have further pointed out that, grammatically considered, the contrast in John 1:17 isn't even between *law* and *grace* and *truth*: John's text is rather concerned with *how* these things came to us from God. The law of God was *given* through Moses while grace and truth *came* in the actual person of Christ. This is echoed in Hebrews 3:5–6 where Moses stands as a servant while Christ stands as a son.

Berthoud is concerned to set forth "the unity of God's commandments and

Word" by both positive exposition and by confrontation of time-worn objections that still persist into the present day. Perhaps some of his most potent contributions in this regard involve his analysis of Psalm 119, where he finds this unity repeatedly expressed throughout the longest member of the Psalter.

Modern abuse of the terms "legalism" and "spiritualism" (terms which "do not even appear in Scripture") can be dangerous if we end up denigrating the law of God in the process or deprecating the Holy Spirit's role in the Christian's life. What Scripture actually condemns are "the carnal thoughts and sinful actions of men who, in their weakness . . . cannot even begin to conform their lives to the requirements of God's law." The fact that obedience is never in our own strength is made explicit by Berthoud: "To try and accomplish the Law without the Spirit who has given us this Law is nothing but a vain, futile effort." But Berthoud immediately heads off any antinomian implication: "To imagine that a spiritual life [can] dispense with conformity to God's Law is nothing but a deadly illusion of the flesh."

When time comes to deal with John Calvin's apparent disdain for applying God's law, Jean-Marc Berthoud spares no words:

It is remarkable that, contrary to his habit, Calvin did not bring any Biblical proof to a very important declaration. Upon this exact point, the comparably eminent reformers Martin Bucer and Pierre Viret, do not share this opinion of their Genevan colleague. For them, the whole law, properly understood, constitutes the foundation not only of that which we call "morality," but also of judicial law itself. This is, likewise, the opinion of the Puritan founders of New England.

The source documentation behind these specific claims, which the

author presents in his footnotes, is well thought-out and to the point. If Calvin is on this point not a suitable guide, Berthoud is not afraid to speak plainly and align himself with the Reformers on the other side of the question.

Particularly valuable is the author's articulation of thirteen key practical points regarding contemporary application of God's law, a tabulation that is comprehensive and morally satisfying. He appends to his list an important caveat: "It must be added here that judicial power cannot judge any but public infractions of the law." He explains why this is the case, setting forth in detail a powerful antidote to modern humanistic law's tendency of late to aspire to the punishment of thought crimes.

An exploration of the psychological aspects of God's law, even as it pertains to the unbeliever, opens up vistas normally not explored by theologians. This discussion occupies the eleventh section of Berthoud's *Foundations* under the title "God's Law and Man's Conscience." The soteriological limitations of God's law are laid bare lest any be tempted to use the law unlawfully, since by works of the law shall no flesh be justified, for "consciousness of the law of God . . . is in itself entirely incapable of leading [any] to salvation." Man must be regenerated: legislation isn't sufficient, supernatural power is required.

The next three sections of *Foundations* deal with important aspects of the Ten Commandments, while the final five sections (where the meat of the book resides) go into depth articulating the place of works in the Christian life, the proper use of the law of God, etc., ending with an address delivered to a group of pastors concerning practical questions relating to Christian ethics. (I've essentially reproduced Berthoud's section titles in the foregoing description. What this pencil-sketch summary

fails to convey is the *victory orientation* in these chapters that emerges when God's law is put back on the table and properly applied, so that we again can see how Christ "leads justice to victory," (Matt. 12:20).

Now that we've laid suitably robust foundations, we're ready to ride into battle armed with the truth ... and this is precisely what Berthoud does in the next section of his book.

Battles

In the second part of Berthoud's book, he deals directly with polemics: the debate over God's law. Two of the six chapters in this section delve deeply into the question of bioethics, an area in which Berthoud is a particularly reliable guide. The others deal with the historic contours of the debate over theonomic ethics, what is at stake Biblically when this debate veers in the wrong direction, and chapters dealing with individual opponents of God's law. One can already smell the heat of battle in the name of some of these chapters: "A theological fraud: *La morale selon Calvin* (*Morality According to Calvin*) by Eric Fuchs" and "Jacques Ellul and the irreconcilable clash of ideas between Marx and Calvin."

We enter the battlefield with section twenty of the book, "Ancient and modern opposition against the Law of God" and then on to the consequences thereof in section twenty-one, "The imperiled Biblical foundations of morality and law." Once opposition to God's law gains a foothold, alien law structures and moral frameworks (so-called) rush in to fill the vacuum created when God is dethroned as Lawgiver (Isa. 33:22), and it is right to draw attention to "imperiled foundations," because great will be the fall of the house when the foundations give way. As the psalmist cries out, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Ps. 11:3).

If *Battles* occupies half the length of

Berthoud's book, it is because we *have* been thrust into a battle, one occasioned by wholesale forfeit and default by Christians over the ages. We have richly earned our "public insignificance" by way of capitulation, which is one of the "distinguishing characteristics in our age," to use Berthoud's language. So we must eject the giants from the land, who will not easily give up ground in the name of the antinomianism they've labored to justify from their tendentious readings of Scripture. We must wrestle with the Word of God, and Berthoud does not disappoint as a first-rank polemicist and apologist for the divine statutes and ordinances.

The author pulls no punches. In the very first paragraph of *Battles*, he declares antinomianism to be "just another form of liberal theology," whose defenders "are actually neo-modernists" (whether consciously so or not). "The royal sovereignty of God has largely been done away with in today's church, for His Law is trampled upon, and viewed with contempt."

The supposed prooftexts in support of antinomian teaching are walked through systematically, each receiving due attention, often leading to unexpected insights (e.g., Berthoud's understanding of "shadow" is actually more defensible than modern misconceptions of the idea, to cite just one instance). He poses Biblical liberty against the false liberty proclaimed in the name of those who pit grace against law. The logic in his expositions is solid, forming a bulwark against the disputer of this age.

That we're facing a rebirth of Marcion's views of the Old Testament (or even parts of the New Testament that smell too much like the Old Testament) is a fact that Berthoud examines closely. The reader is better able to understand the strategy behind Marcion's positions, a strategy that is laid bare to make it

easier to grasp. Today's modern Marcions sing a very similar tune, differing in details but motivated by the same impulse: to open the door for man to become his own legislator.

After surveying Agricola, Freud, and Marx, this study turns to antinomian thinking that wears the robes of Christianity (which the author holds is a pretense, pure and simple). In considering Emil Brunner, Berthoud exposes the underlying motive driving such thinking:

Under orthodox and evangelical appearances and auspices, one comes to give a teaching completely different from that really contained in the Scriptures. An existentialist spiritualism replaces the objective, moral teaching of the Scripture.

How heated (and arguably irrational) antinomians can become is exemplified in the September 1984 issue of *La Vie spirituelle* where the various streams of argument coalesce into a Babel of confusion.

For it turns out that antinomianism doesn't just oppose the law of God, *it substitutes something else for the law*. The offense of the law is its "exact and conceptually intelligible norms." The proffered substitutes open wide the door to a stunning range of conduct on the slimmest of exegetical bases.

Dispensationalism, not surprisingly, comes in for sustained examination (here Berthoud quotes Lewis Sperry Chafer, Rene Pache, and H.E. Alexander; he is in process of preparing a massive analysis of Darby's contribution to the systematic undercutting of Christendom, which will be published separately from this volume). Berthoud identifies R. J. Rushdoony as one whose response to dispensationalism set the proper Biblical orientation to the matter, not to mention his citations of J. Gresham Machen, O. T. Allis, and Philip Mauro.

At bottom, Berthoud attributes

the “weakness of God’s church” to such antinomian thinking, and establishes this point by way of an extended historical analysis that is as broad as it is deep. Why was the church so culturally significant prior to the advent of systematic antinomianism? The author helps us sift through the complexities of that issue. How was the church stronger under the teaching of, say, a Pierre Viret than under our current slate of guides? These are questions that are plumbed to their depths in this volume.

Diagnosis of an illness is the prelude to curing it, so the author comes to ask, “How has it come to this?” in respect to the “continual withering” that has marked Christian influence since “the end of the 17th century.” The causes are several, which are unpacked in detail under the headings of philosophical errors (particularly Cartesianism) and moral errors. All such dualistic thinking saps the faith of her strength and moral foundations.

The American reader is then allowed to gain a deeper appreciation for currents of thoughts on the Continent as Berthoud walks through significant figures in the French-speaking world. Among these are Jacques Ellul, Erich Fuchs (whom Berthoud accuses of theological fraud), Olivier Abel, and Jean-Marc Thévoz. These battles are “close to home” for Berthoud and it is thus proper that they occupy his attention as he depicts the contours of the controversial issues being fought over. We must come to recognize that not every fight is centered on a specific American seminary, for our built-in provincialism fails to account for the worldwide aspects of Christendom’s war for the nations. Awareness of how such debates were conducted in Europe can only be of value when it comes time for us to pursue copycat enemies on this side of the Atlantic.

The final section (before the appendices) goes into additional detail on bioethical issues (first broached at length in the previous section’s detailed examination of Abel and Thévoz) and is something of a tour de force in respect to how bioethics is to be shaped by the application of God’s law. Laid out as a series of numbered theses, this section amounts to a stand-alone manifesto premised on the Biblical doctrine of creation and the abiding validity of the law of God. While brief, its ten key points summarize the issues at stake with exceptional clarity.

The Appendices


Three of the four appendices that conclude Berthoud’s work deal with specific individuals who bring a positive orientation to the question of God’s law for today: J. Gresham Machen’s “The Majesty of God’s Law” from 1937, Philip Mauro’s “The Law and the Gospel,” and Robert L. Dabney on “The Law.” Regarding the latter (extracted from Dabney’s *Lectures in Systematic Theology*), Berthoud observes that earlier systematic treatises were marked by the presence of a section concerning God’s law (e.g., Calvin and Viret in 1564, Turretin in 1679) whereas this locus is absent in modern systematics (e.g., John Owen, Charles Hodge, Herman Bavinck, Louis Berkhof, Herman Hoeksema, or Gordon Spykman). Dabney did cover the question of God’s law, however, as did twentieth-century theologian R. J. Rushdoony in his *Systematic Theology*. The consequences of the studied omission of God’s law from the work of systematic theologians have been serious ones: these are omissions for which we’ve paid a very high price in the loss of both spiritual and cultural capital. If “the entering in of Thy word bringeth light,” then the modern church has for several centuries been purveying considerable darkness in forgetfulness of

her true calling.

Berthoud’s book concludes with an extensive bibliography concerning the law of God, a listing which amounts to an important resource in its own right by covering works unfamiliar to English speaking audiences.

Conclusion

We heartily commend this new work by Jean-Marc Berthoud to the serious student of God’s Word. It is timely, well-written, thoroughly-documented, and compelling. It is always a joy to make acquaintance with a skilled theologian with a large base of Biblical and cultural knowledge and deep historical roots going back to the Swiss Reformation itself. Dr. Harold O. J. Brown’s assessment of Berthoud confirms as much: “That man [Jean-Marc] knows more than the two of us [Harold O. J. Brown and Dr. Douglas Kelly] put together.” Small wonder that Christians are taking notice of Berthoud’s work as more of it appears in English.

While the issues being covered in this volume may seem familiar to the seasoned reader, the approach taken by the author is often unique and insightful. The exhortation to appropriate action, geared toward recovering the glorious foundations that had been left to rot under the influence of antinomian deprecation of much of Scripture, is one that all Christians need to give ear to and to heed. This volume upholds a bright burning torch, one that sheds Biblical light upon our *full* calling under God, for which all of us shall be held accountable before His throne, for to whom much is given, much shall be required. 

1. Review based on copy of the English translation of Jean-Marc Berthoud, *Apologie pour la Loi de Dieu*, provided in advance of publication by Zurich Publishing in 2018 or 2019. The translation has yet to be typeset and paginated, which is why citations lack page numbers.

A Modern Swiss Reformer: The Life of Jean-Marc Berthoud

Didier Erne



It is hard to describe Jean-Marc Berthoud, because his prolific and wide-ranging work of more than twenty books was done outside an

official ministry or a professorship at a seminary, and he is not a professional writer living off the sale of his books and giving conferences. Most of his working life he was a porter in the train station in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, and then a postal worker in a warehouse, but in the end, it was this separation from academia that enabled Jean-Marc to think deeply and independently on matters of vital importance to the life of the church. As a consequence, his books are unique in their sense of scope, having been written in response to various attacks on the church.

As a young man, I became nostalgic for the great witness of the Reformation when I thought about the cause of the gospel in Switzerland. “Is there nothing left of this spirit of spiritual warfare in my fatherland?” I asked myself. So, when I first met Jean-Marc in his bookshop in Lausanne more than ten years ago, I had no idea that God was continuing to preserve a faithful witness through the ministry of this remarkable man. The more I talked to him and read his books, the more I discovered the same passion as there was in Calvin, Zwingli, or Bullinger, brought into a modern context.

When God works to build up and strengthen His church, He takes time to make His servants ready. God often

“His ministry was the strengthening of the church by resisting all evil wherever it was found, and the rebuilding of a sane Christian culture, a culture grounded in absolute reality.”

starts preparing someone long before he knows the nature of his ministry. Humanly speaking, the Reformation was the result of men who fought fierce personal battles and achieved solid scholarship in Biblical studies. In the case of Jean-Marc, he first had to go through a painful experience.

Family and Early Years

Jean-Marc was born in South Africa in 1939 into the missionary family of Alexandre and Madeleine Berthoud, originally from Neuchâtel in French-speaking Switzerland. He was the third of five children, and at the time of his birth his parents were leading a ministry in a village about three hundred miles south of Johannesburg.

Jean-Marc’s mother was a godly lady, the daughter of missionaries. His father, the son of a Salvation Army officer, was a devout minister. In the missionary station, for instance, he was director of the hospital and the small printing house. He organized funds for the mission in addition to his ordinary ministry of preaching. He was full of zeal for God’s work, but his devotion to

his many duties unfortunately ruined his health and caused his untimely death in 1962 at the age of fifty-seven.

From his earliest days therefore, Jean-Marc saw what it meant to serve Christ. The faith of his parents was lived out through dedication to practical service, which left a lasting impression on his life. He saw that serving God came with a cost, such as leaving the comfort of Switzerland for missionary work in Africa, but this work was always done with joy.

He deeply respected his father, but in his early twenties he rebelled against the faith of his parents. It was a rebellion of indifference to God, but in God’s providence this rebellion served to prepare him for the work he eventually had to do.

Academic Career and Return to Europe

Academically speaking, Jean-Marc did very well. At the high school level, he was two years ahead of his peers. He graduated at age sixteen and at age twenty finished the equivalent of a bachelor’s degree at the university in South Africa. His academic brilliance earned him a scholarship to the University of Paris, Sorbonne, to study history.

Sadly, with academic success came pride as well. Leaving rural South Africa, he reveled in the cultured life of the prestigious center of Europe. At that time, he felt morally and intellectually superior to the common man.

Even though Paris seemed to fulfill his yearning for culture, he discovered

the corruption within. The Janus face of Europe was made unequivocally clear to him when he studied the colonial history of the Congo basin under Belgian King Leopold II from 1880 to 1914 for his doctoral thesis. It has been estimated that around five million natives were killed as a direct result of Leopold's greed and lust for power. "How could a Christian culture come to that?" was the perplexing question that Jean-Marc asked himself.

In a desperate attempt to understand this, he widened his initial research from a historical approach to include economic, ethical, and sociological aspects. His thesis derailed, and he returned to Switzerland in a troubled state of mind.

Salvation from Utter Nothingness

Back in Switzerland, he worked as a teacher in a high school to make ends meet because his South African diplomas were not recognized. His doctoral studies had destabilized him because he had found no answers to his most pressing questions.

It seemed to him that there were two civilizations in Europe: one of true being (the reality) and the other of mere appearance (the façade). The civilization that he so much admired—the one he found in Paris—had created a revulsion in him because it was ultimately an attractive veneer over a morally corrupt heart. This insight into the hollowness of a culture that expels God from its thinking was the motivation for his later apologetic work.

Though he longed for a simple life connected to reality, his pride didn't yet allow him to acknowledge the necessity of the Bible for forming a society with true substance. In his desperation to make sense of life in a secular framework, he continued to live a life void of any meaning, apart from the passion of his emotions.

God finally intervened on a Sunday afternoon in 1965, when He revealed to Jean-Marc his true state. Waiting for a train in Neuchâtel, Jean-Marc suddenly felt his utter personal nothingness. It was not anything from the outside that triggered this, but physically and emotionally he felt like he ceased to exist. "I'm undone," he said to his then girlfriend, who stared at him.

Back in his apartment, he read the following sentence in *Calvin's Treatise Concerning Scandals*: "Whoever in distress cries out to God, God will in no way forsake him." Having abandoned the faith of his childhood, he prayed, "God, if you really exist, reveal yourself to me." He realized—as Pascal had long before—that he had nothing to lose if there was no God and everything to gain if there was.

A Slow Progression to the Light

This prayer did not result in his immediate return to normalcy. His thoughts in turmoil, he abandoned his dreams for a doctorate as he was unable to concentrate or to read for more than fifteen minutes at a time. As a consequence of this state of mind, he lost his job as teacher.

Unable to do intellectual work, he found a job as a gardener. Manual work was the best therapy for a troubled mind and so he worked as a gardener for five years. During this time he was able to think, to pray, and to read without the pressure he had felt as a student. He also learned to bear humiliation. Early on he came into contact with L'Abri and Francis Schaeffer, but in the end it was the abiding care of a French minister which helped bring him back to the faith.

During this time of hardship, God blessed him with a growing love for learning and truth. Working with his hands left his brain free to study good solid literature. Visiting Jean-Marc today, you would find a man with an

apartment full of books. God blessed him also with a wonderful wife, Rose-Marie, a Christian nurse with many artistic talents who was the daughter of missionaries.

The beneficial effect of good manual work and the moral support of a loving wife and five believing children gave him the stability of mind to start fighting for the truth to which he had returned—and what a fight it was!

A Life of Service Begins

With the beginning of Jean-Marc's marriage, a desire to do apologetic work started. In 1971, he became aware of the legalization of abortion in his home region of Neuchâtel. In reaction to this he wrote a letter to the local newspaper pointing out the cruelty of abortion. He was disturbed by the silence of Swiss churches on this issue, and in the hope of stirring up a response he sent two hundred letters to the clergymen in his area, each written individually. He reminded these men of their huge responsibility of keeping the flock of Christ (Ezek. 3:17–21). Already, through this first great effort to uphold God's truth, Jean-Marc learned that the biggest enemy to truth is not open and explicit opposition, but silent indifference. His two hundred letters resulted in personal contact with only three of the recipients—an Evangelical pastor, a Reformed pastor, and a Catholic priest.

The meager response was not a cause for resignation, even though he was struggling on several fronts. By that time, Jean-Marc had begun working as a porter in Lausanne's train station. For each piece of luggage carried he was only paid a little more than one Swiss franc!

Nevertheless, through God's continuous provision, he was able to support his growing family. He used the time between arriving trains to read, meditate, and pray. His loving and

humble manner led to many opportunities for witnessing, although at times he experienced opposition from his superiors and even physical aggression from one of his colleagues. God blessed his faithfulness, and at a very low point (when he was under the impression that he was wasting his life doing a low-level job) an old priest wisely reminded him, “All work done for Christ that doesn’t know the Cross is not worth much.”

Organizing the Christian Resistance to Godless Modernity

Jean-Marc came to understand that doctrinal weakness was one of the major causes for the shocking silence regarding abortion. To address doctrinal issues and promote a return to good Biblical scholarship he started a periodical called *Christian Documents* which ran from 1971 to 1978, supported mostly by donations. In these apologetic writings Jean-Marc dealt with the heresies of his day and the essays were sent to clergy free of charge.

As with many earlier reformers, however, his adherence to the truth was not always popular with Christian leaders. When he attacked such weak spots as the non-doctrinal Christianity of Billy Graham, or the problems of Dispensationalism, he lost many supporters and donors. This eventually forced the cessation of the periodical.

Work for a reformer never ceases, and as one battle draws to a close another breaks out elsewhere. Jean-Marc turned his attention to the families in his region. In 1978, together with conservative Roman Catholics, he founded the Association Vaudoise de Parents Chrétiens (Vaud Christian Parents’ Association, Vaud being the name of his canton). This association, still active today, works to strengthen families and schools against ideological attacks and to offer support on the teachings of the Bible and creation.

Next, Jean-Marc was instrumental in the formation of the *Association for Creation, the Bible, and Science* (active 1986–1994) which fought back against theistic and materialistic evolution. He also started a Christian apologetic review called *Resist and Construct*¹ (1987–2005) to address various topics—theological, philosophical, historical, economic, etc.—from a Reformed and Biblical standpoint.

In all of these initiatives, Jean-Marc exposed many wrong teachings in the modern church, regardless of the cost to himself. His interest was not only to fight the consequences of bad thinking, but to get people back to the roots of their faith.

When asked once about the motivation of his apologetic work, he said, “My goal was to reflect on fundamental questions that were generally avoided by Christians, and to approach and try to clarify them.” But to attack the fundamental presuppositions of modernity is no light business, and he was generally considered “divisive” or “argumentative.” Banging the gong of resistance to modernity is a lonesome enterprise, but his often painful confrontations give weight to his writings and make them that much more valuable for the church. Here is no armchair theologian, but a scholar who also knows the hardship of implementing God’s truth in a hostile world.

Rebuilding the Church Through Books and True Fellowship

Until the beginning of the 1990s, Jean-Marc’s literary output was in the form of articles that he copied and distributed with the modest means at his disposal. The work was both labor-intensive and time-intensive.

Then, in 1992, he renewed an old friendship with Vladimir Dimitrijevic, a publisher in Lausanne of Serbian Orthodox heritage. They discovered

a common interest in refuting Liberation Theology. They also shared a desire to provide solid Christian literature touching all aspects of life to a French-speaking public. Dimitrijevic graciously offered Jean-Marc the opportunity to publish a new Reformed book series under the name *Messages* through his publishing house, L’Âge d’Homme.

He also allowed Jean-Marc to rent a beautiful little bookshop in the historic center of Lausanne, which he did for twenty-two years. This bookshop became the meeting point and distribution center for Jean-Marc’s apologetic work. A practical man, he knew that only through genuine human interaction could the church be rebuilt and strengthened to bear witness for God’s truth in our society.

In his bookshop he offered many kinds of books—some Reformed or Evangelical, some Orthodox or secular—but all were true to the Bible’s teaching on creation because they took it seriously. They represented reality and not mere appearance.

Pierre Viret, the reformer of Lausanne and Jean Marc’s spiritual ancestor, said, “It is also necessary that this return to the Word of God would have an interaction with the reality of this world. Half of the time spent studying the Bible and the other half studying the world—nature, society, science and so on—in order to gain control over reality.” True reformation has all of God’s creation as its mission field. With this in mind, Jean-Marc strove to break pietistic Christians out of the constraints of their limited worldview.

A Life of Studying and Apologetic Battles for Truth Bears Fruit

In 2007, Jean-Marc was asked to teach *Biblical Theology* and *Church History* at the Bible College of Lausanne, newly founded by several Reformed Baptist congregations. These two

courses were the basis of a profound work of scholarship, *A History of the Covenant through the Scriptures*, and his five-volume magnum opus, *A Covenantal History of the Church in the World*.

In these two major works, he delivers a comprehensive analysis of key moments and key theological and philosophical battles through the history of the church. From the Arian heresy, to the Nominalist/Realist controversy, to the false lights of Petrus Ramus and John Comenius, to the present-day non-doctrinal Christianity of Pope Francis—through it all he shows that modernity is the culmination of past heresies. And to resist bygone as well as current heresies, we do well to heed the cumulative witness of God's faithful servants, such as Athanasius, John Calvin, Friedrich Stahl, Pierre Courthial, or R. J. Rushdoony, to name a few.

To this list I would submit the name of Jean-Marc Berthoud as a fitting addition.

The purpose of Jean-Marc's writings, especially the major works, is to show the big picture of church history beyond mere dates and facts, and to point out the best sources for further study. As in Calvin, Jean-Marc exhibits an astonishing capacity to synthesize the best elements to respond to spiritual attacks. His writings are truly ecumenical because his research is not limited by confessional boundaries—he acknowledges truth where God has given it and brings it into harmony with the testimony of Scripture.

Jean-Marc once said, "The Word of God, all of it, is the truth, the truth about everything. Nothing useful, nothing fruitful, can be done outside this framework." Such a broad synthesis is only possible, humanly speaking, because he adapts his method of inquiry to its object in the best tradition of Aristotelian methodology. As a consequence

of a life of personal battles and his interest in all spheres of God's creation, his writings lack the barrenness of so many academic works of similar scope.

Conclusion

As hard it was for me to describe Jean-Marc Berthoud in the beginning of this article, it is even harder for me to summarize his contribution to Christian thought in just a few words. He never wanted to establish an interesting new school of thought or develop idiosyncratic concepts about theological or philosophical problems. His ministry was the strengthening of the church by resisting all evil wherever it was found, and the rebuilding of a sane Christian culture, a culture grounded in absolute reality.

His books are therefore both enriching and encouraging to read, leading (as good books tend to be) to the discovery of many other invaluable books and authors that you wouldn't hear of anywhere else.

There is a consistency of thought throughout his writings, and an infectious love for truth and for Christ. Here is a Christian soldier fighting a bankrupt modernity with all his being, a true modern Swiss reformer.

We appreciate and diligently read our fathers in the faith, but I also thank God for giving us men like Jean-Marc, a faithful brother acquainted with our current struggles and speaking to our generation. As the proverbial neglect of a prophet among his own grieves me, it is my prayer that his wisdom would not remain hidden in French and be forgotten, but that others would be inspired to make his writings available to the English-speaking world and beyond. 🇨🇭

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1. All articles, mostly in French, can be accessed under http://calvinisme.ch/index.php/R%C3%A9sister_et_construire

Jean-Marc Berthoud: Magisterial Christian Scholar in Our Time of Need

by Douglas F. Kelly



When I first met him in the autumn of 1982 on a trip to two scholarly conferences in Europe, it did not take me long

to grasp the depth and breadth of the immense reading Jean-Marc Berthoud had done, and the fervent determination of his heart to give his all to the cause of Christ in our declining Western society. Since that time, we have stayed in touch, and his understanding of the issues that have shaped our culture across the world has never ceased to amaze me, and to help me negotiate the world of both high and low intellect, good and bad religion, and healthy and death-dealing politics.

The scope of his reading and comprehension compares to that of his contemporaries, such as Pierre Courthial and R. J. Rushdoony, and from a different perspective, T. F. Torrance. All of these unusually gifted men (and not always from the same point of view) bring into immediate contact very diverse fields of reality and seek to think them through together under thorough commitment to the Word of God written.

While Jean-Marc makes no pretension to high intellectual, academic, or ecclesiastical standing (how he comes across has never been his interest), I have at times wondered if later centuries will not consider him to have been in something like the category of the Church Fathers, sixteenth-century Reformers, or some of the Puritans. Of course, I cannot be sure of that: only time will tell,

and he will have no concern one way or the other in the meantime.

This article of appreciation is to be about Jean-Marc, not myself, but even so, I will have to make some personal references in hopes of shining light on the combined Patristic/Medieval/Reformational and post-Enlightenment magisterial quality of the thought and almost universal grasp of all the issues that matter most for the well-being of humanity and the glory of God.

On the other hand, time and space would fail me to relate in even cursory detail the countless times I have telephoned him to ask his (always informed) opinion on Gnosticism (ancient and modern), Irenaeus, Lombard and Aquinas, Anselm, Bullinger, Viret, Calvin, Lancelot Andrewes, as well as controversies across the church ages, such as the Iconoclastic, the Filioque, etc.

It is a characteristic of this deep and fair thinker that he is never narrowly denominational in his assessments of theologians and churches. For instance, his keen appreciation of Thomas Aquinas (especially in light of some of Thomas's Biblical commentaries) shows careful reading, comprehension, and impartiality, without any anxious regard to widely received opinions. His appreciation is not without critique of areas where he thinks the great thinker was less than Biblical. But weak points do not keep him from lauding strong points, and from using those strong points himself.

Also, Jean-Marc is not without

awareness of the peculiarities and limited perspectives of some of the good Reformed theologians, much as he seeks to stand in their company appreciatively. It is never enough with him to rely merely on widely received academic or ecclesiastical authorities. He respects them, but puts them all under the same transcendent authority that controls his own thought and practice: the Holy Scriptures, interpreted according to the rules of such as Tychonius, Augustine, Calvin, and Owen.

For that reason, I have always felt a certain confidence in asking what he thinks in various matters where I have been lecturing or writing. It is not that he could possibly get everything right (who could?), or that he is never without prejudice or animus (who is?), but that his heart is deeply committed to pleasing Christ, by going on his knees before the Lord who speaks in the Scriptures, in order to edify the church and begin to restore a healthy culture.

You would not wish to keep reading long enough for me to give a representative sample of issues and questions where I have sought Jean-Marc's advice on thinkers and issues across the last two thousand years! (I have kept a daily diary for well over forty years, and in looking at that, I could count it all up; but that is certainly not called for at this time!) He has helped me as I wrote the two volumes of *Systematic Theology*, also *Creation and Change*, and many an article on challenging subjects (some rather arcane—yet always, he knew more than I did).

His well-read assessment of politics since the Middle Ages is directly based upon his understanding of Holy Scripture. He is always what we would traditionally term “a realist”: that is, he deals with what is there, without imposing a structure of preconceived opinion upon it (based on over-attention to “names”—i.e. “nominalism”). Though neither Jean-Marc Berthoud nor T. F. Torrance might exactly agree on my comparison here, I think Jean-Marc’s approach in this sense of humble openness to what is there, is not unlike what T. F. Torrance calls “truly scientific methodology.”

All of us humans are necessarily limited, and therefore cannot entirely see beyond our own starting point and intellectual structure, yet Jean-Marc has been found trying, though not always with complete success—and who could cast the first stone here? He is not sold out to conspiracy theory, but is willing to consider some aspects of it as being potentially relevant to politics since the Enlightenment.

Whether he is right in any of this, I do not know, but to say the least, it has been most interesting to go over with him his views of why the world is like it is for the last three centuries. But whether any of this is the case or not, I am always humbled, uplifted, and instructed by the way he takes everything back to the gospel, the law of God, and to the covenant of grace that runs through the Bible and encompasses all our cultural and political life to this hour. That going back to the Scriptures is what really matters, for by definition, much that lies behind current and historical events is always beyond our ken, and does not matter like Scripture matters. (R. J. Rushdoony’s discussion of conspiracy in light of Psalm 2 is of great relevance here.)

Jean-Marc reminds me of the great nineteenth-century Reformed theo-

logian of Virginia, Robert L. Dabney, in that his transparent sincerity and burning fervency of faith can at times lead him to speak, not only very directly, but also without necessary tact and consideration of the feelings of those who argue on the other side. For both of these good Reformed men, in a very real sense, their strong point is at times their weak point. Once again, who of us does not have to fight against various elements of our own self-life?

The multiple volumes written by Berthoud continue to appear, demonstrating erudition, lucidity, and practicality. They will make ever stronger the applicatory theology of this prolific author. I believe many of these volumes and articles are truly magisterial, in conveying in a lucid and penetrating manner the great theological and political issues that have shaped our world for the last two thousand years. Thus, I would predict that they will eventually bring a large element of healing to our sickened, largely apostate culture.

But that will take some time, for one of the reasons is, as Dr. Rushdoony pointed out to me when I gave him a report of my time with Berthoud upon my return to USA in 1982 from Europe: “Jean-Marc has chosen to work outside the academy.”

Another reason why time will be required to make Jean-Marc seriously available to the wider Christian culture is that he is—in the best and truest sense of the word—“radical.” That is, he takes issues down to their roots, and critiques them by assuming that Holy Scripture is ever true and ever relevant. That often means violating things that are widely received by Christian people, at any one time, as “politically correct.”


Yet history shows that great thinkers usually offend the public for many years—often until the paradigm changes—and then, long after their deaths,

they become part of the mainstream.

I believe that the massive printed corpus of Jean-Marc Berthoud will eventually become a constituent element of the great Christian Western tradition. If I am any judge of the matter, his eagle-eye insight into the root causes of all our malaises, and his equally frank application of God’s evangelical and covenantal mode of healing and restoration, will—in God’s good time—overwhelm the current resistance against his God-honoring realism, and his work will be seen as truly magisterial, though like all of the finest human work, never perfect. That time is coming!

The poem/hymn of James Russell Lowell states the certainty of its coming well:

Though the cause of evil prosper,
Yet the truth alone is strong;
Though her portion be the scaffold,
And upon the throne be wrong;
Yet that scaffold sways the future,
And, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow,
Keeping watch above his own.
(Once to Every Man a Nation)

Then to side with truth is noble,
When we share her wretched crust,
‘Ere her cause bring fame and profit,
And ‘tis prosperous to be just;
Then it is the brave man chooses,
While the coward stands aside,
Doubting in his abject spirit,
Till his Lord is crucified,
And the multitude make virtue,
Of the faith they had denied.
(This Present Crisis) 

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Jean-Marc Berthoud and Creation

by Gerald Pech



My odyssey through the creation controversy became an opportunity to encounter Jean-Marc Berthoud's master-

ful work and his theology, which later would have such a decisive influence on all aspects of my work as a creationist. I wish to recount my personal experience in order to set the stage.

When I still was a student, I did not know much about the creation debate. In order to learn more about evolution, I purchased a book on the subject by French biologist Jean Humbert.¹ Humbert had endorsed Henri Blocher's² framework hypothesis and the theory of evolution. As a result, after reading Jean Humbert's book (which seemed very convincing to me), I began to believe in evolution. I was already a Christian and about twenty years old.

Several years later I became aware of Hugh Ross, whose books my American pastor suggested I read. Thanks to those works, I was pleased and amazed to see that there was a reasonable scientific basis to reject the theory of evolution. I thereby became a progressive creationist. However, I remained embarrassed by Hugh Ross's assertion that death had existed before Adam's fall.

It was only a few years later that I gained a more substantial knowledge of theology and exegesis, first through the discovery of classic revivalist writings, and second, through the works of Reformed theologians. Among the latter were John Calvin, Iain Murray, John Piper, Douglas Kelly, and last but not least Jean-Marc Berthoud, an

"The discovery of Jean-Marc Berthoud's foundational theological writings would have an ever-increasing impact on my theological and spiritual insight on creation, Scripture, and redemptive history."

independent Swiss Reformed scholar. In particular, the discovery of Jean-Marc Berthoud's foundational theological writings would have an ever-increasing impact on my theological and spiritual insight on creation, Scripture, and redemptive history.

Through the years Jean-Marc Berthoud and I have had stimulating and rich email exchanges in which he shared with me his always thorough and acute reflections. It was then that I came to realize the foundational importance of the Biblical doctrine of six-day creation and its wide-ranging implications for all other Biblical doctrines.

In addition, I discovered the scientific works of high-level creationist scientists such as Henry Morris, Guy Berthault, Walter Brown, Robert Gentry, John Hartnett, etc. This was really decisive in completely changing and reshaping my mindset, making me fully embrace the Genesis creation account in six ordinary days which had been the prevailing view within the Church until Darwin's century.

Apologetics and False Dichotomies

My personal experience definitely convinced me that more than a classic presuppositional approach was needed:

we also needed an evidential one. Why both? Because both the heart and the mind cooperate in making us fully grasp God's truths concerning either the spiritual realm or the physical realm. Even more to the point (as I would later discover), the Word of God and the facts of His world are inseparable.

Unfortunately, one of the reasons why many sincere Christians reject an evidential apologetics may be their implicit commitment to an extreme and unbalanced hyper-Calvinist theological framework. The following excerpt from Mark Duncan's pamphlet *The Five Points of Christian Reconstruction from the Lips of Our Lord*³ is certainly significant in this connection:

Jesus employed a presuppositional apologetic method. Christian apologists today would do well to follow our Lord's example. The Savior was perfectly consistent in His teaching. As outlined above, Christ taught the doctrines which have come to be known as the five points of Calvinism. These doctrines teach that man is a totally depraved sinner and therefore salvation is 100% by God's grace. An evidential apologetic method is inconsistent with this Calvinistic doctrine, while totally consistent with the Arminian doctrine of free will. The Arminian evidentialist believes that if given enough compelling evidence, a man will reason that the Bible is the Word of God and that Jesus is who He claimed to be. He will then employ his free will to "accept Christ."

This statement oversimplifies the true Biblical, historic Calvinist view of apologetics, but its merit lies in accurately describing the conviction of

many Christians regarding apologetics. Indeed, as Jean-Marc Berthoud magnificently explains in his *Pierre Viret: A Forgotten Giant of the Reformation. The Apologetics, Ethics and Economics of the Bible*,⁴ a presuppositional approach should be sensitively combined with an evidential one and does not require exclusively starting from the Bible when communicating God's truths to unbelievers:

To attain his end Viret does not limit himself to reasoning exclusively from Biblical texts as is often the case with those who hold to a Van Tillian presuppositional apologetics. Not that Viret believes that there exists an imaginary philosophical common ground between Christian thought and pagan thought...

Now, if Viret constantly maintains his thinking on the high ground of the fundamental presupposition of the total authority of the Bible, he nevertheless does not hesitate to use the created and cultural reality which he shares with his contemporaries in his presentation of God's truth. He is thus at the same time presuppositional and evidential in his apologetics ...

Viret has the considerable advantage over us of not standing historically in our post-rationalist, post-idealist, post-dialectical, and post-modern epistemological climate where the philosophical obstacles to the understanding of the God-given meaning of reality are immeasurably greater than they were in the middle of the sixteenth century. He can thus, more easily than we, make use of every aspect of the reality of his time to lead his readers and listeners to understand that the Scriptures, in the final account, reveal the ultimate God-given meaning of whatever matter may be under consideration. The knowledge of all reality is not to be found in Scripture alone, but inheres in the God-given meaningful facts (the substantial forms) of the creation and history where they may be clearly and truly discerned

though this, in the final account, only by the Biblically-centered reflection of a Christian apologist and historian like Pierre Viret. Let me insist: knowledge, not meaning, for meaning comes from God's written revelation alone. Viret's terminology may sometimes sound as if his position were a purely rational one. But for him human reason and the Bible are not at opposite poles, at war with each other. No, for him, as for Van Til, the Word of God is the very foundation of a correctly functioning human reason.

Thus, for him, to be well instructed in the Word of God was nothing less than the guarantee of a good use of that gracious gift of God—our rational faculties. What, in our modern terminology, we call apologetics was, for Viret and all the Reformers, fundamental to the clear and appropriate preaching of the Gospel. It represents nothing less than the bringing into captivity of every distracted thought of man to the obedience of Christ and to its submission to His sovereign and over-arching Word.

How then does Viret proceed? ... He is, in fact, so confident in the truth of Scripture for every aspect of reality, and so filled with the wisdom of God, that he does not hesitate to make use of all aspects of man's intellectual and cultural activities to reach, in a very concrete and practical fashion, the interests of his contemporaries. But his starting point is always fully Biblical and Creational, never an imaginary common intellectual ground shared in dialogue with the adversaries of the Christian faith. Thus he labors to bring every lost and deformed human thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

I cannot overestimate Jean-Marc Berthoud's influence on my creationist ministry. It was really through the friendship with and the theological insight of Jean-Marc Berthoud that I came to fully realize how extraordinarily profound a Biblical creational worldview was. In what follows I wish to put

forward some of the reasons why I believe that the church in general and the creationist movement in particular need to discover and build upon his work.

Scripture Leads to a Literal Metaphysical Understanding of the Six-day Creation.

All of Berthoud's thought is that of a creationist founded upon God's creational order, which in turn blossoms out into a full-blown Biblical metaphysics. His entire work is reflected in his brilliant (soon to be published) magnum opus: *The Covenantal History of the Church in the World*⁵ where one can fully grasp the necessity for a proper understanding (and integration into the modern-day creationist movement) of a *qualitative* form of scientific thinking. Such qualitative scientific thinking stands in utter contrast to today's *quantitative* scientific thinking so strongly influenced by Francis Bacon's empiricism and René Descartes's mathematical rationalism.⁶

Berthoud offers a sharp and fundamental critique of the nominalist nature of the theistic evolutionism proposed by leading scholars, such as French theologian Henri Blocher and American analytical philosopher Alvin Plantinga (see the pertinent chapters⁷ of Volume V of Berthoud's forthcoming *Histoire al-liancielle*). With regards to nominalism, here is the core of Berthoud's analysis in the words of Dr. Douglas Kelly:

Berthoud believes that the underlying philosophy of this disjunction between "literary" and "literal" (or with Jordan, "theological" and "literal") is a sort of revived nominalism, such as was practiced by the medieval scholar, William of Occam. Commenting on the type of exegesis of which Blocher's writing is an example, Berthoud states: "What is taking place here is in fact nominalist exegesis ... For Occam, the form or the name [whence "nominalism"] has no

real or true [noetic] relation to the thing named or signified. Similarly here [in the “Framework Hypothesis”] literary form has no actual relation to the temporal reality of creation” ...

Nominalism of course is an evasion of “realism” (which rests on the assumption of a real relation between literary text and historical facts, events and persons pointed to by that text). As Berthoud writes elsewhere, “In the aesthetics of the Bible (and in the great literature based upon it), form is married to truth, and truth always commands form.”⁸

As regards Plantinga’s evolutionist errors expressed in his book, *Where the Problem Really Lies*,⁹ Jean-Marc Berthoud says the following,

Plantinga considers that the fundamental problem we have to deal with is naturalism, that is to say, an exclusion of God from the modern scientific cosmos. In this he is not wrong. He develops however in this book a vigorous defense of theistic evolution as an answer to this naturalism, answer that he considers to be adequate—which it is not—to both true science and to the Bible. For him, the deadly enemy is materialism; the Creation conflict being of secondary importance, which will lead him to use that bastard child of materialistic (or naturalistic) evolutionism, theistic evolution, in order to confront materialistic evolutionism, and above all scientific naturalism. For him, classical science, both Newtonian and Einsteinian, does not pose any real problem to the Christian faith. What really poses a problem is materialism or naturalism, the exclusion of a spiritual reality from the investigation of nature. He does not at all understand the well-attested fact that modern science—which was born at the beginning of the seventeenth century—has methodologically excluded any metaphysical and theological meaning (the meaning of the world and supernatural design) from its scientific method by eliminating from its reflec-

tion final causality (God) and formal causality (the meaning of the world).

In his book, Plantinga writes, “My overall thesis: there is superficial conflict but deep concord between science and theistic religion, but superficial concord and deep conflict between science and naturalism” (Chapter 9, p. 307). Therefore, for Plantinga, quantitative science is essentially in agreement with theistic religion, but not with a materialistic or a purely naturalistic, that is, immanent view of the universe.

He does not seem to have any clue about what a Biblical metaphysical view of nature open to the sensible and to the spiritual meaning of reality created by God could be. He is not aware that before the seventeenth century there existed a qualitative science (be it Aristotelian or other) where the view of the universe was ordered by the four causes, material, efficient, formal, and final. At that time, the symbolic creation-laden meaning of the world would have its place and allow for use of a parabolic and symbolic realist language to talk about moral and spiritual realities in natural terms. The earthly things were created materially so that they could also speak to us about the heavenly things. Plantinga does not seem to see that it is utterly impossible to come to such a qualitative understanding of the world when using an exclusively quantitative view of the order of the universe.

Berthoud adds,

The central issue for Plantinga only lies in materialism, naturalism, and the exclusion of a theistic view, but not in the so-called evolutionary process itself. [Plantinga says] “... this is the result of confusion—a confusion between guided and unguided evolution, between sober science and philosophical or theological add-on.” This sentence (and especially the term “add-on”) reveals the astonishing weakness of Plantinga as a philosopher and as a theologian, and his quite surprising ignorance of both the metaphysical and theological nature of the scientific endeavor itself.

As a matter of fact, as was shown over and over (see for instance Burtt, Koyré, and Funkenstein¹⁰), modern science is based upon a view of reality that is both platonic (through its mathematicising tendency) and nominalist (its atomization of reality). In this sense, one cannot merely speak of philosophical or theological “add-ons” to science, since such elements are organically inherent to it. Even the structure of science incorporates theological and philosophical constituents in the form of presuppositions which are generally not explicitly formulated.

It is precisely here that most Christian creationist scientists (even among the most faithful and those most convinced by the truthfulness of Scripture in the line of the Van Tillian approach) twist the Christian approach to nature by adopting a distorted philosophical view of reality. As Jean-Marc Berthoud explains,

This “atomistic” nominalism concerns the resolute and compositive method of modern science, which seeks to resolve (reduce) the measurable reality into its most simple parts (atoms); then to recompose (rebuild) the heterogeneous elements of this atomized reality into a consistent hypothetical whole by means of known scientific laws.

As regards the theological foundations of science, it is also well known that modern science, mathematical as well as experimental, starts with a refusal of Aristotle’s and the Bible’s final and formal causes, causes that are specific to the stable nature and to the organic purpose of divinely created beings as they can be observed through the senses and the mind. Metaphysical reflection about the given meaning that gives each creature its stable being (that is, the universals that order them) has long not been an integral part of the modern scientific endeavor having totally atomized the order of nature itself by its resolute compositive method (*solve et coagula*). In this perspective, the nature

which is investigated by modern science is deprived of any purpose; everything in it is functional, without any proper internal order. God is excluded *a priori* from it, as a matter of principle, methodologically.

Biblical Metaphysics Versus a Decapitated Cosmology

In his beautiful work, *Création, Bible et Science*,¹¹ which epitomizes his search for a truly Biblical metaphysics, Berthoud expounds a metaphysical view of reality that is totally and confidently grounded in Scripture. Such a perspective allows him to defend the geocentric cosmology which had prevailed as the scientific view of the universe for the fifteen centuries before the “Copernican revolution” and, above all, the Galileo Trial. This is quite remarkable, and expresses the freedom of his thought from conventional worldly wisdom, all the more so as only a handful of Protestant creationist theologians and scientists (worldwide down the centuries from Galileo onward) has maintained geocentrism or geocentricity.¹²

In the penultimate chapter of his book *L'Alliance de Dieu à travers l'Écriture sainte*,¹³ Berthoud explains how geocentrism is an integral part of a truly Biblical cosmology in which Christ's bodily resurrection and ascension make sense, in contrast with the decapitated cosmology of modern science which treats the cosmos as being restricted to the atmospheric and sidereal heavens. These two events in Christ's earthly life are realities belonging both to our world, but also to what is outside the normal course of what is happening in our universe. Biblical cosmology presents a three-tiered cosmology, where the third heaven—the place where the Creator abides—and the cosmos He created are in a relationship of partial continuity.

Jean-Marc Berthoud contrasts the

passive attitude of humility and wisdom in ancient cosmology (where a contemplative and thus receptive attitude prevailed in regard to nature) with modern man's will to dominate, control, and transform the order of nature (by acting upon it as a master conquering his possession). The latter attitude (which embodies an active and violent cruelty towards the created order) thus originates in Francis Bacon and René Descartes and provides the fundamental direction taken by modern scientific and technocratic societies.

Ancient Thought Versus Modern Thought

Ancient thought devoted much attention to visible substantial forms, that is, to those of the created order, and not to those discovered in scientific structures hidden within nature. It could not even think of the uniform, homogeneous, boundless, and shapeless universe at which modern science would arrive.

This model of the universe was exactly what Alexandre Koyré deplored. In his numerous books, Koyré shows how utopia (a void with purely geometrical forms) has replaced the finite, closed, ordered, and meaningful universe of ancient cosmology. That universe had concrete, visible substantial forms, and its driving forces (mobiles) would undergo countless external constraints at any time, which prevented any utopic investigation of nature in its mathematically *pure* state. Jean-Marc Berthoud argues that modern science could only emerge because a number of such obstacles had been removed. These obstacles, which characterized ancient cosmology, were:

The ancient world was the study of the steady flexibility and ductility of change, not that of the rigid uniformity of mathematical laws;

The world was ordered following a hierarchy of beings, these beings being

objectively (substantially) different from each other, from a qualitative point of view (matter, plant life, animal life, human life, angelic life, divine life);

Only concrete substantial forms were known, for instance, that cat, that dog, from which universals could directly be derived through their meticulous observations: Species, families, kinds, elements, etc.;¹⁴

These qualitative differences were objective in character, for they belonged to the object itself, and were by no means imposed at all by human thought on things from outside;

In order to be known accurately, all these multiform beings required the use of different methods, each being appropriate to its specific object;

The idea of a single method which would apply to all reality was then intellectually unthinkable, as the multiple order of God's creatures was perceived and admired;

These beings, so various and multiple, were nevertheless dependent upon each other in a quite complex and unified hierarchy the whole of which constituted the well-ordered and harmonious universe of God;

Mathematics were considered by the Ancients as too pure and too detached from this so varied, complex, rich, and above all changeable world for them to be used as an instrument allowing the scientist to apprehend correctly the purpose and the meaning of the sublunary universe; the latter was a world of change within the stability of multifarious substantial forms, each being characterized by its own universal principle;

Everything, in this world, was driven on by a specific goal, a purpose; the ultimate purpose of all beings was in the One who had given them their existence, their life and their being;

The order of received human language (not that of the *pseudo-scientific* con-

structions of linguistics) was a prevailing force, and more specifically—and above all—the order of the written Word of God, the Bible. For this verbal order corresponded to that of the created order of the universe, since both orders stemmed from the benevolent creative and revelatory hand of the one God, being Creator, Providence, and Revealer.

Jean-Marc Berthoud considers that the climax of this synthesis of the ancient universe is to be found in the overpowering system of Thomistic thought which united nature—the varied and united order of the world as it was when it came, in all ways very good, from the hand of God—and theology, based on the higher order of Scripture, truthful revelation given to men by God, divine light enlightening the darkness of man's sin, fitted to his capacities as a sensible and rational creature.

Berthoud is convinced that one of the last Reformed theologians to endeavor (in a more Biblical manner than Thomas Aquinas) to marry the two kingdoms (nature and revelation) was none other than the Swiss Reformer Pierre Viret (1511–1571). Indeed, the title of Viret's masterwork, *Instruction chrétienne en la doctrine de la Loi et de l'Évangile et en la vraie philosophie et théologie tant naturelle que supernaturelle des Chrétiens; et en la contemplation du temple et des images et œuvres de la providence de Dieu en tout l'univers; et en l'histoire de la création et chute et réparation du genre humain*,¹⁵ expresses the entire theological, philosophical, and scientific program and worldview of ancient Christendom.

Berthoud on the History of Ideas, Philosophy, and Theology

In the period between that ancient, traditional and Biblical metaphysics and the discovery of modern mathematical-experimental science, a tremendous

revolution had occurred in the way of thinking, feeling, and believing. Jean-Marc Berthoud maintains that ancient metaphysics progressively disappeared as new philosophies and theologies were emerging.

First came Francis Bacon, whose program based knowledge and epistemology on experimentation. Then came René Descartes with his substance dualism. Nonetheless, Cartesian dualism still left room for the “spiritual” kingdom, that of the soul alongside matter and expanse (space).

But, as a matter of fact, this dualism quickly gave way to Spinoza's cosmic monism. His monism cut mankind off from the ancient view of the universe which had maintained both its unity and diversity, its universality and concrete character, all anchored in the Trinity.

By 1632, the new Baconian, Cartesian, Copernican, and Galilean model of the world had won the cosmological battle. The result was the propagation of a novel view of the world among learned people: a cosmos entirely cut off from transcendence.

Jean-Marc Berthoud takes us backstage to this cosmological revolution, tracing Satan's attacks against the “faith once delivered unto the saints” back to Bacon and Descartes. With the latter, meaning would soon be exclusively attached to what could be measured.

With the Reformation, the Word of God made an extraordinary breakthrough in Europe (placing God's view of the universe at the center again). But with the new sciences in the wake of Copernicus, Galileo, Descartes, and Newton, God and meaning, the final cause and the formal cause, would be excluded from science, as they had no place in it *de principio*.

This decisive new principle is at the heart of an emerging modernity—a new

religion whose prophets were Bacon and Descartes. From then on, the new mathematical-experimental science would prevail as a model for all disciplines of the mind. Mathematics would now become the new universal language, the only language granted legitimacy for decoding the cosmos.

In the light of the recent discovery by archeologists of thousands of 3,700-year-old clay tablets which shed light on the mathematical skills of the Babylonians (including trigonometry, values of sines and cosines, logarithmic formulas, cubic roots, values of exponential functions), one can grasp the spiritual connection between modern-day mathematics-based science and Babylonian religion. The French philosopher of science Roger Caratini concluded that “calculation was institutionally an integral part of the Babylonian number culture as well as the learning of writing, just as was religion among the Egyptians.”¹⁶

Metaphysical Deconstruction Further Unravels Reality

Jean-Marc Berthoud explains that in the same vein Duns Scotus, between the end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth century, detached the universals from the order of creation,¹⁷ and did the same for the relationship between theology and sacred Scripture. As Thomas Aquinas often taught, the only foundation of theology is to be found in the “Sola Scriptura” principle, not in any logical speculation about “faith truths.”¹⁸

Unfortunately, Scotus not only opened the door to an unbridled philosophical speculation (starting from universals that were now detached from their close binding dependence upon the order of the created substantial forms) but he allowed the floodgates to open to a far more dangerous theological speculation. Scotus opened the

way to a limitless logical development starting from “principles of faith” now detached from the precise thought of God as revealed in Scripture alone. Consequently, Duns Scotus was the only Catholic theologian in the High Middle Ages to defend, in a purely speculative way, the unbiblical doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin.

From the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries a speculative school of thought had been developing. It was freed from the bounds of reality in the fields of physics (a discipline increasingly dominated by abstract mathematical constructions), philosophy, and theology. Imaginary worlds were built. All kinds of speculative systems cut off from real, individual substantial forms, were imagined. Little by little, space and time were being conceptualized outside the parameters of the real, concrete world.

For instance, scientists would endeavor to understand motion outside the limitations, obstacles, and constraints of the real world. Their goal was to arrive at a conceptualization describing the reality of all operating forces in motion without the created limitations of the ordinary world. Thus, the model they sought for was inevitably destined to be one in a nonexistent location (a uniform, homogeneous space, as premised on the Copernican principle, that was temporally unconstrained, stable, and infinite), which dovetails with modern Big Bang cosmology. This kind of model is obviously a utopian one, and exists nowhere but in the minds of the scientists who had elaborated it.

Jean-Marc Berthoud makes us embark on an intellectual pilgrimage through history, and digs much deeper into the soil of philosophy, science, and theology than is usually done by modern-day orthodox theologians, science historians, philosophers of sci-

ence, and creationist scientists. He has convincingly shown that the effects of modernity are vastly more devastating than partisans of the modern creationist movement have hitherto thought. The latter tend to attribute the root of all societal diseases to Charles Darwin, but Berthoud has exposed the deeper revolution in man’s cosmological vision, a revolution on a scale not yet thought of: a new vision of the world that would totally disrupt the true reality and unity of God’s good creation.

The Law’s Relation to the Restoration of a Biblical Creational Metaphysics

Last but not least, it is well worth asking: What precise principle and theological Scriptural framework warrant a return to the creational metaphysics Jean-Marc Berthoud calls for as described above? In other words, how may one scripturally justify the harmonious correspondence between God’s Word and the real world? More specifically, what does Scripture teach as the proper relation between Creation, God’s Word and His law? From a philosophical perspective, one may ponder whether Scripture does indeed justify the ordinary language school and the correspondence theory of truth.

The answer is suggested by Jeremiah 31:35–36 which reads,

Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

Here Scripture clearly associates, and binds together, God’s creation and

the creational order (general revelation) on one hand, and His moral laws and redemptive purpose for Israel (special revelation through Scripture)—and through the elect Israel the whole of mankind—on the other.

Berthoud is indeed convinced, and labors to make us understand, that the discovery of the hidden laws of nature as from Descartes and Bacon (and even Jeremy Bentham, who sought to apply his scientific utilitarianism to all of reality), with their arbitrary application to all spheres of human life, are a signal historic error. It is an error which will surely lead our so-called scientific world into an inescapable deadlock.

For our modern science has refused to humbly submit itself *in its scientific labors*, in a spirit of genuine piety, to the Creator of all things. From a methodological viewpoint, it arrived at this outlook by substituting but a small part of reality (its mathematically measurable aspect) for the whole.

Science indeed should seek to reform its purpose so as to conform itself to the whole order of creation. This is the creational or cultural mandate God gave to mankind through Adam in Genesis, and then from Genesis onward. Until the end of time, God’s affairs with mankind and with the world have been (and ever will be) governed by respect to His law. Man cannot evade being under a covenantal relationship to his Creator.

The Creation Mandate and Theonomy

This is why the doctrine of creation is so fundamental to our societies. Rebellious man seeks autonomy from God. Autonomy was first the sin of Adam, who thus broke His law and thereby His covenant.

For the elect people of God in particular, God’s creational mandate is still valid today. It should be implemented through humble and believing obedi-

ence, respectful of the limits imposed by the requirements of the law-word of God upon the unrestrained ambitions of a technocratic, transhumanized mankind. These requirements are those of the visible order of the good and benevolent creation of God.

To understand this is also the first step in recovering from the illness brought on by a pietistic faith. A pietistic faith too easily absorbs humanistic thinking, prioritizes spiritual retreat, and thereby deprives the church of her creational mandate.

The various manifestations of human language display this order admirably. This is even more the case with God's paramount wisdom which expresses and reveals itself in Scripture. Jean-Marc Berthoud's view of theonomy can thus be summarized as follows:¹⁹

The Ten Commandments given to Moses by the Lord Jesus Christ at Mount Sinai can be considered as the first principles of all ethical thought, as much as the first chapters of Genesis contain the first principles of metaphysics, ontology, and epistemology.

All these ethical principles existed long before their first explicit formulation at Mount Sinai, and express God's righteous and holy character, and hence natural (creational) law which manifests the order of Creation. This point was once held unanimously by the Reformers and the Puritans alike.²⁰

They must be read through the lens of Biblical Wisdom literature.

The teachings of the Prophets allow us to understand them more explicitly.

They must be interpreted and understood in the light of Christ's teachings as found in the gospels.

The apostolic teaching provides a proper understanding of the Decalogue.

Such a course of action leads to a very accurate understanding of the require-

ments of God's law and sheds light on their current application to all times and to all places.

To summarize Berthoud: the Decalogue should a) be read in the light of Biblical casuistic laws; b) be applied to particular cases with wisdom; c) be understood in the more complete light of the New Testament teachings; and d) be read in harmony with the natural order, the order of Creation.

All these laws are filled with a meaning coming from God Himself. What is their meaning? The more they are studied and reflected upon, the more one becomes aware of their immense wisdom, not only in moral, social, and legal terms but also spiritually and cosmologically.

From Berthoud's point of view, Aquinas and Calvin, despite mounting detailed and meticulous elaborations upon the law of God, do not adequately do justice to, or fully account for, the Biblical data. Berthoud observes that it is also a pity that so many Reformed theologians do not more deeply explore the exact meaning of these several aspects of God's law.

However, men of God such as John Chrysostom, Thomas Aquinas, Pierre Viret, John Calvin, Heinrich Bullinger, Lancelot Andrewes, Thomas Watson, Benedict Pictet, Friedrich-Julius Stahl, Cornelius Van Til, Francis Nigel Lee, Rousas John Rushdoony, Greg Bahnsen, Gary North, and Pierre Courthial (to name but a few)—and many other secondary figures—have rendered us an immense service by scrutinizing the meaning of many aspects of God's law, whether it be moral, legal, or ceremonial.

Berthoud's magnificent work is invaluable in that it is a very timely reminder to the Church and to the world—as a prophetic plumb line during our troubled times—that God

is indeed the sovereign Creator who demands from all men obedience to His law, and that the rejection of His law will always result in escalating judgments until He accomplishes His redemptive purposes through them so as to bring the nations to enjoy and share His glory and grace.

I am so deeply grateful to God for such a powerful, faithful, incisive, and yet humble messenger and friend as Jean-Marc Berthoud. 🙏

Gerald Pech is 44 years old, married to Jade, and a father of 4 children. He was a French research scientist who worked in the space field both in academia and the industry in Toulouse, the European aerospace capital. He is currently a senior R&D engineer in a high-tech company which designs, develops, and manufactures video compression and image processing electronic boards. He holds BSEE and MSEE degrees from ENAC and a Ph.D. in satellite networking and communications from ISAE-Supaero, one of France's top engineering universities.

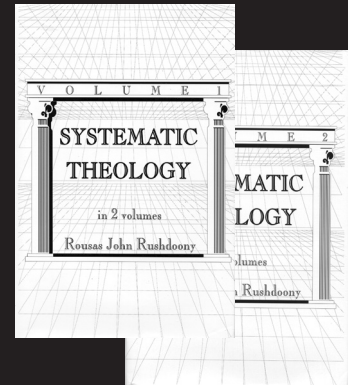
Gerald is a Biblical Creationist, of theonomist and postmillenarian persuasion, although not Reformed in his soteriology. He is the current president of the French-speaking creationist organization Plateforme scientifique Bible & Science and has developed strong ties with Creation Ministries International. He was also involved in the French translation of several theological, scientific, and apologetics books including William Lane Craig's *Reasonable Faith*, Nancy Pearcey's *Total Truth*, Vern Poythress's *Redeeming Science*, Douglas Kelly's *Creation and Change: Genesis 1:1-2:4 in the Light of Changing Scientific Paradigms*, and John Betz's *After Enlightenment: The Post-Secular Vision of J. G. Hamann*.

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14. On the stability of substantial forms see,

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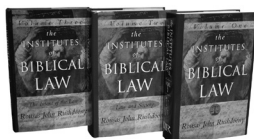
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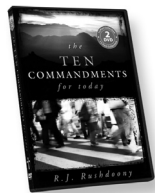
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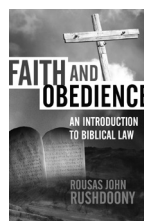
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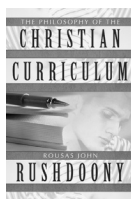
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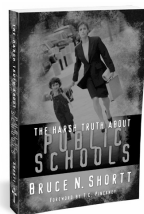
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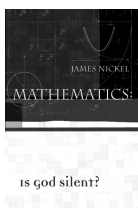


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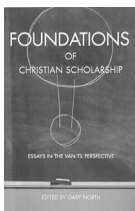
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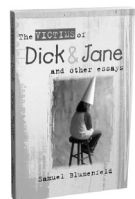
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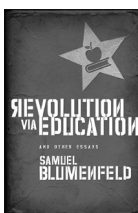
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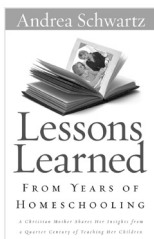
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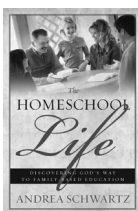
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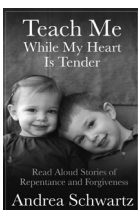
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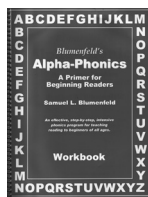
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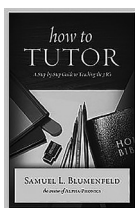
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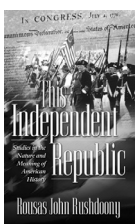
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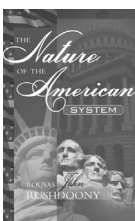
American History & the Constitution



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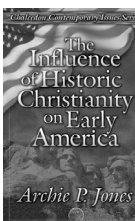
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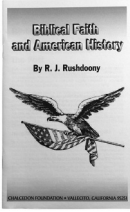


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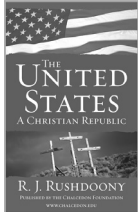
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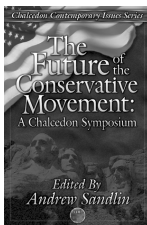
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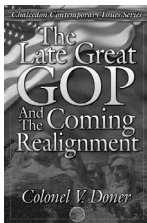
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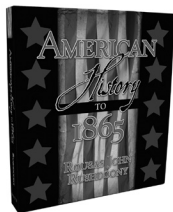
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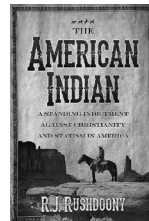


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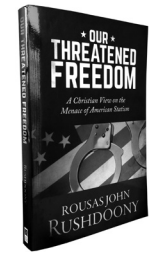


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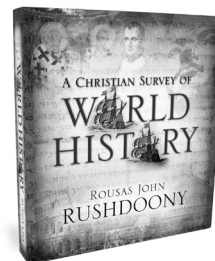


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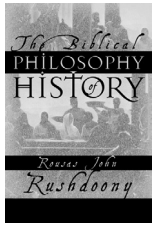
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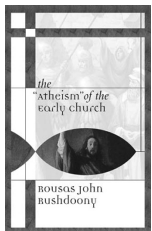
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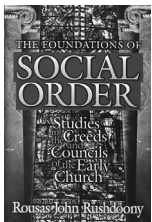
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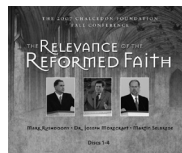
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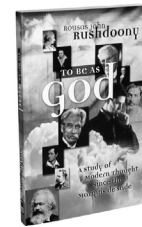
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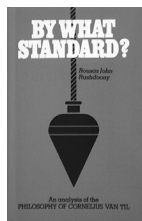
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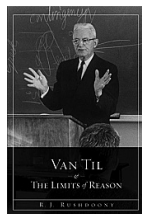
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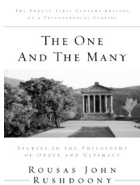
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Van Til & The Limits of Reason

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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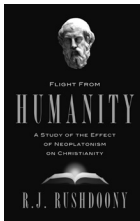


The One and the Many: Studies in the Philosophy of Order and Ultimacy

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

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By R. J. Rushdoony. From the foreword by Steve Schlissel: "Rushdoony sounds the clarion call of liberty for all who remain oppressed by Christian leaders who wrongfully lord it over the souls of God's righteous ones.... I pray that

the entire book will not only instruct you in the method and content of a Biblical worldview, but actually bring you further into the glorious freedom of the children of God. Those who walk in wisdom's ways become immune to the politics of guilt and pity."

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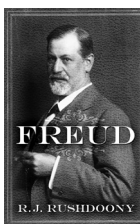


Revolt Against Maturity

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

psychological problems are therefore a resistance to responsibility, i.e. a revolt against maturity.

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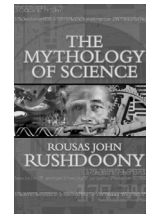


The Cure of Souls: Recovering the Biblical Doctrine of Confession

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

Without a true restoration of Biblical confession, the Christian's walk is impeded by the remains of sin. This volume is an effort in reversing this trend.

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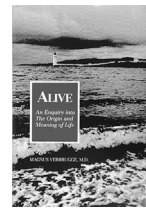
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The Mythology of Science

By R. J. Rushdoony. This book is about the religious nature of evolutionary thought and how these religious presuppositions underlie our modern intellectual paradigm. The "mythology" of modern science is its religious

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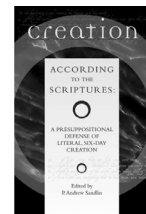
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Alive: An Enquiry into the Origin and Meaning of Life

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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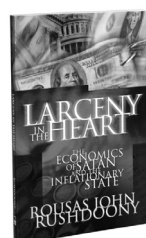
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Making Sense of Your Dollars: A Biblical Approach to Wealth

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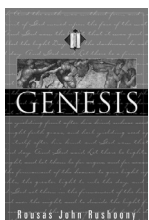
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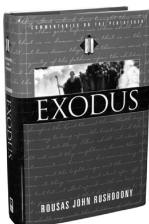
Biblical Studies

Genesis, Volume I of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

By R. J. Rushdoony. In recent years, it has become commonplace for both humanists and churchmen to sneer at anyone who takes Genesis 1-11 as historical.

Yet to believe in the myth of evolution is to accept trillions of miracles to account for our cosmos. Spontaneous generation, the development of something out of nothing, and the blind belief in the miraculous powers of chance, require tremendous faith. Theology without literal six-day creationism becomes alien to the God of Scripture because it turns from the God Who acts and Whose Word is the creative word and the word of power, to a belief in process as god.

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Exodus, Volume II of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

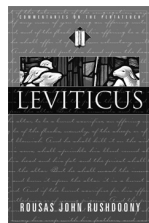
By R. J. Rushdoony. Essentially, all of mankind is on some sort of an exodus. However, the path of fallen man is vastly different from that of the righteous. Apart from Jesus Christ and His atoning work, the exodus of a fallen humanity means only a further descent from sin into death. But in Christ,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

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

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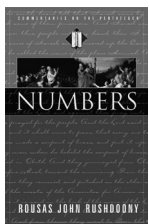
By R. J. Rushdoony. Much like the book of Proverbs, any emphasis upon the practical applications of God's law is readily shunned in pursuit of more "spiritual" studies. Books like Leviticus are considered dull, overbearing, and irrelevant. But man was created in God's image and is duty-bound to develop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

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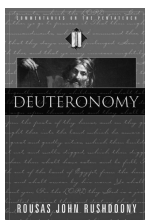
Numbers, Volume IV of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

By R. J. Rushdoony. The Lord desires a people who will embrace their responsibilities. The history of Israel in the wilderness is a sad narrative of a people with hearts hardened by complaint and rebellion to God's ordained authorities. They were slaves, not an army. They would recognize the tyranny of Pharaoh but disregard the servant-leadership of Moses. God would judge the generation He led out of captivity, while training a new generation to conquer Canaan. The book of Numbers reveals God's dealings with both generations.

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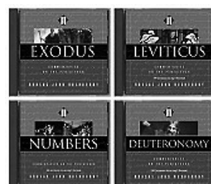
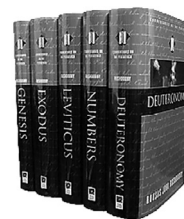
to summarize the central tenets of a truly Biblical worldview—one that is solidly established upon Biblical Law, and can shape the future.

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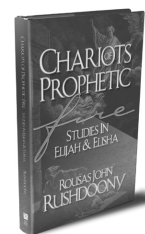
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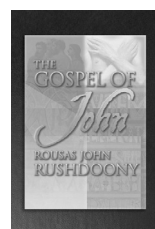
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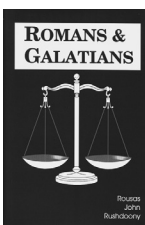


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Jesus of history is He who made atonement for us, died, and was resurrected. His life cannot be understood apart from this, nor can we know His history in any other light.

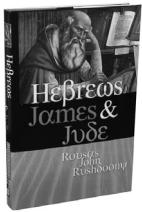
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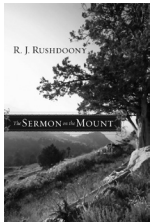
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Hebrews, James and Jude

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

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Sermon on the Mount

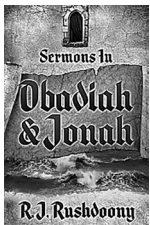
By R. J. Rushdoony. So much has been written about the Sermon on the Mount, but so little of the commentaries venture outside of the matters of the heart. The Beatitudes are reduced to the assumed meaning of their more popular portions, and much of that meaning limits our concerns to downplaying wealth,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

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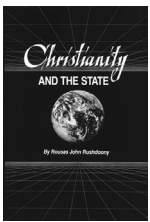
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Sermons in Obadiah & Jonah

By R. J. Rushdoony. In his study of Obadiah, Rushdoony condemns the "spiritual Edomites" of our day who believe evildoers have the power to frustrate the progress of the Kingdom of God. In Jonah, he demonstrates that we play the part of Jonah when we second-guess God, complain about the work He gives us, or are peevish when outcomes are not to our liking.

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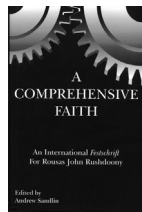


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By Edward A. Powell and R. J. Rushdoony. God's Kingdom covers all things in its scope, and its immediate ministry includes, according to Scripture, the ministry of grace (the church), instruction (the Christian and homeschool), help to the needy (the diaconate), and many other things. God's appointed means for financing His Kingdom activities is centrally the tithe. This work affirms

that the Biblical requirement of tithing is a continuing aspect of God's law-word and cannot be neglected.

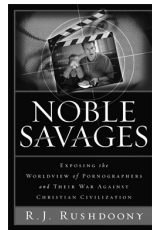
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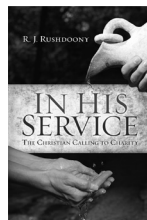
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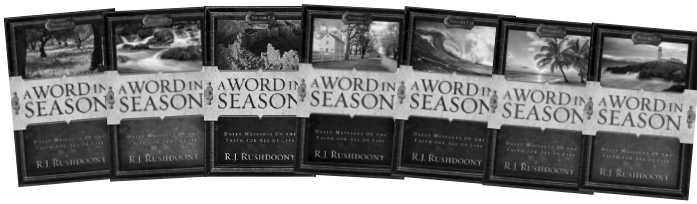
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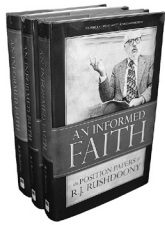
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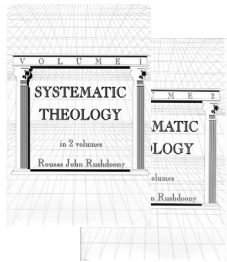


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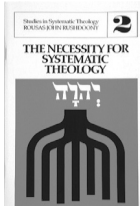
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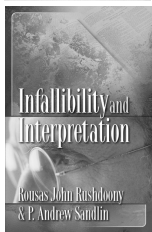
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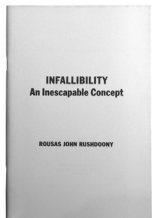
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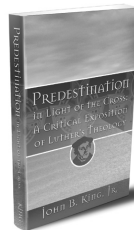
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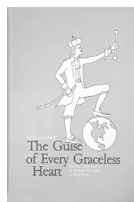
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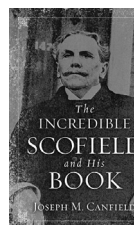
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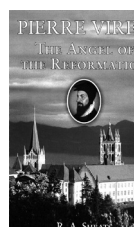
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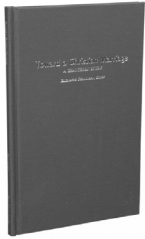


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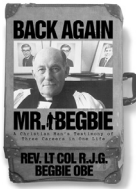


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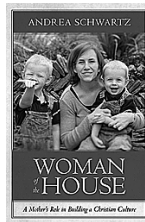


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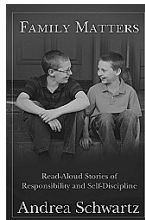
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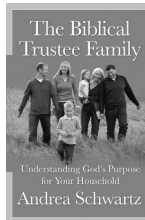
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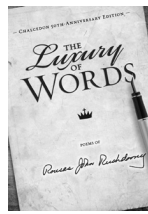
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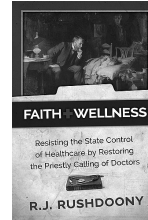
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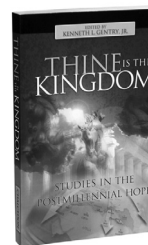


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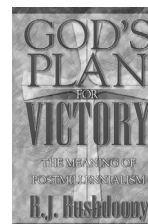
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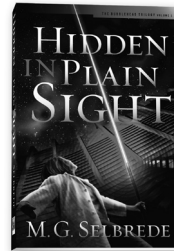
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