

Faith for All of Life
July/Aug 2009

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FAITH FOR ALL OF LIFE

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

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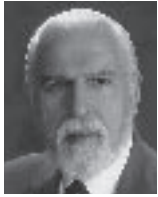
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August 24, 2009**

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The Diaconate, Charity, and Welfarism

(Reprinted from the new release *In His Service* [Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2009])

R. J. Rushdoony



Humanistic motives have often governed commendable causes within the church. Man seeks to gain an advantage over God even with his virtues and obedience. This motivation infects every area of thought at some time and in some form. In Mariolatry, for example, a significant aspect of devotion is the belief that Mary, a creature, can exercise a governing influence with God. Protestants are ready to criticize Mariolatry, and underrate the Virgin Mary, while themselves falling prey to a comparable error. Motherhood has been exalted to a somewhat sacred level, and a “mother’s heart” given undue emphasis. Some Protestant mothers are insistent that God *will* answer a mother’s prayer for her son; this is more a belief in the power of nagging than an example of Biblical faith.

In considering therefore the nature of Christian charity, it is necessary to remind ourselves that erroneous motives have entered in. The modern term *philanthropy* represents an example of this; it means, literally, love of man; whereas Biblical charity means, essentially, manifesting God’s grace because we have received His grace. As our Lord *commands* us, “[F]reely ye have received, freely give” (Matt. 10:8). Christian charity is indeed a godly work, but it is also essentially a manifestation of grace. We give because we have received.

When James tells us that faith without works is dead (James 2:14–17), he is declaring their virtual identity. A

living faith reveals itself in a man’s work: no faith, no works, and vice versa. The work of grace is a fruit of grace. A false separation leads to bad theology. Works separated from faith is philanthropy, and it is also a fallacious view of salvation at times. Faith separated from works tends to mysticism, or at least the confusion of experience and feeling with faith.

The early church was remarkable in its practice of charity. This was in part its inheritance from Judaism, but it went far beyond Judaism in the scope of its practice. We cannot underrate the importance of its work here. At the same time, this practice was not error free. For example, St. John Chrysostom declared:

Are you unable to practise the virginal life? Then make a prudent marriage. Are you unable to do without possessions? Give, then of what you possess. Is such a burden too heavy for you? Divide your goods with Christ. Are you not willing to cede Him everything? Make over to Him at least the half or third part. He is your brother and co-heir; make Him your co-heir even on earth. How much soever you give to Him you give that to yourself.¹

The Neoplatonism and asceticism here is obvious. A life of marriage and the possession of property is the lesser way of spirituality, and amends can be made by living meagerly. God *requires* the tithes; gifts were possible only if more than a tithe were involved. Chrysostom urged “*at least* the half or third part” be given to Christ and His work. This is being holier than God!

With reference to true almsgiving, Chrysostom said:

Charity is, indeed, a great thing, and a gift of God, and when it is rightly ordered, likens us to God Himself as far as that is possible; for it is charity which makes the man. Some one, at least, wishing to characterise man, did it in these words: *Man is great, and the merciful man is honourable*. Kindness is better than raising up the dead. For it is a much greater thing to feed Christ in His hunger than to raise the dead in the name of Jesus. By feeding Christ you confer a benefit upon Him; in the other case He is benefiting you. And the reward is for doing, not receiving. As to the signs, you are under an obligation to God, but with regard to the almsgiving, you put God under an obligation to you.

It is an alms when you give willingly, generously—thinking that you are rather taking than giving; when you give as if you were receiving something, as gaining rather than losing, otherwise there would be no thanks in it. He who helps his neighbour should be in gladness, not in gloom. In truth, is it not foolish that in removing the despondency of another you yourself should be despondent. You will not suffer it to be a real alms.²

In these words, a great impetus for subsequent charities is in evidence: “[W]ith regard to the almsgiving, *you put God under an obligation to you.*” This is a far cry from our Lord’s words, “[F]reely ye have received, freely give.”

This view of Chrysostom’s is different from the emphasis of St. Ephrem of Syria, who said of Christ’s birthday,

“On this day to us came forth the Gift, although we asked it not! Let us therefore alms bestow on them that cry and beg of us.”³ Ephrem said also:

He the Lord of all giveth all to us. He that enricheth all, requireth usury of all. He giveth to all things as wanting nothing, and yet requireth usury of all as if needy. He gave us herds and flocks as Creator, and yet asked sacrifices as though in need.⁴

This is closer in spirit to “[F]reely ye have received, freely give.” Grace is stressed rather than putting God under an obligation.

Both views were widely prevalent, but, in time, the view of Chrysostom (not original with him, no doubt) prevailed. Centuries later, the Spanish picaresque writer Mateo Aleman wrote: “[T]o the rich are given temporal goods and to the poor are given spiritual goods, so that in return for distributing earthly possessions among the poor, grace is bought.”⁵

This does not mean that good did not flow out of this theological error, not necessarily because of the error but the faith still present with it. Maureen Flynn’s study of Catholic confraternities in Zamora, Spain, 1400–1700, is a remarkable account of the Christian organization of life. The confraternities were mutual aid brotherhoods and sisterhoods; they included most Zamorans. Their work included mutual insurance, charitable activities, hospitals, burials, redeeming captives, maintaining bridges, providing dowries, preventing vengeance, and more. They owned land and properties to further their work. They had their own priests and were a lay-operated church outside the church. The French Revolution abolished all such organizations, among other corporations.⁶

Confraternities declined for a number of reasons. *First*, the plague made

labor scarce, and this helped destroy the medieval attitude towards “holy poverty.” *Second*, this went hand in hand with a changed attitude towards work, “and its value in the material development of nations.”⁷ Work was now more sanctifying, especially to Protestants, than was poverty, and able-bodied beggars were now regarded unfavorably.

There was also, *third*, the rise of statist charities, quickly becoming welfarism, as the state gained power, and as crisis conditions in the economy made the burden of charity too great for sometimes weakened church agencies.

Some legislation against begging followed in many countries. In Spain, a Dominican friar, Domingo de Soto, opposed such legislation on both theological and practical grounds. “He considered begging a fundamental human right of which no government should deprive its citizens.”⁸ Even more Soto saw begging as closely tied to property freedom. “As long as private property remained the foundation of the economic order, the poor could not be deprived of their private right to appeal for sustenance.”⁹

At the same time also the Council of Trent began to alter the confraternities from lay control and lay concerns to ecclesiastical ones. In fact, in Flynn’s telling words, “The universal brotherhood of brothers in Spain posed almost as great a threat to Catholic clergymen as the universal priesthood conceived by the Protestants,” since the confraternities were administering sacraments and arranging their own services of worship.¹⁰

Calvin, meanwhile, was giving a renewed emphasis to charity. In his *Institutes*, Calvin declared, in terms of Acts, that

The invariable custom, therefore, was, that no assembly of the Church should be held without the word being

preached, prayers being offered, the Lord’s supper administered, and alms given.¹¹

Charity was thus made inseparable from worship. Very soon, Geneva saw the needy cared for. It was a cooperative task of church and state, as was the case in Spain. The work was under the jurisdiction of the church’s diaconate. A paid, full-time deacon administered the charity.¹² Calvin believed that charity had to be an aspect of the life of faith and dependent on “the voluntary spirit.”¹³ He also held that work was essential, and, in a sermon on Deuteronomy 24:1–6, declared, “If a man is deprived of his work he is degraded.”¹⁴ Thus, efforts were made to provide work for the poor. Calvin’s Geneva provided a pattern in Milan for Cardinal (later Saint) Charles Borromeo.

When the earlier, medieval, view of holy poverty gave way after the plague to a growing dislike of beggars, and a belief that able-bodied men should work, society was ready for a theology of work. Calvin laid the foundations for this in holding that poverty, instead of giving holiness to a man, degraded him.

Wallace said of Calvin that his program for Geneva could be described as one of social sanctification, and as having two aspects. The *first* was to be the personal transformation of the people. The *second* was to be through social discipline, “and through the sacramental power of the word of God.”¹⁵ The “social discipline” included the work of the diaconate.

Calvin’s vision of society was one of church and state alike in the service of the triune God. Another concept was in the process of developing, however. In Flynn’s terms, in describing its Spanish manifestation, in the new temper, “religion was conceived of as at the service of the state.”¹⁶ This meant social

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Man and the Earth: Environmentalism Versus Kingdom Responsibility

Mark R. Rushdoony



The celebration of Earth Day, once restricted to a fringe element at public parks, is now widely noted by the media as if it were

a major national holiday. Perhaps the most telling sign that the environmental movement is politically correct is its commercial exploitation by businesses touting how “green” their products are.

The problem with political correctness was succinctly described to me many years ago by the historian Otto Scott. He noted that the idea, then a new term, represented an intolerance of dissent and freedom of speech, as that which was not “politically correct” now carried a stigma of immorality. Political correctness represents the banning of ideas and their expression.

But why must such harshness be applied to ideas about the environment? All ideas rest on assumptions about ultimacy, and environmentalism is based on evolutionary assumptions about the most fundamental aspects of man’s being. Environmentalism is a view of man’s responsibility to the earth based on the religious/philosophic starting point of evolution.

Man’s Relationship to the Earth

In evolutionary faith, time, space and matter are ultimates. These are often given the artificial collective noun “nature” (though the assumption that nature is unified is borrowed from creationism and defies the chaotic world Darwin actually described). Man is said to have developed from the characteris-

tics inherent in the matter of the earth. Man is thus a product of earth and has a dependent relationship to it by virtue of this biological evolution. The earth, you might say, has given man the “gift of life.”

The Bible very clearly describes the earth as being created by God as a home for man and his exercise of dominion (Gen. 1:26). The problem man now faces is his sin. After the Fall, man had a moral problem, and his relationship to the earth changed. The curse on the ground (Gen. 3:17) made the dominion mandate difficult to fulfill, though sin has not eliminated the dominion mandate, as man’s sin never negates any command of God or any responsibility of man.

Man’s Responsibility to the Earth

In the evolutionary, or naturalistic (i.e., excluding the supernatural) view, man is himself conditioned by nature. Hence, the already artificial collective “nature” is given the nurturing qualities of “Mother Nature.” Such language is evidence that the supernatural power and providence of God is not eliminated but rather subtly transferred to the natural realm. The use of such anthropomorphic language is more than euphemism; evolution must ascribe all eternal, infinite, creative, and sustaining characteristics of God and His work to matter. One does not have to watch a nature show very long before being told that some amazing trait was “developed” by that very organism in order to survive.

The current popularity of environmentalism should not cause us to

forget there are often other evolutionary views of man’s responsibility to nature. Most popular through the middle of the twentieth century, and still a major force in the scientific community, is the view that gives priority to man as the highest form of evolution, as though “nature” conferred a responsibility on man to use his intellect and technology to now accelerate the evolutionary process. This idea gave rise to the cult of science that so dominated the modern mind from Darwin to the space race and is still very prominent in certain fields.

This view sees science as the means to man’s glorious future, but it is the same view that gave us eugenics, Nazi death camps, forced sterilizations to reduce “unwanted” births, and the supposed necessity of the space program. More subtly, it is also the view that has given us municipal fluoridation, mandated immunizations, government-defined health requirements, the elimination of many alternative health-care practices, seat belt laws, and FDA approved label warnings. Such a cult of science, you see, can never achieve its ends without forced compliance. Such “science” always depends on scientific socialism, on using the power of the state to impose the good life on man, always at the expense of liberty.

The difference between the adherents to the cult of science and the environmentalist is that the latter gives priority to the earth as man’s nourisher rather than to man himself. The force of the state is then geared to limit man’s liberty in the presumed necessity of sav-

ing his environment. Man's technology, rather than being seen as the answer, is seen as the problem, and man must be controlled lest he interfere with the evolutionary process.

The environmental movement also tends to default to some form of scientific socialism to achieve its ends, although its view of man's responsibility to the earth takes a different track. This readiness to use the state as the means of achieving its ends betrays the fact that these ideas are more than science—they are religious, philosophical, and statist approaches to life and are incompatible with liberty. Statism in the name of saving the earth is no less onerous than statism in the name of man's necessity to control the future.

The Biblical View

Scripture always directs us to our moral responsibility to God. This is a problem for man because he is a sinner, and sin has weakened man (in that he has a limited time before a certain death) and he works with a cursed earth. Man also influences the earth because of his impulse to dominion, which is part of his being. Man is now a sinner but this drive remains. In its nobler expressions, dominion seeks to make a better life through hard work, medical and other scientific pursuits, and the preservation of liberty for the future generations. All this involves loving our neighbor as ourselves.

In its uglier manifestation, the drive to dominion means the exploitation of others whether on the scale of a Mao Tse-Tung or the physical and emotional abuse of a spouse. Dominion is a desirable thing if the end is the furtherance of God's glory and the means are moral, but the drive itself is prominent in both sinner and saint. The Fall did not release man from the dominion mandate any more than it released him from marriage (both instituted before the Fall).

Two Kingdoms

Dominion is a moral and religious duty. It is not about man's power or right but rather man's responsibility to promote the dominion and prerogatives of God. Its association is political, but not statist. We can see this in another similar term—the Kingdom of God. God is a Sovereign and He reigns and has a dominion which we are to further, but the Kingdom of God and His Christ is a religious and moral fact, not essentially political. God's reign implies obvious moral responsibilities in the civil realm but far transcends them.

When men obey God and His law, first in their own lives (by holiness) and then in the larger contexts of their responsibilities and influences, they exercise dominion and, in some small way, further the Kingdom of God. The emphasis of the dominion mandate is on encouraging men to act in terms of the reality that our God reigns. The Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20) is thus a reinforcement of the dominion mandate. The Kingdom of God may thus be described as wherever God rules. Because “[t]he earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof” (Ps. 24:1), this is the only kingdom that possesses legitimacy and that will endure throughout eternity.

The alternative to the rule of the Creator and His law in the Kingdom of God is the rule of men in what may rightly be referred to as the kingdom of man. This kingdom bears no legitimacy but still lays claim to the promise of Satan that men could be as gods determining good and evil for themselves (Gen. 3:5).

The believer is called to serve the Kingdom of God. In order to do this he must obey God's law. To deny the king's law is to deny the king the prerogative of His rule. This is a repudiation

of the Kingdom of God in favor of the kingdom of man. The antinomian thus twice repudiates God's law, once as Adamic man and once blasphemously in the name of Christ.

Man and the Defiling of the Earth

God created the earth for man and withdraws its benefits as a punishment for man's sin. In a moral sense, the earth is dependent on man's faithfulness. If “the stars in their courses fought against Sisera” (Judges 5:20) then all God's providential care of His creation might be used against the ungodly. The obvious example of the defiling of the earth because of man's sin is neither carbon emissions nor nuclear waste; it is the Flood which was God's moral judgment for sin. The Flood did more than kill sinners; it destroyed the original creation. The earth we see now is not what Adam saw; it is the aftermath of judgment.

The judgments of God on the earth in response to man's sin are described in Isaiah 24. The Lord is said (v. 1) to make the earth empty, to turn it upside down (literally, *to pervert the face thereof*). The earth itself is said to mourn (v. 4). The reason the earth is defiled is that the inhabitants have “transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant” (v. 5). Men are also said to be judged in this passage but there is no doubt God uses the earth itself to punish men.

We can examine the physical forces that cause “natural” disasters. These are very real, but so are the eternal purposes of God and these, at times, include the defilement of the earth in order to execute judgment on man. God's purpose and providential governance is moral, not mechanistic; to limit our view of the natural world to mechanistic forces is to deny that God still governs His creation. It is to presume Deism.

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The Calvin Quincentenary and the Transformation of Christendom

Roger Schultz



The year 2009 commemorates the 500th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin (1509–64), the greatest of the Protestant Reformers. Calvin left an astonishing record of Biblical scholarship, pastoral ministry, theological production, and ecclesiastical and governmental reform. His influence spread throughout Western Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and German historian Leopold van Ranke notes, “Calvin was the virtual founder of America.”¹

The Reformation began in 1517 when Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses to protest Roman Catholic practice, especially regarding indulgences. As did the Reformers who followed him, Luther focused on the redeeming work of Christ and vital issues of personal salvation, Biblical authority and church reform. Calvin shared Luther’s sentiments, but developed a more consistent and far-reaching Biblical theology.

There was much for the Reformers to protest. The pre-Reformation church suffered from grotesque moral and spiritual abuses. Many priests, for instance, kept concubines. Powerful Renaissance popes were notorious for their mistresses and illegitimate progeny. The gospel was obscured. The Bible was often inaccessible, even for priests, and superstition frequently substituted for genuine faith. Frederick the Wise, Luther’s prince and protector, had a relic collection numbering 5,000 holy items, purportedly including wood from the true cross and straw from the

manager in Bethlehem.² Even Johannes Gutenberg, made famous by his press and publication of the Bible, made his living printing thousands of indulgence forms for the Roman Catholic Church (sold to abbreviate the penitent’s time in purgatory) and manufacturing mirrors that pilgrims used when visiting venerated relics.³ Europe desperately needed a reformation.

God used Luther to launch a powerful reformation of Western Christendom. Calvin provided a more systematic, full-orbed expression of the Reformation faith, which is the focus of this article. But this is not merely a historical study. Calvin’s testimony can provide a foundation for a twenty-first century reformation.

Evangelical Faith

The Reformers were committed to the gospel or *evangel*. The evangelical faith emphasizes the good news of salvation through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul makes this crystal clear in 1 Corinthians 15:1–4, when he “evangelizes” his readers with the message that he preached, they believed, and through which Christians are saved. He delivered this message as of “first importance”—“that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures . . .” (NIV).

This message sounds very simple to those who were raised in gospel-preaching churches. For the medieval Christian, however, the road to heaven had been paved with sacraments, good

works, penitential duties, spiritual uncertainty and purgatorial sufferings. Luther languished in monastic misery striving to be good enough for God. He felt liberated by God’s grace and the truth of justification by faith alone. Romans 1:17 (“the just shall live by faith”) was, for Luther, “the very gate of paradise.” Calvin describes his own experience with redeeming grace and “sudden conversion” simply as “God subdued my heart to teachableness.”⁴

In time, Reformation evangelical teaching condensed into five “*Solas*.” *Sola Scriptura* stressed the absolute authority of the Word of God—in contrast to the Roman view of authority resting on tradition, popes and councils. *Sola Gratia* emphasized salvation solely through the grace of God rather than the synergistic work of man and God. *Sola Fide* pointed to “justification by faith alone,” rather than the combination of faith and meritorious human works. *Solus Christus* affirms that salvation is only through Christ our Mediator. *Soli Deo Gloria* provides a theocentric Reformation understanding of God’s eternal plan of redemption—that all things pertaining to our salvation are to the praise of His glory (Eph. 1: 6, 12, 14).⁵

Evangelicalism sometimes gets a bad name today, because of sloppy theology and a compromising spirit. (Bob Jones once defined an evangelical as “someone who says to a liberal, ‘I’ll call you a Christian, if you’ll call me a scholar.’”⁶) Despite the weaknesses of some contemporary evangelicals, however, Reformed Christians should

not be ashamed of the evangel of Jesus Christ—since it is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16).

Christians committed to ongoing reformation must first—like the Apostles and Reformers—stress the gospel. The Chalcedon Foundation provides an excellent example, articulating in “Credo” what genuine Christians must believe: “As Calvinists, we believe that sinners are saved **solely** on the ground of Christ’s substitutionary, atoning death and law-keeping life, the passive and active obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24). Further, we believe that justification, man’s legal acceptance in the sight of God as ‘not guilty,’ is appropriated by faith **alone** (Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:8-10).”⁷

Biblical Faith

The Reformers were committed to Scripture as God’s inspired and absolutely trustworthy Word. In his study of *Calvin’s Preaching*, T. H. L. Parker notes that week after week, Calvin climbed the steps to his pulpit and “patiently led his congregation verse by verse through book after book in the Bible.” This fundamental biblocentricism highlights Calvin’s faith. For Calvin, Parker concludes, “Scripture demands the right of complete submission, complete credence.”⁸

Calvin’s approach to Scripture, furthermore, was Christocentric. He loved the Bible because it pointed to Christ, the cross and salvation. As Stanford Reid notes, “[H]e always brought the hearers back to the fact that the center of the Christian life was Christ Himself.” When Scottish Reformer John Knox was dying, he asked that Calvin’s sermons (on the passion of the Savior) be read to him. Before he died, it seemed, Knox wanted once again to hear from his old mentor the Biblical testimony of salvation through the cross of Christ.⁹

The Reformers also stressed the law of God and its manifold uses. The *civil use* referred to the basic principles of equity and justice contained in the law. All societies have laws regarding killing and stealing, for example, which are proscribed by God’s commandments. The *evangelical use* of the law shows that men are fallen and need a savior. The law is a tutor leading sinners to Christ. Lutherans were slow to accept the “third use” of the law, but Reformed Christians affirmed that it also had a *didactic use*. The law taught basic principles of holy living. As those saved by grace through faith and empowered by the Holy Spirit, Christians were to faithfully obey the commands of Scripture.

Calvin’s sermons were also practical, filled with pointed, contemporary applications. He stressed Old Testament law and its continuing application and sanctions. His sermon from Deuteronomy 28:25–28, for instance, deals with diseases, particularly the sexually transmitted diseases that plagued Europe after the Columbian contact. Calvin’s warnings must have been frightening: “I pray you, have we not seen that God within these fifty years has brought up new diseases against harlotry? Whence comes syphilis and all the other filthy diseases, which cannot be counted at this time? Where do they come from except from God, who utters forth His vengeance as formerly was never seen? [F]or a time men were greatly afraid of it; but . . . it has become so ordinary a matter that the despisers of God (I mean the lecherous sort and the whoremongers, who give themselves over to all sorts of lewdness) do but wring their groins at it. Though God smites them with such a leprosy (for it is a leprosy indeed), so that they are eaten up with fretting and other filthiness, yet they do not cease following their practices and only mock at the illness.”¹⁰

The twenty-first century is a rootless, postmodern and relativistic age. Now more than ever, people need a clear testimony of the absolute trustworthiness of Scripture and the unwavering moral standards of God’s law. Christians must present their generation with a faithful Biblical witness, as did their Reformation forefathers.

Confessional Faith

The Reformers were vigorously confessional and creedal. Constantly facing the prospect of persecution or martyrdom, they were compelled to give a clear testimony of their faith. Calvin’s Genevan Confession of 1536 is an excellent example. The Westminster Standards is the crowning achievement of this confessional age.¹¹

The twenty-first century is not a confessional century. Christians, even in conservative churches, are not taught systematically. It is time for Reformed churches to emphasize theologically-focused training. An elderly Scottish lady recently told me about growing up on the Isle of Lewis. There, in the public schools, she memorized the Shorter Catechism. Though not a believer until later, she thought catechizing was invaluable because it provided such a sturdy theological framework. “If you learn the catechism,” she told me, “you can never go too far off-base in theology.”

The Bible itself includes confessions and creeds. Nehemiah 9 and Deuteronomy 6:5 are Old Testament examples. New Testament examples include Acts 4:24, Romans 10:9–10 and 1 Timothy 3:16. Scripture constantly affirms the value of personal and corporate confessions of faith.

The Practice of Confessional Subscription is an excellent resource for church officers, explaining what it means (and meant historically) to take ordination vows and subscribe to doctrinal stan-

dards. It includes a discussion of the positive purposes of creeds and confessions. Their functions include: Confessional (to confess the faith), Apologetic (to defend the faith), Fraternal (to establish common ground), Pedagogical (to teach the youth), Uniformity (to standardize doctrine), Testing (to reveal soundness of candidates' theology), Qualifying (to prepare men for church office), and Polemical (to attack error and heretical viewpoints).¹² This was critically important for the Reformers.

Churches will inevitably have theological and confessional standards. They may be simple or highly structured. They may be published and visible, or implicit and assumed. They may be official and serious standards, or merely loose guidelines. A key strength of truly Reformed churches is their structured, explicit, public, Biblically-anchored theological standards.

Calvinistic Faith

Calvin's name is immediately associated with Calvinism, election and predestination. All of the Reformers had a strong Augustinian emphasis on the sovereignty of God. Luther's *Bondage of the Will*, written against the humanism of the day, is an excellent example. Of all the Reformers, however, Calvin best represents this emphasis on sovereign grace.

I made a commitment to reread Calvin's *Institutes* in 2009. I first read Calvin's great work thirty-some years ago as a university student, and I filled the margins with my Arminian objections. I loved Calvin's passion, however, and found it difficult to ignore his careful reasoning and his dependence on Scripture.

Calvin's theology emphasizes the sovereignty of God, human depravity, God's special revelation, and the redeeming work of Christ. No one better illustrates human rebellion, self-decep-

tion, and wretchedness. For Calvin, man was "a five-foot worm." And no one better points the way to the Redeemer. Even when Calvin recoils at some of the teaching of Scripture (the decree of reprobation, for instance, which he considered "dreadful"), he faithfully presents the Bible's perspective.

In a humanistic and self-centered age, there will inevitably be opposition to the doctrine of predestination. But that didn't stop Paul, speaking to the philosophers of Athens (Acts 17:24–28), from proclaiming God's comprehensive providence and sovereign control of history. Jesus frequently spoke on election and effectual calling (John 6:65), and His teaching was unpopular (John 6:66). Christians are called to faithfully present the doctrines of Scripture, even if they are difficult to understand or unpopular. The Great Commission requires Christians to disciple the nations, teaching *all things* that Christ commanded.

Reformed Faith

The Reformed Church is "reformed—and always reforming according to the Word of God." "Semper reformandum" has long been associated with Reformed Churches. But it is important to maintain the final clause—"according to the Word of God"—lest liberals corrupt the formulation to mean "constant change according to the prevailing spirit of the age."

I still remember my first (and last) Presbytery meeting in the liberal, mainline UPCUSA. Preparing to go to seminary, I was coming under care of presbytery. Everyone assumed this would be automatic, and I was not dismissed from the floor of presbytery after giving my testimony. A shaggy minister, dressed in jeans and a tee shirt, denounced my chosen seminary, which was evangelical. (Afterwards, people told me that he was sore because of opposi-

tion to his wife, who was a pantheist. At the last Presbytery meeting, she had been barely approved for ordination to the gospel ministry. She was now seated beside her hippie husband, knitting.) The liberal condemned evangelicals in general, saying that they could not serve well in a Presbyterian denomination, which was "reformed and always reforming." For him, I suspect, "always reforming" meant "always becoming more liberal." The Reformers, by contrast, were committed to reformation *according to Scripture*.

Luther's clash with Emperor Charles V at the Diet of Worms is a famous event of the Reformation. Here Luther "took his stand," saying, "I stand convicted by the Scriptures to which I have appealed, and my conscience is taken captive by God's word ..." Luther would not budge from his reforms, unless they were shown to be contrary to Scripture.

Calvin gave a similar testimony to Charles V in the "Necessity of Reforming the Church." Calvin notes that God had raised up Luther and others to bring reformation. Reformation in doctrine was necessary, especially to make clear the doctrine of salvation. Reform of worship was needed to distinguish the "pure and legitimate worship of God" from superstition and idolatry. The government of the church had to be reformed, since it had degenerated into "horrible and insufferable tyranny."¹³

The Reformed Church, then, was reforming in doctrine, worship and discipline according to the Word of God. This three-fold initiative corresponds to the offices of Christ, who is our prophet, priest and king. This also corresponds to the marks of the true church, where the Word was rightly proclaimed, the sacraments rightly administered, and discipline properly dispensed.

The word “reformed” doesn’t appear in the Bible, with one notable exception. Leviticus 26:23–24 (NKJV) reads: “And if by these things you are not reformed by Me, but walk contrary to Me, then I also will walk contrary to you, and I will punish you yet seven times for your sins.”

The term “reformed” in Leviticus 26 could also be translated “chastised,” “instructed,” “disciplined,” or “corrected.” The idea is that God’s people are reformed by God’s careful discipline. It is interesting to note that the areas where God expected reformation in Israel were the very things that the Reformers stressed. They emphasized proper worship and repudiation of idolatry (Lev. 26:1), the Lord’s Day (Lev. 26:2, 43), the Law of God and consequences of disobedience (Lev. 26:3, 27, 40, 46), a personal walk with the LORD (Lev. 26:12), and the doctrine of the covenant (Lev. 26:9, 42, 44, 45). Finally, like the Reformers, Leviticus emphasizes sovereign grace (Lev. 26:23), in that God’s people are “reformed” *by* God. Jehovah is the one who renews His people. Leviticus 26, then, has a dramatic exhortation from the LORD: be Reformed . . . *or else!*

Engaged Faith

The Reformation gave important roles to laymen. Both Luther and Calvin encouraged lay involvement in the work of the Kingdom. Both stressed the idea of vocation and the legitimacy of glorifying God through secular callings. Luther particularly emphasized the priesthood of all believers.

When Calvin reformed the church in Geneva, he did so along Presbyterian lines. He developed a simple, Scripture-heavy liturgy for the church that influenced Presbyterian and Puritan worship. His church order established principles of ecclesiastical polity that were copied throughout the Reformed world. He

proposed four church offices: Pastor, Teacher, Elder, and Deacon. This same polity is found in the Westminster Form of Government and, with modifications, in modern American Presbyterian denominations. The Reformed churches, emphasizing the work of Ruling Elders, encouraged broad involvement.

Hierarchical and bureaucratic churches opposed Biblical Presbyterianism. “The church has by and large paid lip service to the priesthood of all believers,” Rushdoony comments, “because its hierarchy has distrusted the implications of the doctrine, and because it has seen the church as an end in itself, not as an instrument.”¹⁵ Yet man has a proper calling as a royal priest, to serve God in his area of vocation. As Rushdoony notes, “[T]he purpose of the church should not be to bring men into subjection to the church, but rather to train them into a royal priesthood capable of bringing the world into subjection to Christ the King. The church is the recruiting station, the training field, and the armory for Christ’s army of royal priests.”¹⁶ Christian leaders are necessary in every sphere of action—in the church, family, state, education, and various vocations. “It is the duty of the Christian home, school, and the church,” Rushdoony argues, “to train elders who will apply the law of God to all the world.”¹⁷ This is the engaged faith the Reformers emphasized.

Comprehensive Faith

The Reformation faith was a complete faith, touching and transforming every area of life. The Great Commission requires believers to teach *all* things that Christ commanded. The Christian faith cannot be restricted to pious platitudes and Sunday morning religion.

Abraham Kuyper (1837–1920) revived the Reformation commitment to comprehensive, applied Christianity. Kuyper lived what he taught, working

as a pastor, theologian and journalist; establishing a new Dutch Reformed denomination, the Christian Democratic Party and the Free University of Amsterdam; and serving as the Prime Minister of the Netherlands. His overarching commitment to the Lordship of Christ is expressed in his most famous quotation: “There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry: ‘Mine!’” His *Lectures on Calvinism*, the 1898 Stone Lectures at Princeton, is an excellent example of all-encompassing Reformed principles.

Kuyper stressed integrated and coherent worldview thinking. He described a mighty contest between Christianity and Modernism, saying “two *life* systems are wrestling with one another in mortal combat.” As Christians, Kuyper charged, “[W]e have to take our stand in a life system of equally comprehensive and far-reaching power.”¹⁸

He emphasized sphere sovereignty, arguing that beneath the overarching sovereignty of God existed distinct spheres (church, state, family, vocations) with unique structures of authority. The state does not function independent of God’s sovereignty. Kuyper argued, for instance, that there were three distinct Western approaches to state authority: atheistic popular sovereignty (French Revolution), pantheistic state sovereignty (German philosophers); sovereignty of God (Christianity). The state’s power was limited, and it had no right to dominate other spheres, such as the church. “Calvinism protests against State omnipotence, against the horrible conception that no right exists above and beyond existing laws.” Each sphere is distinct, Kuyper argued, and in every sphere “God’s Word must rule.”¹⁹

Kuyper was confident about the future, but he believed that Christians

should be active. They should emphasize Calvinist creeds, study Calvinism's historical roots, and apply principles of the Reformation to "every department of life." All disciplines—philosophy, law, literature, science—must be studied from Biblical and Christian perspectives. As the Apostle Paul proclaimed, "We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. 10:5)"²⁰

Kuyper's "ruling passion" was clear: "That in spite of all worldly opposition, God's holy ordinances shall be established again in the home, in the school and in the state for the good of the people; to carve as it were into the consciousness of the nation the ordinances of the Lord, to which Bible and Creation bear witness, until the nation pays homage to God." His comprehensive vision was the goal of the Protestant Reformers, and it should be the goal of every revival-minded Christian today. ■

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The Cost of Discipleship

Martin G. Selbrede



In the January/February 2009 issue of *Faith for All of Life* (FFAOL), I criticized the “doctrine” of a personal quiet time¹

and exposed the shabby Biblical support for it as well as the dislocated priorities this man-made concept leaves in its wake. But “quiet times” are only the tip of the iceberg among the various strains of programitis infecting Christianity. There are many other beloved practices that also fail the Scriptural Sniff Test. The fact that they sound so reasonable and beneficial has made them difficult to identify and dislodge—we cling to them while simultaneously proclaiming *Sola Scriptura* and *Semper Reformanda*. Binding unbiblical burdens on people’s backs was not a practice limited to the Pharisees and scribes—it yet liveth.

In discussions with many well-intentioned, well-meaning, highly-motivated Christians, I see this tragedy played out repeatedly. “There is a way that seemeth right to a man,” the Bible repeatedly warns. And because that “way” seemeth right, men tend to defend it when it is challenged, when someone suggests it is not, in fact, the right way. The defenders of that way, that tradition, that practice, have all their arguments lined up, their Scriptures in order, the clear beneficial effects faithfully tallied—or so they first think. The truth is this, that insofar as that “way” does not coincide with God’s Way, the church is again spinning its wheels in another ditch rather than making meaningful progress into the future hurtling toward us. The sound

of the engine revving is not the mark of progress: forward motion is the only marker that counts.

And the worst tragedy of all is when man’s way is marketed as the key to making meaningful progress in our faith and its application. Christians collectively see the five smooth stones on the ground, turn aside to look at the shiny armor offered by Saul, and then they choose to don that armor and step over those supposedly inconsequential stones to go into battle.

Bad idea.

Accountability and Discipleship

In my FFAOL essay entitled “By Faith He Still Speaks,” I drew attention to a serious problem plaguing Christendom by adapting a general indictment first leveled by columnist David Brooks:

Team loyalties . . . create “invisible boundaries that mark politically useful, and therefore socially acceptable, thought.” What are these team loyalties? They could be loyalties to church, to denomination, to non-denomination, to a theological school of thought, to a ministry, to a self-serving violation of God’s law being protected through a code of silence, etc. We have created artificial accountability structures that create these socially acceptable boundaries, transgressing on Scriptural boundaries in the process. Such accountability structures inculcate the fear of man and peer pressure, generally in the context of team loyalty, rather than instilling the fear of God. As Rushdoony put it, we are our brother’s *brother*, not his keeper. Not surprisingly, the propagation of the traditions of men makes void the law of God. The conscience can only be bound by God and His Word, but

modern Christendom routinely abandons God’s law and binds the people’s conscience with human precepts. Humanism always rushes in to fill the gap left when God’s law is dumped into the garbage bin. That’s when the invisible boundaries, the unstated rules, encroach on Christian freedom under color of ecclesiastical authority. Couching that humanism in SpiritSpeak merely puts lipstick on the pig.²

The gist of the evangelical push for accountability is *horizontal accountability*. This push is a major factor in many ministries in which believers are advised to hold one another accountable for various aspects of their Christian walk. An implicit distrust of the Holy Spirit’s office of sanctifying the believer lies behind this push. The Spirit may be sent to convict the world of sin and of righteousness, but evangelicals feel He needs a little help—He’s just not quite omnipotent enough, you see, and so men need to fill in what’s missing. Just as we have many new *precepts of men* rushing in to fill the vacuum that results when God’s commandments are tossed out, even so we have many new sanctifying agents rushing in to fill the gap when God’s Holy Spirit is judged inadequate to perfect the saints in holiness.

The pattern is all too clear: just as many evangelicals are dead-set on being lawmakers on God’s behalf, many more are committed to becoming little holy ghosts for their brothers and sisters. One’s “accountability partner” becomes a surrogate for the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit’s work is usurped. This is a way “that seemeth right to a man.” We would expect this kind of thinking

among Arminian believers who repose much weight in the actions of man as opposed to the operations of God, but the idea is rampant among Calvinists who have temporarily lost sight of the fact that God controls sanctification as much as any other aspect of our lives.

The dominant focus in Scripture is that men and women are *accountable to God*. Accountability is fundamentally *vertical*. As David put it so directly after being implicated in the death of Uriah the Hittite, “against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned” (Ps. 51:4). This idea grates on human pride and pomposity, but it is God’s law, not man’s law, that is being broken. We are to inculcate *the fear of God*, the vertical relationship, in others. But we undercut this because accountability partners subconsciously *act out of fear of man*. Our motivation in these relationships takes an unconscious turn: “I’m doing this because I don’t want to look bad to my accountability partner.” God holds us all accountable. Nothing ought ever to pull our eyes down from heaven, from Him with Whom we have to do, to worry about our fellow man’s opinion of us. We ought to worry about what God thinks of us. “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:12; see also 1 Pet. 4:5).

Accountability partnering puts man back in front of a human audience, inviting us to operate in terms of that new relational dynamic instead of in terms of the Holy Spirit’s sanctifying power and quickening of His law-word to our minds and hearts. Dr. R. J. Rushdoony drew attention to this tendency in men to focus on external things in his exposition of the lost military victory against Moab in 2 Kings 3 when the Moabite king sacrificed his eldest son on the city wall in plain sight of Israel:

Given the syncretistic mentality of Israel, it is more than likely and almost

certain that this act of human sacrifice had a profound effect on them, an equal if not greater effect than God’s providential miracles on their behalf. When and where we are more afraid of man than of the Lord, and more awed by the acts of man than the acts of God, then and there we incur God’s wrath and indignation. Men readily believe in the efficacy and power of man’s acts. Man’s acts are deliberately public: the human sacrifice was made, not in an inner temple or altar, but on the walls, before the invading armies. Men work before an audience, while the Lord works in terms of His own secret counsel and way.

Israel lost a victory handed to it by the Lord, because Israel believed more in the power of man’s acts than in the power of God. Men today still lose victories given them by the Lord because they move in the fear of man.³

To seek out an accountability partner is to not only to discount God’s infinite provision for our sanctification, the Holy Spirit; it is to fly in the face of God’s warning in Isaiah 2:22: “Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?” Yet, many churches today unwittingly make men and women depend on each other, rather than upon God, for their sanctification, subtly (or not so subtly) shifting the motive for obedience in the process. As Rushdoony said so well, “men work before an audience, while the Lord works in terms of His own secret counsel and way.”

We should not lose sight of another key factor: the fear of man is a snare, whereas the fear of the Lord is liberating and purifying. Some proponents of these programs argue they are not substituting something for the fear of God, they are merely supplementing the fear of God. But adding a snare to place in our brother’s path is hardly an improvement.

“Accountability” is an idea that sounds good and seems more than reasonable. Therein lies the danger behind the idea. It’s the reasonable, good-sounding things that entrap even vigilant Christians. As has been well-said, there’s a certain kind of evil only a good man can do. This means that our guard is down when strong Christian leaders that we trust come out in favor of an idea—if humanists proposed that same idea, we’d be on our guard and scrutinize it without mercy. We don’t expect to be handed a stone when we ask our leaders for bread—as a result, we’ve broken our teeth on many a false loaf of bread.

“Discipleship, not Accountability”

On many occasions over the last twenty years, I’ve raised these issues with good, solid men of God and was told that they fully agreed with my point regarding accountability, but saw no harm in discipleship. In a sense, they were bringing back the accountability paradigm, but in a form felt to be Biblically defensible. I’ve heard many verses appealed to in favor of such a compromise position: “We’re called to disciple the nations,” “we’re to bear one another’s burdens,” “Paul mentored Timothy,” etc. Let us consider this possibility.

While it might (emphasis on *might*) be possible to do “discipling” that doesn’t run afoul of the concerns raised above, the odds are strongly against it. The very Scriptures used to justify the idea don’t support the weight they’re intended to bear. For example, one’s sanctification is not a burden someone else is to bear for you: it is an operation of God upon your heart and soul. The Great Commission calls upon the nations to become disciples of Christ. Looked at dispassionately, without a preexisting agenda, it offers no basis for justifying much that goes on in the name of “discipleship.” Timothy was

being prepared as one who must give account for the souls to be placed under his ministerial care (Heb. 13:17), a fact not easily generalized without doing violence to the context.

Let us be equally clear, however, that nothing said here militates in the slightest against the many things Christians are to do for one another *as fellow disciples of Christ and members one of another in Him*. We are surely to exhort one another, to teach, to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice, to have a true sense of community, etc.⁴ And these obligations are perpetual, extending far beyond the time anybody spends in spiritual kindergarten as a babe in Christ. But God expects rapid spiritual growth to the point that people become teachers themselves (Heb. 5:11–6:3), not that we stay in a perpetual kindergarten. To fail to become capable of teaching is condemned as the moral crime of slothfulness.⁵ In other words, the window for discipleship, if such a thing were intended for us to pursue at all, would be remarkably short, time-wise. Note too that “moving on toward maturity” (Heb. 6:1) is made contingent on God’s sanctifying operation: “this we will do, if God permit” (Heb. 6:3).⁶

We must not forget that the teaching of God’s people is often represented as God’s teaching them *directly*. “And all thy children shall be taught of God,” we’re told in Isaiah 54:13, while the psalmists repeatedly assert they were taught by God (Ps. 71:17), particularly out of His own law-word (Ps. 119:102, 171). God teaches and disciples us through the Holy Spirit quickening His law-word to our mind, bringing to vigorous spiritual life our individual study of Scripture “to show ourselves workmen approved, not ashamed” while also confirming us in the ministry of the Word from the nations’ pulpits.

The Protestant Reformation was a move away from sacerdotalism (priests and/or church as mediators between God and man) to evangelicalism (where God acts directly upon man’s heart and spirit without a mediator to effect salvation). This move, while pivotal and important, did not always filter down into every nook and cranny of modern Protestant practice. We often hear the oxymoronic term “Protestant sacerdotalism” to refer to such inconsistencies. But the modern accountability movement and its counterpart in modern discipleship practice reinserts humans between God and man in regard to sanctification. This constitutes a return to sacerdotalism. But God doesn’t sanctify through peer pressure, He sanctifies us through His truth (John 17:17). The human agent is more likely to get in the way and realign our priorities and place undue burdens on people not actually commissioned to take over the Holy Spirit’s job in the first place.

Unlike people, the Holy Spirit does not nag. But He can be grieved, and He can be pushed to the deepest envy: “Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?” (James 4:5). The envy, the jealousy, the Spirit feels refers to His seeing us squandering our love on the world rather than loving God—Who actually merits our affections, unlike the empty façade of the world. He works in us both to will and to do—so re-steering our motivation away from God and the Holy Spirit’s chartered task in our hearts is likely to reawaken His envy again. He will envy the trust we place in our fellow man to sanctify us with the slavish crutch of peer pressure.

Zealously Cling to Liberty

To my surprise, there are those who will agree with everything I’ve alleged above against modern discipleship programs, against cookie-cutter attempts to

mold Christians through having your own personal sanctification assistant, and yet will still resist abandoning or reforming such practices. They will either cite the alleged practical benefits they’ve seen, or will argue that a Christian is free to enter such relationships voluntarily.

But men always reap what they sow, and will pay a price for scattering seed in the wrong kind of field. We must live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, and not be governed by matters of expedience. Moreover, the “benefits” of tying people to accountability relationships with each other to anchor their Christian walk cannot be compared to the result of properly teaching the fear of God and promoting Biblical motives for obedience and holiness. The cost of discipleship, when conducted in this way, is very high indeed. In the name of sanctification, we look to our fellow man to hold our feet to the fire through varying degrees of compulsion. For we are talking nothing less than psychological compulsion when we swim in these particular waters.

Christians often enter into relationships that are unwise, or that aren’t countenanced in Scripture. If we are currently free of such spiritually compulsive relationships, there’s every reason to avoid entering such a relationship anew. We are to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ made us free (Gal. 5:1). The accountability relationship is an unnecessary yoke, a set of training wheels that bespeaks man’s distrust of God’s provision for leading us into all truth. It is an open testimony that we hold the Holy Spirit to be inadequate to sanctify us—that He needs our help, and that we need to be, not just our brother’s brother, but our brother’s keeper as well (thus adopting a job description scornfully coined by the world’s first murderer).

In short, a Christian is not actually free to enslave himself, or adopt a yoke that curtails his hard-won liberty. “[W]here the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty,” Paul explains in 2 Corinthians 3:17. Why set aside or diminish the in-working of the Spirit in favor of artificial yokes to “improve” our walks and “insure” our spiritual growth? God alone gives the increase. God alone looks upon the heart, and searches a man’s spirit. “I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins” (Jer. 17:10), “and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts” (Rev. 2:23). Men aren’t qualified to do this. The best men can do is subject us to external testing—which can divert our attention away from His internal work. It is dangerous to associate or equate the commitments we voluntarily make to other Christians with an actual divine imperative.

Under God’s law, we walk at liberty. “And I will walk at liberty: for I seek Thy precepts” (Psalm 119:45). The term translated “liberty” can be understood more literally as “a wide space”—David walks in a wide, unhindered space because he seeks God’s precepts. But when today’s discipleship trend deteriorates into micromanagement, one Christian of another, at any level, there is no more “wide space” to walk in. The sufficiency of Scripture is implicitly undercut as well.

The Urge Toward Micromanagement

I bear my brothers witness that they have a zeal for sanctification, but it is not according to knowledge. The mere fact that the word “disciple” appears so often in the Bible (256 times in the KJV) causes many to think that discipling and discipleship (as they understand those terms) are not to be questioned at any level. After all, everyone wants to be a good disciple of Jesus, so whatever means the church appoints

to make us better disciples is regarded as intrinsically justified. This argument doesn’t bear up under closer scrutiny.

The vast majority of uses for the term *disciple* relate to the twelve disciples: the apostles, the pillars and foundations of the church. We learn that by Acts 11:26 the term became functionally equivalent to “Christians.” Someone who is a disciple of Jesus isn’t even necessarily someone who received micromanaged training by Him—such as Joseph of Arimathea (John 19:38), or, most interesting, the blind man whose sight Christ restored, who posed a question that rankled the scribes and Pharisees:

“[W]ill ye also be His disciples? Then they reviled him, and said, ‘Thou art His disciple; but we are Moses’ disciples.’” (John 9:27b-28)

Moses was obviously not alive at the time the scribes claimed to be his disciples. Christ, of course, repeatedly challenged the leaders’ claims to be disciples of Moses or sons of Abraham, but the fact remains that the concept of *disciple* transcends one-on-one micromanagement. The collective aspect is indisputable, for which reason we find mention of Paul “strengthening all the disciples” in Galatia and Phrygia (Acts 18:23) by collectively exhorting them in their labors for their King.

“What you need is a manager”

Actor Burgess Meredith, playing boxing trainer Mickey Goldmill, informs Sylvester Stallone’s Rocky Balboa that he needs a manager (namely, Mickey himself). And in the 1976 motion picture *Rocky*, that assertion made perfectly good sense.

But all too often, the modern church echoes Mickey by telling the people, “What you need is a manager!” But the Manager that God had already sent into the hearts of His people is

given only lip service, because, regrettably, He is invisible, but man looks on the outward appearance. As Rushdoony so insightfully put it, “men work before an audience,” and an invisible God with an invisible Spirit inside us where we can’t see Him is easily overlooked when staring into the eyes of the person across the table from you who has taken up your spiritual growth as a pet project.

If we’re not to lean upon our own understanding (Prov. 3:5), why should we lean on someone else’s understanding? “Cease ye from man” means we get our marching orders, our motivations, our moral imperatives, from God and His law-word.⁸

Christians already have a Manager Who is fully equipped, through God’s Word, to disciple His people. God alone writes His Law into our hearts and minds (Heb. 8:10). Our distrust of the Holy Ghost in His capacity as Sanctifier reflects our inability to cope with the fullness of Christian liberty.

Liberty is indeed a dangerous concept. Because humanists premise their utopian dreams on total control, the fact that they fret over the idea of liberty is understandable. But the fact that Christians would so willingly abridge one another’s hard-won liberty is not.

Perhaps one day the idea of discipleship could be severely reformed and reconstructed to avoid the countless pitfalls inherent in current practice, pitfalls even plaguing better informed Christians. But as things stand, and as currently practiced, we can draw only one conclusion about the matter:

The cost of discipleship is too high. We’ll get more faithful disciples without it.

The urge to guarantee results through micromanagement of various kinds appears whenever we depreciate the power and value of the Spirit’s work

Continued on page 23

Upon This Rock: Rushdoony's Ecclesiology of the Kingdom

Christopher J. Ortiz

[U]pon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Matthew 16:18b



Who owns the future? That should be the question we ask ourselves. We don't. For the average Christian, a faulty eschatology, and a preoccupation with personal security, represent a willful forfeiture of a distinctly Christian future. Our opponents do not think this way, and our universal indifference to godly dominion is but one more indicator that the future is theirs—all in the providence of God, of course.

Still, the church must awaken from this languid deception because totalitarianism looms over the societal horizon like the creeping fog of the San Francisco Bay. To stretch the metaphor even further, these clouds will not dissipate quickly without the burning rays of a godly people beaming with the authority of Christ. The despotic planners of a humanistic world order revel in the ease of advancement provided them by a church that routinely abandons her post.

Without a return to the true meaning and purpose of the church, we can only expect an increase in the size and scope of the satanic world order. The people of God are simply not prepared to assume a governing position. How could they be? If they do not understand basic issues like God's will for economics, education, or statecraft, how can they possibly avoid tyranny outside of revolution?

What undermines us is fundamental, and it begins with our very concept of the church and its purpose in history. Set over against this is the mirroring agenda of humanism and its push for global dominion. As I've written previously, we were born into a state of war,¹ and unless we discard the ideas that neutralize us, our opponents will retain the societal preeminence.

God's Solution: The Christian World Order

God's goal in history is the destruction of this apotheosis [man's will to be as god] and the establishment of His Kingdom or *House* against the Kingdom or House of Man.²

This is as simple a statement of God's mission in history as I could find in Rushdoony's pages. If we define a thesis as *that which we are seeking to establish*,³ then our essential objective is to destroy the House of Man by establishing the House of God. In contemporary parlance, *we foil the plans for a humanistic world order by building the Christian World Order*. The million-dollar question is, "How is this done?"

For some, political protest is the preferred method, but *protest* of the "city of man" is not enough. The power state and its financial backers are too fortified and the masses too indifferent to our shift to globalism. Others are devoted to *exposing* the nefarious plans for an international super state, but this is also insufficient unless accompanied by an

equally comprehensive system. This is what one Reconstructionist has said for years: "You can't fight something with nothing." He's right. Until the body of Christ is fully engaged in the battle for the advancing Kingdom, we will be forced to endure some form of humanistic totalitarianism.

This does not mean, however, that we are ignorant of the agendas of even small groups of evil men. In his comments on Isaiah 28:15–18, Rushdoony states with undeniable clarity that our historic enemies are "evil men"; their goal is a "world order"; and their means of defense are "lies":

The meaning of the actions of the ungodly, of the lawless and the despisers of God, is that they have a covenant with death and hell. Not only so, but they believe in their hearts that not God but lies are their best refuge, their city and tower of defense. These men seek to shape history by their lies and laws. But God has a sure foundation for His city of refuge, as against the city of man and lies. It is His Messiah, God incarnate, who, as the new Adam, will create a new humanity in His image (1 Cor. 15:45ff.; 2 Cor. 5:17). Through Jesus Christ, the last Adam, God will disannul all that these evil men seek to establish, and their world order, founded on lies and injustice, shall finally perish.⁴

Note the tone of victory whenever Rushdoony addresses what some refer to as "conspiracies," e.g., world government. This is the proper manner in which a Christian should perceive

the works of darkness. Hopefully, the present threat of world socialism will inspire a generation of Christians to rethink their concept of faith and responsibility. We need a *collective faith* regarding the “word of the Kingdom”⁵ in order to push against the very gates of hell.

History Is Not Impersonal

An equal error to over-emphasizing conspiracies is to dismiss them as the delusions of paranoid populists. This is the stumbling block of the intellectual’s dogmatic commitment to rationalism. The orthodox Christian, on the other hand, must not subscribe to an impersonal philosophy of history. He cannot discount the full potential of man’s depravity, viz., its capacity to organize itself in a perpetual agenda for a global order that mirrors the multi-generational mission of the worldwide Kingdom of God. He must not embrace the false comfort of the intellectual who sees history as governed by impersonal forces instead of agendas:

[Conspiracies] can *only* be understood in terms of unconscious, *impersonal* historical forces. In this perspective, to see a conspiracy as a conspiracy is a naïve misreading of history, a failure to analyze its basic currents, and an attempt to see historical froth as substance. To “expose” conspiracies is thus seen as a *confusion of appearance with reality* and an evasion of the basic problems and conflicts of history.⁶

Whereas conspiracy theories have traditionally been the mainstay of paleo-conservatives, contemporary conservatives typically go blind to the threat of statism as long as a Republican administration is steering it. So, when the police powers under the Bush administration increased, most conservatives—including most Christians—celebrated the Federal government’s undermining of our constitutional liberties.

However, this attitude amongst conservatives is changing as the global agenda becomes more apparent—no doubt a socialist in the White House helps. Even the pundits on FOXNews are admitting that a “conspiracy” for world government is afoot. On a recent episode of “Hannity,” FOX contributor Dick Morris said in relation to the G20 plans for an international economic order, “And those people who have been yelling, ‘Oh, the UN is going to take over—global government.’ They’ve been crazy, but now, they’re right!”⁷

As Rushdoony makes clear, whether the League of Nations or the United Nations, modern Towers of Babel remain the humanistic drive because “humanism has a doctrine of incarnation, and the state is the incarnation of its god.”⁸

Why Conspiracies Prevail

The exposing of any evil planners will be done by God in history, but it will be enacted by first permitting their system to increase, as Rushdoony notes, “He gives evil time to mature, so that the issue becomes clear cut.”⁹ This is where contemporary conspiracy theorists are injuring both themselves and their audience. They do not understand the Biblical perspective regarding conspiracies and therefore fall prey to the spirit of fear.

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.
2 Tim. 1:7

Conspiracies are the result of a waning faith in God’s people. When we cast off our responsibility to godly dominion, organized evil moves in to fill the void. These conspirators must be displaced, but a man is greatly deceived if he believes mastering the history of freemasonry, or the Illuminati, will somehow undo the machinations of

Satan. The only solution, as Rushdoony states, is reconstruction:

[B]ecause Christian faith has waned and has become antinomian, it cannot maintain or create a law-order. As a result, ancient criminal impulses and movements grasp at power. The key to displacing these grasping evil powers is not a study of the deep things of Satan, nor a belief in their power, but godly reconstruction in terms of Biblical faith, morality, and law.¹⁰

Stated more simply, “The weakness of evil conspiracies means that they can normally only occupy a vacuum.”¹¹ If your desire is to stop the plans of evil men, then you must commit yourself fully to the task of reconstruction. If you’re faithful to this calling, you can be assured that God will protect His own, for it is during an evil age that the law-abiding people of God are given a city of refuge:

The cities of refuge thus have a typological meaning which must not be neglected. Jesus Christ and His law-word provide us with our city of refuge in an evil generation.”¹²

This is by no means a retreat from the battle—it’s just the opposite. We too, as the church, have a global agenda: “It is our task and *privilege* to make the whole earth God’s city of refuge, a place of justice and safety”¹³ (emphasis added). We as Christ’s church are permitted to remain in history that we may remake the world in the image of the new Eden. If God prospers us, it is exclusively for these ends:

The concentration of wealth, authority, and a general prosperity in civilization is to be seen as making it into a new Garden of Eden. Ezekiel’s language [Ch. 28] tells us of God’s intentions for Eden and the world. The goal is a glorious and prosperous world paradise under God. The purpose of godly authority is to develop such an order.¹⁴

The authority of the wicked will decline only as godly authority increases. As in the parable of the wheat and tares, dominion over the field of the world is determined by which plant crowds out the other.¹⁵ History bears no vacuum; the disappearance of the wicked means the increase of the righteous:

When the wicked rise, men hide themselves: but when they perish, the righteous increase. Proverbs 28:28

The Doctrine of Authority

If the purpose of godly authority is to develop a “glorious and prosperous world paradise under God,” i.e., the Christian World Order, then we must expand the meaning of the authority we are to exercise. Even though the humanistic and Christian world orders are supposed to be antithetical to each other, a Christian misconception of the dual doctrines of *authority* and the *church* has left Protestantism with its own version of elitist rule. In such a system, the Kingdom of God cannot develop properly:

Godly, hierarchical authority and government works to bring others into their rightful and God-ordained authority and government. Elitism, on the other hand, excludes all but the elite from these spheres.¹⁶

If the meaning of discipleship is the preparation for godly authority, then we are failing in this area. The typical understanding of discipleship focuses upon the individual’s spiritual development instead of preparation for godly rule.¹⁷ The goal of contemporary discipleship is “to be like Christ”—as if one could determine what Christ was like outside of God’s law!

Godly authority is given to equip believers to advance the Kingdom in every sphere of life, yet the landscape of the Western church is littered with centralized behemoths (megachurches)

randomly spaced between a myriad of conservative, but bureaucratic, denominational houses of worship. Both suffer from the same ailment: *misplaced authority and a limiting ecclesiology*.

The life of the church is not to be directed to developing an institution but to establishing God’s saving power in their lives and in the lives of others, and in bringing dominion into the lives of men and institutions. Church members are the people of God, and they must further God’s reign and government.¹⁸

When our Lord gave the keys of the Kingdom to Peter, the purpose was manifold; it was never intended to be isolated to the burly fisherman. In Matthew 18:18, the church itself is bearing the keys, and in Matthew 23:13, the Pharisees are recognized as bearing similar “keys” to the Kingdom:

But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

The Pharisees were resisting them that were pressing *into* the Kingdom (Luke 16:16), but an opposite resistance is apparent today where Christian leadership encourages faith for heaven but resists a faith that seeks to bring heaven to earth. If the Kingdom is to come, hierarchical leadership must prepare self-governing rulers under God:

According to our Lord, the purpose of keys is to unlock doors. The keys of God’s Kingdom must be used to unlock the doors of knowledge, vocation, and service for God’s people, to make them a royal priesthood, priests and kings. The purpose of authority under God is to develop the authority and governmental powers of all those to whom we minister. The question thus is not merely, How do we govern those under our authority?, but also, How do they

govern themselves? Something is wrong with us if we must continually support and finance our own children. Mutual assistance is one thing, continuing dependence is another.¹⁹

In most Christian denominations, the doctrine of the church is reduced to an identity other than the Kingdom of God:

Rome has stressed the catholicity of the meaning of the *church* but identified it too closely with the institution. The Baptists have recognized the local nature of the worshipping group and the primacy of faith. The Church of England has seen the relationship of the entire people and their institutions to the church of Scripture but has reduced the church to the nation. Finally, the Reformed Churches have recognized the centrality of the covenant, but they have reduced the covenant to the community of institutionalized worshippers.²⁰

The problem becomes one of conformity as each group focuses upon its doctrinal distinctive rather than the developed Kingdom of God. Rushdoony writes, “Too often the church identifies faith with itself, and faithfulness with loyalty to the institutional forms and practices. It then *seeks conformity rather than faith*.”²¹ However, “the more strong any one of these churches becomes in the faith, the less it stresses its own distinctives and the more it stresses the distinctives of Christ and the word.”²²

What is the Church?

[T]he church is more than the local building and congregation. The term is closer in meaning to the Kingdom of God. It has reference to the called people of God in all their work together for the Lord.²³

Rushdoony’s doctrine of the church is often misunderstood because his was an *ecclesiology of the Kingdom*. In essence, the mission and the people were

indivisible. Despite the claim that pastors understand the church to be made up of people, the people understand the church to be an institution, viz., a non-profit organization representing a particular theological tradition accompanied by professional leaders, staff, and facilities. If Christians can only see the local institutional church, they will remain oblivious to the responsibilities of the faith in establishing the Christian World Order. This doesn't mean we should discard the institutional aspects of the church. We need only help the local congregation to view itself as a power center for godly government:

A church thus is not essentially a building or an institution, although both can be manifestations of its life. It is a covenant people who believe and apply the covenant law-word to all of life and who seek to bring men, nations, and all spheres of life under the dominion of Christ as Lord. Thus, while the church may be a building and an institution, and both can be important and needed aspects of its life, it is primarily a power and a government at work in the world.²⁴

Rushdoony was not *contra*-church. He was *pro*-Kingdom, and that often placed him in opposition to the abuses of institutionalism—a primary hindrance to the advancing Kingdom. His concern was not to divide too sharply the institution from the people. The church is a body of people, whether local or universal, and it is the responsibility of pastors to be sure that laymen understand that they remain the church at all times:

The work of the laity must be seen as a chaplaincy, a carrying of the life of the faith into every area of life and thought. The layman does not leave the church when he walks out of the building; if it is not his life in his calling, then he is never in the church on Sundays either.²⁵

The Church as an Outpost for Christ's Kingdom

The gates of hell are not to prevail against the church that Christ is building, but as it stands, we are far from an ecclesiology of the Kingdom that truly threatens the contemporary satanic world order. As Rushdoony has demonstrated throughout his writings, eschatology and soteriology have a great deal to do with this. The postmillennial hope of a universal Kingdom, and a doctrine of salvation that leads to godly rule, are the best means to undoing whatever system humanistic man constructs. This means a return to the true meaning of the church, viz., “an outpost for Christ's Kingdom”:

It is hardly likely, that after centuries of erroneous usage, we can readily return to the Biblical usage which saw local congregations as outposts of Christ's Kingdom, as the church or kingdom in Ephesus, and so on, but only by a postmillennial perspective is any such usage at all possible. Today, as the world more openly embraces humanism, our religious institutions, schools, families, and callings must see themselves as outposts of Christ's Kingdom, local gatherings of the citizens of the new creation. In the building for worship, the true church in a local community gathers to hear the word of God, whereby they are to go forth and exercise dominion.²⁶

God destroyed the first attempt at a humanistic world order when He confused the language of the builders at Babel (Gen. 11); He will destroy all ensuing world orders so long as they are built upon sin instead of the rock of His revelation: the One with authority in heaven and earth. The purpose of the Book of Revelation is simply a full exposition of Peter's glimpse (“Thou art the Christ”) at Christ's identity. He was not Elijah, or one of the prophets. He is the One that ascended to the throne to

establish His eternal reign, and it is in this reign that we as the church find our identity and mission:

Christ is seen as present in the world in the church, in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, or lampstands (1:12, 20), alive and present in His body as well as in eternity. Christ is hidden now from the world, but present nonetheless not only as King of creation on His throne, but also as the true Church and the head thereof. The purpose of this vision is to give comfort and assurance of victory to the church, not to confirm their fears or the threats of the enemy. To read Revelation as other than the triumph of the kingdom of God in time and eternity is to deny the very essence of its meaning.²⁷

To whom does the future belong? It belongs to Christ—the rider on the white horse who is called “Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war” (Rev. 19:11); and because we belong to Him, we are called to share in His reign (Rev. 20:6). As for the beast, the dragon, and the false prophet, they will have their lot in the “lake of fire and brimstone...and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever” (v. 10). It is not for us to be fearful of any beast or his system. To grant *fear* and *dread* to any conspiracy is to grant them our worship, for these paralyzing emotions were created by God and should be directed toward Him that is “our fear and our dread.” If we do so, God Himself will be our sanctuary:

**“Do not say, ‘A conspiracy,’
Concerning all that this people
call a conspiracy, Nor be afraid of
their threats, nor be troubled. The
LORD of hosts, Him shall you
hallow; Let Him be your fear, and
let Him be your dread. He will be
as a sanctuary...” Isaiah 8:12-14
(NKJV)**

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Rules of Engagement

Andrea Schwartz



Well over a decade ago, I first encountered a recording entitled “The War,” a compilation of the preaching of Dennis Peacocke and the worship music of Ted Sandquist. The full title is “Battle Songs for the War Between Two Seeds.” I was so encouraged by the project that in addition to playing it repeatedly for my family, I shared it with a junior high/senior high co-op class I was teaching on church history.¹

Rev. Peacocke points out that the people of God are simultaneously involved in a cultural war and a spiritual war. He notes that no Christian volunteered for this war, but rather was predestined to be a part of it. The question isn’t who wins the war. The Word of God makes it very clear that Christ has already won the victory. Rather, the question becomes, Are God’s people engaged in the battle or sitting on the sidelines?

Peacocke declares that this war has been engaged and there is no avoiding it. Furthermore, Christians will always have opposition from those who are the seed of the serpent when it comes to our shaping, changing, and challenging the way the world system operates. We must take Jesus at His Word, “[U]pon this rock [the testimony that Jesus is Lord] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18). Now that’s the sort of recruitment promise that engenders confidence and resolve!

Seek Ye First the Kingdom

Too few in the army of Christ live as though they believe that actively seeking God’s Kingdom and His righteousness will produce the blessings so clearly outlined throughout the Scriptures and detailed extensively in Deuteronomy 28:1–14. If they did, there would be less reliance on political parties and national opinion polls to make our decisions, less concern as to whether or not the enemies of God approve of our methods, and considerably less shying away from proclaiming the full counsel of God. However, these verses in Deuteronomy were not always ignored. There was a time in American history when the promises of blessings for obedience and curses for transgressions were taken so seriously that when the President of the United States took his oath of office, he placed his hand on an opened Bible, opened to Deuteronomy 28.²

By default, many professing members of the body of Christ end up participating in this *war between two seeds* aligned with and working for the enemy, as they rally to the battle cry of the wolves in sheep’s clothing: “We’re not under law, but under grace.” By agreeing with and living out a lawless Christianity, they are puppets in the hands of Satan and his children and happily swallow this “Tokyo Rose” style propaganda.³

Strong statement? Well, consider the fact that the majority of American Christians blithely place their children in the boot camp and army of the enemies of Jesus Christ for twelve

years or more, without hesitation or concern. What’s more, they allow active engagement in the pagan culture by their modes of dress, the movies and television programs they devour, and the unmonitored consumption of profane internet sites. Jesus makes it clear that “[e]very kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand” (Matt. 12:25). It is no wonder that we find ourselves in the current cultural malaise, swallowed up by the very curses for disobedience God promised.

Going to War

So, how should a Christian family engage this battle? By orienting its time, money, resources, and efforts in a full commitment to the cause of Jesus Christ. This answer is simple to say, but more complex to live out. When the people of God fully embrace that we live by *every word* that proceeds out of the *mouth of God*—in short, applying the entire Word of God to every area of life and thought—then, and only then, will their efforts result in the blessings of Deuteronomy 28:1–14.

The key to this solution lies with the Biblical trustee family, with the father at the helm and the mother actively present in the lives of the children until they establish new families of their own. Homeschooling is a powerful counter-attack to the lies and deception of the enemy. What are the prerequisites to a God-honoring home education? The answer is simple but requires a shift in

orientation and outlook from that of the modern world.⁴

The law-word of God needs to reign supreme in a Christian home. This is accomplished by regular family Bible study, catechizing, Scripture memorization, sitting under sound preaching, and requiring all family members to reason from Scripture. This requires a strong theological background and should hold a higher priority in the educational curriculum than any other subject. Any requests, decisions, long-range planning, etc., need to be established on a firm Biblical footing, with time spent outlining how a particular choice measures up with and to God's Word and the family's place and work in God's Kingdom.

No family operates without sin and its consequences, but a family whose major educational goal is the pursuit of knowing God's law and applying it across the disciplines and activities of life is in a far greater position to receive God's blessing than a family that merely focuses on academic subjects and success.

Boot Camp

So where is the boot camp for families who wish to follow this model? God has provided the solution in His Word.

But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own

husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. (Titus 2:1–5)

Self-help books, advice from TV and radio programs, and pop psychology do not hold a candle to the one-on-one relationships that the Apostle Paul commands in these verses. When obeyed as outlined, those who have been helped turn into those who can then help others. Back in 1985 when my husband and I met Dr. and Mrs. Rushdoony, they graciously fulfilled the role of the older man and the older woman in our lives and served as mentors and models for us. We were very rough around the edges, but willing and eager to learn. Now, almost twenty-five years later, we serve as mentors to others. This is the very fruit that should be present and prevalent in all Christian homes and churches. There should be no need initially to resort to a "professional" counselor when all know and can apply the law-word of God to the situations of everyday life.

Through a concerted study of the law-word of God with the intent of practical, everyday application, Christians can fight the spiritual and cultural war that confronts us on every side. For the enemies of God to win in the political realm, their major battles are launched primarily against the family as God's basic institution.

Western society has had a family organization since Christianity became the faith of the West. A man's life, from birth to death, is guided, affected, and colored by family relations. The basic unit of the social order is the family. The family is the socially stable unit where the family has liberty and property.

As a result, the totalitarians hate the family and declare it to be the enemy of social change. Totalitarianism hates the family because it is the basic thesis of all totalitarians that man's first loyalty must be to the state, whereas the Christian family's first allegiance is to the triune

God. The totalitarian therefore seeks to abolish the family. Lenin said, "No nation can be free when half the population is enslaved in the kitchen."⁵

The Opposition's Tactics

Is it any wonder that since the last century, at least, a concerted effort has been made to convince women that remaining at home and raising their children is bondage and proof that they lack intelligence and relevance? As families succumbed to the satanic model, a vacuum was created in the lives of families that the totalitarian state was glad to fill. Considering the current push to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁶ Rushdoony's comments back in the middle of the last century are telling:

In the United States, the attack on the family is being steadily mounted. The state increasingly claims jurisdiction over the family, its children, income, and property. The state assumes that it knows what is best for children, and it claims the right to interfere for the children's welfare. As a result, the family is progressively weakened in order to strengthen the power of the state.⁷

The book of Ephesians closes with instructions to the family (Eph. 5). However, the apostle does not stop there, as he knows that none of what he has directed can be accomplished in one's own strength. He therefore directs his brethren in Ephesians 6:10–18:

[B]e strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

These are familiar verses, but often divorced from practical application. Those principalities and powers that we wrestle with and that attack our homes and families are hell-bent on separating us from the love of Christ. What's more, these enemies of Jesus Christ thrive on fracturing families, destroying marriages, and wreaking havoc on the culture once the institution of the family has been routed. At this time in history, we have the antithesis being played out in front of our faces. As Proverbs 8:36 explains, "[H]e that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death." With the enemies of God acting with such an open frenzy now, it is apparent that they will not be content until we are all in hell with them. This is true of the homosexuals in our midst but also of the secular statist who are insisting that we go down a road that has been proven historically to fail.

Many Christians continue to live with their heads in the sand, mistaking

state-granted permission for liberty under God. They remain oblivious to the steady pounding that the family receives in public education, the mainstream media, the compromised professional spheres, and in their own thinking.

The death of the family is therefore planned, and, on every continent, the executioners are at work. Together with the death of the family, the "death" of God is also proclaimed, and we are assured that the new age has no need for God or the family. The menace and intensity of dedication of these hostile forces cannot be underestimated. They are an active, powerful, and highly organized force in modern society.⁸

Homeschooling families are not immune to these assaults, and unless the homeschooling mother is proficient in the application of God's law to areas of her home life, being the "older woman" for her daughters, she will not be able to become the "worthy woman" that Proverbs 31 calls her to be. Without a firm resolve and a dedication to a full-orbed application of God's law in the home, she will fail to raise up a generation of women who will know how to look well to the ways of their households and eventually become the "Titus 2" women themselves. For this upcoming generation to survive, they must comprehend the intensity of the battle raging around us and be fully prepared to engage it.

An Army Advances

Rushdoony points out that although the battle looms large, our God is larger.

We dare not underestimate the power of the triune God, Who rules the nations and fulfils His holy purpose despite all the vain conspiracies and wild imaginations of men. But none can share in God's victory unless they stand forth clearly in terms of Him and His holy cause, unless they separate themselves unto Him. Jesus Christ said,

"He that is not with me, is against me: and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad" (Matt. 12:30). And you, where do you stand?⁹

By God's grace, many wives and mothers are waking up to the vital role they play in the present and future advance of God's Kingdom. They see, contrary to all the indoctrination assaults of the past and present, that their place in the battle is not in the workplace, the halls of academia, or outside the home. They see that the proverbial phrase "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world"¹⁰ is not only true, but also ordained by the living God. ■

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1. Available from G.W.I. Online, <http://www.gwionline.org/onlinestore.htm>.
2. R. J. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1 (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1994), 402.
3. Tokyo Rose was the generic name given by American soldiers in WWII to English-speaking Japanese female propagandist broadcasters whose intent was to disrupt the morale of American GIs.
4. Rushdoony's books *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, *The Philosophy of the Christian Curriculum*, *Systematic Theology in Two Volumes*, and *Law & Liberty* are fundamental reading in obtaining an orthodox, Biblical worldview.
5. R. J. Rushdoony, *Law & Liberty* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1984), 74.
6. Lee Duigon, "Will UN Treaty Abolish Parents' Rights?" The Chalcedon Foundation, May 4, 2009, www.chalcedon.edu.
7. Rushdoony, *Law & Liberty*, 75.
8. *Ibid.*, 77.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Taken from the poem by the same name by William Ross Wallace.

The Older Woman

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When young I was married and expecting the bliss
That was penned in novels or written in scripts
I quickly discovered that marriage demanded more
Than gifts from the wedding and being carried
through the door.

My husband though a blessing
from the Lord up above
Couldn't teach me to humble myself
and him freely love
For that one was needed who had walked in my shoes
A woman much older was the method
God would choose.

Her hair was a white crown,
her face mapped with wrinkles
Her gait was not steady but her eyes
how they twinkled
She was full of the wisdom that comes from a life
That had embraced the role of a helpmeet and wife.

At times I'd call her to complain about my man
And she'd listen and question to help me understand
That I hadn't been called to be the person in charge
But to submit to God's purpose
which was righteous and large.

She wounded me faithfully in my unbelief
And showed me by her actions
that grace was within reach
Be discreet, chaste, and sober
Love children, love husband
Be obedient to his wishes
See that godliness ne'er diminishes
So the Word of God is not blasphemed.

The day came when this older woman
went to receive her reward
Weeks before we had spoken—
these were her tender words
I'm leaving you, Dear, to join my Savior in heaven
Now you be the older woman. Go help six or seven.

At first I was anxious. How could I become
Like the woman God sent to help me respond
To His call on my life a worthy woman to be?
My dear friend assured that His grace
was sufficient for me.

She reminded me that I had something to teach
To the keepers at home—many within reach
Be discreet, chaste, and sober
Love children, love husband
Be obedient to his wishes
See that godliness ne'er diminishes
So the Word of God is not blasphemed.

There are numbers of younger ones
expecting the bliss
That's been penned in novels or written in scripts
They know now that marriage demands
so much more
Than gifts from the wedding and to be carried
through the door.

I look in the mirror and what do I see
With the same set of eyes that have always been me
But a vessel of God to be used in His story
As now, the older woman,
I help others to live to His glory.

Rushdoony ... Diaconate cont. from page 3

discipline for the peace of the state, not for peace with God. It led to a transition from godly charity to philanthropy and welfarism.

Humanistic advocates of welfarism would to a degree give their approval to Calvin's statement, but with a difference. *First*, for the humanistic statist, it is powerlessness *more* than worklessness which is degrading to a man. As a result, entitlements and aid replace work as the remedy for the poor. *Second*, Calvin saw man's degradation and prosperity in terms of man's status before God, not in terms of cash and material goods.

As a result, welfarism has degraded a man far more than poverty has, because its damage has been to the spirit of man. ■

1. Mary H. Allies, trans., "Homilies on St. Matthew," *Leaves from St. John Chrysostom* (London, England: Burns & Oates, 1889), 73.
2. Allies, "Homilies on St. Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians," *Leaves from St. John Chrysostom*, 70.
3. J. B. Morris, trans., "Rhythm the First," *Select Works of S. Ephrem the Syrian* (Oxford, England: John Henry Parker, 1847), 9.
4. Morris, "Third Rhythm," *Select Works of S. Ephrem the Syrian*, 25.
5. Maureen Flynn, *Sacred Charity: Confraternities and Social Welfare in Spain 1400-1700* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 76.
6. *Ibid.*, 247.
7. *Ibid.*, 86.
8. *Ibid.*, 95.
9. *Ibid.*, 96.
10. *Ibid.*, 118.
11. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Bk. 4, Chap. 17, Vol. 2 (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1936), 705.
12. Ronald S. Wallace, *Calvin, Geneva, and the Reformation* (Edinburgh, Scotland: Scottish Academic Press, 1988), 90.

13. *Ibid.*, 96.
14. *Ibid.*, 124.
15. *Ibid.*, 31.
16. Flynn, *Sacred Charity*, 107.

Environmentalism cont. from page 5

God very often sends His rain on the just and unjust (Matt. 5:45) but He can also make the heavens as brass and the earth as iron (Deut. 28:23). God can cause any land to vomit out her inhabitants (Lev. 18:25). Once God's "holy land," and described as a land flowing with milk and honey, Palestine is now largely a barren wasteland. God destroyed the promised land when its people "transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant" (Isa. 24:5). Whatever the secondary causes, the primary cause was the judgment of God.

The Earth and Ethics

The naturalist ascribes sanctity to nature as the supposed originator (i.e., creator) of life. While ostensibly protecting nature, the environmentalist more often seeks to preclude man. While ostensibly setting nature apart, he separates man from his property and liberty in the name of the environment. To oppose environmentalism is to open oneself to the charge of being an exploiter and destroyer. The emotional term "rape" has been long used to describe all ownership and activity not approved by this pharisaical elite. Otto Scott was right. Political correctness is a new moral standard which defines the new sinners and saints.

In Scripture, sanctity belongs to God and His prerogatives. God is holy and man is called to be holy (Lev. 19:1-2; 1 Peter 1:15-16), though this necessitates regeneration (1 Cor. 15:45-47). We are holy, or separated to God, first personally and then in our work and associations. We are called to such faithfulness that one day even the bells

on the horses and pots in the houses, the most mundane of objects, will be separated to the service of God (Zech. 14:20-21).

Our sin makes us rebels against God. Criminals on the lam lead shiftless, wasteful lives. Cain's curse was, in part, that he would be a fugitive and a vagabond. Such men are consumers, not producers. Likewise, the sinner is a consumer, not a producer; he uses God's world for ill and God, though longsuffering, does not allow such a lifestyle to prosper and does not long allow the earth to tolerate him.

Man's abuse of God's creation is real enough, but the sin is not against the earth, but God. The answer to our irresponsible use of the creation is the repudiation of our rebellion in repentance and faith and a return to the disciplined life of faithfulness, work, and dominion. In God man finds life and perspective on all around him. ■

Selbrede... Discipleship cont. from page 14

in our hearts. As Puritan John Howe put it, "An arm of flesh signifieth a great deal, when the power of an almighty Spirit is reckoned as nothing."

In that light, what is the best thing we can possibly do when the Spirit is working in our fellow Christians' minds and hearts to sanctify them? The answer is irritatingly simple:

Get out of His way. ■

1. Martin G. Selbrede, "None Dare Call it Phariseism," *Faith for All of Life*, Jan./Feb. 2009.
2. Martin G. Selbrede, "By Faith He Still Speaks," *Faith for All of Life*, Jan./Feb. 2007, footnote 2.
3. R. J. Rushdoony, *Chariots of Prophetic Fire: Studies in Elijah and Elisha* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2003), 93.
4. We can add that the concept of apprenticeship is a very commendable one, and to the extent "discipleship" means training via

apprenticeships or internships for specific business or technical or marketing or professional skills within the framework of taking godly dominion, I could be induced to relax my objections—if all other aspects were in true Biblical order and my fundamental concerns proposed above adequately addressed. Many skills are best transmitted in this way, but that is a far cry from relegating sanctification of other Christians to such a method.

5. Martin G. Selbrede, “The Perpetual Kindergarten,” *Faith for All of Life*, May/June 2007.
6. Had Hebrews 6:3 said something like, “and this we’ll do, if our accountability partners hold our feet to the fire,” I’d be less inclined to object to this modern practice.
7. Dr. Gary North wrote an article for the *Journal of Christian Reconstruction* that featured this term in its title, wherein he contrasted family authority to various ecclesiastical preemptions. The term itself appears to have originated much earlier still.
8. It should not be necessary to say that Christians should fulfill all their moral, familial, ecclesiastic, civil, educational, and vocational obligations, and that these are not to be pitted against God’s Word, least of all in the interest of anarchy. The Bible places all these spheres under Christ’s feet, and we are to discharge our commitments faithfully even if it hurts (Ps. 15:4). This proviso applies to all statements in the text: they are to be understood in the context of all godly obligations incumbent upon God’s people to faithfully discharge in regard to every single one of life’s concerns. The context of this essay relates to various intrusions of sacerdotal practice in regards to personal sanctification that continue to weaken the church through programs and initiatives and traditions that have been unthinkingly adopted even by Calvinist churches that should have noted the Arminian basis of such practices.

Ortiz... Upon This Rock cont. from page 15

1. Chris Ortiz, “A State of War,” *Chalcedon Report*, April 2009.
2. R. J. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology in Two Volumes* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1994), 701.

3. Christopher J. Ortiz, “The Kingdom-Driven Life: Discovering God’s Larger Purpose and Our Place in It,” *Faith for All of Life*, March-April 2008.
4. R. J. Rushdoony, *Deuteronomy* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2008), 64.
5. Chris Ortiz, “All Things are Possible: The Collective Faith Needed to Establish the Kingdom,” *Chalcedon Report*, June 2009.
6. Rushdoony, *The Nature of the American System* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2001), 153.
7. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=70G7hQov6dI>
8. R. J. Rushdoony, *Christianity and the State* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1986), 41.
9. Rushdoony, *The Nature of the American System*, 157.
10. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (Phillipsburg, PA: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1973), 564.
11. *Ibid.*, 562.
12. Rushdoony, *Deuteronomy*, 64.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology*, 1181.
15. Christopher J. Ortiz, “God’s Story for Christian Dominion: The Ancient Secret of the Wheat and the Tares,” *Faith for All of Life*, Sept-Oct. 2008.
16. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology*, 1172.
17. See R. J. Rushdoony, *Salvation and Godly Rule* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1983).
18. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology*, 746.
19. *Ibid.*, 1173
20. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law Volume Two: Law and Society* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1986), 336.
21. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology*, 674.
22. *Ibid.*, 672.
23. *Ibid.*, 670.
24. *Ibid.*, 745.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law Volume Two: Law and Society*, 342
27. R. J. Rushdoony, *Thy Kingdom Come: Studies in Daniel and Revelation* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2001), 90.

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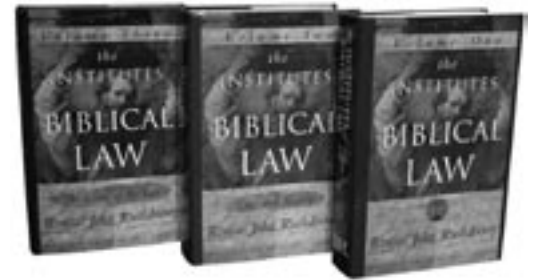
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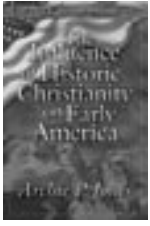
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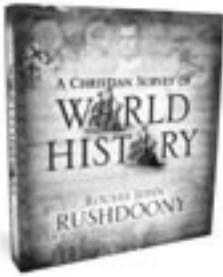
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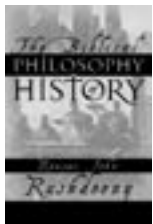
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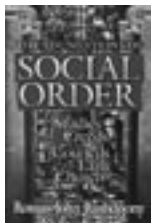
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By R.J. Rushdoony. This monumental work is a series of essays on the influential thinkers and ideas in modern times. The author begins with De Sade, who self-consciously broke with any Christian basis for morality and law. Enlightenment thinking began with nature as the only reality, and Christianity was reduced to one option among many. It was then, in turn, attacked as anti-democratic and anti-freedom for its dogmatic assertion of the supernatural. Literary figures such as Shelly, Byron, Whitman, and more are also examined, for the Enlightenment presented both the intellectual and the artist as replacement for the theologian and his church. Ideas, such as "the spirit of the age," truth, reason, Romanticism, persona, and Gnosticism are related to the desire to negate God and Christian ethics. Reading this book will help you understand the need to avoid the syncretistic blending of humanistic philosophy with the Christian faith.

Paperback, 230 pages, indices, \$21.00



By What Standard?

By R.J. Rushdoony. An introduction into the problems of Christian philosophy. It focuses on the philosophical system of Dr. Cornelius Van Til, which in turn is founded upon the presuppositions of an infallible revelation in the Bible and the necessity of Christian theology for all philosophy. This is Rushdoony's foundational work on philosophy.

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The One and the Many

By R.J. Rushdoony. Subtitled *Studies in the Philosophy of Order and Ultimacy*, 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 determines the conclusion; the effect is the result of a cause. And one such basic presupposition is with reference to the one and the many." The author finds the answer in the Biblical doctrine of the Trinity.

Paperback, 375 pages, index, \$26.00



The Flight from Humanity

By R.J. Rushdoony. Subtitled *A Study of the Effect of Neoplatonism on Christianity*.

Neoplatonism is a Greek philosophical assumption about the world. It views that which is form or spirit (such as mind) as good and that which is physical (flesh) as evil. But Scripture says all of man fell into sin, not just his flesh. The first sin was the desire to be as god, determining good and evil apart from God (Gen. 3:5). Neoplatonism presents man's dilemma as a metaphysical one, whereas Scripture presents it as a moral problem. Basing Christianity on this false Neoplatonic idea will always shift the faith from the Biblical perspective. The ascetic quest sought to take refuge from sins of the flesh but failed to address the reality of sins of the heart and mind. In the name of humility, the ascetics manifested arrogance and pride. This pagan idea of spirituality entered the church and is the basis of some chronic problems in Western civilization.

Paperback, 66 pages, \$5.00

Psychology

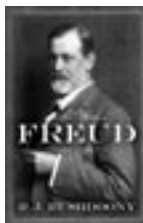


Politics of Guilt and Pity

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."

Hardback, 371 pages, index, \$20.00



Freud

By R.J. Rushdoony. For years this compact examination of Freud has been out of print. And although both Freud and Rushdoony have passed on, their ideas are still very much in collision. Freud declared war upon guilt and sought to eradicate the primary source to Western guilt — Christianity. Rushdoony shows conclusively the error of Freud's thought and the disastrous consequences of his influence in society.

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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.

Hardback, 334 pages, index, \$18.00



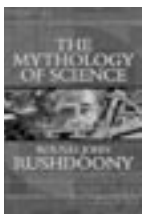
The Cure of Souls:

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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Science



The Mythology of Science

By R.J. Rushdoony. This book points out the fraud of the empirical claims of much modern science since Charles Darwin. This book is about the religious nature of evolutionary thought, how these religious presuppositions underlie our modern intellectual paradigm, and how they are deferred to as sacrosanct by institutions and disciplines far removed from the empirical sciences. The "mythology" of modern science is its religious devotion to the myth of evolution. Evolution "so expresses or coincides with the contemporary spirit that its often radical contradictions and absurdities are never apparent, in that they express the basic presuppositions, however untenable, of everyday life and thought." In evolution, man is the highest expression of intelligence and reason, and such thinking will not yield itself to submission to a God it views as a human cultural creation, useful, if at all, only in a cultural context. The basis of science and all other thought will ultimately be found in a higher ethical and philosophical context; whether or not this is seen as religious does not change the nature of that context. "Part of the mythology of modern evolutionary science is its failure to admit that it is a faith-based paradigm."

Paperback, 134 pages, \$17.00

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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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Creation According to the Scriptures

Edited by P. Andrew Sandlin. Subtitled: *A Presuppositional Defense of Literal Six-Day Creation*, this symposium by thirteen authors is a direct frontal assault on all waffling views of Biblical creation. It explodes the "Framework Hypothesis," so dear to the hearts of many respectability-hungry Calvinists, and it throws down the gauntlet to all who believe they can maintain a consistent view of Biblical infallibility while abandoning literal, six-day creation. It is a must reading for all who are observing closely the gradual defection of many allegedly conservative churches and denominations, or who simply want a greater grasp of an orthodox, God-honoring view of the Bible.

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Economics



Making Sense of Your Dollars: A Biblical Approach to Wealth

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

Paperback, 192 pages, index, \$12.00

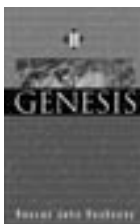


Larceny in the Heart: The Economics of Satan and the Inflationary State

By R.J. Rushdoony. In this study, first published under the title *Roots of Inflation*, the reader sees why envy often causes the most successful and advanced members of society to be deemed criminals. The reader is shown how envious man finds any superiority in others intolerable and how this leads to a desire for a leveling. The author uncovers the larceny in the heart of man and its results. See how class warfare and a social order based on conflict lead to disaster. This book is essential reading for an understanding of the moral crisis of modern economics and the only certain long-term cure.

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Biblical Studies



Genesis, Volume I of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

Genesis begins the Bible, and is foundational to it. 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. The god of the non-creationists is the creation of man and a figment of their imagination. The entire book of Genesis is basic to Biblical theology. The church needs to re-study it to recognize its centrality.

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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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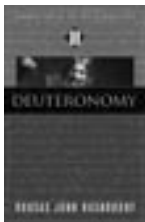
Numbers, Volume IV of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

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. The rebellious in Israel are judged incessantly while a census is taken to number the armies of Israel according to their tribes. This was an assessment of strength and a means to encourage the younger generation to view themselves as God's army and not Pharaoh's slaves.

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The Gospel of John

By R.J. Rushdoony. In this commentary the author maps out the glorious gospel of John, starting from the obvious parallel to Genesis 1 ("In the beginning was the Word") and through to the glorious conclusion of Christ's death and resurrection. Nothing more clearly reveals the gospel than Christ's atoning death and His resurrection. They tell us that Jesus Christ has destroyed the power of sin and death. John therefore deliberately limits the number of miracles he reports in order to point to and concentrate on our Lord's death and resurrection. The 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. This is why John's "testimony is true," and, while books filling the earth could not contain all that could be said, the testimony given by John is "faithful."

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Romans and Galatians

By R.J. Rushdoony. From the author's introduction: "I do not disagree with the liberating power of the Reformation interpretation, but I believe that it provides simply the beginning of our understanding of Romans, not its conclusion..."

The great problem in the church's interpretation of Scripture has been its ecclesiastical orientation, as though God speaks only to the church, and commands only the church. The Lord God speaks in and through His Word to the whole man, to every man, and to every area of life and thought. ... To assume that the Triune Creator of all things is in His word and person only relevant to the church is to deny His Lordship or sovereignty. If we turn loose the whole Word of God onto the church and the world, we shall see with joy its power and glory. This is the purpose of my brief comments on Romans."

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Hebrews, James and Jude

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The Church Is Israel Now

By Charles D. Provan. For the last century, Christians have been told that God has an unconditional love for persons racially descended from Abraham. Membership in Israel is said to be a matter of race, not faith. This book repudiates such a racist viewpoint and abounds in Scripture references which show that the blessings of Israel were transferred to all those who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

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The Guise of Every Graceless Heart

By Terrill Irwin Elniff. An extremely important and fresh study of Puritan thought in early America. On Biblical and theological grounds, Puritan preachers and writers challenged the autonomy of man, though not always consistently.

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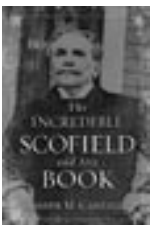
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Keeping Our Sacred Trust

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

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The Incredible Scofield and His Book

By Joseph M. Canfield. This powerful and fully documented study exposes the questionable background and faulty theology of the man responsible for the popular Scofield Reference Bible, which did much to promote the dispensational system. The story is disturbing in its historical account of the illusive personality canonized as a dispensational saint and calls into question the seriousness of his motives and scholarship.

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By R.J. Rushdoony. You'll not find a more concise statement of Christian government, nor a more precise critique of contemporary statistism. This book develops the Biblical view of the state against the modern state's humanism and its attempts to govern all spheres of life. Whether it be the influence of Greek thought, or the present manifestations of fascism, this dynamic volume will provide you with a superb introduction to the subject. It reads like a collection of essays on the Christian view of the state and the return of true Christian government.

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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. This book is "must reading" as Christians work to take dominion in the Lord's name.

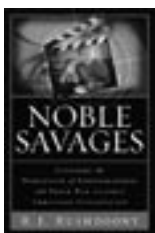
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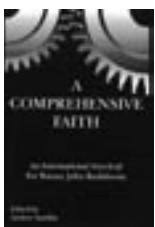
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Roots of Reconstruction

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

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A Comprehensive Faith

Edited by Andrew Sandlin. This is the surprise *Festschrift* presented to R.J. Rushdoony at his 80th birthday celebration in April, 1996. These essays are in gratitude to Rush's influence and elucidate the importance of his theological and philosophical contributions in numerous fields. Contributors include Theodore Letis, Brian Abshire, Steve Schlissel, Joe Morecraft III, Jean-Marc Berthoud, Byron Snapp, Samuel Blumenfeld, Christine and Thomas Schirrmacher, Herbert W. Titus, Owen Fourie, Ellsworth McIntyre, Howard Phillips, Joseph McAuliffe, Andrea Schwartz, David Estrada-Herrero, Stephen Perks, Ian Hodge, and Colonel V. Doner. Also included is a forward by John Frame and a brief biographical sketch of R. J. Rushdoony's life by Mark Rushdoony. This book was produced as a "top-secret" project by Friends of Chalcedon and donated to Ross House Books. It is sure to be a collector's item one day.

Hardback, 244 pages, \$23.00

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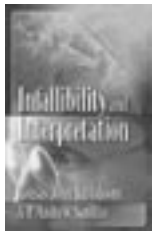
Theology



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of God. They believe man is a creature of faith, not, following the Enlightenment's humanism, of reason. They affirm Biblical infallibility because the God Whom the Bible reveals could speak in no other way than infallibly, and because the Bible in which God is revealed asserts that God alone speaks infallibly. Men deny infallibility to God not for intellectual reasons, but for ethical reasons—they are sinners in rebellion against God and His authority in favor of their own. The authors wrote convinced that only by a recovery of faith in an infallible Bible and obedience to its every command can Christians hope to turn back evil both in today's church and culture.

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Eschatology



Thy Kingdom Come: Studies in Daniel and Revelation

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Thine is the Kingdom: A Study of the Postmillennial Hope

Edited by Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr. False eschatological speculation is destroying the church today, by leading her to neglect her Christian calling. In this volume, edited by Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., the reader is presented with a blend of Biblical exegesis of key Scripture passages, theological reflection on important doctrinal issues, and practical application for faithful Christian living. *Thine is the Kingdom* lays the scriptural foundation for a Biblically-based, hope-filled postmillennial eschatology, while showing what it means to be postmillennial in the real world. The book is both an introduction to and defense of the eschatology of victory. Chapters include contemporary writers Keith A. Mathison, William O. Einwechter, Jeffrey Ventrella, and Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., as well as chapters by giants of the faith Benjamin B. Warfield and J.A. Alexander.

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By R.J. Rushdoony. An entire generation of victory-minded Christians, spurred by the victorious postmillennial vision of Chalcedon, has emerged to press what the Puritan Fathers called "the Crown Rights of Christ the King" in all areas of modern life. Central to that optimistic generation is Rousas John Rushdoony's jewel of a study, *God's Plan for Victory* (originally published in 1977). The founder of the Christian Reconstruction movement set forth in potent, cogent terms the older Puritan vision of the irrepressible advancement of Christ's kingdom by His faithful saints employing the entire law-Word of God as the program for earthly victory.

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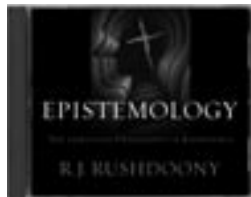
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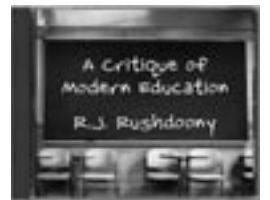
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