

*Faith for All of Life*  
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# FAITH FOR ALL OF LIFE

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

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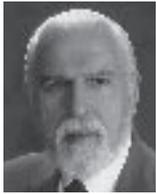
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# The State and Its Morality

[Reprinted from *The Institutes of Biblical Law, Vol. 3* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1999), 181-183.]

R. J. Rushdoony



## The State and Its Morality

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R. J. Rushdoony

Hegel did not create the idea of the state as the source of morality and moral order. It was the faith of ancient paganism, revived by the medieval monarchs, stressed by the Enlightenment, and then formulated by modern philosophy. Jacob Burckhardt traces the independence of morality from religion back to the Renaissance.<sup>1</sup> Certainly the Catholic monarchs since the Council of Constance saw the church as under them rather than vice versa. The English Church was separate from Rome after Henry VIII, but not unlike the major Catholic states in ruling the church. Queen Elizabeth saw herself as head of the church, and it was unwise to question this. As W. P. M. Kennedy writes, “She was in a very real sense what Lord North described her, ‘Our God on earth.’”<sup>2</sup> Such language was not unusual. Much earlier, the Borgia pope, Alexander VI, was hailed in Rome on his elevation to the papacy with the banner, “Rome was great under Caesar. Now she is even greater. Caesar was a man. Alexander is a God!”<sup>3</sup>

The state as a moral agent, as the ministry of justice in the civil order, is a

Biblical doctrine, very clearly set forth in Romans 13:1ff. What was alien to Christianity was the growing detachment of the state from Christianity and its pagan claim to be itself the source of moral order.

As Richard Weaver makes clear, ideas have consequences, and the moral autonomy of the state led steadily to the paganization of society and the rise of the state to the ostensible rank of both god and church.

Previously, the church had been the source of health care, education, and charity. These areas of concern went back to God’s law, the law given through Moses to Israel. The early church carried on these duties as God’s new Israel. The Christian community had an unavoidable duty under God to meet the many urgent needs of society. The state was a ministry of justice. The church was a ministry of grace. The Christian community had a duty: “[W]e are members one of another” (Eph. 4:25), says Paul, and God requires faithfulness to this by His people, by persons essentially and primarily. Morality is first and last a personal fact and duty.

Because ideas do have consequences, the state as the moral agent has moved into health, education, and welfare, in fact into all spheres of life, as man’s hope and savior.

Thus, the state now seeks to educate children and youth about the danger of drugs. As the moral agent, it seeks to enlist family, school, and church in its great crusade. It complains that parents are not sufficiently interested, and it acts as the primary agent of moral reform.

Similarly, “family” education in the schools, state mandated, is sex education on premises which are alien to Christianity but are basic to the state’s premise of man’s moral autonomy from God.

Adolf Hitler and National Socialism led this movement into open moral autonomy from God. Abortion, sexual license, euthanasia, and more were approved, and National Socialism was clearly a homosexual movement. Today only its anti-Jewish actions are condemned as its other practices are adopted.

In the process of this enthronement of the state as the moral agent, the part of the church and the Christian community has been altered. Antinomianism is now well nigh universal, and statist law prevails. The church’s role has been dramatically altered. Instead of being the teacher of morality, of the moral order required by God’s law, the church has become more the morale builder than the moral teacher. This shift is especially visible during wartime, when the church invokes God’s help for often evil causes.

At one time, the church’s mission meant a worldwide effort to create God’s order. Today, world order is left to all the United Nations, and the church has reduced its scope. In the modernist churches, there are commonly study groups concerned with political economic agendas derived from humanism. In Arminian and so called Reformed churches, there are prayer meetings given to small causes, not Christ’s world mandate in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20).

The state's moral agenda is dying of cynicism and corruption. Being internally corrupt because of its separation from God, it cannot create a moral order anywhere. As the remnants of its Christianity recede, so too does its shrinking morality.

The church becomes more and more like an ancient mystery religion, trying to give some kind of hope for the afterlife while irrelevant steadily to this life. The authority of both church and state is eroding.

F. W. Bussell rightly holds that true authority is not coercive. Today law and authority are alike *compulsory* and *coercive* because they are seen as *arbitrary* and even *unjust*. Because both law and authority have a modern meaning, they have become nonmoral force. "Force has now become the most striking characteristic of the conception of Law." Both

"State utility" and the "common good" are inadequate replacements for religious sanctions.<sup>4</sup>

The modern state is morally bankrupt, but so too is the largely antinomian church. The people are well taught in their moral anarchism. Bussell calls attention to Pringle Pattison's *Mind*, with its "libertarian, pelagian, arminian views" and dislike of "regimentation" by God or man. An American writer says of Pringle Pattison, "God is warned not to tread on the holy ground of the individual unless He first put off his shoes ... He betrays a jealousy of God rather than for God. He is jealous of his individuality, not for human personality as *personalized by God* which is really Hegel's conception."<sup>5</sup> Modern man normally wants only the god he himself imagines as good and none other. His

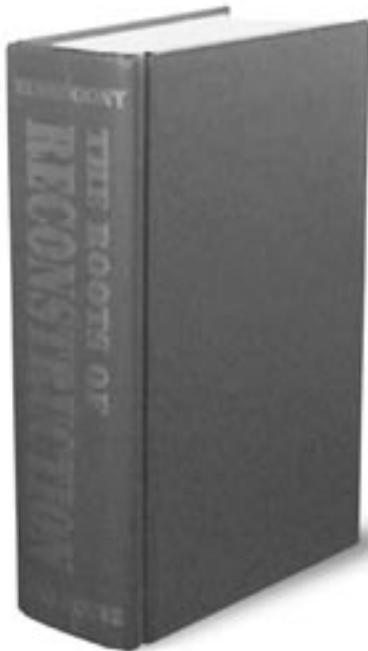
stance is, "Thou shalt have none other gods before me than the god of my imagination." Insistent on his own ultimate, man today is turning on church and state alike when they contradict his moral autonomy. Many in church and state are dedicated to satisfying this warped view of fallen man, and as a result they accelerate the decay.

What must take place is a restoration of morality to the triune God, together with placing church and state, man and society, and all of man's agencies, institutions, arts and science, under God's law and authority. He alone is God.

1. Jacob Burckhardt, *Reflections on History* (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Classics, 1943 reprint), 206.

2. W. P. M. Kennedy, *Studies in Tudor His-*

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# When Church and State Agree to Kill God

Mark R. Rushdoony

Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him. (John 18:12)



## When Church and State Agree to Kill God

Mark R. Rushdoony

Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him. (John 18:12)

When the modern Christian looks at the story of Jesus' betrayal, arrest, and trial, it is too often seen in terms of Jesus as a victim and the entire scene as one of dark pathos. Jesus, however, declared on several occasions that He went to Jerusalem in order to die (Matt. 16:21, 20:18; Luke 9:31, 18:32–33) and that no man took His life from Him but that He gave it up Himself (John 10:18). This, too, was Peter's understanding when he said Jesus was "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23).

John gives us a picture of the conflict between Satan and Christ in Revelation 12, where Satan was utterly defeated in heaven and was forced to limit his evil influence to making war with the believers in Jesus Christ. The conflict of Scripture, then, is not one of good versus evil, which are too often seen as abstract terms defined by man. The conflict is one of Christ versus

Satan; and thus the death, to which Christ voluntarily submitted, as much as it disturbs us, represents not a tragedy of history but the "determinate counsel" of God.

Christ was not the victim, but the victor by means of His willful submission to the cross. Those religious leaders who opposed Jesus throughout His ministry were, in fact, more than evil men; they were the surrogates of Satan, which accounts for Jesus' prayer from the cross that God not hold this to their account for they did not fully know the meaning of what they were doing.

At the betrayal, a new force enters the Gospel accounts. The opposition of the Jewish religious leaders had been ongoing. Now Rome entered the conflict. The apostate leaders of the covenant asked the Roman state for its help in destroying Christ.

The leaders of the Jewish priestly classes and various other prominent Jews made up the Sanhedrin, a council that governed the religious and civil life of the Jews in many areas where tolerated by Rome. Until as recently as A.D. 30, this council had been allowed to enforce the death penalty, at which time that privilege was revoked by Rome. The "determinate counsel" of God had thus forced Rome to take part in the condemnation of Jesus. This is why the Jewish leaders had accused Jesus of blasphemy and declared that by their laws He ought to die (John 19:7), while also complaining that "[i]t is not lawful for us to put any man to death" (18:31). The charge of sedition against Rome

was brought up only because it was a charge a Roman official would have to take seriously.

Stepping back a few hours to the arrest of Jesus, John says that Judas "received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees" (18:3). The Sanhedrin had its own security/enforcement officers, but it appears they were supplemented with Roman soldiers (v. 12). The force was not a small one. The terms in this passage have been variously interpreted as describing a group of soldiers of anywhere between 200 and 1,000 men; even the smaller number would have been a sizable force to arrest a single man. Perhaps they felt the need for numbers was because Jesus was well-known as a miracle worker.

The Jewish religion was, we must remember, a legally recognized religion, and the priests were so powerful that Roman officials periodically removed the high priest from office lest he become too rich and powerful. Those priests, we know, feared Jesus' influence. They began desiring His death after His first miracle in Jerusalem, had openly threatened any who confessed Him as the Messiah with excommunication, and had, after the raising of Lazarus, openly declared that He must die. Then these religious leaders had supplemented their officers with a detail of Roman soldiers in order to arrest Jesus.

We often overlook John's reference that Judas "received" this force from the chief priests and Pharisees. The arresting force was placed under his com-

mand; he was more than just a man in the shadows who identified Jesus. The chief priests (largely Sadducees) and the Pharisees had long conspired against Jesus. Now, with the help of a military contingent, they had their opportunity. Judas was commissioned to lead this show of force, which represented religious leaders, the Roman state, and one apostate disciple. The religious leaders of God's covenant people had consummated their apostasy by asking the state to help them destroy Jesus.

Because He was executed on Roman orders, some still say it is unfair to blame "the Jews" for Christ's death. The term "Jews," as used by John, however, meant the Jewish religious leaders who were very clearly the schemers. Obviously, this does involve a strong sense of condemnation, but the judgment is toward their *apostasy*, not their race or culture. My father often pointed out that the point of Scripture in condemning the Jews was not because they were the *worst* of peoples, but because they were the very *best*. They had the revelation of God's Word and a providential history like no other. As compared with any other nation or culture of the ancient world, they were unquestionably superior in any number of ways. The point of Scripture is that no people can rest in self-confident pride because they feel secure in God's habit of blessing them. Racialist views always miss the point.

The number of men who came to arrest Jesus shows that there was a concern about a riot. Minimally, Jesus was a benign teacher to the people; many knew He was a miracle worker, including Herod. The arrest at night would have made a public reaction difficult. When 200 or more Roman soldiers marched through the streets of Jerusalem at night, no one was likely to resist or interfere in any way.

It is not likely that this force marched up to Jesus in neat ranks. They were likely surrounding the garden. John says they had weapons, torches, and lanterns. For hours the disciples had been alone with Jesus, even napping in the garden. Then they were surrounded by dozens, perhaps hundreds of lights in the darkness.

In contrast to the shock of the disciples, John says Jesus knew everything that was going to happen and that He went forward to speak to Judas' force. He asked, "Whom seek ye?" The answer was "Jesus of Nazareth." This may have been the name on their warrant, though Jesus had repeatedly called Himself the Son of God and One with the Father. Jesus' answer was the point of who He really was. His literal response was "I am." Jesus was quoting God's own identification of Himself to Moses in Exodus 3:14. They asked for a man from Galilee, and Jesus responded with what meant "I am God."

John makes a point of noting that as Jesus said this, Judas stood with the arresting force, and at Jesus' response "they went backward and fell to the ground."

There are two ways to understand this. *First*, they were so shocked by Jesus' bold assertion they jumped back and fell over those behind them. They did know Jesus to be a miracle worker and perhaps feared His power. Then He had stepped forward, confronted them by demanding to know their business, and said "I am God." A *second* possibility is that Jesus' authority miraculously spoke them to the ground. Either way, Jesus did not react to them as a victim, but as a confident proclamation of all He had said before.

Do not see this as a scene of pathos or tragedy. Imagine this as a YouTube clip—these soldiers and Judas, who had come to overpower Jesus, were sitting

on their behinds. There must have been some inappropriate language spoken, as each man blamed the others for falling on him. Jesus, in fact, had to refocus their attention by again asking, "Whom seek ye?"

God's "determinate counsel" had taken the right of execution away from the Sanhedrin not long before these events. This forced Rome into the situation because only the state could order Christ's execution. The fact that the Jewish religious leaders rejected Christ's claim and themselves claimed the religious loyalties of the people, as well as Christ's denunciation of their non-scriptural traditions forced on the people, are clearly laid out in the Gospel accounts of Christ's ministry. Rome's involvement was less sinister in design but just as evil in its practice.

Pilate was not interested in what he recognized was a religious question (John 18:31). The Jewish leaders chose to play political hardball and force Pilate into doing what they wanted. They chose Pilate's greatest vulnerability, his loyalty to Caesar. Pilate was, at that point, without a patron close to the emperor, his having been executed not long before. If there were any questions about Pilate's having Caesar's best interest at heart, there would be no one in Rome to stand up for his dependability. When the Jews threatened to air just such a rumor, Pilate caved and agreed to execute Jesus for questioning Roman power by claiming to be a king. Jesus had nothing to offer Pilate, so Pilate chose to kill Jesus as an expression of loyalty to the emperor. Whereas the issue of the Jewish leaders was their apostate rejection of Jesus as both God and the Christ, the issue before the state was Christ as king or Caesar as emperor. Pilate went along with the Jewish religious leaders who cried, "We have no king but Caesar

*Continued on page 24*

# Worldview Contamination

## Crucial Case Study No. 1: Human Language

Martin G. Selbrede



### World- view Contami- nation

## Crucial Case Study No. 1: Hu- man Language

Martin G. Selbrede

Most people think it's *the other guy's profession* that needs reconstructing, not their own field or discipline.<sup>1</sup> But Proverbs 21:4 teaches that not even the act of plowing is neutral. "An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin." If plowing isn't neutral, *nothing* is neutral.

All fields suffer from worldview contamination—especially human language. Linguistics is infected by humanism. The very tool we use (human language) to promote God's Kingdom is built from parts designed to yield humanistic results.

### Linguistics: The Case Study

After sixty years of English language studies, humanism has failed to secure a consensus, splitting instead into three schools of thought: purism, populism, and contextualism.

*Purists* allow no deviations from

the formal rules of grammar. *Populists* embrace deviations as emblematic of linguistic growth and enhanced expressivity, while *contextualists* allow purpose and audience considerations to determine the admissibility of nonstandard English. The first two schools argue for meaning at the expense of expressivity, and vice versa. Contextualists don't resolve that conflict: they merely arbitrate on a case-by-case basis. All three approaches hide their worldview commitments behind lofty, heated rhetoric.

A Biblical worldview provides a *fourth* position free of false disjunctions, maximizing meaning *and* expressive range, and allowing for linguistic deviations to enhance expressivity while preserving uniformity. By setting *clarity* as the *summum bonum* (greatest good) for language, the place for language anomalies is determined by expressive value. A Biblical worldview (1) preserves meaning, (2) enhances expressive range, (3) accommodates linguistic evolution, (4) limits linguistic decay, and (5) avoids humanistic pitfalls and dead ends.

We encounter a "semantic haze"<sup>2</sup> discussing language because "language is the only way to get around the obstacle of language."<sup>3</sup> Despite poisonous exchanges between experts against a backdrop of advancing national illiteracy, we must shun the *crisis mentality*. A crisis (real or imagined) becomes the pretext for government intervention. English is no stranger to open linguistic warfare. "For the past fifteen hundred years, give or take, the English language has been under attack ... it appears that a

language crisis has been in effect for the English-speaking world in every decade since the sixteenth century."<sup>4</sup> Yet, "it is often difficult to tell when a language crisis is or is not occurring."<sup>5</sup> Alleged crises may simply reflect the truism, "People talk. Language drifts."<sup>6</sup> Power brokers cry wolf out of self-interest.

Elitists blame the *people* for the crisis: the people need the critics to save them from themselves! "The greatest threats to the survival of our language [allegedly come] from the speakers and writers of English themselves."<sup>7</sup> The government will step in if the critics fail.

### Language and the Policy Continuum

Mainstream critics take up positions along a policy continuum between the poles of doctrinaire *prescriptivism* and laissez-faire *descriptivism*. The two poles hurl abuse at their neighbors across the divide, whose idiotic policies ignited the language crisis in the first place. Each claims to be right and to have the only workable solution. The worst sin in their eyes is for their opponents to make these same claims. Consequently, "the critics of language are not a happy lot."<sup>8</sup>

Descriptivists prefer a passive, non-interventionist approach to language. They believe that prescriptivists are a major source of the language crisis, because prescriptivist whining about a crisis may become self-fulfilling if interventions ensue. Descriptivists see prescriptivists as doomsayers who "do not doubt for a moment that our English is in a bad way, that the next sentence that begins with *hopefully* is likely to be its

last.”<sup>9</sup>

Critics in the middle of the continuum (the *contextualists*) heap contempt on descriptivists *and* prescriptivists, being “self-appointed critics who flaunt their concern for good English while openly flouting the serious study of linguistics.”<sup>10</sup>

Linguistic scientists align with the descriptivist side of the continuum, which is the *wrong* side so far as prescriptivists are concerned. “Edwin Newman and Thomas Middleton had long claimed that linguistics was destroying an otherwise perfectly good language.”<sup>11</sup> Prescriptivists don’t just ignore professional linguists, “they actively disdain them.”<sup>12</sup> Frank Anshen singles out “John Simon’s slanders of ‘descriptivist linguists,’”<sup>13</sup> while Karl D. Uitti cites Jakobson’s warnings against “bigoted linguists.”<sup>14</sup> Prescriptivists “declaim the sorry state of the English language and the even sorrier state of its users.”<sup>15</sup> Prescriptivists in turn have been derided as “bunker intellectuals [seeking] a fortified position on an isolated promontory where they could hold off verbal laxity . . . They took pride in leaving excess baggage and abandoning the ordinary linguistic countryside, scorching what they could as they withdrew.”<sup>16</sup>

### An Absolute Standard?

For prescriptivists, “the availability in principle of a right way to say the right thing in some absolute sense was seldom doubted.”<sup>17</sup> But their belief in absolutes conflicts with their practice, because prescriptivists differ on countless issues of usage. “The murky realms of correct usage” are encountered even within a single camp.<sup>18</sup> As John Frame affirms, “Human language is not an instrument of absolute precision. Only God knows, and can state precisely, all the facts in the universe.”<sup>19</sup>

Critics decry “the shameless circularity of the prescriptivist’s creed: good

usage is the language of persons who speak and write well.”<sup>20</sup> Lacking an external reference standard, prescriptivists have no standard but themselves to offer. This leads to raw authoritarianism against perceived *internal* enemies, insofar as “there are relatively few calls to drive the foreign devils from our lips and pens.”<sup>21</sup>

Just because prescriptivists uphold a standard does *not* mean their opponents function without one. Jim Quinn, who derides prescriptivists, “especially that vitriolic, sophomoric poseur, John Simon,” capitalizes Black and not white throughout his book, obviously upholding a standard “more humane, perhaps, than John Simon’s, but no less arbitrary.”<sup>22</sup> The reviewer who wrote that runs afoul of *his* own criticism, since *his* standard (“more humane . . .”) reveals a bias contaminating his “objectivity.”

Prescriptivism’s influence on college-level English instruction was unexpected:

Each teacher of freshman composition receives a duplicated sheet beginning, “Many elements contribute to a good theme. The following list of suggested deductions for grammatical and mechanical errors is not intended to suggest that the instructor’s sole consideration in grading be grammar and mechanics.” Despite the disclaimer, the sheet specifies nothing about other attributes . . . but instead offers . . . “a firm guideline for grading that will encourage a uniform standard of excellence in [students’] writing.”

The implicit philosophy may be less evident to teachers than to their grade-obsessed students, who are often handed copies of the same list. Here is what they infer: it’s not what you accomplish that counts; it’s what you manage to avoid. Students learn to play it safe by developing a sort of literate baby-talk: simple words, minimal sentences . . . risking only ideas (if any) that can be

thus packaged. Logic, substance, clarity, conciseness, and liveliness are worth next to nothing compared to avoiding run-together sentences.<sup>23</sup>

The ideal English paper, says Charles Doyle, would be a blank piece of paper: nothing ventured, nothing lost.

Prescriptivism discourages the very thing it seeks to achieve. Absence of errors becomes more important than expressivity because the grading system speaks louder than the instructor’s words. Unless the grading system treats form and expressivity as equally ultimate, nothing will change. A reconstructed linguistics can deliver expressivity without dismantling standards.<sup>24</sup>

### Worldview Contamination of Dictionaries

Lexicographers are entrusted with enormous cultural authority, so much so that theorists refer to “the claim of the dictionary on the language.”<sup>25</sup> But public faith in dictionaries is misplaced! John Willinsky’s survey of five dictionary publishing houses did “little to support the concept of a single lexicographical standard”<sup>26</sup>—a rude awakening that emerges from a “displacement of authority.”<sup>27</sup>

A dictionary can be comprehensive, unabridged, and easy to use, but if it isn’t *authoritative*, it won’t sell. Prescriptivist dictionaries smell more authoritative than descriptivist ones. Publisher awareness of public tastes has shifted focus toward prescriptivism.<sup>28</sup> As a result, the war between prescriptivists and descriptivists has spilled over into dictionaries. Thus, one reviewer condemned the *Oxford American Dictionary’s* “cheerful attitude of infallibility” as utterly irresponsible,<sup>29</sup> declaring its disguising of prescriptive entries as descriptive ones without a usage note as “just bad dictionary making.”<sup>30</sup>

The public prefers infallibility from

its dictionaries, which is why prescriptivist dictionaries are promoted as ex cathedra tomes (note the *Oxford English Dictionary's* claim to being “the last word from the ultimate arbiter”).<sup>31</sup> This canonizing trend is reckless and deceiving. As Noam Chomsky puts it, “[T]he most elaborate dictionaries provide no more than bare hints about the meanings of words.”<sup>32</sup>

Across the aisle, descriptivist dictionaries (e.g., *Webster's Dictionary of English Usage*) drop all moral imperatives. There are no “oughts,” merely a rehearsal of prevailing patterns. Such lexicons avoid becoming ersatz bibles by recasting themselves as “depositories of words already legitimated by usage.”<sup>33</sup>

The shimmering surface of language is the testing-place of innovation: survival of any usage, old or new, is subject to the suffrage of the mass of people ... All is flux, the rules are always being made and remade.<sup>34</sup>

Linguistic change is driven by many forces (language drift, evolving structures, interference with other languages, pidginization, even language death). These forces give birth to *the word of flux*.

### Language Death

Linguists adopt a Darwinian outlook in discussing language death: less efficient languages should die out to make way for more efficient ones. Nineteenth-century linguist August Schleicher, “heavily influenced by Hegel’s philosophy of history,” used efficiency as the canon for classifying languages.<sup>35</sup> “All parts of grammar and language in general are subject to decay during language death.”<sup>36</sup> A language cannot decay forever without ultimately dying: “[T]here is a limit to decay.”<sup>37</sup>

Linguists regard Chinese as an example of language decay in its final stages: “Chinese characters are the horrible results if the writing system is

allowed to diverge from phonetic reality, and Chinese uninflected monosyllables are what happen to your language if you don’t pay attention to your inflections.”<sup>38</sup>

Linguists claim that the most decisive factor responsible for killing a language<sup>39</sup> is the prevalence of *prescriptivism!* Apparently, prescriptivists are digging a hole to China for the English language. The diagnosis of language death “seems to depend upon the degree of codification ... and upon how irremediably its most influential speakers dug its grave by attempts at once-for-all prescriptive standardization.”<sup>40</sup>

This is the logic: prescriptivists codify and standardize languages. An exhaustively codified language can no longer grow. If it can’t grow, it’s dead. Therefore, prescriptivism leads to language death.

That logic has been challenged. Norman Denison questions whether “a language must be regarded as dead as soon as it stops developing (that is, changing; in other words as soon as its performance can be generated on the strength of its codified rules alone) ... Hebrew would have been judged at least to have been feigning death before it was restored to life in Israel.”<sup>41</sup>

### The Power of the Populace

Dictionaries don’t create new words. The engine of linguistic innovation is the general populace itself. Willinsky makes reference to the “creative lexical force of the street and the spoken word.”<sup>42</sup> New terms and structures are tried in the court of public opinion; incorporation in a dictionary is trivial in comparison with achieving wide cultural acceptance. The general public holds the reins of language in its collective hands. *This fact has met with resistance from elites in both government and education.*

New terms generally don’t earn overnight acceptance. Willinsky refers to a “rare instance” of a “cultural

shortcutting of the normal channels of lexicographical legitimation”—the term “wilding” applied to the brutal beating of a female jogger in New York’s Central Park. “Wilding” was a term borne by the mass media, which accelerated its linguistic acceptance.<sup>43</sup>

Innovation within the massed crowds implies innovation on the part of individuals. The populace either acclaims or rejects the products of individual creativity. But individual innovators are the ultimate source of the new in a language.<sup>44</sup>

### Philosophy and Linguistic Creativity

Scholars believe there is an indeterminate “something” beneath the surface wording of a proposition. Direct ontological links between words and the ideas they represent are the stuff of mysticism. Cabala scholars adopted such a view, taking a legitimate idea to a heretical extreme. “Hebrew scholars ... were faced with the old problem still plaguing philosophers as to how mind can act upon matter. The Jews concluded that there was some intermediate link making this interaction possible, and this step was the spoken word.”<sup>45</sup> This intermediate link was termed the *logos*, which plays a significant role in epistemological linguistics.

Orthodox theologians noted “the way in which names of things are inseparably bound up with the nature of the things so named.”<sup>46</sup> Adam’s naming of every living creature led scholars to focus on this innate creative capacity in man. They credited God as the source of Adam’s linguistic creativity. “In other words, right at the very beginning of human history, man was equipped with a power of discernment which expressed itself in the ability to identify the nature of things and sum up that nature in a word—its name.”<sup>47</sup>

“That there could be so close a tie

between a word and a thing is strange in a way. Nevertheless, the language of Scripture reveals that the concept is indeed ancient, for in Hebrew we find but one term for both 'word' and 'thing.' This is the Hebrew *dabar*.<sup>48</sup> Scripture grounds man's creativity in the creative power of the triune God without appeal to the mysticism of the cabala.

### Your Worldview Is Showing

Philosophers, in seeking to explain why linguistic deviations are so expressive, have resorted to (1) dialectical analysis, (2) mathematical reductionisms, and (3) other dead-end theories to account for a phenomenon that's easy to document, but hard to explain. Linguists are continually confronted with the fact that *where a standard prevails, its presence can be felt whether it is observed or violated*. Well-crafted deviations from the standard language don't degrade communication, they enhance its power and expressive range.

Dialectic analyses can describe but cannot predict. They cannot provide a mechanism for the paradoxes they purport to explain, nor a usable praxis.<sup>49</sup>

Mathematical reductionism has been applied to language, care of the information theorists, but the mystery surrounding semantics has only deepened:

[O]rdinary language contains greater than 50% redundancy in the form of sounds or letters that are not strictly necessary to conveying a message ... The famous advertisement for shorthand training—**if u cn rd** this msg ...—illustrated the point ... Part of the redundancy in ordinary language lies in its meaning, and that part is hard to quantify, depending as it does on people's shared knowledge of their language and their world. This is the part that allows people to solve crossword puzzles or fill in the missing word at the end of a.<sup>50</sup>

In contrast to *quantitative* approaches, scholars opted for *qualitative* analyses where certain parameters (e.g., relevance or informational content) are maximized. Those holding to a "maximum relevance" principle "assumed that the human central cognitive system works in such a way as to maximize Relevance with respect to communication."<sup>51</sup> They omit to explain how the central nervous system functions as an arbiter of Relevance!

Behind every door that linguists open, there lies yet another door. To avoid an infinite regress, they cling to "innate principles" (biological or neurological) as their starting point. They avoid an infinite regress by leaping into metaphysics, bestowing *a priori* status on their pet "innate principles." Karl Uitti doesn't flinch from this sleight-of-hand, observing that "evidence contradicting the innate principle, as stated, merely leads to the formulation of a better innate principle."<sup>52</sup>

From afar, linguistics looks like a neutral, impartial science, but its own experts admit that linguistics is determined more by ideology than by a neutral scientific method:

It would be naïve to believe that we are dealing with a "pure" area of study. Such a view would amount to a "scientific" cover-up of results in our area of study, results extensively determined by ideologies.<sup>53</sup>

Such cover-ups inhabit the majority of academic journals, as Art Bochner states:

[E]ssays inspiring intense disagreement between and among referees should be published, because they often strike at paradigm conflicts. Whole areas of study and methods of research have been and are being suppressed, because work could not satisfy two editors ...<sup>54</sup>

Paul L. Garvin likewise reveals the worldview contamination behind the

scenes:

[T]he process of analysis consists of a series of consecutive decisions on the part of the analyst each of which is based on certain covert assumptions about the nature of the object of study ... [T]he underlying reasoning is often unconscious and the grounds on which decisions are made are covert.<sup>55</sup>

### A Time for Presuppositional Profiling

Ken Hale declares that a linguist's work coheres only "by virtue of a deep seated set of beliefs, however tacit, about the fundamental nature of language."<sup>56</sup> Philip C. Wander documents the existence of "a politically active system for advancing a certain brand of [linguistic] scholarship."<sup>57</sup> These "tacit," "covert" presuppositions that are "extensively determined by ideologies" and propagated by a "politically active system" *completely govern all linguistic research*.

Pronouncements of certainty may reflect nothing more than a researcher's personal philosophical bias. "Both [Dante and Rousseau] illustrate the Western tendency to associate a theory of language with broad intellectual constructs—a world-view, a 'philosophy,' a coherent sense of reality."<sup>58</sup> The modern innovation is its openly *deductive* approach: humanism *is read back into the data*.

This humanistic bias is pervasive because the intellectual elite steers research into politically correct channels. "Social scientists attempt to change the language game that is the academic system."<sup>59</sup>

To work within a paradigm means to have a set of premises about how the work should be done and what the problems are. That is, a paradigm is a frame ... and these premises are self-validating because counter-evidence doesn't mean that the premises are wrong but that there is something

wrong with the evidence.<sup>60</sup>

Such paradigms represent *a priori* starting points. Linguist David Lightfoot is representative of such an approach:

Lightfoot's presentation is an extremely *a priori* and reasoned one ... [He] makes a strong case for the need to have a tight and rigorous theory before beginning any serious scientific work ... Theory-driven investigations certainly have advantages but, of course, one has to buy the theory first!<sup>61</sup>

Noam Chomsky repudiates materialistic rationalism as a basis for linguistic theory: "There are two ways of looking at eliminative materialism as far as I can see. One is that it's total gibberish until somebody tells us what matter is."<sup>62</sup> Dislodging eliminative materialism from linguistics creates a vacuum, so Chomsky substitutes "eliminative mentalism" for it. The only reality remaining is the mental one.

Do worldviews affect the content of dictionaries? "We have Robert Ramsey's calculation that 'nearly all college dictionaries agree close to 90% of the time upon choice of words' ... This rough estimate suggests that we might expect up to 10% of the dictionary to arise from differences in the practices of the publishing houses."<sup>63</sup> *Philosophy influences linguistics on more than just the theoretical level.*

Expanding on the "recent work on presupposition" propounded by "linguists, philosophers, psychologists, and others," Roger Shuy suggests that "to understand the meaning of a word or an utterance, we must understand what it supposes. A presupposition is some set of propositions that we believe is appropriate background for an utterance ... [They] constitute our belief about what is the case."<sup>64</sup> Shuy acknowledges that presuppositions undergird linguistics, that a theorist's claims are only as

good as his presuppositions, and that *human utterance is linked to an underlying worldview.*

"When persons infer something from a statement, they are often realizing the presuppositions that undergird the statement."<sup>65</sup> Sentences aren't just ontologically loaded, they're also worldview-loaded! Ideological presuppositions and biases control the reasoning process of theorists from beginning to end. "That our own ideological perspectives become transparent in a critique of such works is a given."<sup>66</sup>

The very conception of "objective" communication scholarship, and especially objective rhetorical criticism, eventually proved unsatisfying because by its very nature the act of criticism cannot comfortably be considered neutral and objective even in its most modernist incarnations. The critical act is inherently evaluative.<sup>67</sup>

Hollihan observes, "Social scientists are now becoming increasingly aware of the moral choices that both consciously and subconsciously shape their investigations ... As often as we (scholars) hail diversity, multiple voices, etc., we legitimate only certain ideas (e.g., power and domination) ... [Farrell] suggests that critics must 'give up on the pretence of being able to step outside of language ensembles sufficiently to encompass them.'"<sup>68</sup>

Analyzing language is like analyzing a mirror: the image of the researcher dominates the picture. "Our society, our language, and our selves are reflexive."<sup>69</sup>

### Brute Facts and Reductionism

Within humanism, brute facts are "raw facts that just happen to exist." Chomsky writes that "we could not have acquired any language unless its fundamental properties were already in place, in advance of experience, as argued in the epistemic naturalism of early rationalist psychology."<sup>70</sup> Such "fundamental

properties" are brute facts. Language, too, is a brute fact: "Richard Scholes in effect scorns to marvel or despair naively at the brute existence of the process of encoding, decoding, and recoding."<sup>71</sup>

Theorists who build these systems have no right to expect order given their starting point. They forfeit order up front. George Farre designed a "universe of discourse" that lacks any intrinsic ordering principle.<sup>72</sup> Farre sneaks order back into his system by an ad hoc appeal to (of all things) the doctrine of the *logos*:

By *logos*, we mean an ordering and unifying principle which is susceptible of expression through a relational structure. In the case of an object language, the *logos* is the source of intelligibility from which meaningful states of affairs are definable and by means of which their descriptions may be correlated and ordered.<sup>73</sup>

Rational thought is rescued from the pit of brute factuality only by abandoning consistency, empiricism, and inductive methodology!

Man instinctively desires a unifying principle. He either submits to a revealed, theological *Logos*, or constructs an artificial *logos* to render language intelligible. Farre's abstract *logos* is so important he coined the term *logostical* to describe how words tie to things. Why so important? "In the long run humans do not bear up well without meaning, and meaning passes through language."<sup>74</sup>

Humanistic models resort to reductionism to account for the phenomenon of language, but Chomsky rejects reductionism: "Language is far too interesting and important to be left to the old-line philologist or contemporary reductionist."<sup>75</sup> Says he, "[T]here's no reason to expect that a reductionist account is the true one."<sup>76</sup> In fact, "we may not have sufficient mental capacity

to achieve a reductionistic account of the mind.<sup>77</sup>

Chomsky savages all biological doubletalk. “When people say the mental is the neurophysiological at a higher level, they’re being radically unscientific.”<sup>78</sup> He regards such pseudoscience with disdain: “The belief that neurophysiology is implicated in [human thought] *could* be true, but we have very little evidence of it. So, it’s just a kind of hope; look around and you see neurons; maybe they’re implicated.”<sup>79</sup> Despite Chomsky’s denunciations, this irrational faith among scientific linguists persists.

Chomsky is consistent: he writes “mind/brain” *without reducing it*. “We have, by now, fairly substantial evidence that one of the components of the mind/brain is a language faculty, dedicated to language and its use.”<sup>80</sup> Chomsky derides any finer splitting of hairs:

[Cartesian dogma] is commonly derided today as the belief that there is “a ghost in the machine.” But that conclusion mistakes what happened. It was the Cartesian theory of body that collapsed; the theory of mind, such as it was, remained unaffected. Newton ... had nothing to say about the ghost in the machine; he exorcised the machine, not the ghost.<sup>81</sup>

### What’s Hiding Under the Hood?

Linguistic researchers promote theories of language erected on reductionist, biological, neurophysical, or rationalistic grounds because *these scholars are totally committed to humanism*. Humanistic presuppositions completely dominate academic inquiry in linguistics.

R. J. Rushdoony notes that the *Humanistic Education Sourcebook*, an anthology “used in training teachers,” contains an essay “entitled ‘Humanism: Capstone of an Educated Person.’ This title is revealing. For our statist educators, a truly educated person is a humanist.”<sup>82</sup> Linguist Karl D. Uitti

confirms this:

What is the purpose of humanistic scholarship? What, in fact, does the humanist scholar do? The job of the humanist scholar is to organize our huge inheritance of culture ... to clear away the obstacles to our understanding of the past, to make our whole cultural heritage ... accessible to us.<sup>83</sup>

Linguistics was targeted for humanistic codification: “In planning the Princeton Studies of Humanistic Scholarship, we determined from the outset to have a volume on linguistics.”<sup>84</sup>

### Rationalism on Parade

A rationalistic worldview permeates linguistics. Lightfoot commends “a defense of and apology for rationalism.”<sup>85</sup> Mechanistic explanations alone have academic legitimacy. Leonard Bloomfield was concerned “to put linguistics on a firm scientific foundation and he considered a mechanistic exposition to be fundamental to scientific discourse.”<sup>86</sup>

The net result? Worldview implosion. “For perhaps the first time in history ... large numbers of intellectuals cannot construct a picture of the world.”<sup>87</sup> Mechanical reductionism is actually a threat to language: “Another way of devaluing language was to shift faith to apparatus.”<sup>88</sup> Human language isn’t precise enough to build the desired intellectual structure. As Chomsky notes, “[T]he problem is not one of vagueness; rather, of hopeless under-specification.”<sup>89</sup>

### Existentialism Up at Bat

There presently exists “a major failing of existentialism: it does not provide praxis for an existential rhetoric.”<sup>90</sup> Existentialists borrow intellectual capital to make their case. Communication requires *human community* and *history*, while existentialism promotes *individualism* and *living for*

*the moment*. Consistent application of existentialist tenets destroys communication, yet existentialist writers are eloquent communicators. How? *Inconsistency!*

Existentialists don’t deny that autonomy is erosive. They “are rightly sensitive to the charge that their subjective approach can invite irresponsible action.”<sup>91</sup> The “relationship between language and culture ... relates directly to the issue of autonomy in linguistics and, therefore, to the question of the fundamental nature of language ... The question of autonomy is at the very center of current debate and controversy in linguistics.”<sup>92</sup>

### Deconstructivist Anti-Rationalism

Jacques Derrida holds that a “text is not a text unless it hides from the first comer, from the first glance, the law of its composition and the rules of its game. A text remains, moreover, forever imperceptible ... Nontruth is the truth.”<sup>93</sup> This approach denies to humanistic linguistics even the neutered, abstract *logos* concocted to tie words and referents together via an abstract epistemological ligament: “Derrida’s *différance* plays havoc with logocentrism.”<sup>94</sup>

### Gestalt Psychology: A Holistic View

Harry Helson writes that “[t]he assumption that parts constitute wholes ... must be rejected, if we are to remain true to the facts of observation. For wholes are the first data given in perception.”<sup>95</sup> Holistic-minded Gestalt psychologists reject mechanistic models that fragment language into pieces.

Although anti-reductionist, Gestaltism was attacked from another anti-reductionist camp: Chomsky counters that the “basic assumption that there is a common store of thoughts surely can be denied.”<sup>96</sup> Gestaltism’s primary competition comes from its polar opposite,

behaviorism.

## Behaviorism Takes the Field

Gestaltism is “holistic and dynamic,” while behaviorism is “atomistic, analytic, and static ... Both branches of psychology were attempts to account for behavior.”<sup>97</sup>

Behaviorism adopts the mechanistic notions orphaned by Gestaltism. “The underlying assumption of the behaviorists is that behavior is made up of objectively observable and measurable elements ... built up into a mechanical whole of behavior.”<sup>98</sup>

## What Unites These Five Approaches?

The preceding five humanistic approaches to language are contaminated by ideological bias under the pretense of neutral objectivity. Ideology—worldview—governs academic inquiry. Some scholars retain neutrality as a front, while others reject all pretensions to objectivity. Consistent scholars hold that humanistic premises forbid claims to objectivity: ideology *must* govern. “Thus there is no ‘objective’ truth, only ‘class’ truth.”<sup>99</sup>

## The Dimensions of Worldview Contamination

Dictionary makers are governed by ideological considerations. Ideological pressure is the reason that “the lexicographical quest is still marked by zones of exclusion.”<sup>100</sup> Protests of neutrality and objectivity peal across academia, but these claims merit the gravest suspicion.

Worldviews reorder the facts of experience. Nietzsche developed “grand theories designed to seize control of explanation itself.”<sup>101</sup> Language theory is a manifestation of “ideology as praxis—the conversion of ideas into social levers. This is also the language of ideology.”<sup>102</sup>

Ideology, however, has cultural power. “Ideology was dangerous because it stirred the public passions, and the

public’s passions were not to be trusted.”<sup>103</sup> Anti-ideology has become quite acceptable. Ironically, opposing ideology is *not* considered ideological! Therefore, humanistic attacks on Christianity are accorded protected status: *the critic is immune from charges of ideological bias!*

Ideology forces linguistics into a reductionist corner. Neil Postman warns that:

If a number can be given to the quality of thought, then a number can be given to the qualities of mercy, love, hate, beauty, creativity, even sanity itself. [But] our psychologists, sociologists and educators find it quite impossible to do work without numbers. They believe that without numbers they cannot acquire or express authentic knowledge.<sup>104</sup>

Linguistic science fell out of grace as educational ideologues embraced a more analytic approach to language. “Linguistics became trapped by its directionality toward holism at the same time that education began to embrace reductionism.”<sup>105</sup> Those charting American educational policy rejected the linguists’ research, which conflicted with the educators’ commitment to analytic reductionism.

## Language and Education

Educators have started to attack policies and ideologies that are intellectually harmful to students. Charles J. Sykes has indicted his fellow professors in stinging terms:

They are overpaid, grotesquely underworked ... They have distorted university curriculums to accommodate their own narrow and selfish interests ... They have cloaked their scholarship in stupefying, inscrutable jargon. This conceals the fact that much of what passes for research is trivial and inane ... Bad teaching goes unnoticed and unsanctioned, and good teaching is penalized ... [T]he professors’ relentless drive for advancement ... has turned

the American universities into vast factories of junkthink. Mediocrity persists because of the elitist conspiracy between students and professors. The latter agree to certify the former; in return the students agree not to blow the whistle on the faculty.<sup>106</sup>

As Samuel Blumenfeld notes, “[P]rofessors of education are probably the most useless, parasitic group in American society.”<sup>107</sup> Blumenfeld’s contempt for ideologically based linguistics is equally blunt: “[C]urrent methods of reading instruction in American schools are based on psycholinguistics, which is, in my view, the chief cause of our learning disability explosion.”<sup>108</sup>

## Enter Statist Central Planning

Statism and linguistics are brought together because of statism’s impetus to regulate and control the people’s physical and mental resources. Language is an *object* of control and a *tool* of control. This triggers a commitment to language planning:

Language planning is ... concerned with official policy formulation by authorities in political control ... the point to emphasize is that language planning is a state activity ... micro level language planning ... is sometimes given the name of language engineering ... Language planning is a state concern.<sup>109</sup>

“As late as the 1960s and 1970s, many public policy decision making experts were continuing to argue that the elite domination of public decision making was not only inevitable, it was desirable.”<sup>110</sup> But the state wasn’t always a benign despot! “The great masters of social manipulation ... know ... that the establishment of a flexible and subtle language for the ruling classes is only half of what’s needed. The other half is the perpetuation of an ineffective and minimal language among the subjects.”<sup>111</sup> We *are* being

dumbed down intentionally! Bertrand Russell “broadened his concerns to include the point that science could be subordinated by the state as easily as language.”<sup>112</sup>

## Marxists Are the Purists Here ...

Marxists do what Christians won't: they learn and apply their worldview. Georg Klaus's “dialectical materialism” and “materialistic epistemology” culminates thus:

“[E]pistemology cannot survive without linguistics, nor linguistics without epistemology. Behind the different usages of words very often stand different or opposing social forces.”<sup>113</sup> “When Marx says of theory that it can become a material force, then this is true only when mediated by language.”<sup>114</sup> “Marx branded ‘proper’ language as a government informer.”<sup>115</sup> The interplay between Marxism and linguistics is not limited to Marxist regimes: Blumenfeld has found aggressively Marxist rhetoric in “the prestigious *Journal of Education*,” which “provides Marxists with the means to conduct the class struggle in its pages.”<sup>116</sup>

## Contamination Documented

Linguistics is in total disarray. Why? Researchers work from contradictory premises to inflict mutual damage upon each other's work. The goal of a unified codification has become hopeless. Descriptivists applaud this because they think codification kills languages. Worldview flaws will splinter linguistic theory.

Linguists are immersed within the moral domain by the very act of building their theories. They recognize the existence of a “highest good” or *summum bonum*. Humanism has transmuted the *summum bonum* into an easily controlled goal, as Rushdoony notes:

There was a time when the *Summum Bonum*, the supreme good, was not

only the highest and ultimate goal of human conduct but also the major concern of ethical theory by philosophers. The formal consideration of the *Summum Bonum* has disappeared; the practical concern is more intense than ever, except that it is now a political and sociological rather than a philosophical concern.<sup>117</sup>

Modern worldviews hijack the *summum bonum* to redefine it. Since disarray in sociology and politics prevails, no organizing link between words and actions can stand.

## Avoiding the Christian Ghetto

Linguistics requires reconstruction, *not* merely populating the world of linguistics with Christians. There *are* Christian linguists,<sup>118</sup> but they occupy specialized niches. Most Christians drawn to linguistics have limited their work to Bible translation, leaving the humanistic disarray unchallenged.

Adopting the Van Til/Rushdoony perspective means rejecting brute factuality while explaining the ontological link between words and their referents. Van Til sees this as a consequence of the nature of God:

God is completely self-comprehensive ... He was and is the only self-contained whole, the system of absolute truth. God's knowledge is, therefore, exclusively analytic, that is, self-dependent. There never were any facts existing independent of God which He had to investigate. God is the one and only ultimate Fact. In Him, i.e., with respect to His own Being, apart from the world, fact and interpretation are coterminous.

[Man] sees that there is a great variety of facts. The question ... is whether there is any unity in this variety, whether there is one principle in accordance with which all these many things appear and occur. All non-Christian thought, if it has utilized the idea of a supra-mundane existence at all, has used this

supra-mundane existence as furnishing only the unity or the *a priori* aspect of knowledge, while it has maintained that the *a posteriori* aspect of knowledge is something that is furnished by the universe.<sup>119</sup>

Linguists propose a multitude of *a priori* organizing principles, often aping Christian conceptions (the logocentric principle of Farre, the logocentrism defended by Rushing, etc.) while devolving into idealism:

With all its insistence on the fact that there must be an ultimate *a priori* aspect of knowledge, idealism at the same time insists that there is an equally ultimate *a posteriori* aspect to knowledge. This means that for idealist logic ... the Christian concept of God is virtually discarded at the outset. It is taken for granted that the universe is just as ultimate as God is.<sup>120</sup>

Idealism always reduces to unity OR diversity, but never both: “*A proper conception of organism has nowhere appeared in non-Christian ethical theory.*”<sup>121</sup>

Most conflicts among linguists stem from false disjunctions. A Biblical worldview sets linguistics on a foundation free of false disjunctions, with the following benefits:

*Optimization: reconstructed!* By treating meaning and expressivity as co-ultimate, and setting clarity as the *summum bonum* of language, neither meaning nor expressivity is diminished at the expense of the other, providing a theory of linguistic optimization consistent with the facts.

*Language decay: reconstructed!* Van Til's “conception of organism” explains language decay and death. This isn't biological reductionism, it is a Christian revamping of the principle that language change must be necessary.<sup>122</sup> Christian ethics undergirds the notion of a *standard* based on maximized clarity, introducing a conservative principle lim-

iting *unnecessary* change (from language erosion among students due to dereliction by educators, etc.).

*Unlike purism*, a Reconstructed Christian Linguistics (RCL) does not regard formal syntax as ultimate in itself. A nongrammatical utterance could be completely clear to the hearer!

*Unlike populism*, RCL denies the ultimacy of human autonomy in the very nature of the case. Populism offers no safeguards against linguistic anarchy.

*Unlike contextualism*, RCL is not a compromise tied to the audience confronting the speaker. Contextualism offers no solution if the audience for standardized English disappears, deteriorating into pure populism indifferent to language standards.

RCL denies the *independent* ultimacy of expressivity and formal standards arising from the contaminated worldviews shaping purism, populism, and contextualism. There *is* no descriptivism-prescriptivism continuum if its organizing principle is a myth. That continuum perpetuates a false disjunction that Christian theorists must dislodge.

### Drawing the Battle Lines

The breakdown of humanistic linguistic scholarship has been documented from its own literature. Will Christians develop a sound linguistic model before the statist coercively impose *their* model on us? The statist educational apparatus is in place and elitist policy makers are groping for the reins.

The worldview gap between humanistic public policy and an intellectually revitalized Christianity guarantees ideological war. Humanism has reigned over linguistics since Noah Webster's Christian lexicon was displaced by today's secularized dictionaries. Humanists won't give up conquered territory without a fight.

The time for that fight is now.

1. James Jordan once opined that of all the arts, music was the least affected by humanistic influence. Astronomer Dr. Gerardus Bouw wrote that astronomy is in less need of remediation than other sciences. Mathematician Dr. David Rodabaugh used to think mathematics was a neutral domain, but later came to recognize the need to take even that field captive to the obedience of Christ.
2. Robert Erwin, *The Great Language Panic and Other Essays in Cultural History* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), 82.
3. *Ibid.*, 80.
4. Dennis E. Baron, "Criticizing the Language Critics." Review of *Famous Last Words: The American Language Crisis Reconsidered*, by Harvey A. Daniels. *American Speech* 59.3 (1984), 226, 229.
5. *Ibid.*, 228.
6. Erwin, 93.
7. Baron, 226.
8. Baron, 230.
9. Baron, 226.
10. Baron, 229–230.
11. Roger W. Shuy, "Practice into Theory versus Theory into Practice." *The Relation of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics*, eds. Olga Miseska Tomic and Roger W. Shuy (New York: Plenum Press, 1987), 100.
12. Frank Anshen, "Amazing Nuggets of Information." Review of *Grammar and Good Taste: Reforming the American Language*, by Dennis E. Baron. *American Speech* 61.1 (1986), 92.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Karl D. Uitti, *Linguistics and Literary Theory* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1969), 235.
15. Thomas L. Clark, "Praise for Webster's Ninth." Review of Webster's *Ninth Collegiate Dictionary*, ed. Frederick C. Mish. *American Speech* 59.1 (1984), 71.
16. Erwin, 70.
17. Erwin, 67.
18. Connie Eble, "Disappointment with *American Heritage 2*." Review of *The American Heritage Dictionary*. *American Speech* 59.1 (1984), 73.
19. John Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1987), 216.
20. Charles Clay Doyle, "American Language Attitudes." Review of *Attitudes Toward English Usage: The History of a War of the Words*, ed. Edward Finegan. *American Speech* 58.1 (1983), 46.
21. Anshen, 92.
22. Anonymous reviewer, *American Speech* 58.4 (1983), 371.
23. Doyle, 46–47.
24. "It is a vulgar error to think of a standard language as being somehow less rich and colorful, less warm and supportive, less individualistic, less analytic, less almost anything than any other dialect. The very use of language, that custom on which alone language thrives, creates for the standard language an increase in range, in subtlety, and in value." Alan Davies, "How Language Planning Theory Can Assist First-Language Teaching." *The Relation of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics* (see note 11), 157.
25. John Willinsky, "Cutting English on the Bias: Five Lexicographers in Pursuit of the New." *American Speech* 63.1 (1984), 44.
26. *Ibid.*, 47.
27. *Ibid.*, 45.
28. "A generation ago, American dictionaries claimed forthrightly to be descriptive. But since the appearance of Webster's *Third International Dictionary* in 1961, the pendulum has swung steadily toward dictionaries that are more and more prescriptive. Now with the entrance of the *Oxford American Dictionary* onto the standard dictionary market, that pendulum has swung as far as it can go." Michael Montgomery, "Prescriptivism in Dictionary Making." Review of *Oxford American Dictionary*, comp. Eugene Ehrlich, Stuart Berg Flexner, Gorton Caruth, and Joyce M. Hawkins. *American Speech* 58.1 (1983), 55.
29. *Ibid.*, 57.
30. *Ibid.*, 59.
31. Willinsky, 48.
32. Noam Chomsky, *Language and Thought* (Wakefield, RI: Moyer Bell, 1993), 23.
33. Frederic G. Cassidy, "A Grand New Usage Book." Review of *Webster's Dictionary of English Usage*, ed. E. Ward Gilman.

- American Speech* 67.2 (1992), 200.
34. *Ibid.*, 203–204.
35. Flemming Andersen and Carle Bache, “August Schleicher: Towards a Better Understanding of His Concept of Language Change.” *Anthropological Linguistics* 18.9 (1976), 429.
36. Wolfgang Dressler and Ruth Wodak-Leodolter. Introduction to *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 12 (1977), 9.
37. Andersen, 434.
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66. Hollihan, 272.
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74. Erwin, 75.
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76. Chomsky, 87.
77. Chomsky, 70.
78. Chomsky, 85.
79. Chomsky, 85.
80. Chomsky, 34.
81. Chomsky, 38. The “ghost” is evident in two phenomena. A. B. Hooton describes a test given to people who spoke color-shape languages (red triangle) and those who spoke shape-color languages (circle blue) comprising a group of objects of different shapes and colors. Seventy-five percent of the subjects grouped the test objects according to their mother tongue syntax (organized by shape, versus organized by color). Jerwen Jou set up an experiment with special texts to be read out loud that contained various proportions of typographic errors (5%, 10%, etc.). Subjects were to read each text as quickly and accurately as possible. Until the error content became high, the readers would unwittingly correct the text as they read it: an automatic syntax processing system in their mind would kick in. Only when the error count was high was that automated system “short-circuited,” allowing the readers to become more accurate.
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*Continued on page 24*

# The True Origins of Foreign Missions

Bojidar Marinov

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news,  
who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things,  
who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

(Isaiah 52:7 NKJV)



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No doctrine in the twentieth century has likely inflicted more theological damage on the church than the doctrine of “parenthesis”: the church as a temporary economy in God’s plan. This theological construct has demoted the church from her position as the Bride of Christ and turned her into a concubine, a temporary comfort for her Master until the “real wife” (the racial Israel, if such a thing ever existed) returns home.

Severed thus from her theological, spiritual, and historical roots in the Old Testament, the church has become a bonsai church—limited, small, ornamental, cute ... and useless. A church that was intended to establish the dominion of her Lord and Husband over the earth, she is now concerned

with issues that seldom go beyond the limits of her bonsai pot: personal experience, liturgy, pure speculative theology, church discipline, youth groups, etc. The prevalent culture is not addressed by the church’s preaching anymore; the issues of the day are “secular” and not worthy of recognition from the pulpits (besides, mentioning them can threaten your tax-exempt status); and the rulers are left to rule a formerly Christian nation in the ancient pagan and idolatrous ways.

The doctrine of missions is inevitably a corollary of the doctrine of the church. A missionary proclaims the truth *as he knows it*. If he knows a militant, culture-challenging, history-changing church back where he comes from, he will bring that same kind of culture-challenging and history-changing church to his mission field. On the other hand, if a missionary knows a *concubine* church, a temporary, useless, ornamental, defeatist church, that’s the kind of church he is going to preach and plant on his mission field. Inevitably, the rise of the doctrine of the *concubine* church—a church with no permanent legal status before her Lord and with no roots in His redemptive history—will lead to the rise of a doctrine of missions that limits the foreign missions in their scope and historical roots.

Predictably, theologians trace the roots of foreign missions no further back than Paul and his missionary journeys, and maybe Philip and his first

missionary journey to Samaria. Missions are considered a “New Testament thing,” a “Christian activity” that came about after Pentecost; they weren’t really fully developed before Paul was commissioned to go to the Gentiles, and most certainly they had no roots or precedent whatsoever in the Old Testament. This kind of theological error fails to see the established background in the time of the first Christian missions and fails to see that Paul’s ministry was not a novelty: *it was a renewed fulfillment of the old commandments God gave to Israel in the Old Testament.*

The realization of this truth is where we need to begin if we are to restore today’s Christian missions to their real purpose in the Kingdom of God.

### Israel: God’s Missions International

Modern premillennial and amillennial theologians to the contrary, Israel was not primarily a theocratic church-state. True, it was theocratic, but the “church-state” element was not a necessary element in Israel’s destiny and purpose before God. Israel existed without a political structure for quite a while, and even when it was a state, it had a number of different political arrangements, and none was deemed “the right one” by God. With or without political structure, Israel was still Israel in the eyes of God.

Modern dispensational theologians

to the contrary, Israel was not a racial stock. With so many prominent Israelites being of foreign descent or having non-Jewish blood (Jesus Himself being the most prominent of them), it is quite impossible to even define such a thing as a racial Israel. And the multiple examples of converts and believers outside of Israel make it impossible to understand how a covenant would work limited only to a racial stock if faith was all that was required for salvation even before Christ. When God made a covenant with individuals in Israel, He did not look at their genes.

Modern liturgical zealots to the contrary, Israel did not exist primarily for the purpose of liturgy and worship. Liturgical patterns changed a few times even in the Old Testament, and besides, God specifically declared He didn't need and didn't want the worship of an apostate nation. Israel spent years in captivity with no organized worship, and that did not make the nation less Israel, neither did it annul what its real purpose was. Israel was still Israel, even when she had no temple and no organized worship.

The church-state was a tool to Israel's real purpose; the racial core was its seed (and only a seed); and the worship ceremonies were only the symbolic shadow of that real purpose. The real purpose of Israel was for her to be a *missionary society*. Israel was not meant to be a society closed within herself, focused exclusively on her own government, race, or ceremonies. Israel was supposed to be a missionary outreach to the nations, a herald for God's law and God's salvation to the nations, a city on a hill and light to the world, and a mediator between God and the nations, calling the nations to obey God and serve Him only.

The idea of believers being a light to the world was not introduced by Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount. It was first introduced by God to Abra-

ham, the father of all who believe:

**And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. (Gen. 12:3)**

This verse is commonly misinterpreted today by many preachers to mean that a nation is blessed or cursed according to its attitude toward the state of Israel. But in the context of the covenant between Abraham and God, these words mean that the personal covenant was to be expanded through the ministry of Abraham and his descendants to include all the nations (families) of the earth. God was telling Abraham that Abraham had a mission: to make his personal faith the faith of many nations. This was also the meaning of the promise that Abraham would be the father of many nations: many *covenant* nations, that is, not many genetic nations. Abraham was called to be a missionary, and that's how the New Testament authors interpreted Abraham's ministry and its continuity in the New Testament (Rom. 4).

"Well," quite a few of the Christians today would say, "you can say this about Abraham, but the law of Moses was certainly confined to Israel, and missions outreach was not their main concern." This is not true.

Deuteronomy records that, when renewing the covenant with the children of those who fled from Egypt, Moses told the second generation that the scope of the law was greater than the tiny nation of Israel:

**Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say,**

**Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? (Deut. 4:5–8)**

Here is the original commandment of "Ye are a city on a hill." You are supposed to shine forth, said God to the Hebrews, and let all nations make the comparison between their laws and your laws, between their gods and your God. Your mission is to make that comparison obvious to all nations and to exhibit the superiority of your God and His law, so that the nations acknowledge it and accept your God as their God, and your people as their people (Ruth 1:16). Israel left Egypt leading a multitude of nations in their exodus (Exod. 12:38), and the subsequent history shows that this multitude of nations was incorporated in Israel as lawful citizens through faith and circumcision. The law had provisions for accepting ethnic strangers as citizens; and the law required that future wars—after the conquest of Canaan—start with an offer of peace and peaceful incorporation into the nation of Israel and, therefore, submission to God (Deut. 20:10–12). Not only Israel's obedience was to be an evangelistic example to the nations, but Israel's disobedience was to be used by God as a negative evangelistic message to the nations (Deut. 28:37).

Obviously, God's purpose for Israel was not limited to the nation of Israel. In fact, the history of the nation of Israel as it is recorded in the Bible has a heavy focus on that mandate to evangelize the nations. Some of the most faithful characters in the Old Testament were not ethnic Israelites, as I mentioned above.

The Canaanite Rahab and the Moabite Ruth became part of the genealogy of David, and through him, of Christ. The Kenezite Caleb was the leader (prince) of the royal tribe of Judah. Obed-Edom, a compatriot of Goliath of Gath, was the righteous man whose house God chose to accommodate His Ark of the Covenant for a while; and later we see the same Obed-Edom as one of the singers and musicians at the temple. Uriah the Hittite was prominent enough in Israel to be allowed to live in the Holy City and be the neighbor of King David, and also to be sent to lead the troops in battle.

Some Gentiles were attracted to Israel and the law of God, as the law itself promised. Others remained citizens of their own nations but believed in the God of Israel and accepted His sovereign law. The most prominent examples, of course, are the people of Nineveh in the time of Jonah and the Queen of Sheba. Their faith was great enough to procure for them the privilege to be God's appointed judges over the generation of Israel in the time of Christ and the apostles (Matt. 12:41–42). Naaman, the Syrian general, believed in God and was sent away by Elisha with the *shalom* greeting, ceremonially reserved for brethren in the faith. Nebuchadnezzar and Darius, Gentile kings evangelized by Daniel, accepted the law of the God of Daniel and made it the law of the land. Cyrus, who most probably is Darius was called "the anointed one" by God Himself for his commitment to do the will of God (Isa. 45:1). We mentioned Jonah earlier, but he wasn't the only prophet to preach to the nations. Every prophetic book in the Old Testament contains passages of admonishment to the nations to obey God and His law, and promises the same blessings or curses as were promised to Israel in the Exodus.

The New Testament abounds with evidence of Israel's destiny to be a missionary outreach to the nations. The nations outside of Israel acknowledged Israel's special place as God's messenger. The wise men who followed the star were not just an obscure occult group; they were following an age-long tradition among the nations to look at Israel as the birthplace of the future Messiah. That same tradition also led the Greeks who wanted to see Jesus, for they "came up to *worship* at the feast" (John 12:20, emphasis added). Julius Caesar, the political hero of antiquity, acknowledged the special status of Israel as a missionary society and freed them of taxes in the Sabbatical years; in the non-Sabbatical years the taxes were due not to Rome but to the city of Jerusalem, paid directly to the high priest Hyrcanus, even for those Jews who lived outside of Palestine. (One can say that the whole Jewish nation had a 501[c]3 status in the empire.) When Jesus told the Samaritan woman that "salvation is of the Jews," she did not argue with Him. And the only two individuals whose faith Jesus commended were Gentiles (Matt. 8:10, 15:28), and their faith was only a consequence of the same belief accepted among all the nations, that "salvation is of the Jews." (Note that the Canaanite woman specifically compared the Jews to children, and all the other nations to dogs under the table.)

The evidence is abundant, and many more examples can be cited. Modern theology has declared that God's purpose for Israel was to be an introvert nation, focused primarily on her own political structure, racial purity, or liturgical ceremonies. The Bible reveals that those were only secondary issues, subject to the greater purpose God had for Israel: to be His missionary society to the nations, a herald of God's law and salvation, and a nation of apostles and

evangelists. This Old Testament mission is the true historical root of modern missions, and modern theology of missions will always be inadequate unless this truth is recognized.

### The Culture-Bearer for God

Then the question is, *What was the message of Old Testament evangelism?* The modern evangelical mind is so deeply existential that it can hardly relate to any other message but "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so." If a message is anything else but "Jesus saves souls," thinks the modern churchgoer, it can't be a gospel message; it must be secondary to the gospel message. The gospel of soul-winning has replaced the culture-transforming message of the Kingdom of God preached by Christ and the apostles. But we know that people in the Old Testament did not have their eyes on Christ crucified. Then what was the evangelical message of Israel, God's Missions International?

The passage quoted above from Deuteronomy 4:5–8 reveals that *the evangelical message of Israel's mission to the nations was the law of God*. Yes, that message contained the message of personal salvation—the law itself was but a revelation of Jesus Christ, God Incarnate (John 5:46). But it had much more. Israel was supposed to bring to the nations God's commandments for righteous living. Thousands of years before Francis Schaeffer, people were asking the question, "How should we then live?" Civilizations were never materialistic because materialism is never a cause worthy enough to build a civilization around. (Even modern American culture is not simply materialistic; materialism is only the outcome of an underlying idolatrous faith.) People and cultures created law codes and established religious observances and mythological systems, and governments were based on ideas and shared

experiences. Humanity has always been goaded, not by desire for more material things, but by the quest for righteous living, both individually and collectively. Man is a *cultural being* encompassing each one in his totality: his individual soul, his relationship to other men, and his relationship to the part of the creation assigned under his power. So when man asked the question, “How should we then live?” Israel’s mission was to answer, “Here’s how,” and to start reading, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God . . .”

The message embraced the *cultural being*, the man in his totality; therefore, in the midst of pagan and idolatrous nations, Israel’s mission was to *preach culture*. “Culture” not in the modern twisted sense of ballet and theatre buildings, TV shows, and etiquette formalities, but CULTURE as legal structure, interpersonal relationships, practical worldview and cosmology, institutional arrangements and ideology, philosophy of being and psychology, business relations and legitimate spheres of government, and view of time and future. In short, true culture is everything that pertains to the totality of man. Deuteronomy 4:5–8 portrays the quest for righteous living that the pagan nations inherently have. The comprehensive law of God was their answer as well, modeled by the chosen nation of Israel.

In this sense Israel was truly *foreign* to the Gentiles. Foreign not just in the language and the customs the Israelites had, but foreign in bringing to the world a completely different culture that no one else had seen or experienced before. “We fainted,” Rahab told the spies, “when we heard of your God, and there is no courage left in any man,” the same confession that thousands of years later was echoed in the words of Montezuma to that great Christian missionary and warrior, Hernan Cortes. The hearts of

hardened veterans don’t usually melt when they hear of another deity; warriors faint only when they realize that there is no hope to save what they have fought for their whole life, when they realize that *their whole world is about to die*.

Israel was commissioned to preach laws and culture to the Gentiles that were foreign to them, and that were, and still are, the very essence of *foreign* missions. Prophets prophesied to the nations around Israel and condemned them for not obeying the law of God. Nineveh repented and obeyed the law of God. Nebuchadnezzar and Darius realized that the blessings of the God of Daniel were a package deal with His law and obedience to that law. And that unique institution, the synagogue, paralleled by no other institution in antiquity, was first and foremost a *community center* for both Jews and proselytes, a cultural beachhead in pagan lands where Jews of the Diaspora settled.

Without understanding this view of the purpose of *foreign* missionaries as culture-bearers, there is no way to understand why Paul was so forceful in condemning Peter for separating from the Gentiles in the church (Gal. 2:11–14). If personal salvation were all there was in the gospel message, then separating Jews and Gentiles in the church shouldn’t be a problem. There was a reason for the Jewish believers in the early church. It was also the reason Paul made such an effort to reconcile and keep Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome united. Jewish believers who knew the law and the culture created by the law were the “foreign missionaries” to Gentile believers in the church who needed to learn the new culture and conform to it.

The Council of Jerusalem recognized this new—in fact, very old—role of the Jewish believers and established

that which was to be accommodated by the Gentiles. Jewish teachers and preachers enjoyed very high status in the early Gentile churches, sometimes for good, sometimes for bad, as the Epistle to the Galatians testifies. Paul summarized the role of the Jewish believers, “Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law” (Rom. 2:17–20), and then asked, “Do you as a Jew give that practical example to those you are supposed to teach? Do you bring the civilization to them that you learned from an early age?”

The church was instructed to take the culture it learned from the Jews and teach the nations to adopt it (Matt. 28:18–20). The message of Isaiah’s evangelist, “Your God reigns!” was to be the church’s evangelistic message.

## The Failure of Modern Missions

Just like the failure of the church today can be traced to its refusal to accept her status as the only legitimate eternal bride of Christ, the failure of Christian missions to change and influence history in the twentieth century can be traced to the refusal to see the mission field as cultural and historical war rather than strictly personal and existential “witnessing.”

Never before in the history of Christianity have the mission fields seen so many resources committed to spreading the gospel; and never before have missionaries failed so miserably to produce the desired results. Whereas in previous centuries foreign missions produced Christian societies, foreign

missions in the twentieth century produced socialist and nationalist revolutionaries (China and Africa), weak peripheral social groups (Eastern Europe), or theologically and psychologically unstable movements.

The missionaries have accepted the lie of the enemy that they are not supposed to be social reformers, only save souls. They refuse to preach culture because they have accepted the twisted definition of “culture”: designer jeans, fast food, and reality TV. The real culture of Western civilization—legal codes, the Declaration of Independence, individual liberties and the limited state, Common Law, the Puritan work ethic, and the future orientation of economic enterprise (all products of Biblical law and worldview) are outside the legitimate area of preaching and teaching for the vast majority of missionaries. While Christianity has a superior philosophy and ideology for every area of life, the very point of Deuteronomy 4:5–8, most missionaries have failed to make that superior philosophy known to those to whom they preach.

Failing to see the origins of foreign missions in the law of God, missionary organizations have crippled the efforts of their missionaries. Too often a mission’s success or failure has been assessed on the basis of number of converts, or even amounts of money spent on tracts or other limited evangelistic activities. However desirable, the number of converts is not indicative of the expansion of the Kingdom of God. It is *the nations* as entities that we are supposed to bring under the covenant of Christ (Matt. 28:19), and the indicator for an “evangelized nation” is when a whole nation, as a political and legal body not just an arithmetic sum of individuals, sees and says, “Surely, wise and understanding people are those Christians who have such wise statutes and laws.”

The prophetic messages to Edom, Syria, Babylon, or Egypt in the Old Testament need to be echoed today in prophetic messages to Europe, the United States, the Middle East, or India. And Christian missionaries are those who are called to be the prophets to those nations, calling them to submit to God and His law and accept the culture and civilization of the Kingdom of God. A missionary whose only work is to plant churches, save souls, and preach the “love of God” is a missionary who wastes his time and other people’s money. It is time for a Biblical theology of missions and a Biblical type of missionary.

### Conclusion

The beginning of foreign missions was not laid in the first century A.D. with Paul’s journeys. Paul’s mission was merely a restoration of the mission God gave to Israel a thousand years before Paul: to be God’s messenger to the nations and teach them the law of God. Israel’s main purpose was not liturgical, political, or racial; Israel was created as a missionary society, and her task of evangelizing the nations was to be carried out whether or not they had any liturgy or political structure. The early church was the prime example of being a “culture-bearer” for God in a world where the culture of the Bible was the most foreign culture a pagan world could know.

Modern missionary organizations have deliberately truncated their theology of missions and the evangelistic message to the level of personal “witnessing” and the existentialist philosophy of experience. The comprehensive evangelistic message of the law of God has been abandoned, and thus the success of foreign missions has been destroyed. The mission field needs to be redefined according to the concept of foreign missions in Scripture if we are to influence the world again for Christ.

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# Minimizing the Work of the Spirit

Andrea Schwartz



## Minimizing the Work of the Spirit

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Many feel that young children cannot handle difficult Biblical doctrines like the doctrines of hell, eternal damnation, predestination, and election. They choose to emphasize the “more pleasant” elements of the faith, such as storing up treasures in heaven, ministering angels, and letting one’s light shine. They do not want to present a “negative” view of God because they are afraid that would discourage children from choosing to follow Jesus.

However, when children do not learn early that they possess an inherited trait that puts them at enmity with God, they blissfully “float” through childhood without being aware of the spiritual dangers they face. For Christ’s work to have cogent meaning for them, it is imperative that they learn in their tenderhearted years what a tremendous price was paid by Jesus for sin and that apart from Him they have no hope of rescue. Our Savior had so much confidence that children were able to receive His teachings that He presented children as examples that adults should follow as they entered the Kingdom (Mark 10:15).

The shielding of children from these strong, sobering doctrines and the reluctance of adults in children’s lives to “tell

it like it is” points to a greater problem, namely a serious minimizing of the power and influence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers. Because twenty-first-century Christendom is replete with antinomianism, easy-believism, and syncretism, many Christian parents don’t expect to see the transformation of the Holy Spirit in the lives of their children. Could it be that they don’t expect to see it in the lives of adults either?

### The Root Cause

This is because the Biblical definitions of sin and grace have been so polluted and dumbed-down that they do not come close to Biblical doctrines. As Rushdoony points out in his *Systematic Theology*,

How we view sin’s effect upon us will also mark or color our view of the effects of grace and the Holy Spirit. If sin acts on the borders or peripheries of our lives, then too so will grace and the Holy Spirit. All the while, our hearts are then reserved to ourselves.<sup>1</sup>

If the Spirit has come, there is life, and if there is no life, it is evidence that the Spirit has not come. There is no such thing as partial regeneration. A person *is* or *is not* born again. I believe that much of the confusion regarding this topic comes from a misinterpretation of Jesus’ words “you must be born again” (John 3:7).

How one understands the usage of “must” is crucial. Does “must” mean “should,” the way we say, “You must obey the speed limit”? Or does “must” mean “an essential requisite,” the way we say, “Your heart must be beating for you to be alive”? If we understand

“must” to be “should,” we place the emphasis in salvation on man’s work and initiation, rather than on God’s work and initiation. When Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be born again, He was not prompting or prodding Nicodemus to do anything. Jesus was not attempting to *move* Nicodemus into action; He was establishing the Spirit’s prerogative in giving new life to those He chooses.

When we explain the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit (to our children or others), it is important that we not diminish or play down the totality of the resultant transformation. Rushdoony’s explanation brings this to light:

Salvation is total: we are transferred from death to life, from sin to righteousness, by the justification of God through Jesus Christ. Christ our sacrifice takes upon Himself our death penalty, and God declares that our sins are remitted, and our legal standing before Him is as righteous men. *We are saved*. This does not mean our problems are over. A man snatched from a burning house and certain death has only his life; all else is gone. He must now work to establish the capital or substance of his saved life. So too the redeemed man must now put on holiness, work in obedience to God’s word, to grow in terms of the new life which is his and become a rich man in grace, faith, and obedience to his Savior.<sup>2</sup>

A redeemed person is a *changed* individual. This fact should not be minimized. The change is not manifested in one’s *profession* of faith, but in one’s *evidence* of faith. When Jesus said that we will know our brothers and sisters in the faith by their fruit (Matt. 7:16), He was not being esoteric. He meant that

we would know them by how they kept His law as manifested by the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. These attributes are not pietistic pretensions, but rather a full-blown commitment to every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. Good fruit is exemplified in keeping the law of God; antinomianism (lawlessness) is the evidence of bad fruit. As Rushdoony points out,

[T]he summons to manifest the fruits of the Spirit is not a call to a vague and antinomian spirituality, nor to mysticism, but a summing up of the whole of God's requirements of us in His law-word. The Spirit nowhere renounces His word.<sup>3</sup>

### By Way of Illustration

Years ago, I met Michael, an eight-year-old boy who was at Stanford Children's Hospital receiving chemotherapy treatments for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. His situation was compounded by the fact that he had received a heart transplant seven years earlier. By the time I met him, because of chemo, he was bald, with no eyebrows or eyelashes, and donned a mask anytime he was out in public. Michael took up to sixty meds a day to balance the competing issues of potential rejection of his donated heart while doctors attempted to build up his immune system to battle the cancer. Sometimes he had some extreme reactions to his difficult circumstances, compounded by drug interactions, such as chasing his mother with a knife or ramming his foot into the glove compartment of the car and smashing it. Because of his delicate medical situation, normal forms of discipline were not at his parents' disposal.

I had a heart-to-heart talk with Michael. I asked if he spent any time praying that God would heal him.

He was surprised at my question; he thought it evident that he wanted to be cured. I pointed out from Scripture that he was foolish to ask God for healing at the same time he was actively violating God's commandments. I read from Exodus, "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you" (20:12 NKJV). I told him that God considered the prayers of the disobedient an abomination (Prov. 15:8). Michael's eyes grew wide. He acknowledged his lack of self-control and sin of throwing temper tantrums when he did not get his way. I could see he was convicted of his sin. He got the message that he was demonstrating bad fruit. We did not discuss whether he was a Christian or not; the question I asked was, "Are you acting in accordance with your profession of faith?"

Many would question my approach of speaking to a sick child about God's condemnation. However, not only did Michael receive the correction well, he became a vocal ambassador for Jesus Christ whenever he had a hospital stay, a doctor visit, or when he was about to be put under anesthesia. Michael gained a reputation for interacting and consoling other patients in the hospital, and when he died eight years later, hundreds of people attended the memorial service of this young saint. Michael received the Kingdom just as Jesus said he could, and the working of the Holy Spirit in his life was unmistakable.

We should not demand verbal proofs of our children's commitment to the Lord. We need to teach them the fundamentals of the faith and communicate that their words and actions will reveal their heart's condition. When dealing with defiance and rebellion in children, it is not only important to correct the bad behavior, but we must

use the incident as an opportunity to instruct how the breach was a violation of the law of God. I realize that, for some families, entire days might be spent in this correction mode, but done consistently, the training of the child will "kick in," and the infractions will diminish. By teaching the law of God and grounding the children in its application, parents are raising them up in the way they should go (Prov. 22:6). This constant tutoring to Christ is one of the main functions of the law (Gal. 3:24).

### The Law and the Spirit

In today's world, it is unfashionable to question someone's faith based on his works, yet the Scripture tells us that faith without works is dead (James 2:20). In addition, the charge of legalism is often levied against those who assert that God's law-word is binding on all men at all times.

St. Paul is emphatically making clear the connection between the Holy Spirit, the law of God, and the spiritual man. Thus, where the Holy Spirit is at work, the law of God is the delight of the spiritual man, and, where men resist or despise the Spirit, they resist and despise the law given by that Spirit.<sup>4</sup>

Our world is full of people who have never been taught Biblical faith and who have been offered an outwardly appealing counterfeit. We must be sure that we do not cheapen the meaning of grace by coaxing or cajoling people to "accept" something they have no power or ability to conjure up on their own. Rather, our task is to present truth unequivocally and help our listeners understand that although all men are born under condemnation, responding to the message of the gospel is proof of the call of the Holy Spirit.<sup>5</sup>

Too often, we pass over the powerful words of Scripture and minimize their meanings. Second Corinthians

5:17 makes a bold statement,

**Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**

The tenderhearted child is not only ready to receive the Word, but has a receptivity that should not be bypassed. As parents teach their children about the miracle of being born again, children will develop a longing and desire to have what their parents have described. Of course, if these truths are not presented with conviction, children may consider these truths to be merely fairy tales. Consider the expectation of hearing the promise of Acts 1:8,

**But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. (NKJV)**

That power is the power to put on the full armor of God, the power to stand against the wiles of the devil, the power to recognize that when temptations abound, God promises a way out (1 Cor. 10:13). This is the good news of the gospel.

However, the good news does not stop there. We need to embrace our identity as *more than conquerors* (Rom. 8:37), and we should expect to witness the life-changing effects of salvation. Counterfeit portrayals of conversion (faith and repentance) only serve to slander the Holy Spirit. We then somehow have to reconcile lawless behavior as being consistent with the indwelling of the Third Person of the Trinity. Once this compromise is made in our thinking, believers begin to expect less, and our resultant Kingdom work is crippled.

### **Don't Settle for Less**

Too much emphasis is placed on our experience or human perspective

when it comes to our conversion, and we regularly see manifestations of this sorry substitute. Spending inordinate amounts of time rehearsing the circumstances of one's conversion or life prior to faith is very much majoring on the minors.

A man may or may not know the day of his conversion; he cannot know when God regenerated him; but he cannot escape knowing that he is regenerated and converted. It is the same as knowing that we are alive, only now alive in Christ.<sup>6</sup>

As believers grow in grace (sanctification), their nature is renewed and remade after the image of God. This is a process but not a hidden one. Where holiness—the process of being sanctified—develops, there also develops a desire to be led by God's Spirit *according* to His Word. Believers are no longer generating sin at their core,<sup>7</sup> but are moving in holiness (obedience of faith to the law). Children need to understand that the mark of their allegiance is not only in what they do not do, but also in what they deliberately do.

As converts embrace and exude the righteousness (justice) of God throughout every facet of their being, startling changes take place in their lives and in their efforts. They possess the *power* of the Holy Spirit within them, no small matter. The miracle of the Third Person of the Trinity making His abode within His people should not be reduced to pietistic and charismatic manifestations. So much of the meaning of Pentecost and our own baptism of the Holy Spirit is lost when we fail to grasp the fuller implications. Rushdoony explains,

Pentecost was thus a *coronation*, not of believers collectively as a church, but as individuals who are members of Christ. We are told of the glory, "and it sat upon each of them." In the world of Christ's day, where the meaning of the royal flame was well known, the mean-

ing of Pentecost was clear: the glory of God was given, not to the kings and emperors of the world, but to covenant man, redeemed man.<sup>8</sup>

The meaning thus of the flames of Pentecost is that we put on Jesus Christ as our glorification. The emphasis is not on our experience, but on our relationship and obedience to Jesus Christ, God's manifest glory.<sup>9</sup>

This is the substance of our faith, that we abide in Christ and He abides in us. We are His friends if we do whatsoever He commands us, and we bear His glory when we keep His commandments or law.<sup>10</sup> In this way, we manifest our positional standing according to our royal lineage. This is not too difficult for children who have been taught the implications of faith in Christ. But because we expect so much less, we are not concerned when we see little fruit.

As we appreciate the glorious benefits we have been given, we need to avoid viewing salvation from a man-centered perspective. Rather, we are to see it in terms of God's purpose for the establishment and furtherance of His Kingdom. We are released from our slavery to sin and death and empowered for service to the Lord.<sup>11</sup> Much more than dwelling on our inner feelings, repeatedly rehearsing our life circumstances prior to conversion, or dwelling on and cataloguing the blessings we have received, our salvation calls us to service. The Gospel account of Jesus' words to Peter, as recounted in John 21:15–17, shows that Christ was more concerned with His call on Peter's life than discussing the inner feelings and regrets of Peter's denial.

An emotional confession, and comforting words from Christ, would have left Peter and all the betraying band of apostles *feeling* better. Our Lord prevented this. He gave them a task, because the redeemed and forgiven people of God are not called to concentrate on their feelings and conditions but to serve the

Lord with gladness. Peter's calling was the mark of grace and forgiveness. The forgiven do not dwell on the past, nor on their sins: Christ has dealt with their sins, and they stand forgiven and redeemed. Their sins are the dead past, but their calling is the present and future.<sup>12</sup>

Expecting the Holy Spirit to empower us as we live according to God's Word is the prerequisite for unabashed dominion and Kingdom work. Jesus told us that Spirit-driven faith would allow us to move mountains. God knows that there are some big ones to move in our day! How our children transform the culture we leave them will be determined by their dominion-oriented response to the Holy Spirit. We need not hold back; they can handle it!

Andrea Schwartz is the Chalcedon Foundation's active proponent of Christian education. She has authored two books on homeschooling along with writing a regular blog [www.StartYourHomeschool.com](http://www.StartYourHomeschool.com). She is spearheading the Chalcedon Teacher Training Institute and continues to mentor, lecture, and teach. She lives in San Jose with her husband and continues to homeschool her youngest daughter. She can be reached by email at [lessons.learned@yahoo.com](mailto:lessons.learned@yahoo.com)

**Watch for Andrea's read-aloud book for families, *Teach Me While My Heart Is Tender*, available soon from Chalcedon.**

1. R. J. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1 (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1994), 304.
2. *Ibid.*, 507
3. *Ibid.*, 371.
4. *Ibid.*, 359.
5. This is the balance that affirms the prerogative of God in election and at the same time does not diminish the culpability of men in their rebellion.
6. Rushdoony, 534.
7. The unbeliever is guilty of *anomia*, a dedicated rebellion against God's law. The believer, while not fully sanctified this side of heaven, still sins (*hamartia*), but his sin is more indicative of missing the mark rather than aiming to miss.
8. Rushdoony, 552.

## Rushdoony ... Kill God cont. from page 5

(John 19:15).

Pilate's pragmatism in sending Jesus to the cross was not the end of the Roman state's involvement in the crucifixion events. Perhaps because they were used to themselves overseeing executions, these same religious leaders, after standing near the cross and ridiculing God incarnate, felt bold enough to request the crucifixion death be accelerated by breaking the victim's legs. (This prevented pushing up with the legs to expand the lungs, thereby speeding death by asphyxiation). Then they asked Pilate to post a guard at the tomb because Jesus had spoken of His resurrection on the third day. Our last scene of Rome's involvement is recorded by Matthew 28, where we learn an earthquake accompanied the rolling of the stone from the tomb and the Roman soldiers guarding the tomb shook with fear and became "as dead men." Presumably, they were still in this pathetic state (again, think of this as a YouTube clip) when the followers of Jesus first arrived at dawn.

The apostate religious leaders and the Roman state were united in their efforts to kill their God. This, remember, was all by God's "determinate counsel" and should tell us something.

Men tend to try to play God; this was the original sin of Genesis 3:5. To do this, they elevate their institutions. The greatest means of absolutism have been by religious establishments or the state. Both here are seen cooperating to kill Jesus. Both institutions are valid and necessary, but both are also capable of doing harm or even great evil commensurate with the power and authority they are allowed to have. All institutions are capable of corruption

## Selbrede ... Contamination cont. from page 15

99. Hollihan, 272.
100. Willinsky, 62.
101. Erwin, 69.
102. Hollihan, 272.
103. Hollihan, 273.
104. Quoted in Otto Scott's review of Postman's *Technopoly* in *Otto Scott's Compass* 4:46 (1994), 6. Postman was professor of communications at New York University.
105. Shuy, 100.
106. Quoted in Sol Saporta's review of *Profscam*, by Charles J. Sykes. *Anthropological Linguistics* 30.2 (1986), 250–252.
107. Samuel Blumenfeld. "The Fraud of Educational Reform," *Journal of Christian Reconstruction* 11:22 (1987), 23.
108. *Ibid.*, 25.
109. Davies, 157.
110. Hollihan, 277.
111. Richard Mitchell, quoted in Erwin, 76.
112. Erwin, 72.
113. George Klaus, "Linguistics and Epistemology," *Linguistics and Neighboring Disciplines*, Ed. Renate Bartsch and Theo Vennemann. (New York: American Elsevier, 1975), 107.
114. Klaus, 110.
115. Erwin, 69.
116. Blumenfeld, 24.
117. R. J. Rushdoony, *Revolt Against Maturity* (Fairfax, VA: Thoburn Press, 1977), 238.
118. Kenneth Pike, Robert Longacre, Vida Chenoweth, John Oller, etc.
119. Cornelius Van Til, *Systematic Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Re-

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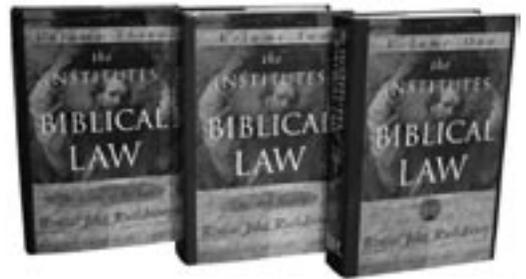
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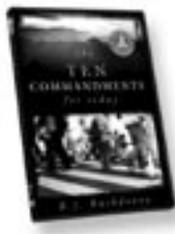
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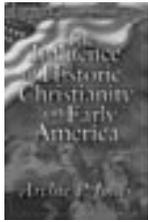
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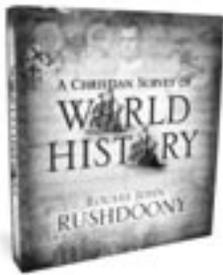
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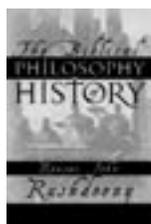
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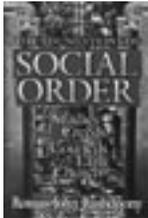
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### **The "Atheism" of the Early Church**

By Rousas John Rushdoony. Early Christians were called "heretics" and "atheists" when they denied the gods of Rome, in particular the divinity of the emperor and the statism he embodied in his personality cult. These Christians knew that Jesus Christ, not the state, was their Lord and that this faith required a different kind of relationship to the state than the state demanded. Because Jesus Christ was their acknowledged Sovereign, they consciously denied such esteem to all other claimants. Today the church must take a similar stand before the modern state.

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## Philosophy

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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.

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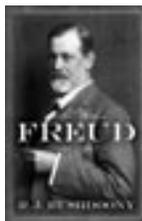


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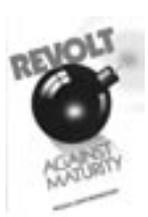
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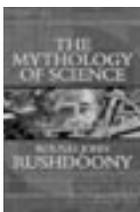
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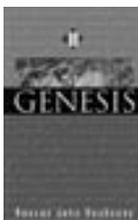


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By R.J. Rushdoony. In this study, first published under the title *Roots of Inflation*, the reader sees why envy often causes the most successful and advanced members of society to be deemed criminals. The reader is shown how envious man finds any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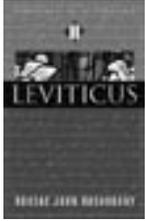


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Essentially, all of mankind is on some sort of an exodus. However, the path of fallen man is vastly different from that of the righteous. Apart from Jesus Christ and His atoning work, the exodus of a fallen humanity means only a further descent from 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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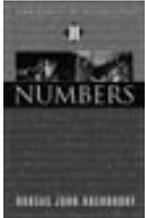
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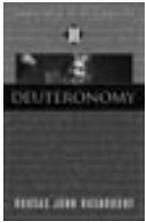
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The Lord desires a people who will embrace their responsibilities. The history of Israel in the wilderness is a sad narrative of a people with hearts hardened by complaint and rebellion to God's ordained authorities. They were slaves, not an army. 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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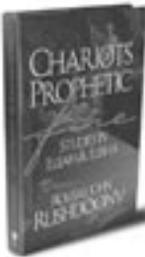
If you desire to understand the core of Rushdoony's thinking, this commentary on *Deuteronomy* is one volume you must read. The covenantal structure of this last book of Moses, its detailed listing of both blessings and curses, and its strong presentation of godly theocracy provided Rushdoony with a solid foundation from which to summarize the central tenets of a truly Biblical worldview—one that is solidly established upon Biblical Law, and one that is assured to shape the future.

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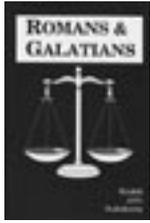
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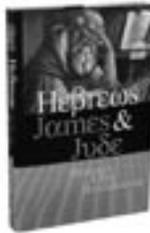
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a matter of life. "Pure religion and undefiled" requires Christian charity and action. Anything short of this is a self-delusion. James's letter is a corrective the church needs badly. Jude similarly recalls us to Jesus Christ's apostolic commission, "Remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 17). Jude's letter reminds us of the necessity for a new creation beginning with us, and of the inescapable triumph of the Kingdom of God.

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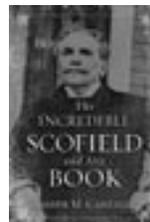


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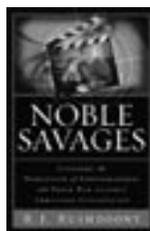
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of a humanistic world order. In this book, Rushdoony elucidates the Christian's calling to charity and its implications for Godly dominion. In an age when Christian action is viewed in political terms, a return to Christian works of compassion and Godly service will help usher in a return of the reign of God as no piece of legislation ever could.

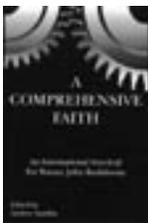
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## A Comprehensive Faith

Edited by Andrew Sandlin. This is the surprise *Festschrift* presented to R.J. Rushdoony at his 80th birthday celebration in April, 1996. These essays are in gratitude to Rush's influence and elucidate the importance of his theological and philosophical contributions in numerous fields. Contributors include Theodore Letis, Brian Abshire, Steve Schlissel, Joe

Morecraft III, Jean-Marc Berthoud, Byron Snapp, Samuel Blumenfeld, Christine and Thomas Schirmacher, Herbert W. Titus, 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.

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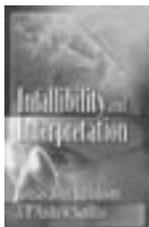
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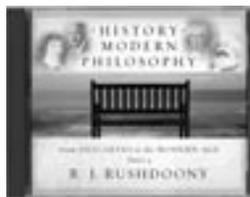
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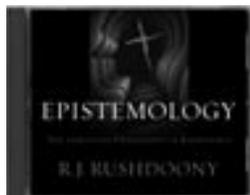
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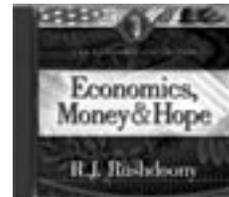
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