

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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Editorials

2 From the Founder

The Power of His Resurrection

4 From the President

The Day of the Lord and the Certainty of Justice

Features

6 God's Law: The Only Hope for Animals

Martin G. Selbrede

12 New Developments in Climate-Change Battles Illustrate the Difference Between Science and "Post-Normal Science"

Calvin Beisner, Ph.D.

14 Cornelius Van Til and Rousas John Rushdoony, Part 1 Every Thought Captive

Michael J. McVicar, Ph.D.

Columns

20 Important Considerations for Expecting Parents

Jo Loomis

23 Rethinking Childbearing - Part 1

Andrea Schwartz

Products

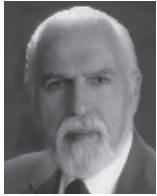
26 Catalog Insert

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The Power of His Resurrection

By R. J. Rushdoony

(Reprinted from *Romans and Galatians* [Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1997], 136–139.)



In Romans 8:19, Paul says it is the eager and intense expectation of all creation that the sons of God be revealed. All creation has a yearning more powerful than gravity for the unfolding of God's purpose and, in particular, "the manifestation of the sons of God." This is an important fact when understood. With millions upon millions of professing Christians, what is creation waiting for? Does it not recognize these people? The word *manifestation* is in the Greek *apokalupsis*, a revelation, an uncovering, a revealing. In other words, Paul says that the sons of God have not revealed themselves! What is this apocalypse of the sons of God?

In Bede's *Life of Saint Cuthbert*, we are told of Cuthbert's way as a bishop:

He delivered "the poor man from him that was too strong for him, the poor and the needy from him that despoiled them." He took care to comfort the sad and faint-hearted and to bring back those that delighted in evil to a godly sorrow. He strictly maintained his old frugality and took delight in preserving the rigours of the monastery amidst the pomp of the world. He fed the hungry, clothed the destitute, and had all the other marks of a perfect bishop.¹

Eddius Stephanus, in his *Life of St. Wilfrid*, tells us that Wilfrid was zealous to convert the ungodly, and to care for widows, orphans, and the infirm. Moreover,

He cared for the poor, fed the hungry, clothed the naked, welcomed strangers, brought back captives, and protected

the widow and orphan, all so that he might win the reward of eternal life amid the choir of angels with Jesus Christ our Lord.²

At Wilfrid's election as bishop, it was said, "We therefore elect him in his prime of manhood to teach the law of God."³ The apocalypse, manifestation, or revelation of the sons of God is their exercise of godly dominion over all things, bringing all things into captivity to Christ. It is thus wrong to sit back and wait for God's apocalypse if we do not effect our own where God requires it.

In verse 20, Paul continues to develop this point. As Leenhardt so beautifully states it:

Since man has not fulfilled towards creation the ministry with which he was entrusted, creation, for lack of guidance and control, is not evolving towards the end that was assigned to it; it moves purposelessly in the void; life leads nowhere except to corruption and death. *Mataiotes* stresses this futility of existence, its essential vacuity or lack of substance and meaning. It is man who is responsible for the subjection of creation to this condition which is contrary to its destiny, for it is man who has failed to direct it towards ultimate meaning.⁴

The liberation of all creation awaits the apocalypse of man, man's assumption of his dominion mandate, "Because the creature [or, creation] itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (v. 21). This corruption (*phthora*) means a state of decay, an

inferior condition to a natural one. The natural condition of creation as God made it is very good (Gen. 1:31). Its present fallen estate is an unnatural one because sin and death prevail. Man, by pushing back the realm of sin, increases the realm of life. Then, at the end, God's mighty act destroys death forever. In speaking of that culmination, Calvin calls attention to its totality, while disproving of speculations which sought to learn more than Scripture says:

v. 21. But he means not that all creatures shall be partakers of the same glory with the sons of God; but that they, according to their nature, shall be participators of a better condition; for God will restore to a perfect state the world, now fallen, together with mankind. But what that perfection will be, as to beasts as well as plants and metals, it is not meet nor right in us to inquire more curiously; for the chief effect of corruption is decay. Some subtle men, but hardly sober-minded, inquire whether all kinds of animals will be immortal; but if reins be given to speculations where will they at length lead us? Let us then be content with this simple doctrine—that such will be the constitution and the complete order of things, that nothing will be deformed or fading.⁵

Godet notes, "Paul does not say that nature will participate in the glory, but only in the liberty of the glory of the children of God. Liberty is one of the elements of their glorious state." This power "expresses the unchecked development of the free expression of all the powers of life, beauty, and perfection, wherewith this new nature will be

endowed.”⁶ Meyer’s comment is also telling:

Observe ... how Paul has conceived the catastrophe, of which he is speaking, not as the destruction of the world and a new creation, but, in harmony with the prophetic announcements, especially those of Isaiah (Isa. xxxv., lxv. 17, lxvi. 22), as a transformation into a more perfect state. The passing away of the world is the passing away of its form (1 Cor. vii. 31), by which this transformation is conditioned, and in which, according to 2 Pet. iii. 10, fire will be the agent employed. And the hope, the tenor of which is specified ... might, in connection with the living personification, be ascribed to all nature, as if it were conscious thereof, since the latter is destined to become the scene and surrounding of the glorified children of God.⁷

There is a vast difference between seeing the end of the world as only destruction as against the view of it as a transformation. Postmillennialism sees it as transformation, and the transformation includes our regeneration, our dominion work of sanctification, and more.

Luther says, of verse 21, that Paul says two things:

First, that the creation will be set free, namely, from vanity, when the ungodly have been condemned and taken away and when the old man has been destroyed. This liberation is now taking place every day in the lives of the saints. Second, that it will not only no longer be vain but also it will not be subject to corruption in the future.⁸

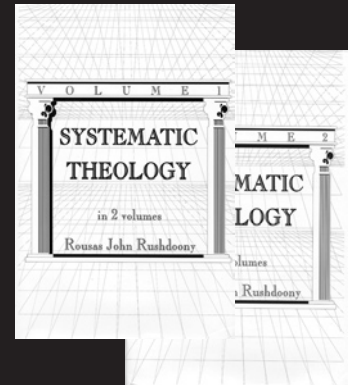
Paul continues, in verse 22, calling attention to the fact that “the whole creation” groans and is in travail like a woman in childbirth, awaiting the great consummation. Creation is not to be superseded; it is to find fulfillment together with us. In verse 23, Paul says further that we who are in the Spirit

groan also, sigh and pulsate, waiting for the fullness which comes with the redemption of our body. Again citing Leenhardt, “It is not merely a question of the liberating power of death; it is a question of the redeeming action of God aimed at endowing humanity with a new status of existence, by bringing the believer to share in the power of Christ’s resurrection (Phil. 2:10).”⁹

The power of Christ’s resurrection means that a redeeming force and people are now at work in history, bringing all things into captivity to Christ. The scope of the resurrected Christ’s redeeming power is cosmic and eternal. 🇺🇸

1. J. W. Webb, translator, *Lives of the Saints* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, [1963] 1981), 105.
2. *Ibid.*, 144.
3. *Ibid.*, 143.
4. Franz J. Leenhardt, *The Epistle to the Romans* (London, England: Lutterworth Press, [1957] 1961), 220.
5. John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1948), 305.
6. Frederic Louis Godet, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, [1850] 1977), 315.
7. Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, *Critical and Exegetical Hand-Book to the Epistle to the Romans* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, [1884] 1983), 325.
8. *Luther’s Works*, Vol. 25, *Lectures on Romans* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1972), 363.
9. Leenhardt, *Epistle to the Romans*, 228.

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The Day of the Lord and the Certainty of Justice

Mark R. Rushdoony



Obadiah was likely the first prophet to use the term “the day of the Lord” (1:15). It has an intended foreboding sound to it

because it speaks of an ultimate accountability before a God to whom justice is attributed as part of His being. The expression is used in Scripture to refer to a day in which judgment is both pronounced and executed. The reference is to men and nations appearing before God’s court.

Obadiah’s specific message was calling the nation of Edom (Idumea) to their sentencing before God for their mistreatment of Judah. In that context, the prophet also refers several times to Judah’s trial as “the day.” Judah itself had been called before God’s court. In Judah’s day of judgment, the Edomites (descendants of Esau) took advantage of the Hebrews, a related people. Judah had its day of judgment, as had Israel, and the Edomites now were assured theirs was coming, but one with no mercy and future restoration.

After Obadiah wrote, other prophets used the term. The day of the Lord came at different times for Israel, Judah, and Edom, as it does for every person, nation, and institution, yet there is also a final day of the Lord referred to in Scripture; hence it is called the *Last Judgment*. Because the prophets were specifically speaking to nations facing violent foreign invasions and captivity, the Old Testament references are quite harsh. The nature of the day is one of

destruction and land laid desolate. Their descriptions speak of humbling, goods and lands spoiled or stolen, heathen swords, and repeated references to darkness. Such imagery is also in the New Testament, where the earth and its works are burned up in that final day of the Lord.

The Necessity of Judgment

There can be no justice without judgment on both injustice and the unjust. Judgment on sin is the consequence of violating God’s moral order. In human courts we say people are “brought to justice,” they are held accountable for their crimes. We do not say justice is suddenly imposed on them. Obadiah tells the Edomites their judgment is directly related to their sin: “[A]s thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head” (v. 15b).

When Hosea prophesies about the coming defeat and enslavement of the nation of Israel, their judgment is also referenced as a direct consequence of sin, “For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind” (Hosea 8:7a). Their judgment was a necessary and direct result of their sin. Judgment is not a subjective decision by God but a necessary part of His righteousness. Judgment is God saying, “You made your bed, now lie in it.”

Likewise, the curses of God are described to us as following and inevitably overtaking disobedient man (Deut. 28:2, 15). Like the laws of physics God built into His universe that we recognize with scientific certitude,

the moral law of God is an unavoidable part of reality that man ignores at his own peril.

In *The Biblical Philosophy of History*, my father notes something profound when discussing that history is linear, not cyclical. Not only does history move forward, he says, but in a very real sense it moves backward from future to present, because the future promise of God and His predestined plan make that future certain. The present moves toward that eternal purpose. Nothing can exist or operate except in the eternal certainty of God’s future. This is why postmillennialism does not stem from man’s optimism but from a faith in the person and Word of God and the exalted place of His Messiah. One of the persistent problems of the contemporary church is that it gives Satan a position of preeminence by assuming he controls the world and its future.

Who Controls the Future?

The writer of Psalm 46 assumes God controls the future when he writes, “Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth” (v. 10). That writer speaks of “natural” disasters, plus foreign threats and the devastation of war, yet still can exalt God as his “refuge and strength.”

Our faith in God must be a faith in His rule over all things, not just our salvation. A world whose attention is focused on one of the most devastating natural disasters in modern history should remember the faith the psalmist professes:

Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. (vv. 2–3)

There is no hint of Satan's control over anything in Psalm 46. As Christians we need to examine our faith. Do we believe God or Satan controls life, history, and the future? How you answer that question controls much of your life and thought.

No Safety in Sin

There is evil in this world; there is no doubt that is the context of all Scripture. We are ourselves sinners, and we live in a fallen world. Sin has its consequences, so the life of sinners in a fallen world has problems. Sin produces both temporal consequences and moral judgment, yet righteousness also produces temporal consequences and blessing. Sin and righteousness, both being moral in nature, have moral rewards before the court of a just God; but God is not just as we choose to define justice, or we make God into a puppet of our humanism. We understand the nature and definition of justice as we understand God's revelation of Himself and His law-word.

The salvation of God represents more than our eternal reward; it must be seen as our status as new creatures in Christ in this fallen world of time and history. Our purpose as the redeemed of God is our recall to the exercise of dominion in terms of our faith that God is who Scripture says He is and that Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, is now Lord and Savior. The end certainty on which we fix our eyes is the historical certainty of Revelation 11:15: "The kingdoms of this world

are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." This is not a short-term goal for which we strategize but a faith in which we operate in sometimes very frustrating labors.

There is no safety in a sinful world, and no easy way for sinners, even those redeemed by grace. Life in a sinful world has been problematic since the fall. This does not mean sin or Satan controls either this world or the course of history.

The Slave Mentality

Egypt was used by God and the prophets as a symbol of oppression and slavery. Even as a place of slavery, Egypt was, however, also a place of security; the Hebrews were not responsible for anything but their work details. This was one reason the Hebrews resisted Moses. Slaves could not think like free men; they did not have the courage to exercise the responsibilities liberty demanded. One result was only remembering the food Egypt provided and their complaining to Moses about the fine mess he had gotten them into. That generation had such a slave mentality that God forbade them to go into the land and they died in the wilderness.

We, too, derive many benefits from the humanistic, statist culture in which we live. We cannot be quick to assume the standard of living in the wilderness was better than that of Egypt. God did not give them instant prosperity, nor did the "promised land" offer a land of ease, but a land of opportunity under God's law. Should God's judgment fall in our lifetime, we, too, may find ourselves in a wilderness for a time, stripped of the comforts and conveniences of our Egypt. The question for us will then be, "Do we move on to the building of a better nation under better laws, or do we cry out for the lost pleasures of the past?"

Too often materialism has been denounced in either Marxist or dualistic terms (i.e., as either unjust or unspiritual). The real problem with materialism is that men tend to esteem its comforts more than God. Israel was wholly and Judah partially given over to Baalism, the worship of "lords" or "powers." These various Baals had the common denominator of being aspects of fertility cults. The powers worshipped had to do with rain, crop cycles, harvests, and productivity. We still have fertility cults, though not by that name. We now have prosperity and blessing cults, where God is treated like a Baal whose appeasement assures that His worshippers are given the good life.

When the Hebrews were called out of Egyptian slavery, their apostasy took the form of a mental return to the love of prosperity. Even Jehovah became no more than a minor Baal in their pantheon of lords. They became slaves to prosperity. Today we have also become slaves to prosperity. We most often do this by means of the slavery of debt and fiat money. The consequences of this sin are coming home; we have sown the wind, and we are soon to reap the whirlwind.

Darkness ... and Light

During World War I, when man's humanistic optimism was shattered, Edward Grey, a British statesman, remarked privately, "The lamps are going out all over Europe. We shall not see them lit again in our time." The expression is the most famous quote of that era and is still used to refer to a pessimistic outlook on current events.

In contrast to such a negative perspective, consider Zechariah 14:7, which says of the day of the Lord, "[A]t evening time it shall be light." This is not referring to a time of day, but to the

Continued on page 25

God's Law: The Only Hope for Animals

Martin G. Selbrede



The Battle Over God's Creation

It is to be freely admitted that virtually all champions of environmentalism, eco-justice, animal rights, veganism, etc., are antagonistic to *Biblical* Christianity. In their prose we often see emotional sensationalism, sentimentalism,¹ disdain for humanity, pro-abortion agendas, moralistic condescension, and “the tendency of environmentalism to become ‘everythingism’—i.e., to lead to totalitarian visions of social reform.”² Their work is either grounded in neo-pagan thinking or it attempts to co-opt the Scriptures³ (or argues in favor of setting aside Scripture⁴ in the interests of an ecumenism we would naturally reprehend). See *ResistingTheGreenDragon.com* for a macro-level (public policy) exposé of the anti-Biblical (and statist) trappings of modern environmentalism.

This apparent “package deal,” this tying of the baby to the bathwater, will continue to doom the baby until *informed Christians* establish that we ourselves have fallen prey to a false dichotomy. Bible-believing Christians are in a unique position not only to take true godly dominion in regard to these concerns (along a very different trajectory from the one taken by the humanists), but we have more powerful tools to reverse the curse on God's creation than unregenerate mankind at large possesses (see R. J. Rushdoony's discussion of Romans 8:19–23 on page 2 of this issue of *Faith for All of Life*).

We therefore will speak of Biblical alternatives that turn the tables on the humanists. Should we find value in a given humanist's approach in a specific action, this does not widen into an endorsement of that humanist's overall philosophy or worldview anymore than Christ's extolling of the Samaritan's conduct toward the man set upon by thieves (Luke 10:37) implies an endorsement by Him of faulty Samaritan theology. Romans 2:14 acknowledges that men outside the covenant might possibly “do by nature the things contained in the law,” but St. Paul's moral reference point remains an explicit anchoring to God's law: no general endorsement is ever expressed or implied. The same holds throughout this analysis. As Dr. R. J. Rushdoony puts it, “[T]he belief that nature is normative is anti-Christian and clearly unbiblical. It is God who is normative, and His law that governs man and nature alike.”⁵

Extending the Culture of Death

Be prepared for a surprise. The HSUS (Humane Society of the United States), the ASPCA (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals), and PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) have traditionally been the greatest defenders of the wholesale killing of dogs and cats in animal shelters. When innovative new life-saving paradigms came online in city after city, these big-name, high-profile “defenders” of animal rights either ignored these new approaches,⁶ dismissed these successes with self-righteous

rationalizations,⁷ or actively resisted life-saving efforts.⁸ These organizations treat killing of shelter animals as a great kindness and mercy. “[B]ut the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel” (Prov. 12:10b). The first half of that proverb reads, “A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast.” These ideas inhabit the same verse and thus share the same context.

To be clear, note that the so-called No Kill revolution does *not* mean that euthanasia in an animal shelter falls to zero, but rather that only irredeemably injured, ill, suffering, or vicious animals are euthanized (i.e., true mercy killing). The accepted litmus test for achieving No Kill status is an annual live outcome rate of 90 percent or higher at an animal shelter (contrast this with PETA's 10 percent or lower live outcome rate in 2005 exhibited in endnote 7). The big animal-rights organizations continue to promote the failed LES model (Legislation, Education, Spay/Neuter) that they use to blame the public (not the shelters or their directors) for sky-high death rates. PETA, too busy reinventing fish as “sea kittens,”⁹ has written off real kittens like nobody's business.

A key factor driving high kill rates is, ironically, the myth of pet overpopulation, which can be stated this way: the killed animals are labeled “unwanted” and “unadoptable” because these animals outnumber the available homes they could be placed in. *This statement is absolutely false.* There are *far more homes available* than there are pets to place. Thousands of shelters say

they are “killing for lack of space” due to “overpopulation,” when each has dozens of empty cages.¹⁰ Shelters actually kill out of convenience.¹¹ As Shakespeare and Shaw noted, “Custom will reconcile people to any atrocity.”¹²

The irony in the “overpopulation” claim (when there are actually twice as many qualified homes for shelter animals as there are animals entering shelters) is that R. J. Rushdoony wrote a seminal work, *The Myth of Overpopulation*, which debunks this myth as it relates to humans.¹³ These respective myths (animal overpopulation, human overpopulation) are two peas in a pod, as are the associated concepts of an “unwanted dog or cat” (justifying shelter killing) and an “unwanted child” (justifying human abortion). In drawing this comparison, we are emphatically *not* putting human life on the same level as animal life (as far too many animal rights advocates insist upon doing). A human is “worth more than many sparrows” (Luke 12:7 NIV). But the culture of death always casts a wide net, affecting man *and* the beasts placed under man’s dominion.

The HSUS, ASPCA, and PETA represent old wineskins that the new wine will inevitably burst. Once we Christians grasp the proper Biblical dimensions of the situation, we will join in blowing the whistle on the false moralism currently driving these organizations. However, we must be careful not to adopt *every* plank in the No Kill platform, for many of its leaders see it as a stepping stone to veganism, just as doctrinaire libertarians see their political philosophy as a stepping stone to legalized prostitution. There are Biblically valid elements in No Kill sheltering (just as there are in libertarian thinking and in the Samaritan’s rescue of the victim in the ditch), but we must be vigilant and discerning. In the dispute between

the Sadducees and Pharisees over the resurrection, Jesus took the side of the Pharisees—but in so doing He did *not* promote the Pharisees’ full agenda.

In other words, Christians will make *neither* faction entirely happy. The big-name animal rights groups will recoil when Christians support alternatives to the killing game they’ve been playing, but No Kill advocates might be disappointed that we won’t go the final mile with them. Our standard is Scripture, and our allegiance must be to that standard.

But what *are* the Biblical dimensions of the animal shelter function in modern culture? It’s one thing to allude to them, but it’s necessary to spell them out in basic form.

The Relevant Biblical Texts

The texts of interest are directed to conduct toward a neighbor (Deuteronomy) and toward an enemy (Exodus) with the primary focus being the animals that God commands us to assist.

If you see your fellow Israelite’s ox or sheep straying, do not ignore it but be sure to take it back to its owner. If they do not live near you or if you do not know who owns it, take it home with you and keep it until they come looking for it. Then give it back. Do the same if you find their donkey or cloak or anything else they have lost. Do not ignore it. If you see your fellow Israelite’s donkey or ox fallen on the road, do not ignore it. Help the owner get it to its feet. (Deut. 22:1–4 NIV ©2011)

If you come across your enemy’s ox or donkey wandering off, be sure to return it. If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen down under its load, do not leave it there; be sure you help them with it. (Exod. 23:4–5 NIV ©2011)

The Exodus passage puts the interest of the animal ahead of one’s hatred of one’s enemy. Both passages clearly lay out what kind of conduct is forbidden: ignoring the animal’s plight. The literal Hebrew behind the NIV phrase in Deuteronomy 22:4 is “withdraw not thyself,” while the Hebrew in Exodus reads “thou shalt cease from leaving,” i.e., leaving the animal “in a helpless condition.”¹⁴ God commands that if the owner is unknown, the animal is to be taken back to your own home (and properly fed and cared for, as Matthew Henry observes¹⁵).

Dr. Rushdoony’s powerful essay “Thou Shalt Not Destroy” alludes to these two texts and other parts of God’s law concerning animals: “His law reminds us to be mindful of them ... An animal in distress must be aided ... Stray animals were to be returned to their owners ...”¹⁶ The “wanton destruction” that Rushdoony believes the law forbids is surely exemplified in the high-kill animal shelters of America. But disregard for God’s law in modern Christendom has led to either inaction or theologically deformed actions on our part.

Excepting an Irish law passed in 1635, the first laws against animal cruelty were passed by the Puritans (in 1641 in Massachusetts and in 1654 in England).¹⁷ That was probably the last time Christians exercised any leadership or serious cultural impact in this area, evidently because subsequent generations were slack in the law (Hab. 1:4). Reaction against modern environmentalism’s extremes (worship of the creation and reverence for animals as opposed to reverence for God alone and respect for creation) has become a substitute for actual reconstruction in this area.

The ethical vacuum that results when God’s law is slacked will be filled

with false substitutes, such as the utilitarianism of Peter Singer that continues to drive the animal liberation movement (although there actually are activists more extreme than Singer who regard him as a mere halfway house to the radical endgame they envision¹⁸).

Matthew 5:19 is relevant here for another reason. What, precisely, is the least commandment? The Hebrews asserted that Deuteronomy 22:6–7 “is the least of all the commandments of the law of Moses.” But what is that law about?

Animals.

Whoso shall loosen even the least of these commandments and teach men so, shall be least in the Kingdom of heaven.

But there’s more: this “least of the commandments” involving animals (nesting birds in this instance) promises something astonishing for those who obey it: “[T]hat it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days.” This is the same promise God makes for keeping the fifth commandment concerning honoring father and mother.

So much for giving short shrift to the commandments concerning animals!

As Matthew Henry notes, only in man’s law does the principle *de minimis non curat lex* (the law takes no cognizance of little things) hold: “Because God’s providence extends itself to the smallest affairs, his precepts do so, that even in them we may be in the fear of the Lord, as we are under his eye and care. And yet the significance and tendency of these statutes, which seem little, are such that, notwithstanding their minuteness, being found among the things of God’s law, which he has written to us, they are to be accounted great things.”¹⁹ (Henry’s last phrase is an allusion to Hosea 8:12, where Ephraim esteems the “great things” of the law

that God wrote to him to be “a strange thing.”)

Christians need to exercise stewardship and leadership in these areas, bringing Deuteronomy into the very animal shelter systems that we’ve corporately delegated the welfare of stray, abandoned, and orphaned animals to. The time to dwell approvingly on Oliver Cromwell’s achievements is over: it’s time to bring that same spirit to vigorous life and go much further than the Puritans did during their short tenure.

It’s time to unleash the Word, push back false and/or statist solutions, and begin to reverse the curse on creation that our first parents inflicted upon it. Pushing back against the HSUS, ASPCA, PETA, and others using the No Kill paradigm as a provisional tool is a good place to start taking ownership of our full list of duties under God’s law. Christians must expose the culture of death these big groups defend *and offer the Biblical alternative to it*.

To repeat: we must no longer merely *change* our focus: we must *widen it*.

The Other Dimension: Man’s Abdication of Godly Dominion over Creation

The creation responds to man’s conduct. When man obeys the land Sabbath law, the earth yields a double harvest in the sixth year.

But the creation also responds to man’s misconduct and his abdication of responsibility. The bubonic plague was influenced by man’s conduct and only incidentally by rat and flea populations, as R. J. Rushdoony points out.²⁰ Creation responds to man, for good or ill. The entire creation is groaning, “stretching its neck forward” in anticipation of liberation, as Rushdoony explains in his essay on Romans 8:19–23 in this issue.

Christians can move this process, this liberation from vanity, forward.

Proper dominion (leadership and authority grounded in justice and calling) over animals will push back the vanity, the futility. As an example of how this can be done, we select something quite mundane: the family dog.

The modern family dog is a victim of man’s abdication of godly dominion. In most homes today, the family dog has taken dominion in every area due to dereliction of duty by humans. We even use evolutionary language (!) to describe this phenomenon: this dog is the alpha (the leader); this other dog is a beta, a gamma, or an omega. In the absence of a human exercising dominion as the actual alpha (leader), the dogs *must* fill in this hole by taking the reins of dominion that the humans have relinquished.

The alpha dog does what it wants to do. This is what comprises alpha status. In the absence of a human alpha, determining relative rank becomes all-consuming to a group of dogs. The rank-determination process gives rise to the futility/vanity that Romans 8 refers to in at least two ways: dog-dog violence and dog-prey violence. Are your dogs killing squirrels on your property? Do they fight amongst themselves? Is this carnage just *dogs being dogs*?

No.

This is *dogs occupying the empty hole left in their world where man should have been*. These are the results when man leaves dominion to the animals. But there is a solution.

Retaking Godly Dominion in Your Home

How do we retake dominion that we’ve ceded to the family dog(s)? There are several steps to take, and consistency is critical. You, the human, must become the alpha, the true leader of the pack. Once you establish this, *pack distinctions* will disappear among your dogs (erasing dog-dog aggression), and more surpris-

ingly (and controversially), *your dogs will no longer kill small animals in the yard*. They may or may not chase them, but they will decline to catch and kill them because only the alpha may do so. Assuming *you* don't eat raw squirrel, this carnage-free goal, the inexorable pushing back of the futility and vanity that Dr. Rushdoony describes in Romans 8:19—23, can be achieved in part by you consistently maintaining godly dominion over all your house, including your dogs. We list additional details and important qualifications in an endnote.²¹

As a dog owner, you must understand how your pet conceives of your role as the one to whom God gave the responsibility of dominion. When animals fill in the dominion vacuum left by humans, their attempts at dominion will generally end in a defiled version of dominion (i.e., aggression) that is usually rationalized in terms of instinct and the laws of nature. The supernatural component in Romans 8:19—23 is ignored at the creation's expense. When seen in that light, this apparently bizarre digression from the first part of this article is seen to reveal the flip side of the coin: to faithful obedience there will always correspond the exercise of dominion under law.

This hasty, incomplete sketch makes clear that godly dominion (not ungodly domination) is a 24—7 concern, but the well-earned fruit of such diligent dominion is deliverance from futility and vanity (animal-animal violence and predation). The deformities in the relationship between man and creation are dialed back enough to start liberating nature from the effects of sin. Where applied, such dominion-oriented approaches transform animal behavior because man has dutifully taken the reins appointed him by the Creator, and has done so in faith. And all of this leads to a great goal described in Scripture, a

goal that positively dares us to walk in faith rather than by sight.

The True End Game

All of creation is moving toward a future where Isaiah's prophecy shall blossom into fullness:

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. (Isa. 11:6–9)

While humanists persist in trying to build Eden²² without Christ's atonement, the transformation of Isaiah 11 is premised on the Messiah's work in history (verses 1–5 and verse 9). The small beginnings²³ of this divinely ordered transformation, the pushing back of futility, can begin in your own household. It will inexorably conclude with the fullness of Isaiah's prophecy being realized in the world God created. Then, the last enemy shall be destroyed, death itself. Prior to that consummation, wars shall have entirely disappeared from the earth (Isa. 2:4 and 9:7) and man and nature shall have been reconciled (Isa. 11:6–9). (We note in passing that the dispensational notion that animal sacrifices shall persist through a literal millennium is flatly contradicted by Isaiah's assertion that none of the animals in God's holy mountain shall ever be hurt or destroyed.)

The transformation of hitherto carnivorous creatures into herbivorous ones described by Isaiah may include man as well, implying that vegetarianism might possibly have a brief future just before the consummation of history. As Rushdoony points out, the precondition for this physical change in man and animal is stated in Isaiah 11:9.²⁴ Humanists, however, seek a direct line to their supposed utopias through the will of the flesh, either bypassing God's Word or mishandling it, but such a change will be a supernatural consequence of the Great Commission's completion.

Will our stewardship over creation be informed by the laws of God? Will our exercise of godly dominion begin to reverse the curse and contribute in some small measure to the liberation of the creation from the futility into which it has sunk under Adam's transgression?

Will we do the weightier matters of the law—justice, mercy, and faith—without leaving these other things undone?²⁵

Will we do and teach even the least of His commandments? Since there *is* no other way to bring God's law to bear on these particular matters, God surely desires that more serious Christians will seek to be called great in the Kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:19).

What will *you* be called in His Kingdom? 🏰

1. R. J. Rushdoony points out, "Sentimentalism can be as evil as tyranny in its consequences." Cf. Rushdoony, *Exodus* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2004), 330.

2. E. Calvin Beisner, *Where Garden Meets Wilderness: Evangelical Entry into the Environmental Debate* (Grand Rapids, MI: Acton Institute & William B. Eerdmans, 1997), 42. This pioneering book by Dr. Beisner is nearly the only study we can comfortably recommend to serious Christian readers. Out-of-print as of October 2010, copies are still available at www.ecalvinbeisner.com, and it is likely to be reprinted by the

Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation (www.cornwallalliance.org). This latter website is recommended for readers interested in big picture (macro-level public policy) issues as formulated on a serious Biblical footing. Dr. Beisner directs interested Christians to an important Cornwall Alliance project at www.resistingthegreen-dragon.com.

3. Matthew Scully, *Dominion: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002). Scully persists in quoting Scripture as window dressing despite not being "a particularly pious or devout person" (1). The author, a political conservative, takes on fellow conservatives Chuck Colson, Dennis Prager, and Joe Sobran (130–140), picking apart their moral logic and bemoaning the absence of any clear statement of what constitutes "godly dominion" (131). Despite the book's title, it doesn't fill that hole either, it being easier for Scully to collate atrocities and inhumane conduct for hundreds of pages than to deliver a scriptural solution.

4. Andrea Cohen-Kiener's *Claiming Earth as Common Ground: The Ecological Crisis Through the Lens of Faith* (Woodstock, VT: SkyLight Paths Publishing, 2009) is a veritable clearinghouse of such ecumenical, progressive, liberal sentiments, thus: "We need to examine what we've been taught about God in light of today's environmental crisis" (77). Wrong: we should examine today's environmental crisis in light of God's Word. "It is crucial for us to remember that earth (the universe, in fact) is the primary and largest context" (87). Wrong: the world will pass away, but His Word will stand forever: God and His Word provide the largest, unshakable context. "However, if we want to be effective in saving our beautiful planet, we need to put aside our hard-earned *isms*" (34). Take one guess what we Christians are expected to put aside. "The environmental crisis challenges us to love the God of creation more than the God of the pews. Our dogma will not help us here; our experience of the living universe will" (28). The false dualism here is explicit and easily discerned. No surprise that most environmentalism has become a sociopolitical religion in opposition to Biblical Christianity. See Dr.

Beisner's article in this issue of *Faith for All of Life* for further macro-level insights.

5. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (Philipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing Company, 1973), 262.

6. Nathan Winograd, *Redemption: The Myth of Pet Overpopulation and the No Kill Revolution in America* (Los Angeles: Almaden Books, 2007, 2009), 98. The ASPCA researched an article on the future of No Kill and omitted the data from the one No Kill shelter it studied. In his self-published 2009 book *Irreconcilable Differences: The Battle for the Heart and Soul of America's Animal Shelters*, Winograd reiterates these charges: "HSUS leadership continues to provide political cover for shelter killing and fails to acknowledge and promote existing No Kill success while offering only token initiatives toward it" (119).

7. Ibid., 100. An HSUS workshop (March 2006) taught that "we are not killing. We are taking their life, we are ending their life, we are giving them a good death ... but we are not killing." In 1999, PETA killed 1,325 of the 2,103 dogs and cats it claimed to rescue and claimed this was "an act of kindness" (102–103). As Winograd adds concerning PETA, "By 2005, nearly 2,000 dogs and cats—over 90 percent of those it 'rescued'—were killed. What kind of rescue is that?" (103).

8. Ibid., 99f. Much of Winograd's book (and website) documents how the status quo culture of death continues to be strenuously defended by PETA, the ASPCA, and the HSUS. Every city that becomes a No Kill city is an open rebuke to these organizations, and they resent this fact.

9. <http://features.peta.org/PETASeaKittens/about.asp>

10. Ibid. "The City of Los Angeles Animal Services Department kills every day despite empty cages" (156). "The Lane County Animal Regulation Authority kept all but a half dozen cat cages empty at the height of the busy season, even though it killed approximately 70 percent of cats during the last year, many of them ostensibly for 'lack of space'" (157).

11. Ibid. Regarding Los Angeles, "a veterinarian who tried to keep more animals alive

by keeping the cages full was fired in 2005, in part, due to staff complaints of 'too much work'" (156). The entire chapter is filled with countless examples like this. Against such "killing for convenience," see endnote 15.

12. Ibid., 156. Winograd begins his chapter on the myth of overpopulation with this quotation.

13. See Dr. Beisner's article in this issue to see how human overpopulation continues to be characterized as the worst form of pollution by increasingly aggressive environmentalist ideologues.

14. C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament: The Pentateuch 1:2* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1983), 145.

15. Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible in 6 Volumes* (McLean, VA: MacDonald Publishing Company), 1:814. Henry states that the one coming upon the stray animal "must not mind [the] trouble" and "must not mind [the] expense" of intervening on the animal's behalf: God requires them to take the trouble and the expense of helping the creature, which verse 3 expands to include any animal or thing that has been lost.

16. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law, Vol. 2: Law and Society* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1989), 355.

17. The Massachusetts Bay Colony's constitution was based on *The Body of Liberties* by Rev. Nathaniel Ward, a Puritan. The 1641 law against cruelty to domestic animals was based on Ward's work, contradicting humanist René Descartes's 1637 position that animals were insensible automata incapable of suffering. The 1654 animal cruelty laws in England were rescinded after Oliver Cromwell died. Modern animal rights legislation can easily coexist with human malignancy, as witness the stream of laws against animal cruelty passed in Nazi Germany in the 1930s.

18. Law professor Gary Francione (Rutgers School of Law, Newark) holds that the only right animals need is the right not to be owned: until animals are no longer regarded as property (i.e., pets, livestock, etc.), the battle he champions hasn't yet been won.

Francione's position is hostile to other animal activists because he believes they aren't extreme enough. His views are clearly in opposition to Scripture, but until Christians understand the ramifications of Biblical law, our apologetic against utilitarian arguments will be deplorably anemic and ineffective.

19. Henry, *Commentary*.

20. R. J. Rushdoony, "The Possibility of Depopulation," *Faith for All of Life*, July-August 2010, 2–4. See also the second volume of his *Systematic Theology* (957–958 and 966–967) cited in endnote 24.

21. The following counsel is not based on Cesar Millan's *Dog Whisperer* approach despite any affinities they may share, nor does it involve man becoming an alpha animal but rather his *becoming fully human*. The term "alpha" entails dogs occupying the slot left empty by man's forfeiture of dominion. The term is used for clarity regarding retaking lost human ground, not endorsement of any evolutionary misconceptions.

First point: the alpha always sleeps at a higher elevation than the rest of the pack. Packs of stray dogs in New York were diligently studied over a two-year period. The alpha dog will knock over a trash can to sleep on it in the midst of the pack (very uncomfortable but crucial in asserting alpha status). Lesson for your home: no dogs on the bed or furniture.

A dog can be *invited* up onto the sofa next to you, but may never just get onto the sofa on its own volition. You must be the alpha, the human leader. Man must exercise dominion. You might wonder what should happen when the doorbell rings. The dogs are to bark to alert you to the visitor, but they remain about ten to fifteen feet behind you, sitting in silence as you open the door, remaining seated until or unless invited to meet the guest(s). A dog on your bed is asserting that it has dominion, not you. It is filling the hole left when you forfeited dominion to him/her.

Alpha dogs will not permit another dog within ten feet of them while eating. Lesson: all dogs must remain ten feet away from your table while you are eating. No exceptions.

Alpha dogs decide when and where the

other dogs go, eat, and do. Lessons for us: door control is asserted (no dog goes through a door without express permission: they are to sit and wait until you bid them through). Food control is asserted (dogs sit patiently while food bowls are placed before them, not moving toward food until permission is granted). By reordering and realigning the use of leashes, collars, crates, and dog toys in terms of man's dominion, household discipline can be reestablished. (If your leashed dog is ahead of you, pulling you forward, it is usurping your dominion status; its shoulders should remain behind yours as you walk. If you stop to speak to another person and the dog is between you and the person, the dog is asserting control of the encounter. A dog jumping up on you is asserting its ownership over you: step into the dog rather than backing up to yield control of your space to the animal (which equals submission to the dog's authority).

These comments are not an endorsement of any given dog training method, which would be wholly out of place in this periodical, but some available methods are better than others at arriving at results consistent with Biblical goals. Exercise wisdom in charting your household's future standards of conduct.

22. Cohen-Kiener's book (see endnote 4) includes an entire section called "The New Eden: Reclaiming the Garden." Contributor Andrea Ferich's essay therein (101f.) mentions the New Eden several times. Says she, "As we studied biblical scripture, I came to read the holy text in light of my ethical understanding of sustainable agriculture as an act of eco-justice, and as a prayer that draws me close to the good news that Jesus spoke." We can discern from such misinformed statements how crucial a recovery of God's law and Biblical orthodoxy really is in this spiritually confused day and age.

23. Note God's view of small beginnings in Zechariah 4:10.

24. R. J. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 1* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1994), 262–263.

25. Far too many Christians pick up the absolute wrong lesson from our Lord's rebuke to the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew

23:23, tacitly dropping the final words our Lord spoke:

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, *and not to leave the other undone*. [Emphasis added.]

The vast majority of Christians get the following doctrine out of the above passage: *forget tithing herbs and other inconsequential things, just focus on the important stuff*. But our Lord doesn't even come close to saying any such thing. He doesn't say Drop This and Do That instead. He says the Pharisees need to *add more to their ethical obligations*. They need to do judgment, mercy, and faith and pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin. Our Lord specifically states these men are "not to leave the other undone." But the modern take on this passage is *to leave the other undone* in our bid to make the main thing the main thing (which invariably mutates into *we should make the main thing the only thing*).

This "main thing" orientation presupposes a right to *prioritize God's laws* and to choose only the important things to observe. It assumes God would have been much happier with Pharisees who did the opposite of those in Matthew 23:23, namely, such as those who would do judgment, mercy, and faith but merely failed to tithe on their herb gardens. God would supposedly be so pleased at the weightier matters being done that He'd wink at the fluffy stuff.

But tithing mint and rue *isn't* to be taken lightly: those commandments are also weighty (as Matthew Henry notes). God's laws come in two flavors: weighty and weightier. Those herb tithes were not inconsequential because man shall live by *every* word that proceeds out of the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4). Loosening the least of the commandments and teaching others to do the same leads to immediate demotion in His Kingdom (Matt. 5:19); those who are great in His Kingdom are those who do and teach even the least of His commandments. Jesus didn't instruct the Pharisees to *change*

Continued on page 25

New Developments in Climate-Change Battles Illustrate the Difference Between Science and “Post-Normal Science”

. Calvin Beisner, Ph.D.



As one who, though very widely read in environmental and especially climate science, earned his academic degrees in religion

and philosophy, economic ethics, and the history of political thought, I am tremendously grateful to the many scientists who, through their books and articles and in many instances their direct personal communications, have helped me understand the workings of science—and its corruption.

A little over a year ago I wrote an article titled “Wanted for Premeditated Murder: How Post-Normal Science Stabbed Real Science in the Back on the Way to the Illusion of ‘Scientific Consensus’ on Global Warming.”¹ The article explains the difference between real science and “post-normal science” and refers to another article on the subject² by British scientist Kevin McGrane. Understanding that difference is, I believe, one of the most important things for Christians—indeed for everybody—to grasp in today’s world, for a great deal of dangerous nonsense now masquerades as science and undeservedly gets the respect real science has earned, and the consequences for mankind are deadly.

Now another scientist friend, John Swayze, a research chemist, having read about the hyper-politicized, misanthropic views of the editors of one scientific journal,³ has written two paragraphs that state that difference be-

tween science and “post-normal science” about as clearly, simply, and concisely as anything I’ve seen:

Traditionally, science worked something like this: “I was curious, asked a question, and had an idea. So, I tested that idea through experiment and observation, obtaining some results. Those results caused me to ask more questions, posit more ideas (including some which contradicted one another), and test them all through further experiment and observation. After examining all the data, I have reached this conclusion which I am sharing with you. Feel free to examine my data and conclusions, have alternate ideas, test yours and mine, and reach your own conclusions, even if they contradict mine. Eventually, a range of ideas and conclusions may coalesce into a coherent whole, which we will regard as true until a countervailing argument is found to be more compelling. I acknowledge that this process may take generations, also knowing that an upstart with new ideas may upset the applecart at any time. That is a good thing.”

Unfortunately, the system has been transformed in many ways to be this: “I had an idea. I liked it a lot because it could transform politics and economics, in ways I would like, if people believed it. So, I set out to find only those data which supported it. When I found data which didn’t support my idea, I sought other sources which would allow me to reach the conclusion I wanted. By combining some sources of data and information, and ignoring others, I was able to support the conclusion I had

already reached. By joining forces with like-minded others and obtaining public support from news media and politicians, I was able to claim ‘overwhelming scientific consensus,’ drowning out voices raised in disagreement. As I had become a prophet uttering profound oracular claims, it was both reasonable and necessary to stifle dissenting views. The truth is what I say it is. Anyone who disagrees is, therefore, a liar and a scoundrel. It is reasonable to use both the courts and the court of public opinion to silence heretics.”

Such clear expression puts me, once again, in debt to a scientist friend.

I couldn’t help recognizing its applicability to another development in the warfare between science and “post-normal science”: the filing of lawsuits against Canadian global warming skeptic Dr. Timothy Ball.⁴ I take no position on the legal merits of the cases or the veracity of Ball’s accusations against global warming alarmists Dr. Andrew Weaver and Dr. Michael Mann, or theirs against him. *Canada Free Press*, which published many of Ball’s articles, has removed most from its site and published a retraction of some claims Ball made about Weaver in one of his articles. (Curiously, I can no longer find the apology at *Canada Free Press*’s website, and links to it in past articles fail.⁵ But the text of the retraction can be read elsewhere.⁶) Aside from admitting “one small mistake” (saying Weaver was bowing out of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), Ball said,

"I stand by the story."⁷ (Weaver earlier sued *Canada's National Post*; that suit is still pending.)

Whatever the merits of the lawsuits, in an interview about the lawsuits, Ball rehearsed what appears to be a plain example of "post-normal science" in action in the climate debate:

People find it hard to believe that the entire world could be so easily misled by so few people. They, particularly Maurice Strong, established control of all government weather agencies by co-opting the World Meteorological Organization. This gave them control of data collection and archives within each nation [and] then its global dissemination. Each national weather agency controlled politicians and funding of research. They directed funding to one side of the science debate[,] thus allowing later the circular arguments that claims that most scientists and most publications prove the science. The national agencies also determined who served on the IPCC[,] thus providing complete control. The group of scientists who controlled the entire process became so small that Professor Wegman was able to name names in his report to the US Congress. As he demonstrated, they controlled the peer-review process[,] thus allowing them to further control the publication process.⁸


The rise of "post-normal science," with its politicization of science and corruption of scientific process, is part of a larger philosophical corruption sweeping the West in the last fifty years: postmodernism and its literary sidekick, deconstructionism—according to which language conveys not truth but only power. In both the humanities and the sciences, the Western world is in full flight from its Biblical worldview foundations, jettisoning the rationality necessary for scientific endeavor.

That flight is nowhere more clear and widespread than in the environmental movement, where Western

postmodernism and Eastern mysticism combine into a deadly poison. "Truth is being hijacked by radical environmentalism to smuggle in a whole worldview ... It is a religious philosophy which is no longer really secular but has become pagan," says Dr. Vishal Mangalwadi, Indian Christian philosopher and theologian, in his lecture "Logos vs. Mysticism: Environmentalism's Flight from Reason," in the recently published *Resisting the Green Dragon* video series.⁹

Fundamental to human nature is the *imago Dei*, the image of God, and fundamental to that is *logos*, the capacity to reason: "In the beginning was the Logos," wrote the Apostle John, "and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God." That Logos, he added, is "the true light, which enlightens everyone" (John 1:1, 9).

The flight from, indeed the warfare against, reason in "post-normal science" is in fact the outworking of the rejection of God and His representative on Earth, mankind, which is His image (Gen. 1:26). It is no wonder, then, that in environmentalism it goes hand-in-hand with the kind of misanthropy that could lead two editors of the journal *Water, Air, and Soil Pollution* to write, "Currently, one could argue that the most significant form of global pollution is human population growth."¹⁰ Thus they vehemently demand population control to prevent catastrophic, man-made global warming. This is why the environmental movement also poses a challenge to the sanctity of human life, as Dr. Charmaine Yuest argues in her lecture in *Resisting the Green Dragon*.

The need is great to understand and resist these challenges to reason and the Christian faith. 

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theologians, pastors, ministry leaders, scientists, economists, and policy experts dedicated to bringing Biblical worldview, theology, and ethics together with excellent science and economics to pursue simultaneously economic development for the poor, wise environmental stewardship, and the proclamation and defense of the gospel. He has written over ten books, including *Where Garden Meets Wilderness: Evangelical Entry into the Environmental Debate* (1997), and hundreds of articles, technical and popular.

1. E. Calvin Beisner, Ph.D., "Wanted for Premeditated Murder," Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation, <http://www.cornwallalliance.org/blog/item/wanted-for-premeditated-murder-how-post-normal-science-stabbed-real-science-in-the-back-on-the-way-to-the-illusion-of-scientific-consensus-on-global-warming/>
2. <http://buythetruth.wordpress.com/2009/10/31/climate-change-and-the-death-of-science/>
3. J. T. Trevors and M. H. Saier, "A Vaccine Against Ignorance?" *Water, Air, and Soil Pollution*, February 23, 2011, <http://www.springerlink.com/content/4v7347161782r243/>
4. <http://drtimball.com/>
5. For example, see <http://www.daylife.com/article/09Ep71wapN5pG>, which previously linked to the apology at *Canada Free Press*.
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9. <http://www.resistingthegreendragon.com/>
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Cornelius Van Til and Rousas John Rushdoony,

Part 1: Every Thought Captive

Michael J. McVicar, Ph.D.

This article is an introduction to the ideas of Rousas John Rushdoony's theological mentor, Dr. Cornelius Van Til, who taught at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia for five decades. While many readers of *Faith for All of Life* are already intimately familiar with Van Til's ideas, I hope this article is a useful refresher of how Van Til's basic ideas—especially his presuppositional apologetics—directly relate to the ministry of R. J. Rushdoony and the work of the Chalcedon Foundation.

For those new to either Rushdoony or Van Til, I hope this article might also serve as an introduction to “presuppositional apologetics,” the basic system behind Rushdoony's concept of Christian Reconstruction. With that said, it is important to note that this essay isn't about Rushdoony. Instead, it is the foundation for an article that will appear in a future issue of *Faith for All of Life* that will specifically document the personal friendship and professional collaboration between Rushdoony and Van Til. This current article focuses on the early life and intellectual career of Van Til. It shows how Van Til's theology grew out of a tumultuous period in the history of Reformed Christianity in the United States. Further, it discusses how Van Til's insights led Rushdoony to conclude that Christian education is the precondition for American cultural renewal.

Strangers on a Train

Readers of my earlier articles on R. J. Rushdoony's missionary years in Nevada will recall that he first encountered

Cornelius Van Til in March 1946 while traveling back to Owyhee, Nevada, after an extended trip to the East Coast.¹ During his East Coast visit, Rushdoony heard a “well-known neo-orthodox theologian” “savagely” attack Van Til's ideas.² When Rushdoony stopped in a small Colorado town to visit another minister, he stumbled across a copy of Van Til's *The New Modernism*³ in the minister's library. Noting Rushdoony's interest, the minister responded, “You want it? Take it.”⁴ Rushdoony took the book and began reading it on his return trip to Nevada. In a train full of troops returning home from the Second World War, Rushdoony hardly noticed the commotion around him as he consumed the book. “When I reached Denver,” Rushdoony told an interviewer decades later, “I had to wait several hours in the railroad station. I just sat there and didn't take the time to go and eat. I was there five or six hours.”⁵

In Denver, the rapt Rushdoony read a dense, carefully argued rejection of the theologies of Karl Barth and Emil Brunner. The book would have been notable to Rushdoony because it was one of the earliest sustained critical works written by an American on the theologians Barth and Brunner for a Reformed audience.⁶ But if the subject matter lured Rushdoony in, the book's style and theological project hooked him. Today *The New Modernism* is perhaps best known as the first book-length exposition of Van Til's presuppositional apologetics. For this reason, instead of focusing on the text's specific argument

against Barth and Brunner, it is more useful to provide a general overview of Van Til's presuppositional method that undergirded the book.

Van Til argued that the relationship between God and His creation provided an important foundation for reassessing the nature of human knowledge. In a nutshell, if God created the universe, then He also created the means for interpreting it. To try to think independently of God is not only impossible, it is the ultimate human temptation that leads to sin in its very essence. Before offering a full exposition of these insights, it is worth pausing a moment to consider Van Til's life and how it related to his theological development. To begin with, Van Til's unique status as a political and religious refugee had a profound influence on his theological ideas and, in turn, on Rushdoony's idea of Christian Reconstruction.

The Education of Cornelius Van Til

Born in Grootegast, the Netherlands, in 1895, Van Til and his family moved to the United States and settled in northern Indiana in 1905. The Van Tils raised their son within the cultural context of the Dutch *Afscheiding*, the “Secession” or “Separation” movement, a nineteenth-century effort to insulate the Dutch Reformed Church from state intervention. State-sanctioned persecution drove many of the largely rural, poor secessionists to seek refuge in the New World. In Indiana, the Van Tils joined a separatist community of conservative Dutch immigrants who jealously protected their linguistic

and religious heritage. Growing up in this tight-knit community of religious dissenters, Van Til hardly drew a distinction between his Old World cultural heritage and the standards of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, a conservative communion that created sharp boundaries between its polity and modern American society.

Van Til followed a traditional path within the Christian Reformed Church toward a ministerial position, first attending Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and then pursuing a divinity degree at Princeton Theological Seminary (PTS) in New Jersey. After seminary, he went on to earn a Ph.D. in philosophy at Princeton University, and after a short period as a preacher he eventually moved away from preaching toward teaching.

His philosophy degree brought his theological training into dialogue with the problems raised by modern philosophers in the United States. Specifically, Van Til became interested in *epistemology*. Epistemology is a field of philosophy that studies how humans know what they know; that is, epistemology is the study of *human knowledge*.

Since the work of the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), many European and American philosophers focused their attention on the problem of knowledge. Kant—and I’m simplifying greatly here—focused his attention on how human beings create knowledge and come to know the world in which they live. Building on Kant’s work, philosophers began to focus more tightly on problems of human knowledge and language. Some concluded that humans had the ability to reason independently of divine authority, and these philosophers began to move away from metaphysical and theological questions related to the being and nature of God. Kant and his successors have asked

questions such as, “How do human beings create knowledge about the world?” “What is the foundation of human reason?” Van Til found these sorts of questions blasphemous because they implicitly—or explicitly—reject God’s ability to determine meaning and construct human knowledge. Consequently, at PTS Van Til developed a Christian alternative to post-Kantian philosophy that foregrounded God’s sovereignty over human knowledge.

With this background in mind, we can now turn to Van Til’s development of presuppositional apologetics. The next section outlines Van Til’s revolutionary ideas about the relationship between Jesus Christ and human knowledge. Further, it demonstrates how his ideas were directly related to the creation of a new seminary that would eventually produce two of the most important voices in Rushdoony’s Christian Reconstruction movement, Gary North and Greg Bahnsen.

Westminster Theological Seminary and the Birth of Presuppositional Apologetics

While a graduate student in the 1920s, Van Til witnessed the struggles between theological conservatives and theological liberals at PTS. Theological liberals, or modernists as they are also known, tended to be open to modern philosophy and other intellectual trends such as Darwinism and higher criticism. Proponents of Darwinism suggested that aspects of the Bible, such as the creation account in Genesis, conflicted with modern scientific findings and could not be taken literally. Furthermore, those supporting higher criticism believed that literary analysis of the Bible suggested many of the books had factual errors and contradictions that betrayed the hand of human artifice rather than affirming divine authorship.

When PTS began hiring faculty who subscribed to both Darwinism and higher criticism, Van Til followed a group of secessionist faculty, led by J. Gresham Machen, to form a new seminary called Westminster Theological Seminary. Westminster’s very name indicated that the secessionists were appealing to the traditional authority of the Reformed churches’ Westminster Confession of Faith, first adopted by Reformed Christians in 1646. Van Til and the other founding faculty hoped that the new Westminster Theological Seminary would serve as the conservative alternative to what they perceived as the liberal trends at Princeton.

At Westminster, Van Til developed a presuppositional apologetic method that operated in sharp contrast to the then-dominant Reformed tradition of evidentialist apologetics. Evidentialist apologetics is rooted in the Scottish Common Sense philosophical tradition as it was adopted and adapted by American intellectuals and theologians in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. According to the historian Mark A. Noll, American evangelicals generally highlighted three key aspects of Common Sense philosophy. First, Noll points out that American evangelicals traditionally emphasized an epistemology that asserts, “[O]ur perceptions reveal the world pretty much as it is.”⁷ Second, the tradition emphasized that human beings can infer ethical standards from their innate nature, thus suggesting that certain standards of moral behavior are shared by all humans.⁸ Finally, evidentialists advanced their project through a vaguely Newtonian scientific methodology that “encouraged evangelicals to believe that the end product of theology was a system of certain truths, grounded on careful induction from simple facts, eschewing hypothetical flights of fancy, and providing a universal and unvarying

picture of God and his ways.”⁹

Although evidentialist apologetics dominated Princeton Theological Seminary in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Van Til rejected this traditionally accepted method. Instead, he insisted that such an empiricist method presumes the *autonomy* of human beings to think independently from God and Scripture. Building on this point, he insisted that human beings could not think a single thought independently of God. This led Van Til to conclude that intellectual *autonomy*, self-rule of the mind, is a sin because it rejects God’s authority, whereas *theonomy*, God’s rule of the mind, is the only source for legitimate knowledge. Those who defend orthodox Christianity must begin with the ultimate reality of Jesus Christ and the Trinity as the source of *all* knowledge. Any other point of apologetic departure is not only illogical, but is also a rejection of God’s sovereignty over all of creation.

Van Til argued that the Trinity is the only proper starting point for understanding reality. He believed that Christianity, rightly understood, posited a two-layer theory of reality.¹⁰ He drew a hard and fast distinction between God and His creation. The being and nature of the first layer, God, is “infinite, eternal, and unchangeable.”¹¹ The second layer is the created universe, which is finite, temporal, and constantly changing.¹² Between Creator and created, there is an insurmountable gulf that cannot be bridged by any willful means of a created being. Instead, the only bond between God and His creation comes from grace. The recognition of this chasm between God and creation is, in Van Til’s mind, the essential presupposition upon which orthodox Christianity is founded. Christians *must* presuppose this separation in order to correctly comprehend the nature of God

and creation. Any attempt to collapse God into creation or to subsume creation into the nature of God is a false, non-Christian presupposition.

The Problem of Sin in Van Til’s Thought

Van Til’s epistemology begins with the presupposition that God is completely self-contained, has exhaustive knowledge of His self, and consequently also has exhaustive knowledge of His creation. In terms of creation, since “all aspects” of the universe are “equally created,” then “no one aspect of reality may be regarded as more ultimate than another. Thus the created *one and many* may in this respect be said to be equal to one another; they are equally derived and equally dependent upon God who sustains them both.”¹³ Humanity can never have exhaustive knowledge of this creation by attempting to reduce one aspect of nature to another or by trying to subsume the particulars of nature into an abstract totality. Instead, as John M. Frame, a theologian and former student of Van Til, summarizes,

Insofar as we can know the world, it is because [God] gives us revelation and the ability to repeat his thoughts on an analogical, finite level. And insofar as we cannot know the world, we can trust that the world is nevertheless an intelligible whole. Things that are mysterious to us do not spring from an ultimate chaos or meaninglessness; they spring, rather, from the wonderful riches of God’s thought, which transcends our understanding.¹⁴

The plurality and unity of creation are perfectly represented in the plurality and unity of the Trinity. Just as God can no more be reduced to a single person of the Trinity, no aspect of nature can be reduced to another. Similarly, just as the persons of the Trinity only have meaning in relation to one another, so too do all aspects of nature.

Human beings sin when they attempt to apprehend reality independently of God’s revelation without acknowledging our finite, subordinate relationship to God. As Van Til explains, God gave Adam and Eve, humanity’s “first parents,” a prescriptive path “marked by love and obedience” if they “led their lives in the direction he indicated to them.”¹⁵ Rather than follow this path, they instead listened to Satan who told them “how free he had become since declaring his independence of God.” “To be self-determining,” Satan explained, “man must surely be able to decide the ‘nature of the good’—regardless of what God says about it.” Adam, after listening carefully to Satan’s appeal and weighing it against God’s plan, concluded,

You are right Satan, I must first decide whether such a God as often speaks to us (1) knows what the “good” for us is, (2) controls history so that he can determine what will happen if we disobey him, and (3) has the right to demand obedience from us. After I decide these issues, and if the answer is “yes,” then I shall obey him. Certainly not before.¹⁶

Christians agree on what happened next: Adam and Eve sinned precisely because they succumbed to Satan’s temptation to “be as gods, knowing good from evil.”¹⁷ At that precise moment, human beings asserted the primacy of their intellectual autonomy over God’s sovereignty.

Humanity’s fall into sin was precipitated by a desire to reason independently from God’s authority. Accordingly, humanity’s pretense to independent knowledge becomes a matter of rebellion against God’s plan because “[d]eep down in his mind every man knows that he is the creature of God and responsible to God. Every man, at bottom, knows that he is a covenant-breaker. But every man acts and talks as

though this were not so.”¹⁸ If thinking is an explicitly religious activity, then this epistemological claim has political implications: thinking becomes a matter of kingship, power, rebellion, and, in the final analysis, warfare. Either human thought recognizes God’s sovereignty, or it does not.

For human beings, the foundation of thought must be God’s Word. As Wesley A. Roberts notes in his summary of Van Til’s epistemology, “Van Til insists that all knowledge that any finite creature would have must rest upon the revelation of God. Thus the knowledge that we have of the simplest objects of the physical universe is based upon the revelation of God.”¹⁹ Scripture is the objective yardstick by which all human thought must be measured, and when found lacking, by which it must be disciplined. In Van Til’s words, “[I]f man is not autonomous ... then man should subordinate his reason to the Scriptures and seek in the light of it to interpret his experience.”²⁰ Thus, for Van Til Scripture is both authoritative and authoritarian—it both authorizes human experience and constitutes it—whether we recognize it or not.²¹

To help his students understand the relationship between God, creation, and knowledge, Van Til illuminated his theology with a series of chalkboard doodles. The most famous of these sketches depicts his two-level, “theocentric” model of reality: two circles, one over top of the other.²² The superior circle is the larger of the two. It depicts God, while the smaller circle represents creation. The circles do not touch, leaving “no ontological bridge” between the two (*see figure 1*).²³ Two flimsy lines overlap the perimeters of each loop forming a narrow, but perceptible bridge of grace between the Creator and His created. In contrast to this “theocentric” conception of the two-layer nature of

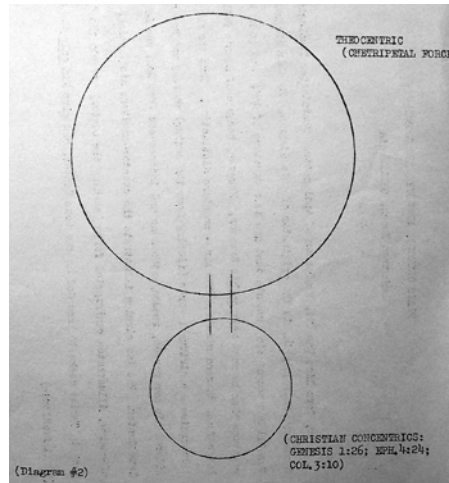


Figure 1. Van Til’s “theocentric” conception of two-layer Christian representation of reality as depicted in one of his student’s notes. From Erick Erikson notes dated 1964, RJR Library.

reality, Van Til used a single circle to depict the “anthropocentric” conception of reality (*see figure 2*). Here, a lone circle indicates humanity’s sinful attempt to apprehend reality as a singular structure, which is either reducible to its constitutive elements or irreducible to its abstract totality. Whether conceptualized as reducible or irreducible, this “anthropocentric” perspective denies the reality of a separate, self-contained God. Within Reformed circles, these heuristics have become iconic representations of Van Til’s understanding of the relationship between God and humanity.

Antitheses: Abraham Kuyper and Van Til at Westminster

Van Til’s complex ideas about human knowledge and their relationship to sin grew from the theological turmoil he witnessed at PTS. First, as we have seen and I elaborate below, his theological and apologetic perspectives were partly a product of his own education as the son of Dutch immigrants struggling to understand the proper relationship between their cultural heritage and their place in turn-of-the-century American society. Second, Van Til developed his apologetic method in the age of an as-

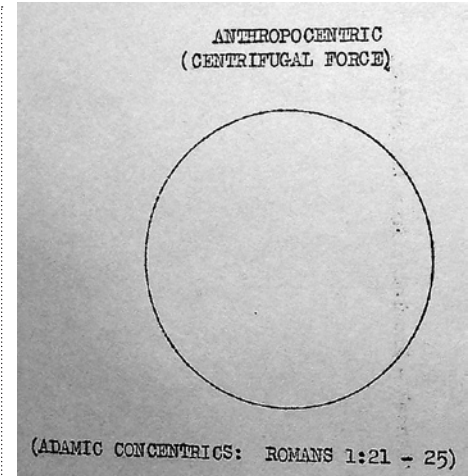


Figure 2. Van Til’s “anthropocentric” conception of a single-layer, non-Christian representation of reality as depicted in one of his student’s notes. From Erick Erikson notes dated 1964, RJR Library.

cendant theological modernism that was splitting the Presbyterian Church asunder. In the face of a series of setbacks for theological conservatives—including the Auburn Affirmation, the reorganization of Princeton Theological Seminary, and the fracturing of the Presbyterian Church in the United States—Van Til offered his apologetic method as a means of rejecting the general trend of the secularization and modernization of the church.

Beginning with his Dutch Reformed heritage, it is important to note that the teaching of the Dutch theologian and statesman Abraham Kuyper (1837–1920) heavily influenced Van Til.²⁴ Kuyper is largely credited as the father of “neo-Calvinism,” a movement whose adherents see Calvinism as a comprehensive, coherent Christian worldview capable of resisting and rolling back the social, cultural, and political advances of the Enlightenment and modernism.²⁵ In order to combat the ideas of the Enlightenment, “Kuyper insisted on the absolute separation, or ‘antithesis,’ between the Christian and the modern worldview that came to prominence in the French

Revolution.”²⁶ He encouraged Calvinists to draw sharp distinctions “between Christian approaches to social issues and those supported by non-Christian or ‘apostate’ thought.”²⁷

Kuyper labeled this concept of the separation between Christian and non-Christian thinking the “antithesis.” Only Christians, Kuyper argued, could be self-conscious. In fact, non-Christians could not think in a consistently non-Christian manner, because such a project would ultimately lead to utter meaninglessness. Non-Christians, Kuyper concluded, therefore “borrow” all knowledge and meaning from a dull apprehension of their nature as a created beings.

Van Til wholeheartedly embraced Kuyper’s concept of the “antithesis” and rigorously developed it to a degree that Kuyper did not. By coupling Kuyper’s concept with his own reading of post-Kantian philosophy, Van Til developed his “pioneering insight” that the “given presuppositions of any philosophical position predetermined and governed much of its later outworking.”²⁸ Indeed, Van Til recognized that modern thought is “is largely preoccupied with the theory of knowledge,” and therefore insisted that Christians needed to rigorously expound how their epistemology differed from non-Christian systems of thought.

Van Til’s primary innovation was to expand Kuyper’s ideas to assert that Christian and non-Christian epistemologies have little or nothing in common. By adopting and developing the “antithesis” of Dutch Reformed Calvinism, Van Til declared war on any system of thought that did not accept Scripture. Within the context of the early twentieth-century conservative/liberal theological controversies, Van Til’s ideas made him one of the most revolutionary thinkers in the fundamentalist camp.

His presuppositional method challenged fundamentalists to be *more* Biblical in their orientation and to draw *sharper* distinctions between themselves and theological modernists. Van Til’s was not a stance of moderation or compromise.

Conclusion: Van Til and the Origin of Christian Reconstruction

Rushdoony’s chance encounter with *The New Modernism* in a friend’s library precipitated his rapid adoption of the presuppositional perspective. After reading Van Til in March 1946, Rushdoony immediately began adopting Van Tillian themes and terminology in his letters. In a letter to a Presbyterian Mission official, Rushdoony offered the first clear exposition of Van Til’s ideas in his correspondence without mentioning Van Til: “I have been doing considerable studying since my coming here and am increasingly convinced that without a doubt our present day Biblical studies are grounded, not on sound scholarship but on philosophical presuppositions and are thus unrelated to fact.”²⁹ Instead, Rushdoony explained that the zealous faithful look at scholarship with skepticism because it seems to deaden their encounter with God. Van Til’s ideas had clearly taken root in Rushdoony’s mind. From the first appearance of the term “presupposition” in his correspondence, to a clear rejection of the anti-intellectualism and the dispensational bent of contemporary fundamentalists, Rushdoony had seen the critical power of Van Til’s ideas.

By 1947 Rushdoony began encouraging his friends to read *The New Modernism*, and by the early 1950s Rushdoony embraced a systematic Reformed perspective based on Van Til’s presuppositional apologetics. He became convinced that the only way Christians could renew American culture was through epistemological self-

awareness. This insight was the origin of the concept of Christian Reconstruction and the work of the Chalcedon Foundation. From it he developed the notion that Christians can *reconstruct* the world by bringing “every thought captive”³⁰ to the Word of God as embodied in the Bible. By developing this focus on epistemology, Rushdoony spent the 1950s authoring his first withering attacks on secular humanism and, most importantly, secular education.³¹ He worked tirelessly to popularize Van Til and sought to empower Christian educators and thinkers.

In a future issue of *Faith for All of Life*, I will take up where this story leaves off and provide readers the story of the long, productive friendship between Rushdoony and Van Til. Their collaboration emerged from their deep personal respect for each others’ ideas and their shared desire to develop Christian self-awareness as the prerequisite for cultural renewal. We’ll see how Rushdoony helped popularize and spread Van Til’s ideas to a wide audience and learn how the two men spent their lives as champions of one another’s work. 🏠

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1. For a history of Rushdoony’s time in Owyhee, see Michael J. McVicar, “‘First Owyhee, and then the World’: The Early Ministry of R. J. Rushdoony,” *Faith for All of Life* (November/December, 2008): 18–22, 33.
2. R. J. Rushdoony to Cornelius Van Til, October 23, 1947, R. J. Rushdoony Library, Vallecito, CA (hereafter cited as RJR Library).
3. Cornelius Van Til, *The New Modernism: An Appraisal of the Theology of Barth and*

Brunner (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1946).

4. Janet S. Larson, "The Oral History Interview of Dr. Rousas John Rushdoony," 1980, RJR Library, 33.

5. Ibid.

6. In assessing the influence of Van Til's criticism of Barth and Brunner, Phillip R. Thorne insists, "Without a doubt the history of Barth's reception by American Evangelicals must begin with Dr. Cornelius Van Til ... Not only was he one of the earliest, most prolific and well read of Fundamentalist Evangelical interpreters, Van Til was the most influential" (Phillip R. Thorne, *Evangelicalism and Karl Barth: His Reception and Influence in North American Evangelical Theology* [Pittsburgh, PA: Pickwick Publications, 1995], 33). Gregory G. Bolich reaches a similar conclusion regarding the importance of *The New Modernism*, arguing that Van Til and those who followed his analysis convinced many evangelicals that Barth's "neo-orthodoxy" was neo-heresy: "Under Van Til ... the work of Barth was declared off limits to a generation of evangelicals. Van Til's general conclusions, as well as many of his specific criticisms, became the primary response of the American conservative community to Karl Barth" (Gregory G. Bolich, *Karl Barth & Evangelicalism* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980], 66–67). Bolich is careful, however, to point out that many conservatives rejected Van Til's analysis as a mere "caricature" of Barth's theology (ibid., 71; for Bolich's summary of these criticisms see pages 70–73). Van Til's biographer John R. Muether notes that Van Til helped set the tone for Barth's reception in the United States partly because he had the advantage of reading Barth in the original German years before many of the Swiss's key writings appeared in English (*Cornelius Van Til: Reformed Apologist and Churchman, American Reformed Biographies* [Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2008], 121). Finally, George Marsden describes Van Til as "one of the few in the fundamentalist fold equipped philosophically and linguistically to deal with the complexities of European dialectic theologies." He concludes, "Few fundamentalists read [*The New Modernism*], but many

repeated the title" (George M. Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism* [Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 1987], 101).

7. Mark A. Noll, "Common Sense Traditions and American Evangelical Thought," *American Quarterly* 37, no. 2 (Summer 1985): 220.

8. Ibid., 221–222.

9. Ibid., 224.

10. Cornelius Van Til, *The Defense of the Faith*, Third Edition (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1967), 35; 23–30. See also Wesley A. Roberts, "Cornelius Van Til," in *Reformed Theology in America: A History of its Modern Development*, ed. David F. Wells (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1985), 122.

11. Roberts, "Van Til," 119.

12. Ibid., 119.

13. Van Til, *Defense of the Faith*, 27. Rushdoony eventually translated this insight into a political vocabulary to assert that all aspects of social reality are equal to one another; therefore, no aspect of society can be reduced to another and, conversely, no aspect can claim superiority over another. See Rousas John Rushdoony, *The One and the Many: Studies in the Philosophy of Order and Ultimacy* (Fairfax, VA: Thoburn Press, 1978).

14. John M. Frame, *Cornelius Van Til: An Analysis of His Thought* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1995), 76.

15. Cornelius Van Til, "My Credo," in *Jerusalem and Athens: Critical Discussions on the Theology and Apologetics of Cornelius Van Til*, ed. E. R. Geehan (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1971), 5. See also, Van Til, *Defense of the Faith*, 33–35; Cornelius Van Til, *Apologetics*, (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1976), 56–57.

16. Van Til, "My Credo," 5–6.

17. Genesis 3:5.

18. Van Til, *Apologetics*, 57.

19. Roberts, "Van Til," 124.

20. Quoted in ibid.

21. Roberts, "Van Til," 124; and Van Til, *Defense of the Faith*, 32–33.

22. As one former student noted, "Every student of Van Til can instantly recall the characteristic Van Tillian blackboard graffiti: the foremost symbols being two circles, a big one for the creator, the other for creation with no ontological bridge between." (James N. Anderson, "Obituary: Dr. Cornelius Van Til," www.vantil.info, April 18, 1987.) See also Frame, *Van Til*, 27; and Muether, *Van Til*, 116.

23. Anderson, "Obituary."

24. Van Til encountered Kuyper in his theology and religion classes at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Calvin College was founded by the Christian Reformed Church, which in turn has its roots in the Dutch Reformed churches. For Van Til's introduction to Kuyper, see Muether, *Van Til*, 44–46.

25. Muether, *Van Til*, 24–25; and Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism*, 78–79.

26. Muether, *Van Til*, 25.

27. Ibid., 25. As Muether explains, Kuyper believed that Christians and non-Christians can work together in spite of their irreconcilable worldviews because of the work of common grace. Since non-Christians can never be truly epistemologically self-conscious and ultimately rely on Christian presumptions, there is room for cooperation on projects designed to better the human condition. Van Til reformulated this view of common grace to argue that it provides a check on any "absolute expression" of human depravity in history. See ibid., 154–155.

28. Quoted in Roberts, "Van Til," 124.

29. R. J. Rushdoony to Lorna Logan, April 4, 1946, RJR Library.

30. 2 Corinthians 10:5.

31. See Rousas John Rushdoony, *Intellectual Schizophrenia: Culture, Crisis, and Education* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1980) and Rushdoony, *The Messianic Character of American Education: Studies in the History of the Philosophy of Education* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1963).

Important Considerations for Expecting Parents

Jo Loomis



Christian parents want the best for their children. When they are expecting a baby, they are full of anticipation, and they

pick out just the right name, shop for the layette, paint the nursery, and even begin a savings fund for the child.

But many women today do not plan for the birth process of their child, leaving that to the “experts.” There is a trend in this country, in this current generation, not to feel the need to prepare, learn, study, and seek out options for a good birth for the child and mother. But there is no part of a child’s life that is not under the loving hand of God; He has planned out the life of this child from the very beginning. Jeremiah 1:5 declares, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you” (NASB). Psalm 139:13 concurs, “For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother’s womb” (NASB). Shouldn’t parents take as much care in planning for the birth as they do for the child’s future education?

Hollywood and popular television programming portray birth as a very fast and extremely painful process with women screaming in anguish. The truth about the quality and nature of pain in childbirth is much less dramatic and probably wouldn’t sell as many sensational programs. If most of what a woman believes about childbirth comes from these sources, she will be convinced that the only way to survive childbirth is to have as much pain

medication as is “safe” and hope for the best. Women have believed that lie for generations with disastrous results in terms of the health and well-being of their babies and their own bodies.

Many women do not know the details of the history of childbirth in this country. Perhaps if they did, they would make better choices as to how their babies and their bodies are cared for during childbirth.

Until the early part of the twentieth century, most births in the United States, as elsewhere around the world, occurred at home just as they had since Eve gave birth to her first child. Women in labor and during birth were attended by female relatives and often a *midwife*, which means “with woman.” Today, a midwife is a health care professional educated and trained to provide prenatal, labor, delivery, and postpartum care for a healthy woman who is having a baby. Midwives are fully equipped to handle most common birth emergencies and know when they need to refer to a surgeon. For most women, pregnancy is not a disease, and childbirth is not a dangerous journey. A woman’s body is designed by its Creator to work very well during the development of the baby in her womb and during childbirth, which is a normal physiological process.

Similarly, *breastfeeding* is a relatively new word in our culture. A few generations ago, a baby would simply be *fed* immediately after birth as part of its usual care, and only the absence or extreme illness of the mother would require artificial feedings. Yet today both a woman’s body and her God-designed

means of feeding her baby are considered defective and require a specialist’s intervention for a safe passage. It wasn’t always that way.

Before the early decades of the last century, most women wouldn’t even think about having their babies with a physician, much less in a hospital. Hospitals were considered a place to go if there was no other hope, a place to die.

For royalty, childbirth was another matter. These women were attended by their own private physicians. Queen Victoria used chloroform for pain relief during the birth of her third and subsequent babies. This became a symbol of status, and more women began to demand medications for pain during labor and delivery, requiring the move from home to hospital and the need to be under a physician’s care. Gradually, it became a sign of prestige and wealth to be accompanied by a physician for childbirth. During this time physicians worked to discredit and eventually disenfranchise midwives.¹ Even today the public is largely unaware that the claims made against midwives are largely untrue.

Deaths related to pregnancy and childbirth dropped drastically in the United States from the late 1930s to the mid 1980s.² This change has been heralded as a triumph of medical science as the move was made from the home to the hospital. However, tremendous strides in the standard of living, such as improved sanitation, better housing and working conditions, improved diet, and more widespread health education are more likely causes of these improve-

ments.³ This was happening all over the industrialized world.

Even so, rates for disease and death during childbirth, both for mother and baby, were higher in the United States than for many other industrialized countries. According to a study in the 1920s, more mothers and babies died in hospitals than at home with births attended by midwives. A closer examination of the statistics reveals that a larger percentage of those who died were upper class and wealthier women as opposed to the poorer women. The women who could afford to be attended by physicians also suffered more medically unnecessary interference with the normal labor and delivery process.

In fact, a national study published in 1932 concludes:

That untrained midwives approach and trained midwives surpass the record of physicians in normal deliveries has been ascribed to several factors. Chief among these is the fact that the circumstances of modern practice induce many physicians to employ procedures which are calculated to hasten delivery, but which sometimes result harmfully to mother and child. On her part, the midwife is not permitted to and does not employ such procedures. She waits patiently and lets nature take its course.⁴

Obstetricians are surgeons who are trained in pathology and trained to care for the abnormal in pregnancy and childbirth. These physicians in the early part of the twentieth century felt that labor was a dangerous passage and required specialized care. They often used medical procedures and instruments to speed up labor and delivery. Many times these caused harm to the mother or the baby, and a large percentage of infant deaths during this time were a result of birth injuries.⁵

A colorful example of this dichotomy is the story of Mary Breckinridge and her Frontier Nursing Service in the

Appalachians in Kentucky. During the 1920s and 1930s this mountainous area of the United States was one of the most impoverished in the country. Many areas were accessible only by horseback. Mrs. Breckinridge trained nurse midwives to provide basic prenatal care and nursing services to poor women who otherwise would have no care during childbirth. Her remarkable improvements in the health and well-being of mothers and infants in this poor, rural area surpassed those in hospitals in the nearby cities and across the entire United States, achieving about ten times lower rates of maternal death related to childbirth.⁶

Just before World War II, there was a significant drop in the rates of death and illness of mothers and babies with the introduction of the class of antibiotics called sulfonamides, which prevented deaths from puerperal fever.⁷ (Back in the 1840s physicians had a much higher rate of patients with this deadly infection, commonly called “childbed fever,” than did midwives, even under the same hospital roof: midwives washed their hands before examining a woman in labor and performed fewer vaginal exams overall.) Later, with the introduction of penicillin and better obstetric care, the rates of death and disease for mothers and babies dropped even further.

During the 1940s and 1950s women demanded the ability to receive a medication called “Twilight Sleep,” a combination of morphine and scopolamine that dulled pain and left the woman with no memory of the childbirth. Women labored alone, without husband or other women for support, and were often tied to the bed so they wouldn’t jump out and break their teeth on the edge of the metal bed under the hallucinogenic effects of the drugs. Some of this medication crossed the placental barrier to affect the baby,

leaving it sleepy and with breathing and feeding difficulties. Babies were taken to separate nurseries to be fed scientifically developed formula and cared for by nurses until their mothers were free of the drugs and healed enough to care for themselves, often several days or even weeks after birth.

An article appeared in the 1958 *Ladies’ Home Journal* entitled “Cruelty in Maternity Wards,” describing inhumane treatment of women while medicated in labor.⁸ During this time there was a public outcry and reforms were instituted. Today, well into the twenty-first century, concerns are still being raised about the treatment of women and infants during labor and delivery and the use of medications to eliminate pain in childbirth.⁹

The American Society for Psychoprophylaxis in Obstetrics (ASPO) was formed in 1960, whose goal was to educate women to be better prepared for better birth outcomes and healthier babies. Later this organization became Lamaze International.¹⁰

Also in the 1960s, electronic fetal monitoring was introduced, and it is commonly used today. Yet fifty years later there are no quality studies that show the effectiveness of its routine use.¹¹ Add to that the frequent use of epidural anesthesia, the frequent augmentation or induction of labor with an artificial oxytocin (Pitocin), and 33 percent cesarean-section rates climbing to nearly one in every two childbirths in some hospital settings, and birth in this country has become anything but “normal.”

We are told that these are best care practices, yet with some of the most expensive medical care in the world, the United States has worse pregnancy outcomes than most of her industrialized neighbors, coming in at a ranking of forty-first in maternal deaths, accord-

ing to the World Health Organization.¹² California recently reported an increase in maternal deaths that may partially be due to the increase in elective C-sections performed there.¹³

In countries where birth is treated as a normal, natural process, and where it is attended mostly by midwives, birth is safer with less risk of death or damage to mother and baby. That is much of the rest of the industrialized world. Yet America, as a formerly Christian nation that has been blessed with tremendous medical and technological advances in the past few decades, treats pregnant women and their children as if the marvelous creation of the woman's body is defective and needs highly specialized interventions and interference to function.

Christian parents must wake up and recognize that without arming themselves with the truth about the process of childbirth, and by submitting to these interferences ignorantly, they are exposing both baby and mother to potentially life-threatening dangers. When choosing a birthplace for their child and a professional to attend the birth, couples should ask questions about the risks and benefits to the mother and baby for every intervention and option. The birth of the child, as well as the child's later care and education, belong firmly in the control of the parents. 🙏

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degrees from San Jose State University. She is nationally certified by the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, and the North American Menopause Society. She received the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from the University of Minnesota and has more recently achieved the CNL certification. She has two years experience as Director of Nursing for the Community Pregnancy Centers of San Jose. Currently she is Assistant Professor of Nursing for the University of San Francisco and Adjunct Faculty for Mission College LVN to RN Program. Her specialty is maternity nursing and teaching normal birth to nursing students (and anyone else who will listen).

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Rethinking Childbearing - Part 1

Andrea Schwartz



Back in the early 1980s when the practice of homeschooling began to surface as an alternative to customary day-school options, the sentiments of many were less than favorable. Homeschooling parents were warned that they would tire of the endeavor, that their children's educational progress would be hampered, that they would grow up unable to successfully interact with others, and that success as an adult would be stifled. Decades later, thousands of home-schooled graduates have demonstrated, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that they are responsible citizens, who work to support themselves and their families, and prove to be assets wherever they serve. Rather than be at a disadvantage because of being homeschooled, many educated in this manner often demonstrate an "unfair" advantage. Excellent results changed the minds of critics and struck a blow to the "expert" mentality that got its start with Dr. Benjamin Spock, who convinced parents that they needed to be guided by people who were highly trained and knew more than they did.

Thanks to the foundational thesis supplied by R. J. Rushdoony,¹ large numbers of Christian families removed or never placed their children in state schools and thus recaptured an important area of family life. The pioneers of the modern movement acted on faith, believing that if they applied the Bible's directives to teach children to love God and keep His commandments, they

would be blessed. Today, homeschooling has become an accepted practice, although efforts to stifle and regulate it still persist. Thanks to many faithful homeschooling advocacy groups that combat legislative efforts to steal from the family that which God commanded it to do, homeschooling continues to be a growing movement.

Education, however, is NOT the only area where Biblical considerations have been usurped by so-called "experts." Like education, modern medical childbirth procedures, along with how, when, and where a child will be birthed, merit reevaluation from a scriptural perspective.

Far from being a neutral area of life, the issues of labor and delivery, and the customary practices routinely followed, will either reflect the wisdom of God's created order or they will reflect a humanistic makeover of that order. Too few prospective parents have examined these issues from the Word of God and have uncritically assumed the validity of letting modern medical science practitioners make decisions for them, usually within a framework that sees childbirth as pathology rather than a reflection of God's creative wisdom. To fully bring all areas of life and thought under the dominion of Jesus Christ, we need to recover a better-informed Biblical mindset concerning childbirth so that family prerogatives aren't surrendered to approaches that may be inconsistent with God's Word.

Travail

The Bible uses the word *travail* to describe the process of a child leaving

the womb. Webster's 1828 dictionary defines this word as follows:

travail, v.i. [L. trans, over, beyond, and mael, work; Eng. toil.]

1. To labor with pain; to toil.
2. To suffer the pangs of childbirth; to be in labor. (Gen. 35.)

travail, n. Labor with pain; severe toil.

1. Labor in childbirth; as a severe travail; an easy travail.

In Genesis 3:16a, God promises Eve that He will "greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children." This is a direct response to Eve's disobedience. The Bible consistently associates pain with childbearing. In fact, the pain itself is due to Eve's rebellion against God. It should be noted that the Scripture does not contain any directive for women to avoid this pain through the use of anesthetics.² These facts, while not decisive in themselves, do steer us to inquire further. First Timothy 2:14–15 reads:

And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

One of the three most plausible interpretations of Paul's meaning is that these verses promise that a woman will make it through childbirth if she remains in faith, charity, holiness, and sobriety. By implication, if she embraces the calling God has given her as a woman, wife, and mother, she will obtain favor from the Lord. Under this interpretation, we note that Paul gave

no indication that she should seek to avoid this reality of traveling, nor sedate herself during the experience. While an argument from silence has limited validity, and the interpretation is not conclusively settled, the issue surely warrants thoughtful exploration given its importance.

Eve, by her own admission (Gen. 3:13b), was deceived, specifically about the question of authority, God's authority, and invoked human wisdom in her bid to settle the question. This question of authority is a continuing factor in women's lives, and we've seen the ugly results when the state expects parents to bend to its alleged authority over education. In a like manner, women continue to bend to medical authorities relating to pregnancy and birth because the alternatives (like homeschooling to statist education) are routinely ridiculed. Faulty appeal to authority is a logical fallacy, and perhaps it's not going too far beyond the evidence to suggest that in our day women have continued to be deceived about their prerogatives concerning parenting *from the very beginning of that process*, including childbirth and the travail associated with it.

No Pain, No Gain?

One young mother³ described it this way, "I think the pain is meant to remind a woman of what happens when she lives life on her own terms, and that should make her even more determined to raise that baby she has just delivered to live life on God's terms." Thus, rather than being "bad" pain, this is useful pain. Pain that will help her "count the cost" of the endeavor before her to raise her child "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." While this is anecdotal evidence, not an explicit appeal to Scripture, it is representative of a different way of thinking about childbirth that bears further scrutiny.

Another reference to childbirth is

made by Jesus in John 16:20–21:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. [Emphasis mine.]

Jesus, by way of analogy, is telling His disciples that their sorrow at His death will be turned to joy in His resurrection. How does He convey this? He does so by using the analogy of a woman in childbirth. This flies in the face of modern obstetrical practice that encourages pain medication to lessen the experience. Certainly we cannot imagine that Jesus was recommending that His disciples drug themselves to avoid the terrible sorrow His death would usher in for them. No, He was advocating that they parallel the normal experience of labor and resulting birth, in order to fully experience and appreciate the process by which salvation was to be ushered in for them.

Time for a More Biblical Paradigm?

It appears that many women continue to be deceived by humanistic medical criteria in the very midst of fulfilling their respective callings to be mothers. Many mothers-to-be today buy into modern medicine's disdain for God's natural, physiological processes, and in essence agree that God's design is inherently defective. Systematic deceptions under color of medical authority include its glowing characterization of the travesty of abortion. So many women are grossly deceived when it comes to believing the lie that abortion is safe, easy, and will allow them to get on with the rest of their lives without

any negative consequences. The medical profession has made a practice of telling women what they wish to hear.⁴

Assuming that most practitioners in the field of obstetrics don't harbor bad intentions toward women,⁵ it remains that if their basis for pharmacological and surgical intervention is based upon humanistic principles (i.e., all pain is bad and should be reduced or avoided at all costs), women may well be deprived of the promise of their anguish being turned to joy. While it is true that the use of medications and interventions can remove a woman's memory of birth⁶ or possibly reduce her pain, our Lord's comments in John 16:21 suggest that the child's arrival in the world is itself the medicine that erases the memory of the prior anguish.


While there are many voices advocating for less medical intervention and calling for natural childbirth, most are expressing their concerns on the basis of human rights abuses against women and the joy of an unmedicated birth. While there is some merit to these perspectives, they make their case on secular rather than Biblical grounds. Future installments will examine the "accepted" practices of natural childbirth with the purpose of attempting to develop the contours of a systematic theology as it applies to childbearing while allowing for a variety of individual applications.⁷

Conclusion

The so-called "experts" in the field of obstetrical practice desire that families do minimal thinking on their own and submit to the superior wisdom of modern medical science. However, as the homeschooling movement has thoroughly demonstrated, matters that are properly in the jurisdiction of families and responsibly carried out by the family bring tremendous personal and culture-changing effects.

Rushdoony points out that child-

birth occurs within an ongoing context when he notes,

It is obvious, of course, that procreation ... birth, is a function of the family, and, in a healthy, biblically oriented and governed family system, this function is preceded by an important fact that conditions birth. The parents marry because there is a bond of faith and love between them, a resolution to maintain for life a covenant under God. As a result, heredity of faith and a unity in terms of it are established as a prior condition of birth, so that a child born into such a family has an inheritance which cannot be duplicated. The Biblical family cannot be rivaled by man's science or imagination as the institution for procreation and rearing of children.⁸ 

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. She is spearheading the Chalcedon Teacher Training Institute and continues to mentor, lecture, and teach. She lives in San Jose with her husband of 33 years. She can be reached by email at lessons.learned@yahoo.com

1. Rushdoony was among those who demonstrated that homeschooling was far from a new practice and that through most of the history of the U.S. republic and during the colonial period, parents teaching their children was commonplace and the literacy rate in America was much higher than today.
2. It should also be noted that Proverbs 31:6–7 advises the use of an anesthetic for those in pain and dying. However, this passage is in no way connected to the process of giving birth.
3. Thanks to Mrs. Mike (Nicki) O'Donovan for our conversations together on this topic.
4. For personal testimonies as to the long-term effects of abortion on women, see the DVD, "Life after Abortion," <http://vimeo.com/11510410>
5. This is not to say that there are not legitimate circumstances where medical

interventions are lifesavers for mothers and their babies.

6. See Jo Loomis's article in this same issue of *Faith for All of Life*.

7. R. J. Rushdoony in his twelve Medical Reports (published in *The Roots of Reconstruction*) is a useful starting point for further examination of modern medicine by those committed to the authority of Scripture.

8. R. J. Rushdoony, *Law & Liberty* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books), 100.


Rushdoony ... Justice cont. from page 5

approach of a time of darkness, a time when pessimism seems appropriate, when the lights seem to be going out. It means when the darkness of events falls, God can give light, a new day, a new hope. God can do more than regenerate men's hearts; He can change the course of history.

There is a myth that postmillennialism is a belief in man's ushering in of the Kingdom of God by his proactive efforts. Rather, postmillennialism is about a faith that God will confound man's sin in His direction of the course of human history so that men, nations, events, and institutions will fulfill His purpose and glorify Jesus Christ. It's about the action of God in history, not of men.

"Rejoicing ... in the Day of the Lord"

The judgment of the day of the Lord is a frightening thing, even to the redeemed, because we know, even though we are spared damnation, we have failed our God in many ways. Nevertheless, Paul speaks of rejoicing in the day of the Lord (2 Cor. 1:14). We cannot follow the prosperity cults of our time and believe in only those aspects of God that appeal to us. We must accept God as He defines Himself. In accepting that God is righteous, just, and powerful, we must then accept His righteousness, His justice, and the

exercise of His power, and we must rejoice therein. The justice of God is certain; we either welcome it and rejoice in it, or we resist it, which puts us in peril at its coming. 

Selbrede ... Animals cont. from page 11

their focus but to *widen* their focus. The law of God is an integrated whole, a unified totality containing no trifles (James 2:10). Pharisaic ostentation and hypocrisy aside (their tithing made them *look* to be what they weren't and incited our Lord's warning in Matthew 5:20 that their "righteousness" needed to be exceeded by His hearers), Christians establish the law (Rom. 3:31) by establishing *all of it* (Matt. 4:4) without regarding this totalistic approach as burdensome (1 John 5:3 NKJV – "His commandments are not burdensome").

Yet, in key areas, we Christians fail—and we fail quite resoundingly, with a self-righteousness that rivals that of the Pharisees. Our disdain for a host of humanistic agendas that don't pass the sniff test causes us to throw a multitude of babies out with the bathwater. Consequently, our totalism is not totalistic enough. Because so much of the humanistic bathwater is particularly odious from the standpoint of Biblical orthodoxy, we neglect to hunt for the baby that sank underneath the surface.

Biblical Law

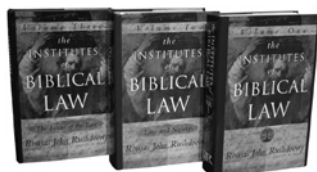
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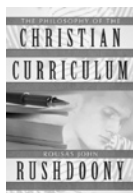
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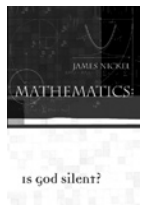


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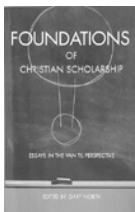


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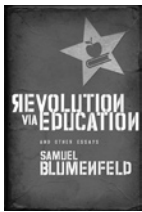
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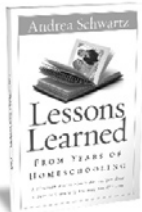
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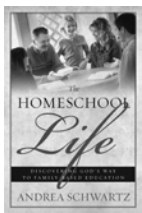
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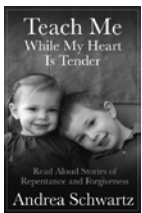


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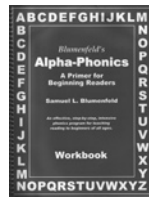
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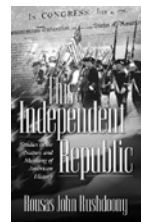


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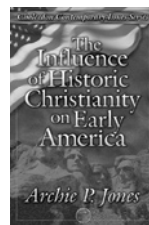
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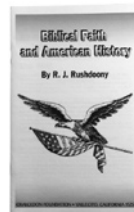
Paperback, 180 pages, index, \$18.00



The Influence of Historic Christianity on Early America

By Archie P. Jones. Early America was founded upon the deep, extensive influence of Christianity inherited from the medieval period and the Protestant Reformation. That priceless heritage was not limited to the narrow confines of the personal life of the individual, nor to the ecclesiastical structure. Christianity positively and predominately (though not perfectly) shaped culture, education, science, literature, legal thought, legal education, political thought, law, politics, charity, and missions.

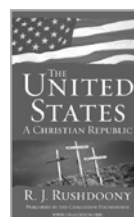
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By R. J. Rushdoony. The author demolishes the modern myth that the United States was founded by deists or humanists bent on creating a secular republic.

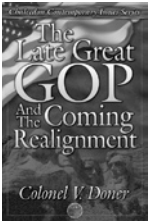
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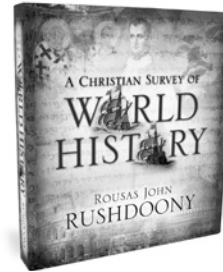
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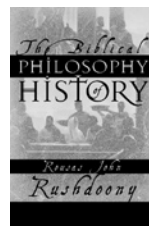
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By R.J. Rushdoony. For the orthodox Christian who grounds his philosophy of history on the doctrine of creation, the mainspring of history is God. Time rests on the foundation of eternity, on the eternal decree of God. Time and history therefore have meaning because they were created in terms of God's perfect and totally comprehensive plan. The humanist faces a meaningless

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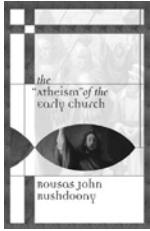


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By Otto Scott. In this study, Otto Scott writes about one of the "holy" fools of humanism who worked against the faith from within. This is a major historical work and marvelous reading.

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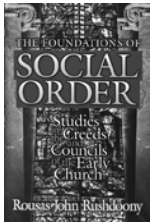
Church History



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.

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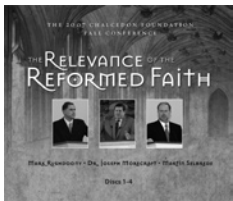


The Foundations of Social Order: Studies in the Creeds and Councils of the Early Church

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By Rousas John Rushdoony. Modern philosophy has sought to explain man and his thought process without acknowledging God, His Revelation, or man's sin. Philosophers who rebel against God are compelled to *abandon meaning itself*, for they possess neither the tools nor the place to anchor it. The works of darkness championed by philosophers past and present need to be

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By R.J. Rushdoony. This monumental work is a series of essays on the influential thinkers and ideas in modern times such as Marquis De Sade, Shelley, Byron, Marx, Whitman, and Nietzsche. Reading this book will help you understand the need to avoid the syncretistic blending of humanistic philosophy with the Christian faith.

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By What Standard?

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

Hardback, 212 pages, index, \$14.00



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

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

determines the conclusion; the effect is the result of a cause. And one such basic presupposition is with reference to the one and the many." The author finds the answer in the Biblical doctrine of the Trinity.

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The Flight from Humanity: A Study of the Effect of Neoplatonism on Christianity

By R.J. Rushdoony. 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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By R.J. Rushdoony. From the foreword by Steve Schlissel: "Rushdoony sounds the clarion call of liberty for all who remain oppressed by Christian leaders who wrongfully lord it over the souls of God's righteous ones.... I pray that the entire book will not only instruct you in the method and content of a Biblical worldview, but actually bring you further into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

Those who walk in wisdom's ways become immune to the politics of guilt and pity."

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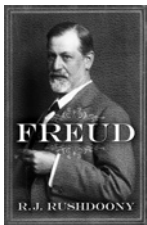


Revolt Against Maturity

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

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

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Recovering the Biblical Doctrine of Confession

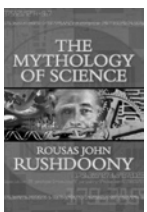
By R. J. Rushdoony. In *The Cure of Souls: Recovering the Biblical Doctrine of Confession*, R. J. Rushdoony cuts through the misuse of Romanism and modern psychology to restore the doctrine of confession to a Biblical foundation—one that is covenantal and Calvinistic.

Without a true restoration of Biblical confession, the

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

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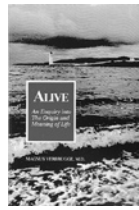
Science



The Mythology of Science

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

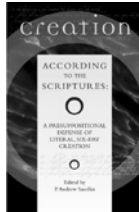
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Alive: An Enquiry into the Origin and Meaning of Life

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

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Creation According to the Scriptures

Edited by P. Andrew Sandlin. Subtitled: *A Presuppositional Defense of Literal Six-Day Creation*, this symposium by thirteen authors is a direct frontal assault on all waffling views of Biblical creation. It explodes the "Framework Hypothesis," so dear to the hearts of many respectability-hungry Calvinists, and it throws down the gauntlet to all who believe they can maintain a consistent view of Biblical infallibility while abandoning literal, six-day creation.

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Making Sense of Your Dollars: A Biblical Approach to Wealth

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

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

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

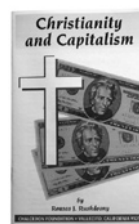
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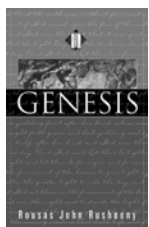


Christianity and Capitalism

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Biblical Studies

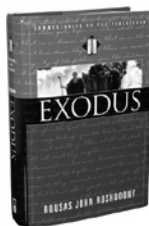


Genesis, Volume I of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

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

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Exodus, Volume II of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

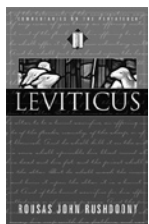
Essentially, all of mankind is on some sort of an exodus. However, the path of fallen man is vastly different from that of the righteous. Apart from Jesus Christ and His atoning work, the exodus of a fallen humanity means only a further descent from sin into death. But in Christ, the exodus is now a 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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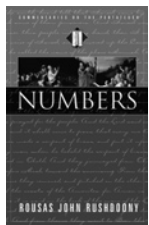
Much like the book of Proverbs, any emphasis upon the practical applications of God's law is readily shunned in pursuit of more "spiritual" studies. Books like Leviticus are considered dull, overbearing, and irrelevant. But man was created in God's image and is duty-bound to develop the implications of that image by obedience to God's law. The book of Leviticus contains over ninety references to the

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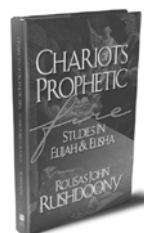
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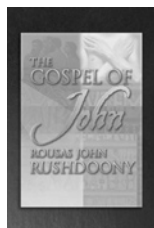
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By R.J. Rushdoony. Nothing more clearly reveals the gospel than Christ's atoning death and His resurrection. They tell us that Jesus Christ has destroyed the power of sin and death. John therefore deliberately limits the number of miracles he reports in order to point to and concentrate on our Lord's death and resurrection. The Jesus of history is He who made atonement for us, died, and was resurrected. His life cannot be understood apart from this, nor can we know His history in any other light.

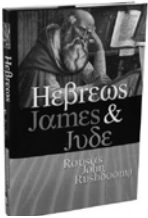
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Romans and Galatians

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

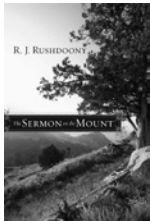
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Hebrews, James and Jude

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

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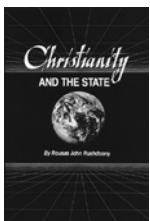
Beatitudes are the Kingdom commission to the new Israel of God, and R. J. Rushdoony elucidates this powerful thesis in a readable and engaging commentary on the world's greatest sermon.

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

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

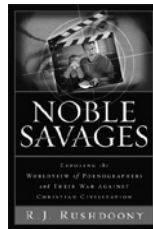
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By R.J. Rushdoony. Salvation in Scripture includes in its meaning "health" and "victory." By limiting the meaning of salvation, men have limited the power of God and the meaning of the Gospel. In this study R. J. Rushdoony demonstrates the expanse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

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

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

Rushdoony elucidates the Christian's calling to charity and its implications for Godly dominion.

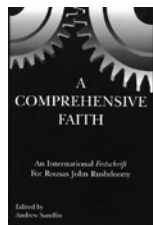
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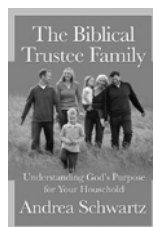
Hardback, 1124 pages, \$20.00



A Comprehensive Faith

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

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By Andrea Schwartz. God's basic institution is the family, and the Biblical family lives and operates in terms of a calling greater than itself - the Kingdom of God. In an age when the family is disparaged, warred against, and treated as a mere convention, it becomes the duty of Christians to bring God's plan for the family to listening ears. That's what Andrea Schwartz has accomplished in this collection of essays on *The Biblical Trustee Family*.

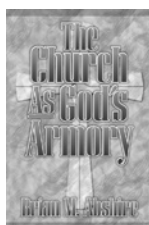
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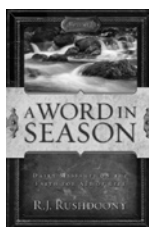
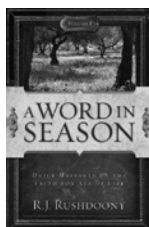
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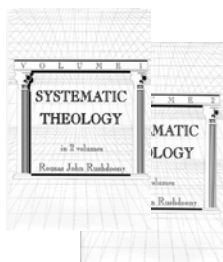
pages, you won't find the overly introspective musings of a Christian pietist; what you'll discover are the hard-hitting convictions of a man whose sole commitment was faithfulness to God's law-word and representing that binding Word to his readers.

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

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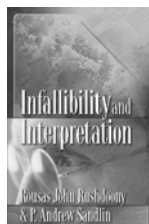
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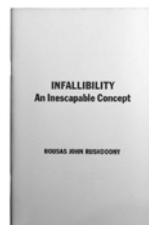


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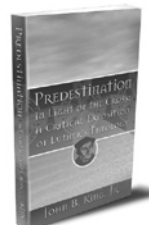


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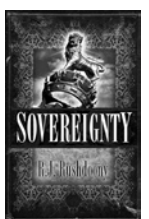
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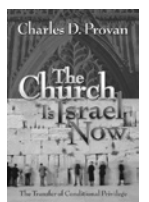
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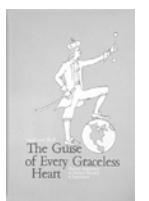
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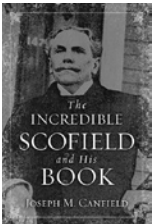
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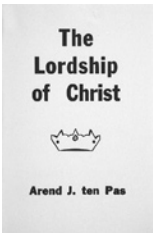
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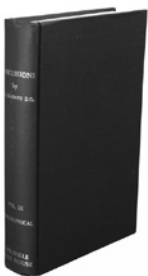


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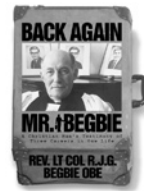
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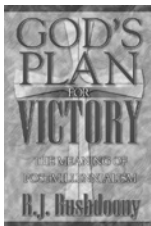
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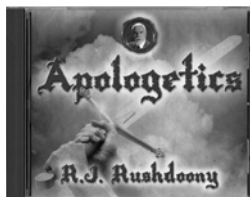
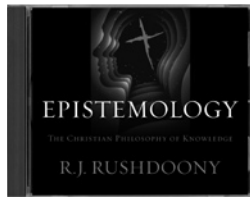
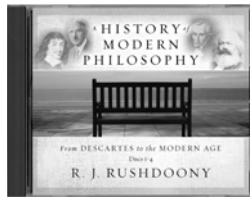
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