

FAITH FOR ALL OF LIFE

Faith for All of Life
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Contributing Editors
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For circulation and data management contact Rebecca Rouse at (209) 736-4365 ext. 10 or chaloffi@goldrush.com

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Paradise Restored, or, Get Back to Your Post!

Christopher J. Ortiz



In 1986 I borrowed a strange book from a friend who assured me that my life was about to be radically changed. I'd heard that before. Every book promised such glorious transformation, but usually left little to no major revisions in my faith. However, this book was different, and my friend was correct: I was about to be floored.

The book was the late David Chilton's *Paradise Restored: A Biblical Theology of Dominion*. It had an odd cover depicting one of those masterful illustrations so often used by the Dominion Press books—an image of a golden mountain, waterfalls, and colorful water-sprinkled foliage. Just the cover itself was revolutionary. Most books on the “end-times” featured mushroom clouds or a fiery globe. This one displayed a vision of paradise that, along with the title, confronted me immediately with its obvious thesis: that God was not going to end the world tomorrow, but rather restore it to Edenic glory.

Since I was raised in a non-Christian home, I did not have much to unlearn. I admit that I did accept the third-grade eschatology of the imminent last days, but I was inherently an optimist. I was also a Charismatic. Therefore, anything that hinted at Christian advancement appealed to me.

By the time I reached the tenth chapter, I was converted. And, yes, everything changed; and things would continue to change as my theology developed. Beyond eschatology it would be the Reformed faith and theonomy that would reengineer my entire thinking. I had become a Christian Recon-

structionist, and none of my constituency had the slightest idea what I was talking about.

Eschatology and Obedience

As my theology, like leaven, worked its way through the lump, I soon found no peaceful coexistence within my circle of influence. The fulcrum had shifted. I discarded the soiled garments of arminianism and no longer saw value in the “deeper life” teaching of mainstream Charismaticism. It became difficult to find common ground with most Christians because our philosophies concerning history were literally “worlds” apart.

The primary difference was that I now *had* a philosophy of history. Time and history suddenly mattered. Where history was headed held severe implications for how I functioned in the present, and I was ready to embrace my responsibility.

Postmillennialism was an inescapable concept for me. How could the world ever belong to the wicked one? However, I was using the term to convey a progressive transformation of society more so than simply defining the time of Christ's return. I think most people do. My concern remains the development of the Kingdom of God in history, i.e., *the reign of Christ in every sphere*.

But even this phrase is becoming trite. I say it almost habitually. The idea of the manifested reign of Christ in *every sphere of life* is now defined as “Christian domination” without any reference to the paradise motif. Yet, the issue in eschatology is restoration, not domination. It's the bringing back of

Eden—the fullness of blessing for God's creation.

This is also the power of law-keeping: it is obedience for the purpose of blessing. Though we are in danger of losing sight of this meaning, the Pauline doctrine of theonomy provokes our remembrance with simplicity and clarity:

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. Eph. 6:1–3

Long life for the righteous is a clear allusion to the days of Eden; and the restoration comes via the fulfillment of commandments in history. The apostle is here demonstrating the proper use of the “two-edged” sword of God's law-word: *commandment and promise*—a usage much needed today to help avoid the pitfalls of hyper-Charismaticism and its emphasis upon promise, or the legalism of certain conservative churches and their man-centered doctrines of holiness. Our doctrine should encourage a joyful obedience to God's law with a certain expectation that He will reward the diligent seeker (Heb. 11:6).

Sinful Man Desires Paradise on His Own Terms

Collectively, modern man is also involved in a millennial pursuit of paradise. He longs for the day when conflict will give way to peace and lack will make room for abundance. But let us not be fooled by this superficial utopia. His desire is a paradise free from labor, since the idea of work is no Eden for him. Rather, his idea of paradise is the stuff of legend and lore wherein a male-

dominated bliss is gorged with gluttony and immoral fantasy.

For the Muslim, the martyr's reward is a palace full of virgins—certainly no paradise for the seventy-two young women marked for sexual slavery. For the dispensationalist Christian, paradise is a new millennium with Christ seated upon a throne in Palestine in daily communion with the restored Jewish people. For the social Darwinist, paradise is the one-world order of steel and stone hewn from the transformed tools of war. This is best represented in the original idyllic vision of the United Nations.¹

Whether in heaven or earth the drive to paradise pushes man to remake the world in his own terms. *He is redeeming the time to make the days evil.* There is no desire in him to fashion the world in terms of God's will, for a God-ordained paradise requires responsibility to God and His Word. But without Christian dominion, humanistic paradise is free to pursue its dark future by default. Therefore, the Christian must awaken to the call to world transformation. The Christian must "get back to his post!"

When Adam Left His Post

And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? Gen. 3:9

Little mention is made of this text by commentators. I find this surprising. Most of the textual examination centers on the Hebrew definition of *called* as the "crackling sound." But I find it interesting that God asks the question, "Where art thou?"

God knew the whereabouts of Adam. Of this we can be quite certain. It is my contention that God is asking for a larger reason than geography. It appears that when the Lord lighted upon man's appointed place, Adam was "absent without leave." He abandoned his post, his place of assignment. De-

spite God's charge to "dress and keep" the garden (Gen. 2:15), Adam left his responsibility after violating God's direct command to avoid the prohibited tree (v. 17). In other words, "Where are you, Adam? Why are you not where I placed you?"

Adam knew he was naked and hid from the intimidating voice of God moving through the trees. Man became conscious of sin, and life decisions were now governed by guilt and fear. And these guilt-ridden decisions would not be made in favor of responsibility and dominion—Adam was now evading the call of God.

The Latent Power of Guilt

Guilt, like depression, is a paralyzing emotion. It neutralizes talented people who would otherwise strive to great ends in pursuit of their callings. They dismiss themselves as unqualified, undeserving, or condemned, like a condemned building that is declared "unfit for use."

In the case of Adam, guilt removed him from his garden stewardship. This was the immediate objective of the serpent. The Kingdom of God was undermined, and dominion man was now hiding among the trees—neutralized.

The guilt was overwhelming, and near impossible to escape. Once awakened, Adam could not suppress the guilt by hiding among the trees, so he added a layer of "fig leaves" as aprons (Gen. 3:7). But that too was insufficient. Even his shifting of the blame to God and Eve (v. 12) was a vain attempt at adding more layers to cover his shame.

This is what we now refer to as the "Fall of Man." A simple transition of Adam from the center of the garden just a few yards over to the trees can have apocalyptic and eternal implications! This event redirected the mission of history to the *restoration* of paradise rather than the *expansion* of paradise. And even

though Christ has redeemed us from the Fall, we also remain hidden among the trees due to guilt and bad theology. What are the implications for history if each one of us moves just a few yards away from our respective responsibilities?

Get Back to Your Post

I must admit that I am still somewhat Charismatic in my approach to faith. I imagine you are as well. I still believe that God is desirous to answer prayer. Don't you? I believe James when he says that God responds to faith and spurns doubt (James 1:6–7). I am also convinced that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick" when the sinner repents (James 5:15).

However, I have cast off the selfish reasons for answered prayer. If God heals or restores an individual, it is for His own purpose, not ours. If He heals you, His intent is for a restoration to your calling. The objective of salvation, or restoration, is for godly rule, not merely the avoidance of eternal punishment.²

What is the conclusion, then? Get back to your post! Cast off the guilt, sin, confusion, and indecision that keep you cowering among the trees. Your engagement in your calling has eternal implications, and all of heaven is in support of the mission you may be avoiding:

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Heb. 12:1 ■

1. Rushdoony writes, "We will either fail to understand the U.N. or to cope with it unless we recognize that it is religious in inspiration and a religious necessity for humanism, for the religion of humanity." *Politics of Guilt and Pity* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1970), 185–186.

2. R. J. Rushdoony, *Salvation and Godly Rule* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1983).



The Paradise Motive

(Reprinted from *Revolt Against Maturity* [Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1987], 52-59).

According to Robert Ardrey, “Man is a bad-weather animal, designed for storm and change.”¹ This opinion rests on Ardrey’s belief that “man is a predator whose natural instinct is to kill with a weapon.”² The premise being false, the conclusion is in error also. Man is not a predatory animal. If he *sometimes* thrives in bad weather, it is because he is jarred out of his complacency in sin. The root of progress is not trouble but grace. If “bad weather” or trouble made for progress, China, India, and Africa should have assumed world leadership centuries ago.

Man, having been created by God, was created for the Kingdom of God, for a perfect society under God. His first home was the Garden of Eden, and what can be called an urge to paradise remains in his nature. The myths of most peoples recall a “golden age” or an original paradise, and the politics of most peoples have as their motive force a drive to create a new paradise on earth.

The urge to establish a paradise on earth is governed, however, by the reality of the Fall and the fact of sin. As a result, the political version of the dream, the Kingdom or City of Man, has as its motive the desire to be as god, knowing good and evil (Gen. 3:5). St. Augustine, in *The City of God*, traces the history of that perverted motive and its disastrous consequences for man. Sovereignty, the attribute of God, has become a goal of men and nations. As a result, “This lust of sovereignty disturbs and consumes the human race with frightful ills.”³ The pagan thinkers themselves assert that man’s

life must be social, and Augustine agrees, “For how could the city of God ... either take a beginning or be developed, or attain its proper destiny, if the life of the saints were not a social life?” But man, because of his sin, cannot live in peace with his fellow man. Even in the close and loving ties of marriage, community turns to warfare, and the pagan “comic writers” make their characters express unhappy sentiments about marriage as being misery. The home too often becomes a scene of warfare and grief.

If, then, home, the natural refuge from all the ills of life, is itself not safe, what shall we say of the city, which, as it is larger, is so much the more filled with lawsuits civil and criminal, and is never free from the fear, if sometimes from the actual outbreak, of disturbing and bloody insurrections and civil wars?⁴

Centuries of marital failures have not discouraged men from marrying in the hopes of finding happiness and true community in a family. The urge is not simply sexual: it is an urge to establish an order and a community, not merely to find sexual relief.

Similarly, the political failures have not ended political hopes. Men continue to seek a paradise on earth by a variety of means, of which politics is a central one.

The fallacy in these attempts is their evasion of the primacy and sovereignty of God. Politics is an area of order, not the means to order and peace. A man and woman who are at peace with God and with one another can establish godly order in marriage because they bring order and peace to the marriage. Marriage simply gives greater scope for the already

existing condition and allows its extension, and conversely, if there is neither peace nor order in the life of the man, marriage will increase the scope of his disorder. Similarly, men carry their sins and disorders into the political state, and the state cannot give them and their social life a character they themselves lack.

The dream of man, however, is to make his disorder the grounds of a new order, to make his sin the new virtue, and to indulge himself in perfect peace. *The Kalevala* gives us a pagan expression of this supposedly idyllic dream:

The virgins of the island speak, the maidens of the headlands ponder

“We have house to come to, spacious farmsteads to live in, to take your songs to from out of the cold, to bring your words in from outdoors.”

Then as soon as reckless Lemminkainen came into the house he sang the stoups from farther off toward his end of the long deal table, stoups full of beer, beautiful pots of mead, dishes spilling over, bowls brimful.

Stoups of beer, pots of mead were indeed brought, butter was put in the readiness and pork put there for reckless Lemminkainen to eat, for the man with a far-roving mind to enjoy.

The man with a far-roving mind is very grand, nor does he start to eat without a silver-hilted knife, a gold sheath knife.

He got a silver knife, sang up a gold sheath knife; then he eats his fill, drank beer to his contentment.

Then reckless Lemminkainen strolled about the communities enjoying the virgins of the island in the lovely bevy of those with luxuriant hair.

Wherever he turned his head then his mouth was quickly kissed, wherever he reached out his hand then his hand was gently pressed.

Evenings he went out for some fun in the pitch dark.

There was not a community in which there were not ten farms nor was there a farm in which there were not ten daughters, not that daughter, not that mother's child by whose side he did not stretch out, press down the arm.

He knew a thousand brides, lay with a hundred widows.

There were not two in ten, three in a whole hundred maids who were not had, widows not lain with.

Thus indeed reckless Lemminkainen lives in an easygoing way all of some three summers in the big communities of the island.

He delighted the virgins of the island, satisfied all the widows, too.⁵

When men dream of being god, their only attitude towards all other people and things is to use them to their advantage and profit. The result is not paradise but hell, not peace on earth but conflict and warfare. This, however, only intensifies their hunger for paradise, but since their only means of achieving it is by means of their lust for sovereignty, their very hunger for paradise pushes them deeper into hell on earth.

Nowhere is the lust for sovereignty more marked than in men who profess peace, humility, and a democratic methodology. Their concept of peace and democracy means their ascendancy. "Power to the people" means power to them as the incarnation of the people. Thus, Professor Tadeusz Kotarbinski, a Marxist scholar, has defined the humanist (who is therefore a socialist and the true man) in these terms: "The attitude of humanism is assumed by one who strives toward a given objective because he believes that it is for the good of the people." He then defines this good to

make it identical with Marxist socialism.⁶ In the name of championing man, such people become the enemies of all men who dare to dissent from their position. Kotarbinski can baldly say, "The term 'for the people,' 'for the individual' must be used in the universal sense if they are to characterize the attitude of humanism. But what do we mean by the words 'universal sense'? We mean that we are not referring to separate and distinct individuals or to certain specific groups of people but to people in general and to Man in general."⁷ This is the same as saying that I love my idea of man, but I hate my neighbor and must kill him since he violates my concept of what a man should be. The principle of definition is located in man rather than in God; reality is then what the man-god defines it to be. The gospel then is not God's redemption of man but man's redemption of himself by severing every tie that would bind him to God. "Authentic humanity" becomes defined as a God-free humanity. Thus, Dr. Lewis B. Smedes of Fuller Theological Seminary summons men to "preach Christ as the reclamer of man's lost humanity." But man cannot be said to have lost his humanity in the Fall without violence to Scripture. Man was man both before and after the Fall; the difference was that he became a *sinful* man. Smedes writes, "The world does not need a message about a Savior who will do no more than turn us all into uptight, all-white, middle-class, comfortable champions of the law, order, and proper religion. What the world needs is the gospel of One who can restore men to total and authentic humanity—no more, no less, no other."⁸ A mythical Christ is thus made the Adam who successfully frees man from God into an "authentic humanity" which is antinomian and autonomous.

The urge to paradise in fallen man is therefore an antinomian urge. Adam

and Eve in the Garden of Eden decided that their homeland was not paradise but a prison because they were restricted from transgressing God's law. The law was practically manifested in a bar with respect to one tree; in principle, that restriction meant that man had to chose God's law-word as against man's law-word. The whole point of the temptation was that paradise would begin with man's assertion of his autonomy and his "authentic humanity" in defiance of law (Gen. 3:1–6). The urge to paradise was now anti-God and antinomian, and hell is simply the consummation of man's autonomous urge to paradise. In hell, man in total isolation from God and other men lives entirely to himself, without community, communication, or meaning, as his own world and god. Autonomous man's urge to paradise thus has its conclusion finally in hell.

In godly men, the urge to paradise expresses itself in faith and obedience: "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:7). In these words, the Messiah-King, as the new Adam, expresses the principle whereby He leads men into their Sabbath rest, the true paradise or promised land (Heb. 4). "The King acknowledges a definite standard of the will of God, before He undertakes to aim at fulfilling it ... The Law which foreshadowed the duties of a King of Israel was the rule of the King's life."⁹

The work of restoration begins with Christ's atonement, salvation by sovereign grace. Reconstruction proceeds with man's obedience to God's law. The paradise of Revelation is both garden and city (Rev. 21:1–22:5). It is the restoration and fulfillment of both man and his world.

Because the urge to paradise today is divorced from God and His law-word, its application and development in one continent after another only intensifies

the problems and miseries of men. Both the Fall of man and the redemption of man are progressive actions. Christ by His death and resurrection destroyed the power of sin and death and reestablished man's dominion in and under God, "But now we see not yet all things put under him" (Heb. 2:8). The victory was won in principle on the cross; it will be completed when "the last enemy," death, is itself destroyed (1 Cor. 15:20–28).

The Fall too is progressive. Between Adam and Noah, the decline and destruction was great, and from Abraham's day to Ezra's, the world saw the intensification of man's Fall. The twentieth century has seen vaster destruction and far more extensive degeneracy than other centuries, because evil has been more mature, and also because human progress itself gives fallen man greater scope and power in the manifestation of his depravity.

On the one hand thus, godly man's urge to paradise leads to the new creation; on the other, man's sinful urge to a paradise without God leads to the totality of hell.

As we have noted, the fallen man's urge to paradise is antinomian, whereas the covenant man's urge to paradise is by means of God's law. A further contrast can be noted. As fallen men seek to establish their concept of paradise, their means of establishing paradise is violence and coercion, revolution and totalitarian controls. In the name of man's salvation, humanistic man crucifies mankind on the cross of his controlled order. Because even totalitarian controls are failing to create the new model man of humanism, the dream increasingly is of dispensing with the old mankind that God created. A new race is to be created by biological sciences, by tampering with the genetic code and by means of like hopes.

The humanistic dream of paradise is inescapably coercive, because it requires a humanity to exist in that dreamed-of order which has little relationship to existing man. Since man is God's creature, not man's, man is simply incapable of becoming the new model man of humanistic dreams. However much he is educated, brainwashed, coerced, and threatened, he remains, in spite of all his fears and all his efforts to please his tormentors, God's creature still. Man is created in the image of God, not in the image of the state or of the covenant-breaker's dreams. Coercion and violence can harm man, but they cannot remake him. Because the humanist cannot remake man, in spite of all his coercive efforts, his every effort to create a humanistic paradise becomes an ugly nightmare and a failure.

Whereas the means to paradise regained for fallen man is outer coercion and persistent violence, the means God uses to restore man and the earth to their original destiny is an inward or inner coercion, regeneration. By God's grace man is recreated in Jesus Christ and made a new creature. Because salvation is entirely by God's sovereign grace, it is coercive, but it is a coercion comparable to the process of birth, a deliverance into life, or, better, it is comparable to resurrection. Man is released from bondage, that he might serve and enjoy God forever. He can then say with David in Psalm 56:13 (in Moffatt's version), "[F]or thou hast saved my life from death, my feet from stumbling, that I might live, ever mindful of God in the sunshine of life." ■

1. Robert Ardrey, *African Genesis* (New York: Atheneum, 1961), 327, cf. 270, 330.
2. *Ibid.*, 316.
3. Augustine, *The City of God*, bk. 3, chap. 14, trans. Marcus Dods (New York: Modern Library, n.d.), 86.
4. *Ibid.*, bk. XIX, chap. 5, 681.

5. *The Kalevala, or Poems of the Kaleva District*, comp. Elias Lonnrot, prose translation, foreword, appendices by Francis Peabody Magoun, Jr. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 210.

6. Tadeusz Kotarbinski, "Socialist Humanism," in *Poland* no. 4 (200), April 1971, 31.

7. *Idem.*

8. Lewis B. Smedes, "A Modest Proposal to Reform the World," in *The Reformed Journal*, February 1971; cited in "Credibility Gap," *The Standard Bearer*, vol. XLVII, no. 13, April 1, 1971, 294–295.

9. Brooke Foss Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, [1892], 1952), 311.

The Restoration of the Family

Greg Uttinger



There's a telling scene at the beginning of Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*. Stella, an insurance company nurse, scolds a wheelchair-

bound L. B. Jefferies for not getting serious about marriage. She objects in blunt language to the psychological approach that moderns take to marriage. They "read a lot of books, fence with a lot of four-syllable words, psychoanalyze each other," she complains. "When I married Myles," she says, "we were both a couple of maladjusted misfits. We are still maladjusted, and we have loved every minute of it." Perhaps Stella was on to something. A psychological mindset can complicate, even destroy, the most basic of human relationships.

But the cult of psychology has cast its shadow over the church as well. We have lots of books on marriage, lots of books on parenting, and (even so) lots of families with lots of problems. Maybe one of our problems is that we overanalyze. We read book after book. We fence with four-syllable words. We speculate about motivations and intentions. We try to read the heart, something only God can do. But the divorce rate within the church continues to pace that of those outside the church—about 35 percent.¹

The Role of Counseling

Certainly there is a place for Biblical counseling within the church. Some Christians don't know the Word of God very well; they need instruction. Some don't want to obey it; they need their rationalizations gently stripped away. Some simply need a bit of wise counsel or encouragement.

In each case the goal of Biblical counseling should be changed. The ignorant need to learn; the disobedient need to repent; those who receive counsel or encouragement need to act on it. In other words, counseling should produce quick and visible results; when it doesn't, something is probably wrong. And sometimes overmuch counseling can be a pious cloak for simple rebellion. The man caught up in perpetual counseling sessions never has to deal decisively with his sins.

Peter and Paul could have written large manuals on marriage and the family. They didn't. Each contented himself with some background theology and a few simple commands. Husbands are to love their wives sacrificially, Paul says—"even as Christ also loved the church." Wives are to respect their husbands and submit to them "as unto the Lord." Fathers must not provoke their children to wrath, but "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Children are to honor and obey their parents. All this from Ephesians 5 and 6.² In 1 Corinthians Paul spends a few verses to tell spouses not to defraud one another sexually (1 Cor. 7:3–5); then he goes on to discuss divorce, remarriage, and staying single. And in his First Epistle, Peter adds a bit more about husbands and wives, but altogether he only uses seven verses.

It seems the apostles' first concern wasn't analysis and understanding, but obedience to God. While Paul and Peter make no promises of perfection, they seem to think that quite ordinary Christians can have happy and fruitful marriages. Fancy that.

Asking Too Much

The family is fallen. Or more accurately, each one of us is fallen, and there is nothing in the structure of the family that can undo that. Marriage is not a sacrament; infant baptism does not regenerate. Covenant children are not automatically bound for heaven. True love does not transform the soul. A family, even a Christian family, is a collection of sinners living in a very confined space. That can be messy. We do much harm if we ask too much of the family. The pursuit of perfection, the insistent desire for a storybook family, will leave us either in terrible disillusionment or in vicious hypocrisy. It just depends on how honest we are.

Consider the families we meet in Scripture. In Abraham's we find polygamy; in Isaac's, rank favoritism, sibling rivalry, and profanation of the covenant. In Jacob's all this was multiplied—by four wives and twelve sons. David's family was torn apart by adultery, incest, rape, fratricide, and high treason. Even within our Lord's family, there were younger brothers who didn't believe, who openly mocked the Son of God. Which of these families should we take as our model? Which is good enough, pure enough? And yet God used each of these families in powerful ways to advance His Kingdom and His purposes in the earth. God obviously doesn't need perfect families to bring His Kingdom to men.

Substantial Healing

But shouldn't Christian homes be better—happier, holier—than pagan homes? Yes, they should. For resurrection life works in every child of God.

We are united to Jesus Christ and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. We are freed from sin to serve God as those alive from the dead (Rom. 6). But we must distinguish between perfection and godliness, between the “home beautiful” mentality and the perseverance of the saints. Francis Schaeffer spoke of “substantial healing” in personal relationships.³ That’s exactly it. Not a perfect marriage, not an ideal family, but real change and growth towards wholeness, godliness, and peace. Christian homes can be happy and fruitful. Here, again, are some of the basic instructions the Bible gives us.

How Shall We Then Live?

We must not make marriage or family an idol. The Lord alone is God. He is our Savior, our Life, and our Joy. If we put our marriage or family in His place, we will destroy it.

God ordained the family in the context of man’s call to dominion (Gen. 1:26–28, 2:15–25). Since no two men have exactly the same calling, no two marriages, no two families, will look exactly alike. If we miss this, we can do great harm. It is all too easy to jump on the latest religious bandwagon, to identify with the latest fad or faction that offers a quick fix for serious spiritual problems. There’s safety in numbers, and fleshly confidence in bland uniformity. But as we come to understand the unique calling God has laid on our own family, we can move ahead with a clearer sense of direction, with real spiritual confidence, and less stress and strain all the way round. We can find great joy and contentment in being what God made us to be.

The structure of marriage, however, is the same for everyone. We are not allowed to reinvent the institution for our own convenience. God’s commands are what they have always been. And they are good (Gen. 1:31).

The husband must love his wife sacrificially (Eph. 5:25–33). He must lay down his life to nourish and cherish her. The standard here is Christ’s own sacrificial love for His church. This is a daily business. Initiative, communication, and service must become a way of life. More than that, the man must rejoice in his wife, romantically and sexually, and he must be faithful (Prov. 5:3–20).

The wife must submit to her husband (Eph. 5:22–24, 33). The pattern is the church’s submission to Christ. The wife must follow her husband’s lead and help him in his calling (Gen. 2:18). She must be ready with counsel and encouragement. She must guard the home (Titus 2:5) so that her husband may more freely pursue his call to dominion. She must respect her husband—“reverence” is the Biblical word. Sarah called Abraham “lord,” we are told; that is, she spoke and thought of him with respect.⁴ Peter commends to us her example (1 Pet. 3:6).

Furthermore, both husband and wife must do what God has commanded because God has commanded it. The issue is not personal fulfillment or success or happiness. Husband and wife alike are to live by every Word of God (Matt. 4:4). The husband may not abandon love because he finds his wife unlovely; the wife may not throw off respect because her husband has failed to earn it. Each must keep covenant with God regardless of the other spouse’s track record; each must trust God for the outcome.⁵

But there’s more. To most marriages, God gives children. They are a blessing and a trust. They are arrows shot into the future, cornerstones upon which God will build palaces (Ps. 127:4, 144:12).

Fathers must, therefore, bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; but they must

not provoke their children to anger or discourage them in the process (Eph. 6:1–4; Col. 3:21). While Christian discipline and nurture involve a great deal, the heart of the matter is simple. Fathers must humbly and patiently teach their children the Word of God. Mothers must help (Prov. 1:8). Aside from Christ Himself, Scripture is the most valuable thing God has given us. It is truth; it is life. It is the law of our King. We must teach it to our children diligently and daily (Deut. 6:6–9). We must teach it as a book, as a system of truth, and as a way of life. We must teach it by word and example.⁶ This isn’t easy. In fact, it’s challenging and time consuming. But the fruits are eternal.

In the Spirit’s Power

Can we do all this? Not perfectly. Not in the flesh. But through the finished work of Christ and in the power of His Holy Spirit, we can begin. We can act in faith and walk in love. And when we fail, we can repent and ask forgiveness—both of God and of our spouse or children. “Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it,” the psalmist tells us (Ps. 127:1). Christian homes are products of divine grace, nothing less. And therefore our homes must be full of the gospel and full of prayer. We must trust God; we must rest in Jesus Christ.

So away with psychoanalysis. Away with dreams of the ideal family. Let’s love the family God has given us and trust Jesus Christ to accomplish His purposes in our frail and faulty lives. ■

Greg Uttinger teaches theology, history, and literature at Cornerstone Christian School in Roseville, California. He may be contacted at paul_ryland@hotmail.com.

1. “Born Again Christians Just As Likely to Divorce As Are Non-Christians.” *The Barna Update*, September 8, 2004, www.barna.org.

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Economy Restored: A Blueprint for a Biblical Model of Government

Ian Hodge



We all know something is wrong with the economy. But how would it look once it was put right? Would there really be little or no taxation? Would money be gold and silver, or paper and plastic as it is in most parts of the world today? Is negligence a legitimate ground for fraud? What would happen to Medicare and Medicaid? And would the civil authorities have the power of eminent domain?

Consider, for example, Enron. Not the company, but what it has come to stand for. Corporate crime. Or, at the very least, corporate mismanagement. Promises to investors and shareholders that cannot be met and could never have been met at the time they were made. And Enron is known not because it is a unique situation, but because the numbers of people and the amount of money involved were huge.

Presuppositions: The Regulative Principle

In order to address these issues, however, it is imperative to clear the air over one important presupposition. Everyone agrees that somehow the Bible contains answers to the issues that define a Christian economy. But how the Bible ought to be read is a critical consideration.

For example, in the debate of the Regulative Principle, the question is whether or not those things that are done in a worship service should be specifically defined in Scripture, or whether things can be included that have not been specifically excluded in Scripture.

The same debate is necessary in consideration to a Biblical economy. Can the government do anything it likes unless it is expressly forbidden in the Bible? Or must it confine itself to those things that are clearly defined in Scripture?

Take the example of the ambulance service. There is no particular command in the Bible that says the government should operate the ambulance service, as governments do in many parts of the world. On the other hand, there is no express prohibition in the Bible that it should not do this. Because there is no prohibition, would it be legitimate for the government to run the ambulance service?

How you read the Bible, then, will govern the kind of answers you come up with in defining a Biblical economy. It is the perspective of this writer that the Regulative Principle approach is the only way that the priority of the family can be maintained and property rights can be established in favor of the family.

This way of thinking, incidentally, is not new. The principle of federalism is built on the notion that a constitution is a limiting document. It limits the government to do those things and only those things that are expressly set down in the constitution. In countries such as the U.S.A. or Australia today, this issue is quite prominent, as new interpretations of the constitutions of those nations are offered to allow the federal governments to do things that were never conceived by the founding fathers.

When you read the Bible, you cannot help but come to this conclusion.

It is apparent that in Eden there was no need for human government. God was in direct contact with His creation, and Adam and Eve were quite capable of taking leadership from Him.

The Fall, however, changed this. Now man's desire was to be his own god, making up his own rules. The Creator God could take a backseat from now on. His rules were no longer needed. Man had come of age.

In addressing this problem, the problem of sin, the Bible is quite clear. It is God's law that defines righteousness and justice. It is God who determines the boundaries of what men may and may not do, and what they should and should not do.

In Eden, however, even after the Fall, there was no civil government established by God. Only in the exposition of the law in Exodus, for example, do we see the pattern of civil government established. It had a limited role, to punish evil. It was not a legislative role; it was not an administrative role; it did not provide services of any kind except one: judiciary. And even in this it was limited, with the people themselves required to participate in the apprehension and punishment of those violating the law of God.

A Biblical Economy

The key headlines of the Biblical economy are thus the moral requirements that fall out of the Ten Commandments. *First*, the necessity of complete honesty in business dealings. This is key to any economy. Even in a Biblical economy, man's knowledge is at

best limited. People might have good intentions, but negligence can and should have a role to play in any economy.

Negligence can have different aspects. We might not intend to break a person's leg, but if our negligence in some way causes it, should we be liable for the expense involved in having it treated? A person might have the best intentions when asking others to invest in his business venture, but if he is negligent in the claims about the business prospects, or negligent in omitting certain key points that eventually cause the investors' loss, should the businessman be held accountable for the loss of the investors? Does *caveat emptor* mean that the Biblical entrepreneur is exempt from negligence issues?

Can a business owner claim that the value of his shares is \$10 when the market says they are worth \$0? Or rather, *should* he make such a claim when this abstraction called the market disagrees with him? After all, doesn't the free market economy allow each of us to have a subjective opinion that may be radically different from the next person's?

The answer to this one is simple. You can have a different opinion of the value of your shares. Rushdoony highlights the nature of fraud when he says, "A man may willingly purchase an item under the impression that it is what it is represented to be, but fraud [misrepresentation – IH] on the part of the seller makes it clearly theft."¹ Fraud can take place not only in the thing represented, but also in relation to its value.

Now it might be argued, Why would anyone invest under such circumstances? Surely prudence would govern investors, and if they were foolish enough to invest without doing their homework, they deserve what they get.

A Biblical economy will continue to have a Department of Securities whose role it will be to determine if negligence

has occurred, the making of unwarranted or false claims about an enterprise or its management and using that to attract investment capital. And their role would be to implement the principle of restitution so that those who mislead might be held responsible for their misleading advice.

The restitution laws of Scripture establish the idea that at the end of the day we are responsible in some way to help our neighbor keep what he has. If we steal, then we must repay what we stole. If we are negligent—intentionally or otherwise—we are still responsible to make sure we don't disadvantage our neighbor in any way.

Second, however, is the deeper question of who should operate this Department of Securities. There is no reason that this needs to be a function of the state. It could—and should—be an activity of the free market. There is a need. Individuals could provide this service.

But who will *enforce* private judgments? There is clearly a role here for government, not as prime investigator, but as enforcer of judgments that are handed down in private arbitration. This fits within the description of Romans 13 that the civil authorities are to punish evil.

Third, now that there is a role for government, how will the government be paid? Does it need to tax? If so, how much? To answer this question, you only need to consider what are the *functions* that God has given to the government? The government appears to have a very limited role. In fact, it is strictly confined to jurisdiction in matters of punishable offenses. But even here it is limited to one of judgment only. Execution, for example, was to be undertaken by the community. The people in a local community, starting with the witnesses, had the responsibility of inflicting punishment upon a murderer.

If this is the limited role of government, then it is not so easy to see why there is no taxation as we know it for the political state in Scripture. Now there were lots of payments in the Old Testament of one kind or another. But they were invariably tithes or atonement payments. Even the poll, or head, tax was not a tax to government. It was atonement money paid by those who reached a certain age. The fixed amount nominated by God did not go to pay for civil services; it was to be used in the tabernacle of meeting (Exod. 30:11–16).

It is difficult to get from this picture to the idea that somehow the government should have money for public education, health, roadwork, and national security. Again, do we look for those things expressly commanded, or those not prohibited?

Given there is an identified role for judicial judgment somewhere in the community, how should these services be paid for? It seems the Bible is silent on an express command. Therefore, we can only conclude that those who make use of the service should be the ones to pay for it.

But direct taxation is not the only form of taxation. Historically, charging fees on imports and exports has been a fund-raising tactic of government. But if the Regulative Principle applies, it is difficult to find a directive to those exercising judicial judgments that they can charge foreign and local importers taxes on goods. Unless, of course, it is merely a way to meet the costs of running ports, harbors, and points of entry into the country. But that only moves the discussion about the role of government in managing ports, harbors, and border patrol—and there is nothing to indicate this is a function of civil government.²

Fourth, if the only function of civil authority is to make judicial decisions, then the question of what kind of money

should exist is also to be answered by individuals. In other words, people should be able to make any kind of exchanges they like, unless those exchanges are prohibited by God's law. They can exchange labor for food, tomatoes for gold. They could even exchange beef for paper—provided no one has interfered with the value of that paper by printing an artificial value on it, then coercing acceptance of the paper at that artificial value. Determining what will be money is not a function of government, but the government could enforce contractual conditions that involve money.

Fifth, it is evident that the question of property in its specific case of real estate, and in a broader sense of dealing with any economic good or service, is also addressed by the prohibition against theft. In Old Testament times land was distributed to eleven tribes. One tribe had no inheritance in the land. Their job was to provide a number of services to the community, and owning land, perhaps, would cloud their judgments.

In the new heavens and new earth talked about in Scripture, is there to be any other system of land ownership? The New Testament has not abandoned family ownership in favor of some kind of communal living. Ownership and control of all kinds of property, land, homes, cars, bicycles, watches, telephones, and televisions belong to the family, not that of the wider community.

Sixth, while family ownership is the basis for the Biblical economy, there are still rules that govern it. In particular, the Sabbath laws would have a significant impact on economic activity. Every Sabbath day is to be a day of rest. One year in seven is not only a yearly rest, but all lenders are required to cancel debts. In the year of Jubilee—seven Sabbath years plus one, fifty years—not only were debts to be cancelled, but the land was to be returned to its original owning family.

If nothing else, this puts an end to the modern concept of eminent domain. The government may not confiscate people's property for its own use, even when it pays fair price, as the story of Naboth and his vineyard indicates (1 Kings 21).

Seventh, another major element of the Biblical economy is health and welfare. Again we search in vain to find an express command for the political order to get involved. Each citizen of the kingdom, however, has a responsibility to help those in need, as the parable of the Good Samaritan indicates. In this matter, the Amish are a better example than the Anglo-Saxons. Their concept of community takes care of the practical needs of each other.

Eighth, if the Regulative Principle is applied, there are no grounds for occupational licensing by the civil government. There is little evidence that licensing by the authorities improves standards. It does cause higher charges, restrict choice, and diminish innovation.³ But this would leave ground for private licensing that could recognize skill levels in particular occupations. But private licensing carries with it no punishment for those who refuse to take the license.

Ninth, the last aspect of the economy in its broader sense has to do with international trade. Events inside the border might seem to be taken care of without political interference, but international trade is something that requires government intervention, so the argument goes. Yet there is no inference in Scripture that the political order is to control cross-border transactions. This is difficult to conceive, given centuries of government interference in cross-border trade.

Interestingly, the Old Testament is adamant that the application of God's law in all its glory would have

an evangelistic effect on the other nations around Israel. There is to be a free market within the national borders that is surrounded by God's law. And this very same standard is to be applied to those outside the nation unless indicated otherwise. Usury, therefore, could be charged on foreigners, but not to the fellow-Israelite. Usury on foreigners, however, was not compulsory. And this is not the same as saying that the political order must determine who can transact business within the nation and at what prices those transactions should occur.

Conclusion

The Biblical economy as outlined here is a far cry from the one we live in. This should not be surprising. There have been several hundred years of development of the modern state, with its control of the courts, control of taxation, and control of the borders. And the last ingredient to add to this is abandonment of the family and church as the key communities, replacing them with the modern state.⁴

Contemporary mankind sees no hope outside of the political order. Elections in every country are held to provide the solution for all the nation's ills. Apparently "we, the people" keep electing the wrong people to civil office because the problems persist. Never is it suggested that the solution to the country's woes is a return to God and His laws as the way of righteousness and prosperity. Our mistaken loyalty to the nation-state of the modern world—idolatry, the Bible calls it—prevents us from seeing the glory and splendor of the Christian commonwealth with God as King and royal law-giver (James 2:8). ■

Ian Hodge is a businessman, musician, and author living in the United States. He has recently released Ian Hodge's *Read, Write & Play Music*, a self-instructional music program for home educators that applies the

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Don't Pray for the Peace of Babylon

Mark R. Rushdoony



God's Word uses the term "Babylon" as a euphemism for all the statist regimes of history that have sought to play god. Man outside of

God's grace has an insatiable desire to make good on Satan's phony promise that men could challenge the sovereignty of God Himself and "be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5). Gods know good and evil because they determine it. The quest to "be as gods" was thus the origin of the desire for human autonomy, the humanistic dream of playing god, of remaking the world in terms of the sovereign word of man.

Man's quest of autonomy, or self-rule by his own truth and word rather than that of God, tends to result in one of two manifestations. The individual may become anarchistic, seeking his "own rules" and his "own thing." The individual autonomous man, however, is either irrelevant or a nuisance to collective man, and so humanism's autonomy has always tended toward statism. The real autonomy is thus of the state, not individuals, which illustrates the Biblical teaching that man's rebellion against God represents an enslavement to sin. The moral reality of slavery to sin is manifested in the institutional enslavement of men to the highest collective voice of mankind, the state.

As a moral rebel, man perverts the things of God. Since man is not god, but only a creature, all he can do as a rebel is counterfeit the Creator's reality. Man was made to have dominion over creation (Gen. 1:28), for instance, but his moral rebellion in Genesis 3 means

that all his attempts at dominion without God end in manifestations of his sin. The sinful lust for power rather than godly dominion stems from the original sin of desiring to be as gods. Man's constant grasp for power is manifested in aggression and exploitation. Power-hungry men create a power-hungry state as the utilitarian means of controlling others.

Man was never freer than in Eden before the Fall. There, he was in total harmony with God and the purpose for which he was created. He was governed, not by his own sinful self-will, but by the revealed Word of God. Man's perfect government was his self-government in terms of that Word. Adam's sin was in his desire to be his own god. Man's continuing sin is his ongoing desire for autonomy; his own dominion, power, and glory; and his demand that the world serve him.

In the atonement of Jesus Christ, God in human flesh paid the penalty for man's sin and destroyed the moral stranglehold of sin on us. In Jesus Christ, the "last Adam" (1 Cor. 15:45), we are made new creatures and therefore our "labour is not in vain in the Lord" (v. 58). We are recalled to our purpose of exercising authority under God's sovereign lordship because we repudiate Adam's satanic delusion of autonomy and power.

The Kingdom of God we serve is now available because of Jesus Christ. It exists wherever Christ rules, in church, state, family, or school. Babylon is the kingdom of man, where men seek power in the numbers on which statism depends. Babylon represents the statist exertion of control over others, which

presumes on the power that belongs to God. Simply put, the state has throughout history played god and thus institutionally embodied the original sin of man.

Babylon

The downfall of the statist regimes of history is described in Revelation 17–18 as the "judgment of the great whore" (17:1), who bears the name of "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (17:5). The great whore is said to ride on both a beast (17:3, 7, 9) and on "many waters" (17:1). Four elements here are crucial to understanding what judgment is being prophesied.¹ These four elements are the allusion to Babylon, the beast, the great whore that rides upon it, and the waters.

First, Babylon represents the statist powers of human history that have sought the hegemony that rightly belongs to God. It is unmistakably a reference to Babel, the meaning of which is often lost in its relegation to a Sunday school morality tale.

Babel was a political empire in the days of Peleg (Gen. 10:25), who was born 100 years after the flood.² This means it was in the days of men who well knew of God's judgment on man's sin. Peleg was the fifth generation after Noah (and five removed from his descendant, Abram). The goal of the people of Babel is stated in Genesis 11:4.

Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

The goal of Babel was thus both a city and a tower. We tend to overlook the former. They were in quest of both an empire and a “name.” They sought to define themselves in terms of a political entity. Establishing their name was an attempt to exert their authority, to impress their strength in the eyes of all.

“The Tower of Babel” was a representation of the magnificence of the city, the social order, they planned. Like later civilizations of the ancient world (and possibly the antediluvian world that had to have been advanced enough to produce a vessel of the impressive dimensions of the ark), monument building was a means of flaunting power and wealth. Great cities and their engineering marvels were built to instill awe and a sense of insignificance in those who viewed them. In desiring to “reach heaven,” the builders of Babel were trying to project themselves as a power center. The religious statement this made, in the people familiar with the history of the Fall and the judgment of the Flood, was a bold one and a promulgation of a humanistic statist purpose as a substitute for that of God. Babel was a return to the thinking of the pre-Flood generation whose purposes were “only evil continually” (Gen. 6:5). Perhaps its builders were wickedly emboldened by God’s promise not to repeat the Flood (9:8–17).

The unity of the social order of Babel was a forced one. Cain had earlier built a city or cities for protection. Guilty because of the murder he had committed, he felt the need to establish himself in a defensible stronghold. Like its city and tower, the unity of Babel was a planned one, measured in political strength that could be projected to others. Sadly enough, Babel had a very real God-given unity, that of language. Their God-given judgment was in removing their greatest unifying factor, thus making the political order impossible.

Babylon is also a reference to the empire of the Old Testament era, which later developed on the plain of Shinar, or Mesopotamia, where Babel had once existed. It was Babylon that captured Judah and held it for seventy years. It was Babylon that destroyed Jerusalem and the temple of God that Solomon had built. It was Babylon that left the land promised by God to His people a sparsely settled wilderness. The complete enslavement of the Hebrew people, the expropriation of their sacred land, and the destruction of their religious center must have created such a feeling of pride and superiority in the Babylonians that we should hardly be surprised that they became synonymous with those of every age who politically and culturally believe they can make God and His people irrelevant.

We must not limit references to Babylon to either Babel or the ancient empires that bore the name, however. Babylon also refers to the Roman Empire of John’s day. His description of seven mountains or hills (Rev. 17:9) is a clear, well-known reference to the city of Rome from where the Caesars then ruled. Then John describes Babylon as also in the future, kings with “no kingdom as yet” (vv. 12–14). Babylon is more than a single political reference. It is the ideal, the hope, the dream of humanistic man for a kingdom of man that supplants the Kingdom of God.

A *second* element of Revelation 17–18 is the beast with many heads and horns. These are civil governments, kings (17:10ff.), that “make war with the Lamb” (17:14), though the angels assured John of His victory and that of those who are faithful to Him. In addition to representing civil governments, the beast also represents Satan (17:8) and, again in verse 9, Rome. (Babylon as the dream cannot be separated from the beast, the civil governments, that

embodies that dream, so the reference to the seven hills is a reference to Rome as both a civil government, the “beast,” and an embodiment of the dream of “Babylon.”)

The beast, these civil governments, has seven heads that represent kings. The first five kings were past, one was ruling in John’s day (an obvious reference again to Rome), and the last was in the future (17:10). The future king would have ten horns, a symbol of totality. In other words, the future manifestation of statist civil government and its quest to play God would have many lesser manifestations, a number known to God.

Much eschatology is geared to the specific identification of these ten horns. That may not have been John’s purpose. The purpose seems to be the identification of the dream of Babylon as, throughout history, being the unifying factor of statist civil government. The war of the beast against Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, and His people is a recurring theme throughout history, the kingdoms of humanistic statist man at war with the Kingdom of God and its citizens.

A *third* element of John’s vision is the whore who rides on the beast, the kingdoms or governments of the world. The whore is carried by the beast, who is the major character. It is the work of a whore to tempt man, to play on his passions, his fantasies. We have already characterized Babylon as the dream, the hope, the ideal of rule of man without God, His victorious competitor. The great whore of Babylon tempts the nations, the governments of the world, with the dream of Babylon, the kingdom of man exalting itself over God.

The whore of Babylon is not a person, but the temptation, the quest for the autonomous man playing God. It is a continuation of the phony promise of Satan in Genesis 3:5 that man could,

in fact, be “as gods.” The whore is man’s insatiable lust to make good on Satan’s promise. The desire is the embracing of man’s original sin, the determination to make it work in his favor. This is a war on God and the Lamb who offered the only resolution to Adam’s sin at Calvary.

There is yet a *fourth* element that we should note in Revelation 17. The whore sits on the waters (v. 1). John clearly identifies the waters as people (v. 15). The evils of Babylon are not reserved to a few evil rulers or particular regimes of history; they belong to the peoples as well. The lust (whore) of statist governments (beast, kings) for the preeminence of man’s will and glory in defiance of God (Babylon) cannot be limited to institutions; it is the sinful tendency of all men who, after Adam, pursue a life in terms of the promise of Satan in Eden.

Part of the sinister nature of ancient Babylon, though in no way unique to it, was the control over men it wielded by economic power. It encouraged debt by easy credit and economic control, which was then followed by political control. The description of judgment to which John referred (Rev. 17:1) is largely described in terms of economic collapse (Rev. 18). There is no swifter judgment than economic collapse because it impacts every aspect of the life of every single person. The Soviet Union, let us remember, collapsed with its military strength intact when its economy became so dysfunctional that its people stopped fearing to offend its strength of arms.

Modern Babylon

The modern Babylons of the West have most noticeably tried to counterfeit the Kingdom of God. Oriental and Asian thought came to have a contempt for history as the realm of karma, the merciless outworking of consequences. Some non-Christian Westerners turned to a similarly defeatist position by

seeing history as cyclical. More often Western thought has believed in some form of progress, of forward movement of history toward some hope. Without a conscious belief in the advance of the Kingdom of God and His Christ through the grace shown to His covenant people, man’s dominion impulse is counterfeited, secularized into some humanistic hope.³

The Renaissance and the Enlightenment turned to utopian ideas as a humanistic alternative to the Kingdom of God. Humanistic man’s kingdom is of some kind of Babel, some social order whereby man makes a name for himself and builds some sort of lasting tower or monument to its permanence. Modern man’s towers tend to be legal and institutional rather than made of mortar and brick, but they are no less presumptuous in their goal of creating an order outside of God.

Utopianism seeks a permanent social order, an end to history by creating its final order. Karl Marx clearly saw this as the purpose of revolution. Others have adopted the idea of creating order by revolution through different means, such as political, legal, or educational “reform.” All suggest that a perfect order is possible if man can only be made subject to the new order he envisions. Some method of aggression or legal compulsion is inevitably the means to achieve utopian goals.

United Nations

The United Nations is a modern utopian version of Babylon. The order it seeks in international affairs is an entirely humanistic one, not a moral one in any Biblical sense. Its hope is in the organization of mankind into a new city and tower of Babel under a concept of justice and law that it decrees. The world at peace it seeks must be a world under its rule and law, a new version of *Pax Romana* or “peace of Islam.” It

is thus, perhaps, the very worst manifestation of the dream of Babylon, for it seeks a *world* law and a *world* state. The peace it seeks is in terms of its own purposes and goals of empire. It is an enemy of God’s justice and His Kingdom because it seeks its own.

The United Nations fails to recognize sin, therefore it allows sin to flourish if it is in its own self-interest. The United Nations has always been plagued by internal corruption and scandal. It is a centralized, non-accountable body that rules by a law that is neither organic to the culture to which it dictates nor subject to the transcendental authority of God. The United Nations represents the dream, the ideal of Babylon writ large.

The judgment on the beast, civil governments, and its dream of Babylon is described by St. John (Rev. 18). The angel of God declares, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen” (v. 2). The warning of the angel is clear. “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (v. 4). The angel directly references the ancient Tower of Babel when he says Babylon’s “sins have reached unto heaven” (v. 5). But Babylon thinks she is immune from misfortune, so she sits as a queen who cannot be widowed or mourn (v. 7), i.e., who will never see misfortune.

Four plagues will come upon the Babylons of history, however: death, mourning, famine, and fire (v. 8). Death is God’s response to Babylon’s belief she will never be a widow; mourning is in contrast to the arrogance of her power; famine is the recompense for the wealth she enjoyed through the labor of others; and fire the destruction in her judgment.

The end of all Babylons, like the judgment on Babel, will be a scattering. The means in Genesis 11 was the destruction of the people’s productive capacity by the confusion of their unify-

ing language. This meant more than the comical chaos of our Sunday school lessons; it meant their ability to do any business or trade was destroyed. It was not just the tower that was abandoned; it was the city of Babel and its dream of making a name for itself that was aborted as well.

The collapse of Babylon, the angel says, will be largely economic in nature (Rev. 11–19). Those who benefit from Babylon will mourn its demise, but in this economic collapse, God's people are called to rejoice over her collapse as the antagonist of the "apostles and prophets" (18:20–21).

Too much eschatology centers around the minutia of John's prophecy in Revelation, as if its essence were in the details. We fail to see the big picture. The angel revealed to John that man's hope of being God, his collective system of empire-building toward the good life in terms of one humanistic dream or another will collapse. Babylon will fall. This economic calamity will affect all men, but we must rejoice in its fall as the judgment of God.

We must not pray for the peace and prosperity of Babylon, nor mourn its coming judgment. We must, rather, prepare ourselves to respond with the refrain that will fill heaven, "Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said Alleluia! And her smoke rose up for ever and ever" (Rev. 19:1–3).

Christians must not support statism, even that with a democratic rhetoric. To do so is to support a modern Babylon. Christians cannot invest their lives and future hopes in Babylon, the

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UN Charter: Utopian Language, Corrupt Practice

In the utopian vision of the United Nations Charter, the world looks like paradise.

All member states are sovereign and equal; war is discouraged; and men and women within those member states are equal. States and international organizations promote social progress, "the economic and social advancement of all peoples."

All peoples of the world are to enjoy self-determination; all religions are to be respected; and member states that persistently violate the Charter are to be expelled (for a full text of the Charter, see <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/un/unchart.htm>).

The document goes on for page after page, 111 articles in all, without mentioning God, let alone acknowledging Him as the authoritative source of truth, morality, and law. In the UN Charter, truth, morality, and law are all arrived at through collective bargaining and consensus. There is, of course, no acknowledgement of man's fallen nature, his inborn depravity and imperfectability.

As lovely as it sounds, the Charter reflects very little of the actual practice of the United Nations.

The absolute sovereignty of member states usually renders them immune from UN action. In those rare cases where "sanctions" are imposed, e.g., against Iraq or North Korea, we see the target regimes evade the sanctions with the connivance of their allies—or with the connivance of the UN itself, as in the "Oil for Food" scandal.

As for the UN's capacity to discourage war, space does not permit a list of all the wars fought in recent years despite the UN. Just to name a few: Iran-Iraq, Israel-Hezbollah-Palestine, United States-Iraq, Libya-Chad, etc. And the UN has been powerless to deter bloody, genocidal conflicts within national borders: Darfur, Rwanda, East Timor.

Peoples such as the Kurds and the nations of southern Sudan are still waiting to taste the fruits of self-determination. Many Muslim states systematically persecute religious minorities and oppress women. A permanent member of the Security Council, China, is infamous for its suppression of religious groups, from Lutherans to Falun Gong.

And far from being expelled from the UN for persistently violating the Charter, chronic offenders Zimbabwe, Saudi Arabia, Cuba, China, and others are rewarded with seats on the UN Human Rights Council.

If mankind were purposely to set up an institution whose rhetoric and practices were diametrically opposed, it would look like the United Nations.

"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it," says the Bible (Ps. 127:1). The UN is the world's most ambitious utopian project to date, and humanism's greatest embarrassment.



The Arrogance of Utopianism

Timothy D. Terrell



In the February 1973 *Chalcedon Report*, Rousas J. Rushdoony writes that utopianism's folly is its idea that sin can be overcome by sufficiently careful organization of society. In a utopia, he writes,

[m]an is not seen as a sinner, nor does man need a Savior; man's need is for the expert, the elite mind, to take over man's life and all society and to reorganize all things in terms of his own wisdom. Man, especially elite man, is beyond good and evil. Man must become his own maker, and in terms of the thinking of his philosophical and scientific elite, rethink all things and redefine the public good, happiness, profit, and justice.¹

Utopianism usually begins with the arrogant thought that God's law is useless for society. When Biblical law is removed, social constraints are the next to go. Social patterns that have developed over millennia—tradition, case law, property rights—are all readily discarded in favor of the intellectual creations of the utopian visionary. Common features of utopias include a complete reworking of the law, abolition of private property, common housing, uniform dress (or perhaps nudity), commonality of sexual partners, and centrally directed education. Later utopias rely on technology to render sin obsolete.

One of the earliest utopian visions was that of Plato, who proposed a system of communal property for society's elite ruling class of philosophers-kings. To remove the temptation to acquire wealth, all corrupting property would be abolished for this aristocracy. Even mar-

riage was too exclusive, and the choice of marriage partners should be made by the state. Children would be raised separate from their parents, in communal schools.

Later utopians made similar pronouncements on property and family. The fourteenth-century Free Spirit cults in Germany held that all property was common, including the property of those outside their circle of believers. As Free Spirit Johann Hartmann writes, "The truly free man is king and lord of all creatures. All things belong to him, and he has the right to use whatever pleases him. If anyone tries to prevent him, the free man may kill him and take his goods."² The fifteenth-century Taborites in Bohemia advocated revolutionary violence to accomplish their communistic utopia. They forbade marriage, and a husband and wife seen together could be executed.

After the failure of the Taborite community, the Bohemian Adamites continued and extended their utopianism. Making promiscuity mandatory, they decided that any man could require the submission of any woman, subject to the consent of their leader, whom they called Adam-Moses. Consistent with some other utopian communes, they generally went about in the nude. Since the Adamites made every effort to kill those outside their community, neighboring troops eventually invaded their refuge and slaughtered them all.³

Nineteenth-Century Experiments

Experimentation with "progressive" ideas continued in nineteenth-century communes. Charles Fourier, an

early nineteenth-century utopian, also proposed communal living, with "free love." Fourier, who suffered no lack of strange ideas (e.g., in the coming eighth stage of the earth, man would grow tails, five more moons would appear, and the oceans would turn into lemonade), advocated the replacement of capitalism with small communes called "phalanxes." Everyone in these phalanxes would have a guaranteed minimum income, and even guaranteed minimum sex due to an "angelic group" within the community.⁴ American admirers of Fourier tried many times to organize phalanxes, but all soon failed.

John Humphrey Noyes' utopian community in Oneida, New York, became well known for making silverware. Noyes taught that man was perfectible in this life, and, according to Clifford Thies, "once perfected was freed from the usual restriction on behavior imposed by private property and marriage."⁵ Noyes controlled the community's property, as well as the women. He evidently fathered most of the commune's children.

One of the best-known examples of utopian communism was Robert Owen's community at New Harmony, Indiana, founded in 1825. It lasted less than three years. Robert Dale Owen, who with his father had founded the New Harmony community, became a vigorous proponent of compulsory public education. Owen, along with Frances Wright (a former New Harmony resident), ran a newspaper called the *Free Enquirer*, which championed "national, rational, republican education; free for all at the expense of all; conducted

under the guardianship of the State, and for the honor, the happiness, the virtue, the salvation of the state.”⁶

Owen and Wright, drawing perhaps from Plato, advocated institutionalized care for all children, from age two to sixteen, with limited parental visitation. In these state-run boarding schools, egalitarianism would be the rule.

In these nurseries of a free nation, no inequality must be allowed to enter. Fed at a common board; clothed in a common garb ... raised in the exercise of common duties ... in the exercise of the same virtues, in the enjoyment of the same pleasures; in the study of the same nature; in pursuit of the same object ... say! Would not such a race ... work out the reform of society and perfect the free institutions of America?⁷

Maintaining equality in spite of natural variations in human capabilities and desires would require the suppression of individuality. Any exceptional abilities would inevitably have to be suppressed, and individual preferences smothered. To prevent the influence of the inequalities of the children's home life, the students could not live at home. Rather, the schools

must receive the children, not for six hours a day, but altogether must feed them, clothe them, lodge them; must direct not their studies only, but their occupations and amusements and must care for them until their education is completed.⁸

Murray Rothbard argues that Owen and Wright's influence on the public education movement in the United States has not been trivial.

Further examples of utopian communist thought include, of course, Proudhon's famous remark, "Property is theft," and Aldous Huxley's slogan, "Everyone belongs to everyone else." Through all of these utopian ideas runs the theme of central control, forcing conformity to the visionary's fantasies.

Apart from God, these fantasies are deadly.

Utopian Arrogance

Many utopian proposals attempt to merge capitalism with idealistic socialism. One early example is found in the writing of Claude Henri de Rouvroy Comte de Saint-Simon (1760–1825), a French noble. Despite Saint-Simon's antagonism toward government ("Government always harms industry when it mixes in its affairs, it harms it even in instances where it makes an effort to encourage it"), Saint-Simon had a centralized plan for an "industrial parliament." This would bring the intellectual and industrial elites—artists, scientists, engineers, and other talent—together to produce new ideas for society. The ominously named "Chamber of Execution" would have the power to levy taxes, the revenues then to be devoted to promising areas of research and development. Like other utopians, Saint-Simon trusted deeply in his ability to organize society. The fantasies of his brain counted for more than Biblical truths about human nature or the collective wisdom of long centuries of social development.

Karl Marx, who was influenced by Saint-Simon, nevertheless regarded him as unrealistic, calling him a "utopian socialist." Marx, by avoiding Saint-Simon's level of detail, maintained a mystic awe that avoided criticisms of detailed applications. As Murray Rothbard writes,

In contrast to the various groups of utopian socialists, and in common with religious messianists, Karl Marx did not sketch the features of his future communism in any detail. It was not for Marx, for example, to spell out the number of people in his utopia, the shape and location of their houses, the pattern of their cities. In the first place, there is a quintessentially crackpotty air to utopias that are mapped by their creators in precise detail. But of equal importance, spelling out the details of

one's ideal society removes the crucial element of awe and mystery from the allegedly inevitable world of the future.⁹

The unadulterated arrogance of utopians is sometimes stunning. Saint-Simon believed that Charlemagne had appeared to him in a vision while he was imprisoned during the French Revolution to tell him that he should save the French Republic after the French Revolution. He instructed his servant to wake him in the morning every day by saying, "Arise, Monsieur le Comte, you have great things to do today."

Utopia, FDR-Style

From small experiments like the Oneida commune or New Harmony in the nineteenth century, utopianism hit the American mainstream during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Herbert Hoover, the engineer-president, wanted to supersede market coordination and resource allocation with government planning. Franklin D. Roosevelt took Hoover's statist tendencies and expanded them. These were not attempts to promote outright socialism. Instead, Hoover and Roosevelt sought a "third way" between capitalism and socialism. The mixture was to be concocted by a selfless intellectual aristocracy with enormous coercive power.

Roosevelt brought well-educated experts to Washington—mostly university professors. Journalists began to call this group the "Brain Trust." Roosevelt's administration flouted law and precedent to create his New Deal programs, regarding the wisdom of the Constitution's authors as secondary to the ideas of his intellectual elites. As critic John T. Flynn puts it,

In the capital one bumped suddenly and frequently into a happy and eager bureaucrat who had but recently been a tutor or professor or instructor in some college where he was eating his heart out over the futility of the professor's

existence—where he presided over the destinies of two dozen youths in some small fragment of human learning, while lesser and baser men directed the destinies of the nation. Now he is in Washington and by a swift turn of the wheel of Fortune he presides over a numerous division of lesser bureaucrats, earns twice what he got as a teacher and is amazed and delighted at finding himself fabricating a policy to mold the lives of a million farmers or twice as many housewives. The sense of anonymous power sends the blood coursing through his heated brain. After a while he seems not unequal to any problem, however vast.¹⁰

Roosevelt's Brain Trust helped him dream up some of the sweeping changes in law that would remedy the market's supposed failure to ensure consistent prosperity. These Brobdingnagian programs, with names like the National Recovery Administration, Public Works Administration, and Agricultural Adjustment Administration, are now often acknowledged to have hindered recovery rather than promoting it. It was, once again, a utopian fantasy.

One of Roosevelt's Brain Trust members was Rexford G. Tugwell. Tugwell taught economics at Columbia University and became Assistant Secretary of Agriculture during Roosevelt's first term. He was contemptuous of ordinary people and was notorious for having terrible manners. Highly skeptical of the market economy, Tugwell advocated extensive control by experts (such as himself, of course). He argues,

The Cat is out of the Bag. There is no invisible hand. There never was. If the depression has not taught us that, we are incapable of education ... We must now supply a real and visible guiding hand to do the task which that mythical, nonexistent, invisible agency was supposed to perform, but never did.¹¹

Tugwell was a socialist. Socialism comes in many varieties, but one variety

that was popular in the 1930s was "planned capitalism." The economic "high ground" would be nationalized—banks, railroads, mines, etc. Most of the economy would be left in the hands of the private sector, there to be subject not to government ownership but merely to regulation. Regulation on labor contracts, consumer product quality, prices, and the financial sector would address the common failings of the market.

This form of socialism was attractive to many in Roosevelt's system because it allowed them to claim that they were basically capitalists, while holding to the essentials of socialism. This form of socialism was called fascism when adopted by Mussolini's Italy or Hitler's Germany. By the time Roosevelt latched on to the idea, fascism had a bad name, so it had to be called something else: the Planned Economy. After all, how can one be opposed to planning?

The Austrian economist Ludwig von Mises makes the point that the absence of central planning does not mean *no* planning. In a market economy, it is the individual who plans the use of his own property, and not the government planning the use of everyone else's property.

Why wouldn't central planning work? Why wouldn't it be a good idea to have a central authority plan the movements of labor and capital, set prices, and regulate output? Doesn't the government have possession of better information about the economy than an individual? Mises explains, "[I]n the socialist system everything depends on the wisdom, the talents, and the gifts of those people who form the supreme authority. That which the supreme dictator—or his committee—does *not* know, is not taken into account."¹² Roosevelt's administration was full of people who thought themselves gifted and knowledgeable enough to make decisions for

everyone else in the country.

Roosevelt's onetime vice president, Henry Wallace, illustrates well some of the oddities of FDR-style utopianism. Not a stable thinker, Wallace bounced from Presbyterianism to Roman Catholicism to Episcopalianism to Confucianism to Buddhism, and even astrology. He was, for a time, a fan of a strange guru of Eastern philosophy named Nicholas Konstantin Roerich.¹³

At one time, Wallace was the Secretary of Agriculture, and, during World War II, served as the head of the Board of Economic Warfare. Chief economist for the BEW was Dr. Maurice Parmelee. Parmelee is the author of a book called *Bolshevism, Fascism, and the Liberal Democratic State*. In it, he displays a predilection for central planning, Soviet-style:

The high technological development in the United States renders it feasible to introduce a planned social economy much more rapidly than has been the case in the U.S.S.R. ... The superficial paraphernalia of capitalism can be dispensed with more quickly than in the Soviet Union.¹⁴

Parmelee was a colorful character. He has also written a book called *Nudism in Modern Life*, in which he advocates a strange brand of nudism called gymnosophy. This was an old cult of Hindu hermits who went around with little or no clothes. He urges nudism "wherever feasible in office, workshop, or factory."¹⁵ As with other utopians, nudism went hand-in-glove (or, in Parmelee's case, out-of-glove?) with Parmelee's socialism. He writes, "[T]hese gymnosophist nudist colonies furnish excellent opportunities for experiments along socialist lines ... Customary nudity is impossible under existing undemocratic, social and economic and political organization."¹⁶

Parmelee became a little too embarrassing for the administration, so he was

replaced as chief economist with Harvard-trained John Bovingdon. Bovingdon was quite the artist, in addition to whatever economic credentials he may have had. He became director of the International Theater in Moscow, worked as a journalist there, and wrote radio scripts and plays. He came back to the United States in early 1935, where he became a kind of informal advocate for the Soviet Union. Indeed, utopians in the Roosevelt administration provided a channel for Soviet infiltration during the wartime alliance with Stalin.

Roosevelt's administration, stocked though it was with leftist utopians, was nevertheless too moderate for some thinkers of the time. Upton Sinclair, who is perhaps most famous for his novel *The Jungle*, was a prolific critic of capitalism. He won the Democratic nomination for governor of California, with the idea of turning the state into a socialist utopia.¹⁷ Sinclair's plan involved getting the state government to put up borrowed money to restart all the idle factories and abandoned farms, which would then hire the unemployed. Ten or fifteen percent of California's population would be moved immediately into a socialistic economy. Sinclair got Roosevelt's support after winning the primary, but the Republican candidate defeated Sinclair.¹⁸

One oddball utopian group of the 1930s, the Technocrats, took their ideas from the aforementioned Saint-Simon. The Technocrats wanted to unite with Canada, Mexico, and the Central American countries and eliminate the democratic system. Engineers and economists would then run the country. This was to be called the Soviet of the Engineers. This council of elites would have abolished the current monetary system and based all money on a unit of energy called the erg.

Roosevelt-era utopianism was

horrifyingly wasteful and occasionally laughable. But forms of it have persisted to the twenty-first century. While the modern utopian is likely to accept some modicum of capitalism, as New Dealers did, environmentalism is now a prominent feature of ideal societies. The primitivist "hippies" of the late sixties and early seventies made the usual association of communal living and sexual anti-traditionalism, but inserted environmental concerns. State coercion was soon enlisted to enforce allegedly pro-environment behavior.

Christian Utopia?

Christians who advocate a society based on God's law are sometimes classified as utopians. But merely considering how an ideal society might look is not the error of utopianism. A Christian worldview requires thinking about "ideals," informed by the Bible. Christians might well look to the commands against theft or covetousness as indications that private property is part of an "ideal" Biblical society. We might also note the impossibility of human perfection in this life and know that it is foolish to expect sinless, selfless devotion to communal living. We might find in the Bible the indication that only God is omniscient, so knowing the best uses of resources is beyond the power of any individual, government bureaucracy, or think tank. A price system acknowledges human ignorance and helps condense and convey the most important information about resource scarcity.

The problem of utopianism is the pursuit of ideals in the face of all we know from the Bible. It is the arrogance contained in the belief that one can reconstruct society from *man's* wisdom. It is an arrogance that results in poverty and death. ■

Timothy Terrell teaches economics at a small college in South Carolina. He is also

director of the Center for Biblical Law and Economics at <http://www.christ-college.edu/html/cble/>. Dr. Terrell can be contacted at terrelltd@marketswork.com.

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Religion Gone Bad: The Hidden Dangers of the Christian Right

by Rev. Dr. Mel White

New York: Penguin, 2006

Reviewed by Martin G. Selbrede



It has been pointed out that the Bible is an anvil that has worn out many hammers. In some respects, the latest book by Rev. Dr.

Mel White, a nationally noted apologist for the homosexual community, is another in a long line of hammers, but not all hammers are created equal. Although liberal scholar Bishop John Shelby Spong leads the list of endorsements on White's dust jacket, it would be an error to think their respective agendas are in absolute lockstep. Spong sees the Bible as filled with "texts of terror," as evidenced in his book, *The Sins of Scripture: Exposing the Bible's Texts of Hate to Reveal the God of Love*. Dr. White's approach does not reach Spong's extreme, but it is surely burdened by its own problems.

Dr. White's Approach to Scripture

In his booklet entitled *What the Bible Says—and Doesn't Say—About Homosexuality*, White provides a not-entirely-accurate list of Bible teachings and concludes, "I'm certain you don't agree with these teachings from the Bible about sex. And you shouldn't." Why not? "[T]he Holy Spirit has taught us that certain Bible verses should not be understood as God's law for all time periods ... [T]he Holy Spirit uses science to teach us why those ancient words no longer apply to our modern times." Unlike Spong's outright rejection of Scripture, White attempts to co-opt the Bible

by floating alternate interpretations of controversial passages (e.g., he treats the statute in Leviticus 20:13 as applying solely to the Levitical priesthood while it existed).

It is noteworthy that White's *method* in approaching Scripture is rampant across Christendom, making it impossible for most mainstream Christians to criticize him without raising the specter of blatant hypocrisy and arbitrary selectivity. Christian inconsistency rightly gets thrust back into the face of White's detractors. Christians want to criticize Dr. White for picking-and-choosing the Biblical texts *he* emphasizes on the grounds that Dr. White neglects passages X, Y, and Z, but Christians themselves have Biblical skeletons in *their* closet (neglect of passages Q, R, and S) that Dr. White ably exposes. It is therefore not without cause that Chalcedon has always urged a full-orbed Biblical faith: anything short of this effectively sheathes the two-edged sword of Scripture, not to mention unleashing the rebuke Paul enunciates in Romans 2:22–23.

Dr. White on Biblical Inerrancy

As touching Biblical inerrancy, Dr. White sees it as a pivotal issue. "Everything rises or falls on that belief."¹

Understanding that Biblical inerrancy is foundational, Dr. White is at pains to undermine it throughout his book. When the church caves on inerrancy, books like Dr. White's are the irrevocable result. Dr. White indicts, at length, those who hold to inerrancy as idolaters

who sin against the Holy Spirit by treating the canon as closed and thus turning "the Bible into a cold, stone idol."²

As R. J. Rushdoony noted, infallibility is an inescapable concept. Dr. White reposes it elsewhere than in God's Word, creating his own set of idols in the process (Abraham Lincoln³ and the U.S. Constitution⁴ being foremost in the list).

Dr. White as Researcher

Is Dr. White's book well researched? Two endorsements on the dust jacket characterize the book as "meticulously researched," as the obvious product of "methodical research." *Personally*, I would avoid *any* method of research that leads to such obvious gaffes as calling R. J. Rushdoony's son-in-law David North rather than Gary North,⁵ or repeatedly labeling those who promote God's law "theophonists"⁶ rather than theonomists (Dr. White evidently didn't get his money's worth studying Greek at Fuller Theological Seminary).

Dr. White speaks about how he successfully corrected Francis Schaeffer regarding Barth's stance on Schleiermacher,⁷ only to repeatedly misspell the latter's name as Schleirmacher. The book of Leviticus slips between being the second⁸ and third⁹ book of the Torah. Rampant carelessness has marked most criticism of Reconstruction (see my articles concerning the two conferences held in New York last year), and Dr. White is representative in this regard. Perhaps he has other fish to fry.

Dr. White as Ghostwriter

Dr. White was a ghostwriter for Dr. Jerry Falwell, Rev. Billy Graham, Dr. W. A. Criswell, and Pat Robertson. Perhaps the most embarrassing incident Dr. White relates deals with Pat Robertson's book, *America's Dates with Destiny*. Dr. White could never pin Robertson down long enough to go over any of the 120,000 words of the ghostwritten text (at one point spinning his wheels holed up in a hotel room for two days for no purpose). Robertson was later to autograph Dr. White's copy thus: "To Mel White, a magnificent writer, best wishes, Pat." Dr. White adds, "I can say for certain that in my copy of *America's Dates with Destiny* there are nine words that Pat Robertson wrote." The most controversial incident, however, relates to an event we only have Dr. White's word on regarding Dr. Criswell.¹⁰

Dr. White's Primary Themes

If one went by how often Dr. White repeats a phrase in this book, the most significant ideas he puts forward are that fundamentalists "create fear and loathing" of homosexuals and that this, whether intended or not, leads to "tragic consequences." Dr. White stays rigidly "on message" with this sequence of ideas. The most common endnotes in his book are references to dozens and dozens of fund-raising letters and appeals (all on file), the primary subtext of which is that fundamentalists create "fear and loathing" to boost fund-raising—and it is reportedly very effective.

Since Dr. White thinks in terms of political and monetary power, he lists the budgets for the major ministries, both to warn his constituency and to indict the ministries for intentionally cashing in on "hate." Because multiple millions of dollars flowing into the hands of fundamentalists makes for a better alarmist story for Dr. White, Chalcedon is completely passed over, being implic-

itly insignificant and appearing only faintly on his radar screen. Given his progressivist view of political power, Dr. White's God is much closer to "the God of forces ... whom his fathers knew not" (Dan. 11:38) than a God who confounds the strong by using the weak. He undermines his focus on God being the God of outcasts¹¹ by making sure the power state is beefed up to keep God's Word culturally castrated.

Several subthemes are detectible: he labels as pseudo-science anything coming from across the aisle; he regards fundamentalism as heretical and embodying idolatry in various particulars; he reprehends secret or semi-secret meetings of Christian leaders; and he dances back and forth on the issue of slapping the fascism label on his opponents. The criticisms are equivocal and could often be put back in Dr. White's lap with equal (if not greater) justice.

Dr. White's More Dubious Points

When in doubt, compare your opponents to Hitler. I've written on this gambit last year in New York in regard to Katherine Yurica's use of it against Christians, and the same corrective principles apply here. To be fair, Dr. White seems to want his cake and eat it too: he repeatedly invokes the Hitler/Goebbels gambit and then withdraws it as obviously over-the-top.¹² Some of his constituency may wonder why he halts between two opinions: why raise the specter of renewed Nazi Kristallnachts only to have a failure of nerve about the charge in the next paragraph? He hesitates to condemn individual fundamentalists but insists that their position will likely tend in the direction of a Nazi-style "final solution" or "ultimate solution."¹³ He spends many pages painting fundamentalists as fascists and drawing inflammatory comparisons.

Like Yurica and others, Dr. White insists that "stealth" and "coded lan-

guage" mark the strategies of fundamentalists.¹⁴ Perhaps this is why Dr. White deals so little with R. J. Rushdoony: there's nothing stealthy or encoded to uncover.

In his preface, Dr. White discusses the murder of Gary Matson and Winfield Scott Mowder by the hate-mongering Williams brothers.¹⁵ Dr. White quotes from the court testimony of Dr. Mark A. Matson, Gary's brother and Academic Dean at Milligan College, who holds a doctorate in New Testament Studies:

Mark Matson ... admitted to a reporter that "Gary saw the danger of the religious right." Apparently, it was the one thing the two brothers disagreed on. "It is ironic to me," Dr. Matson admits, "that his reaction was correct. For him Christianity or at least a perverse segment of it was dangerous" ... It took the torture and murder of his brother for Mark Matson to realize that "a perverse segment" of Christianity is dangerous. What will it take for the rest of us to realize that fundamentalist Christianity, that "perverse segment" of the Christian church, is a threat...?"¹⁶

I contacted Dr. Matson to see if Dr. White had fairly and accurately represented his views. Dr. Matson graciously replied to me and forwarded me the court transcript as well. Says Dr. Matson,

[My] brother was the one who saw danger from Christians. The term "Christian right" is actually his term, not mine. [Dr. Mel White's] simple quote does not do me or my views justice. My larger point was that the murder of homosexuals cannot possibly be condoned under the guise of Christianity ... that the Williams actually were *not Christians*, they were hateful people that masqueraded under [a] *false banner* ... Your real question is whether I think fundamentalism is "perverse." No.¹⁷

The lesson here is that one cannot assume that Dr. White isn't bending the

data to fit his rhetorical needs, whether that be the Biblical data or his apparent attempt to make undue capital of Dr. Matson's testimony to create the impression of solidarity. Since he has formally announced that he will no longer dialogue with any of his opponents, his treatment of the Biblical texts is now insulated from challenge or interaction. He criticizes fundamentalists for their alleged "no discussion" attitude,¹⁸ but cheerfully admits to the same fault,¹⁹ since he has since moved on to "relentless nonviolent resistance" using the approach of Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King.

Dr. White as Modern Shimei

In 2 Samuel 16:5–13, we read of Shimei cursing King David and casting stones, sticks, and dirt at him and his entourage from along the hillside. David wouldn't let anyone touch Shimei, saying, "Let him curse." In what sense does Dr. White function as a Shimei? (Put another way, setting aside the vast bulk of his book with which we disagree, do some of his accusations ring true?)

Dr. White points out that "conservative Christian couples are even more likely to divorce than couples from other faith groups, atheists, or agnostics."²⁰ And he can cite George Barna in support of this contention, concluding that this evidence shatters the myth of the Christian nuclear family (a myth, he adds, that we should nonetheless aspire to realize). Dr. White never actually asks the question, "What if the energy spent battling homosexuality were redirected to this far wider problem instead?" He doesn't need to. The function of a Shimei is to curse and throw sticks, hoping some may hit the mark.

Dr. White lampoons the utter Biblical illiteracy of the vast majority of Americans (even American Christians), pointing out (among many other things) that "God helps those who help

themselves" was a "bromide by Ben Franklin" that not only isn't in the Bible, it contradicts the themes of both Testaments.²¹

Dr. White skewers the prosperity gospel on the grounds that it makes God subservient to man and his wishes: God must obey man in such pop theologies.²² Dr. White occasionally makes a statement that could even have been written by R. J. Rushdoony himself, such as in warning against limiting "the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus to a kind of 'Get Out Of Jail' card ... to escape the fires of hell."²³ That sounds eerily like Rushdoony's criticism that too many Christians have a spare tire religion, that Jesus represents life and fire insurance and little more.

Why even acknowledge *any* edifying content in this book? If King David can tolerate dirt flung in his face by Shimei, why should we quail at Dr. White's occasional flash of truth? Dr. Rushdoony made it crystal clear in his exposition of the ninth commandment that we must bear true witness in our dealings, even (and perhaps especially) in regard to our opponents.

Dr. White as a Statist

Dr. White decries what he sees as grabs for statist power being made by fundamentalists. He doesn't see the irony in that his response makes him birds of a feather with his opponents. By elevating the U.S. Constitution over the Bible, Dr. White, knowingly or not, advances Hegel's notion that the state is God walking on earth.

Dr. White therefore looks for statist, political solutions, as most progressives (almost by definition) always do. The focus is on power, however structured (statist power, civil rights movement power, etc.). He wails over power slipping into the hands of his opponents, but promotes the accumulation of power for his own agenda. As Dr. Joseph C.

Morecraft once said of America's political parties, one wants to gain power, the other wants to retain power. But the focus is always a lust for power.

Chalcedon has consistently upheld Isaiah's affirmation that the nations are as nothing, and less than nothing, like the small dust of the balance (Isa. 40:15, 17), that of the increase of Christ's government and of peace there shall be no end (Isa. 9:7), and that the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this. Dr. White is counting on fundamentalists to continue to fight in Saul's armor, but R. J. Rushdoony made clear that Biblical law cannot be imposed, it can only be embraced. If God Himself writes His law on the minds and hearts of His people (Heb. 8:10), Dr. White has set himself the impossible task of fighting God.

Dr. White may have retired from the field declaring victory over God's inerrant Word, having explicitly subordinated His Word to human political documents that "trump" it, but he will ultimately need to contend with the stupendous claim made in Psalm 138:2: "[T]hou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." What God hath magnified, let no man subordinate.

Final Observations

Dr. White gains tremendous traction by leveraging the ignorance Christians have of the books of Moses. How many Christians have read Leviticus, let alone understand it? How many will discard Leviticus under Dr. White's emotional promptings, such as when he claims that the holiness passages in Leviticus have been "trumped, invalidated, annulled, quashed, overthrown by the two great commandments"²⁴—with Dr. White never mentioning that one of those two great commandments is embedded in Leviticus itself, centered between the passages he claims are quashed? We're left marveling at how

Leviticus magically overthrows itself.

In short, I would recommend buying and reading Dr. White's book, just so long as you also buy Dr. Rushdoony's commentary on Leviticus²⁵ and read it in parallel with Dr. White's work. Only then will you fully appreciate precisely what is at stake when Christians persist in their studied indifference to the law of God. Luther held that we're only defending the faith if we're engaged at the point at which it is actually under attack. If so, we can thank Dr. White for pointing out the critical battle zone today: the book of Leviticus. May new, unflagging zeal and love for His Word be thereby ignited in us all. ■

Martin G. Selbrede, Vice President of Chalcedon, lives in Woodlands, Texas. Martin is the Chief Scientist at Uni-Pixel Displays, Inc. He has been an advocate for the Chalcedon Foundation for a quarter century.

1. Rev. Dr. Mel White, *Religion Gone Bad: The Hidden Dangers of the Christian Right* (New York: Penguin, 2006), 29.
2. Ibid., 174–175. On the multitudinous “idolatries” practiced by fundamentalists, see 169–207.
3. Ibid., 276. Dr. White approvingly cites the London *Spectator's* assessment that Lincoln's words have “a sacred and almost prophetic character,” something Dr. White denies to much of Scripture.
4. Ibid., 257. “When it comes to guiding our democracy and running our government, the U.S. Constitution must always trump the Bible, because the Constitution protects our rights to disagree about what the Bible says.” Absolutely no one is above the law (259)—apparently not even God, which *is* in fact the official position of the U.S. government.
5. Ibid., 241.
6. Ibid., 109.
7. Ibid., 28.
8. Ibid., 159, 171.
9. Ibid., 109.
10. Ibid., 44–45. Dr. Criswell is said to have

retrieved from Dr. White a bundle of letters “that should not have been given to the archives” that “were clear evidence that W. A. Criswell had truly loved another man” when he “was in his late teens.” True or false, Dr. White has probably worn out his welcome in Dallas with this highly charged claim?

11. Ibid., 300–303. “God loves outcasts best.” “When you stand with outcasts, you stand with Jesus.”
12. Ibid., 214. “Actually we have no right to make a direct comparison.” Yet he elsewhere writes, “I am convinced that Christian fundamentalism is a far greater threat to this country than Muslim terrorists could ever be” (213). He poses the question whether the “460 fundamentalist Christian leaders gathered on July 4, 1986” who signed the *Manifesto for the Christian Church* “committed treason that day” (250). He gains more backbone on page 252, directly calling that signing a “treasonous act.” For someone claiming it's his opponents who make irresponsible statements, such comments are disturbingly duplicitous.
13. Ibid., 159, 165. “Is it possible that the extremists among them are discussing an ultimate solution behind the scenes?” The entire chapter on “Fascism: The Politics of Fundamentalism” draws extended point-by-point comparisons between an anti-Semitic Nazi propaganda film and Christian fundamentalist tenets.
14. Ibid., 160. Dr. White regards the term “absolute values” to mean the institutionalization of homophobia and any number of species of xenophobia.
15. Ibid., xiii–xvi.
16. Ibid., xv.
17. Dr. Matson regards himself as a fundamentalist, although he dislikes the label as being inadequate. He holds to the absolute authority and inspiration of Scripture, regards himself as a literalist regarding the Scriptures that speak about homosexual acts as a sin, but is *not* an inerrantist. In his email to me, he expressed his dismay that the older of the two convicted murderers “was ‘ordained’ as a minister while in jail, after it was clear that he had murdered my brother.” I am grateful for his willingness to discuss such a painful circumstance at such great

length with me, a perfect stranger.

18. White, 175.
19. Ibid., 183, 329–330 and elsewhere. There'll be no more “studying, debating and discussing” because Dr. White regards this as a pointless game that further *enables* his oppressors, as he sees them. This position further insulates him for having to defend his handling of various Biblical texts, such as his homosexual angle on the Roman centurion's servant or the reclining position of St. John on the Lord's breast during the Last Supper (357). Christians *will* dialogue on the exegesis of the text of *any* Scripture, but Dr. White has formally disengaged. This comes dangerously close to being a hit-and-run on his part, but he hasn't painted himself in the corner so far that he can't reconsider his *you're in the darkness, I'm in the light, I'm not talking anymore, I'm now going to take it to the streets* approach (my words, not his, although he does talk about taking it to the streets and “mobilizing acts of civil disobedience at the headquarters” of James Dobson, Pat Robertson, and even the Vatican Embassy, on page 331). Van Til and Greg Bahnsen have noted how fruitless it is to argue across presuppositional systems, but disengaging like this means never truly popping the hood on the other side's reasoning.
20. Ibid., 181.
21. Ibid., 281.
22. Ibid., 176–177.
23. Ibid., 178.
24. Ibid., 171.
25. R. J. Rushdoony, *Commentaries on the Pentateuch: Leviticus* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2005).

Contra Imperium: The Christian Case Against American Imperialism and the Security/Police State

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A deep division is occurring in America. It is dividing family members and friends into opposing ideological camps. The ideological split between previously gracious and forbearing individuals is caused by two aspects of *growing statism*:

First, America's military expansion overseas—i.e., imperial hegemony.

Second, the domestic growth of what is known as a security/police state—i.e., the domestic program of government rulers to induce among the populace a ready acceptance of the idea of foreign imperialism through the generation of mass fear coupled with the forceful suppression of political dissent.

In one camp are those who claim the Bush Administration's preemptive invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq (and the proposed invasions of Lebanon, Syria, and Iran) are unconstitutional, unwise, unnecessary, and do nothing but inflame Islamic hatred of America. Some in this camp believe that President Bush does not possess true authority. They believe that the real power brokers are the war-mongering neoconservatives who, in turn, answer to the more shadowy rulers who seek to meld our American Republic into the international "New World Order." As you might have heard, recent surveys reveal that 36 percent of the American population now believe that the U.S. government had some hand in the "terrorist" attacks of 9/11—that it was an "inside job." According to this growing view, these at-

tacks were allegedly contrived to justify the two-pronged policy of preemptive foreign war and the establishment of a domestic security/police state.

Included in the allegations of the first camp is that the present administration is being compromised by gross sexual immorality, as in the case of James Guckert (a.k.a. "Jeff Gannon"), the homosexual pornographer who advertises himself as a male prostitute and who had ready access to the White House through a White House press pass. More recent is the exposure of pedophiles in Congress, like ex-Florida Congressman Mark Foley, who quickly resigned when the fact of his illicit emails to young male congressional pages was made public. Such moral indiscretions demonstrate a clear weakness in political leadership during a time of war and national security.

The opposing camp argues, "No way!" They state that President Bush had an "experience" and is a "born-again" Christian. They relate that Bush's political staff, during his first presidential campaign, told how Bush allegedly led a young teenager to Christ. Therefore, the president would not engage in any under-the-table maneuvers for political reasons. They argue that, instead of opposing President Bush's preemptive attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq and his regime-change occupation of these countries, Americans should support him and the patriotic troops who are protecting America against "Islamic terrorism." And if future intelligence indicates that Iran is achieving

nuclear capability, then America and her allies should uphold the president in his efforts "to protect our country" against this nuclear threat from radical Islamic leaders.

Perhaps the best way to shed light on this divisive subject is first to consider foreign imperialism and domestic statism in ancient history, and second, Great Britain, the greatest imperial nation of all times.

We will then consider the United States of America to see how our own country gradually became, though unrecognized by most Americans, a full-fledged imperial state overseas and a corresponding security/police state domestically.

Finally, we will evaluate the double-sided problem of foreign imperialism and domestic statism from a Biblical perspective.

The issue of building empires, either domestic or foreign, is completely contrary to God's Word. In man's first world-empire-building attempt, the Tower of Babel, God confused the language and dispersed the people (Gen. 11:1–9). God's clear plan for civil government is for the establishment of small, democratic-republic civil units, not large, unitary dictator-type units (Exod. 18:13–26). To be Biblical, America should abhor foreign possessions and international entanglements like the United Nations, NAFTA, etc.

Imperialism in Ancient History

A survey of ancient civilizations—as cited by the Preacher in the book of

Ecclesiastes—shows “there is no new thing under the sun” (1:9). Accordingly, it is not surprising to discover that civil rulers, from the earliest kingdoms to those of the present time, all wielded hegemonic power to expand their borders by land or sea. Generally, the motive to attack other nations was to seize their wealth and to gain control of their natural resources, trade routes, or the seas.

Sometimes the motivation to make war on other nations was simply to eliminate them as competitors in trade. This was the case in Rome’s long-continued attacks on Carthage during three Punic Wars (264–146 B.C.). “Carthago delenda est!” (“Carthage must be destroyed!”) was the cry on Rome’s senate floor by those who stood to benefit from war. A similar motivation was behind Britain’s assaults against Germany leading to World War I because the “British Crown” feared competition from Germany’s rapidly expanding industrial capability.

What we today call “special interests” were usually behind inciting a pro-war attitude among the public. It was so in early history, and it is so today. Even in early history, it was essential for empire builders to instill in the common people a willingness to sacrifice their lives and the lives of their children as “cannon fodder” to expand their country’s imperialistic hegemony.

Here is a summary of key events of imperialistic hegemony in ancient history:

The Hyksos

Around 1720 B.C., the Hyksos, a Semitic people from Palestine, invaded the Delta area of Egypt and made all of Egypt tributary. The irresistible power of the Hyksos came from their temporary monopoly of two new weapons of war: the powerful composite bow of wood and horn and the much-feared horse-drawn chariot, which had sharp swords

extending from the hubs of the wheels to slice up opposing foot soldiers. These awful war chariots generated great fear among the enemy.

It was during this pro-Semitic rule of the Hyksos in Egypt that Jacob and his family migrated to Egypt during Joseph’s reign as administrator. After some time, the Egyptians were able to expel the Hyksos because they adopted the new weapons that were introduced by the Hyksos invaders.

The Hittites

About 1450 B.C., the Hittites established themselves in eastern Asia Minor. They had developed an iron metallurgy that gave them improved weapons. Their horse-drawn chariots (inherited from the Hyksos) and iron-tipped spears and swords provided a strong military advantage and enabled them to expand their borders and conquer the people of central Asia Minor. The Hittite Empire included Syria, which had been lost to them by Egypt. Once again, superior military technology and the fear it generated among the enemy was the key to imperial expansion.

The Kingdom of Solomon

Shortly after 1200 B.C., an invasion of Indo-European peoples destroyed the Hittite Empire. The chief importance of the Hittites was the culture they passed on to the Greeks (who settled along the Aegean coast of Asia Minor) and the knowledge of iron metallurgy, which later gave the Philistines military dominance over the Israelites during the time of King Saul (1095–1055 B.C.).

Liberation of the area of Palestine from the hegemony of competing empires then allowed the Old Testament Israelites to grow and expand under the reigns of Kings Saul, David, and Solomon.

Solomon established an oriental-type, military-based empire similar to others in the Mideast. He maintained

a formidable military force of 40,000 stalls of horses for chariots and 12,000 horsemen (1 Kings 4:20–28). His harem numbered 700 wives and 300 concubines. Burdensome expenditures and impressed labor were used to erect a grandiose temple and house for Solomon (1 Kings 6 & 7).

Under Solomon’s rule, the democratic republic of the Hebrews was turned into an autocratic empire (“like other nations”), which grew fat on wealth and tribute wrested from foreign nations. This was a typical growth-of-empire process that would be followed by other empires in the future. Gold and riches flowed into Solomon’s empire, but the internal cost to ordinary citizens was heavy taxation and the loss of individual freedom.

Eventually, burdensome taxes motivated the Hebrew people to rebel during the reign of Solomon’s son Rehoboam (1 Kings 12:16). This was a Biblical/historical instance of the principle of *governmental interposition* through which God raises up an intermediate magistrate to rally the people against rulers who have turned tyrannical.

Later Empires

The Assyrians, a Semitic people from the upper Tigris, subdued Babylon in 721 B.C. and gained control of the Fertile Crescent (which extends northward from where the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers pour into the Persian Gulf, westward to the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and southward to Palestine).

The offensive strategy of the Assyrian Empire in foreign conquests is important to note because similar steps were used both by earlier and subsequent empires:

1. The use of superior war-making technology to overwhelm the enemy; in the case of the Assyrians: the much-feared military chariots, mounted cavalry, and sophisticated siege engines.

2. A policy of generating terror among the peoples they attacked.
3. A very efficient system of political administration.
4. Destruction of the national unity of conquered peoples by mass deportations.
5. Strong support of the empire's domestic commercial classes who would profit from trading over large areas that were united by political and economic stability.

Expansion of the Assyrian Empire was quite successful, but, around 650 B.C. the ethnic population of Assyria had been so decimated by continued wars that the rulers had to depend on hired mercenary troops and levies from the nations they conquered. This weakened the empire and enabled Egypt to regain its independence. Also the Medes, an Indo-European people who had established themselves on the Iranian plateau about 1000 B.C., east of Assyria, refused further tribute. By 625 B.C. the Chaldeans, who had gradually filtered into Babylonia, revolted; and by 612 B.C. the Chaldeans and Medes joined to destroy Nineveh, the capital. Thus, we see that empires are built through force and by inciting fear among the enemy, but are themselves eventually destroyed by force.

The Roman Empire was notorious for how members of its Senate conspired to expand Roman hegemony for their own personal benefit—money and power—to the eventual ruin of the empire, which reached its zenith about A.D. 180. The Roman soldiers, who wielded the notorious short sword, generated great fear and hate among the enemy by leaving battlefields strewn with decapitated heads, and arms and legs. Today, the same tactic is used via mass cluster bombing and the use of depleted uranium (which causes deplorable birth malformations among the nations under attack).

Octavian Augustus (27 B.C.) attempted to restore the old Roman virtues of self-reliance, personal integrity, discipline, and family cohesion; but the aristocracy, in its moral decadence, was generally unconcerned about the drift of their country (like our modern Congress?). In the cities, unemployed mobs, long degraded by government-provided free bread and circuses (similar to our modern welfare payments and TV?) had lost interest in hard work. Later, a steady debauching of Rome's currency was a telltale sign of its moral, political, and economic corruption. (A comparable decline in purchasing power of the U.S. dollar has occurred since creation of the Federal Reserve Bank in 1913!)

Earlier empires (the Persian and that of Greece), and later empires (Byzantium, the Mongol and Ottoman, and those in India and China), all rose through the use of power and fear, and then declined. Generally the pertinent facts are similar: the lust for land, power, and riches at the expense of weaker nations; the greedy self-interests of those who benefit financially from imperial expansion; and the growth domestically of freedom-destroying statism.

The British Empire

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Portugal, Spain, England, France, and the Dutch all expanded their hegemony internationally. Each used the rapidly developing technology of gunpowder (cannons and small arms) to conquer and enslave less-advanced nations and to dominate their cultures.

Britain's rise to become the preeminent world empire rested on the leading technology she had in arms manufacture and shipbuilding. This made her able to dominate less-advanced countries on both land and sea, thereby expanding her hegemony all over the world. Her boast was "the sun never sets" on her empire.

At home the common people were mentally conditioned, at great personal loss of life and limb, to serve as recruits in the imperial army and navy. This was accomplished through government propaganda and the willing participation of a compliant press that was largely controlled by commercial and financial special interest groups represented in Parliament. In this, note the similarity to the Senate of the Roman Empire. Blood flowed freely wherever Britain's hegemony was extended (India, China, Africa, and elsewhere); immense riches flowed into the coffers of the Crown and members of the ruling elite.

Queen Elizabeth had incorporated the English East India Company in 1600. This created a monopoly of trade, producing vast wealth for her and other stockholders.

History textbooks downplay two main sources of the Queen's vast wealth (accumulated tax-free) and of the wealth of other empire elites in Britain and Europe:

1. The opium trade. Tea and spices could not possibly generate the vast income needed to station British soldiers at the Khyber Pass, only one of many places where imperial troops were posted.

2. The African slave trade. Britain joined it in 1503, first to supply cheap labor to her sugar plantations in the West Indies, then later (in the 1600s and 1700s) to supply cheap labor to the plantation owners in Colonial America.

Trade in opium and slaves provided the foundation for many family fortunes now enjoyed by descendants of the British and European royalty, as well as for elite families of New England in America today—though much effort is made to conceal these dark facts of history.

The Bank of England was founded in 1694 to provide the king with funds

to pay for foreign wars. The Bank's charter allowed it to charge 8 percent on monies loaned to the government and gave the Bank a monopoly for issuing credit-based banknotes on which it could collect interest. Credit financing made it easier to fund expansion of the empire overseas. The Bank is still located in "the City" of London, an independent entity not under the British government.

British imperialism reached its zenith after World War I when Palestine, Iraq, and large parts of Africa were designated as her "protectorates" by the League of Nations, which Britain greatly influenced. This allowed Britain to gain effective control of the rich oil reserves of Arab countries. This set the stage for the volatile situation we see in the Mideast today. Britain also gained effective control of vast mineral reserves and other riches in Africa.

After World War II, the extensive British Empire quickly crumbled, going the way of all empires, as freedom-minded peoples demanded self-determination.

America's Path to Empire

In 1896 the U.S. Congress passed a resolution to intervene in a rebellion of Cubans against Spain, but President Grover Cleveland, an anti-imperialist, refused to get the U.S. involved. When pressured, he declared that if Congress declared war, he would not, as commander-in-chief, issue the necessary order to mobilize the army. Thus, Cleveland courageously opposed public opinion, which was being stirred up by special interests who had commercial ties to Cuba. Earlier, in 1893, Cleveland, against strong public opinion, had stopped the annexation of Hawaii, which was being engineered by commercial interests in Hawaii who had wrongly deposed Queen Liliuokalani.

In contrast, when the U.S. battleship Maine blew up in Havana harbor on February 15, 1898, President William McKinley, who did not want hostilities, reluctantly yielded to public pressure stirred up by special interests and a cooperative press. So America declared war against Spain, which ceded Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States, and thereby gained effective control of Cuba. This was America's great step toward building a foreign empire.

One immediate effect of our venture into empire building was the rebellion of our prior allies in the war, the Philippine patriots, who demanded self-determination. The resulting Philippine resistance was overcome by American military strength, but it took three years and the deployment of 60,000 American troops to put down the rebellion.

In subsequent years, America's foreign entanglements drew us into a long series of foreign wars, lasting more than a century. In each instance, there is sufficient evidence suggesting U.S. government deception of the American people in order to create support for war.

America's engagement in World War I came after the sinking of the Lusitania, which the Germans accused the British of causing in order to bring the U.S. into the war. Much has also been written about FDR's inducing the Japanese to attack the naval ships at Pearl Harbor. Also, Truman is alleged to have tricked North Korea into attacking South Korea, thus launching an unconstitutional war for America. And it is now a documented fact that LBJ lied to the American public about the Gulf of Tonkin incident—the alleged event that caused an immediate escalation of U.S. involvement in Vietnam.

In the 1991 war "Desert Storm," Iraq invaded Kuwait after being told that the U.S. "had no interest" in Iraq's

territorial dispute with Kuwait. It is also now well established that many of the atrocities alleged to have been perpetrated by Iraqi forces in Kuwait are fraudulent. These false allegations were used to stir up a pro-war attitude among the American public.

And, finally, the preemptive attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq were based upon faulty intelligence regarding so-called "weapons of mass destruction" and the very questionable events of September 11, 2001. Even today, as Bob Woodward recently revealed in his book *State of Denial*, the truth about the escalating violence in Iraq is being hid from Americans.

In each of these wars, the net result has been a sharply divided public; a sad waste of young lives; the centralization of more government power in Washington, D.C., especially in the hands of the executive branch (a shocking example is Congress' recent passage in early October of the "Detainee Bill," which unconstitutionally gives President Bush sole power to determine who is a "terrorist combatant"—including even American citizens!—and which, also unconstitutionally, provides President Bush retroactively with protection against being accused of the torture of prisoners under the Geneva Convention); tremendous increases in taxation and government regulation; persistent monetary inflation, which causes a steady depreciation in the purchasing value of the U.S. dollar; and a continued loss of individual freedom as citizens are persuaded by political leaders to surrender their God-ordained, self-responsibilities to the government. In short, a caretaker security/police state has developed in America as an inescapable and corresponding part of America's involvement into an empire state internationally.

During each war, freedom of the people has suffered, never to be wholly

restored, and taxes and government control of the population have continually increased.

Evidences ...

Here are some clear evidences of the growth of American imperialism abroad and the accompanying security/police state domestically:

Burdensome taxes: When civil governments exceed their role in society—their lawless interventions into the spheres of the home, the church, business, and other private associations—their statist programs must be paid for. To wrest needed monies from citizens, the IRS has been set up as an “inquisitor” that has power to “undress people financially” every year, and even to make armed raids to confiscate property on claims of nonpayment. Today the average American must work for over six months each year to pay for federal, state, and local taxes. Compare this with God’s modest tithe of only 10 percent from His people.

Monetary inflation: When citizens start complaining about high taxes, civil rulers then turn to the easier route of a hidden tax called monetary inflation, which gradually siphons off the purchasing power of people’s money. Since the Federal Reserve Bank was established in 1913, the value of the dollar has steadily plummeted to less than 2 percent! Most of this insidious debauchment was caused by our involvement in foreign wars that we had no valid reason to enter, plus numerous unconstitutional government programs that forcefully transfer wealth from the pockets of some citizens to the pockets of others. Frederic Bastiat called this process “legalized theft.”

The “war on drugs”: President Richard Nixon initiated the war on drugs in 1971.

During WWII, the OSS (the Office of Strategic Services, forerunner of the

CIA) had to pay Malaysian warriors with heroin because they would not work for money, not even for gold. Thus, the OSS operatives made connection with the international drug cartel that operates through the “Golden Triangle” in Asia. Eventually, drugs literally started flowing into America from the poppy fields of Pakistan and Afghanistan in Asia and from Columbia in South America.

To counter the incoming flood of drugs, the federal government deceitfully started the war on drugs, but, of course, the flood continued. This so-called “war,” through the RICO law, resulted in armed SWAT-team raids all across America and the confiscation of billions of dollars of private property owned by innocent people. Many small operators in the drug scene were arrested, but no arrests of the major kingpins. Today, most local police departments have been effectively “federalized” by the FBI, and about 89 percent of local police departments now have strongly armed paramilitary units whose main job is to break into homes unannounced on drug searches. Almost 500,000 American citizens are now in prison on drug charges. In 1980 the number imprisoned was 50,000.

Secrecy in government operations: Over the years, it has become increasingly difficult for ordinary citizens to discover what politicians and government bureaucrats are doing.

In spite of the Freedom of Information Act, citizen inquiry is often “stonewalled” on the alleged claim that “this is a national security issue”; as if so-called national security issues were more crucial than protecting citizens’ constitutionally protected freedoms. Thus, the domestic web of freedom-destroying legislation and totalitarian government programs, as well as the so-called “black flag operations” of covert U.S. agencies

overseas (and in our own country also), continue to undermine the Constitution. For instance, the Bush administration has been quietly advancing a massive “NAFTA Super Highway” that will run along Interstate 35 from the border of Mexico in Texas to the Canadian border north of Duluth, Minnesota. This empire-building scheme will be an accomplished fact, with no constitutional approval, before most Americans become aware of it.

Fear mongering: Throughout history, totalitarian-minded civil rulers have created a domestic climate of fear among the general population to make them more readily accept Orwellian-type regulations and control. Psychological control is much more efficient than using guns. “Foreign enemies” are thus the bogeymen whom the people are brought to fear.

In the modern case of America, it is so-called “Islamic terrorists” that have replaced the previous menace of communism.

A good example of fear mongering is the police-state atmosphere of fear currently surrounding American airports, supposedly to stop “terrorist” hijacking. Most Americans have “bought into” this specious tactic, and they, like sheep being led to slaughter, have been conditioned to continue exposing themselves to the most degrading forms of personal inspection when boarding planes—a clear undermining of the Fourth Amendment.

New repressive federal agencies: As a result of the psychological fear mongering about 9/11, Congress passed the constitutional-subverting “Patriot Acts” and created the KGB-type, police-state agency called “Homeland Security” (note the Orwellian language). This agency has been given the unconstitutional authority to use outright force to destroy Americans’ liberty at the whim

of the president. Recently, Homeland Security notified banks that whenever banks are so notified by Homeland Security, bank customers would not be allowed to open their safe-deposit boxes unless a Homeland Security agent was present.

More than 400 governmental units throughout America (states, cities, and counties) have publicly gone on record as opposing the so-called "Patriot Act." Three cheers! These are acts of governmental interposition.

Every statement above is true, and the list could go on and on; but the important question is, What are we to do?

What Direction Does God Give?

Solutions to the above-mentioned problems are readily found by searching Scripture because God's Word is designed to guide mankind in how to live in a sinful world populated by not only sinful citizens, but especially by sinful and tyrannically oriented civil rulers (1 Sam. 8).

We are to think God's thoughts (2 Cor. 10:3–5) in every aspect of our lives and especially in building our social institutions (family, church, businesses and other voluntary organizations, and civil government). We are created in God's very image and likeness; therefore, we have a God-given right to be free, and we have the responsibility to maintain our freedom so that we can stand self-responsible before God, our Creator and Lord (Gen. 1:26–28; Exod. 8:1).

What we must do is threefold: think Biblically, think economically, and think constitutionally. Note the sequence: both our economic world and our political world must be made to conform to God's Word.

These United States of America have grown beyond the Biblical pattern. One way of restoring our Constitutional Republic and eliminating the unitary aspect of our national government is

to eliminate the Seventeenth Amendment thereby reinstituting the election of senators by state legislatures; and also eliminate the income tax and replace it with a head tax paid to the states in conjunction with requisitions requested by the national government, as we had under the Articles of Confederation. Patrick Henry, a wonderful patriot and believer in decentralized government, said, "I love those requisitions!" because they limited the power of the central government.

Today, our problem is too-big government, too far from home, and no effective way to choke off funds going to the national government. Eliminating the Seventeenth Amendment and restoring the "requisitions" that Patrick Henry so loved would accomplish this. Radical? Yes! But radical in the good sense in that the solution cuts to the very core of the problem.

To bring it about, Americans must ask, "What is the proper role of civil government in society according to the Bible?" This is the second-most important question in life because the answer will determine whether we live in freedom and self-responsibility to God during this life or as serfs to a centralized, autocratic government.

When it comes to burdensome taxes, the solution is clear: God's gracious tithe, which is paid voluntarily, is limited to only 10 percent, for which God promises to bestow His blessings (Mal. 3:10). Any tax levy near 10 percent approaches tyranny, and any levy above that certainly is tyrannical.

Once again, we must ask, "What is the proper Biblical role of civil government in society?" We find the answer in Romans 13:3–4. Civil government is not designed by God to be a transfer agent to take money from one citizen and transfer it to another citizen (legalized theft). Rather, it is to be a nega-

tive force in society, not a regulator of economic activity, but simply a punisher of wrongdoers and lawbreakers.

Monetary inflation is nothing more than a form of insidious taxation that makes it easier for civil rulers to engage in the "legalized theft" process of wresting money from some citizens and giving it to others who happen to be favored by the rulers. Money creation by the Federal Reserve to fund government deficits should be abandoned because it is credit-created debt. Also, our system of fractional banking should be put on a 100-percent-reserve basis to stop banks from creating credit money when extending loans. Savings banks and savings and loan associations worked like this successfully for many, many years. This would end the alleged need for a central bank to supply a "flexible" monetary system and to serve as an alleged "lender of last resort."

Governmental Interposition

Government by the people cannot function properly unless they know what is going on behind the scenes and understand the Constitution. If the false screen of "national security" continues as it is, our country is doomed to succumb to the security/police state. We live in a very perilous time; and the peril does not exist outside of our country in a fictional cave inhabited by an alleged freedom-hating, Islamic member of al-Qaeda. Our real peril exists in high places inside our own country. We ignore this fact at our peril and at the risk of what kind of country our children and grandchildren will be destined to live in.

What is God's solution for unseating ungodly rulers who turn tyrannical and for replacing them with rulers of His choice? When King Rehoboam refused the people's petition, it was, "[T]o your tents, O Israel!"

continued on page 32

The Current Trends in the Theonomy Debate

Jacob Aitken



T. David Gordon in particular (and Klineans in general) has been one of the sharpest critics of theonomy in the past years. This evidences a recent trend in Reformed social theology: to what extent (if any) is Scripture to speak to social ills with normative commands?

Gordon highlights this view in several articles in major Reformed publications, including “The Insufficiency of Scripture,” *Modern Reformation*,¹ and “Critique of Theonomy: A Taxonomy,” *Westminster Theological Journal*.² In each section I will summarize Gordon’s argument and explain what’s at stake in the Reformed camp, while also presenting Kenneth Gentry’s responses from his book *Covenantal Theonomy: A Response to T. David Gordon and Klinean Covenantalism*.³ I will not go into much of the theonomic debate history. Gary North has provided that in a series of books, *Theonomy: An Informed Response* and *Westminster’s Confession*.

Gordon’s Underlying Presupposition

The underlying presupposition of Gordon’s thought is that the Bible **is not** sufficient for life outside the covenant community.⁴ He identifies theonomy as the “error de jure” of the attempt to apply God’s Word to society. In this respect he has clearly and helpfully defined the ultimate issues at stake.

Gordon tries to show that theonomy is wrong from at least three different perspectives: a taxonomic critique (showing the distinctives of theonomy and critiquing them), Klinean method-

ology, and a tri-dimensional critique opposing theonomy on the sufficiency of Scripture: the latter being defined along philosophical, exegetical, and theological lines. I will predominantly focus on the first perspective since I consider Greg Bahnsen’s approach to covenant theology to be in the mainstream of covenantal thought (e.g., emphasizing the continuity between the covenants).

The Argument from Necessity

Gordon argues that theonomists paint themselves into a corner in saying that the Bible is sufficient for all areas of life. If sufficient, then clear. If clear, it should tell us how. In short, the Bible, according to theonomists, should give exhaustive specificity for all things. This it clearly does not do. Therefore, theonomists are wrong. But theonomist Dr. Kenneth Gentry, for one, points out that theonomists *do not* make the claim that the Bible is exhaustively specific.⁵ At the very least, the Bible does give clear political guidance, and this should be a key focus in the debate.

This is a key weakness in Gordon’s articles. He says he critiqued theonomy’s main arguments from its main supporter, Greg Bahnsen.⁶ If so, as Gentry points out, “[W]hy is this argument for Theonomy absent from Bahnsen?”⁷ Also, “This is not a philosophical argument from Theonomy, contrary to Gordon, but a theological implication of the Christian worldview.”⁸ Worldviews involve civil jurisprudence and social matters. By what standard are laws to be judged?

Gordon’s next question is at the heart of the confusion: “*Where does the Bible address ... science, medicine, statecraft ... engineers ... mathematicians?*”

The theonomist would counter that the Bible addresses statecraft in the first five books of the Old Testament and Romans 13. As to the other part of the reduction, it can easily be turned around. Why did modern science develop in Christian cultures? And, mathematics is impossible without Trinitarian Christianity: if there are no universal entities that relate to mankind in particular instances, math is an illusion (which would be consistent with many Eastern religions). Gentry points out that Gordon confuses scientific issues with moral ones, statecraft being moral.¹⁰

Gordon urges us to remember “the nature of the curse on the human race subsequent to the fall.” The theonomist gladly agrees. However, a key component of Gordon’s worldview is the preference of general revelation over special revelation with respect to socio-political morality. If that is the case, then we must logically expect a blurring of natural revelation, since we can’t interpret it clearly. But where is the clear teaching to be found? Romans 2 tells us that the work of the law is written on the heart of all, but Romans 3 builds upon this to say how much more blessed the Jews were for having the *written revelation of God*.

Theonomy as a comprehensive system is new. Theonomic presuppositions are not. They are, as Meredith Kline candidly admitted, quite confessional. Theonomy’s attraction is its commitment to the Bible as a source for wisdom and light. We are living in social decay and watching a civilization die. The world is desperately looking for an answer.

A New Angle on Matthew 5 in the Theonomy Debate

Matthew 5:17 (“I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil”) is a benchmark argument for theonomy and has been in the forefront of the theonomic debate. Most critics of theonomy in response to Matthew 5 simply attempt to rebut Bahnsen’s claim that “fulfil” means confirm “in exhaustive validity.” Gordon advances a different line of argumentation. Gordon tries to corner the theonomist into an exegetical trap: if the Old Testament is indeed binding unless God has rescinded it in certain places, then theonomists must also admit that if the Sinaitic administration remains, then the prophetic office announcing the coming of the Messiah must also remain.¹¹ Gentry rebuts this by showing that Christ’s teachings are indeed ethical and not merely eschatological in character, a point agreed with by almost all evangelical commentators, including those who are not theonomic.¹²

The Argument from Covenant Theology

One way of discrediting theonomy is to show its alleged novelty. No one in the history of the church, it is argued, held to a theonomic view of the law and covenants; therefore, one ought to be highly suspicious of such a movement. True, theological novelties should be embraced only with the utmost reluctance. However, is theonomy really that novel a view? Gordon maintains that Bahnsen erred in seeing extreme continuity between the Mosaic covenant and today, downplaying the discontinuities and the problem of legalism. Along with that, theonomy is erroneous in that it abstracts the Mosaic covenant from its environment. If true, it would be hard to account for the fact that many respectable Reformed theologians (Murray, Dabney, the Westminster divines) viewed the law of God, particularly the

Ten Commandments, as normative in the Christian life and a guide to Christian behavior.¹³

Gordon argues that the duties of the covenant are binding only on the parties of the covenant. If this is true, then it is devastating to theonomy. However, Gentry responds that while Israel was under a “public covenantal obligation to keep the divinely revealed law, the *moral* obligations within that covenant were not uniquely applicable to Israel alone.”¹⁴ Another way of replying is that the Ten Commandments represent the moral law re-published from nature revelation.

Concluding Observations

I would urge theonomists to develop more arguments for theonomy that do not overly depend on Matthew 5 (Bahnsen states frequently that theonomy doesn’t depend on Matthew 5). Also, I would note that the larger debate has now brought in arguments against theonomy from multiple angles: the two-kingdoms theory and natural law.

The two-kingdoms view holds that God rules the church through His right hand and the secular world through His left hand. The Christian, it is urged, is not to bring matters of religion into the public square. But as John Frame rightly notes, “The problem is that the two-kingdom doctrine claims a duality, not only between law and gospel as such, but also in God’s standards, his norms.”¹⁵ But an even bigger challenge to theonomy is the renewed interest in “natural law.” As a contemporary natural law theorist writes, “Though intellectual fashions change, an objective moral order, knowable by man and within the reach of mankind, can be reasonably seen as the most stable basis of personal, national, and international order and happiness.”¹⁶

Space prevents a thorough rebuttal. In short I would only mention that

natural law depends on unexamined presuppositions that are untenable for Reformed Christianity. Besides being fallacious (naturalistic fallacy), natural law theorists operate from the basis that man’s reason has not been sufficiently affected by the Fall. But even more, natural law theory is unable to do more than endorse the “status quo.” True, natural law theory does posit itself as transcending the civil magistrate, but it offers no clear guidance to the magistrate, nor does it sufficiently limit his powers. Consider, then, this moving quote by Greg Bahnsen on the necessity for a distinctively *Christian* approach to politics:

The alternative to God’s law is not no law at all, but human law; governments which do not guard the majesty of God and His righteous law have no alternative and choice but to uphold the majesty of their own human authority ... If no higher law is adhered to, then the law of man is absolute; there is no logical barrier to stop such a state from becoming totalitarian. When the state’s will is substituted for God’s will, then the only real crimes become crimes against the state (as in Imperial Rome, present day Russia, and much of the United States), for example, treason, defection, and so forth ... There is no appeal beyond the state and its rulers when God’s law is put aside; man has no realm of justice to which he has recourse in opposing the will of the state ... For Christians the choice is between a law order based on God or the potentially tyrannical oppression of a law order resting in the arbitrary will and power of the secular state.¹⁷ ■

Jacob Aitken is an M.Div. candidate at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, MS. He is a member of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and is a native of Monroe, LA.

1. T. David Gordon, “The Insufficiency of Scripture,” *Modern Reformation*, January/February 2002.

2. T. David Gordon, "Critique of Theonomy: A Taxonomy," *Westminster Theological Journal*, 1994.
3. Kenneth Gentry, *Covenantal Theonomy: A Response to T. David Gordon and Klinean Covenantalism* (Nacogdoches, TX: CMF, 2005).
4. Gordon, "The Insufficiency of Scripture," 18.
5. Gentry, 17.
6. Gordon, "Critique of Theonomy," 24.
7. Gentry, 24.
8. *Ibid.*, 26–27.
9. Gordon, "Critique of Theonomy," 26.
10. Gentry, 29ff.
11. Gordon, "Critique of Theonomy," 29.
12. Gentry, 56–57.
13. *Ibid.*, 226.
14. *Ibid.*, 146.
15. John Frame, "Law and Gospel" http://www.frame-poythress.org/frame_articles/2002Law.htm.
16. Paul M. Weyrich, *Future 21: Directions for America in the 21st Century*, ed. Connaught Marshner (Devin-Adair Publishers, 1984), 129. I am aware that Thomas Aquinas advocated some form of civil resistance derived from his natural law ethic. However, I am not convinced that it follows without at least presupposing some form of Biblical revelation. Natural law just as easily endorses the status quo.
17. Greg Bahnsen, *Theonomy in Christian Ethics* (Nacogdoches, TX: CMF, 2002), 455.

Uttinger ... Family cont. from page 8

2. Paul says much the same thing in Colossians 3:18–21—only four verses.
3. Francis A. Schaeffer, *True Spirituality* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1971), chap. 12.
4. When Sarah called her husband "lord" in Genesis 18, she did so "within herself," in her thoughts.
5. This means that divorce should be a rarity in the Christian church. While God has ordained divorce as a remedy for certain terrible sins (Matt. 19:3–9; 1 Cor. 7:15), its

light and selfish use is something He hates (Mal. 2:14–16).

6. And, yes, we must often use the "rod of correction" to punctuate the lessons (Prov. 22:15).

Hodge ... Economy cont. from page 11

classical concept of education to music. See www.readwriteplay.com for details.

1. R. J. Rushdoony, *Institutes of Biblical Law*, vol. 1 (Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., 1973), 453. See a fuller discussion pp. 496–499.
2. A comprehensive discussion on taxation can be found in Edward A. Powell and R. J. Rushdoony, *Tithing and Dominion* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1979), especially chaps. IX, X, and XI.
3. S. David Young, *The Rule of Experts* (Washington, DC: The Cato Institute, 1987).
4. Joseph R. Strayer, *On the Medieval Origins of the Modern State* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970).

Rushdoony ... Babylon cont. from page 15

kingdom of man. Christians must reject the supposition that politics will succeed in building the good life by an economy built on debt. Any such dream or economy built on confidence in Federal Reserve Notes or some other fiat promise of statist men will fall like a millstone cast into the sea (Rev. 18:21).

All Babylons will end in failure and God's judgment. Are you preparing yourself, despite the economic hardship you will experience, to join the heavenly host in crying "Alleluia"? ■

1. For more on this see R. J. Rushdoony, *Thy Kingdom Come* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2001), especially 189–198.
2. For a discussion on Babel, see R. J. Rushdoony, *Genesis* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2002), chaps. 24–27.
3. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Biblical Philosophy of History* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books), 46–51.

Rose ... Imperium cont. from page 29

The principle in God's solution to tyranny (unconstitutional rule) is called governmental interposition, and it can be done peacefully.

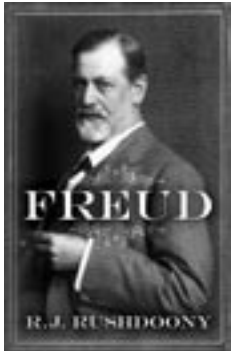
God has the power to turn rulers' hearts (Prov. 21:1). First, let us pray for this. But also, let us remember that there are many imprecatory prayers in the Bible. They, too, are for our use. God's final option is the Biblical principle of governmental interposition, whose time, I believe, has come. May God's will be done to the salvation of America and to the glory of His Kingdom! ■

Tom Rose is retired professor of economics, Grove City College, Pennsylvania. He is author of seven books and hundreds of articles dealing with economic and political issues. His articles have regularly appeared in *The Christian Statesman*, published by the National Reform Association, Pittsburgh, PA; and in many other publications. He and his wife, Ruth, raise registered Barzona cattle on a farm near Mercer, PA, where they also write and publish economic textbooks for use by Christian colleges, high schools and home educators. Rose's latest books are *Free Enterprise Economics in America* and *God, Gold and Civil Government*.

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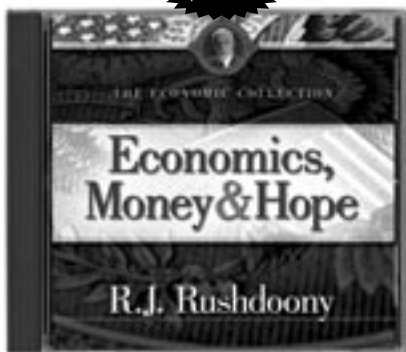
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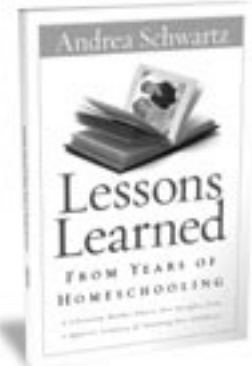
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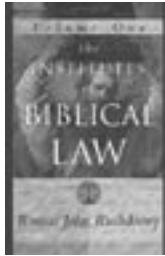
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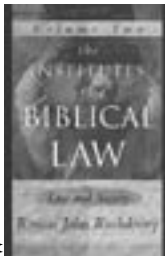
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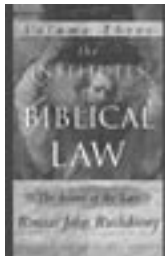
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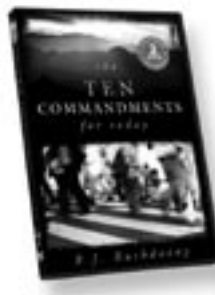


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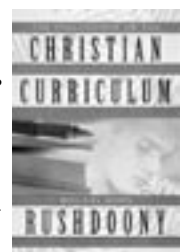


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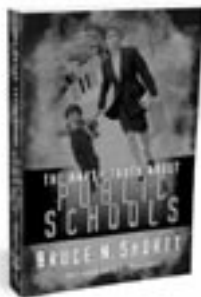


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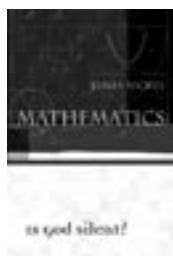


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The Nature of the American System

By R.J. Rushdoony. Originally published in 1965, these essays were a continuation of the author's previous work, *This Independent Republic*, and examine the interpretations and concepts which have attempted to remake and rewrite America's past and present. "The writing of history then, because man is neither autonomous, objective nor ultimately creative, is always in terms of a framework, a philosophical and ultimately religious framework in the mind of the historian. . . . To the orthodox Christian, the shabby incarnations of the reigning historiographies are both absurd and offensive. They are idols, and he is forbidden to bow down to them and must indeed wage war against them."



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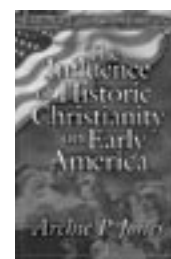
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By R.J. Rushdoony. America was a break with the neoplatonic view of religion that dominated the medieval church. The Puritans and other groups saw Scripture as guidance for every area of life because they viewed its author as the infallible Sovereign over every area. America's fall into Arminianism and revivalism, however, was a return to the neoplatonic error that transferred the world from Christ's shoulders to man's. The author saw a revival ahead in Biblical faith.

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12. The Thirty Years War

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Tape 11 14. England: The Puritans through Queen Victoria

Tape 12 15. 20th Century: The Intellectual – Scientific Elite

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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 world in which he must strive to create and establish meaning. The Christian accepts a world which is totally meaningful and in which every event moves in terms of God's purpose; he submits to God's meaning and finds his life therein. This is an excellent introduction to Rushdoony. Once the reader sees Rushdoony's emphasis on God's sovereignty over all of time and creation, he will understand his application of this presupposition in various spheres of life and thought.

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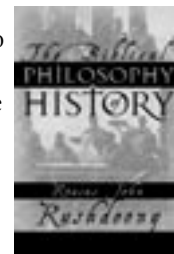
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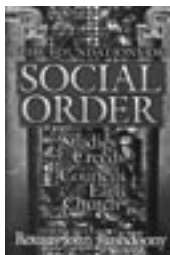
consciously denied such esteem to all other claimants. Today the church must take a similar stand before the modern state.

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philosophy

The Death of Meaning

By Rousas John Rushdoony. For centuries on end, humanistic philosophers have produced endless books and treatises which attempt to explain reality without God or the mediatory work of His Son, Jesus Christ. Modern philosophy has sought to explain man and his thought process without acknowledging God, His Revelation, or man's sin. God holds all such efforts in derision and subjects their authors and adherents to futility. 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 exposed and reprov'd.

In this volume, Dr. Rushdoony clearly enunciates each major philosopher's position and its implications, identifies the intellectual and moral consequences of each school of thought, and traces the dead-end to which each naturally leads. There is only one foundation. Without Christ, meaning and morality are anchored to shifting sand, and a counsel of despair prevails. This penetrating yet brief volume provides clear guidance, even for laymen unfamiliar with philosophy.

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By R.J. Rushdoony. Modern man has a problem with knowledge. He cannot accept God's Word about the world or anything else, so anything which points to God must be called into question. Man, once he makes himself ultimate, is unable to know anything



but himself. Because of this impasse, modern thinking has become progressively pragmatic. This book will lead the reader to understand that this problem of knowledge underlies the isolation and self-torment of modern man. Can you know anything if you reject God and His revelation? This book takes the reader into the heart of modern man's intellectual dilemma.

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By R.J. Rushdoony. Subtitled *Studies in the Philosophy of Order and Ultimacy*, this work discusses the problem of understanding unity vs. particularity, oneness vs. individuality. "Whether recognized or not, every argument and every theological, philosophical, political, or any other exposition is based on a presupposition about man, God, and society—about reality. This presupposition rules and determines the conclusion; the effect is the result of a cause. And one such basic presupposition is with reference to the one and the many." The author finds the answer in the Biblical doctrine of the Trinity.

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psychology

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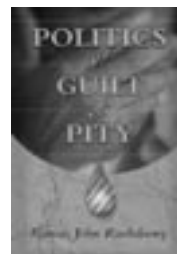
By R.J. Rushdoony. From the foreword by Steve Schlissel: "Rushdoony sounds the clarion call of liberty for all who remain oppressed by Christian leaders who wrongfully lord it over the souls of God's righteous ones.... I pray that the entire book will not only instruct you in the method and content of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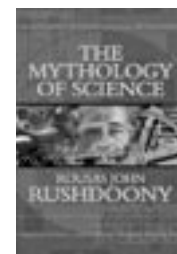


science

The Mythology of Science

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

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economics

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biblical studies

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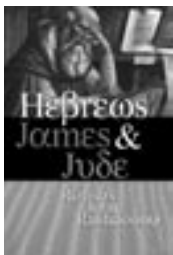
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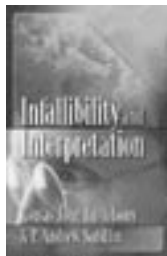
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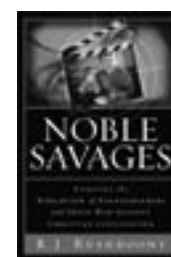
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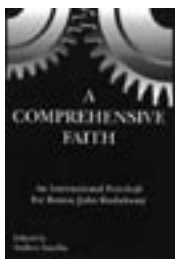
A Comprehensive Faith

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

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