

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

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

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## Editorials

**2 From the Founder**  
*The Revolutionary Ideology*

**5 From the President**  
*Judgment and Deliverance*

---

## Features

**8 Rx for Turning America "Rightside Up"**  
*Buddy Hanson*

**12 Why Check-Book Theology is Necessary—Part 2**  
**Don't Circle the Wagons**  
*Ian Hodge, Ph.D.*

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## Columns

**3 Political Saviors**  
*R. J. Rushdoony*

**16 The Expectation for Children**  
*Andrea Schwartz*

**20 The Second Mayflower by Kevin Swanson**  
*Reviewed by Lee Duigon*

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## Products

**26 Catalog Insert**

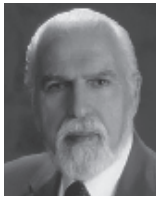


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# The Revolutionary Ideology

By R. J. Rushdoony

(Reprinted from *Sovereignty* [Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2007], 453)



The modern world-view carries within itself many contradictions. It views as the definitive institution of society, as the modern “church” as it were, the state, and an intellectual elite who, with scientific experts, come together to create the scientific socialist state. This state is, in terms of its philosophical premises, the voice of Reason, if not Reason incarnate.

At the same time, a very different perspective is held with respect to the People. Rousseau exalted both the natural man and also the state which embodies the general will. The natural man, however, is clearly not rational man. Rousseau and Romanticism idealized the natural man’s untaught feelings and instincts in a manner which led in time to the doctrine, in the nineteenth century, of the subconscious mind in man. With Freud and his followers, this became the *unconscious* mind. For Freud, the unconscious replaced God and became the new locale of infallibility. Whatever the unconscious in man, in particular, the *id*, and then the *ego*, revealed, whether in dreams, actions, words, or in any other way, had for the Freudians an unerring revelatory character. Consciously, man could die; unconsciously, he reveals himself and confesses readily to the mainsprings of his being. The unconscious mind of man thus represents man in his primordial character.

Rousseau’s natural man became revolutionary man. In revolution, the pre-civilized energy and power of man

**“Since World War II, we have seen evidences of this. Students have occupied university administrative offices and lecture halls and issued nonnegotiable demands. Workers have done some of this also. Welfare recipients have done their share of “demonstrating.” In one instance, the office of then Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York was occupied by insolvent welfare recipients who refused to speak civilly to the governor, who tried hard to be patient.”**

shatters the conventions and breaks the chains of civilization. Revolution supposedly revitalizes a corrupt and effete society by unleashing the forces of primordial chaos against it. The French Revolution, as Otto Scott has pointed out, adopted the language of medicine to describe its murderous course. “The purge,” the forced expulsion of feces, became a political term, now widely used.

This creates an amazing paradox: at the top in the state, the state as Reason, is the scientific socialistic elite, and, at the bottom, the unconscious forces of society, the masses. Of course, both the views of the elite and the masses are intellectual constructs and in part

figments of the imagination. All the same, everything is done to enhance this illusion and better enable all concerned to play their parts. The more power is centralized at the top, the more vocal is the affirmation that power is being exercised of, by, and for the people.

Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929), in *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899), described the ancient leisure class as dedicated to the belief that “Whatever is, is right,” whereas “the law of natural selection, as applied to human institutions, gives the axiom: ‘Whatever is, is wrong.’”<sup>1</sup> Veblen thus saw evolution working against the leisure class. Now Veblen’s leisure class is not the same as the modern statist elite, but his point applies all the same. The Darwinian premises are very much a part of the main current of modern thought, and of Romanticism. Charles Darwin was a most unromantic soul, but his premises were still derived from Romanticism. Whether in biology, politics, or literature, power was derived from below. Even as the romantic looked to his feelings for guidance and power, so the evolutionist believed in *power from below*. The magnificence of the universe, its complexity, energy, and diversity, had to have a primordial source of power, chance, and chaos.

The Darwinian enthronement of power derived from chance and chaos delighted Marx and Engels because it verified their revolutionary ideology. The Age of Reason saw hope in its enlightened despots; the new temper created by Romanticism saw hope instead in revo-

*Continued on page 4*

# POLITICAL SAVIORS

By R. J. Rushdoony

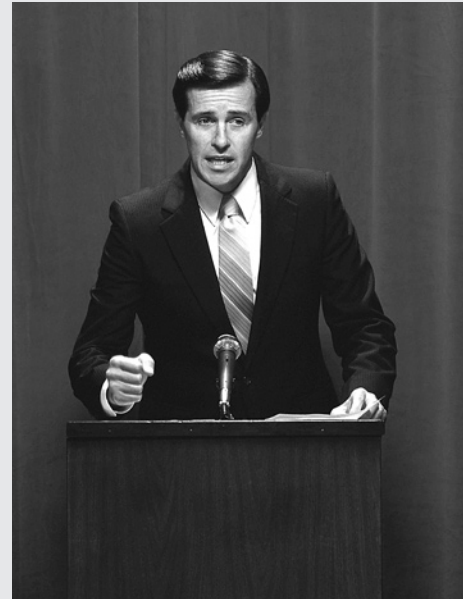
(Reprinted from *A Word in Season*, Vol. 3 [Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2011], 52)

According to the German historian, Ethelbert Stauffer, the religious principle of the Roman Empire, from the days of Augustus on, was salvation by Caesar: “Salvation is to be found in none other save Augustus, and there is no other name given to men in which they can be saved.”

This helps us to understand the boldness of St. Peter, and the total power he declared rested in Christ, when he said of Jesus Christ, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

War between Christ and Caesar, the Christians and Rome, was thus inevitable. The state and its emperors claimed to offer salvation. The church declared only Christ does.

**WE ARE AGAIN IN THE AGE OF CAESARS, OF POLITICAL SAVIORS. ALL OVER THE WORLD, POLITICIANS PROCLAIM THEIR PLANS OF SALVATION, AND THE CORNERSTONE OF THEIR BUILDING IS MAN. LOOK UNTO ME, THESE FALSE SAVIORS DECLARE TO THE PEOPLES, VOTE FOR ME AND BE SAVED.**



St. Peter faced a hostile nation whose hope of salvation was in freedom from Rome. Thus the Zealots, or revolutionists, had a large popular following. Salvation for them meant their own political order. For the Roman overlords and their followers, salvation meant Caesar’s rule and plan.

St. Peter ruled out, not only all other religions, but all the political plans of salvation with his blunt words: “Neither is there salvation in any other.” Christ is unique, and His salvation is exclusive. He is THE way, the ONLY way, Peter made emphatically clear, of salvation, “for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” There are no alternate routes.

This means that false political saviors will give not salvation but ruin. False religious saviors will only give delusions. Truth is exclusive. We cannot say that two plus two can equal five, or can equal three, because three and five sound close to four. We cannot play games with truth.

Thus, as we are confronted by political and other saviors, we must stand with St. Peter and declare: None other name!

lution and the worker. The sins of the enlightened despots became monstrous evils; the mass murders by the revolutionists became revolutionary justice.

Freud's *id*, the unrestrained pleasure principle, was for him also the will to live. Modern revolutions give expression to Freud's *id*, to pleasure in destruction. When the Revolution lives, the Revolution kills! Mass executions, slave labor camps, and a continuous rule of a secret police become endemic to revolutionary regimes.

At the same time, the revolutionary *id* seeks to kill religion, Christianity in particular. The Biblical premises are all hostile to the revolutionary ideology, because Christianity affirms God as the Creator and Redeemer, not chaos and revolution. Power is sought from above, not from below. In fact, for Christianity, power from below is ultimately demonic.

The modern state sees itself as the source of authority and power, not God. It thus seeks steadily to contain every area of life and thought and to rule over all.

In the history of the Church of England, the claim of the crown has been over all the church and its properties and incomes. As Miall wrote,

The last point is epigrammatically put by Bishop Warburton, in a sentence contained in a note on Clarendon's "History of the Rebellion," referring to the demand of Parliament for the alienation of Church lands. "The State," he observes, "may resume what the State originally gave."<sup>2</sup>

The modern socialist states openly claim such a total jurisdiction, and the democracies implicitly so.

This claim is challenged by some churchmen, although the compromises are many.

There is, however, another potential challenge of a revolutionary sort. If the people are the source of power, and if power, whether in art, politics, or biol-

ogy, comes from below, what is to keep the masses from revolting?

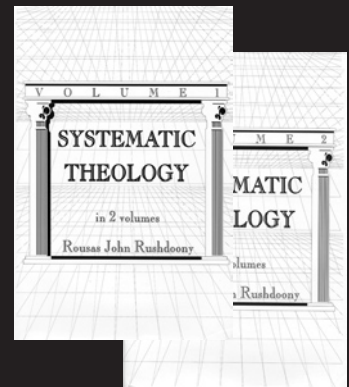
Since World War II, we have seen evidences of this. Students have occupied university administrative offices and lecture halls and issued nonnegotiable demands. Workers have done some of this also. Welfare recipients have done their share of "demonstrating." In one instance, the office of then Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York was occupied by insolvent welfare recipients who refused to speak civilly to the governor, who tried hard to be patient.

All this might have delighted Freud, who wrote on December 22, 1897, to Wilhelm Fliess: "I can scarcely detail for you all the things that resolve themselves into — excrement for me (a new Midas!)."<sup>3</sup>

The modern state thus faces a problem. The revolutionary ideology is implicitly hostile to the life of the state. The people believe that they have a right to disobey whatever law displeases them. Freud's *id* knows no law outside its will; Darwin's evolutionary force recognizes no higher law; and the modern temper had a notable expression in Paris, in the 1960s, when rebellious students declared, "It is forbidden to forbid!" The modern state is in the business of forbidding on its own waning authority. 🖱️

1. Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York, NY: Modern Library, 1934), 207.
2. Edward Miall, *Title-Deeds of the Church of England to Her Parochial Endowments* (London, England: Longman Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1862), 118.
3. Cited by Jonathan Weinberg, "It's in the Can: Jasper Johns and the Anal Society," *Gender* (University of Texas Press), no. 1 (Spring 1988).

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# Judgment and Deliverance

Mark R. Rushdoony



There are many once great cities that now lie in ruins, some of their histories completely lost to us, their armies, influence, and wealth now immaterial. Man proposes and God disposes. Not even the states of Israel and Judah were so important to God's purpose that He couldn't dissolve them and still accomplish His promised salvation.

## Community or Disunity?

Great cities and empires represent both their builders and their cultures. The first recorded city was built by Cain, who "went out from the presence of the Lord," that is, he did the opposite of men like Enoch and Noah who walked with God. Both Cain's first son and the city he founded were called Enoch, or "rejuvenation." Cain was trying to restore paradise without God, to create an order, a culture for fellow fugitives and vagabonds from godly order. Five generations later, Lamech's family advanced this culture's economy to the point of specialization in animal husbandry, music, and metallurgy. Lamech personally extended his family empire by means of vengeance, including murder (see Genesis 4).

We tend to call our cities communities, but they are often anything but that. *Community* carries with it the root concept of *communion*, which is a religious, and specifically Christian, idea of a unity in faith. The union of Cain and all non-Christian cultures since is a union of unbelief, and their social order

inevitably reflects the rebellion inherent in their common bond. Such places often have no real community because they have no bond or communion in terms of a benign ethic. All men have in common then are casual discussions about the weather or sports (the latter being as close as many come to a religious unity). They are then not part of a *community* but *disunity*.

The prophets often condemned even the apostate Hebrew cities for the evil they institutionalized in their social, legal, economic, and political systems. The book of Amos was written to announce the complete destruction of Samaria, the capital of Israel. Jerusalem, called a city of murderers by Isaiah (1:21), was the subject of a similar pronouncement by Micah at about the same time (though the fulfillment of these prophecies took place at different times). Great cities of the ancient world that stood opposed to God were the subject of prophecy, including Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian empire, Babylon, Rome, and many lesser cities or regional powers. One after another they were dismissed as power centers and reduced to historical and archaeological curiosities.

## The Nature of Statism

Humanism is the religious/philosophical estimation of man as the supreme being. The emphasis of humanism varies. Some humanism regards each individual; anarchism is a pure form of such humanism. A much more common form of humanism in history is one in which some group or entity speaks for collective man. Stat-

ism, whether democratic or oligarchic in structure, has this common logic of justification: "We represent all, we speak for the people, we govern in the name of the masses because we're the government." Not long ago a spokesman for the Obama administration responded to a challenge to the Constitutional authority for a proposed action with the dismissive statement that it "was in the nature of government authority."

To those under the direct power of statist government the power or threat they wield is intimidating. Yet the prophet Nahum used a word for the "wicked" Assyrians (1:15) that is elsewhere translated "Belial." This is not a proper name, but rather the appellation "worthless." Elsewhere, the term "vile" is used. To our ears it means something loathsome, but the word merely means light in weight, as in Psalm 62:9, which says of men both of high and low status that "in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity." From God's perspective, if man was put on a scale, he would be lighter than light, he would register zero!

Men and nations are such light-weights that they do not register, but that does not preclude either God's judgment or grace to them. Some empires have opposed God and His people beyond the point of simple unbelief or even contempt. Some have challenged God by challenging His people. This is to challenge God's sovereignty itself. Obadiah told the Edomite people of their coming doom (Obadiah 8-14). Their contempt of the Hebrews stemmed from envy. They believed

everything possessed by the Hebrews should have been theirs as the descendants of Esau the firstborn, and they lost no opportunity to take advantage of Judah by allying with its enemies. Nahum asked the Assyrians, one of the most vicious and feared nations of history, “What do ye imagine against the Lord?” (1:9), before answering his own question, for they “imagineth evil against the Lord” (1:11).

## **I Wanna Be Like the Marquis**

In his book, *To Be As Gods*, my father starts his overview of modern thought with the Marquis De Sade. De Sade avowed his hatred for God and declared God his enemy to the point of saying the greatest crime would be to murder God. He was largely rejected by his contemporaries for his criminal perversity, but later Darwin’s naturalism so completely destroyed the Enlightenment faith in natural law that man was left an animal emerged from meaningless chaos. To that, Freud added a mythological primordial history to explain our basest impulses. The result has been that modern thought and culture has returned to the perversity and contempt of God shown by De Sade.

When Michael Jordan was the most famous athlete in the world, a popular ad campaign drew in youth with the slogan, “I wanna be like Mike.” Since Darwin, modern man is increasingly saying, “I wanna be like the Marquis.”

Evolutionary dogma has not merely declared whatever man conceives as natural to be normative, it has also declared war on everything supernatural as by definition illegitimate and unacceptable to its naturalistic worldview. Man after Darwin is far advanced in what Van Til called his “integration into the void.”

## **Judgment and Deliverance**

Cities, empires, cultures and peoples have repeatedly disappeared from his-

tory. Scripture was the only mention of some of these until modern archaeology rediscovered them. Some modern academics questioned the historicity of both the Assyrians and the Hittites until verified by modern archaeology.

When Christians see disaster it is normal to think of it in terms of the judgment of God. It is also easy to find some blatant sin and link it with the disaster as cause and effect. Thus hurricane Katrina was said by some to be caused by the immorality of New Orleans and just recently I heard someone assert the hurricane which hit New York City was judgment for a statement by that city’s mayor.

Such association was forbidden by Jesus, who used the example of a Siloam tower collapse (Luke 13:3–5). Jesus warned against assuming those victims were worse sinners than others. He did not say we ought not to see judgment in such disasters, but to think of our own guilt and liability to judgment. God never asks us to focus on the guilt of others, but to acknowledge our own and repent.

We are to see the hand of God in history, but we are not able to read the mind of God. Job’s “friends,” remember, tried to tell him his reversal of situation had to be because of his sin. Such an explanation seems so theologically logical. Unfortunately, it was not only wrong, it was theologically off-base. Such logic presumed Job was the central character and God was merely reacting to him. It neglected the possibility that God might have a greater purpose and focus to His Providence than Job. His trials were not about him at all.

We must extend this view of judgment beyond individuals like Job to men collectively. Judgment is generally a reminder that men are not the center of anything but vanity. Temporal judgments ought to remind us of divine

judgment and, as such, they are always a type of the final judgment. Yet the worst judgments in history are never the final and complete judgment of the last day. As such, they involve grace, deliverance, and salvation; they remind us, like the tower of Siloam, that we ought to repent of our sins.

## **Lesson to Moses**

When Moses asked God to reveal His glory, the first words God said to him referred to both judgment and deliverance:

**The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth**

**Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty ... (Ex. 34:6b–7a)**

When Nahum prophesied the fall of Nineveh he referenced both the mercy and wrath of God: “The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked ...” (Nahum 1:3a). Jonah, in fact, angry that God had spared the Ninevites generations before Nahum, had dared throw God’s mercy in His face when he justified his hesitancy to preach to Nineveh by referencing those words to Moses: “I knew that thou art a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and of great goodness, and repenting of the evil” (Jonah 4:2). Jonah was a missionary upset that his message had been well received; his cry to God was, in effect, “See, I knew you would be longsuffering and show mercy, and this proves it!”

It is a sad commentary that Christians sometimes seem more eager to see God’s judgment on sinners than His grace. We are called to preach judgment as the ultimate wage for sin, not our preferred outcome: or we make Christianity a vehicle for our own evil desire. Our proclamation of the righteousness

of God must always be in the hope of repentance and faith by the hearer or it will easily morph into an arrogant self-righteousness. Jonah's sin was his desire for God's judgment to the point of being angry at His grace; it ought not be ours.

## The Lessons of History

We ought, as believers, to see the lessons of history as more than the mistakes and accomplishments of men. Our worldview ought to place the Biblical narrative over all history. God has not changed nor can He change from what He was before Adam, Noah, the prophets, or Paul.

We are wrong to see eschatology as about the end time. If we do, it becomes a subject of curiosity and speculation. Rather, eschatology is about end times. The flood was an obvious end time, as was the crossing of the Red Sea, the destruction of Nineveh, and the end of the prophetic messages to the people of Judah. All involved judgment but also grace, mercy, or deliverance of some kind.

All judgment and deliverance points to the final judgment and eternal salvation; it reminds us that the great division of mankind is the redeemed and the lost. Because God is one, His Providence is one, His judgment is one, His salvation is one. All point to man's accountability before Him in terms of His Messiah.

Human kingdoms have often been anti-God and have stood ready to oppose the righteous and righteousness in general. Each judgment of history points us to our accountability, each deliverance to His depthless grace. Even so, it is not about us, but rather His eternal will. In the multitude of examples of judgment and deliverance we must see the righteousness and justice of God revealed, but we must never presume that God owes those He has called the righteous or just vindication in time and history.

## The Creation Groans

The "simple gospel" has often degenerated into the "easy gospel" where only the pleasant attitudes of God are proclaimed and salvation is said to be all about blessing. In fact, we live in a world that often hates God and His people. Sin has produced pain and conflict. Even the creation has fallen under the curse. Designed for man's blessing, God has involved it in His judgment on sin. Paul said the creation groans under sin (Rom. 8:22) as do we (2 Cor. 5:2-9), desiring both to see the promise that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas" (Isa. 11:9).

The Flood is a good example of how the earth groans under the curse. We refer to what we see as "the creation," but everything we see, as beautiful as it is, is the aftermath of the Flood's destruction. The entire geography of the earth changed during the Flood.

Cain, the founder of the first city and the man who hoped to "rejuvenate" his environment by walking away from God, was, after all, the one who first polluted the earth with shed blood, that of his brother Abel. That blood cried to God from the ground (Gen. 4:10). The sin of Cain has been repeated innumerable times since, often in the name of the most sanctimonious of motives. As men, like Cain, build monuments and empires dedicated to sin and warfare against God, they have, one after another, fallen to eventual judgment. These anti-God powers are the Old Testament form of what is called Antichrist in the New. They are all epitomized by references to Babylon which was the enslaver of God's covenant people and the destroyer of His temple.

## Statism as a Worldview

Assyria's worldview controlled its drive for empire and is a good example of how religious faith shapes far more

then ideas. Assyrian religion saw the universe organized as a state with the gods representing a higher order, but man controlling the historical process. This dictated how they viewed history and social order. Might and order belonged to the gods and corresponding might and order in the political realm was seen as evidence of union with the gods. The Assyrian monarchs thus claimed to be kings not just of their empire but of all the universe.

The Assyrians' worldview thus saw unity and power as a metaphysical goal which justified their quest to expand and exercise control by any means. Order required authority to impose its will. As a consequence, the Assyrian empire was one of the most studiously cruel of history. Their records brag of the corpses they left behind and speak proudly of their goddess Istar as a relentless destroyer. In their wake they left skinned corpses, mutilated foes and mounds of human skulls, all to inspire terror so that none would dare to oppose their quest for power. Their mindset, based on their worldview, was that authority, no matter how brutal, represented a divine order. Freedom in such a worldview was unthinkable and non-existent. Life under this form of statism was even more brutal than contemporary variants. Western tyrants today claim authority from some abstract source they call "the people" or "the country," which puts them at least on the human plane. Ancient rule always claimed to be the incarnation, or at least the anointed voice of deity. Their message was, "We are the divine power on earth; individuals are irrelevant." To challenge such claims was at once both treason and blasphemy.

A Biblical worldview sees the course of history in the hands of a just God. We will not understand its twists and turns but we will see it as governed by

*Continued on page 23*



# Rx for Turning America “Rightside Up”

By Buddy Hanson (Part 1 of 3)



Future historians will undoubtedly shake their heads in amazement at our cultural conditions. Think about the scenario we’re providing for them:

Non-Christians who don’t believe in absolute truth, and in some cases even reject the concept of truth, are busily trying one idea after another in an effort to bring about cultural improvements. Meanwhile, Christians, who do believe in absolute truth and in a purposeful cause-and-effect creation, are not attempting to do anything to bring about positive changes in our culture. In other words, non-Christians, who believe they are biological accidents in a random and chance creation, are living *like Christians* with the expectations that their behaviors will bring about hoped-for results, and Christians are living *like non-Christians* by having no expectations that their obedient and God-honoring behaviors will produce positive consequences for their culture, and, in effect, are depending upon a sudden, random act from Jesus to deliver (and excuse) them from their commanded responsibilities!

This is not to say that non-Christians have any desire to *live like Christians*. They most certainly don’t. Nor is it to say that Christians have any desire to live like non-Christians; we don’t. But this is what is happening. Future historians may well conclude that the world of twenty-first-century America was turned “upside down.” They may also ask, “Why did American Christians ignore the core theological answers to life’s questions that non-Christian worldly philosophers had

given up on answering?” In addition, they may wonder, “What were Bible teachers teaching to cause Christians to live in such a manner?” and, “Why didn’t Christians make it a priority to disciple each other by explaining these fundamental answers to life?”

This series looks to God’s Word for His prescription on what we can do to stop living like non-Christians, and to begin living like Christians. The framework for the answer of turning our world “rightsides up” includes three parts:

**Part One:** Conforming our *Little Picture* of Life to God’s *Big Picture*.

**Part Two:** Changing the paradigm of how we view the church and our role in it from “Library Science,” to “Life Science.”

**Part Three:** Assisting fellow Christians to *Re-suppose* what we *Pre-suppose* by interpreting the Bible in terms of our *Present Days*, instead of according to the *Last Days*.

Let’s begin by looking at these primary answers to life that we for one reason or another are hiding from each other.<sup>1</sup>

1. *Who* are we? (“A chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.”) 1 Peter 2:9
2. *What* are we supposed to do? (“Rule the earth,” and be “ambassadors for Christ.”) Gen. 1:26–28; 2 Cor. 5:20
3. *When* are we supposed to apply God’s Word? (“Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.”) 2 Timothy 4:2
4. *Where* are we supposed to apply

God’s Word? (Everywhere! “Walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”) Colossians 1:10

5. *Why* can we expect to be successful by conforming our lifestyle to Biblical ethics? (“Those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed.”) 1 Samuel 2:30
6. *How* are we supposed to do it? (Present a godly lifestyle [testimony] for our non-Christian neighbors to observe; share the Gospel; and teach God’s ethics for living to our families and others.) Luke 10:27

What a blessing it is to be an adopted member of God’s family and Christ’s Kingdom! With the “veil” that used to cloud our understanding having been “lifted,” we now have the matchless advantage of being able to know how to live as our Creator desires, and commands<sup>2</sup>—indeed, how we would naturally live had not Adam and Eve sinned. However, in contrast to our sure, certain and never-changing answers to life, our non-Christian neighbors, cannot escape the fact that they are attempting to bring about a rational understanding to a world that in their view came about in an irrational manner. King Solomon captures the view of non-Christians by stating,

“What profit has a man from all his labor in which he toils under the sun? One generation passes away, and another generation comes ... the sun also rises, and the sun goes down... there is nothing new under the sun.” Ecclesiastes 1:3–9



The only thing about which they can be certain is the current “moment,” which means that tomorrow’s “moment” is an entirely different and separate entity, with no connection to today’s moment. We only need to remember how we approached life before our conversion to recall how frustrating, confusing, and ultimately hopeless the non-Christian lifestyle is.

By God’s grace, we have been enabled to see history as a slow and steady unfolding of His eternally perfect plan for His creation. We understand that time is linear and meaningful, not cyclical and meaningless, and we can point to *numerous civilizations* that have flourished and been able to sustain themselves by living in obedience to His rules. In stark contrast to this, non-Christians can point to *no civilization* that has been able to sustain itself by following man’s rules. Yes, wars and various other unpleasant potholes are included along life’s highway, but their root cause is man’s sinfulness, and not the mindless workings of a random, haphazard universe.

Since we agree that God’s Word is true and without errors or contradictions, a question that should haunt us is: “*Why don’t we trust in God enough to conform our lifestyle to His perfect counsel?*”<sup>3</sup> Why do we apparently believe more in what our non-Christian neighbors say about how we should live than we do in what God says? With the significant number of Americans who profess to be Christians, the cultural condition of our country would certainly be dramatically different if we trusted in God’s wisdom more than we apparently trust in our own wisdom.

### **Conforming Our Little Picture of Life to God’s Big Picture**

There are two things we must do, to successfully carry out our calling:

1. Think God’s thoughts after Him (by consistently studying in His Word).
2. Fit our Little Picture (immediate circumstances) into God’s Big Picture (His revealed will for earth) so that we are certain we are attacking the taproot of an issue and not just an isolated branch.

Jesus intends for us to go about our daily tasks by viewing the world through God’s eyes, not our eyes. This is the only way we will be able to shift our focus from one that is primarily concerned with the Little Picture that focuses primarily on our situations and circumstances, to God’s Big Picture that focuses on His plan for a redeemed earth. There are two ways of viewing these questions: horizontally (man-centered), or vertically (God-centered). Seven fundamental lifestyle questions are listed under these two headings:

#### **LITTLE PICTURE QUESTIONS: Our Time-Oriented Priorities**

1. What should a Christian think about a particular topic, situation or circumstance?
2. How can I (with God’s help) improve my culture?
3. Which heroes provide role models for me, my spouse, or my family?
4. Should I participate in politics?

#### **BIG PICTURE QUESTIONS: God’s Life-Oriented Priorities**

5. What is God’s perfect and unchanging plan for mankind?
6. How does each area of my life conform to Biblical ethics?
7. Am I providing a consistent lifestyle testimony for those with whom I come in contact?

To view these questions through our eyes would be to see them in two horizontal groupings, with our Little Picture time-oriented priorities nearest to us,

and God’s Big Picture priorities grouped behind them. We know that God’s Big Picture life-oriented priorities are “out there,” but since they are obscured from our line of sight they remain fuzzy in our thought processes. All are good questions and need to be asked and answered. However, by beginning our focus with questions 1–4, our tendency is to try to fit God’s priorities (questions 5–7) into our overall thoughts and plans as best we can.

For proof that such an approach will fail, we only have to think about our daily spiritual practice. Anyone who has attempted to “add” a few minutes with God to either the beginning or end of a day has likely experienced unsatisfactory “hit and miss” results. May we not forget that God is not some subjective Being on the periphery of our life; He is our life. There is no Scriptural justification for beginning each day with a “To Do” list that does not have serving God at the top. Hoping to fit God in “between the cracks” of our routine demonstrates that our priorities come first, and that His priorities come in a distant second. Such an attitude clearly demeans God’s importance in our life and testifies to our non-Christian neighbors that He has nothing important to do with our daily actions and decision-making, since our lifestyle is so similar to theirs.

If we’re not careful, the Little Picture questions will serve to block out the Big Picture questions by conning us into thinking we’re living for God when we’re really only being “busy” for Him.

The preferred way of viewing life and these questions is to look at them from a vertical perspective because that enables us to constantly have all seven questions clearly in view. This way we are reminded to sift our various daily decisions and priorities through God’s overarching priorities to make certain

that our actions conform to His revealed ethics. By doing this we are not only able to carry out His will, but we also present to our neighbors a lifestyle that is distinctively different, attractive (and Christian!).<sup>4</sup>

We should never forget that God is concerned first and foremost about His will being done on earth.<sup>5</sup> He's interested in our being "more than conquerors through Christ,"<sup>6</sup> not busying ourselves in church-sponsored activities and events that may have little to do with bringing about His will on earth. God doesn't simply want a portion of our valuable time, He demands and commands our *entire life*! Since questions 5–7 are life-oriented, keeping a clear focus on them enables us also to deal consistently with questions 1–4. May we therefore be careful to view life through God's eyes, from a vertical perspective, instead of from the fallen horizontal perspective of our non-Christian neighbors. This is why the apostle Paul says we should be:

**Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. (2 Cor. 10:5–6)**

### **How Did We Become So Near-Sighted?**

Christianity is not to be lived in quiet seclusion with the only application of the truths we believe taking place inside our homes and churches. On the contrary, we are commanded to approach everyday tasks within a corporate or covenantal context. The pietistic attitude of "not forcing our beliefs on others" is not Biblical. It was the seventeenth-century English philosopher John Locke who popularized the idea

**"To bring about this needed paradigm shift we must begin by viewing ourselves as Biblical instructors, instead of Biblical informers. Whether we are teaching our family around the kitchen table, leading a small group, or preaching from the pulpit, the best thing that could immediately happen is for us to cut the information in our lessons in half, and use the other half of our time providing practical suggestions on how to apply the truths in our messages."**

that Christianity is a private concern. Since Locke and other Enlightenment leaders thought man's reason ruled supreme, it was only logical for them to encourage Christians to remain silent when it came to cultural matters, because in their view, "spiritual thoughts" were not relevant to "real life."

During this time frame, the term "soul saving" took on an unbiblical meaning. Rushdoony notes, "Soul in Scripture means very commonly the life of man, so that Biblical soul-saving is concerned with the total life and being of a man, and soul-saving means the regeneration of the whole man. Salvation now was by implication limited to one side of a man, his soul or spirit, and salvation had an inner meaning rather than a total and cosmic meaning."<sup>7</sup>

The truth of the matter is that every day at every point someone is attempting to influence someone else according to his worldview. This means that if we don't demonstrate our beliefs to those with whom we come in contact, we will very likely be the only persons who

aren't living according to our worldview. The same lesson holds for churches. If the pastor and other church officers are not presenting a thorough and on-going Biblical analysis of how their congregation can apply God's Word to current events, they are not doing their job.

### **Helping Fellow Christians Identify Spiritual Gifts**

Our fellow Christians desperately need to be instructed about God's Big Picture for the earth. They need assistance in identifying their Spiritual gifts so they can set Little Picture goals for themselves and their family. It is also important for them to understand that when they study the Bible, whether in private, in a small group, or a worship service, their goal should be to learn how to serve Jesus more faithfully and consistently, because Christianity is a "Life Science," and not merely to continue to add up more knowledge about God, as though Christianity is a "Library Science." Finally, they need to understand that their submission to God's revealed counsel, combined with the submission and obedience of Christians across the world, will assist in completing Satan's defeat.<sup>8</sup>

### **Changing the Paradigm of How We View the Church and Our Role in It from "Library Science," to "Life Science"**

People who attend the "good guy" churches come with an expectation to hear an exegetically sound sermon. When they do, they leave satisfied and probably forget the message during their drive back home. Why? Because most of the "good guy" sermons, while filled with solid Biblical truths, have little explicit connection to the learners' everyday situations and circumstances. At most, the truths in the sermon provide a level of comfort by reminding us that God is in charge of His creation, but

since the pastor isn't likely to provide practical suggestions on how to live out those truths, we continue to view ourselves as *spiritual outsiders* on earth, instead of *spiritual providers* on how to successfully make the most of life for our non-Christian neighbors.

I've heard friends brag that the sermons at their church are longer than the typical sermons at other churches. But the solution to America's ills is not the length of our sermons, but that we come away with at least one Biblical ethic to incorporate into our lifestyle *today*.

Sports coaches don't care how much their players know about playing the game, but how well they play it. Successful sports coaches win not because their players know the "X's & O's," but because they have systematically instructed their "Jimmy's & Joe's" how to perform the basic fundamentals of the game.

Can we not say that God thinks the same way about us in terms of how we live for Him, instead of how much we know about Him?<sup>9</sup> Christianity should not be thought of as a "Library Science" whereby we study Scripture with the purpose of simply adding to our knowledge about God, but as a "Life Science" whereby we study God's Word in order to be a more consistent servant in Christ's Kingdom. Can we as Bible teachers confidently say that we have done our best to systematically teach learners the fundamentals of how to live, work, play, raise our children, self-govern ourselves, and worship God?

## Explain What It Means to be Living in a Cause-and-Effect Creation

God created a cause-and-effect creation whereby "good things" happen when we obey Him, and "bad things" happen when we disobey Him. It appears that every vocation "gets this," except Bible teachers. Like Little League

baseball coaches we continue to encourage our learners to "throw strikes," and "hit the ball," but unlike college and professional coaches, we rarely tell them *how* to perform these skills. As a consequence, our learners take away the idea that they should "throw a strike" *when they feel like it*, or that they should "hit the ball" *when they feel like it* because these are things that Christians should do (*when they feel like it!*). But until we change this paradigm of how Christians view the church and their role in God's family and Christ's Kingdom, they will continue to view being a Christian as little more than a positive "add-on" to their lifestyle (*when they feel like it*), instead of being a "complete transformation" of their lifestyle.

To bring about this needed paradigm shift we must begin by viewing ourselves as Biblical instructors, instead of Biblical informers. Whether we are teaching our family around the kitchen table, leading a small group, or preaching from the pulpit, the best thing that could immediately happen is for us to cut the information in our lessons in half, and use the other half of our time providing practical suggestions on how to apply the truths in our messages. The more word-pictures and practical examples presented the better, because that only puts more ideas into the minds of the learners on how they can be better servants of Christ.

Apparently, not many American Christians see themselves as they really are. For example, how many sermons and/or small group lessons have you heard that explained these two marvelous verses where the Apostle Peter tells us that we are:

**A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own special people, that we may proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His**

**marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. (1 Pet. 2:9–10)**

## Are We Turning Christian Truths into Content-Free Christian Clichés?

Have we taken the time to drive home the truth that we are not "bugs" on God's windshield, but are, in fact "*the* windshield?" And that it is the non-Christians who are the "bugs"? Or, has our practice been to present an accurate (and rote-sounding) Biblical definition of these verses and move on to another commonly misunderstood verse, such as:

- Be ready in-season and out—2 Timothy 4:2
- No man can serve two masters—Matthew 6:24
- Be salt and light—Matthew 5:13

The negative consequence of teaching as though we are *Biblical informers* is that our learners know a good deal about God's Word, but without a thorough understanding of how to incorporate it into their lifestyle, these marvelous truths of God become little more than empty Christian clichés that we quote to each other to make various theological points. This is why it is critical to relate God's Big Picture for the earth to our learners' Little Picture role in it.

So as you prepare your next message, I would suggest four things to consider:

- Is the information Biblically accurate?
- How well does it fit the cares and concerns of the learners?
- What practical applications can I present (throughout the message, not just at the end) that connects

*Continued on page 23*



# Why Check-Book Theology is Necessary—Part 2

## Don't Circle the Wagons

Ian Hodge, Ph.D.



In Part One I wrote about a workshop with church elders that highlighted the lack of planning. Part 2 is about implementation, but the implementation story is from another workshop I conducted with even better results.

When Danny said he believed God was directing him to a new “calling,” my mind began racing. Why would a man, fifty-three years of age, eighteen years in the pastoral ministry, receive from God a new calling *outside* of the ministry? Was it to become a truck driver? Maybe a janitor?

Danny, a humble minister of the gospel, did not think he was being called to be president of a major corporation. He could readily empathize with Harry Callahan (Clint Eastwood) in the Dirty Harry movie, *Magnum Force*: “A man’s gotta know his limitations.” And Danny was certainly well aware of his limitations.

At the same time he also knew he served a God who knew no limitations, and for these many years Danny had faithfully relied on God as he served his local parish in the suburbs of a city of around one million people. It was a quiet, lower middle-class area, with a growing population as land availability and prices were forcing people to move to the outer suburbs. Danny had surrounded himself with a small number of faithful elders.

We were sitting over coffee when Danny dropped this bombshell about

a new calling. We explored his options, which he recognized were few in the marketplace.

“If your church was growing at ten new members a month, or even if it was just growing in attendance at any rate month after month, would you want to quit the ministry and go somewhere else?” I asked.

I could tell from the expression on his face that he was thinking. But it took him a few days before he called me with his response.

“You’re right. If this church was growing I would not want to quit and go elsewhere. I love the pastoral ministry and really do believe this is where God wants me.”

“So is it possible that you have been confusing *frustration* with a mistaken notion that God is calling you elsewhere?” I asked.

“Yes,” he replied.

“Let’s get together and talk,” I suggested.

I had known Danny for about two years. We had relocated to the area and joined his church. It had a little over 200 people who were actively attending, although not all would be there every Sunday. Its activities were the usual youth activities, mid-week home study groups, and Sunday services. Danny’s preaching was practical rather than a merely intellectual exercise. And he played a mean guitar.

Often, though, you can tell what’s going on in a church by what it does *not* do, rather than by what it does. The church had grown over the years, but

more by population expansion rather than active outreach. It’s not that they did not *believe* in outreach, it’s just that they did not *plan and manage* for church growth.

Here was a typical evangelical and conservative church, a Presbyterian church with its “correct” theology, but frustrated that this “correct” theology did not appear to be resulting in greater church growth. Meanwhile, elsewhere in the city, there were churches that had less “correct” theology, but had congregations in the thousands.

The typical Reformed response to this practical phenomenon is to lay the cause for these larger churches at the door of man’s sinfulness. People follow their “sin” nature, it is suggested, and lean towards churches that don’t hold to the sovereignty of God—at least, don’t hold it in the way we hold it. As a result of this conclusion, it’s easy for the Reformed community to lock themselves into small churches—and frustration.

Sometimes you have to take a rain check. Is it true that God has ordained that the more apparent faithfulness you have in your doctrine, the smaller your church will be? Some people are convinced this is the case. Therefore, they conclude that poor or incorrect doctrine leads to church growth, while faithful preaching of the gospel leads to small churches.

This same belief—*mistaken* belief—often gets translated into the business world. The conclusion is that businesses only get large by “ripping people off.” It is alleged they have unethical business



practices, misleading marketing, high-pressure sales tactics, and *these* are the reasons for their growth.

Such conclusions, however, about both business and the church, are half-truths paraded as the full truth. It is true that there are unethical business practices, just as it is true there are churches whose theology is way off course.

But it is *not* the poor theology or the unethical practices of business that are the cause of their success. For that, you have to look elsewhere.

There is a serious *disconnect* in conservative Christianity, even among those who are postmillennial in their view of the future. These people *expect* the church to grow, but they often do not *experience* it. In trying to explain the apparent failure of their conservative church to grow, they look *outside* their own church for an explanation, rather than inside it.

To look inside your church for the answer to this apparent failure to evangelize and grow, however, requires that you look in the mirror. There you see the cause of the failure to grow, not in some mistaken view about baptism, soteriology, eschatology, exclusive psalmody, or even the sovereignty of God. Yes, these are issues, and they are *real* issues. But by themselves they do not *determine* the size of your church.

Imagine a farmer who has tools—spade, rake, and axe. He has a particular *brand* of these tools, and he argues, quite cogently, how it is the *brand* that is the key to successful farming. His brand, he says, is the *Reformed* brand. Meanwhile, farmers who own a different brand prove just as successful, or even more successful than the farmer with the Reformed brand. He has so convinced himself that it is the *brand* that is the key to his success that he cannot fathom why farmers with a different brand have greater success.

It is easy to recognize that our Reformed-brand farmer perhaps misses the real point. While it is necessary to have tools, it is just as necessary to consider *how* the tools are to be used. And sometimes the farmers who do not have the Reformed brand of tools use their tools better than the Reformed farmers.

What determines the size of your church is not your theology. Mormonism and Jehovah's Witnesses are proof of that. It is what you *do* to grow the church that is important. If you don't do anything, don't expect it to grow. If all you do is pray, don't expect it to grow. If all you do is read the Bible, don't expect it to grow. If all you do is argue over Calvinism, don't expect it to grow. But if you talk to people who currently don't attend your church, and invite them to come along, *then* you can expect it to grow.

Conservative, small, and Reformed churches have a ready-made excuse for their smallness. For many, a church of 200, like the one Danny pastored, would be considered a major breakthrough. But it still does not reach the thousands. Those churches with a just a few families, where the pastor often supports himself with other work, would *love* to be at 200.

And here's how you get there.

Danny and I met over yet another cup of coffee, and I always appreciated my time with him. He was a great encouragement to everyone in his congregation, faithful in his pastoral duties, and consistent in his conservative theology. But Danny was not alone with *frustration*.

As we talked about his frustrations, I was able to talk through the issues of *management* with him. He had the usual excuses. This is a church, not a business. But he did recognize that the *financial* success of his church depended upon the tithes and offerings of the congrega-

tion who, when they went to work, needed to *manage* the success of their daily activities.

"So what makes the church *exempt* from management practices?" I asked.

Danny had no answer to this. But he agreed to let me run a workshop with the elders to explore their mutual frustration and see if a solution could be found. A date was selected, and the elders were to come prepared. Preparation meant reading the first of three volumes on leadership by Dr. Tony Keys, published by the Trinity Institutes of Leadership, completing all the questions in the workbook, so that at the workshop there could be *discussion* of the issues raised in the book.

When we met, Danny announced he had come to a conclusion about church growth that he would share at the end of the workshop.

The discussion was lively and intense. As usual, I took the group, seven men in total, through the key functions of the organization and helped them discover the opportunities. That's just a more positive way of saying "discover the things they are not doing."

The outcome of these discussions is *always* the same. No plan. No shared vision of the future. It appears everyone is confined to the treadmill of near—if not total—failure.

In the discussion, the roles of the pastor and of the elders were explored. So too were their *ambitions* for the expansion of the Kingdom of God through the local church in which they found themselves.

I've been in this church for two years, and I've met with the folk and heard them talk. They're *all* frustrated, just like Danny. They seem to think that any "success" related to the Christian life is only going to happen in the life hereafter.

The discussion at this workshop

was not unlike the one I spoke about in Part 1. The details are different, but the outcome is the same. The purpose of the workshop is to get everyone to agree on a plan of action. Not my plan of action, but one they can all agree on is the next step—for them.

I did not plan to end this workshop without some kind of *agreed* commitment from Danny and the elders. As we worked, I used large sheets of sticky-notes, accumulating comments and ideas, so they had a record of the meeting.

My very last step was to take one of these large sheets and write the numbers one through ten in the left-hand column. Beside the number one, I wrote the number seven. It looked like this.

1	7
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Without telling them what this represented, I turned to the group and I began a new line of discussion.

“You men seem all very excited at the end of our workshop. You have found direction, without having found specific answers. You have agreed your next step is to get together to make a plan, a plan that incorporates church growth, teaching programs, etc. within the church.

“Now let me ask you this: How long do you think it will take you to get just *one* person in the congregation, who was not present today, as excited as you are? So excited that they will go and talk to one of *their* friends in the church and get them excited so they will go and get

one of their friends excited?”

In other words, I’m asking a *productivity* question which will become a part of their plan. How long? Why, they have been in this meeting since 8:00 a.m., it’s now 1:30 p.m. It shouldn’t take long at all.

Eventually, I got a reply from one them, the church secretary.

“One month,” he offered.

“Great,” I replied. “How many did you get in the last month?”

Now it was not my intention to belittle anyone’s activities. What I needed them to be was *realistic* in their expectations.

“How about I give you *two* months. Do you think each one of you could get just one person in the church excited about the future, so they will go and talk to one of their friends?”

They all nodded. Everyone in the room agreed *this* is an achievable goal.

“I’m sorry. I’m a skeptic. I know you all have the best of intentions. How about I give you *one year* to achieve this goal? That ought to be achievable, don’t you agree?”

A year! You could sense what was going through their mind. A year! Why, that’s as easy as falling off a log. Of course we could achieve that.

I returned to the board at the front and added some headings to the columns, and completed the right-hand column.

Years	People
1	7
2	14
3	28
4	56
5	112
6	224
7	448
8	896
9	1,792
10	3,584

I continued, “I don’t know what you folk have in mind about church growth, but if you did *nothing more* than achieve the goal of one person each year, and then replicate that each year for the next ten years, this could be the result.

“I do not even know that you are *capable* of achieving such a goal, but you all seem to think that one year is a *more than reasonable expectation* for you to find, encourage, *teach and train* people to reach out to other people.

“One a year. That’s the commitment.”

They were silent. A church of over 3,500 people in ten years. Never in their *wildest* imaginations was such a goal achievable. This was for the “other” church groups, not Reformed people. Yet they have agreed, in this meeting, that such a goal is *possible*.

Danny spoke, “I came here today with a number for church growth. It was nowhere near *that* number. I’m going to throw mine away and run with this one.”

If you look carefully at the table, you will see that on this productivity plan, it will take them six years just to work through the *existing* congregation and get everyone on board for an exciting train ride for the remaining four years.

## Outcomes

Perhaps you are wondering what happened? Did this church achieve this outcome? Did they, in fact, put a plan in place?

The workshop was held in 2004. In October 2010 they baptized new Christians and had many accept “membership” in the church. Here’s the result in Danny’s own words.

“Your workshop taught us we needed to have a plan. We were inexperienced, and we decided we were not going to reinvent the wheel. Instead, we borrowed an idea from another church

and implemented our version of it and called it 'Faith Steps.' This comprised four basic steps in the life of every Christian in the church, from newcomers onward, learning to serve God in a particular way. Each step is a logical flow on to the next. Our aim was to improve the worship service so that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit would be worshiped in an excellent way; communicant membership would be encouraged through a well presented view of Scripture and the sacraments, leading to a challenge of personal commitment and service; small group ministry; and finally a mature Christian approach to mission both at home first, the community and then abroad ..."

In other words, Danny and his elders began to ask the "quality" question. So often the music in churches is poorly put together. Little or no rehearsal. Danny, a skilled guitarist, encouraged the church musicians to a higher standard. And there were also the greeters in the church who were trained to do a better job of greeting and befriending strangers who enter the church. Danny continues:

"The elders were terrific. The church came alive and the Lord brought many new faces to us. We now have a part-time employee to carry on our youth work. The whole team worked together well, implementing the first two steps."

But here's the interesting piece of this story. Most of the church growth happened while Danny was "absent" from the church. He says,

"We invested time into people and trusted them in doing certain tasks, the growth (not that huge but noticeable) took place while I was moderator for that year, therefore away for most of the time. That was proof enough that the work did not and never did revolve around the minister alone. That's what

excited me. Someone (tongue in cheek) said, 'Dan, you should be away more often.' I took that in the right spirit ... and understood perfectly what was meant. But that was the highlight, to see the church being the church and not a bunch of people just following a minister—fifty-eight new members and eight baptisms (I got to enjoy the results) after some real effective ministry by others in the church—not me. I guess my input was years of teaching and discipling, but that didn't eventuate into anything until people actually owned the work and ran with it."

Danny and his elders had crossed the path that separates doctrine and church growth *without* the slightest compromise to their doctrine. Too often church growth is seen to be achieved only by giving up doctrine. But not for Danny and his co-leaders. Danny learned to harness the skills of other people, recognizing he could not do it all himself. "A man's gotta know his limitations." And until he does, his effectiveness is diminished.

But he also learned the most important lesson. And his advice to conservative churches is this: "You have to stop circling the wagons around doctrine. You need to let the doctrine do its work."

When Danny read Part One of this series, he wrote, "You just reminded me about what I had forgotten in the forecasted hustle and bustle of our next planning day—tangible goals—it really does matter. Activities and goals must be distinguished, otherwise we always plan for disappointment when people don't get enthusiastic about the activity ... We are actually planning now to increase the church size to 500 people, over the next ten years, that's fifty a year, at least one quarter of our congregation being gainfully employed in discipling one person per year for the next ten years.

I'm sure we can do better than that."

Their next phase, thus, is to encourage *and train* the congregation to reach out into the community through home groups and other related activities. They do not yet know how some of this will work out in practice. They just know they need to plan and do something.

Not a bad effort from someone who was ready to quit the ministry. In fact, an inspiring story because the church has not only grown in numbers, the "spiritual" growth is also evident. The weekly church newsletter encourages people to become active and reject political and social activities that are hostile to the gospel. Their Christian growth is not inward, it is outward, and this is what makes for a growing, vibrant church.

However, it seems to be time to run another workshop for Danny and his elders and help them with their math problem. I need to remind him that compound interest is superior to simple interest when investing money—and also when managing church growth.

Meanwhile, Danny, the leadership of the church, *and* the congregation are all on a journey—not a destination. And the journey of a thousand miles begins with one small step.

What's your plan? What's *your* next step? Need help? Contact Chalcedon and we'll teach and train you, and put you in touch with people like Pastor Danny so you might see the expansion of God's Kingdom in the portion of His garden he has allotted to you. 🌿

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# The Expectation for Children

Andrea Schwartz

**[Editor's note:** In attempting to push the pendulum back from the feminist extremes it has reached under humanism's sway, Andrea Schwartz often couches her argument in very strong terms. This provokes people to serious thought, even if Andrea overcompensates for the existing cultural bias (perhaps most obviously in the section entitled "Ready Or Not"). The value of initiating a long-overdue reassessment outweighs the element of controversy. Such essays thus serve an important general purpose even if the Biblical position was arguably overshot in some particulars. When iron sharpens iron, each piece of metal gives up something of itself in that process: namely, those assertions that don't pass scriptural muster. We would be blind to these issues entirely were it not for those like Andrea willing to take the heat in confronting them. Refining the Biblical parameters will inexorably follow as the pendulum shifts closer to its final position over time.]



It is painful to witness a young child ordering his parents around. The only thing more painful is to witness the child's parents (many times professing Christians) awkwardly smile and give in to the child's demand. Sometimes you can hear parents negotiate with the child, attempting to get him to "speak politely" to them. I recall my children's faces when they would see this dynamic played out. They would appear conflicted, as though they wished they had such freedom to rule our household. They would, however, inevitably announce later, "That child really needed a spanking." I would point out to them that they were correct in their assessment that the boy or girl really needed disciplining, but I would add, "Truth be told, the parents need a spanking!"

My children were taught that if a parent failed to discipline a child, that child had a parent who hated him because the Bible teaches: "He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly" (Prov. 13:24 NKJV).

Why do modern parents tolerate the tantrums, rudeness, defiance, and rebellion of their children? Why do they

pursue a policy of appeasement, often handling a defiant outburst with a piece of candy or a new toy? Blame can be laid at the doorstep of the anti-spanking experts who have polluted the culture by making corporal punishment synonymous with child abuse, thereby creating justifiable fear in parents that public disciplining may get them in trouble with the law or Child Protective Services. While there are a number of societal causes that contribute to the status quo, much needs to be laid at the doorsteps of the church that fails to teach God's law-word in its fullest application.

The Word of God warns us that foolishness is bound up in the hearts of children (Prov. 22:15), and those who fail to honor their God-given authority will reap the consequences of an undisciplined life (Deut. 5:16). Parents who ignore the Bible's instructions to identify, reprove, and correct rebellion and defiance in their children bear responsibility for the actions and outcomes of those children even into adulthood. Those who are not self-consciously submitted to the authority of God, who operate without a Biblical understanding of the family, and who approach parenthood as a make-up-the-rules-as-you-go activity, scandalize their children by being unfaithful representatives.<sup>1</sup>

With all the excellent resources available to instruct how to discipline Biblically, parents are doubly without excuse.

## The Root of the Problem

A warped understanding of the purpose of marriage contributes to our modern parenting failures. Sadly, many decide to marry without a Biblical understanding that the family is God's basic institution of society and that God's plan for discipling the nations begins with the fruit of the womb. Couples and their parents often give more attention to the color scheme at the wedding and the favors the guests will receive, than what the Bible says about the creation of a new Christian family. They approach their marriage with the assumption that it will evolve and progress naturally without much direct instruction from the Word.

In Genesis 1:28, God instructs Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply—in other words, to have children. Many enter marriage with something other than this dominion mandate in mind and have elevated other priorities ahead of bringing children into the world: finishing school, establishing themselves in a career, buying a house, or traveling the world. The uncertainties of our day encourage the decision to



wait on children as does the huge debt from student loans, coupled with little or no prospect of employment.<sup>2</sup>

Modern culture supports these decisions to wait because, although not stated outright, there is the prevailing opinion that once children arrive on the scene, freedom and autonomy cease. This is the foundation for abortion being a woman's right. A culture of death encourages divorcing sexual intimacy from marriage and marriage from the bearing of children. If a Christian man and woman do not consider themselves ready to become parents, they should re-evaluate the purpose of getting married.

Psalm 127 reads:

**1. Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.**

**2. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.**

**3. Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.**

**4. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.**

**5. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.**

Why would Christian couples not want to receive God's reward and blessing of children? People only refuse gifts they don't consider valuable. God does not describe children as a financial drain. In God's economy children are deemed a blessing. The Psalmist specifies the reward as God-given. Happiness and contentment come to the man who

has many children. The Psalmist describes offspring as having an important role in the defense against enemies at the gate. We should view these enemies as God's enemies and the children as covenant soldiers advancing the work of the Kingdom in the face of opposition (v. 5).<sup>3</sup>

## Ready or Not?

Christian couples and their families need to re-examine what constitutes readiness for marriage. The Bible points to some necessary prerequisites: the man must be able to demonstrate his capacity to support his wife and future children, (the dowry demonstrated this),<sup>4</sup> the wife should be physically ready to bear children and be able to look well to the ways of her household (Ps. 128:3, Prov. 31).

In our culture, the first years of marriage have replaced the betrothal period of the past. This entire period was to complete the necessary prerequisites for marriage. Only after meeting the requirements would the couple be deemed ready to marry. Because we ignore the Biblical marital guidelines, Christian marriage is often reduced to a "legal" sexual relationship.

The Christian marriage contract has a third partner, God Almighty, who places a high premium on covenant children (Ruth 4:11).<sup>5</sup> A man should be established in his calling and ready to support his wife and future children, so that there are no earthly impediments to "filling his quiver." The priority is such that a man was to refrain from starting a business or serving in the military within the first year of marriage to focus on his wife and the creation of his family. Deuteronomy 24:5 states,

**When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but he shall be free at**

**home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken.**

Rushdoony points out,

The bridegroom *cannot* be involved in military or civil duties. This is a requirement of very great importance because it clearly indicates the priority of the family to the nation. Religious institutions are not mentioned, because crises in such spheres are a rarity, whereas crises in national life are commonplace. No national crises can take precedence over the new marriage. Because the family is most important in God's sight, it must always be protected. The Vulgate gives an interesting reading: the groom shall "rejoice (or, take pleasure) with the wife of his youth." He is free, literally, "for his own household." He has a duty under God to establish a family as a physical and spiritual entity.<sup>6</sup>

In God's economy, the first year of marriage is to establish the family, recognizing that this supersedes business or national defense. This is a far cry from the perspective that eschews and postpones the arrival of children. If children are not eagerly anticipated, within the context of a Biblical framework, it is not a surprise that child rearing problems arise when the children arrive. With God's authority being dismissed, is it any wonder that parental authority is diminished?

## Who Says So?

Authority on the human scene is closely tied to status or position, but it cannot be equated with status. To illustrate, parenthood is a natural fact; giving birth to a child gives the status of a parent to the father and mother. Authority, however, is not derived from this natural fact but from God's command. "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee" (Ex. 20:12). This is a law from God which promises long life as a gift from God for obedience. Moreover,

the commandment here is to adults to honor, not to children, who are commanded more specifically to obey (Eph. 6:1). This law has no true analogue in the world of nature.

This means that parents who seek to command their children naturalistically deny they have religious authority. Such mothers will tell their children of the “trauma” of conception and birth, and all their “sacrifices” for their children, and the fathers will recount how much time and money their children have cost them. The children are unimpressed: they didn’t ask to be born, and none of these facts give the parents any true authority. Authority is a religious fact, and unless it is religiously grounded, it quickly disappears.<sup>7</sup>

Back to our tyrant-in-the-making child who has no healthy fear of his parents. Every child is born with this wickedness in his heart which manifests itself as he gains new abilities. If parents do not stand on the firm foundation of God’s law, they either take the path of least resistance by submitting to the child’s dictates, or they can become heavy-handed and abusive.

When I informed my children that the parents who failed to correct their children hated them, I had Scriptural backing: Hebrews 12:6, “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” If this method of correction is good enough for God the Father, parents should not hesitate to apply such discipline when necessary. Furthermore, consistent application early on in a child’s life has the added benefit of becoming less and less necessary as the child matures.

Today’s explanations on the “bad” behaviors of children are manifold and have been dosed out to us by child psychologists with expressions/excuses such as the terrible twos, the teenage years,

or boys will be boys. Charles Spurgeon does not agree.

The proverb is, “Boys will be boys,” but I do not think so. They will be men, if we let them have time; unless they learn self-restraint and habits of obedience while they are boys, they are not likely to make good men. He who cannot obey is not fit to rule; he who has never learned to submit, will make a tyrant when he obtains the power. It is good that every child should be broken in, delivered from his foolish self-will, and made to feel that he has superiors, masters, and governors, and then, when it shall come to his turn to be a leader and a master he will have the more kindly fellow-feeling to those who are under him.<sup>8</sup>

Children pick up very early on if their parents’ profession of faith matches their actions. Parents who refuse God’s authority cannot lead their children to obey them or God. Irresponsible, self-indulgent adults come from somewhere; they don’t just develop from out of the blue. The fabric of society, whether functional or dysfunctional, comes out of the context of family life.

## Training for Governing

Training for government in church, state, and other areas is in Scripture essentially within the family. This is apparent in two key texts. First, in every Passover service, beginning with the very first in Egypt, the instruction and participation of the sons was a requirement. Every religious festival had an element of instruction in it, and it was essential in all things that the children be reared in the essentials and fundamentals of the faith. God so requires it (Ex. 12:26–27; Ex. 13:8–14).<sup>9</sup>

The Hebrew child participated in the Passover Service. The Christian child took part in communion, for the first eight centuries everywhere, and the practice had some prevalence still into the fourteenth century. It was clearly

seen as essential that the covenant child understand the meaning of salvation and that as early as possible share the responsibility of the redeemed. He was taught to ask the question, because it was his responsibility to give an answer for his faith. This kind of training appears also in Joshua 4:6 where the question, “What mean ye by these stones?” requires the answer of teaching God’s saving power.<sup>10</sup>

The question from the youngest child and resultant answer from the father is all part of the training that teaches the child that he/she has been born into a context, an already organized and ordered life. The significance of having the youngest child ask the question is so that all within the household of faith would learn, and be expected to know, the meaning behind the symbolism. To exclude children from a knowledgeable participation in the faith cripples them. How are they to understand that failing to obey will shorten their lives, if they have not been taught and then held accountable?

This theme repeats throughout the Scripture but is emphatically driven home in Psalm 78, especially verses 1–8:

1. Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
2. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:
3. Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.
4. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.
5. For he established a testimony

in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:

6. That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children:

7. That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

8. And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.

Rushdoony comments,


This whole psalm cites the lessons of history which parents must teach their children; the history lessons are illustrations of God's judgments and are to be a part of the teaching of God's law. Life must be built upon the law of God, the psalmist says, and the law must be taught to children: this is God's requirement. Without the law, and the examples of God's judgment on law-breakers in Scripture, history will be the continuing and weary round of judgment on unconfronted covenant-breakers. Even more, it is not merely knowledge of the law, but a life of faithfulness which is required. The goal is "that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments" (v. 7).<sup>11</sup>

## Biblical Expectations

Question #104 in the Heidelberg Catechism reads, *What does God require in the fifth Commandment? The answer: That I show all honor, love and faithfulness to my father and mother, and to all in authority over me; submit myself with due obedience to all their good instruction and correction, and also bear patiently with*

*their infirmities, since it is God's will to govern us by their hand.*

Authority begins for us in the home. God places parents over children. All children are to show "honor, love and faithfulness" to their parents. Ephesians 6:1–3 gives the New Testament interpretation of this commandment. God's promise of blessing to obedient children still stands! Disobedient children are wicked children who are preparing themselves for ungodly lives and eventually hell, if they do not repent.<sup>12</sup>

Honor thy father and thy mother is the first commandment with a promise, and must be established early on in a child's life. Without doing so, children are trapped in a sinful cycle that promises to shorten their days and their parents become accomplices in their dire end. Conversely, when couples eagerly anticipate God's blessing of children and steward these lives into obedient service, they will receive the mercy unto thousands of them that keep the commandments of God. This is how the Kingdom is forwarded. 

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1. Thanks to Rev. Mike O'Donovan of Rock of Liberty Church in Fort Worth, TX ([www.rockofliberty.com](http://www.rockofliberty.com)) in a recent exposition of Lord's Day 39 from the *Heidelberg Catechism*.

2. Interestingly enough, many married couples would be astonished and possibly offended to discover that their reasons for holding off on having children mirror almost exactly the reasons offered by abortion-minded women who claim that abortion is their only option due to these same considerations.

3. Rev. Mike O'Donovan has an interest-

ing view on v. 3. His take is that the reward belongs to God as much as it is given by God. So, in essence, the decision to hold off on having children is depriving God of what is lawfully His.

4. Ex. 22:16 speaks of the bride-price as normative. This is not the purchase of a woman as chattel property, but an indication of the man's commitment and ability to assume the role of husband.

5. The absence of children in a marriage is lamented by many prominent women of the Bible (e.g. Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Hannah), or in some cases presented as a sign of judgment (Michal).

6. R. J. Rushdoony, *Deuteronomy* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2008), 372.

7. R. J. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2 (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1994) 1140–1141.

8. The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit: Sermons, Parts 249–260, by Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

9. R. J. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2 (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1994), 683–684.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid

12. Rev. Norman L. Jones, *Study Helps on The Heidelberg Catechism* (Reformed Church in the U.S., Publications Committee, 1981).



# The Second Mayflower by Kevin Swanson

(Generations with Vision, Parker, CO: 2008 Edition) Reviewed by Lee Duigon

“Our goal is a different world than the one we know today where 37 percent of children are born without fathers, half of marriages end in divorce—and where half of our income is taxed.”—Kevin Swanson (p. 210)

“I believe that far too many people are guilty of hand-wringing, worry, and despair over the future of America ... This country was brilliantly designed by its founders to be a kind of giant self-cleaning oven.”<sup>1</sup>—Mike Huckabee



With a presidential election looming, the national economy a shambles, and “flash mobs” looting stores and attacking passersby, America’s future is very much in question.

Christian radio host Kevin Swanson has been pondering that question. His *Generations Radio* daily show has listeners in all fifty states.

*The Second Mayflower*—first published in 1994, and twice updated since—is Swanson’s metaphor for the future. As the Pilgrims set sail on the first Mayflower to found a Christian civilization in a New World, Swanson writes, so must Americans today embark on a “second Mayflower” to re-found a Christian polity—either here in America, or somewhere else: “Either change this place, or go somewhere else where it can be done” (p. 283).

## Why a Second Mayflower?

“[T]he premise of this book is simply this: if God can bless us once, perhaps He will do it again” (p. xii).

“Western civilization is dying a wretched death,” Swanson writes (p. 1); and America itself has been in decline for 200 years.

In what ways have we declined? Reasons for our country’s fall from Christian greatness are, according to

Swanson, 1) a rejection of God’s law as binding on the civil government (p. 39); 2) “a rising antinomianism” (p. 41); 3) “poor application of God’s law ... to make it more restrictive than it was” (p. 43); 4) “bad theological formulations” leading to an inward-looking pietism and the corruption of the seminaries (p. 43); and, finally, 5) the whole culture’s embrace of a totally man-centered “truth” and man-centered “freedom” (p. 43).

This is a very meaty book, and we cannot help oversimplifying to some degree. Swanson builds his argument with care, point by point, and his book must be read attentively. It’s much more persuasive than may appear from a short review of it.

## A Rising Tyranny

For Swanson the most telling symptom of American decline is the replacement of liberty by tyranny.

Usually I have little patience with those who toss around terms like “police state” and “dictatorship” as applying to America. Obviously we are vastly better off than people living in Syria or North Korea. But Swanson is a thoughtful man, and his use of the words “a rising tyranny” is neither casual nor unjust. Tyranny, he writes, echoing John Adams, is “inevitable with an immoral people” (p. 46). Or, as Benjamin Franklin put it, “Either you’ll be governed by

God, or by God you’ll be governed!” (p. 48)

## What are the characteristics of American tyranny?

First, we have an ever more burdensome tax load. Since 1929 our tax load has increased 9,000 percent (p. 49), while the cost of government as a percentage of our national income rose to 46 percent by 2006, compared to 10 percent during the nineteenth century (p. 50). Ours is “the most expensive tyranny the world has ever known” (p. 52), while “we are taxed for services that we neither want nor endorse” (p. 56)—public funding for abortions immediately springs to mind.

As taxes rise and government grows, the birth rate shrinks and we see “strains in the solidarity of the family” (p. 54). The fact that we see the same pattern in every other country in the Western world is no comfort.

The second aspect of this rising tyranny is the gradual replacement of the family by the state, Swanson continues. The inspiration for this development goes back to the eighteenth-century philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “who abandoned his five children on the steps of an orphanage and proceeded to write a book on how to educate children” (p. 57). Compulsory education came to America in 1852, and by 2005 a Colorado judge was bold enough to



say, “All of Colorado’s children belong to us!” (p. 59) He meant, of course, that the children “belong” to the state, not to their families. That would certainly seem to be an adequate definition of tyranny.

Third, we have seen a progressive erosion of personal freedoms, with “thousands of [federal] programs that regulate every possible area of life” (p. 62). By 2005 there were 78,851 pages in the *Federal Register*, compared to 9,910 in 1954 (p. 63)—and they have labored on it since! Swanson devotes several pages (63–67) merely to list some egregious examples of government’s slow erasure of private property rights, expressive of “the very soul of Marx’s vision for complete state ownership of private property” (p. 69). We also have to contend with various new “laws” limiting free speech (p. 72), and assorted “social services” agencies turning citizens’ lives upside-down for the most trivial reasons (p. 78): sometimes all it takes is an anonymous tip from a neighbor with a grudge.

### Pushing Immorality

Fourth, the government deliberately promotes personal immorality, further undermining the family so as to make individuals increasingly dependent on the state.

Thus we see “bedraggled government-subsidized whores who strew the cities with millions of illegitimate children” (p. 76) as the predictable, unavoidable result of the “promotion of immorality ... by force of public policy” (p. 81).

“Social acceptance of homosexuality,” Swanson adds, “is now almost complete,” with more than a few churches actively complicit in the crime (p. 83).

“Does God really care anymore about things like this?” he asks (p. 84): and finds that the answer from Scripture (Romans 1:27–32) is a resounding “yes!”

Meanwhile, there have been 48 million abortions in America since 1973 (p. 85), with some \$272 million in federal funds granted to Planned Parenthood in fiscal year 2004–05 (p. 86). “God holds all of us responsible for the conditions of our communities,” Swanson warns. “This is called ‘covenantal culpability’” (p. 87).

There’s more detail given in the book, much more. Swanson’s facts and arguments are damning. Not only has America declined: the decline is much worse than we thought. And yet, he observes, on the whole, America’s churches have ignored all this (p. 89)! Tens of thousands of churches dot the American landscape. In light of our continuing slide into cultural bestiality, we have to wonder about the quality of those churches as salt and light and instructors in God’s Word.

### Why Haven’t We Fixed It Yet?

Surely Kevin Swanson wouldn’t share Governor Huckabee’s confidence in America as a self-cleaning oven. But why hasn’t the oven cleaned itself? What with the Reagan Revolution, the Morality Majority, Focus on the Family, eight years of George W. Bush in the White House, and conservative talk radio all over the airwaves ... why do we now have “gay marriage” in New York?

When the Pilgrims departed from Europe in the Mayflower, they did so with a clear vision in their minds. In the New World, populated only by a sprinkling of aborigines, the Pilgrims intended to found a Christian civilization conforming to the teachings of the Bible. “They built a godly culture with great commitment to God, at great risk to their own lives and fortunes. This was their commitment” (p. 237).

America’s conservative movement has no such vision. One wonders, sometimes, what they think they are conserving. They want to cut taxes and shrink

the government, and then campaign and vote for leaders who wind up doing just the opposite. They extol “family values” while their libertarian wing makes alliances with homosexual activists. Let a conservative leader or pundit find out that he or she has a family member who is “gay,” and he will suddenly discover that the “social issues” don’t matter, after all. The various conservative groups are so busy pushing for a place at the table of political power, they pay no attention to what’s on the menu.

“Christian conservatives” have been just as ineffective as pure secular conservatives. They send their children to anti-Christian, humanist public schools and colleges, blighting the prospects of their own posterity: statistically, most of those children will drift away from Christianity. They watch the same television shows and movies, and imbibe the same content, as the unbelievers (p. 103). In their churches, the preachers neglect to preach God’s Word (p. 115), succumbing to “ethical confusion” born of trying to substitute man’s word for God’s (pp. 108–109).

They don’t insist that their legislators, or their communities, be bound by God’s law (p. 120). Hampered by a culture-fed “mistrust of God’s word” (p. 124), they seek better answers to their questions from worldly “experts” (p. 125).

“I would hold,” writes Swanson, “that a careful look at our hermeneutics, our theology, our worldview, and our lives would find the marks of humanist autonomy throughout the Christian faith today” (p. 126). Which is to say that in America these days, it’s getting harder and harder to tell the Christians from the non-Christians.

### The Vision

What kind of vision ought to inspire our “Second Mayflower”?

At the heart of Swanson’s vision is

the critical need to regenerate the Christian family in America, and especially to restore fatherhood to its honored place. This will not be easy! Christians must “attack the world at every point, to impose God’s agenda on it” (p. 161), avoiding the usual “half-baked, piece-meal approach” (p. 168). There must be a vision to *connect*—we should probably say *reconnect*—family, church, education, and politics (p. 169).

The work of the Second Mayflower, says Swanson, will require a multi-generational commitment (p. 103), informed by a Biblically faithful “generational vision” (pp. 101–102)—that is, a vision that must be maintained, and work that must be carried on, literally from one generation to the next. “If we prepare now, we will be ready in seventy-five years when God opens a door of opportunity for us” (p. 248).

We don’t have space to do justice to all the particulars of this. Kevin Swanson is a thinker, and he has thought deeply about these matters. But we do need to discuss one practical application that is crucial to the fulfillment of his vision—Christian homeschooling.

## Light in a New Dark Age

While the public schools are getting ready to “move from homosexual clubs to homosexual classes and laboratories” (p. 91), and absolutely “refuse to teach an education rooted in the fear of God” (p. 92), homeschools are “the monasteries of the new Dark Age” (p. 2).

Sending Christian children to public school, Swanson says, is like Saul smiting the Amalekites but sparing their king, as told in I Samuel 15:7–9. “[I]f you kill what is vile ... and leave the king alive, you will continue to lose the battle for generations to come. Our age exactly replicates the half-hearted obedience of Saul ...” (p. 93).

We at Chalcedon whole-heartedly agree. *Of course* homeschooling can

be used to tie it all together. As fathers and mothers take up their God-given responsibility to educate their own children—and with a Biblical education, to boot—families naturally will become more closely-knit, more unified. Naturally persons who grow up in such families will be better able to form deeper and longer-lasting relationships with others. Naturally such families will strengthen the churches which they join. Naturally they will be a blessing to the communities in which they live. The more such Christian families, the better for America.

Slowly, says Swanson, “... the ideas of a modern day reformation are developing” as “families must reform every aspect of household life” (p. 140). Families must “work out what it means for God to be central in their home” and then extend that vision to their church (p. 141).

The self-defeating paradox of secular statism is that, in undermining family and church in order to replace them as the focus of the individual’s loyalties, the state turns its citizens into anarchists. Separate the individual from family and church, and you have removed him from the context of human life. A void is created, which the state cannot fill. God and family give love, meaning, and purpose to a human life. The state can only offer handouts. The helots who receive those handouts aren’t part of anything greater than themselves. All they know is what they want, from one moment to the next. Kevin Swanson must have been the least surprised observer in the world this summer, when London’s permanent, state-subsidized underclass erupted into riots.

But one need not look as far as England. The same sort of thing is happening here in America. See the video of a “flash mob” looting a convenience store in Montgomery County, Maryland.<sup>2</sup>

A famous African proverb says, “If a man does away with his traditional way of living and throws away his good customs, he had better first make certain that he has something of value to replace them.”<sup>3</sup> It would seem our modern humanist “experts,” in their statist lust to do away with Christianity, fatherhood, marriage, etc., showed less wisdom than so-called “primitive” people.

In replacing family and church with radical, atomized individuation, statisticians have given people a nihilistic worldview and virtually destroyed their capacity for long-term human relationships (p. 142), says Swanson. Ironically, the more immoral, the more disconnected the statisticians manipulate people to be, the more those same people are apt to turn against the state and destroy it. But the homeschool movement, Swanson says, is the beginning of the solution to these problems (p. 143).

What percentage of the riots in London, do you suppose, came from Christian homeschooled families? What percentage of them were “educated” in public schools? No one has yet researched these questions, but we would guess the answers would turn out to be 0 percent and 100 percent.

## The Long Haul

“The Second Mayflower,” Swanson says, “must take a meaningful step toward separating state and family” (p. 154). To save the family, public education must go (p. 153). As families “rise in true faith in the living God ... Hundreds of thousands of fathers are rising to the occasion” (p. 149). “These will be the nuts and bolts of the Second Mayflower,” he adds (p. 150). In other words, he proposes to throw away bad customs and replace them with something of value!

By way of contrast, let’s turn briefly to Mike Huckabee’s book, *A Simple Government*. We don’t wish him ill:

but as a mainstream “evangelical” and former presidential candidate, now with his own weekly political commentary show on television, Huckabee seems to be as good a spokesman for mainstream evangelical conservatives as we are likely to get.

Throughout his book, Huckabee seems to be in total agreement with Swanson as to the nature of America’s problems—fatherless “families,” out-of-control government spending and taxation, over-regulation, and a failed education system. But what is Huckabee’s solution?

“Let’s not flee our public schools, let’s fix them” (p. 93).

Fix them? How? With more standardized testing (p. 92), vouchers and charter schools (p. 94), merit pay for good teachers (pp. 95–96), having the states compete for federal education funds (p. 106), and jazzing up the school experience to make it more palatable to students (pp. 101–103)—a tweak here, a fiddle there, a lick of paint, and everything will be hunky-dory. Huckabee doesn’t even mention homeschooling.

This kind of thinking shows why, despite all their electoral successes, despite all their money spent, despite the hundreds of thousands of citizens signed up for and contributing money to “pro-family” organizations, mainstream conservatives are getting nowhere fast. The floor of America is rotting and splintering beneath their feet, and they want to tweak the public schools.

But Kevin Swanson is in it for the long haul. He thinks it will take seventy-five years, at least, to clean up the mess which humanism has made of our country. Many of us reading his book will not be here to see God open the door for a new and truly Christian America. Even if we climb aboard her now, we won’t be there to see the Second May-

flower reach her destination.

Four hundred years ago, the Pilgrims faced such a daunting challenge as this: and in God’s name, conquered.

Swanson has called on us to do the same. 🏰

Lee Duigon is a Christian free-lance writer and contributing editor for *Faith for All of Life*. He’s the author of the three-volume *Bell Mountain Series* of Christian novels.

1. Mike Huckabee, *A Simple Government* (New York: Penguin Group USA, 2011), 195.
2. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2011/08/19/flash\\_mob\\_robbery\\_in\\_montgomery\\_county\\_md.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2011/08/19/flash_mob_robbery_in_montgomery_county_md.html)
3. <http://thesafaridesk.com/index.html>

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*M. Rushdoony ... Judgment cont. from page 7*

eternal Providence. We will not expect it to focus around our needs, expectations, or lifespans, but will rather see in it our accountability to God for our sins and our dependence on His grace and mercy in every area of our being. 🏰

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*Hanson ... Rightside cont. from page 11*

- their cares and concerns to the truths in the message?
- Extend the message throughout the week via email. For example, send an email on Monday recapping the lesson’s key points and inviting feedback for the results of their various applications during the week. That would not only help keep the message fresh in their minds, but be a great way to begin the next message by citing some of their responses. Without giving any names, you could say, “Last week we mentioned ... Here are a couple of ways some of you put God’s Word to work, and the results of it. It just turns out that these applications were success-

ful, but even when they don’t turn out the way we hoped, we often learn a lesson of how to more effectively apply God’s truths. Our walk with Christ is a lifelong process, and we have numerous promises from God that “whatever we sow, we will reap,”<sup>10</sup> so as adopted members of God’s family and Christ’s Kingdom let’s make certain that we sow bountifully in order that we will reap bountifully!<sup>11</sup>

In Part Two we will continue our suggestions for how to change the paradigm of viewing the church from being “Library Science” whereby we go to church or a small group study to find out additional information about God, to “Life Science” whereby we go to church and small groups to find out how to use the information we learn to be better servants in Christ’s Kingdom. 🏰

Buddy Hanson is president of the Christian Policy Network and director of the Christian Worldview Resources Center and has written several books on the necessity of applying one’s faith to everyday situations, circumstances, and decision-making. For more information, go to: [www.graceandlaw.com](http://www.graceandlaw.com).

1. See Mark 4:21.
2. See 2 Corinthians 3:13–17.
3. See Psalm 73:28.
4. See Deuteronomy 4:5–7.
5. See Matthew 6:10.
6. See Romans 8:37.
7. R. J. Rushdoony, “Biblical Faith and Armenian History, Part 2, The Present,” *Chalcedon Report*, December 2001.
8. I am referring to His numerous objective promises to bless our obedience, not any particular subjective eschatological view.
9. See John 4:34.
10. See Galatians 6:7.
11. See 2 Corinthians 9:6.



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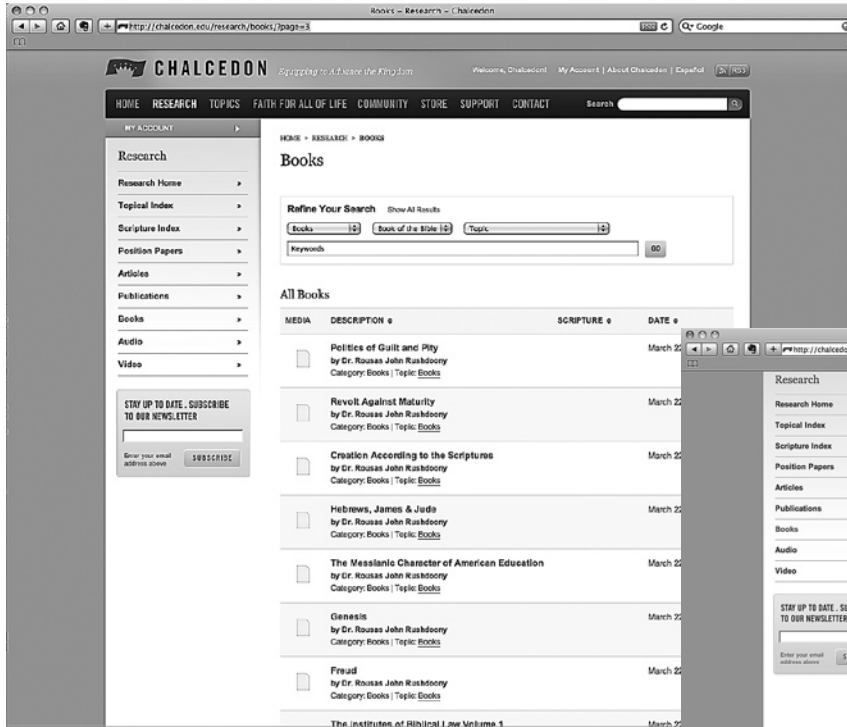
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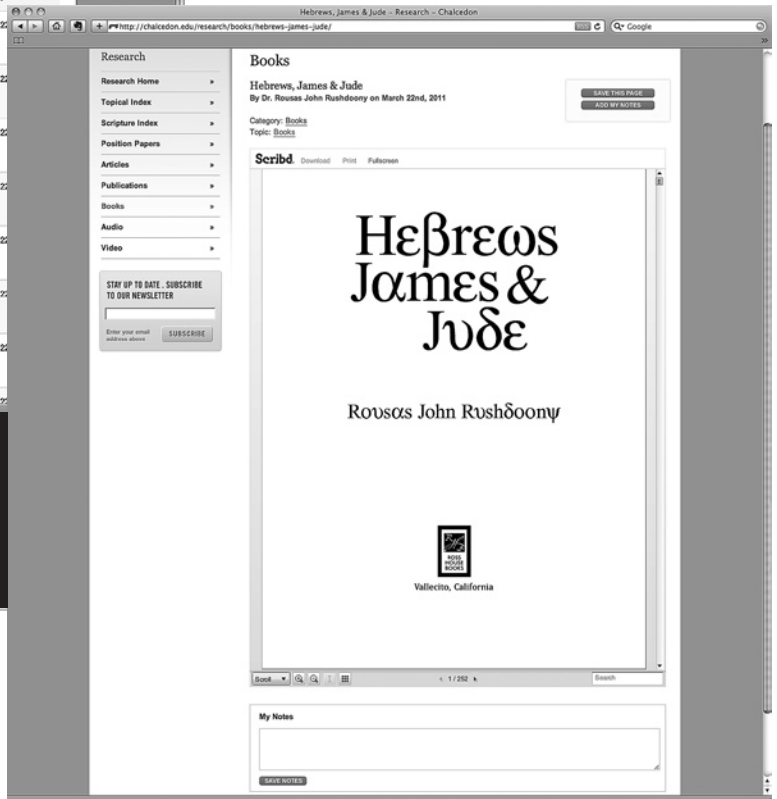
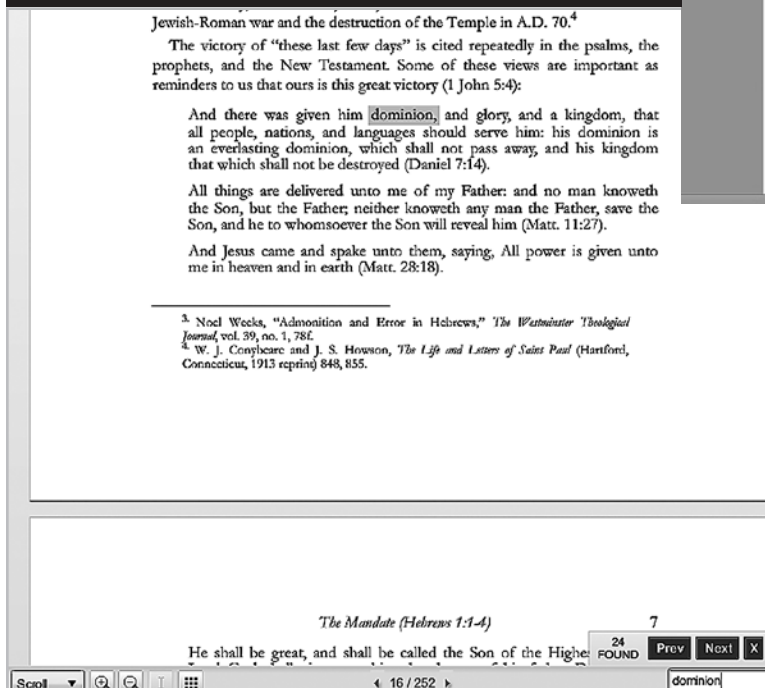
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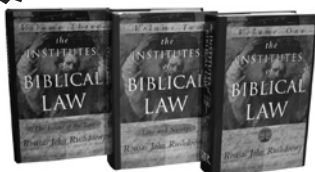
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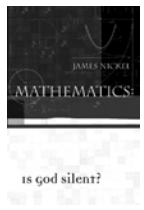


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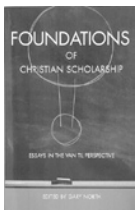


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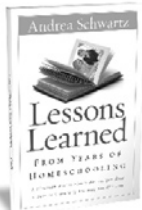
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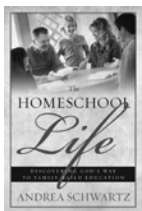
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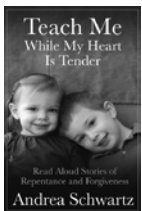


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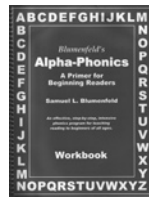
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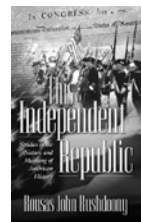


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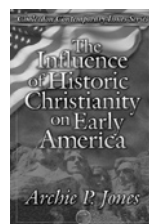
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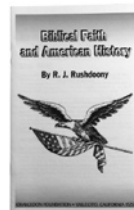
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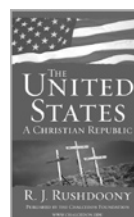
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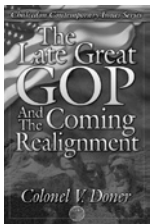




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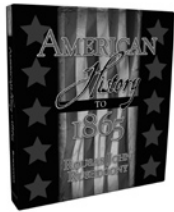
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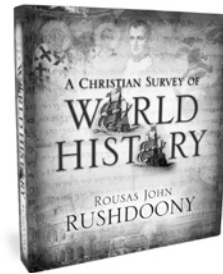
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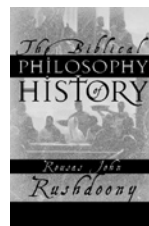
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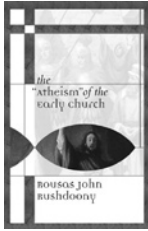
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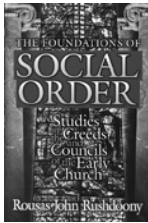
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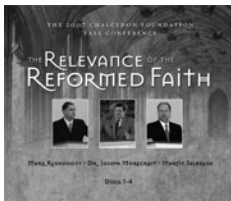


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Can you know anything if you reject God and His revelation? This book takes the reader into the heart of modern man's intellectual dilemma.

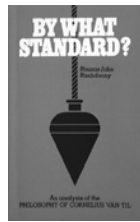
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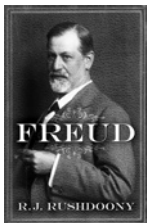


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By R. J. Rushdoony. The Biblical doctrine of psychology is a branch of theology dealing with man as a fallen creature marked by a revolt against maturity. Man was created a mature being with a responsibility to dominion and cannot be understood from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

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#### Recovering the Biblical Doctrine of Confession

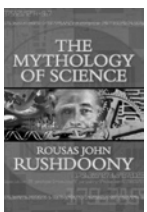
By R. J. Rushdoony. In *The Cure of Souls: Recovering the Biblical Doctrine of Confession*, R. J. Rushdoony cuts through the misuse of Romanism and modern psychology to restore the doctrine of confession to a Biblical foundation—one that is covenantal and Calvinistic.

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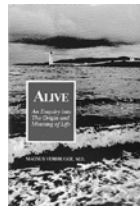
## Science



### The Mythology of Science

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

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### Creation According to the Scriptures

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

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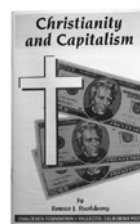
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### A Christian View of Vocation: The Glory of the Mundane

By Terry Applegate. To many Christians, business is a "dirty" occupation fit only for greedy, manipulative unbelievers. The author, a successful Christian businessman, explodes this myth in this hard-hitting title.

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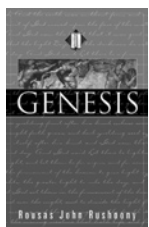


### Christianity and Capitalism

By R. J. Rushdoony. In a simple, straightforward style, the Christian case for capitalism is presented. Capital, in the form of individual and family property, is protected in Scripture and is necessary for liberty.

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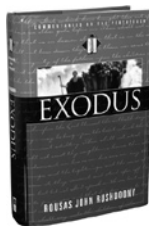


## Genesis, Volume I of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

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

require tremendous faith. Theology without literal six-day creationism becomes alien to the God of Scripture because it turns from the God Who acts and Whose Word is the creative word and the word of power, to a belief in process as god.

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## Exodus, Volume II of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

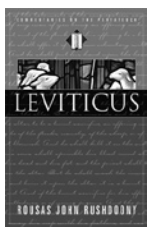
By R. J. Rushdoony. Essentially, all of mankind is on some sort of an exodus. However, the path of fallen man is vastly different from that of the righteous. Apart from Jesus Christ and His atoning work, the exodus of a fallen humanity means only a further descent from sin into death. But in Christ,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

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

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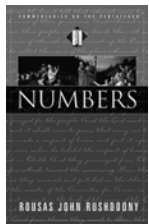
By R. J. Rushdoony. Much like the book of Proverbs, any emphasis upon the practical applications of God's law is readily shunned in pursuit of more "spiritual" studies. Books like Leviticus are considered dull, overbearing, and irrelevant. But man was created in God's image and is duty-bound to develop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

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

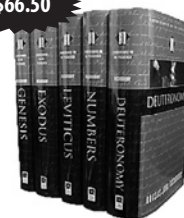
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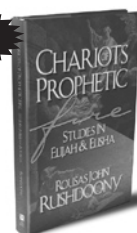
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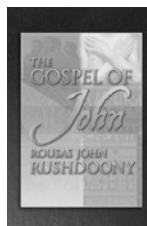
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By R. J. Rushdoony. As in the days of Elijah and Elisha, it is once again said to be a virtue to tolerate evil and condemn those who do not. This book will challenge you to resist compromise and the temptation of expediency. It will help you take a stand by faith for God's truth in a culture of falsehoods.

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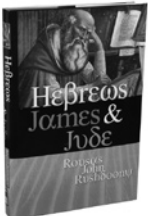


## Romans and Galatians

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

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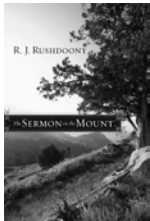




### Hebrews, James and Jude

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

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### Sermon on the Mount

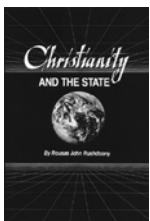
By R. J. Rushdoony. So much has been written about the Sermon on the Mount, but so little of the commentaries venture outside of the matters of the heart. The Beatitudes are reduced to the assumed meaning of their more popular portions, and much of that meaning limits our concerns to downplaying wealth, praying in secret, suppressing our worries, or simply reciting the Lord's Prayer. The Beatitudes are the Kingdom commission to the new Israel of God, and R. J. Rushdoony elucidates this powerful thesis in a readable and engaging commentary on the world's greatest sermon.

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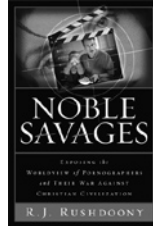
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By R. J. Rushdoony. Salvation in Scripture includes in its meaning "health" and "victory." By limiting the meaning of salvation, men have limited the power of God and the meaning of the Gospel. In this study R. J. Rushdoony demonstrates the expanse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

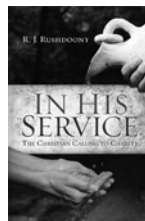
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### In His Service: The Christian Calling to Charity

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

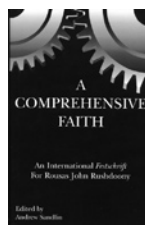
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### Roots of Reconstruction

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

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### A Comprehensive Faith

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

Hardback, 244 pages, \$23.00 **\$16.10**



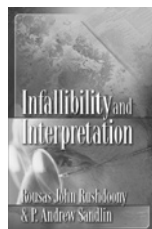


### A Conquering Faith: Doctrinal Foundations for Christian Reformation

By William Einwechter. This monograph takes on the doctrinal defection of today's church by providing Christians with an introductory treatment of six vital areas of Christian doctrine: God's sovereignty, Christ's Lordship, God's law, the authority of Scripture, the dominion mandate, and the victory of Christ in history.

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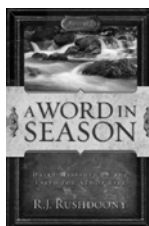
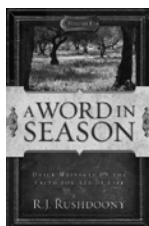


### Infallibility and Interpretation

By R. J. Rushdoony & P. Andrew Sandlin. The authors argue for infallibility from a distinctly presuppositional perspective. That is, their arguments are unapologetically circular because they believe all ultimate claims are based on one's beginning assumptions. The question of Biblical infallibility rests ultimately in one's belief about the character of God.

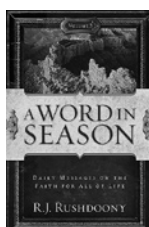
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The multi-volume series is taken from over 430 articles written by Rushdoony over the span of 25 years (1966-1991) for the California Farmer, an agricultural periodical that provided him a regular column entitled "The Pastor's Pulpit."

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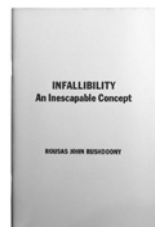
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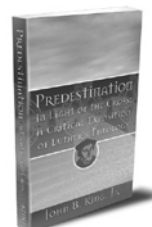


### Infallibility: An Inescapable Concept

By R. J. Rushdoony. "The doctrine of the infallibility of Scripture can be denied, but the concept of infallibility as such cannot be logically denied. Infallibility is an inescapable concept. If men refuse to ascribe infallibility to Scripture, it is because the concept has been transferred to something else. The word infallibility is not normally used in these transfers; the concept is disguised and veiled, but in a variety of ways, infallibility is ascribed to concepts, things, men and institutions." Booklet now part of the author's *Systematic Theology*.

Booklet, 69 pages, \$2.00

**\$1.40**



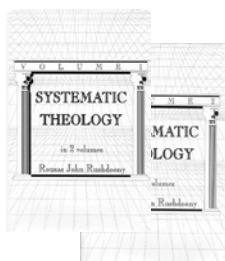
### Predestination in Light of the Cross

By John B. King, Jr. The author defends the predestination of Martin Luther while providing a compellingly systematic theological understanding of predestination. This book will give the reader a fuller understanding of the sovereignty of God.

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## Theology

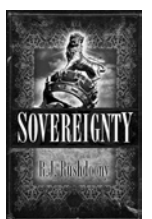


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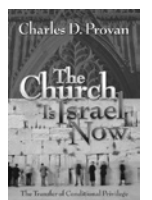


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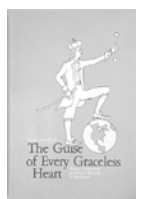


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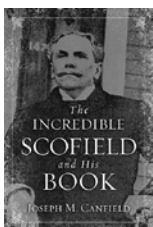
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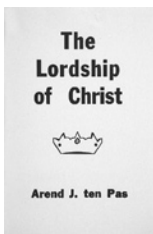
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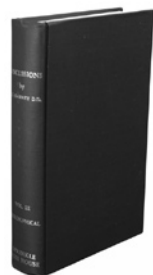


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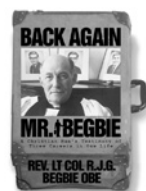
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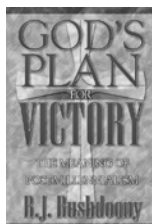


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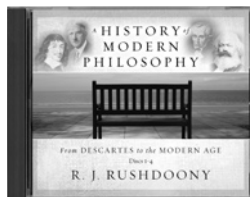
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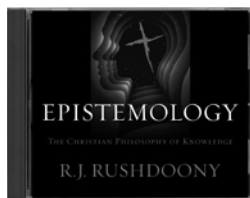
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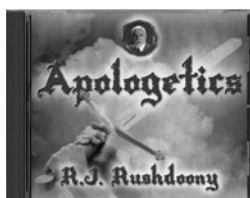
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