

CHALCEDON Report

Faith for All of Life

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The Need for a Theology of the State

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Evolutionary thought has accustomed us to think of polytheism, the belief in many gods or forces, as a mark of primitive cultures emerging out of animism. Polytheism is ostensibly succeeded by monotheism, and monotheism by science and reason. This construction is not historical; it is, moreover, philosophical and mythological.

The Plague of Polytheism

Polytheism seems rather to mark a culture in decay, and an atomistic society. When, not long after World War II, Dr. Clark Kerr denied the concepts of a universe and a universality in favor of a multiverse and a multiversity, he espoused polytheism. Instead of a unified cosmos and a truth binding in all times and places, reality became a mass of conflicting forces, relevances, and limited and purely utilitarian and instrumental truths. The cosmos ceased from this viewpoint to be either the magnificent order of the omnipotent and Triune God, or the marvelous machine of earlier scientists. Instead, like the city dump, it became a miscellaneous and meaningless collection of a vast nothing. This is the world of polytheism: it knows no over-all truth and order, only fragments and limited connections in the shambles of time and space. Polytheism is a fact of cultural decay and collapse.

A key fact thus of polytheism is that at best the area and scope of meaning is severely limited. There is no universal scope, sway, or meaning in the world of polytheism, except by imperialistic aggression. From Alexander the Great to the present, the world of polytheism has no means of a common truth and order except by imperialistic conquest. In such a world, neither order nor meaning have a universal sway; hence, force tries to bind those factors which are held to lack the cohesiveness of truth and a common Creator.

As a result, polytheistic religion keeps to its own corner. Zeus, Venus, Mercury, Apollo, and the other "gods" made no attempt to gain either exclusive or universal jurisdiction. Moreover, even within the narrow limits of the Athens city-state, none of the "gods" attempted to control the state, education, or sexual life. The "gods" did not prescribe either an economic nor a political order. Polytheistic religion is more prone to demanding gifts and bribes for the temple than to making claims over men and nations.

Thus, whenever and wherever a religion becomes polytheistic, it ceases to be catholic and to make universal claims. It then limits its jurisdiction to a corner of life and it is content for crumbs from the rest.

Now with the rise of the Enlightenment, the churches of Europe began to limit their spheres severely. It can be argued with good cause that the churches had overstepped their boundaries at times. There is a very important distinction at this point. The church, in terms of Scripture, has no jurisdiction and control over other institutions and spheres of life except a "spiritual" one, *i.e.*, the proclamation and application of God's Word and authority to every realm. To limit the church, however, emphatically cannot and does not mean the limitation of Christianity and the Triune God. Rather, the church must declare that every sphere of life must be under the rule of God's Word and under the authority of Christ the King.

The 24/7 Christian

Put very, very simply, this means that a man must be a Christian in church, home, school, state, vocation, and all of life. In going from one sphere to another, a man does not move from the realm of Christ, to that of Mammon, Baal, Molech, or any other "god." Similarly, neither the school, state, nor any other order of life can exempt itself from the catholic or universal sway of God's rule and law. It is a sin to steal, bear false witness, or have other gods wherever we are.

With the Enlightenment, the churches limited their sphere, and God's sphere, to the spiritual realm. Before long, God became the absentee landlord of the physical universe. Tithing, for example, moved from a general and necessary requirement to a voluntary and increasingly more infrequent practice. Less and less could the "spiritual" realm, God, command the "material" realm, the state and economics.

Polytheism was born thus within the church. The work of Jesus Christ was progressively limited to soul-saving, and, with the steady rise of Arminianism, even here man gave an assist to God.

As a result, the cosmic Christ was traded for a polytheistic Christ, and the Bible was read, not as God's law-word, but as a devotional book for pietists. The state (and most of life) was thus

"freed" from God to follow a humanistic course. Humanism, as the new Catholicism, began to claim the school and all other agencies and institutions, until humanism too began to decay within and thus resort to force to gain its will without, *i.e.*, in the physical world of men and nations.

The God of Scripture, however, as the Lord and Creator of heaven and earth, claims and has absolute and total jurisdiction over every area of life and thought. For any area to claim independence from God is revolution and sin. It is an even more serious offence for Christ's church to deny the universal jurisdiction of Christ the King. Such a step adds treason to revolution, and it incurs and invites the wrath of Almighty God.

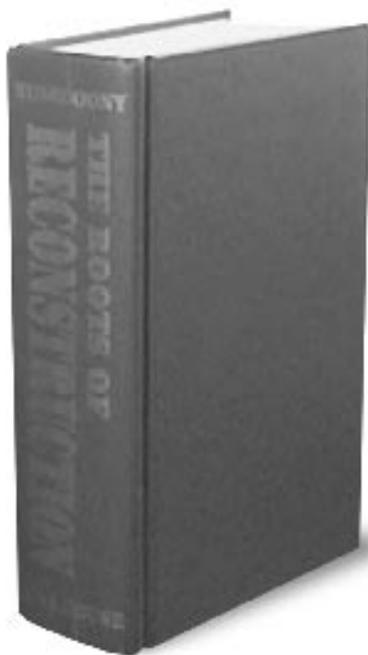
A theology of the state is thus a Biblical necessity. God as creator declares

Himself to be the sovereign over all men and nations; His law has universal sway. The nations are summoned in Psalm 2 to cease their conspiracies and wars against Him and His law, or failing to do so, to be smashed in pieces like a potter's vessel by a rod of iron. Jesus Christ is proclaimed "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev. 19:16).

A Christian theology of the state must challenge the state's claims of sovereignty or lordship. Only Jesus Christ is lord or sovereign, and the state makes a Molech of itself when it claims sovereignty (Lev. 20:1-5).

The church must be roused out of its polytheism and surrender. The crown rights of Christ the King must be proclaimed. **CR**

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THE SWEEP OF HISTORY

MARK R. RUSHDOONY



Walking “by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7) doesn’t mean we walk with our eyes closed.

When life overwhelms us and the forces arrayed against God’s people seem invincible, we must not close our eyes and walk blindly. Our Lord said, “Ye are the light of the world; a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid” (Mt. 5:14), whether or not it looks that way to us. It is a sad commentary on the state of the modern church when so fundamental a word as “faith” is often misused.

God’s Word tells us that the Lord has already won the battle. It is our faith in this certainty in which we are to walk, as opposed to the distress we “see” with our eyes around us.

Paul contrasted faith and sight by describing how our faith in the next world differs from our daily vision of this one. He was contrasting our faith in the resurrection with our present mortal selves. Far from being a leap into the dark unknown, he described this walk of faith in terms of God’s promises, a *faith in our eternity with Him* as opposed to our *sight of our present “groaning” under the curse*. Such a faith gives a vision beyond the present and is, Paul said,

to be the context of our desires (v. 2), and our sense of accountability to Jesus Christ (v. 10). Faith is a walk guided by a belief in God and His promises, as opposed to a confidence in the fallen world which we can see.

God’s promises in which we are to have faith are many, and have been given to us in the context of history. Scripture displays the grand and glorious sweep of history from creation to judgment. It speaks of our predestination before the foundation of the world and then gives us a glimpse of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21-22).

God gives our faith a past, present, and future. We do not walk in the dark; His glorious and gracious revelation of things that were, are, and shall be illuminates our way. God gives us all this so that we will have faith in our future with Him. Faith is a conscious walk toward the reality of the Kingdom of God and His Christ and our citizenship therein.

Lines vs. Cycles

According to the Bible, history is linear, not cyclical. History moves from its beginning (Creation) to its conclusion (Second Coming and Final Judgment), and has a purpose.

When Adam and Eve sinned, they rejected God’s rule over them and

sought to be His equal (Gen. 3:5). When God cursed Satan, He declared that this alliance would not stand, that He would restore man to Himself and defeat Satan.

And I shall put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. (Gen. 3:15)

Revelation 12:1-13 tells of the conflict between the serpent and the woman with child, this time from the perspective of heaven. There, the serpent tried to destroy the child as soon as it was born. God caught up the woman’s man-child to His throne, and a great battle ensued for heaven and its rule. God defeated the serpent and cast him down to the earth, where he “persecuted the woman which brought the child” (v. 13).

This is a reference to the church and Satan’s attempt to destroy the people of God. Scripture here makes clear that history is not about good and evil in the abstract, but in the flesh; the great battle of history is between Satan and Christ. The victory of Christ in that battle should make our current conflicts clear-cut.

God’s curse on Satan was that he would be crushed. Revelation 12

describes the defeat of Satan as his rejection by the throne of heaven to which he had aspired. Later, Revelation 21-22 shows us a picture of heaven wherein dwells the Lamb of God. This must be the believer's worldview, his big picture of the sweep of history.

Christ's Invasion of History

The incarnation was, as my father said, the invasion of history by Jesus Christ to reclaim what was His. God's prophecy of Satan's defeat was also the promise of our salvation and restoration. Satan's apparent triumph at Calvary (where he bruised Christ's heel, a painful but non-lethal injury) turned to defeat at Christ's resurrection (where he crushed Satan's head, a mortal blow). Christ was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities (Is. 53:5).

Our world and life view has to keep in mind the sweep of history as Scripture describes it. We must see the big picture and our part in it today. Augustine spoke in the 5th century of the conflict between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of man. Because the latter was Satan's attempt to usurp God's throne, we might just as accurately speak of the Kingdom of God as opposing the kingdom of Satan. Christ as Lord of heaven and earth saves us from the reign of Satan, the reign of sin and death that controls those who continue in the rebellion of Adam.

Jesus Christ is the new Adam (1 Cor. 15:45), the head of a new humanity that will not fall from its calling. This is our worldview. We must think and act aware of who we are, where we stand, and the certainty of our calling.

The New Humanity

Those who believe in Jesus Christ are new creatures, reestablished in our relationship to Him and recalled to reflect the image of God in us. The authors of the Westminster Shorter Cat-

echism defined that image as involving knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, in the exercise of dominion. The Spirit of God has regenerated us and Satan's power is broken. Christ has all power in heaven and in earth as the incarnate Messiah, as He has in eternity. The Son has, in turn, commissioned us to proclaim His salvation, His Word, and His Kingdom (Mt. 28:18-20).

Revelation 12 depicts Satan as a loser defeated in the great cosmic war for heaven. Satan was "cast down unto earth" (v. 13) but is angry "because he knoweth that he hath a short time" (v. 12). He makes "war with the remnant of her seed [the church], which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (v. 17).

Satan's defeat was real, and so his wrath against us is fierce. Paul describes the believer's difficulties as tribulation, distress, persecution, nakedness, peril, and sword (Rom. 8:35ff.). The world sees us as "sheep for the slaughter" — helpless victims. But Paul says we shall be "more than conquerors" because of Christ:

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 8:38-39)

The grace of God has granted us a picture of the future. It is ours to see this future and think and act in terms of it. It is the eternal Kingdom of God to which we are called as citizens and whose Lord we serve. We have, in Scripture, the sweep of history, and we must therefore see our role in God's Kingdom as our place and our meaning in the outworking of God's grace. **CR**



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In colonial America the church was the hub of community and social life. It was frequently a center for news regarding community, colonial, and international affairs. Not surprisingly, the signals across Boston Harbor to warn patriots of the approach of the British originated from the Old North Church.

Patrick Henry delivered his “Give me liberty or give me death” speech — a strong, emotional spur to the fervor for independence — in St. John’s Church in Richmond, Virginia.

Our forefathers well understood not only the personal and family implications of the Christian faith, but also its social and political ramifications. They continued the Old Testament legacy in which the prophets frequently spoke out on social and political matters. Were the political statements of such prophets as Nathan, Elijah, Isaiah, and Daniel, for instance, stripped from the Biblical record, much would be lost.

As a nation, America was founded in the context of a general Christian consensus and upon Christian principles. The evidence shows that the Christian faith dominated our developing nation’s cultural and legal history.

Our Legal Declarations

In the original legal charters for the thirteen colonies appear numerous devout references to God. A few examples will suffice. The 1609 charter for the Colony of Virginia granted by King James I stated: “It shall be necessary for all such as inhabit within the precincts of Virginia to determine to live together in the fear and true worship of Almighty God, Christian peace and civil quietness.” Similarly, the first charter of South Carolina granted in 1662 by Charles II declared that pious zeal for “the propagation of the Gospel” motivated the colonists to settle there.

The New Haven Colony Charter of April 3, 1644, adopted rules governing the judicial system in New Haven Colony: “The judicial laws of God, as they were delivered by Moses ... [are to] be a rule to all the courts in this jurisdiction.”

The Fundamental Orders of Connecticut was the first written constitution in America, adopted January 14, 1639. The committee convening to frame the Orders sought to make the laws “as near the law of God as they can be.” Its Preamble stated: “Forasmuch as it pleased the Almighty God by the wise disposition of His divine providence so to order and dispose of things. . . .” It continued in the second paragraph:

“and well knowing when a people are gathered together the Word of God requires, that to meinteine the peace and union of such a people, there should be an orderly and decent government established according to God. . . .” In the third paragraph it spoke of its purpose as “to meinteine and presearve the libberty and purity of the Gospell of our Lord Jesus which we now professe.”

Furthermore, many legislative, constitutional, and judicial documents of the era say the same. The legislature of the Province of Pennsylvania in December, 1662, stated that “government in itself is a venerable ordinance of God” and noted that it was the principal object “of the freemen of Pennsylvania to make and establish such laws as shall best preserve true Christian and civil liberty.”

According to the later Connecticut Constitution of the 1770s, the great end of the Connecticut Commonwealth was “to maintain and preserve the Gospel of our Lord Jesus.” It further declared that “the Scriptures hold forth a perfect rule of the direction and government of all men in all duties they are to perform to God and man.”

The Great and General Court of Massachusetts in 1776 wrote: “Piety and virtue, which alone can secure the freedom of any people, may be encour-

aged. They command and enjoin upon the good people of this colony that they lead sober, religious and peaceable lives, avoiding all blasphemies, contempt of Holy Scripture and of the Lord's Day, and all other crimes and misdemeanors."

The New York State Legislature in 1838 decreed: "This is a Christian nation ... Our government depends for its being on the virtue of its people — on the virtue that has as its foundation the morality of the Christian religion, and that religion is the common and prevailing faith of the people." The Constitution of the State of New Jersey (1844) read: "We, the people of the State of New Jersey, grateful to Almighty God for the civil and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy, and looking to Him for a blessing upon our endeavors to secure and transmit the same unimpaired to succeeding generations, do ordain and establish this Constitution."

Significantly, the constitutions of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Delaware, and Maryland all required some sort of Christian profession from those who held public office.

The Declaration of Independence — which served as the moral justification for the separation of the Colonies from the British crown — speaks honorably of God in several places. It speaks of "the laws of nature and nature's God" and refers to the endowment of "certain inalienable rights" by the "Creator." It appeals to "the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions" and notes the colonists' reliance "on the protection of Divine Providence."

Our U. S. Constitution even gives the President Sundays off from returning bills to Congress (Art. 1; Sec. 7; Para. 2). And the main body of the Constitution ends with these words: "Done in Convention by the Unanimous Consent of the States present the

Seventeenth Day of September in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty seven."

Even the U. S. Supreme Court has recognized the religious character of our national heritage. The 1892 *Holy Trinity Church* decision noted: "These references add a volume of unofficial declarations to the mass of organic utterances that this is a religious people ... a Christian nation."

The 1962 *Zorach* decision observed, "We are a people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being." The 1963 *Schempp* decision (against state-prescribed Bible reading in public schools) noted that "nearly every criminal law on the books can be traced back to some religious principle or inspiration."

U. S. Supreme Court Justice Joseph

Story in his *Commentaries on the Constitution of the U.S.* (1891) wrote: "Probably at the time of the adoption of the Constitution and of the First Amendment to it ... the general if not the universal sentiment in America was, that Christianity ought to receive encouragement from the state so far as was not incompatible with the private rights of conscience and the freedom of religious worship."

Alexis de Tocqueville in his classic *Democracy in America* (1834) observed that "among the Anglo-Americans there are some who profess Christian dogmas because they believe them and others who do because they are afraid to look as though they did not believe them. So Christianity reigns without obstacles, by universal consent."

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Citizens Defend Ten Commandments Display

The citizens of Boise, Idaho, have exercised their rights in defense of the public display of the Ten Commandments.

Earlier this year, when the Boise City Council voted to remove a Ten Commandments monument from a public park, citizens got up a petition to keep it (see <http://www.reclaimamerica.org/pages/NEWS/newspage.asp?story=2054>).

To win a place on the November ballot, Boise's Christian citizens needed to collect 8,700 signatures. In August they turned in 19,000.

Some officials have said they might seek a court ruling to block the initiative; but for the time being, the fate of the monument will be decided by the voters.

The above is an example of what Christian citizens can do to defend their constitutional right to public expression of their religious faith. Meanwhile, leftist/humanist groups have been using the courts — and in Boise's case, elected officials — to suppress religious expression.

Many jurisdictions grant citizens the right to initiative and referendum. Sometimes the results can be dramatic: witness the recall of California Governor Gray Davis.

Anti-Christian officials in some states, counties, and cities are subject to recall elections. Where they are not, Christian voters may still remove them from office during the regular elections.

Will Boise's Christian voters start a trend?



Render unto Caesar

Greg Uttinger



One day, a group of Pharisees and Herodians came to Jesus with a question: “Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?”

That these two sects should be working together was a bit odd. The Pharisees were conservatives and nationalists. They saw themselves as champions of the covenant and the Faith. They advocated Jewish independence, albeit somewhat quietly.

The Herodians, on the other hand, were a court party. They supported the claims and interests of Herod Antipas, the Idumean king who ruled as Rome’s puppet over much of Israel. The Herodians were comfortable with the political status quo and quite used to religious compromise. Normally, the Pharisees and the Herodians didn’t get along. But they had found a common enemy in Jesus of Nazareth.

No Safe Answer

Their question was a trap. There was not supposed to be a safe answer. If Jesus sided with the Pharisees and publicly forbade His followers to pay the tribute money, the Herodians could

hand Him over to Pilate as a tax rebel and a revolutionary. His execution would have followed quickly. If, however, Jesus sided with the Herodians, He would lose popular support by alienating Jewish national feeling and jeopardize His own claims to the kingship.

But Jesus is God, and He responded to the question with divine perception and wisdom. After rebuking their hypocrisy, He asked to see a Roman denarius: “Show me the tribute money.” This is important. He did not produce the coin from His own pocket or from the common purse of the apostolic band. He asked the Pharisees and Herodians for the coin, and they brought one out. They had the tribute money, Rome’s money, in their own possession. Jesus asked them, “Whose is this image and superscription?” They had to answer, “Caesar’s.”

Jesus then pronounced the immortal words, “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things which are God’s.” The tribute coin bore Caesar’s name and image: it must be his. Give it back, Jesus told them. The trap-setters went away, stunned.

What Did Jesus Mean?

The Herodians had no moral arguments on their side, only appeals to political expediency. The Pharisees, however, claimed to stand for God’s righteous rule in human affairs. They were the patriots and the conservatives. We might be tempted to sympathize with their position and suspect that Jesus didn’t really mean quite what He said. Is it possible to expand or improve upon the arguments the Pharisees might have used?

The emperors were wicked men, unworthy of their office. Certainly, Julius Caesar had been a serial adulterer, a bisexual, a socialist, and a tyrant. Augustus and Tiberius were at best idolaters and totalitarians. Caligula and Nero would soon carry evil beyond the limits of human sanity. And all the Caesars suffered from delusions of godhood to one degree or another.

This is all true, but for Jesus it was irrelevant. The issue for Him was not the character of the ruler, but our own obligation and debt. If I am indebted to an evil man, his evil does not free me from my debt. Israel was indebted to Rome. Rome administered justice. Rome built and maintained roads.

Rome policed the seas. Rome provided coinage. The denarii that circulated in Israel proved her obligation to Rome. Israel had to pay her bill.

But the tribute money supported and perpetuated a corrupt political system; it financed abominable programs and schemes. The tribute money funded all sorts of horrible things — construction of pagan temples, gladiatorial games, the salaries of corrupt officials. Eventually, it would fund the massacre of the church in Rome. Jesus did not deny this. Instead, He implicitly freed the taxpayer from any complicity in the state's wickedness. The taxpayer was not *giving* money to Caesar; but simply returning to Caesar his own money. Jesus tells us not to steal, not even from the state.

But what about the law that forbade Israel to enthrone a Gentile king (Dt. 17:15)? Clearly, God did not want a pagan ruling His covenant people. So Roman rule wasn't *de jure*, merely *de facto*. It was illegitimate and could not claim God's sanction.

Yet Jesus said otherwise: Caesar does have God's sanction. God made Caesar king. No, Israel was not to enthrone a pagan king, for she was to be ruled by God. But Israel had rejected God's rule; she had abandoned His law. So God had handed Israel over to Rome. That was the covenant reality and the political fact. For Israel to appeal to the law she had rejected to escape the punishment she now deserved was trifling and hypocritical. Repentance required her to kiss the rod and pay her taxes.

Render Unto God

But a man must choose his lord; after all, no man can serve two masters. We must either render tribute to Caesar or to God. Jesus, however, rejected this conflict, too. Obedience to God and obedience to Caesar need not be mutually exclusive because they are — or should be — of different sorts. And here

Paying taxes to Caesar is part of our duty to God; it is an expression of His kingdom.

For the powers that be are ordained of God, and Caesar is God's minister, regardless of his own moral character or his socialist agenda

(Rom. 13:1-8).

we must return to the rest of Christ's command: "Render...unto God the things that are God's."

What exactly belongs to God? Everything: our worship, our obedience, our tithes and offerings, our children. Our life in civil society is God's. So is our relationship to the civil magistrate, whether he be emperor, president, or governor. Paying taxes to Caesar is part of our duty to God; it is an expression of His kingdom. For the powers that be are ordained of God, and Caesar is God's minister, regardless of his own moral character or his socialist agenda (Rom. 13:1-8).

Jesus never intended His answer to divide life into two compartments, the one religious and the other civil. His answer subordinates all of life to God and His rule. It fixes our earthly citizenship and civil responsibilities within the kingdom of God. It puts tax paying and all other earthly affairs on God's terms. No, we may not foment civil rebellion. That's all right, though. The spiritual weapons that Christ has given us are still powerful enough to transform nations and kingdoms and to turn the world upside down — again. 

Greg Uttinger teaches theology, history, and literature at Cornerstone Christian School in Roseville, California. He lives nearby in Sacramento County with his wife, Kate, and their three children. He may be contacted at paul_ryland@hotmail.com.

If you or someone you know has ever struggled with understanding the philosophy of Cornelius Van Til, this book is for you.

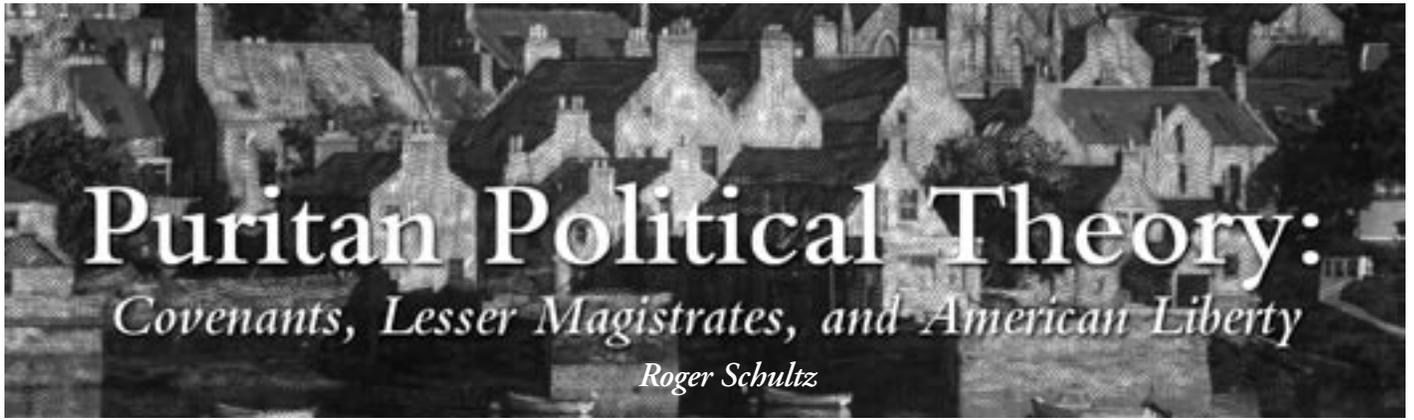


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Puritan Political Theory:

Covenants, Lesser Magistrates, and American Liberty

Roger Schultz



Can the roots of the American Revolution be found in the writings of Puritan theologians?

Puritanism was a reform-minded Calvinistic movement in the British Isles in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Some historians dislike the term, arguing that it is too broad and the movement too difficult to define. It is clear, however, that a vigorous Reformed movement emerged during the era of Elizabeth I (1588–1603) and had an enormous impact on England, Scotland, Ireland, and America.

The Puritans were best known for emphasizing pure, scripturally regulated worship, Biblical church government, and the freedom of the church from royal domination. The Puritans also emphasized Biblical principles of government, which directly influenced the growth of liberty in England and America in the 17th century.

Puritan Commitments

Puritan civil theory emphasized the authority of Scripture. In contrast to Roman Catholic theorists (who stressed canon law, tradition, and papal decree), Anglicans (who increasingly stressed natural law as a source of authority), and later Enlightenment authors (who stressed human reason), the Puritans looked to Scripture as the starting point for understanding government. As Gregg Singer notes in *A Theological*

Interpretation of American History, “The idea that the state was beyond the reach of the claims of the Bible was . . . abhorrent to the Puritan, [for] in the Scriptures they found the origin, the form, the functions and the power of the state and human government.”¹

Puritans also stressed divine sovereignty and sphere sovereignty. A sovereign God ordained all earthly authority. God also established different spheres of authority (state, church, family), and each institution had legitimate authority within its sphere. While the state was entrusted by God with the power of the sword, for the ends of lawful defense and the administration of justice, the state had no right to intrude on the affairs of the church or family.²

Puritan theory, then, carefully proscribed the power of the state. Puritans opposed theories of divine right absolutism that flourished in the 17th century, insisting that royal power was not absolute. Following Deuteronomy 1:13, Puritans argued that people should select their own leaders, an idea that led to convictions about the consent of the governed.

They further argued that lesser magistrates, ordained by God in their roles, might even oppose a king if a monarch became a tyrant. And by stressing the importance of covenants, which were binding for both the people and the king, Puritan theorists laid the foundation of modern constitutionalism.

Architects of Puritan Civil Theory

John Knox (1505–1572), the great Scottish reformer, saw tyranny firsthand. He was a bodyguard for the Scottish martyr George Wishart and a refugee during the Marian persecution. Deeply influenced by Calvin, Knox strove to bring reformation to Scotland and applied the Word of God to both church and state. Knox emphasized the continuing applicability of the Old Testament, the importance of covenants, and the duty of lesser magistrates to resist tyrants.

In *The Emergence of Liberty in the Modern World*, Douglas Kelly argues that three key Scottish concepts influenced Western political thought: “the concept of church as a body equal in legal right and standing with the civil state; the implicit ‘covenantal’ idea of the direct rights of the people to hold political authorities responsible to carry out their functions under limitations prescribed by transcendent law; and the general elevation of the common citizens through democratizing structures emulating Presbyterian polity.” Or as Richard Greaves puts it, “Ultimately Knox’s theory of active resistance [to tyrants] contributed to the ideological tradition that culminated in the American Revolution.”³

The new Stuart monarchs of the early 17th century alarmed the Puritans. When James I (1603–1625) assumed the English throne, the Puritans were

hopeful: he had been king in Scotland, a Presbyterian country. Puritans sought religious reforms in the Millenary Petition, signed by nearly a thousand ministers, and at the Hampton Roads Conference (1604). James contemptuously dismissed them, saying, “No bishop, no king.”

The king understood the structural similarity between episcopacy and monarchy, and that movements toward Presbyterianism would likely lead to republicanism. A Scottish presbytery “agreeth as well with the monarchy as God with the devil,” James observed. “Now Jack, and Tom, and Will, and Dick shall meet and at their pleasure censure me and my council. I will make them conform, or else I will harry them out of the land, or else do worse, hang them — that is all.”⁴

Charles I (1625–1649) was even more aggressive in fighting Reformed Christians. During his reign, Puritans fled to America to avoid persecution by Archbishop Laud. The Scots rose in revolt after the imposition of bishops and the Book of Common Prayer. Parliament finally stood against Charles I, leading to a civil war and ultimately the execution of the king. In 1649, Parliament gave Charles I a severance package he couldn’t ignore! (Americans long remembered the lessons of Stuart tyranny and legitimate resistance. Jonathan Mayhew’s *Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission*, a famous sermon showing occasions for lawful resistance, was published in 1750 — just after the centennial of the execution of Charles I. In one of his greatest speeches, Patrick Henry reminded his audience what happened to tyrants: “Tarquin and Caesar each had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, George the Third . . . may profit by their example! If *this* be treason, make the most of it.”⁵)

The great Puritan political theorist during the English Civil War was

Samuel Rutherford, author of *Lex Rex* (1644). A successor to Knox, Rutherford articulated a mature Reformed view of authority, Christian liberty, and resistance. He “denied that a limitless sovereignty belonged to the king, and contended that the Crown is bestowed by the voluntary consent of the people, who are at liberty to resist a tyrant.” After the Stuart restoration in 1661, *Lex Rex* was ordered burned, and Rutherford was summoned to answer a charge of treason. Terminally ill, Rutherford answered, “I have got summons already before a Superior Judge and Judicatory, and I behove to answer to my first summons, and ere your day come, I will be where few kings and great folks come.”⁶

Rutherford clearly influenced patriots in the American War for Independence. The most influential pamphlet of the period was *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine. Though an infidel, Paine quoted scripture and appeared quite orthodox, appealing to his largely Christian audience. “Monarchy is ranked in scripture as one of the sins of the Jews,” Paine argued, quoting extensively from Judges 6 and 1 Samuel 8. “These portions of scripture are direct and positive. They admit of no equivocal construction. That the Almighty hath here entered his protest against monarchical government is true, or the scripture is false.”

Paine then gives a stirring call: “But where, say some, is the king of America? I’ll tell you, Friend, he reigns above . . . [L]et a day be solemnly set apart for proclaiming the charter; let it be brought forth placed on the divine law, the Word of God; let a crown be placed thereon, by which the world may know, that so far as we approve of monarchy, that in America the law is king.”⁷

In 1783, in an election sermon entitled “Defensive Arms Vindicated,” Stephen Case looked back on the American Revolution. He only has a little to add,

he says, because the real champions of American freedom were Samuel Rutherford (author of *Lex Rex*), Sir James Stewart (a Covenanter, and author of *Naphthali* and *Jus Populi Vindicatum*), and George Buchanan (author of *The Rights of the Crown in Scotland*, 1579). Although familiar with other writers, Case contends that America’s case for justifiable resistance arose from these old Puritans.

Richard Flinn once wrote, “Most Calvinists in our day tend to be conservative in their political principles and economic outlook. But they have no theology to underpin their conservatism. They have either a world and life view that is nebulously connected to the Scriptures, or one which is encrusted with meaningless slogans. The result is that doctrines of either the Left or the humanistic Right are poured into Calvinistic political theology.”⁸ Flinn was right. Most Reformed Christians are ignorant of their rich Puritan and Presbyterian heritage and lack a comprehensive political worldview.

One of Francis Schaeffer’s last speaking engagements was at Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia. Fighting cancer and very weak, Schaeffer gave a powerful message about the lordship of King Jesus and the Christian duty to fight tyranny, and received an overwhelmingly positive response from the Baptist audience. It is time for the spiritual descendents of Knox and Rutherford to show a similar passion for King Jesus and His government. 

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CITIZEN CHRISTIANS!

By Jim West



My favorite anecdote about citizenship concerns a confederate soldier brought before General Benjamin Butler at the end of the Civil War. “We gave you hell at Chickamauga, General!” said the soldier. The irate Butler admonished him that if he did not take the citizenship oath immediately, he would be “ventilated” by a firing squad. With some unwillingness, the defiant Southerner took the oath and then said, “General, I suppose I am a good Yankee and citizen of the United States now?” The general responded unenthusiastically, “I suppose so.” “Well, General, the rebels did give us hell at Chickamauga, didn’t they?”

The anecdote illustrates the privilege of citizenship and how, on the basis of an oath, an enemy was saved and guaranteed a Niagara of civil liberties, including the freedom “to mouth off.”

The Meaning of Citizenship

What is a citizen? The word comes from the Latin *civitas*, meaning a member of a city or polis. The etymology derives from the city-states of the ancient world, such as Athens and Rome. The

word *citizen* refers to one’s legal position and allegiance in a country.

In the Greek and Roman city-states, there were slaves, plebeians, patricians, aliens, and citizens. In the Greek states the slaves had no rights, and aliens virtually none at all. Citizens, however, were expected to be just that, to be citizens of their polis. They voted, attended the assembly or senate, served on juries, and volunteered for the military.

As Rome grew into an empire, citizenship became less elitist. In A.D. 212 the Emperor Caracalla conferred citizenship upon virtually every John Doe in the Empire. The emperor’s “gift,” however, was not without financial strings; it was a strategy to levy every citizen with inheritance taxes.

Citizenship declined with the development of feudalism, but made an aggressive comeback during the spread of constitutional republicanism. Just prior to the ascension of democracy, citizens were commonly dubbed “subjects.” They were expected to kowtow to every whim of Europe’s kings, who ruled by divine right. But as constitutionalism progressed, subjects became less and less enamored with their downtrodden status and title.

Old and New Testament Citizenship

In the Old Testament every Israelite was a citizen of the theocracy. There was some differentiation within the body politic, too. Briefly, an Israelite male reached spiritual majority when he became twelve or thirteen. This entitled him to partake of the Passover and to receive other spiritual benefits. In addition, he reached civil or political majority when he became twenty. This entitled him to serve in the army.

The New Testament abounds with examples of citizenship. For example, the Apostle Paul invoked his citizenship to appeal to Caesar. When he first revealed his Roman citizenship, the authorities “feared.” In a stinking dungeon in Philippi, Paul demanded limousine service from the lawless jail keepers. He said, “They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? Nay verily, but let them come themselves and fetch us out” (Ac. 16:37). When the authorities heard the talismanic words (*Romanus civis sum*), they begged Paul and Silas to depart. According to Cicero, no words disarmed a lawless authority more than

“I am a Roman citizen.”

Paul had his citizenship probably by hereditary right (Ac. 22:29). It was attained by his father through some special service that he performed in the city of Tarsus (a free city). Citizenship was an honorary status granted as a favor or reward to individuals and families, and it entitled them to certain privileges and immunities. The sacredness of Roman citizenship was so prized that it had become a part of Roman religion, and any infraction of it was considered sacrilege. In our own country, the honorary citizenships of Lafayette and Sir Winston Churchill are roughly equivalent to Paul’s.

Our citizenship in God’s world is two-fold: we are members of the church and God’s kingdom. Yet we often hear the cliché that we are exiles in this world, and even Jesus is portrayed as “a King in exile.” This bogus notion of non-citizenship usually hinges upon such ideas as we are “strangers and pilgrims on the earth” and that we are seeking another country, which is a heavenly country (Heb. 11:16).

These Scripture verses simply mean that we are *ethically* not at home in this world. Even the Pilgrims were not called “pilgrims” until 200 years after their landing! They thought of themselves as saints, as did the Puritans. The *Mayflower Compact*, with its “city upon a hill” emphasis by John Winthrop, permeated Puritan theology. Their city was not “pie in the sky, by and by.”

The Attributes of Citizenship

A cardinal reason for thinking of ourselves as citizens relates to our civil responsibilities. “Subject” implies submission, but citizen implies duty. Consider only jury duty. Instead of growling when we are called to jury duty, we should embrace it as a divinely appointed responsibility. We should not dodge this responsibility, even if it means a little purse-hemorrhaging.



IN THE LAST ANALYSIS, GOD BEQUEATHED US CITIZENSHIP AT CREATION WHEN HE COMMANDED MAN TO EXERCISE DOMINION. WE WERE CREATED CITIZENS OF THE WORLD. CITIZENSHIP IS NOT THE GIFT OF THE STATE OR NATURE.

I once ministered in a church where a godly woman, a matriarch in the church, was called to jury duty. She was a reluctant juror and told the judge so. The case was about drunk driving, and she informed the judge in the presence of the whole court, “I’m not qualified to serve on the jury; you see, I’m prejudiced against drunk drivers.” To this flimsy excuse, the judge said, “I’m against drunk driving, too.” But the woman, a pietist, got her way, abandoning her responsibility as a citizen. Why did she do this? She saw herself as a subject instead of a citizen.

Every Christian living in the United States enjoys a triple citizenship. Our first is the church, which God calls a city and nation (Eph. 2; 1 Pet. 2:9).

Our second citizenship is our own national government.

Our citizenship also has a third feature, enshrined in the Fourteenth Amendment: we are citizens of the state to which we belong.

Citizenship Under God

Citizenship is not raw submission to a tyrant; it is a thesaurus of duties and responsibilities under the scepter of Jesus Christ.

Citizenship is broader than the church because of the expanse of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom in the narrow sense is the church; but in the broader sense, it is the whole universe.

The gospel that the church preaches is not just the gospel of the church, but “the gospel of the *kingdom*” (Mk. 1:14). We are not Anabaptists and Pietists, who think a citizen and an ecclesiocrat are synonymous. Because of Christ’s kingship over both church and state, citizenship is our calling.

Citizenship helps us to understand the Puritan, who humbled himself before his Maker while placing his feet upon the neck of the king. A Christian citizen will not equate patriotism with citizenship either, knowing that the two do not always mesh. He will understand Dr. Samuel Johnson’s insight that patriotism is often the last resort of the scoundrel. He will not say, “My country, right or wrong, but my country.” Nor will he swear “unconditional obedience to the fuhrrer,” or even to the red, white, and blue. Of course, when a civil government demands that we sin against Christ our King, we especially prioritize our citizenship in God’s kingdom. Our alternatives include prophetic dissent, flight, legal strategy, or even revolution in some cases. When the American colonists rebelled against George III, they did so believing that their actions were counter-revolutionary, since the king and Parliament initiated the real revolution.

In the last analysis, God bequeathed us citizenship at creation when He commanded man to exercise dominion. We were created citizens of the world. Citizenship is not the gift of the state or nature.

Let each of us be citizen Christians! 

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Agents of Social Change

Joe Morecraft, III



In the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18–20 (“teach all nations...”), Christ calls Christians to be agents of social change in non-Christian cultures. Making the world’s nations disciples of Christ requires that Christians see themselves as commissioned by Jesus Christ — to act and speak by His authority, empowered by His Spirit, and to accomplish social change according to His Word in those nations.

Today American politics is all about social change, whether one is a Democrat or Republican, liberal or conservative, Christian or anti-Christian. This has been true of our nation since the appearance of the Social Gospel movement in the mid-19th century.

The Social Gospel was ... an attempt to socialize the Gospel, to give it a sociological frame of reference and purpose, and to make it a decisive force in the shaping of the new America of the twentieth century. In order to do this, the historic Gospel had to be brought into a harmonious relationship with evolution in such a way that it was ... scientifically respectable....¹

But not all social change is good. Some is devastating to a free and just social order. Just because a candidate advocates changing society for the better does not mean he should receive the Christian’s vote. Marxists and Muslims are also working for social change.

So then, how do we know when social change is good and when it is bad? How do we know when change is needed? How do we determine the goal and methods of social change? Is it even possible? Where do we begin? The Christian goes to the Bible for answers to these questions because it is the inerrant and all-sufficient written revelation of the Creator; all human beings are accountable to live in submission to His revealed will in all facets of their life on earth.

When Is Social Change Necessary?

A culture, like the United States, needs changing when it abandons its Christian foundation for a principle of revolt against Almighty God and His moral order. That change will manifest itself throughout the culture.

Our analysis of the needs of society must be based on God’s analysis of man and society revealed in the Bible. The Word of God speaks with absolute and comprehensive authority to all aspects of human society and activity. Biblical law must always be our one standard in determining the direction and nature of social change.

The goals of social change must be a free, just, prosperous, secure, and loving Christian civilization — a second Christendom. Our methods as well as our goals must be taken from the Bible because God’s goals can be reached

only by God’s revealed ways and means. Godly goals cannot be reached with ungodly methods because this amounts to “abandoning Christ for the methods of His enemies.”² Furthermore, God has promised us that we can reach His goals: “Do not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary” (Gal. 6:9).

Where to Begin

Where do we begin in our work for social change? One’s answer to this question will determine the nature, goal, and morality or immorality of the social change he seeks. Because many Christians have not thought consistently about this question, “[O]ne of our persistent problems today is that so much ‘reform’ approved by Christians and non-Christians, and liberals as well as conservatives, is simply immoral.”³ This is true for two primary reasons.

First, much social reform presupposes that the political, economic, and social environment is the cause of man’s problems. We are told that human beings are basically good, but victims of their evil environment. Jesus refuted this in Mark 7:14–15: “Listen to Me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside the man which going into him can defile him; but the things which proceed out of the man are what defile the man.”

Therefore, “much of our ‘reform’ legislation justifies the sinner in his

sin. According to the logic of this view, the tempter, rather than Adam and Eve, should have been at least cast out of Eden, if not killed; the tree of the knowledge of good and evil should have been demoted and sued for creating the possibility of temptation and sin.⁴ But this view makes the sovereign Creator the ultimate culprit.

Much of social reform is aimed at removing God from the institutions of society to escape His moral order so that fallen man can be free to establish his own immoral order (Ps. 2, “The kings of the earth set themselves against the Lord...”). This amounts not to freedom but to slavery.

Many Christians fail to recognize that because human beings are pervasively sinful and in rebellion against God, social change must begin not with politics, but with the regeneration of the heart. This means that political, social, economic, institutional, and societal change must be spearheaded with evangelism and Christian education:

Basically, the difference between all these plans of salvation and Christianity is this: the non-Christian believes that the problem is not in man but in something outside of him, in his environment, family, heredity, schooling, or some like external factor. Thus, to change man, you first change the world around him. The most logical and thorough-going expression of this faith is revolution. It is held that the transformation of man must begin with the radical transformation of his social order. Then man will himself be changed. Liberation theology is the application of this faith within the church: change the world, it is held, and then man can become a Christian. This is the same faith set forth by the tempter to Jesus in the wilderness, Matthew 4:1–11. (Ed., “All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me,” said the Devil.)

Biblical faith holds the contrary view.

The goals of social change must be a free, just, prosperous, secure, and loving Christian civilization — a second Christendom. Our methods as well as our goals must be taken from the Bible because God’s goals can be reached only by God’s revealed ways and means.

For Christianity, man must be changed by the sovereign grace of God through Jesus Christ. Then the changed man can change the world. Salvation cannot come to man nor to society apart from Christ’s atonement and His regenerating power. The dynamics of society are from God to man to the world.⁵

The Top-Down Approach

Social reform that begins with changing society and that is “top down” (beginning with political legislation and directives) is:

...disruptive and threatening to those below, and the result is the creation of a rootless mob below, whose life-style has been broken, their loyalties shattered, and their conditions all too little improved. The time is ripe for a strong and virile Christianity, one firmly committed to Biblical law, to command the day. Nothing else can provide a comparable motive force for the reconstruction of all things. Change is certain, but whether or not it will be progress depends on who controls it.⁶

How do we apply all this to our choice of candidates when all candidates say they are for reforming society for the better?

Christians must vote only for those candidates who do not see themselves

as agents of social change, but as men who are to uphold and defend the U.S. Constitution, according to its original intent, and who are not afraid to confess publicly that the God of the Bible is the sovereign source of law, liberty, and justice for all. As R.J. Rushdoony taught us, elected officials are either champions of Biblical law or hatchet-men for the humanistic status quo. **CR**

For extended studies on the subject of social change, see the following: (1) R.J. Rushdoony, “False Morality and False Reform,” “Revolution or Regeneration,” “Responsibility and Change,” and “Rational Reforms” in his *Roots of Reconstruction*; (2) Garry Moes, ed., *Journal of Christian Reconstruction: Symposium on Change in the Social Order*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 1990–1991; and (3) C. Gregg Singer, “The Social Gospel and its Political Effects in American Life” in his *A Theological Interpretation of American History*.

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1. C. Gregg Singer, *A Theological Interpretation of American History* (Nutley: NJ: The Craig Press, 1964), 150.
2. R. J. Rushdoony, *Roots of Reconstruction* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1991), 427.
3. *Ibid.*, 391.
4. *Ibid.*, 393.
5. *Ibid.*, 426.
6. *Ibid.*, 926.

Why Is Isaiah's Message to Israel's Civil Rulers Applicable to Us Today, Since We Do Not Live in a Theocracy?

Buddy Hanson



For more than a century, America has been electing lawmakers who, at best, admit to standing for nothing more than traditional values. It is long past time that we vote out of office those who rule in fear of public opinion polls and vote into office those who rule “in the fear of God.”¹

This is not a political preference, but a political necessity — emphasized by the fact that 700 years before Christ was born, Isaiah taught the kings of Judah that “the nation and kingdom which will not serve [the church] will perish.”² And a psalmist writes: “You reject all those who stray from Your statutes, for their deceit is falsehood. You put away all the wicked of the earth like dross . . .”³ David adds, “The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell in it forever.”⁴ This verse does not say the righteous (Christians) will merely live in the land forever, but will inherit it. Jesus clearly states that His followers are to “occupy” until He returns.⁵ This means we will be in charge of its governance in all of its functions and spheres.

The Evangelical Objection

Many of today's evangelicals may consider this unfair. They say we cannot govern by God's rules. “What about those who are atheists or belong to a non-Christian religion?” some may ask. “What business do we have demanding that they live by our standards?”

This erroneous reaction stems from the misguided 20th century mindset that Satan controls planet Earth and Christians should focus on personal salvation and church-related activities instead of on our culture. A full-orbed view of Scripture, however, shows there is no reason to imagine Christ limits His rule to church activities or to a few individuals. It must be remembered there is no such thing as a separation of the sacred and secular. All of life is sacred.

King David provides the correct perspective: “The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein.”⁶ David continues by asking, “Who may ascend into [political leadership]? . . . He who has clean hands and a pure heart . . . nor [has] sworn deceitfully. He shall receive blessing from the Lord” (vs. 3–5). God, through David, teaches that Christian leaders (civil rulers) will receive His blessings.

What, then, can civil rulers who refuse to govern according to God's laws expect but God's curses? Indeed, what have our civil lawmakers and we received from God during the last 150 years as we have arrogantly preferred to live by our own wisdom and resources? The proposition that God's Word is not good enough for civil government comes from the French Revolution, not the Protestant Reformation.

The Myth of Neutrality

Ask any Christian if he or she can take a neutral stance regarding God on any issue and the unhesitating answer will be, “No way!” But if these same brothers and sisters are asked whether their lawmakers can be neutral in making or enforcing society's laws, in too many cases their answer will be “Yes, because . . .”

As Christians, we should know that there are no acceptable “because” to keep us from obeying our Lord and Savior. Rev. James R. Wilson takes us back to the giving of the law:

When God proclaimed, on the summit of Mount Sinai, His Law, in the hearing of the congregation of Israel, it surely could not have entered into the heart of any pious or intelligent man among that people to believe, that while the private individual was bound by the law, the nation as such, the heads of the tribes, and all the civil rulers, were not to listen to it as directed to them. Everyone knows that the influence of the public laws of a nation is powerful over all the interests of the citizens, in relation to temporal prosperity, morality and religion.⁷

Because of man's fallen condition, in which he is unable and unwilling to choose or decide on the Truth, a society's laws should reflect God's will, not the collective will of the people as theorized in the “Social Contract” of the Enlightenment. This means the civil ruler must follow and enforce God's laws and serve

His purposes instead of his own. Psalm 2 is clear on this principle:

Be wise now therefore, O you kings; be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, unless He be angry, and you perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him. (vs. 10-12)

There is no difference between a good civil ruler in the Old Testament or in the New Testament. The only way to be good is to live and rule according to God's law. In the words of Moses, "There shall be one standard for the stranger as well as the native, for I am the Lord your God."⁸ Were this not the case, God would be guilty of having a double standard of judgment and that, of course, is impossible.⁹

The Old Testament provides several notable examples to substantiate this: Sodom was destroyed for breaking a case law,¹⁰ and Nineveh was spared destruction because it repented and began living in obedience to God's Word.¹¹ The lesson is that any nation can be assured that unless it does its best to follow God's laws, it will perish, "because you would not be obedient to the voice of the Lord your God."¹²

For society to succeed, it must follow God's instructions, for "God is not mocked."¹³ Our goal, as Christians, is to live according to "every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."¹⁴ These words, as revealed in Scripture, reflect God's will for our life. To effect His will "on earth as it is in heaven,"¹⁵ we have no other option but to conduct our personal and public actions according to His Word.

Nowhere in Scripture does God instruct us that His laws are no longer the best way to conduct our civil affairs. For a society to imagine it is wiser than God is to insult its Creator, Lord, Savior, and King! 

This feature is excerpted from chapter four of *Thy Will be Done On Earth: Heavenly Insights for Down-To-Earth Living, A Commentary on the Book of Isaiah*.

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1. 2 Samuel 23:3-7. See also *Choose This Day: God's Instructions on How to Select Leaders* by Buddy Hanson. (Tuscaloosa, AL: Hanson Group, 2003).
2. Isaiah 60:12.
3. Psalm 119:118-119.
4. Psalm 37:29.
5. Luke 19:13.
6. Psalm 24:1. For statements concerning the worldwide rule, see Genesis 12:3; Acts 3:25; Psalm 47; Psalm 67; Psalm 72; Isaiah 2:2-5; Isaiah 11:6-10; Isaiah 65:17-25; Jeremiah 31:33-34; Daniel 2:44-45; Habakkuk 2:12-14.
7. "The Subjection of Kings and Nations to Messiah" by James R. Wilson, 15.
8. Leviticus 24:22. See also Numbers 15:16; Deuteronomy 1:16-17.
9. Deuteronomy 25:13-16; Leviticus 19:35-37; Romans 2:11-12.
10. Homosexuality, Genesis 19:4; cf. Leviticus 18:22; 2 Kings 23:7.
11. Jonah 3; Luke 11:30, 32.
12. Deuteronomy 8:20; 30:17-18.
13. Galatians 6:7.
14. Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4.
15. Matthew 6:10.



Should Pastors Preach Politics?

Most churchgoers want to hear their pastors speak up on political issues, according to a recent poll by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (see <http://www.pewforum.org/docs/index.php?DocID=51>).

Overall, Pew found (in an August 2004 survey) that 51% of the respondents wanted to hear their pastors' views on political issues.

"White evangelicals" were 71% in favor, with "black Protestants" at 64%.

Opposed were "white Catholics" (60%), "white main-line Protestants" (51%), and "secular individuals" (59%).

Overall, 44% of the respondents opposed their pastors speaking out.

But when it came to pastors endorsing a particular candidate (a potential violation of federal tax laws), 65% of churchgoers nationally were opposed.

Religion is important to American voters, Pew found: 72% of registered voters said they wanted a president with "strong religious beliefs."

The surveyors questioned 1,512 adults.



Are You a Patriot or a Nationalist?

by Eugene Clingman



Christians are called to bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5). This is also the process Paul describes in Romans 12, when he calls us not to be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our minds.

If we are honest and thoughtful, we will find that certain ideas we hold dear, and believe to be good and right, may be more the product of our culture than of a Christian worldview. Patriotism is one of them. Can we make our patriotism captive to the obedience of Christ?

Patriotism

There is a patriotism that is in keeping with the mind of Christ, and there are also views and feelings of patriotism that are decidedly not Christian. Noah Webster, in his 1828 dictionary, defines a patriot as “a person who loves his country, and zealously supports and defends it and its interests,” and he defines patriotism as “love of one’s country; the passion which aims to serve one’s country, either in defending it from invasion, or protecting its rights and maintaining its laws and institutions in vigor and purity. Patriotism is the characteristic of a good citizen, the noblest passion that animates a man in the character of a citizen.”

What some call patriotism is actually nationalism. For example, a man’s home

is his jurisdiction, and he must protect it. Yet he is unrighteous to insist that everything about his home is good, and worthy of protection and affirmation, simply because it is part of his home.

This man may have a son living in his home who robs a bank, and as a result the police come to arrest the son. The father ought to recognize that there is a higher law requiring his submission and by which he, his home, and its inhabitants are judged: a law higher even than the state’s. That higher law is “Thou shalt not steal.” The father should not make excuses for the son. He should not declare that because the son is part of his household, the son is not responsible for wrongs done or that the wrongs are not really wrongs since they were done for the benefit of the family.

As a patriot, when my homeland is attacked, as it was on September 11, my fellow Americans and I are called to protect it. But if our nation should, without provocation or cause, attack some nation and wreak havoc on it (no, I’m not implying Iraq), my country ought to confess the sin and make restitution. Just as the father should bow before the higher law of God, so should our nation, any nation, bow to the law of God and conform itself to His requirements.

Godly patriotism recognizes its own nation’s right to exist and allows the same to other nations. The right to exist, for a man or for a nation, is not a *carte blanche*. Should one man mur-

der another, he forfeits his right to life. Therefore God raises nations up and brings nations down.

Nationalism

Much patriotism is really “nationalism.” Nationalism, to use our example again, would have the father say, “Mr. Police Officer, has my son robbed a bank? Well, he may have done that, but because he lives in my house, it is either not wrong or it is not wrong enough for us to make an adjustment. We love our home, and its inhabitants are noble. We believe in honorable principles, God and country. We do good works in the neighborhood. Because we are what we are, we cannot be wrong. It would be detrimental to our family to believe we have ever done anything wrong or acted in a way that wasn’t in our best interest. For this reason, I have to say, Mr. Police Officer, that what my son has done is acceptable.”

This is “nationalism.”

This may seem like a homely, even silly illustration. But isn’t it what many “patriots” do when, in spite of the actions of their nation, they wave the flag and defend all its activities, just because it is “my country”? When they support their nation against the higher law of God, are they not as the father of the bank robber? When they fail to judge with “righteous judgment” by acknowledging that God is Judge and that His judgments are true, are they not as this father?

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Patriotism

by Rick Williams

“When I speak of my Nation, I mean the Commonwealth of Virginia.”

John Randolph



In this time of war and a kind of dysfunctional patriotism in America, the words of John Randolph would seem strange to most Fox Newsed, Limbaughed, conservative Christians. Propagandized simultaneously from the establishment Left and the establishment Right, those Christians in America who are at least in a semi-conscious state tend to swallow whatever the gurus on the Right spoon-feed them. Naturally repulsed by the nutty Democratic leftist ideas of same-sex marriage, confiscatory taxes, and a nanny-state, Christians back unwarily into the arms of a Republican party that has left its principles of smaller government and morality lying on the floor of its last fundraiser — discarded like the name tags that identified the back-slapping, power hungry, feminized little men and manly big women who wore them.

Cynicism

Those of us who have been involved in conservative politics long enough to remember proudly voting for Ronald Reagan have been disappointed enough times to become cynical. But cynicism, can, in many cases, become sin. This happens easily enough. We look to a particular party or politician to “save America” and then are quickly disillusioned when we are forgotten like a promiscuous one night stand. Promiscuous one night stands deserve to be forgotten. The gullible get what they deserve. Solomon warns us in two places, “The simple pass on, and are punished” (Pr. 22:3b and Pr. 27:12b).

Cynicism can make us bitter toward the political process — many Christians have dropped out completely. I’ve been tempted to do so myself. Both major parties are immoral, big-government machines. That is no longer arguable. What’s the point? The point is we have a duty and responsibility to be involved. God gave us this responsibility in the covenant founding of our nation, and our forefathers consummated this responsibility and duty in blood. But it is important to remember that the responsibility to “be involved” in the political process does not mean blind allegiance to a political party, movement, or even a nation. That statement is heresy among the 21st century neo-conservative Christian lemmings, who get all of their political perspective from talk radio, cable television, and, sadly, even from the pulpit.

The Love of Land

Clyde Wilson, University of South Carolina history professor and writer, once wrote, “[P]atriotism is the love of a land and its people, nationalism is the love of a government.” Dr. Wilson and John Randolph would have gotten along well. Both men instinctively verbalized what most Americans have forgotten — and no longer understand. Patriotism is virtuous and wholesome. Nationalism is not the same as patriotism. Nationalism is dangerous. Nationalism gave rise to Nazism and Communism.

My ancestors have been in Virginia for at least eight generations. I, along with three of my six children, have never lived more than ten miles from the spot

we were born. Some might call that parochial or provincial — unsophisticated. I’ll take all three labels as a compliment and wear them proudly. Am I snobby about this? Perhaps a little. But not snobbish in an “I’m better than you” attitude, but rather snobbish in an “I feel sorry for you” attitude. I’m sorry that many Americans don’t have this connection to a particular place or home. They’re missing out. I cannot imagine living anywhere but Virginia. Douglas Southall Freeman, the Pulitzer Prize winning author of the massive four-volume biography of Robert E. Lee, agreed with the importance of having a “sense of place.” He once wrote, “I think the American people lose a large part of the joy of life because they do not live for generations in the same place.”¹ Freeman would have gotten along well with John Randolph and Dr. Wilson. This sense of place is what gives birth to true patriotism.

A Sense of Place

In 1861, America was torn apart by differing views of patriotism. The North, with its ostensible loyalty to “the Union” (aka the government), invaded the Southern states to keep them from seceding. The South, with its loyalty to its “sense of place,” fought the invading horde with such vigor that we came close to whipping a numerically and technologically superior foe. The Federals were shocked at the resistance they met. The Lincolmites did not understand patriotism. They did understand nationalism. The North did not

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DOMINION & HOLLYWOOD

Part Three by Brian Godawa

What is the Christian take on movies? Can Hollywood be a part of Christian culture? And what about those “Christian movies”?
Movie screenwriter Brian Godawa answers these questions.



In the first two parts of this series, we examined the Biblical call to dominion in Hollywood, and two approaches to this call: separation and infiltration. While there is a place for “Christian” arts, there are also dangers associated with our being a subculture, not the least of which is a consistent lack of excellence. But infiltration, though it has the goal of transformation and reform, also poses a risk to us. The world can influence us as much as we can influence it.

Drawing the Lines

Against infiltration, we often hear it said that by working on a secular movie that has a worldly worldview, we are supporting that godless message. I agree that we need to draw lines, but I do not believe this is a black and white area of decision. We live in a fallen world. Nothing is perfect. No movie is Scripture, and so we will not agree with everything a movie says. But that does not mean everything about a movie or television show is bad and therefore invalidating.

Once, on a radio talk show, I received a phone call from a woman who said it was sinful to support *Schindler's List* because of an after-sex nude shot in the movie. The shot was inappropriate and unnecessary, but this woman threw away the entire 200 minutes of the most powerful, humane, educational, moral story about the Holocaust ever made because of a single two-second shot. Does she walk away from an unbeliever who is cussing rather than witness to him? Does she throw out the Bible because it contains descriptions of inappropriate sexual sins like adultery, incest, orgies, and gang rape?

We must decide how much agreement is required to warrant our involvement in a project. That line can be somewhat subjective (1 Cor. 8). I personally could not adapt the book *The Da Vinci Code* to a movie, because that would cross my line, but I could work on *The Day After Tomorrow*. Why? Because even though I don't agree with the environmental extremism in the film, I recognize that it is an area of debate that is not absolute, and it is not an intrinsic violation of my faith. Even though the Bible gives man dominion, it also says

we are responsible for pollution and our waste products as well as the environment (Ex. 22:5-6). So disagreeing on the degree of a claim is not the same as disagreeing on the essence of one.

Making a Difference in Hollywood

There are many Christians who have had this kind of salting or leavening influence in television shows like *That 70s Show*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Judging Amy* and others. They act as gatekeepers. They may not be able to change the entire show, but they are certainly positive influences that keep even worse stuff out. For instance, shows favoring abstinence were successfully championed to replace so-called responsible teen sex episodes by Christian writers and producers of *Family Matters* and *Step By Step*. On *Touched By An Angel*, a show approving of transvestite behavior as God-given was advocated by network executives but stopped short by the Christian producer and writers of the show. An *American Detective* TV show was turned from nihilistic criminal hopelessness into spiritual hope with the mere soundtrack addition of

a Black Gospel rendition of the hymn “Softly and Tenderly.” And an insulting stereotype pastor character on *That 70s Show* was ultimately replaced by a more respectable one thanks to the diligent and persevering efforts of a Christian staff writer.

But much effect of Christians in entertainment cannot be measured because their influence is a day-to-day general influence on attitudes and subject matter, not merely specific incidents. If you think some television shows are bad, imagine how bad they would be without *any* Christian influence. Salt, light and leaven. And those Christians go on to higher positions of power and influence. In time, the salt seeps through the entire food and the leaven increases the whole lump of dough.

I have a Christian friend who is trying to get a job on the research team for the feature film adaptation of *The Da Vinci Code*. The research team investigates elements of movies to make sure they are accurate, like historical references or scientific and technological verity. That Christian could provide research that would show the elements of the book that are fallacious, which as we know, are manifold. In this case, her involvement in that godless project would be a way of working against the lies rather than supporting them.

A Comprehensive Dominion

Of course, restraining evil is only one aspect of cultural transformation. God wants us to do a whole lot more than stop a few dirty words or naughty behavior, He wants us to ultimately have dominion over Hollywood. But we have to start somewhere. If more of us were committed to infiltration, together we would have a greater influence. If one Christian can have only limited influence on the content of a television show or movie, imagine how much more influence a hundred Christians would

have on that project. It's the Rahab strategy: conquer the enemy's city from within.

Ironically, this subversive tactic is how the homosexual community has operated for years in Hollywood. By infiltrating studios like Disney, they have been able to change studio benefits and policy on issues of domestic partnership. They have been able to take a studio that represented everything they were against (traditional mores) and subversively change the content so that now Disney's definition of family values is more in line with their own. They infiltrated their enemy and took over.

There is a real lesson in all this for Christians. It's not necessarily a compromise to infiltrate. And Christians are not necessarily responsible for the evil that exists in other parts of a system they may be working within.

Look at Daniel. He worked in a system that was idolatrous to its very core, with a king who demanded worship from his subjects. Not much different from the studio system in Hollywood. Yet Daniel was only responsible for his own actions, not those of others. He would not engage in actual sin, but he still did his job for a heathen evil government. It's true that he was a slave, not a voluntary worker, but if it was entirely wrong to work for a godless government, then righteous Daniel would have done nothing at all and accepted death willingly. That was his character. We know he did not. We know he did his job.

Are we not aliens in this world, no matter where we work and live (1 Pet. 2:11)? Are we not citizens of another kingdom (Phil. 3:20), who, like Daniel, are trapped in a world that is under the power of the evil one (1 Jn. 5:19)?

But not forever. Let's infiltrate. Let's reform. Let's transform. Let's see Hollywood as a mission field to evangelize, not a Sodom to leave to judg-

ment. Sometimes, we may have to take a stand and even lose our jobs for an unwillingness to cross a line of morality. It is not easy. But we must not continue to stagnate in our Christian ghetto of sub-standard subculture. We are under the New Covenant of cultural infiltration, not the Old Covenant of cultural separation. **CR**

Brian Godawa is the screenwriter of the award-winning feature film, *To End All Wars* (www.toendallwarsmovie.com), starring Kiefer Sutherland and Robert Carlyle. Most recently, he has been hired to adapt best-selling author Frank Peretti's supernatural thriller, *The Visitation*, for producer Ralph Winter. Mr. Godawa's articles on movies and philosophy have been published in magazines around the world. His scripts have won multiple awards in screenplay competitions. He travels around the United States teaching on movies and culture to colleges, churches and community groups. His book, *Hollywood Worldviews: Watching Films with Wisdom and Discernment* (InterVarsity Press) is in its 7th printing. His website, www.godawa.com, contains more of his cinematic, theological and philosophical musings.



**Movie Reviews
by Brian Godawa**

Visit www.Chalcedon.edu to view weekly movie reviews by Hollywood screenwriter Brian Godawa.

Christian Vote

By Warren Kelley



Ask the average American pastor if you can have ten minutes out of the Sunday morning service to encourage the members to participate in the upcoming election, and he will probably look at you like you just spontaneously grew a third ear in the middle of your forehead.

Then, once he recovers his decorum, the answer in most cases will be no — followed by a poorly articulated explanation about the separation of church and state, problems with lawsuits, worry over offending church members, or, my personal favorite, it's too worldly.

Does God expect Christians to vote? What does the Bible say about our political involvement? Is the church responsible to educate its members on this issue?

Most churches, and most Christians for that matter, would rather just bury their heads in the sand and pretend that these questions don't even exist. But the effect of that mentality has been devastating.

Since 1960:

- Out of wedlock births have increased by more than 500%.
- The number of cohabiting couples has increased by almost 1000%.
- Over 43 million unborn children have died at the hands of abortionists.
- The divorce rate has doubled.
- The suicide rate for 15- to 24-year olds has more than tripled.
- By age 24, one in three sexually active people will have contracted a sexually transmitted disease.

Obviously, the church has not been as effective as it should for the last half century. But, can the church really be held accountable for the direction of our nation? Much of what has happened has been the result of decisions made by our government. And during this same time, the church has been busy working to reach people with the message of the gospel.

During this same time period, the Southern Baptist Convention reports that more than 13 million people have accepted Christ in their churches. And that is just one denomination. Currently, almost 90% of Americans claim their religious faith is important to them and more than half of those attend church in a typical week.¹

So why isn't the church doing a better job of impacting the culture? Can the church be held responsible that people are not leading morally better lives? After all, we have all been told that you can't legislate morality.

If that's true, why is it that our government seems to have no trouble legislating immorality? Just look at the decision by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court that forced legalized homosexual marriage on that state, lending the full weight of the government to legitimize the homosexual lifestyle.

Or what about the court decisions that tell our children they cannot pray in public because it might offend someone who is not a Christian. Our courts also tell us that we cannot prevent a doctor from killing a child $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through the delivery process because banning partial birth abortion might infringe on a woman's right to choose.

How did we come to the point where our government could make such evil rulings? Who gave them the authority to do this to our nation?

The sober truth is, we did. We the people, or more specifically, we the church.

If we have judges who make ungodly rulings, it is because we elected the officials who appointed them. If they continue to make ungodly rulings, it is because we elected legislators who don't have the courage to take seriously their responsibility to stop them. If we have legislators who give us bad laws, who was it that put them into office?

But what can the church do about it? Many people can't believe that their one vote can change the outcome of an election, and even more don't believe the church as a group has the power to swing an election. But consider this, according to statistics from the Barna Group, of the 204 million adults who could have voted in the 2000 election, 41% were born-again Christians. And because Christians are more likely to vote than non-Christians, 48% of those who did vote were born-again Christians.

These statistics are not based on the Barna Group asking people if they are born-again; rather, they ask people if "they have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their lives today." The individuals asked must also indicate in the survey that they believe they will go to heaven when they die because they have accepted Christ.

That makes born-again Christians by far the largest single voting block in the country. Considering how close

recent elections have been, Christians could easily control the outcome of every election in the country. But there are two simple reasons why we don't.

First, over 40% of Christians who could vote don't show up on Election Day, and that's in the presidential election, which draws the heaviest turnout. The second and even more difficult problem is that more than a third of Christian voters use their vote to put into office the candidate who opposes Biblical values.

This brings us back to the three questions that we started with. The Bible doesn't directly address the concept of voting, but it does make clear that God judges governments and nations for their corporate actions just as He judges us individually. God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah for their wickedness, judging them as a city-state. God judged Babylon as a nation for their destruction of Judah.

God judged Israel because His people refused to stand up against unrighteousness in their culture; they allowed the widow to be defrauded and the poor to be abused, and they allowed children to be sacrificed to the idols of Canaan.

The nation of Israel lived under a monarchy that gave the average individual limited ability to do anything about the moral condition of the nation. Yet God still judged the entire nation. If God judged the people of Israel, how much more will He hold us responsible when we have the ability to do so much more?

If anyone in America ever doubted that a few votes could make a difference in an election, the 2000 presidential race should have forever dispelled that myth. Recent events have also made it abundantly clear that the outcome of our political races have moral consequences for our nation.

If a Christian fails to cast a vote for the candidate who will do the most to uphold Biblical values in our culture,

it is the same as casting a vote for the candidate who will do the most damage to our culture. If we are unwilling to use the power of our vote to hold politicians accountable to Biblical standards, then we deserve to live in the moral decay that follows. **CR**

Warren Kelley serves as President of the National Center for Freedom and Renewal.

1. "Religious Beliefs Remain Constant But Subgroups Are Quite Different" The Barna Update, March 19, 2004, <http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?Page=BarnaUpdate&BarnaUpdateID=160> and "Church Attendance" Barna By Topic www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?Page=Topic&TopicID=10

Do Christians Vote as Christians?

How seriously do American Christians take their responsibilities as citizens?

"Faith Has a Limited Effect on Most People's Behavior," reports the Barna Group, America's leading Christian polling organization (see May 24, 2004 Barna Updates, [barna.org](http://www.barna.org)). The behavior studied in the survey included some aspects of citizenship.

The majority of Christians, Barna reported, "were indistinguishable from people of other faiths." This majority, as defined by the survey, includes "non-evangelical Christians" (who "have accepted Jesus Christ as their savior but do not necessarily accept the Bible as completely accurate in its teachings") and "notional Christians" (who "say they are Christian but have never made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ").

The non-evangelicals constitute one-third of America's adult population, Barna reported, and notional Christians another third. Notionals also "represent almost half of all people attending Christian churches in the U.S."

"These individuals were more likely to behave in ways that characterized non-Christians ... their faith

does not seem to be a defining factor in many of their lifestyle choices," Barna wrote.

They were no more likely than non-Christians to vote, discuss politics or moral issues with other people, or contact a political official.

Dramatically different, those listed as "Christian evangelicals" were the most likely of all faith groups to vote or discuss politics and moral issues. These committed Christians, Barna said, are only 7% of the adult population.

"There is a strong connection between the faith views and practices of evangelicals and their lifestyle ... a lifestyle that is increasingly at odds with the accepted norms," Barna reported.

"While the mass media commonly portray evangelicals as rabidly involved in politics, ... they were the segment least likely to contact a political official to express their views," the survey found — although they are the faith group most likely to register to vote and most likely to vote.

Most Christians in America, however, neither vote as Christians nor live any other aspect of their lives in a distinctly Christian way, the Barna Group concluded.

Christian Citizenship: *A Gift from God*

by Lee Duigon



Imagine a Roman Empire, in the 1st century, in which the public officials — from the emperor on down to the local tax collector — are elected by universal suffrage. Even the slaves vote.

Imagine 1st century Christians having these opportunities:

*To run for office, any office, themselves.

*To sign petitions for candidates, who would need a certain number of signatures to be eligible to run.

*To join the power structures of the major political parties, starting with the neighborhood seats on the local executive committees and going all the way to the top.

*To serve on screening committees that interview the would-be candidates, weeding out the unsuitable.

*To attend their parties' conventions, for cities, prefectures, provinces, where they could meet the candidates, question them, and vote on whether to advance them to the primary elections.

*Finally, to vote in primary and general elections, and to work for their favored candidates by signing up new voters, canvassing their neighborhoods, contributing labor and money to the campaign, etc.

Imagine, further, that most of the voters in the empire are Christians, or at least profess to be. What would St. Paul say to them? How would he advise them to exercise their citizenship?

A Climate for Christ

In this imaginary Roman Empire, we assume that the age of church foundation and persecution has already been completed. Paul is still alive, still writing epistles.

Would Paul advise the Christians to opt out of the political process? Would he tell them to disengage, while the pagan minority elects emperors like Nero, governors like Pontius Pilate, high priests like Caiaphas? Legislators who would demand that Christians worship the emperor or die?

The apostles and the entire Christian community already have standing orders from their Lord and King, Jesus Christ, to “teach all nations...to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Mt. 28: 19-20). Bearing in mind this Great Commission, would Paul have advised Christians to elect officials who would foster an environment favorable to this mission?

Imagine how much easier it would be to carry out the Great Commission if committed Christians wrote and administered the laws, sat as the judges

who interpreted the laws, operated the schools, and staffed the bureaucracies.

Ambassadors for Christ

Paul couldn't have imagined such an empire. Under the providence of God, the world wasn't ready for it. In the real world, Christians had to be tempered in the forge of persecution, barbarian invasion, civil war, and reformation — a process still going on today.

Paul couldn't have imagined such a political system, and we don't have to: we live in one. We, the Christian citizens of America, have opportunities that Paul never dreamed of.

What have we done with them?

“Humanistic sociology,” Chalcedon founder R.J. Rushdoony wrote, “arose because the churches had abandoned the faith of the prophets and apostles. By their pietism, they had surrendered the world to the enemy...”¹

Paul called Christians to be “ambassadors for Christ” (2 Cor. 5:20), and commented on the impossibility of completely separating ourselves from the ungodly: “for then must ye needs to go out of the world” (1 Cor. 5:10).

One way for us to be effective ambassadors is to shoulder our duties as citizens. In Romans 13, Paul told Christians how to be good citizens of

the Roman Empire in the 1st century. America's political institutions are completely different, and so are the duties of American citizens. But surely Paul would counsel us to be good citizens within the parameters of our American Constitution.

God, who ordains all worldly powers, has ordained the American political system with its almost limitless opportunities for citizen participation. To opt out of it, to choose not to take advantage of these opportunities, is to spurn the gift of God.

Christian Civics

We often complain that there are no truly Christian candidates for us to vote for. Whose fault is that?

American politics is built from the ground up. Do we join our neighborhood committees? Do we take up the challenge to participate in candidate se-

lection at every level? Citizenship doesn't begin and end with voting in an election — and some of us don't even bother to do that.

It's a long climb, up a long ladder, from deciding to run for office to getting one's name on the ballot. Christians ought to be involved at every step.

Like all grass-roots efforts, this takes a lot of work by a lot of ordinary people. It takes time to learn the ropes, build an organization, and succeed. Sometimes success only comes after a string of failures, some of them heart-breaking. But should that daunt Christians? **CR**

Lee Duigon is a Christian free-lance writer from New Jersey. He has been a newspaper editor and reporter and a published novelist. He and his wife, Patricia, have been married for 26 years.

1. *The Institutes of Biblical Law, Vol. 2*, (Ross House Books: Vallecito, CA, 2001), 1.

A "Christian Taliban"?

The prophets are eloquent in declaring that God requires faith and obedience of every man and institution. They never assume for a moment that the state is not a religious institution. Baal worship is an evil in the family, the school, the state, and every other area as it is in the temple. We cannot escape this total requirement of obedience by saying, "Those laws apply to the Old Testament and to the theocracy alone." Theocracy means the rule of God. Did God abdicate when the New Testament was given? Are we any less under the rule of the triune God now? Has God grown weak, old, and too impotent to rule, *i.e.*, too old to be God?

The Great Commission makes clear that the incarnate Son is a part of that theocratic rule: all power, all authority in heaven and in earth, is given to Him (Matt. 28:18-20). What we have in the New Testament is not an abdication of the theocracy but the plan for its extension to the whole world: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations..."

This means that, because the doctrine of God is a theological question, it is also a matter of politics, education, the arts and sciences, personal and social life, and all things else. How we view God will determine how we view everything.

(Taken from *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, R.J. Rushdoony, pgs. 180-181.)

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Christian Metaphysics and the Creator-Creature Distinction: Part I

By Anthony Rogers



God is the basis for all that exists, all that we are, and all that we know — according to Christian metaphysics. The word metaphysics comes from two Greek words which mean “above nature” (*meta* = above, *physis* = nature). As a branch of philosophy, metaphysics is the study of the ultimate nature, structure, constitution, and origin of reality. As the study of the ultimate nature of reality, “It is broader in its scope than science...” which studies some delineated aspect of reality,¹ and “...is also more fundamental, since it investigates questions science does not address but the answers to which it presupposes.”^{2, 3}

There is a profound reason why the very first verse of the Bible is: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” The most basic or ultimate reality, from the perspective of Biblical Christianity, is the existence of the Triune God — He was “in the beginning.”

At the same time, Biblical Christianity affirms the existence and reality of “the heavens and the earth.” These two affirmations, that of the reality of the eternal triune God (who exists independently of all things) and the reality of the temporal world which He created (which is completely dependent upon God), are fundamental to the Christian view of reality as well as to the Christian view of knowledge and ethics.

The Creator

God is *ultimate* or *absolute*. This means, “God is in no sense correlative

to or dependent upon anything outside His own being... He is sufficient unto Himself.”⁴ He owes His existence to no one, and He needs nothing from anyone or anything (whether sustenance, counsel, or help). We cannot “prove the existence of God” by appealing to some higher standard, because there is no higher standard.

There are no laws, standards, or anything else above, alongside, or outside of God, according to which He acts or in terms of which He is explained. He acts in accordance with and is defined by His own nature. His being (or nature) is absolute, and, therefore, it is the true source of all standards and explanation. As John Frame explains, “His power and wisdom are beyond any possibility of successful challenge.”⁵ James Tyne describes this reality:

There is nothing co-eternal with God or bigger than God; there are no overarching realities, such as creaturely concepts of time, space, existence, logic or possibility, alongside or supporting God or against which He could be measured. He transcends everything other than Himself.⁶

Saying that God is absolute does not mean that He is an abstract principle or something less than personal. He is the Triune (or tri-personal) God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — and not some other. The terms *tri-personal* and *triune* mean that God is three persons and that these three persons are one in essence or being. Van Til explains:

We hold that God exists as a tri-personality. “The Trinity is the heart of Christianity.” The three persons of the Trinity

are co-substantial; not one is derived in his substance from either or both of the others. Yet there are three distinct persons in this unity; the diversity and the identity are equally underived.⁷

The Christian God is both eternally One and eternally Many. His oneness is, by virtue of being *His* oneness, ultimate. His many-ness is, by virtue of being *His* many-ness, ultimate. Unity and diversity in God, or plurality within unity in God, are equally ultimate. Ralph Smith notes:

In the Father, Son, and Spirit, Christians worship three equally ultimate Persons who are united in one Being. Since neither God’s Oneness nor His Threeness is prior to the other, both His unity and His personal diversity are ultimate... Indeed, the whole creation can only be understood rightly in terms of the Tripersonal God who created all things to reveal His glory. Ultimate explanation is not to be found in principles, nor in ideas, nor in a final theory, but in the Father, Son, and Spirit — the Personal God.⁸

The way of speaking of God as He is in Himself is sometimes referred to as the ontological Trinity. This God, the Triune God — the eternal One and the eternal Three — is totally independent of all things. He is the absolute personal God from whom, through whom, and to whom are all things.

The Creation

All things are “from,” all things are “through,” and all things are “to” God. This sums up, to a great degree, the Christian philosophy of “the heavens and the earth,” the cosmos.

In saying that all things are *from* God, we understand that the universe was brought into being out of nothing (*ex nihilo*) — rather than out of God (*ex Deo*) or out of pre-existing matter (*ex materia*) — by a direct fiat of God. This means that the world is neither eternal nor does it exist by itself or on its own. The world is completely dependent upon God for its origin.

In saying that all things are *through* God, we understand that the world is dependent upon God for its continued existence. God continues to sustain and govern the world according to His decree and by His providence. He upholds all things by the word of His power and in Him all things consist. In (or through) Him all things live and move and have their being.

Last, in saying that all things are *to* God, we understand that the purpose of God's creative act and continuing providence, the *telos* or end to which all of history is directed, is the glory of God. All things were created "by" God, all things consist "in" God, and all things exist "for" God.

The high point of God's creative, providential, and teleological acts is man. Man, as part of the created, temporal reality, owes his existence to and is dependent upon God. He was made by God in His image. He depends upon God for his meaning, his origin, for who and what he is, and for what his task and purpose is in the world.

This world — the temporal, finite, and derivative reality — consists of a multitude of different, concrete, particular things. Notes Thomas A. Thomas:

There are snowflakes falling to the ground in the frozen north, and there are strange fish swimming in the rivers of the tropical Amazon jungle. There are grains of sand on the Sahara Desert and atoms of the elements that compose the stars. There are events of history, such as Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo and Washington crossing the

Delaware. There are bees, birds, butterflies, rocks, mountains, lakes, rivers, and a seemingly infinite multiplicity of other things.⁹

To a Christian, all of these *many* things do not simply exist as isolated particulars with no underlying *unity* or tie between them. Christians make a distinction between considerations of God as He is in Himself, from all eternity, and God as He is involved in and with the world in the works of creation, providence, and redemption.

Christians often speak of God's existence in terms of an ontological Trinity, and His acts in terms of an economic Trinity. God, the eternal Triune God who is active in the origin and course of the temporal world, by His creation and control of whatsoever comes to pass (in accordance with His comprehensive plan), is the One who ties together the Many of created reality. God imposes unity upon and guarantees order in the created universe.

Because the temporal unity and the temporal diversity in the world are equally derivative, and therefore equally dependent upon the Triune God, neither the unity nor the diversity of created reality is more basic than the other. Again, Van Til notes:

[T]he various aspects of created reality must sustain such relations to one another as have been ordained between them by the Creator, as superiors, inferiors or equals. All aspects being equally created, no one aspect of reality may be regarded as more ultimate than another. Thus the created *one and many* may in this respect be said to be equal to one another; they are equally derived and equally dependent upon God who sustains them both. The particulars or facts of the universe do and must act in accord with universals or laws. Thus there is order in the created universe. On the other hand, the laws may not and can never reduce the particulars to abstract particulars or reduce their individuality in any manner. The laws

are but generalizations of God's method of working with the particulars.¹⁰

Nothing exists in heaven, on earth, or under the earth that God has not created, does not now uphold, and does not continually control in accordance with His infinitely wise and holy counsel. Because of this, there are no autonomous atoms, maverick molecules, or anything else subject to chance. There are no such things as brute facts, or uninterpreted raw data. All things are what they are, and mean what they mean, by virtue of the eternal decree, the creative act, and the continuing providence of God. All things were created by God, are related to God, and derive their meaning from God. **CR**

Anthony Rogers is currently a student at Christ College and attends Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church, pastored by Rev. Richard Knodel. After graduation, he plans to pursue a Master of Apologetics degree from Bahnsen Theological Seminary and vocational goals of teaching, writing and debating. He and his wife, Janis, have two children. Anthony may be contacted at smprrparatus@aol.com.

1. *E.g.*, physics, which studies nature; biology, which studies living things; astronomy, which studies the solar system, etc.
2. *E.g.*, the relationship of facts to laws; the uniformity of nature; identity through change, etc.
3. Punayot Butchvarov, "Metaphysics," in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), ed. by Robert Audi.
4. Cornelius Van Til, *The Defense of the Faith*, 3rd ed. (Philipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1967), 9.
5. John Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Philipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1987), 17.
6. James J. Tyne, "Putting Contexts in Their Place: God's Transcendence in Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book One," in *The Standard Bearer: A Festschrift for Greg*

continued on page 29

Gentry, *Foundation... cont. from page 7*

Our Cultural Practices

To these legal and historical references we can add a number of cultural practices. The First Continental Congress' first official act was to open the meeting with prayer. The prayer offered up by Rev. Jacob Duche is recorded in official archives. On September 11, 1777, this Congress ordered the purchase of 20,000 Bibles after receiving the following Congressional Committee Report:

The use of the Bible is so universal and its importance so great that your committee refers the above to the consideration of Congress, and if Congress shall not think it expedient to order the importation of types and paper, the Committee recommends that Congress will order the Committee of Commerce to import 20,000 Bibles from Holland, Scotland, or elsewhere, into the different parts of the States of the Union.

Just five years later the Continental Congress granted approval to print "a neat edition of the Holy Scriptures for the use of schools." The edition that was printed by Robert Aitken of Philadelphia became known as "The Bible of the Revolution."

On September 24, 1789, Congress called on George Washington to proclaim a national day of prayer. Every president but two since then has done this.

One of our main national holidays is Thanksgiving, which is inherently religious. Congress proclaimed the first day of thanksgiving in 1780.

Our national motto on our money since 1864 reads: "In God we trust." Our Pledge of Allegiance speaks of our being "one nation under God." The third stanza of our national anthem says:

Blest with victory and peace, may the heaven-rescued land

Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation!

Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just

And this be our motto "In God is our trust."

Juries, trial witnesses, political officials, armed services and civil service personnel, and others, have long sworn to their duties with one hand on the Christian Bible. Generally this is done while pledging "so help me God."

Our Religious Drift

Our heritage is emphatically that of a robust Christian faith. In fact, as Rushdoony has argued, the notion of a secular state was unheard of in the world until later during the French Revolution and its "Reign of Terror."

Unfortunately, despite our forefathers' diligent labors, secular forces have for more than fifty years actively worked to erase the handprint of God from America's foundation stones. In 1962 the *Engle* Supreme Court decision outlawed the long-maintained custom of beginning school days with prayer. The following year saw the *Schempp* decision outlaw state-approved Bible reading in public schools.

In 1973 came the classic challenge to our Christian heritage and culture, the infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision which legalized abortion-on-demand. This decision set aside the longstanding Hippocratic Oath of the medical profession which obligated doctors to refuse to administer an abortion.

According to the *Roe* decision, it was rendered on the grounds (partly) that the Hippocratic Oath was popularized only due to the spread of Christianity, whereas "ancient religion [*i.e.*, paganism] did not bar abortion." University of California Law Professor David Louisell called this decision a "perfect challenge" to Christianity. Theologian Harold O. J. Brown rec-

ognized *Roe* as the "formal challenge of paganism."

The Scripture warns us: "If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Ps. 11:3). Contrariwise, it promises us: "Blessed is that nation whose God is the Lord" (Ps. 33:12). Let us pray that our nation re-anchors itself in the bedrock foundation of the Christian faith. **CR**

Dr. Gentry is the author of thirteen books and a contributor to eight others, from publishers such as Zondervan, Baker, Kregel, P & R, and American Vision. He is the editor of a new title from Chalcedon: *Thine Is the Kingdom: A Summary of the Postmillennial Hope*. He has spoken at conferences and on radio across the nation and runs a website for Reformed educational materials: www.kennethgentry.com.

Schultz, Political Theory... cont. from page 11

1. C. Gregg Singer, *A Theological Interpretation of American History* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1963), 13.
2. Abraham Kuyper notes that "the Calvinist maintains the sovereignty of God, as the source of all authority among men (and) Calvinism protests against State-omnipotence, against the horrible conception that no right exists above and beyond existing law." See *Lectures on Calvinism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, [1898] 1981), 90, 98.
3. Douglas Kelly, *The Emergence of Liberty in the Modern World* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1992), 52; Richard Greaves, *Theology and Revolution in the Scottish Reformation* (Grand Rapids: Christian University Press, 1980), 224. Both are excellent studies, Kelly's book is a must-read for those who want to understand the Reformed impact on political theory.
4. Alexander Mitchell, *The Westminster Assembly: Its History and Standards* (1883), 70.
5. Patrick Henry, *Patrick Henry: Life, Correspondence, and Speeches*, ed. William Wirt (Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle, 1993), I: 86.
6. *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, 735.

7. Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, in *The Selected Works of Thomas Paine*, ed. Howard Fast (New York: Modern Library, 1946) 12, 14, 30.

8. Richard Flinn, "Samuel Rutherford and Puritan Political Theory," *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction* V:2 (Winter, 1978–79), 49.

Clingman, Nationalist?... cont. from page 18

George Orwell in his "Notes on Nationalism" (May 1945) said, "By 'nationalism' I mean ... the habit of identifying oneself with a single nation or other unity, placing it beyond good and evil and recognizing no other duty than that of advancing its interests."

The Wikipedia dictionary defines nationalism as "a concept of identity which members of a particular government, nation, society, or territory may collectively feel. Nationalists strive to create or sustain a nation based on various notions of political legitimacy. These notions of political legitimacy can derive from the Romantic theory of 'cultural identity', the liberal argument that political legitimacy is derived from the consent of a region's population, or combinations of the two" (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationalism>).

The Godly Patriot

Nationalism will fail, but godly patriotism — love and care for one's own country in keeping with the judgments of God and Christ's Lordship — will grow as history progresses (Is. 60:12). All citizens of all nations on earth should aspire not only to be godly patriots of their own nations, loving and defending its borders and sovereignty, but also to recognize that their first allegiance is to Him "whose right it is," who is King over kings, and Lord over lords. If patriotism does not recognize that Christ has the right to rule every nation, it is nationalism.

Godly patriotism is to want the best for the country that fathered you. The best for our country, indeed for any country, is for us to recognize Christ as Sovereign and Lord. In all our private and public businesses, in our institutions and constitutions, we must bow to His laws and implement them in our society as the standard and final authority for any policies, institutions, or legislation. **CR**

Eugene Clingman is Executive Administrator of the International Church Council Project (www.churchcouncil.org) a theological effort (of Coalition on Revival) seeking to halt the slide of the evangelical church toward liberalism and compromise. Eugene also works part-time as a representative for an Inc. 500 company (MoreHealthTimeMoney.com).

Williams, Patriotism... cont. from page 19

understand what the eminent Virginia historian, Philip Alexander Bruce, expressed with these words:

It was this love of home, with its thronging recollections of the past both near and far ... that nerved many a Southern soldier Love of the South was inextricably mixed up with this love of the family hearth Love of one particular spot, of one neighborhood, of one State, was the foundation stone of the love of the entire region which entered so deeply into the spirit of the Confederate soldier.²

That, my dear reader, was patriotism. This dichotomy of philosophy was expressed in Ron Maxwell's film *Gods and Generals*. In one scene Union General Joshua Chamberlain was about to mount a charge against the Confederate line. As his troops were preparing to charge, Chamberlain offered a strange, nationalist petition — "Caesar, we who are about to die salute you!" Juxtapose this with the appearance of a poignant quote by George Eliot as the film opens: "A human life, I think, should be well rooted in some spot of a native land,

where it may get the love of tender kinship"

Patriotism is not living and dying for Caesar. Caesar likes one night stands. That, again, is nationalism. Patriotism is living and dying for your sense of place, your kinship. Your place in history, ordained of God, is often determined by the roots you put down in your native land and your love for your "tender kinship" — your family, your neighbors, your community; this is true patriotism.

Love your land, love your people, and in doing so, you will manifest the love of Christ and become a true patriot. **CR**

Rick Williams is a businessman, publisher (VirginiaGentleman.com), and author. He proudly admits he once served the Commonwealth of Virginia as a magistrate, but he has thus far resisted offers of one night stands with Caesar. He can be reached at rgwnsure@cfw.com.

1. David E. Johnson, *Douglas Southall Freeman* (Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 2002), 182.
2. Philip Alexander Bruce, *Brave Deeds of Confederate Soldiers* (Stuarts Draft, VA: Virginia Gentleman Books, [1916] 1999), 15.

Rogers, Metaphysics... cont. from page 27

L. Bahnsen (Nagadoches, Texas: Covenant Media Press, 2002), 371.

7. Van Til, *ibid.*, 12.

8. Rev. Ralph A. Smith, "The Trinity and Covenant: The Christian Worldview," <http://www.berith.org/essays/tcv/>

9. Thomas A. Thomas, *A Reason for the Hope: Be Ready Always to Give an Answer* (Rochester, NY: Backus Books, n.d.), 60.

10. Van Til, *ibid.*, 27.

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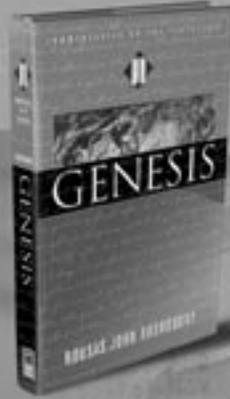
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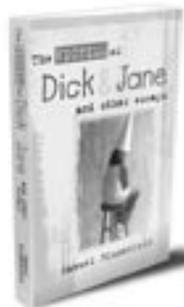
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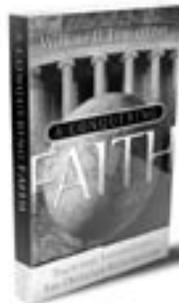
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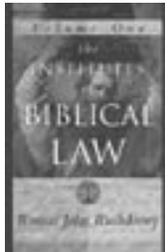
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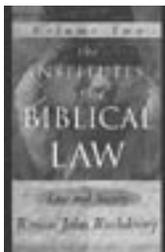
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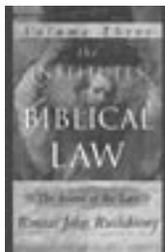
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VHS Series. Ethics remains at the center of discussion in sports, entertainment, politics and education as our culture searches for a comprehensive standard to guide itself through the darkness of the modern age. Very few consider the Bible as the rule of conduct, and God has been marginalized by the pluralism of our society.

This 12-part video collection contains an in-depth interview with the late Dr. R.J. Rushdoony on the application of God's law to our modern world. Each commandment is covered in detail as Dr. Rushdoony challenges the humanistic remedies that have obviously failed. Only through God's revealed will, as laid down in the Bible, can the standard for righteous living be found. Rushdoony silences the critics of Christianity by outlining the rewards of obedience as well as the consequences of disobedience to God's Word.

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education

The Philosophy of the Christian Curriculum

By R.J. Rushdoony. The Christian School represents a break with humanistic education, but, too often, in leaving the state school, the Christian educator has carried the state's humanism with him. A curriculum is not neutral: it is either a course in humanism or training in a God-centered faith and life. The liberal arts curriculum means literally that course which trains students in the arts of freedom. This raises the key question: is freedom in and of man or Christ? The Christian art of freedom, that is, the Christian liberal arts curriculum, is emphatically not the same as the humanistic one. It is urgently necessary for Christian educators to rethink the meaning and nature of the curriculum.



Paperback, 190 pages, index, \$16.00

Intellectual Schizophrenia

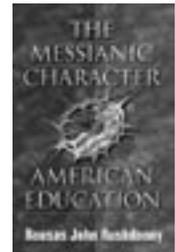
By R.J. Rushdoony. When this brilliant and prophetic book was first published in 1961, the Christian homeschool movement was years away and even Christian day schools were hardly considered a viable educational alternative. But this book and the author's later *Messianic Character of American Education* were a resolute call to arms for Christians to get their children out of the pagan public schools and provide them with a genuine Christian education. Dr. Rushdoony had predicted that the humanist system, based on anti-Christian premises of the Enlightenment, could only get worse. Rushdoony was indeed a prophet. He knew that education divorced from God and from all transcendental standards would produce the educational disaster and moral barbarism we have today. The title of this book is particularly significant in that Dr. Rushdoony was able to identify the basic contradiction that pervades a secular society that rejects God's sovereignty but still needs law and order, justice, science, and meaning to life. As Dr. Rushdoony writes, "there is no law, no society, no justice, no structure, no design, no meaning apart from God." And so, modern man has become schizophrenic because of his rebellion against God.



Paperback, 150 pages, index, \$17.00

The Messianic Character of American Education

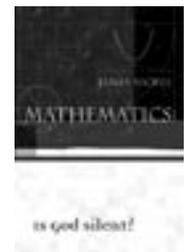
By R.J. Rushdoony. Rushdoony's study tells us an important part of American history: exactly what has public education been trying to accomplish? Before the 1830s and Horace Mann, no schools in the U.S. were state supported or state controlled. They were local, parent-teacher enterprises, supported without taxes, and taking care of all children. They were remarkably high in standard and were Christian. From Mann to the present, the state has used education to socialize the child. The school's basic purpose, according to its own philosophers, is not education in the traditional sense of the 3 R's. Instead, it is to promote "democracy" and "equality," not in their legal or civic sense, but in terms of the engineering of a socialized citizenry. Public education became the means of creating a social order of the educator's design. Such men saw themselves and the school in messianic terms. This book was instrumental in launching the Christian school and homeschool movements.



Hardback, 410 pages, index, \$20.00

Mathematics: Is God Silent?

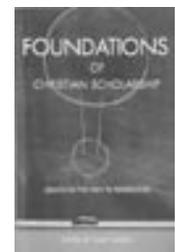
By James Nickel. This book revolutionizes the prevailing understanding and teaching of math. The addition of this book is a must for all upper-level Christian school curricula and for college students and adults interested in math or related fields of science and religion. It will serve as a solid refutation for the claim, often made in court, that mathematics is one subject, which cannot be taught from a distinctively Biblical perspective.



Revised and enlarged 2001 edition, Paperback, 408 pages, \$22.00

The Foundations of Christian Scholarship

Edited by Gary North. These are essays developing the implications and meaning of the philosophy of Dr. Cornelius Van Til for every area of life. The chapters explore the implications of Biblical faith for a variety of disciplines.

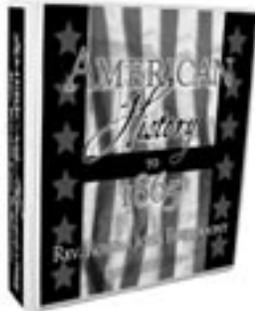


Paperback, 355 pages, indices, \$24.00

american history & the constitution

American History to 1865

Tape series by R.J. Rushdoony. These tapes are the most theologically complete assessment of early American history available, yet retain a clarity and vividness of expression that make them ideal for students. Rev. Rushdoony reveals a foundation of American History of philosophical and theological substance. He describes not just the facts of history, but the leading motives and movements in terms of the thinking of the day. Though this series does not extend beyond 1865, that year marked the beginning of the secular attempts to rewrite history. There can be no understanding of American History without an understanding of the ideas which undergirded its founding and growth. Set includes 18 tapes, student questions, and teacher's answer key in album.



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2. Motives of Discovery & Exploration II
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4. Feudalism, Monarchy & Colonies/The Fairfax Resolves 1-8
- Tape 3** 5. The Fairfax Resolves 9-24
6. The Declaration of Independence & Articles of Confederation
- Tape 4** 7. George Washington: A Biographical Sketch
8. The U. S. Constitution, I
- Tape 5** 9. The U. S. Constitution, II
- Tape 6** 10. De Toqueville on Inheritance & Society
11. Voluntary Associations & the Tithe
12. Eschatology & History
- Tape 7** 13. Postmillennialism & the War of Independence
14. The Tyranny of the Majority
- Tape 8** 15. De Toqueville on Race Relations in America
16. The Federalist Administrations
- Tape 9** 17. The Voluntary Church, I
18. The Voluntary Church, II
- Tape 10** 19. The Jefferson Administration, the Tripolitan War & the War of 1812
20. Religious Voluntarism on the Frontier, I
- Tape 11** 21. Religious Voluntarism on the Frontier, II
22. The Monroe & Polk Doctrines
- Tape 12** 23. Voluntarism & Social Reform
24. Voluntarism & Politics
- Tape 13** 25. Chief Justice John Marshall: Problems of Political Voluntarism
26. Andrew Jackson: His Monetary Policy
- Tape 14** 27. The Mexican War of 1846 / Calhoun's Disquisition
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30. Manifest Destiny

- Tape 16** 31. The Coming of the Civil War
32. De Toqueville on the Family
- Tape 17** 33. De Toqueville on Democracy & Power
34. The Interpretation of History, I
- Tape 18** 35. The Interpretation of History, II

This Independent Republic

By Rousas John Rushdoony. First published in 1964, this series of essays gives important insight into American history by one who could trace American development in terms of the Christian ideas which gave it direction.

These essays will greatly alter your understanding of, and appreciation for, American history. Topics discussed include: the legal issues behind the War of Independence; sovereignty as a theological tenet foreign to colonial political thought and the Constitution; the desire for land as a consequence of the belief in "inheriting the land" as a future blessing, not an immediate economic asset; federalism's localism as an inheritance of feudalism; the local control of property as a guarantee of liberty; why federal elections were long considered of less importance than local politics; how early American ideas attributed to democratic thought were based on religious ideals of communion and community; and the absurdity of a mathematical concept of equality being applied to people.

Paperback, 163 pages, index, \$17.00

The Nature of the American System

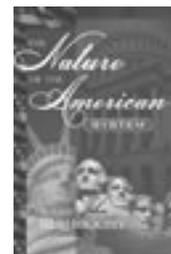
By R.J. Rushdoony. Originally published in 1965, these essays were a continuation of the author's previous work, *This Independent Republic*, and examine the interpretations and concepts which have attempted to remake and rewrite America's past and present. "The writing of history then, because man is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

Paperback, 180 pages, index, \$18.00

Retreat From Liberty

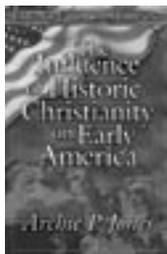
A tape set by R.J. Rushdoony. 3 lessons on "The American Indian," "A Return to Slavery," and "The United Nations - A Religious Dream."

3 cassette tapes, RR251ST-3, \$9.00



The Influence of Historic Christianity on Early America

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



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The Future of the Conservative Movement

Edited by Andrew Sandlin. *The Future of the Conservative Movement* explores the history, accomplishments and decline of the conservative movement, and lays the foundation for a viable substitute to today's compromising, floundering conservatism.



Because the conservative movement, despite its many sound features (including anti-statism and anti-Communism), was not anchored in an unchangeable standard, it eventually was hijacked from within and transformed into a scaled-down version of the very liberalism it was originally calculated to combat.

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The United States: A Christian Republic

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

Pamphlet, 7 pages, \$1.00

Biblical Faith and American History

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

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world history

A Christian Survey of World History

12 cassettes with notes, questions, and answer key in an attractive album

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“Can you see why a knowledge of history is important—so that we can see the issues as our Lord presented them against the whole backboard of history and to see the battle as it is again lining up? Because again we have the tragic view of ancient Greece; again we have the Persian view—tolerate both good and evil; again we have the Assyrian-Babylonian-Egyptian view of chaos as the source of regeneration. And we must therefore again find our personal and societal regeneration in Jesus Christ and His Word—all things must be made new in terms of His Word.” Twelve taped lessons give an overview of history from ancient times to the 20th century as only Rev. Rushdoony could. Text includes fifteen chapters of class notes covering ancient history through the Reformation. Text also includes review questions covering the tapes and questions for thought and discussion. Album includes 12 tapes, notes, and answer key.

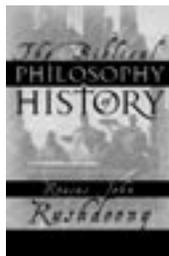


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- Tape 5** 5. The Early Church
- 6. Byzantium
- Tape 6** 7. Islam
- 8. The Frontier Age
- Tape 7** 9. New Humanism or Medieval Period
- Tape 8** 10. The Reformation
- Tape 9** 11. Wars of Religion – So Called
- 12. The Thirty Years War
- Tape 10** 13. France: Louis XIV through Napoleon
- Tape 11** 14. England: The Puritans through Queen Victoria
- Tape 12** 15. 20th Century: The Intellectual – Scientific Elite

The Biblical Philosophy of History

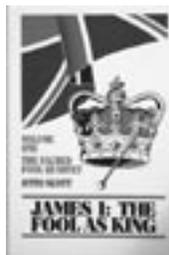
By R.J. Rushdoony. For the orthodox Christian who grounds his philosophy of history on the doctrine of creation, the mainspring of history is God. Time rests on the foundation of eternity, on the eternal decree of God. Time and history therefore have meaning because they were created in terms of God's perfect and totally comprehensive plan. The humanist faces a meaningless world in which he must strive to create and establish meaning. The Christian accepts a world which is totally meaningful and in which every event moves in terms of God's purpose; he submits to God's meaning and finds his life therein. This is an excellent introduction to Rushdoony. Once the reader sees Rushdoony's emphasis on God's sovereignty over all of time and creation, he will understand his application of this presupposition in various spheres of life and thought.



Paperback, 138 pages, \$22.00

James I: The Fool as King

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



Hardback, 472 pages, \$20.00

Christian Reconstruction in England

A cassette tape series by R.J. Rushdoony, previously released as *English History* examines the impact of John Wycliffe, Richard III, Oliver Cromwell, and John Milton on English history.



5 cassette tapes, RR135ST-5, \$15.00

church history

The "Atheism" of the Early Church

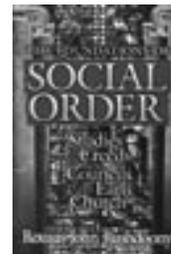
By Rousas John Rushdoony. Early Christians were called "heretics" and "atheists" when they denied the gods of Rome, in particular the divinity of the emperor and the statism he embodied in his personality cult. These Christians knew that Jesus Christ, not the state, was their Lord and that this faith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



Paperback, 64 pages, \$12.00

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

By R.J. Rushdoony. Every social order rests on a creed, on a concept of life and law, and represents a religion in action. The basic faith of a society means growth in terms of that faith. Now the creeds and councils of the early church, in hammering out definitions of doctrines, were also laying down the foundations of Christendom with them. The life of a society is its creed; a dying creed faces desertion or subversion readily. Because of its indifference to its creedal basis in Biblical Christianity, western civilization is today facing death and is in a life and death struggle with humanism.



Paperback, 197 pages, index, \$16.00

philosophy

The Death of Meaning

By Rousas John Rushdoony. For centuries on end, humanistic philosophers have produced endless books and treatises which attempt to explain reality without God or the mediatory work of His Son, Jesus Christ. Modern philosophy has sought to explain man and his thought process without acknowledging God, His Revelation, or man's sin. God holds all such efforts in derision and subjects their authors and adherents to futility. Philosophers who rebel against God are compelled to *abandon meaning itself*, for they possess neither the tools nor the place to anchor it. The works of darkness championed by philosophers past and present need to be exposed and removed.



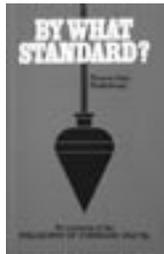
In this volume, Dr. Rushdoony clearly enunciates each major philosopher's position and its implications, identifies the intellectual and moral consequences of each school of thought, and traces the dead-end to which each naturally leads. There is only one foundation. Without Christ, meaning and morality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

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By What Standard?

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

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Humanism, the Deadly Deception

A tape series by R.J. Rushdoony. Six lessons present humanism as a religious faith of sinful men. Humanistic views of morality and law are contrasted with the Christian view of faith and providence.

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The One and the Many

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

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Epistemology: How Do We Know?

A tape series by R.J. Rushdoony. Eleven lessons on the discipline largely ignored by the modern thinker. Learn how philosophers such as Descartes and Camus changed modern thought. See how circular reasoning is an unavoidable fact of man's creaturehood. Understand how modern man is increasingly irrational, as witness the "death of god" movement. This is a good companion set to the author's book, *The Word of Flux*.

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A History of Modern Philosophy

A tape series by R.J. Rushdoony. Nine lessons trace modern thought. Hear a Christian critique of Descartes, Berkeley, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Sade, and Genet. Learn how modern philosophy has been used to deny a Christian world-view and propose a new order, a new morality, and a new man.

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The Flight from Humanity

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

Paperback, 66 pages, \$5.00

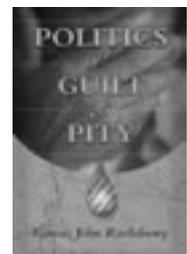


psychology

Politics of Guilt and Pity

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

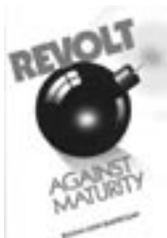
Hardback, 371 pages, index, \$20.00



Revolt Against Maturity

By R.J. Rushdoony. This is a study of the Biblical doctrine of psychology. The Biblical view sees psychology as a branch of theology dealing with man as a fallen creature marked by a revolt against maturity.

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Creation According to the Scriptures

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

Paperback, 159 pages, \$18.00

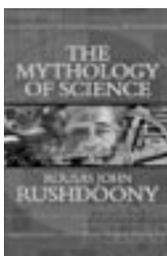


science

The Mythology of Science

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

Paperback, 134 pages, \$17.00



economics

Making Sense of Your Dollars: A Biblical Approach to Wealth

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

Paperback, 192 pages, index, \$12.00



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.

Pamphlet, 8 pages, \$1.00

Alive: An Enquiry into the Origin and Meaning of Life

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

Paperback, 159 pages, \$14.00



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.

Pamphlet, 12 pages, \$1.00

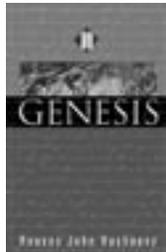


biblical studies

Genesis, Volume I of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

By Rousas John Rushdoony. *Genesis* begins the Bible, and is foundational to it. In recent years, it has become commonplace for both humanists and churchmen to sneer at anyone who takes Genesis 1-11 as historical. Yet to believe in the myth of evolution is to accept trillions of miracles to account for our cosmos. Spontaneous generation, the development of something out of nothing, and the blind belief in the miraculous powers of chance, require tremendous faith. Darwinism is irrationality and insanity compounded. Theology without literal six-day creationism becomes alien to the God of Scripture because it turns from the God Who acts and Whose Word is the creative word and the word of power, to a belief in process as god. The god of the non-creationists is the creation of man and a figment of their imagination. They must play games with the Bible to vindicate their position. Evolution is both naive and irrational. Its adherents violate the scientific canons they profess by their fanatical and intolerant belief. The entire book of Genesis is basic to Biblical theology. The church needs to re-study it to recognize its centrality.

Hardback, 297 pages, indices, \$45.00



The Gospel of John

By R.J. Rushdoony. In this commentary the author maps out the glorious gospel of John, starting from the obvious parallel to Genesis 1 ("In the beginning was the Word") and through to the glorious conclusion of Christ's death and resurrection. Nothing more clearly reveals the gospel than Christ's atoning death and His resurrection. They tell us that Jesus Christ has destroyed the power of sin and death. John therefore deliberately limits the number of miracles he reports in order to point to and concentrate on our Lord's death and resurrection. The Jesus of history is He who made atonement for us, died, and was resurrected. His life cannot be understood apart from this, nor can we know His history in any other light. This is why John's "testimony is true," and, while books filling the earth could not contain all that could be said, the testimony given by John is "faithful."

Hardback, 320 pages, indices, \$26.00



Companion tape series to *The Gospel of John*

A cassette series by R.J. Rushdoony. Seventy sermons cover John's entire gospel and parallel the chapters in the author's commentary, *The Gospel of John*, making this a valuable group Bible study series.

39 cassette tapes, RR197ST-39, \$108.00



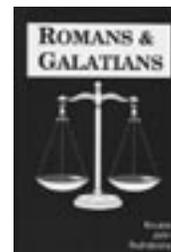
Romans and Galatians

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

The great problem in the church's interpretation of Scripture has been its ecclesiastical orientation, as though God speaks only to the church, and commands only the church. The Lord God speaks in and through His Word to the whole man, to every man, and to every area of life and thought. . . . To assume that the Triune Creator of all things is in His word and person only relevant to the church is to deny His Lordship or sovereignty.

If we turn loose the whole Word of God onto the church and the world, we shall see with joy its power and glory. This is the purpose of my brief comments on Romans."

Hardback, 446 pages, indices, \$24.00



Companion tape series to *Romans and Galatians*

Romans - "Living by Faith"

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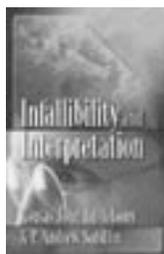
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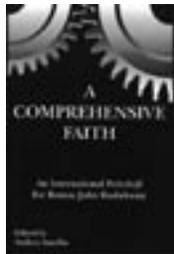
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