

# FAITH FOR ALL OF LIFE

*Faith for All of Life*  
July/Aug 2006

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

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*Faith for All of Life*, published bi-monthly by Chalcedon, a tax-exempt Christian foundation, is sent to all who request it. All editorial correspondence should be sent to the managing editor, P.O. Box 569, Cedar Bluff, VA 24609-0569. Laser-print hard copy and electronic disk submissions firmly encouraged. All submissions subject to editorial revision. Email: [chalcedon@adelphia.net](mailto:chalcedon@adelphia.net). The editors are not responsible for the return of unsolicited manuscripts which become the property of Chalcedon unless other arrangements are made. Opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of Chalcedon. It provides a forum for views in accord with a relevant, active, historic Christianity, though those views may on occasion differ somewhat from Chalcedon's and from each other. Chalcedon depends on the contributions of its readers, and all gifts to Chalcedon are tax-deductible. ©2006 Chalcedon. All rights reserved. Permission to reprint granted on written request only. Editorial Board: Rev. Mark R. Rushdoony, President/Editor-in-Chief; Chris Ortiz, Editor; Susan Burns, Managing Editor and Executive Assistant. Chalcedon, P.O. Box 158, Vallecito, CA 95251, Telephone Circulation (9:00a.m. - 5:00p.m., Pacific): (209) 736-4365 or Fax (209) 736-0536; email: [chaloffi@goldrush.com](mailto:chaloffi@goldrush.com); [www.chalcedon.edu](http://www.chalcedon.edu); Circulation: Rebecca Rouse.

# The Satanic Revolution

Christopher J. Ortiz

SADE THUS IS THE MOST MODERN OF MEN. HE IS AHEAD OF THESE LIBERATED PEOPLE IN THAT HE OPENLY VINDICATED MURDER AND ALL OTHER OFFENSES. IF THERE BE NO GOD AND NO FALL, THEN NATURE IS NORMATIVE, SADE HELD, AND NOTHING CAN BE CALLED A SIN OR A CRIME, AND ALL THINGS ARE PERMITTED EXCEPT CHRISTIANITY. THE WORLD WILL SOON CATCH UP WITH SADE, UNLESS IT ABANDONS ITS HUMANISTIC FOUNDATIONS.<sup>1</sup>



The world is catching up with the Marquis de Sade. Published perversion now pervades both the airwaves and the “information superhighway” as cable television and high-end Web services provide immorality on demand. We have not abandoned our humanistic foundations, and the culture of perversion is helping to make formerly perverted lifestyles appear acceptable. This will be part of our undoing as a nation.

We are experiencing the next phase of world revolution. This is not merely another political coup. It is spiritual in nature because it seeks to overturn the Western sense of morality—a morality informed by Biblical law. The Anglophile “Establishment”<sup>2</sup> that manipulates the apparatus of the state is seeking nothing short of an overturning of Christian civilization in order to erect the humanistic metropolis of Plato’s vision:

The modern state has a moral foundation, but it is not a Christian one. Rather it is emphatically humanistic. As Quigley noted of the English and American establishment, “[T]heir roots were to be found in ancient Athens rather than in modern Manchester.” In other words, the roots of the humanistic order were not in economic reality, i.e., in Manchester, nor in the free market. Neither were they in Biblical faith. These statisticians saw themselves in terms of Plato’s Republic. Their hostility was reserved for “the darkness of theocratic law,” i.e., Biblical law.<sup>3</sup>

Christianity stands as the opposing system to all who desire a humanistic utopia. Biblical law abides as the governing moral standard in both believer (Heb. 8:10) and unbeliever (Rom. 2:14–15); it is an inescapable concept—an indelible mark on the heart of man.

Humanistic man’s attempts at eradicating the witness of God’s law will not prevail, but his commitment is to the death. He hates God, and therefore loves death (Prov. 8:36). His drive is relentless, and his dedication to revolution only demonstrates his impatience in dismantling the Christian social order. His tactics are varied, and often political as well as economic. Yet, at base it is a spiritual revolution—the ultimate tool for erasing the moral reign of orthodox Christianity:

For the final goal of world-revolution is not Socialism or even Communism, it is not a change in the existing economic system, it’s not the destruction of civilization in a material sense; the revolution desired by the leaders is a moral and spiritual revolution, an anarchy of ideas by which all standards set up throughout nineteen centuries shall be reversed, all honoured traditions trampled under foot, and above all the Christian ideal finally obliterated.<sup>4</sup>

And because the revolution is spiritual, it seeks to align itself with a branch of Christianity that is easily compromised. By securing the aid of the Christian leadership, the establishment hopes to render ineffective the orthodox Christian testimony. The spiritual capacity of the compromised Christian

leadership will serve as a necessary element in steering society further into the humanistic era:

If the Christian Intelligentsia can be destroyed or won over and the nation deprived of all its natural leaders, the world-revolutionaries reckon that they will be able to mould the proletariat according to their desires.<sup>5</sup>

This is the strategy of subversion that Rushdoony so often referred to—a point often missed by even his most devout readers. For all too many, Rushdoony was simply a more astute voice of Christian conservatism railing against left-leaning secularists. This is too reductionistic. Rushdoony’s great offense is that he rails against the long-standing undermining of a godly social order by the seed of Satan. Although the players may change, the strategy is the same. So is the solution. Only a return to faithfulness and obedience can undo the machinations of sin and Satan. ■

1. R. J. Rushdoony, *Noble Savages: Exposing the Worldview of Pornographers and Their War Against Christian Civilization* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2005), 5.

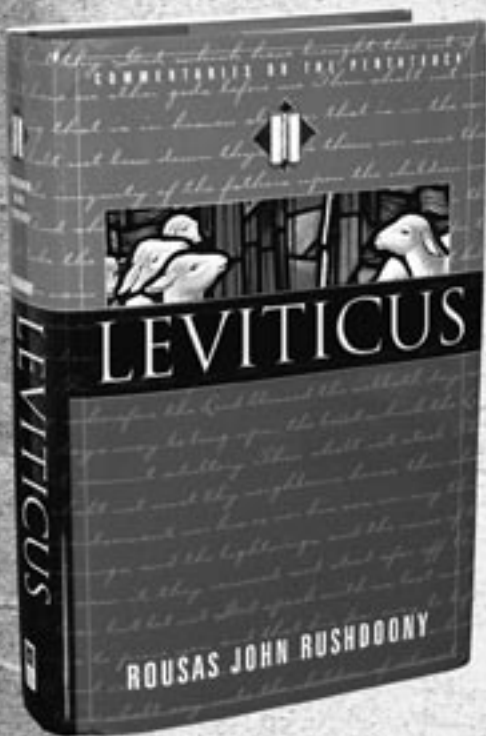
2. Carroll Quigley, *The Anglo-American Establishment* (San Pedro, CA: GSG & Associates, 1981).

3. R. J. Rushdoony, *Christianity and the State* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1986), 33.

4. Nesta H. Webster, *Secret Societies and Subversive Movements* (Brooklyn, NY: A&B Publishers, 1924), 337.

5. *Ibid.*, 342–343.

# Discover the Way of Holiness



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The book of *Leviticus* has not been a popular subject of study in the modern church. Much like the book of *Proverbs*, any emphasis upon the practical applications of God's law is readily shunned in pursuit of more "spiritual" studies. Books like *Leviticus* are considered dull, overbearing, and irrelevant. To be spiritual, in the modern sense of the term, means to live on a "higher" level where today's Christian is governed more by the impressions of the heart than a carnal commandment.

But man was created in God's image and is duty-bound to develop the implications of that image by obedience to God's law. In this volume, the author writes, "Man cannot develop his personhood except in terms of God and His law-word. Even as God separated man from the dust of the earth to make him a living soul (Gen. 2:7), so God summons covenant man in *Leviticus* to separate himself to the Covenant Lord and to become holy even as God Himself is holy. The law or justice of God is the way of holiness."

The book of *Leviticus* contains over ninety references to the word *holy*. The purpose, therefore, of this third book of the Pentateuch is to demonstrate the legal foundation of holiness in the totality of our lives. In the book of *Zechariah*, the prophet proclaims a day when "there shall be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS TO THE LORD" (Zech. 14:20). This same inscription is borne upon the garments of the high priest, and pictures for us a day in which every area of life shall be made holy to the Lord. This present study is dedicated to equipping His church for that redemptive mission.

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## Freedom and the State

(Reprinted from *Christianity and the State* [Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1986], 141-144).

Not only is morality transferred from God and His law to the state and its fiat law, but freedom also. Whether it be a Marxist state or a democratic one, freedom is today usually spoken of as an attribute of the state rather than of the people as individuals. Such freedom as is permitted to men is freedom under the state, not under God.

Turning again to Gumplowicz, we find a frank statement of the fact that man, as a creature of the state, cannot be free: "That man is a free being is pure imagination ... The premise of 'inalienable human rights' rests upon the most unreasonable self-deification of man and overestimation of the value of human life, and upon a complete misconception of the only possible basis of the existence of the state. This fancied freedom and equality is incompatible with the state and is a complete negation of it."<sup>1</sup>

In Biblical theology, the absolute freedom of God is a basic premise: God cannot be controlled or governed by anything outside of Himself. This is the premise of humanistic doctrines of the state: the absolute freedom of the state.

At the same time, radical and final coercive powers are claimed by the state. It can be noted indeed that there are limits, in the United States and other countries, to these coercive powers, but these are self-limitations. Acts of Congress or of Parliament can at any time alter or remove those limits. Without the limitation of faith in and a covenant with and under God, the state is the absolute determiner of its own powers.

With each passing year, we have seen an extension of those powers. In the United States, whatever the platform of moderation, reform, or the limitations of powers whereby presidents and members of Congress have been elected, there has been a steady increase of coercion and a decrease in freedom.

In Mexico, there has been a clearer development of the theology of the state, because Mexican intellectuals have been more successful in implementing their philosophies. The Mexican economy has been more backward by far than anything else in North America, but its politics has been more dominated by intellectuals and theoreticians and hence in advance of the United States and Canada in developing the implications of humanism.

No less than do Christians believe in a final order, the full and perfect community created by God, do humanists also believe in their own final order, the Great Community of man. Thus, in Mexico, leading thinkers have been ready to allow a semblance of religious liberty provided that the churches do nothing to influence or alter the social order. Thus, for Gabino Barreda: "An individual should think and believe as he pleases, provided that his thoughts and beliefs do not alter the social order. The mission of public education was not merely to teach; it was to make public order possible."<sup>2</sup>

Less honestly stated, this is the position of many state and federal agencies in the United States during the 1970s and 1980s in particular. Religious free-

dom was tenable only when and where Christianity was having no influence on the social order. When the Christian school movement began to move the faith from irrelevance to relevance, persecution began. It became obvious that the much-vaunted religious liberty meant, for many officers of the state, the freedom to practice religion only between the limits of a man's two ears.

The Marxists have seen liberty as a concept used by a social class to their advantage. The Mexican positivists hold that a thing is free when it follows its natural course and encounters no obstacles. It then follows the law of its being. A stream coming down a mountainside is in terms of this definition free. However, where applied to man, this doctrine has some interesting consequences, because freedom is then clearly related to the doctrine of man. If man is God's creature, then freedom is only under God. If, however, man is an evolving animal whose being is determined by naturalistic drives and forces, then religion is a dramatic restraint on his freedom.

Thus, for Gabino Barreda, the individual was not free to do as he wished. Rather, "Freedom ought to be subordinate to the interests of society, namely, to the interests of the Mexican nation." A laissez-faire freedom is to be seen instead as disorder, not liberty. "The freedom of the individual must subordinate itself to the social order." Freedom is not under God, but under the state. "Thus, the state should intervene, as an instrument of society, in the moral education

of Mexicans. It must prepare Mexicans to be good civil servants by stimulating their altruistic sentiments.”<sup>3</sup> For this reason, Barreda could say, “[T]he rights of society are more important than the rights of man.”<sup>4</sup> It follows also that Barreda could propose a civil dictatorship to promote freedom.<sup>5</sup>

The equation of reason and moral-ity with the state is commonplace to humanistic thought. (A variation is its equation with the autonomous man.) Such a view is productive of a new phariseism. In this self-righteous faith, the state as the great good passes judgment on all other segments of society. It holds that the state and its sovereignty constitute the necessary order for life, indeed, the saving order. Dissent from the state then becomes true evil. Not crime but non-conformity is then seen as the great problem.

As a consequence, in the USSR, criminals are not seen as the great offenders. Rather, it is the dissenter of any kind, especially the Christian or the libertarian dissenter. The uniform testimony of former slave labor camp prisoners is that criminals have a privileged status and are commonly used to terrorize political prisoners. The only offense of these political prisoners, when there is any offense, is their real or fancied dissent. Vicious hoodlums do not threaten the political philosophy of the state, but dissenters do, and they are accordingly treated more severely.

We see steps in the same direction in the United States. As the state’s ability to cope with crime, and its concern to do so, diminishes, its zeal to penalize dissent increases. The persecution of churches and of independent Christian schools points clearly to this zeal to limit liberty. Thus, many people find a dual limitation on their freedom. In major cities, freedom of movement, especially after dark, is limited because of the freedom

of the criminal element. At the same time, their personal and religious liberties are increasingly restricted by statist claims and the growth of statist power.

Bussell pointed out how, in medieval Europe, the empire revived Roman law (in the twelfth century) to destroy the freedom of the church. Roman law “could not conceive of a genuine *diarchy* in which both parties respect the limits of the sacred and profane departments.”<sup>6</sup> By 1453, Bussell held, the ideals of the medieval world were dead, and statism in the saddle.<sup>7</sup> The savagery of the modern age was under way, and the Renaissance of paganism was also the renewal of tyranny and barbarism.

Despite the rise of the national states, the Holy Roman Empire and its dream persisted. Maximilian I (1459–1519), called the “foremost knight of the age,” is like Sigismund, well regarded by many historians. However, as we know from a letter to his daughter Margaret, Maximilian hoped to gain the papal throne on the death of the pope, and, at times thought of deposing Pope Julius II. Moreover, Maximilian dreamed of the “good” he could accomplish by using the church’s wealth for the empire.<sup>8</sup>

There were and are no restraints on the dream of the modern state. What Maximilian dreamed about, Henry VIII in effect did, and also Louis XIV and other monarchs with their state churches. With the French and Russian Revolutions, the state made itself man’s church and savior. As man’s true savior and church, the modern state began an open or a covert war against the church, and also against man’s freedom. The only freedom desired by the modern state is its own.

As we have noted, man’s freedom was separated from God and creation in His image and made a natural fact, freedom to follow our natural course.

One religious consequence of this has been the sexual revolution. Another, and an earlier one, is aptly summarized by Hallowell: “Communion with nature replaces communion with God as the source of inspiration and true enlightenment.”<sup>9</sup> An early example of this was William Wordsworth. The environmental movement has deep religious roots.

This “natural freedom,” however, does not make possible any freedom for man other than an esthetic and sexual venting of his impulses. To “do your own thing” is a logical consequence of Wordsworth’s religion. It means submission to, not resistance against, the forces of history, and it is the death of freedom, which is an anti-naturalistic motive. Because the Biblical doctrine of freedom is anti-naturalistic and supernatural, only Christ can make us free (John 8:36). We are made free by the supernatural act of regeneration. Since our natural course is a fallen one, natural freedom is to sin and die. The history of true freedom cannot be known or written apart from Jesus Christ. Inevitably, the modern humanistic state is anti-Christian and anti-freedom. ■

1. Cited by John H. Hallowell, *Main Currents in Modern Political Thought* (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 1950, 1959), 318, from Ludwig Gumplowicz, *Outlines of Sociology*, 180.
2. Leopoldo Zea, *Positivism in Mexico* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1974), 126.
3. *Ibid.*, 98–99.
4. *Ibid.*, 115.
5. *Ibid.*, 95.
6. F.W. Bussell, *Religious Thought and Heresy in the Middle Ages* (London: Robert Scott, 1918), 848.
7. *Ibid.*, 646–647.
8. Friedrich Heer, *The Holy Roman Empire* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), 139.
9. John H. Hallowell, *Main Currents in Modern Political Thought*, 167.

# The Limitations of Constitutional Reforms

Mark R. Rushdoony



When the humanistic spirit of the modern age reveals any new assault on individual liberty or Biblical morality, there is sure to be an immediate cry for a new constitutional amendment to preclude such attacks. Some of these proposals may be prudent, even noble, causes. Before we take refuge in constitutional reform, however, we need to realize its limitations.

Constitutions are a false security in an evil culture. They cannot create a moral ethic in a people, its law enforcement, or its courts. Many have cried that we must “get back” to the Constitution, yet it is not really a strategy of victory to go back to what is presently ignored and violated. Constitutions are a limitation on government authority by means of a procedural directive. They are a constraint that is always limited by the ability and willingness of those entrusted to enforce their provisions. Constitutions provide a procedural rule, but not a moral rule. They will not long restrain evil men. Character and ethics, not documents and procedures, are what define any culture, indeed any civilization.

When he emerged from the Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin was asked what kind of government had been established. “A republic, if you can keep it,” he replied. The burden of good representative government, Franklin observed, eventually fell to those represented. The dangers of mob rule inherent in democracy are only separated by extra layers of constitutional provisions and officers in a republic; they are not absent.

When the Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville traveled in the United States in the 1830s, he noted its considerable strengths, but also the inherent dangers that threatened it. His studies were titled *Democracy in America I and II*, which reflected his awareness of the damage democracy had done a generation earlier in France. After the destruction of states’ rights in the War Between the States, the references to the republic in American life grew fewer, and democracy was increasingly espoused as the essence of the American system of government.

## Democracy’s Threat to Freedom

Most Americans now believe in democracy as a sacred tenet of freedom. In reality, democracy favors a concentration of powers in the state, which becomes the highest collective voice of the people. The lesser authorities and power centers necessary to a republic are marginalized, for in democracy there can be only one ultimate mouthpiece. Individuals are, in fact, also demoted to an insignificant status as a part of “mankind” or a single element of either the “majority” or the “minority.” People as individuals disappear in favor of the collective people; individual men are swallowed up in “humanity.”

The layered, shared, and limited government of a republic is a far greater procedural limitation than afforded by a democracy, but these are, in the end, only structural limitations. Impediments to evil men are not barriers, and no structure or procedure can long constrain an immoral people who wish to use the procedures of government or the language of democracy to impose their will on others.

Legal systems and procedural forms cannot create a good government from bad citizens. Evil can take any procedural form. The U.S. Constitution was and is in many ways a brilliant work of an unusually gifted group of men, but its strength, as Franklin noted, ultimately rested in the character and vigilance of the American people. Later attempts to replicate the Constitution in other nations did not produce the same results. The character of differing peoples gave differing results. Today, we are still suffering from the fallacy that importing American forms will duplicate the American success.

## Modern Jurist Claims

A document can neither create nor restore liberty, particularly if it is interpreted in the highest courts, as is our Constitution. The modern jurist claims an authority equal to the Constitution and that his words carry more weight than the words of that document. As long as we tolerate such judicial doctrine, no constitutional protections are secure.

We can take it as a given that modern jurists do not highly regard the original intent of the writers of the Constitution. Its words constrain no more than the argument contained in the writing of their new opinions. At other times, the outright ignoring of the Constitution has been notable. The ownership by government of most of the present federal lands is prohibited by the Constitution, as is the printing of paper money (Article I, Section 8). The most ignored part of the Constitution may be the Tenth Amendment,

which reserves all powers not specifically delegated to the national government nor prohibited to the states either to the states or the people.

Putting a law into black and white does not necessarily mean it will be followed. God's laws were made abundantly clear in His revealed Word. Still, men have long substituted the commandments of men for those of God. If our nation and its courts, indeed if our culture and civilization, ignore and reinterpret God's law, how can we feel any written limitation on man will fare better?

Constitutions are a necessary limitation on state power, but they are, ultimately, only procedural and cannot fix the basic cause of bad governance, which is the evil nature of men. The moral problem is not isolated to those in positions of power, either. As Franklin implied, the people have a significant role in the outworking of representative government.

## The Statists

Limited government is most desirable to a people who choose to direct their own lives. To them, a constitution represents a plan for personal liberty and responsibilities. Statist government is for a citizenry who prefer the security of big government, for those who seek the "safety net" of socialistic security and are ready to demand that the government "do something" if the price of a commodity or service is too high or because a natural disaster has caused them loss. A constitution that defines a limited government will not long restrain government if the citizenry itself demands a more powerful and active government.

Many of the modern revisions (actual or *de facto*) of our Constitution reflect a new perspective on the nature of government's purpose. The U.S. Constitution represented a plan for a limited government. The modern view

of the nature and purpose of government has changed greatly. Limitations on government, a leftover of the Puritan belief in man's sin nature and his tendency to use power for selfish ends, are today rarely advocated. Instead we hear about new programs, all of which are designed to represent a great expansion of government, to solve perceived problems. The Constitution was written for a constrained state and for a free people. Today the preference is increasingly for a free state and a constrained people.

The fact that our Constitution has been ignored and abused is a serious concern. A piecemeal approach of undoing the damage by amending the Constitution will not alter the root moral problem. Tocqueville recognized that a representative government could not be better than the people it represented. Constitutional reforms must thus be short-term goals. The only long-term solution is a moral and spiritual reform.

## Moving Toward the Future

When a man lies dying, it does him limited good to study how the poor habits of a lifetime have contributed to his condition. What he needs to know is if there is now anything he can do to restore his health. Learning from the past is no substitute for moving toward the future. Likewise, documenting our long departure from the Constitution, limited government, and individual liberty is no substitute for charting a path forward toward their restoration. This, of course, is a more difficult proposition, largely because it presupposes the need for a fundamental change in the character and behavior of a citizenry. Without such a moral change, procedural proposals will at best be a delaying strategy. Before there can be substantive and lasting constitutional reform, there must be moral reform.

We cannot revive the past, though we can learn from it. Our duty is to

build toward the future in terms of new victories of the faith and its application to our law and culture beginning where we now find it. It will do us no good to fix any date, historical period, or long-lost standard as an ideal to which we aspire. Elijah could not afford to wax romantic about the time of King David, or David about that of Joshua, or Joshua of Moses, or Moses of Abraham. Each had new challenges and new opportunities, as do we. The future is not in reviving the past but in the revival of a people in terms of the Holy Spirit and His regenerating call. The only legitimate backward look is to the revealed Word of God, which is our guide to present and future faithfulness.

A political or procedural answer will not last long. The only real reform must be a spiritual reform. ■

# My First Interview with R. J. Rushdoony

Susan Burns



I sat in the classroom gazing out the window, only half interested in the seminar I had chosen for the afternoon at the writer's conference: interviewing. Some writers made a decent income interviewing, but there were so few people who intrigued me. I wasn't into celebrities or politicians or sports stars. My motivation for taking the class was to develop skills to help me do what I really wanted to do—investigative journalism.

But the instructor asked a question that turned my life around: "Don't hold back," he said. "Let your imagination run wild! What one person in the whole world would you love to interview if you could?" "Tom Selleck." "Ronald Reagan." "George Washington." "Albert Einstein." "Marilyn Monroe." Famous names ascended through the air on the sighs of the daydreamers. I thought a bit and then joined in, "R. J. Rushdoony."

The symphony of famous names stopped. All eyes were on me as the class in unison asked, "WHO?" "R. J. Rushdoony," I sighed. "Who is he?" they wanted to know. "Only the greatest thinker of this century," I replied dreamily, never imagining for a nanosecond that I would ever meet my hero, much less have the thrill of sitting down with him for an interview.

Oh me of little faith!

I knew Rush rarely gave interviews. My dear friend Byron Snapp kept encouraging me to ask, but I was too shy and in awe of Rush. Finally with Byron's prodding (he had been speaking to Rush on my behalf for some time, I found

out later), I asked and Rush said yes! We planned to meet after the Appalachian Conference to Rebuild America (ACTRA) in Kingsport, Tennessee. The date was only six months after the writer's conference where I had sighed his name!

The ACTRA conferences were popular among the Reformed and Christian Reconstructionists. When Rush spoke, attendance was even better. I stood in line with the others, introduced myself, and asked when we could get together. He said after the conference, and I stepped aside so the long line of men, women, and children could have an opportunity for a word with Rush. Just a few seconds with him was considered the moment of a lifetime.

Throughout the day, Rush gave his lectures and talked to people. The crowd hovered around him like dust. I thought he might be too tired at the end of the day for our interview. But fatigue did not seem to touch him.

Finally the conference ended, and once again Rush was surrounded by people asking questions, thanking him for his work, introducing their children to him. As we walked through the hotel lobby, more folks wanted a moment of his time. Slowly we made it to his hotel room. There were several men there who wanted to listen to the interview. I remember Byron was there with his son, Samuel.

I had fallen in love with Rush as a thinker and a writer a few months after my conversion in 1971. The first book I read was *Intellectual Schizophrenia*. Everything I read after that just sealed the deal with me. What an intellect! What a beautiful writer! What a warrior for the

faith! I had all that going into this interview. But what I did not have was Rush the man. I had seen it throughout the day as he spoke to people—his patience and kindness as he dealt with the endless line of people wanting a moment of his time. He was a true gentleman.

He sat across from me, eye to eye and face to face. His was a calm and steady spirit nurtured by an unwavering faith in a loving Heavenly Father. I was very excited; but just a few moments in his presence calmed me down, and we began our interview. It was published in two parts by *The Christian Observer*. As usual, Rush was prophetic in his comments. He was so far ahead of the rest of us in his observations about where we were headed as a nation that abandoned God's law-word. Here at Chalcedon, we are continually reading what he had to say and marveling at how his comments of decades ago hit the nail on the head today.

In our first interview, Rush spoke of the Christian homeschool and day school movement. "Christian schools are restoring literacy to the United States. I believe that is going to be very important. We are producing the only people who can command the future." In addition to seeing the miserable failure of the statist schools, Rush saw the glorious harvest that would come when Christian parents obeyed God's commands to provide a Christian education for their children.

It was as though he had the church of 2006 in mind when he said, "It is only the power of God unto salvation

*Continued on page 31*



# Preparing for School: Homeschool or Christian Academy

Andrea Schwartz



Worldviews are like belly buttons—everybody has one.

However, if one is truly viewing the world from a Christian perspective (a Christian/Biblical worldview), then every area of life and thought needs to be filtered through the lens of God's Word. This is not a weekend undertaking capable of being crammed into someone's spare time. Nor will you likely find reading *A Biblical Worldview for Dummies* particularly gratifying. No, short gimmicks or patches won't do the trick.

The answer is immersion. Saturate your children, in all subjects and activities, with Scripture as the foundation and faith in Jesus Christ as the impetus and object of the undertaking. That's how parents can hope to inculcate a Christian world and life view to their children.

So, the question becomes, where is the best place to achieve this goal? Certainly not in the state education system or secular private schools. However academically elite these may seem, they are specifically geared NOT to impart a practical Christianity, proclaiming the faith for all of life. The Christian academy is a good choice for parents whose background, circumstance, or inclination makes homeschooling unrealistic or unworkable. However, this option involves more, not less, work on the part of the parents. They need to oversee the educational process, filling in any gaps or discrepancies with a full-orbed

Biblical faith. The following is a list of good questions to answer before taking this step:

- What is the school's definition of education, educator, educated?
- What place does the school give to parents and their preferences?
- What are the priorities: Academic? Social? Character building?
- What role do the teachers assume in the character building of students?
- What is the school's mission statement?
- What is the dress code, code of behavior?
- How are infractions of rules and policies dealt with?
- Is observation of classroom activities by outsiders welcome?
- Is the school for Christian students or to create Christian students?
- What is the view of the authority of family, church, school, state?
- Is the curriculum deliberately and self-consciously Christian?
- Is this school only for the college bound student? Vocational student? To prepare for the workforce? To be ready to start a family?
- Do students, parents, and teachers all give similar answers to these questions?
- What is the school's philosophy of education? Is it compatible with yours?

These questions presuppose that the parents have a framework to judge the answers given. Also, careful consideration needs to be made in taking this step as you will be submitting to the

authority of the school and will be directing your children (and yourselves) to respect, honor, and obey those you place in authority over them. When organized and run properly, the Christian academy is a tremendous support to the family.

Homeschooling is an option that I have exercised for the past twenty-five years and with which I have the most familiarity and practice. However, like enrolling in a day school, this option needs to be carefully planned out. Rushdoony says it well in his book *The Philosophy of the Christian Curriculum*:

The teacher who does not grow in his knowledge of his subject, in methodology and content, is a very limited teacher, and his pupils are "under-privileged" learners. (133)

The teacher as student is, above all else, a student of God's word. To be a student means to advance and grow. (134)

Our growth in teaching *requires* our growth through and under the teaching of the Holy Spirit. We must become good learners as a step towards becoming good teachers. Our profession is a very great one in Scripture: our Lord was a Teacher, and the Holy Spirit is our continuing Teacher. We cannot treat our calling lightly, nor grieve the Spirit by abusing our calling. (135)

The homeschooling parent needs to be prepared to be the source and conduit of what students need to learn and to create a syllabus that includes subjects that demonstrate the truth of God's Word in all subject areas. Even though I used much curricula that

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# The ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

By Roger Schultz



Children dream of being princes and princesses. Genealogists scrutinize the past looking for evidence of the noble or noteworthy in their family trees. People desire a unique lineage, I suspect, because it points to a nobility of status and purpose. Even those who discover a horse thief or rogue among their ancestors are usually pleased because it is testimony of something unusual. We want to be special—and descended from something special.

Scripture teaches that the people of God are a royal and priestly people. Even the common and ordinary can have a noble status, a high calling, and an extraordinary purpose. Because of God's election and calling, every believer is declared to be part of a royal and holy nation.

## The Old Testament Royal Priesthood

Old Testament Israel had a royal, priestly calling. This calling was separate

from that of the Levitical priesthood, where one tribe was set apart for ceremonial and ritual functions. The entire nation was to be a royal priesthood.

God's calling of Israel was dramatic. Having just been delivered from bondage in Egypt, the people were endowed with a unique station as priests and kings. As God declares, "Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel" (Exod. 19:5–6 NKJV).

Israel was God's unique possession. The whole nation had a priestly function: they were to be a consecrated and holy people (Deut. 4:20, 14:2). Moses was explicitly commanded to inform the children of Israel of their calling (Exod. 19:3, 6). In other words, they had to know about their new status.

Israel's priestly call was tied to God's sovereign election. He did not choose

Israel as His people because they were numerous, impressive, or significant in themselves. His election was in fulfillment of His covenant promises (Deut. 7:6–8, 10:15).

Consecrated Israel was called to obedience to God's law and commandments. The nation's status was dependent upon its faithfulness to God's covenant (Exod. 19:5). The requirement of obedience is made emphatic elsewhere, for instance in Deuteronomy 26:16–19, where God promises praise, fame, and honor for an obedient and consecrated people.

Israel enjoyed its priestly status, furthermore, because of God's redemptive mercy. Israel was called to "keep" God's covenant (Exod. 19:5). The covenant was initiated by a sovereign God and confirmed through the shedding of blood (Gen. 15:8–10). Exodus 24:6–8 records a fascinating event of covenant making, as Moses read the book of the covenant and sprinkled the people with sacrificial blood. His language ("the blood of the covenant") is appropriated

by Christ at the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:20).

Finally, the Bible records the promise of the complete consecration of God's people. At the close of Zechariah's prophecy, Scripture says that even the most common and mundane things (the bells of the horses) will be inscribed with "HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD." Even the cooking pots in Jerusalem would be considered as "holiness unto the LORD of hosts"—thus being as holy as the sacred garments of the Aaronic priests (Zech. 14:20–21; Exod. 28:36–38).

### New Testament Royal Priesthood

New Testament Christians also have a holy calling as priests and kings. The New Testament deliberately employs the language of Exodus 19 to describe the royal priesthood of the church (1 Pet. 2:5, 2:9–10; Rev. 1:6, 5:10). The passages are excellent examples of the continuity between the Old Testament people of God and New Testament believers.

Peter writes to a persecuted and scattered church (1 Pet. 1:1), to those unlikely to consider themselves privileged and fortunate. Yet these scattered "aliens" had been "chosen" by God and sprinkled with the blood of Christ (1:1–2). They were being built up for a spiritual house and a "holy priesthood" (2:5).

Peter's exhilarating description of the church's status must have been an encouragement to beleaguered believers: "But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy" (1 Pet. 2:9–10 NKJV).

The church's royal and priestly

character is clearly stated, as well as the reason for its exalted position (God's sovereign election). The status of believers (*now* a people, having received *mercy*) is clearly contrasted with their previous condition (*not* a people, *not* receiving mercy). The church is also given an unmistakably evangelical task—to proclaim the excellencies of the One who called them out of darkness into light.

The terminology of a royal priesthood is also used in the book of Revelation. The book begins with a reference to Jesus Christ, who is the ruler of the kings of the earth and is the One who loves us and saved us from our sins "and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father" (Rev. 1:6 NKJV). The church's new song of praise to the Lamb of God includes the language of the royal priesthood, "For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9–10 NKJV).

Scripture, then, from Exodus to Revelation, testifies to the position of believers as royal priests. They have this status because of Christ's redemptive work and God's choosing. They faithfully discharge their duties as they are obedient to God's law and covenant. Their commission is evangelical: testifying to the nations of the mercy and greatness of the Triune God.

It is worth noting that the word for priest "is never used in the New Testament of Christian ministers, though it is applied to the Christian body as a whole."<sup>1</sup> There is a tendency in Christian history for the church to become *hierarchical* (literally, ruled by priests). But when a commitment to the priesthood of all believers is lost, the church invariably loses its vitality and mission.

### Reformation Priesthood of Believers

A hallmark of the Reformation was the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. The Roman Church was hierarchical, priest-ridden and ecclesiastically dominated. Protestant Reformers were intent on developing a more Biblical view of the Christian priesthood.

At the beginning of the Reformation, for instance, Martin Luther stressed the priesthood of all believers. He especially disliked the authoritarian papacy and the corrupt priesthood. In *An Appeal to the Ruling Class* (1520), Luther argues that "our baptism consecrated us all without exception, and makes us all priests." In *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (1520), he explains that "[i]t follows [1 Peter 2:9] that all of us who are Christians are also priests."<sup>2</sup> For Luther, Christian ministers were "functionally, not ontologically distinct. The higher and lower callings, as in the prior distinctions between monks and laity, are abolished."<sup>3</sup>

The doctrine of the priesthood of believers influenced Reformed polity. The most recent issue of *Church History* includes an excellent comparative article on the ruling eldership. Presbyterians emphasized the office of elder because it was found in Scripture and it helped prevent a minister from becoming a "Sole Ruler, and as it were a Pope." Especially in New England and Scotland "the Calvinist stress upon the spiritual equality of layman and cleric strengthened a willingness to let the ruling elder assume much of the function and attendant honor of the minister."<sup>4</sup>

Presbyterian eldership illustrates the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. In a lengthy discussion of "The Church," R. J. Rushdoony notes the continuity between Jewish practices and the New Testament eldership, arguing that it is part of the church's "claim to

be the new and true Israel of God.” A healthy eldership is essential for a strong church.

Rushdoony also notes that “few offices have deteriorated more radically than that of the elder.”<sup>5</sup> Many Presbyterian bodies, even conservative ones, have themselves become hierarchical, bureaucratic, and priest-ridden. In this new kind of authoritarian, quasi-Presbyterian polity, the minister functions as the official priest-bishop, and elders and deacons are considered but lay helpers. “He treated me like a *ruling elder!*” an associate pastor I knew complained of the senior pastor. (I gathered that the two men didn’t get along. And I also gathered that neither had a high view of the eldership.)

Hierarchical churches will vigorously oppose Biblical Presbyterianism and despise the Reformation doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. As Rushdoony puts it, “[T]he church has by and large paid lip service to the priesthood of all believers, because its hierarchy has distrusted the implications of the doctrine, and because it has seen the church as an end in itself, not as an instrument.”<sup>6</sup>

### Rushdoony on the Royal Priesthood

In *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, Rushdoony shows the importance and relevance of the doctrine of the royal priesthood. “The purpose of man’s calling as priest is thus to realize himself as God’s vice-regent and to dedicate himself, his areas of dominion, and his calling to God and to the service of God’s kingdom. Man’s self-realization is possible only when man fulfils his priestly calling.”<sup>7</sup> In the Garden of Eden, for instance, man was given a priestly task by God. In his task of dominion, man acted as a king or a vice-regent subduing and protecting the earth.

The church has the responsibility

of equipping the saints to do the work of ministry and service. The church trains priestly princes and princesses. As Rushdoony comments, “The purpose of the church should not be to bring men into subjection to the church, but rather to train them into a royal priesthood capable of bringing the world into subjection to Christ the King. The church is the recruiting station, the training field, and the armory for Christ’s army of royal priests. It is a functional, not a terminal, institution.”<sup>8</sup>

Rushdoony further argues that Christian leaders are necessary in every sphere of action: in the church, the state, education, and various vocations. In the Old Testament, the leaders of these spheres were called *elders*, those with age, wisdom, and the ability to rule in their various spheres of calling. (Rushdoony does *not* want an ecclesiastical apparatus to control all aspects of life. Those who present him this way—and many have—clearly misunderstand him.) “It is the duty of the Christian home, school, and the church to train elders who will apply the law of God to all the world. The elder [*elder* is used generically for leader] is not governed by the church as a subordinate officer who is sent out as an imperial agent into the world. Rather, the elder governs in his sphere, even as the church in her area, each as imperial agents of Christ the King.”<sup>9</sup>

Hierarchical institutions, and particularly the state, bitterly resent the Christian royal priesthood. “The tendency of institutions—church, state, and school—and of callings,” Rushdoony notes, “is to absolutize themselves and to play god in the lives of men.” But whenever a genuine Christian priesthood is strong and viable, “the centralization of institutional power cannot flourish.” Rushdoony’s conclusion is that “the doctrine of the priest-

hood of all believers, where adhered to, is a program for not only survival but victory as well.”<sup>10</sup>

### Spheres of Royal Priestly Action

How, then, can Christians be successful in their spheres of influence? How can they serve as priests and vice-regents under Christ the King? How can they retard the centralization of institutional and statist power? Most importantly, how can they, as royal priests, best serve Jesus, their Savior and King?

Christians must have a sense of calling. They are called as priests and kings, and that is an honorable status. They are called to service, and they perform labor of eternal value. I do a good deal of hiring in my job, and I look for Christians who have a sense of calling and mission. I know that when committed Christians work, they will labor as unto the Lord (Eph. 6:5–8).

A few years ago, I hired a secretary who had a special vocational goal. She wanted to be a servant of Christ at a Christian university. I liked that; it is exactly the sense of calling I want in employees. Later, to my wife, the secretary gave a corollary goal—to make her boss look good. (My wife liked that!) I was impressed by the new employee’s wisdom. She had a clear macro-goal: to serve Jesus. She also had a clear micro-goal: to be a servant to her immediate supervisor. This is precisely what royal priests should do.

Christians must be willing to serve. Those who view themselves as servants will be willing to work, and to work hard. They will be less inclined to whine and complain. Years ago, in some otherwise-forgotten essay, Gary North gave an invaluable piece of advice: “[M]ake yourself indispensable to your employer.” I read the essay shortly before taking my first full-time position in academia, and the advice was excellent. Royal

priests must be willing to work faithfully, as unto the Lord.<sup>11</sup>

Sometimes Christian service involves dull and uninspiring tasks. I know of one church where elders, at their ordinations, are issued brooms. It is a reminder that, first of all, they are servants.<sup>12</sup>

Most churches, however, have a problem. Too many members want to wear crowns; too few want to wield brooms.<sup>13</sup> Those who wish to rule for Jesus must be willing to be servants. The model of royal behavior that Jesus taught and set was of humble and faithful service (Luke 22:25–30).<sup>14</sup>

Christian education is an example of the royal priesthood at work. In the last generation, there has been a revolution in the Christian commitment to training of covenant children. Christian parents have sacrificed to educate the next generation in homeschools and Christian schools. Forty years ago, this level of commitment would have been inconceivable. In the early years, Rushdoony was a lonely voice in the movement for Christian education. Now, almost every community in the country has churches committed to supporting covenant education.

Churches often offer courses to supplement what homeschooling parents can do. The courses deal with upper-level philosophy, math, and science—areas where homeschooling parents feel limited. Over the years I have taught courses in history for homeschoolers. Are you interested in being a faithful royal priest? Then volunteer to teach such a course for local homeschooled students. Help train a future generation of priestly kings.

Liberty University is an example of the vision for Christian education. Jerry Falwell endeavored to start an institution where Christians could get an education—from kindergarten through Ph.D.—without ever having to take

a class from an atheist or humanist. Started in 1971, Liberty University is the largest Christian university in the world.

In Liberty's College of Arts and Sciences, where I work, one can earn degrees in everything from aviation to psychology, from health to home economics, from math to music. Students can earn a master's degree in nursing or a Ph.D. in counseling. The college's biology department is vigorously committed to young earth, six-day creationism. The college's history department has held worldview workshops based on "Christian Philosophy of History" materials originally published in the *Chalcedon Report*.<sup>15</sup> The university is committed to a Biblical worldview and a conservative evangelical perspective.

Christians can make an impact for Christ in their various vocations. We should ask ourselves: "How can my calling be self-consciously and consistently Christian?" In other words, how does one who is committed to Christ and His Word operate within a specific vocation? A farmer at the Chalcedon conference in Atlanta a year ago told me that he was intrigued by questions of the stewardship of the land. In short, he was taking Biblical principles and applying them to his labor. He was seeking to work as a royal priest.

### Spurgeon on the Kingly Priesthood

In 1855, Charles Haddon Spurgeon preached from Revelation 5:10 on "The Kingly Priesthood of the Saints." (As a Baptist, Spurgeon is proof that the royal priesthood is not just a Presbyterian issue.) This excellent sermon is available online in both text and audio formats.<sup>16</sup>

Spurgeon begins by discussing "The Redeemer's Doings." The language—"Thou has made them kings and priests"—is deliberate and significant. Our royal priesthood was initiated in eternity, he notes, when the Triune God

established the eternal covenant of grace, the Magna Charta of the Saints. Christ's redeeming work was sealed at the cross, and it was finished at the ascension of Christ.

Spurgeon continues with "The Saint's Honors." "The saint has two offices conferred upon him at once," he argues. "[H]e is made a priestly monarch, and a regal priest." (Believers are made kings on *earth*, not just in heaven, Spurgeon insists. Believers are made kings *now*, not just in the future.)<sup>17</sup>

Spurgeon closes with a section on "The World's Future." Though he eschews eschatological speculation, Spurgeon has a glorious view of the future. He is convinced that believers shall reign on earth, and he looks forward to a worldwide revival of Christianity:

The hour is coming when the saint, instead of being dishonored, shall be honored; and monarchs, once the foes of truth, shall become its friends. The saints shall reign. They shall have the majority; the kingdom of Christ shall have the upper hand; it shall not be cast down—this shall not be Satan's world any longer—it shall again sing with all its sister stars, the never ceasing song of praise. Oh! I believe there is a day coming when Sabbath bells shall sprinkle music over the plains of Africa—when the deep thick jungle of India shall see the saints of God going up to the sanctuary; and, I am assured that the teeming multitudes of China shall gather together in temples built for prayer, and, as you and I have done, shall sing, to the ever glorious Jehovah ... Happy day! happy day! May it speedily come!

God has made believers priests and kings. We should find great encouragement in our royal station and calling. We must be faithful to the Word and covenant of the Lord. And we must be willing to work faithfully and diligently for our King and His Kingdom. ■

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# Kingdom Now, But Theocracy, Not Yet

By Christopher J. Ortiz



Not since the 1960s has America been beset with so many social crises. The relative calm of the 1990s has given way to a train of national handicaps such as war, immigration, natural disasters, and rising fuel prices. People are frustrated. They are concerned about the state of a country that appears to be fading under the intense rays of national tribulation.

The political climate is unusually tense. A disappointing Republican performance is even turning many conservatives away from the Grand Old Party. The population is realizing that the Left/Right political paradigm is limited and senior politicians on both political aisles are virtually the same. After twelve presidents since FDR there has been no genuine change in national policy. Government is bigger, the cost of living is higher, and personal liberties are under threat. For all of the “Christian” presidents we’ve had since *Roe v. Wade*, the slaughter of the unborn continues, and a Nazi-like scientism euphemistically refers to abortion now as “reproductive rights.”

But, an even greater social divide is now looming large. It is the debate over the religious identity of America. On one side are the Christian nationalists—revisionists bent on redefining America as a Christian nation. They refer repeatedly to the religious intent of the founding fathers as a buttress for a contemporary campaign to legislatively convert America.

On the other side are the secularists, made up of both atheists and left-wing professing Christians. Groups like the ACLU and Americans United for Separation of Church and State are the well-known non-profits leading this wing. This constituency was galvanized due to the two-term leadership of an allegedly evangelical president and the co-terminous rise of a politically aggressive Christian Right. These far-left advocates are the only political group decrying the threat of an encroaching theocracy by Christian dominionism.

The secularists are convinced that democracy itself is under siege by the dominionists. They proffer a false antithesis by suggesting that the theocracy advocated for forty years by the Chalcedon Foundation is antithetical

to American democracy. The self-appointed “expert” on dominionism, Frederick Clarkson, describes theocracy as a replacement for his version of democracy with the direct rule of a “theocratic elite”:

Generally, Reconstructionism seeks to replace democracy with a theocratic elite that would govern by imposing their interpretation of “Biblical Law.” Reconstructionism would eliminate not only democracy but many of its manifestations, such as labor unions, civil rights laws, and public schools.<sup>1</sup>

Having been a student of Christian Reconstruction since 1987, I don’t recall ever gleaning this concept of theocracy in any systematic way. Clarkson is referring more to the sensationalism of Dr. Gary North (a.k.a. “Scary Gary”) rather than any single book. North admitted to using inflammatory rhetoric intentionally as a means of drawing critics out into a direct debate with Christian Reconstructionists. It is not my intent to defend the work of Gary North, but one need only refer to the long-standing division between North and Rushdoony to understand that there is hardly a monolithic agreement between Reconstructionists.

But such hyperbolic speech by the likes of North and others provides usable fodder for critics of Reconstruction. Most of the written critiques of Christian Reconstruction feature the same handful of inflammatory quotes by men like Gary North. However, a genuine critique of Christian theocratic thinking requires reading thousands of pages of theological and philosophical discussion. It's much easier for the critic to simply cite how Gary North wants to tear down secular institutions than tackle the voluminous writing of any one theonomic writer.

Without reading the full breadth of Reconstructionist literature, such isolated citations lose their context. For example, when Gary North questions the rightness of the Constitution, he is in no way organizing a coup to overturn it. More often than not, he believes it will be a very long time before Americans would ever return to a national covenant as modeled by the early American Puritans. What is central to understand about North's perspective is that any constitutional or institutional transition is contingent upon the vast majority of Americans embracing a Reconstructionist theology. New Testament scholar, D. A. Carson, understands this well:

Theonomists are often accused, wrongly, of wanting to impose Old Testament penal codes on contemporary offenders, against the will of the vast majority of the populace. In fact, what they argue is that by the preaching of the gospel and the adoption of this interpretation of the Bible, the nation should, and one day will, repent and reaffirm the covenant. Old Testament sanctions will then be the will of the people and the law of the land. This view of the future, of course, is tied to a firm conviction of the rightness of postmillennialism.<sup>2</sup>

### The Rise of the "Experts"

Clarkson recently boasted that Kevin Phillips, author of the newly released

*American Theocracy* (see Dr. Terrell's review on page 24), gleaned considerably from Clarkson's Internet exposé cited previously:

When Phillips tackled the subject, one that was new to him, he soon realized that one cannot talk about the theocratic tendencies of the Christian right without looking at the intellectual sources of contemporary theocratic thought. Hence the importance of Christian Reconstructionism, the central intellectual source of the theocratic movement in the U.S. I was honored that Phillips drew considerably on an article about Christian Reconstructionism I wrote in 1994 for *The Public Eye* magazine.<sup>3</sup>

From this we can only expect that Kevin Phillips will also perpetuate this false conspiracy theory that American democracy is under threat by an advancing theocratic elite—an elite educated by the shadow master, R. J. Rushdoony. Whereas they see "Christian nationalism" as a measured concern, the real threat is the Christian theocrats, i.e., the Christian Reconstructionists. So says Chip Berlet, senior analyst at Political Research Associates:

Whereas the Christian theocrats, the harder right wing of the Christian right, are people who think that only Christian men deserve to rule American society. Theocracy means rule of the godly as represented by a particular religious viewpoint. They're a pretty scary group. The Christian Coalition would be like the Christian nationalists and groups like the Christian Reconstructionists are Christian theocrats.<sup>4</sup>

There you have it. We are a "pretty scary group" of power-hungry extremists bent on destroying the U.S. Constitution and eliminating the American political system. We are supposed to be meeting daily on how to bring a rapid demise to our most hated ideology—Western democracy. Here is how Berlet defines us, the Christian theocrats:

**Christian Theocrats** – They want to replace democracy with an authoritarian theocratic society run by a handful of Christian men. They seek to supersede the Constitution and Bill of Rights with Old Testament Biblical law. We must oppose them and not give an inch in our defense of democracy against theocracy.<sup>5</sup>

Berlet, like Clarkson and other critics, repeats the same errors: (a) that Reconstructionists are opposed to American democracy, and (b) that we advocate an authoritarian rule over an unwilling populace by a select cabal of religious elitists. These accusations are never accompanied with any citations. They are simply declared. If R. J. Rushdoony is the founder of modern Christian theocracy, then why is it that critics never cite his views on theocracy? Probably because Rushdoony's concept of theocracy presents a much different scenario than the secular conspiracists allege:

Few things are more commonly misunderstood than the nature and meaning of theocracy. It is commonly assumed to be a dictatorial rule by self-appointed men who claim to rule for God. In reality, theocracy in Biblical law is the closest thing to a radical libertarianism that can be had.<sup>6</sup>

Chip Berlet derives much for his thesis from the early critiques by Sara Diamond (*Spiritual Warfare*, 1989) and Bruce Barron (*Heaven on Earth? The Social and Political Agendas of Dominion Theology*, 1992). Berlet thinks much of the research of Dr. Barron, but oddly deviates from much of Barron's analysis:

Author Bruce Barron warned of a growing "dominionist impulse" among evangelicals in his 1992 book *Heaven on Earth? The Social & Political Agendas of Dominion Theology*. Barron, with a Ph.D. in American religious history, is also an advocate of Christian political participation, and has worked with conservative Christian evangelicals

and elected officials. Barron is smart, courteous, and not someone you would debate without doing a whole boatload of homework. Disrespect him at your own risk.<sup>7</sup>

Berlet disregards the early warnings of Barron who wrote, “What little attention dominionists have received from secular writers *has more often than not been designed to convince the general public that dominionists are extremist, fanatical, and downright scary*” (emphasis mine).<sup>8</sup> As I cited previously, Berlet referred to Christian Reconstructionists as a “pretty scary group.”

It is my contention that Barron’s assessment is more relevant today than in 1992. Men like Berlet and Clarkson are intentionally creating public outrage to Christian Reconstruction in a political effort to influence voters. By seeking to attach North and Rushdoony to the thinking of George W. Bush and the GOP, they hope to influence mainstream Americans to repaint the red states blue. In addition, these men are creating a name for themselves while garnering much media attention along with new readers. As in all cases, objectivity goes out the window when the mailing list rules.

### Democracy vs. Theocracy

Secular critics claim to be defenders of democracy. Frederick Clarkson indicates that a few of the theocratic targets include such “democratic” manifestations as “labor unions, civil rights laws, and public schools.”<sup>9</sup> By framing the debate this way, Clarkson is bearing false witness. Encouraging Christian parents to remove their children from public schools is hardly a war on democracy. In all honesty, I don’t think Clarkson has taken the time to define democracy before slandering Christian theocrats as being opposed to it.

Democracy is an elastic term that is used in varying ways to define a political

form or special interest. What do secularists mean when they say “democracy”? Do they suggest a direct rule by every citizen without representation (i.e., *vox populi, vox Dei*)? Is democracy simply the electoral procedure? Is it a majority rule? Does democracy equate to social or economic equality?

If by democracy the secularists mean supporting gay marriage and public schools and that politicians cannot vote their faith, then yes, we theocrats would be opposed to that hijacked version of democracy. But that is not democracy—democracy is not socialism. It does not equate to gay rights or abortion on demand. Democracy does not equate to taxing your neighbor in order to subsidize your irresponsibility.

Democracy is procedural. It is a form of populist self-government in which qualified citizens elect political leaders to represent their interests. Democracy is not manifested in such institutions as the public school system. Socialism is manifested in the public school system. Tyranny is also manifested in the public school system. R. J. Rushdoony gained most of his notoriety by defending homeschooling parents and Christian academies against the prosecuting state. So much for democracy there, eh, Mr. Clarkson?

Nobody within Christian Reconstruction is opposed to the form of democracy that suggests citizens of a republic can elect representative leadership. America is not, nor has it ever been, a pure democracy. America is a republic with a democratic procedural political process governed by the rule of law.

Biblical theocracy is not opposed to the American democratic process. As Rushdoony states, theocracy is a “radical libertarianism” because it advocates the rule of God over every man, woman, and child. Not by the direct

tyranny of a religious elite—that would be “ecclesiocracy”—but by the rule of God in the hearts and minds of people as they govern themselves in terms of Biblical law instead of autonomous reason, and without coercion by the state or church. Naturally, this would result in a vast reduction in the size of civil government, as obedient people would provide their own retirement, care for their own elderly, educate their own children, and provide for the poor in their communities.

### By What Standard?

Rushdoony often noted that the U.S. Constitution only presented a procedural morality—it did not provide us with a substantive morality. What this means is that the Constitution is designed to govern the political process more so than outline the fundamentals of morality. It is also a document designed to explicate the restraints upon civil government. Even the beloved “separation of church and state”—words that do not actually appear anywhere in the Constitution—is intended to restrain civil government from involvement in the organized church.

If the Constitution did not provide a substantive morality, where then did the individual states derive their moral law? For example, as late as 1960 all fifty states still had sodomy laws on their books. This amount was vastly reduced over the ensuing years and took a nosedive after the Supreme Court declared sodomy laws unconstitutional in 2003.<sup>10</sup>

Secularists will often engage in revisionism by suggesting that early American morality was shaped more by the Enlightenment and Greco-Roman social theory than Biblical law. This is not a tenable argument. Sodomy laws were not adopted from Greco-Roman civilization. Greece, and Rome in its decline, were immoral, and the most



prominent classical thinkers and rulers were homosexual. Think of the “Greek Bathhouse.”

Why then did all states codify sodomy laws? They did it because of the direct influence of Biblical law on early America. The Constitution does not address sexual morality, and therefore it is unconstitutional for the Supreme Court to address the issue of sodomy for independent states. The Supreme Court is only empowered to adjudicate in cases involving public leaders, maritime jurisdiction, and controversies between the states or between citizens of each state (Article III, Section 1). These are all matters of procedural law. These are all constitutional matters.

Sodomy laws are not procedural—or constitutional—matters. These are issues of substantive moral law that are derived from other sources than the Constitution. In most cases, the moral laws of individual states were based upon Biblical law.

Moral civil laws can certainly change, but only by the decision of the citizens of each state and their representative leadership. The cultural battle is an ethical conflict, not a constitutional conflict. Christians have every right to elect leaders that will rule in terms of Biblical law. Secularists have equal right to elect leaders that will seek to overturn Biblically reflective laws. That is the democratic process. That is what’s being denied to contemporary conservative Christians. Any involvement in the political process to push forward a Christian moral agenda is labeled as “dominionist” and a push toward theocracy.

Based upon those premises, secularists would have to admit that at the time the Constitution was ratified, America was a full-blown theocracy. Sodomy laws, blasphemy laws, and even Sabbath laws were common in various states. If secularists are crying “theocracy” now,

they would’ve marched in the streets of eighteenth-century America.

Since the present conflict is an ethical issue, education is the primary responsibility of Christian leaders, but not simply a continual reference to the founding fathers. Ethical authority is not located in the intents of the constitutional writers. Ethical authority is found in God’s law. Educating the population in Biblical law is the only means to stemming America’s transformation to the new Sodom and Gomorrah.

### **Kingdom Now**

Christian theocracy is often misconstrued as a monolithic movement. Whereas earlier critics, like Bruce Barron, were more careful to distinguish between the respective factions of politically active Christians, today’s critics tend to slander all Christian social action as “dominionist.” Although Christian Reconstructionists believe that the Kingdom is now, it is not to be confused with “Kingdom Now” ideology.

“Kingdom Now,” or “Dominion Theology,” is a label given to the Charismatic branch of dominionism that spawned in the 1980s. During this time certain Charismatic leaders were inspired by the writings of the Reconstructionist theology and modified it to fit their extra-Biblical ideologies. The marriage of beliefs quickly led to heretical teachings, although the concept of the Kingdom existing now is thoroughly Biblical.

Both John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus made repeated statements about the Kingdom of God being “at hand” (Matt. 3:2, 4:17; Mark 1:14–15). There are dozens of references to the present Kingdom throughout the entirety of the New Testament. I won’t belabor you with references since you’re probably familiar with this perspective.

My point is simply to state that although Christ ushered in the reign of

His Kingdom, the world (and especially the United States) is far from exhibiting a Christian theocracy. It is a gross misconstruction to present contemporary Christian political movements as equating to theocracy. It is rather another season of the long-standing debate between the sacred and the secular. Both sides are ideological. Both are manipulative. And neither fully understands the Biblical theocratic vision.

For example, most leaders on the Religious Right view Christian Reconstruction with great disdain. Simply because Christian leaders like Tim LaHaye and James Dobson are engaging in political activism does not mean a cadre of religious leaders is about to take over the country and impose the full text of Biblical law. At present it only means the Christian Right may secure enough conservative seats on the judicial bench to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Secularists quickly forget how they did the same thing in order to establish *Roe v. Wade*. In short, we are simply witnessing political tactics by both the Christians and the secularists.

### **Towards a Christian Theocracy**

The Reconstructionist vision is vastly different from a takeover of the existing monstrosity of American centralized government. Reconstructionists have long disparaged the taxing state for its sheer uselessness and corruption. We have only advocated decentralized efforts funded by the Christian tithe.

Tithing and theocracy are intertwined:

In a theocracy, therefore, God and His law rule. The state ceases to be the over-lord and ruler of man. God’s tax, the tithe, is used by godly men to create schools, hospitals, welfare agencies, counselors, and more. It provides, as it did in Scripture, for music and more. All the basic social financing, other than the head tax of Exodus 30:16, was provided for by tithes and offerings or gifts

*continued on page 32*

# The strategy of subversion



By Martin G. Selbrede



The first law of subversion is letter simple: it's always the other guy who is the subversive. When people speak reproachfully of subversion, their judgment is always cast up against a value-laden background, however strenuously they protest neutrality. Anything working against our perceptions of how things should be is inherently subversive. Since people have opposing positions on how things should be, it is not surprising that charges of subversion fly across the rhetorical landscape, fueled no doubt by the pejorative connotations the term has accumulated over time. As a label, divorced from context, *subversion* is a loaded weasel word.

It is no surprise to find that Christians are being accused of subversion, now that the populace has been taught to adopt statist conceptions as the accepted frame of reference. In short, one way to subvert Christianity is to charge it with subversion. Merely making the charge of subversion against Christianity automatically elevates its accusers to the office of guardian of treasured values because of what the term *subversion* connotes.

### Blunder or Wonder?

Humanists are very much distressed by the release of Ann Coulter's new book, *Godless: The Church of Liberalism*.<sup>1</sup> The level of distress is easy to discern: it's proportional to the outrage selected parts of the book have pro-

voked (parts that Coulter is not averse to amplifying in front of a microphone).

Coulter goes into considerable detail on the worldview of what she calls the official state religion of the United States (liberalism), illustrating that this religion is replete with its own "sacraments (abortion), its holy writ (*Roe v. Wade*), its martyrs..., its clergy (public school teachers ...), its doctrine of infallibility ... and its cosmology."<sup>2</sup>

The book is ably written and documented. The last third documents the case against evolution by way of a fascinating exposé of the interaction between the proponents of Intelligent Design and the keepers of the Darwinian flame. This part of the book is problematic from the humanistic point of view primarily because Coulter has already

enjoyed *New York Times* bestseller status with four previous books: if this new book joins that influential circle, the exposure that Intelligent Design would enjoy would be, well, unacceptable. So the strategy is to vilify Coulter on other grounds, thereby discrediting and neutralizing the impact of her book.

Walt Handelsman's editorial cartoon for *Newsday* is quick to paint the desired picture.<sup>3</sup> The placard advertises "Ann Coulter heads out on her latest book tour ..." but the cartoon image is of a witch flying on her broom. The *Houston Chronicle* editorial of June 9, 2006, "Trading in hate," accuses Coulter of extremism, stretching the limits of acceptable expression, and proving that "selling hate and resentment in today's poisoned political atmosphere can be lucrative." This time out, Coulter was not sufficiently selective about the targets she had "vilified, slandered and lied about." "Rarely, though, have the targets included victims of a national disaster" (i.e., the New Jersey widows who helped create the 9/11 Commission). The editorial concludes that self-obsessed Coulter, not the widows, is "exploiting tragedy and reveling in millionaire celebrity" and that the Coulter model is "a model Americans must now reject."<sup>4</sup>

"What need we any further witnesses?" (Mark 14:63).

Columnist Leonard Pitts, Jr., is equally aghast at Coulter's book and is just as determined to do nothing that might contribute to its possible rise to bestseller status, starting with a pointed refusal to even identify the work: "In her latest book, whose title you won't read here, she savages the widows ..."<sup>5</sup> An implicit blackout is being promoted.

Now, either Coulter went over the line, or she didn't. That's probably immaterial if the primary intent is to discredit her and her book (which the *Houston Chronicle* certainly implies:

"Americans must now reject"). If she *was* injudicious in dealing with the widows, few will give her a fair reading on topics like Intelligent Design.

The outrage over Coulter's comments, ironically, proves her point. You would not know it from her critics' selective quotations, but the offending section occurs in the chapter entitled "Liberals' Doctrine of Infallibility: Sobbing Hysterical Women." Coulter identifies a new "ingenious strategy": to "choose only messengers whom we're not allowed to reply to ... You can't respond to them because that would be questioning the authenticity of their suffering. Liberals haven't changed the message, just the messenger. All the most prominent liberal spokesmen are people with 'absolute moral authority'—Democrats with a dead husband, a dead child, a wife who works at the CIA, a war record, a terminal illness ..."<sup>6</sup> The position was invariably taken "that the spokesperson immunized the message from criticism, no matter how vicious or insane it was."<sup>7</sup> Infallibility is reposed in such spokespersons: they become untouchables. Coulter proved this by touching them, and the reaction was as she predicted.

Coulter's book, with only 281 pages of text, was brief enough for critics to plow through quickly. Although more time-consuming, poring through thousands of pages of R. J. Rushdoony's published works to mine for isolated quotes to discredit him may also have the potential to become a growth industry. Rushdoony long ago addressed the underlying issue in his monograph, *Infallibility: An Inescapable Concept*,<sup>8</sup> an essay that also opens his two-volume *Systematic Theology*. One chapter asks the question, "Who Speaks The Word," namely, the infallible Word?<sup>9</sup> Coulter has independently put her finger on the new twenty-first century answer to that question.

### A Deeper Perspective

Did Coulter go too far in her depictions? Let's assume that she did. Is her contribution doomed to be irredeemably tainted? That depends.

Consider the case of the Church of England's Edward B. Pusey (1800–1882) through the lens of B. B. Warfield, as the latter cites a review of Liddon's *Life of Pusey* by G. A. Simcox. Warfield states:

Nothing is more remarkable, indeed, than the prosperity of Dr. Pusey's leadership ... The secret of it is not to be found, however, in any "tact" which he may be supposed to have exercised ... Dr. Pusey had as great a capacity for blundering as any man who ever lived; and one wonders how his cause could survive his repeated and gross errors of judgment. "What strikes us rather," says Mr. Simcox truly, "is how many false moves he made, and how little harm they did him." The secret of it is found in his intensity, steadfastness, and single-hearted devotion to what he believed to be divine truth. The mere tactician has always ultimately failed, since the world began. The blunderer who lays himself a willing sacrifice upon the altar of what he believes to be the truth of God has never wholly failed.<sup>10</sup>

There is, in other words, a supernatural component to whether or not Coulter's positive impact will outstrip the attempts to pull her down, whether or not she has blundered. We should remember that the determining factors in both Pusey's and Coulter's cases are removed from the human plane entirely.

Pusey himself explained the grounds for his success (blunders notwithstanding) under two heads, as Warfield puts it: "the steadfast, consistent proclamation of an 'entire system of faith,' strong, positive, objective, which people are required to believe on the simple ground that it is true; and the foundation of this system upon an external authority, an 'authority out of one's self.'" Warfield

being Warfield, he also lets us in on the bigger issue: “What is ominous in the present-day drift of religious thought is the sustained effort that is being made to break down just these two principles: the principle of a systematized body of doctrines as the matter to be believed, and the principle of an external authority as the basis of belief.” Warfield charts the campaign to achieve this end:

It begins by rejecting the authority of the Bible for minor matters only—in the “*minima*,” in “circumstantials,” and “by-passages,” and “incidental remarks,” and the like. The next step is to reject its authority for everything except “matters of faith and practice.” Then comes unwillingness to bow to all its doctrinal deliverances and ethical precepts ... then the circle is completed by setting aside the whole Bible as *authority*.<sup>11</sup>

The intent is to arrive at a point “when every shred of ‘external authority’ in religion is discarded, and appeal is made to what is frankly recognized as purely human reason.”<sup>12</sup>

“The Rationalists of Germany were the descendants not of the unbelievers of former controversies, but of the ‘defenders’ of Christianity. The method of concession was tried, and that was the result. The so-called ‘defenders’ were found in the camp of the enemy.”<sup>13</sup> This is the form that subversion of Christianity will often take—because it is effective in the same way the world’s first subversion (Gen. 3:5) was effective. This “sustained effort,” as Warfield calls it, tirelessly works toward subversion while retaining the trappings of genuine Christianity, from whence it sprang. Could it be that Coulter has put her finger on the same pulse a century later?

### Information Asymmetry as a Strategy

Coulter’s book documents the liberal effort to impose information blackouts on a host of issues (her chapters

on Intelligent Design are eye-opening in this regard). The monopolization of information conduits and suppression of unsanctioned content comprise important aspects of modern humanism’s war against Christendom. In fact, it is a universal strategy within unregenerate humanity, and as University of Chicago economist Steven D. Levitt points out, it has a name: *information asymmetry*.<sup>14</sup> What you don’t know can hurt you, or be used against you in ways hitherto unimagined, starting at the economic level:

Armed with information, experts can exert a gigantic, if unspoken, leverage: fear. Fear that your children will find you dead on the bathroom floor of a heart attack if you do not have angioplasty surgery. Fear that a cheap casket will expose your grandmother to a terrible underground fate. Fear that a \$25,000 car will crumple like a toy in an accident, whereas a \$50,000 car will wrap your loved ones in a cocoon of impregnable steel.<sup>15</sup>

Such information asymmetries have been partially mitigated by the Internet, as Levitt notes:

Information asymmetries everywhere have in fact been mortally wounded by the Internet ... Information is the currency of the Internet. As a medium, the Internet is brilliantly efficient at shifting information from the hands of those who have it into the hands of those who do not ... The Internet has accomplished what no consumer advocate could: it has vastly shrunk the gap between the experts and the public.<sup>16</sup>

Even so, the Internet has its limits in the war against information asymmetry:

The Internet, powerful as it is, has hardly slain the beast that is information asymmetry. Consider the so-called corporate scandals of the early 2000s ... Though extraordinarily diverse, these crimes all have a common trait: they were sins of information. Most of them involved an expert, or a gang of

experts, promoting false information or hiding true information; in each case the experts were trying to keep the information asymmetry as asymmetrical as possible.<sup>17</sup>

Mark that last sentence about “trying to keep the information asymmetry as asymmetrical as possible.” Meanwhile, the idea of an *information crime* comes to brutally vivid life under Levitt’s pointed analysis:

Consider the Enron tapes, the secretly recorded conversations of Enron employees that surfaced after the company imploded. During a phone conversation on August 5, 2000, two traders chatted about how a wildfire in California would allow Enron to jack up its electricity prices. “The magical word of the day,” one trader said, “is Burn, Baby, Burn.” A few months later, a pair of Enron traders named Kevin and Tom [sic] talked about how California officials wanted to make Enron refund the profits of its price gouging.

**Kevin:** “They’re f\*\*\* taking all the money back from you guys? All the money you guys stole from those poor grandmas in California?”

**Bob:** “Yeah, Grandma Millie, man.”

**Kevin:** “Yeah, now she wants her f\*\*\* money back for all the power you jammed right up her \*\*\* for f\*\*\*\* \$250 a megawatt hour.”

If you were to assume that many experts use their information to your detriment, you’d be right.<sup>18</sup>

We will return to information asymmetry later, to examine the means to confront and defeat it.

### The Taproot of Subversion

R. J. Rushdoony examines how words and language become a primary battlefield in which subversion takes root and spreads:

Few things are more readily and easily subverted than words: the subversion of words is accordingly a major factor in all subversive activity ... The word love has

been re-interpreted to mean revolutionary action and the subsidizing of all kinds of evil, and Christians are told they are not showing Biblical love if they fail to support Marxist social action. But perhaps the most subverted word of all is God ... [which is] widely used in order to nullify the gap between Biblical and non-Biblical religions, between Christianity and humanism ... These revolutionists are out to destroy not only God but all language, since language still reflects the idea of a right and wrong. Friedrich Nietzsche called for a “new language” to express this new faith.<sup>19</sup>

Language scholar Robert Erwin corroborates Rushdoony’s view of Nietzsche’s goals, illustrating how Nietzsche spent time developing “grand theories designed to seize control of explanation itself.”<sup>20</sup> Subversion involves what T. A. Hollihan describes as “the conversion of ideas into social levers.”<sup>21</sup> We should not be surprised when Alan Davies affirms that “language planning is a state concern.”<sup>22</sup> Richard Mitchell explains why:

The great masters of social manipulation ... know ... that the establishment of a flexible and subtle language for the ruling classes is only half of what’s needed. The other half is the perpetuation of an ineffective and minimal language among the subjects.<sup>23</sup>

If you find it hard to believe that language subversion such as Samuel Blumenfeld or John Taylor Gatto have described is genuinely occurring, that could either be because they’re wrong—or because *they’re already right*.

Evidence often streams from the pen of prominent humanists themselves. H. L. Mencken bemoans how the term “liberal” has been hijacked and subverted in the course of examining the praise heaped on then-Chief Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes:

The hopeful Liberals of the 20s ... concluded that he was a sworn advocate

of the rights of man. But all the while, if I do not misread his words, he was actually no more than an advocate of the rights of law-makers ... He held, it would seem, that violating the Bill of Rights is a rare and difficult business, possible only by summoning up deliberate malice, and that it is the chief business of the Supreme Court to keep the Constitution loose and elastic, so that blasting holes through it may not be too onerous ... If what he said in some of those opinions were accepted literally there would be scarcely any brake at all upon lawmaking, and the Bill of Rights would have no more significance than the Code of Manu.<sup>24</sup>

The subversion of words is foundational to the cultural acceptance of moral inversion: “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil” (Isa. 5:20). We live in such an era as Isaiah described, where moving “the ancient landmark” (Prov. 22:28) is standard operating procedure to facilitate the paganization of our culture, the substitution of a new humanistic creed for Christianity.

### The Human Father of Subversion

While the first subversion occurred at Genesis 3:5, the pattern to be played out in political history takes its concrete shape at Genesis 4:17, as Rushdoony expounds it:

Cain had a son, whom he named Enoch; he then built a city and named it after his son ... The comparison to Eden is very obvious. First of all, Enoch was not the first city; Eden was, and Enoch was an obvious attempt to replace and supplant it ... Thus, Cain’s city was an imitation Eden, not the first city but the second ... The city thus, although an imitation of God’s city, was built in defiance of God, as an aggressive act against God, and as a new beginning designed to supplant God’s beginning in Eden. At this point, Ellul is right; the “secular” city has an anti-God character; it is built as man’s work and as man’s order as

against God’s work and order. Cain’s city and the modern city have been built to keep out God, to replace God’s law and predestination with man’s law, planning, and control.

Van Til has written of “the Cainitic wish” that “there is no God.” Those possessed by this “Cain-complex” worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator, and all fallen, unregenerate men “hate God and are possessed of the Cain-complex.” Being possessed of the Cainitic wish that there be no God, the sons of Cain, his spiritual heirs, seek to eliminate every trace of God from reality.<sup>25</sup>

The walls of the city named Enoch were to keep *God* out (inasmuch as Cain was divinely protected against mortal enemies). Today’s nations invariably follow Cain’s pattern with lockstep precision, systematically eliminating “every trace of God from reality.” But such actions come with a built-in price.

### Subversion against God Subverts Itself

R. J. Rushdoony exposes the ironic consequences of subverting divine authority within a culture in pointed terms:

The state has denied all absolutes; it has denied God, and it has sought to make itself the new god, and its purposes the new absolutes. Statist trained youth have learned their lesson well, however, and the result is that they are as rebellious against the state as against God, and even more so! By destroying the principle of authority, the state and its schools have destroyed their own authority. By exalting rebellion and revolution into the only virtues, the state and its schools have created a world programmed for perpetual revolution.<sup>26</sup>

The subversion of God’s authority causes human authority to implode. At the heart of modern statecraft is a desperate centralization of power tied to stout assertions of sovereignty.

But the statist “imagine a vain thing” (Ps. 2:1) when they seek to confound God because it is He that “increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again” (Job 12:23). To operate in willful neglect of this fact, to regard man as relevant while God is not, ironically insures both man’s irrelevance and God’s judgment.

### What Coulter Got Unequivocally Right

If nothing else, Coulter’s book is dead-on accurate in depicting the scope of the battle: it rages across multiple dimensions of culture, media, the arts, economics, and the sciences: in short, it is a comprehensive multi-front war. The most damaging place for an asymmetry to arise is in our Christian response. Without a fully orbed, multi-front Biblical worldview confronting *every single aspect* of humanism’s entrenched positions, there can be little meaningful progress in “the pulling down of strong holds” (2 Cor. 10:4) that we are called to.

Christians have too often been counseled to retreat from everything but deeply personal spiritual concerns, thereby becoming flavorless salt (Matt. 5:13). This wholesale withdrawal, the primary consequence of *pietism*, has worsened the asymmetry by arguing for the non-application of the faith. Pietism is subversive insofar as it labels unfaithfulness as true faith and bids men walk according to its reined-in parameters. This compromising “counsel of Balaam” (Num. 31:16) causes many to stumble.

Pietism offers no meaningful response to secular subversion because it has co-opted the secularist position. It bears all the marks of the subversive campaign that Warfield refers to: the eroding of the authority of Scripture being orchestrated by Christians themselves. Forfeiture and faith have thus become confused. Pietism surely inures

to Satan’s benefit, not Christ’s, and the fact that saying so invariably ignites controversy is alarming proof of how far faithfulness has decayed.

### The Bible and Information Asymmetry

Recall Professor Levitt’s earlier comment about “trying to keep the information asymmetry as asymmetrical as possible.” This is one key to understanding the difference between Biblical faith and humanism. In humanism, power is concentrated and centralized in the hands of the few by securing and extending such information asymmetries (e.g., statist monopolization of education, suppression of anti-humanist contributions in refereed technical journals, “perpetuation of an ineffective and minimal language among the subjects,” etc.). It is from this tower that humanists hurl claims that Christians are the ones subverting culture.

Across the chasm, discerning Christians charge humanism as the actual agent of subversion.

Whom to believe?

Such mutual antagonism compels us to examine the distinctive differences between the claimants. And one difference lies in the response of each to information asymmetry: humanism promotes it, while Biblical Christianity undermines it. The reason that Christianity is the solvent of all institutions not based on itself stems from the corrosive action of divine truth against falsehood. It cannot be otherwise.

Christianity seeks to maximize the dissemination of truth to such an extreme that the need for further dissemination becomes unnecessary: “And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest” (Heb. 8:11), “for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters

cover the sea” (Isa. 11:9). The endgame in Scripture includes information *symmetry*, when Zion “shall see eye to eye” (Isa. 52:8).<sup>27</sup>

The “information crimes” described by Levitt become impossible to perpetrate when the Messianic promises of Isaiah 32:1–8 are realized on the earth. George Adam Smith stresses that the “capacity to discriminate character” lies at the heart of Isaiah’s prophecy. “The explosion of social lies” and the advent of “social truthfulness” are explicitly predicted. “In those magic days the heart shall come to the lips, and its effects be unmistakable.”<sup>28</sup> John Calvin insists that Isaiah teaches the exposure of “hidden wickedness,” to the end that the wicked “may no longer deceive or impose upon any one.”<sup>29</sup> The reprehensible dialogue of Enron’s Kevin and Bob cited by Professor Levitt would become a thing of the past, Scripture itself bearing witness. This is the direction to which all creation is tending under His providential, determining government. The power of God, not the Internet, is mighty to secure the intended ultimate end.

Perhaps humanists know there’s something to Hosea’s lament that the “people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hos. 4:6). Humanists, in effect, leverage the societal dimension of holding down “the truth in unrighteousness” (Rom. 1:18) because “they received not the love of the truth” (2 Thess. 2:10). Humanism thrives on cover-ups, on information asymmetry, on politically correct boycotts and academic shunning, so much so that William Randolph Hearst’s campaign to suppress the movie *Citizen Kane* looks like innocent child’s play in comparison.

### A Religious, Not Political, Matter

Rushdoony illustrates the limits of political conservatism when it confronts something on the order of Coulter’s

church of liberalism, which is creedally anchored:

Every social order has an implicit creed, and this creed defines the order and informs it. When a social order begins to crumble, it is because the basic faith, its creed, has been undermined. But the political defense of that order is usually made the first line of defense: it becomes the conservative position. But, because the defense is politically rather than creedally informed, it is a superficial defense and crumbles steadily under a highly doctrinaire and creedal opposition ... The success of the subversives rests on their attack on the creed of the establishment, and its replacement by a new creed.<sup>30</sup>

What Coulter has done is strip the contemporary façade from the implicit creed that Rushdoony refers to. That liberalism denies being a religion is a disinformation tactic that Coulter says protects its government funding: “Separation of church and state means separation of YOUR church from the state, but total unity between their church and the state.”<sup>31</sup> What remains to be seen is whether a creedal or political response arises out of the smoke of ideological battle. To see liberalism/humanism as a Trojan horse is only half the battle.<sup>32</sup> To confront that Trojan horse with the right weapon is the other half.

While it’s important to identify and understand the strategies of subversion active in our time, it’s even more important to respond to them in Biblical, not political, terms. To respond in political terms is to affirm the creed of our opponents, to promote a faith in horses and chariots, to trust in the arm of flesh. Jeremiah 17:5 declares that all who think this way are cursed. We must rather respond in creedal terms and let the political implications fall where they may. God’s Kingdom is too big to fit into the tiny boxes allotted for it by today’s political parties or ideological

camp. For us to press His Kingdom into such boxes is to insult our Maker.

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1. Ann Coulter, *Godless: The Church of Liberalism* (New York: Crown Forum, 2006).
2. *Ibid.* This summary appears on the inside left flap of the book’s dust jacket.
3. As reprinted in the *Houston Chronicle* Friday, June 9, 2006. B9.
4. *Houston Chronicle* Friday, June 9, 2006. B8.
5. Reprinted in the *Houston Chronicle* Monday, June 12, 2006. E7.
6. Coulter, 101.
7. *Ibid.*, 102.
8. Rousas John Rushdoony, *Infallibility: An Inescapable Concept* (Vallecito, California: Ross House Books, 1978).
9. *Ibid.*, 42.
10. Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *Studies in Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003, reprint of 1932 Oxford University Press edition), 585–586.
11. *Ibid.*, 589.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, *Freakonomics* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 68.
15. *Ibid.*, 70.
16. *Ibid.*, 68–69.
17. *Ibid.*, 69.
18. *Ibid.*
19. Rousas John Rushdoony, *Roots of Reconstruction* (Vallecito, California: Ross House Books, 1991), 587.
20. Robert Erwin, *The Great Language Panic and Other Essays in Cultural History* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), 69.
21. Thomas A. Hollihan and Patricia Riley, “Rediscovering Ideology” *Western Journal of Communication* 57 (1993), 272.

22. Alan Davies, “How Language Planning Theory Can Assist First-Language Teaching,” *The Relation of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics*, edited by Olga Miseska Tomic and Roger W. Shuy (New York: Plenum Press, 1987), 158.

23. Quoted in Erwin, *The Great Language Panic*, 76.

24. H. L. Mencken, *A Mencken Chrestomathy* (Franklin Center, PA: The Franklin Library, 1980), 286–287.

25. Rousas John Rushdoony, *Revolt Against Maturity: A Biblical Psychology of Man* (Fairfax, VA: Thoburn Press, 1977), 91–92.

26. Rushdoony, *Roots of Reconstruction*, 886.

27. The abolition of asymmetry is signified in the exalting of the valleys and the bringing low of the mountains (Isa. 40:4), in Christians being called “kings and priests unto God and his Father” (Rev. 1:6), in fulfillment of Jeremiah 33:22’s prediction that sons of David and sons of Levi would one day be utterly innumerable, and in Joel’s prophecy that God would ultimately pour His Spirit out on all flesh, which would fulfill the asymmetry-busting outcry of Moses recorded in Numbers 11:29: “[W]ould God that all the LORD’S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!”

28. W. Robertson Nicoll, ed., *The Expositor’s Bible. 6 vols.* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982 [1902], vol. 3), 678–682. See note 29.

29. John Calvin, *Calvin’s Commentaries. 22 vols.* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979). The position documented in this and the previous note was already argued by the present author in his article “Reconstructing Postmillennialism,” published in *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction*, Vol. XV, 1998, 160–61.

30. Rousas John Rushdoony, *The Foundations of Social Order* (Fairfax, VA: Thoburn Press, 1978), 225–226.

31. Coulter makes this comment in her autologous review of her book on her website. She has little reason to trust anyone else to review her book accurately, but is honest enough not to resort to a pseudonym in writing the review. Pay no attention to the

*continued on page 32*

# The “Menace” of Conservative Christianity

## A Review of *American Theocracy* - Kevin Phillips

Viking, 2006

Reviewed by Timothy D. Terrell



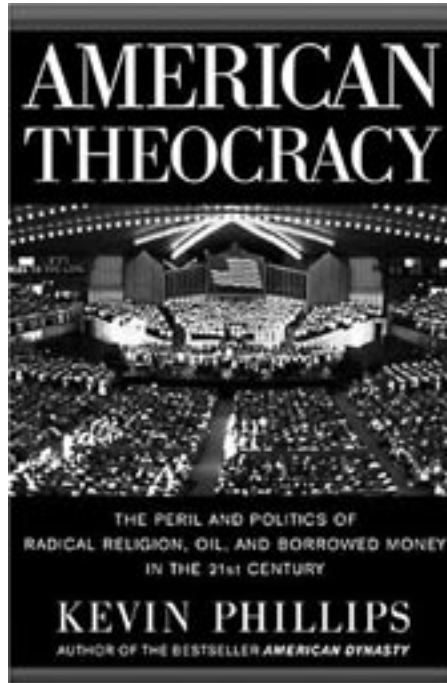
Kevin Phillips has three major concerns in *American Theocracy*: the American thirst for oil in the face of shrinking global

reserves, a habitual reliance upon debt, and an overabundance of Christian zealots. Phillips, a former Republican strategist, believes that the Republican party is now dominated by representatives of all three groups. The unifying influence is the Christian Right, as an apologist for reckless oil consumption and borrowing. The GOP has become, Phillips says, “the first religious party in U.S. history,”<sup>1</sup> and it is traditional, politically active Christianity that inspired the title for the book.

### Phillips vs. Christianity

Phillips’ complaint about Christian influence may come as a bit of a surprise to Christians who note the removal of Christian references, symbols, and memorials from the public square, the expulsion of any overt Christian teaching from government schools, the steady advance of the feminist and homosexual political agenda, and the ejection of God’s law from courtrooms. Yet *American Theocracy* argues that conservative Christianity is excessively powerful, among the greatest “menaces to the Republic” (ix).

The book’s main objections to conservative Christianity coalesce around three themes: Biblical inerrancy, eschatology, and American exceptionalism. The idea of Biblical inerrancy must be



highly irritating to Phillips, judging from the number of mentions in the book. What Phillips takes as clear-cut scientific conclusions about global warming, evolution, and oil resources are challenged by some Christians who check science against what is known from the Bible. The Bible may not say much about climate change or petroleum geology in particular, but many Christians draw inferences from Biblical chronology and the account of Noah’s flood. Also, conservative Christians argue that the government’s responses to allegedly looming environmental or resource disasters are constrained by Biblical limits on the civil magistrate (e.g., Romans 13). But Phillips rejects any attempt to subordinate science or policy to divine revelation, characterizing “evangelical

religion” as “hostile to science.” With barely concealed derision, Phillips remarks, “Their biblically viewed world is at most ten thousand years old, not the millions of years established by scientists, whose insistence on this longer time frame is said to usurp God’s prerogative” (67). Elsewhere, Phillips mentions “claiming absolute truth” among the “principal perverse fundamentalist tendencies” (205). One wonders if Phillips is absolutely certain that claiming absolute truth is inappropriate.

Phillips is convinced that Biblical inerrancy is the enemy of progress. Startlingly, he writes, “No leading world economic power has ever maintained itself on the cutting edge of innovation and development with a political coalition that panders to Biblical inerrancy” (67). But Christianity has clearly been a friend of research and innovation. The nations with the most prominent Bible-believing groups led the Industrial Revolution. Even Phillips himself acknowledges this later in the book: “The three Protestant ‘Hebraic analogy’ and covenanting cultures—Dutch, British, and then American—just happened to produce the three successive leading world economic powers of the seveneenth through twenty-first centuries ... If any unusual lobby has guided Dutch, British, and U.S. attentions, clergy and readers of Scripture must be in the van” (126–127).

Phillips unleashes much of his anti-Christian sentiment on dispensational premillennialism. “The rapture, end-times, and Armageddon hucksters in



the United States rank with any Shiite ayatollahs.” Hucksters there are, as well as millions of *Left Behind* series readers who read prominent roles for the modern Israeli nation-state into Biblical prophecies. But Phillips paints with too broad a brush, lumping dispensational eschatology in with the rest of the Christian Right. He complains about the lack of a response from old-line liberal denominations, but fails to mention the substantial Reconstructionist opposition to this eschatology. Many Reconstructionists are dismayed and embarrassed by the support dispensationalists have given to American imperialism in the Middle East. But Phillips ignores other eschatological views that look forward to Christ’s second coming but do not generate the same conclusions about American foreign policy or the significance of current events in the Middle East.

It is not as though Phillips is unaware of Christian Reconstruction, which attracts several pages of his attention. However, it does not suit his purposes to point out many of the key distinctions among Christians on politics and end-times ideas. Nor does he get his facts straight on groups he wants to condemn. Christian Reconstructionists, as far as I know, do not advocate the death penalty for drug users (240) or “believe a theocratic type of government must be built before Jesus will return” (65, cf. 67). (Having a mandate to pursue Biblical law in society does not mean that we can manipulate Christ into returning through political action.)

Phillips also takes on the idea of American exceptionalism, which he believes has encouraged Americans to ignore the consequences of overreaching foreign policy and debt. A Christian-influenced America relates to the rest of the world aggressively and heedlessly, he contends, assuming immunity from consequences as a supposed benefit of

**Phillips’ complaint about Christian influence may come as a bit of a surprise to Christians who note the removal of Christian references, symbols, and memorials from the public square, the expulsion of any overt Christian teaching from government schools, the steady advance of the feminist and homosexual political agenda, and the ejection of God’s law from courtrooms. Yet American Theocracy argues that conservative Christianity is excessively powerful, among the greatest “menaces to the Republic” (ix).**

being identified as a Christian nation. Phillips does a decent job of pointing out that penalties for foolishness still come to God’s people, but does so with the sneering tone characteristic of much of the book.

In general, Phillips wants faith separated from politics. *American Theocracy* evidences the well-worn confusion between a separation of church and state and a separation of religion and state (213–215). Many Christians would agree that the church and state should be separate in their functions and jurisdiction. But Phillips labors under the impression that a civil government can be consistently agnostic or secularized. All policies have underlying ideas about what “good” and “evil” are, what a “person” is, what human nature is, and whether or not direction by a divine power is real or relevant. Deciding whether or not the God of the Bible exists and whether or

not this is important for government are religious decisions. There can be no real religious neutrality. Phillips cannot ridicule “Bibles being brandished as public policy guides” (173) without making a religious presupposition about the role of government. If Phillips wants to make connections between conservative Christian groups and the path of politics in America, he has made a decent effort and has loads of statistics to offer. But he does not deal effectively with the Christian ideas themselves, providing scorn instead of careful argument. He scoffs at the “wild-eyed invocation of dubious prophecies in the Book of Revelation” (100) and refers later to “extreme interpretations of the Book of Revelation” (346), as though he were qualified to comment on Biblical interpretation or the plausibility of Biblical prophecy. “Extreme” is used throughout the book as a condemnation.

What should really be objectionable is not that the White House might be influenced by Christianity, but that the influence is so ill-informed, credulous, and so entranced by government power. Many on the Christian Right have serious misgivings about the expansion of the state under the Bush administration. Have Americans really given the federal government carte blanche to preemptively invade other countries, conduct warrantless searches, and treat airline passengers like prison inmates, all in the name of preventing terrorism? Although Phillips’ criticisms are often misguided and coarse, some Christians do behave like knee-jerk Republicans. Perhaps their judgment is swayed by the occasional lip service Bush pays to Christian “values.” But there is a pattern of ignoring or excusing transgressions of Biblical and/or constitutional boundaries. Nationalism is “in,” and criticism of Bush or the military is considered unpatriotic or even un-Christian.

## Phillips on Oil

One third of *American Theocracy* is devoted to American dependence on oil. In the process, Phillips shows himself to be dismissive (or ignorant) of a free market's ability to ration resources effectively. But if he fails to appreciate markets, Phillips is at least able to show that American intervention in the Middle East is not necessarily an idealistic pursuit of democracy. American oil companies stand to benefit enormously from contracts to exploit the largely untapped Iraqi oil fields, and their lobbying has had an impact. The U.S. military has become a protector of global oil resources on behalf of American oil companies, acting in tandem with diplomacy to exclude the companies of other nations. This is expensive and, some Christians might add, outside the Biblical responsibilities of government.

Other wars have had similar motives, in spite of propaganda efforts on the home front to drum up popular support. After World War I, Woodrow Wilson asked, “[M]y fellow-citizens, is there any man here, or any woman—let me say, is there any child here, who does not know that the seed of war in the modern world is industrial and commercial rivalry? ... This war, in its inception, was a commercial and industrial war. It was not a political war.”<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately, Phillips' discernment of the influence of special interest groups is mixed with statism and bad economics. After pointing out the peak and decline of whale oil production in the nineteenth century, Phillips argues that we are likely to move “toward an inflammatory worldwide shortage” of petroleum (11). To Phillips, it is obvious that government intervention is required to discourage oil use. Yet the transition from whale oil to petroleum occurred simply as a response to higher whale oil prices, which prompted people to search

**American oil companies stand to benefit enormously from contracts to exploit the largely untapped Iraqi oil fields, and their lobbying has had an impact. The U.S. military has become a protector of global oil resources on behalf of American oil companies, acting in tandem with diplomacy to exclude the companies of other nations. This is expensive and, some Christians might add, outside the Biblical responsibilities of government.**

for alternatives. Phillips does realize that prices and advancing technology play a role (21), but he clearly has more confidence in central planners than in a price system.

Phillips is stuck in a New Deal-era “price stabilization” mode, in which government is thought necessary to straighten out the market's fumbling. “Because a boom-or-bust commodity like oil required some regulation to minimize gluts and price collapses, a degree of government involvement was critical,” he asserts (35). Phillips fondly recalls Carter's energy conservation measures (which included the fifty-five miles per hour federal speed limit) (55), advocates increases in the federal fuel economy requirements (55–56, 351), and wants the federal government to spend more on solar energy.

Although oil is important, Phillips allows it to overshadow other, more important, contributors to a nation's prosperity. For example, he believes that U.S. command of oil resources “played a major role in the U.S. displacement of Britain” as a world power (12). Yet other nations with little or no oil resources

have found success in the twentieth century. We might also look to Britain's six expensive years of war, its widespread rejection of Christian ethics, and its radical postwar socialism and unionism as factors in its relative decline.

## Phillips on American Industry and Debt

Much of the last third of the book demonstrates what many readers of this review already know—that the United States is sinking under a load of debt. Government and household debt have both risen to alarming levels. Phillips attributes much of this to “policy favoritism” benefiting the financial sector. Bemoaning the decline of the manufacturing sector, Phillips argues that the accompanying rise of the financial services industry is an indicator of national decline. He employs historical examples and a barrage of statistics, but when it comes to policy analysis, sound economics are absent. Again, he objects to a free market, insinuating that “unfettered financial capitalism” and deregulation are bad news (288). Resorting to a straw man argument, Phillips characterizes Adam Smith's “invisible hand” as the “innerrant guidance of the market” (316).

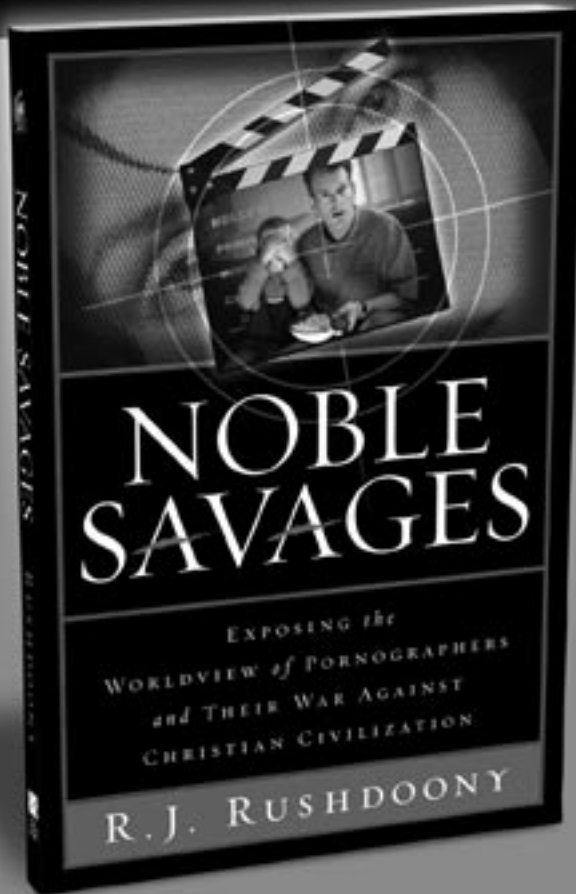
*American Theocracy* is an attempt to show that the modern Republican party has become a three-legged stool of interest groups—conservative Christians, oil, and the financial sector. Perhaps he is right. But if Phillips intends to correct the GOP's course, he is not pointing in the right direction. ■

Timothy Terrell teaches economics at a small college in South Carolina. He is also director of the Center for Biblical Law and Economics at <http://www.christ-college.edu/html/cble/>. Dr. Terrell can be contacted at [terrelltd@marketswork.com](mailto:terrelltd@marketswork.com).

1. Phillips, vii. Hereafter cited in text.
2. John V. Denson, ed., *Reassessing the Presidency* (Mises Institute, 2001), 473.

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This \$57 billion dollar industry is swallowing peoples worldwide as its revenues exceed that of professional football, baseball, and basketball combined. Statistics reveal that upwards of 40 million American adults regularly visit over 372 million published pornographic web pages. How did we get here?

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In his conclusion Rushdoony wrote, “Symptoms are important and sometimes very serious, but it is very wrong and dangerous to treat symptoms rather than the underlying disease. Pornography is a symptom; it is not the problem.” What is the problem? It’s the philosophy behind pornography — the rejection of the fall of man that makes normative all that man does. Learn it all in this timeless classic.

## The Far Left Hand of “God”

### A Review of *The Left Hand of God: Taking Back Our Country from the Religious Right* - Michael Lerner

Harper San Francisco, 2006

Reviewed by Steve Hays

Michael Lerner is a radical social activist. He calls himself a rabbi, although the validity of his ordination is very much in dispute. Now, Lerner has much to say about the far right, but he says it from a far left perspective. As a result, the reader learns much more about the far left than the far right. Indeed, one sees how little the far left understands the far right.

Lerner has a monolithic view of the far right. The only distinction he draws is between the political Right and the Religious Right. He believes these two factions use each other, which is true. Politics is the art of coalition building. But he regards this coalition as a merely cynical and unholy alliance.

In this book his basic contention is that a secular Democratic party cannot be a national party, for 90 percent of the electorate is religious in one degree or another. He is hoping to unite the Religious Left with the political Left.

He believes that many voters are attracted to the GOP because they are attracted to the social values of the Religious Right.

At the same time, he also believes that many “values voters” are not dogmatically committed to conservative Christian theology, and it would be possible to peel away a certain percentage if the political Left allowed the Religious Left to shape the party platform by using his syncretistic, New Age spirituality to underwrite a Green party ideology.

And it’s true that voters are drawn



to the GOP for a variety of reasons. Indeed, the reasons are far more various than Lerner allows. Some are drawn to the GOP because they are foreign policy hawks. Some are drawn because they are businessmen who favor free trade, deregulation, and lower corporate taxation. Some are drawn because they are libertarians, for whom the best government is the least government. Some are drawn because they are socially conservative “single-issue” voters.

In some cases, these factions overlap. In other cases, they peacefully coexist in a state of tension. But the fault lines are there.

Lerner writes as though conservatism generally advocates big government

along with an expansive foreign policy. But conservatism typically supports limited government, with an emphasis on local control. Likewise, many conservatives oppose Wilsonian militarism.

Finally, you also have theonomic Christians who operate with a social blueprint. Instead of having an ad hoc, piecemeal position, they work from within a complete value system, grounded in God’s law and promise.

“Theocracy” is the scarecrow that Lerner puts on display to anger, terrify, and mobilize his readers. Yet Lerner’s own social vision is a secular parody of theocracy.

Although he demonizes “theocracy,” he has no grasp of what it really is. For him, theocracy is synonymous with the Religious Right, which he accuses of “idolatry,” “hypocrisy” (105, 188), “triumphalism” (21), “moral relativism” (219), “social Darwinism” (97), and “hostility” towards science (130). A Bible-based theocracy is a recipe for limited government since the scope of the state is limited to the scope of the law, which is prior to the state.

Likewise, a Bible-based theocracy doesn’t force unbelievers to live like believers. Where unbelievers are concerned, the law is primarily proscriptive rather than prescriptive in force. Certain conduct is forbidden rather than commanded.

One of the ironies of liberal ideology is that liberals deny the Fall of Adam. And yet they act as if we live in

a fallen world. They are extremely unhappy with the state of the world. They measure the world by some utopian yardstick.

This is because liberalism is a Judeo-Christian heresy. It's no coincidence that Lerner is a Jewish Marxist, for Marx was a renegade Jew. What is Marxism if not a politicized and secularized version of messianism? Likewise, so much of socialism goes back to liberal Victorian Christianity.

Because of this, liberalism fosters a culture of complaint. Not only is a liberal unhappy with the state of the world, he is angry. He lives in a perpetual state of rage. He's unhappy when other people are happy, for they should be angry, too!

According to Lerner, the right wing is motivated by the fear that unless we dominate others, they will dominate us (78). This is, of course, a conspiratorial view of the right wing, as if we can't sleep at night for fear of our enemies. We spend all our time plotting a grand counteroffensive.

In fact, one reason that it's difficult to mobilize conservative voters is because many conservatives are naturally apolitical. They are easily satisfied with a certain social life, consisting in friends and family, church, work, and sports.

It is only with great reluctance that, like Marshall Kane in *High Noon*, they strap on their six-shooter and enter the political fray to defend their way of life.

By contrast, it is the liberal who is forever casting about for some vicarious new cause to live for, some new social mascot to adopt and patronize.

Due to this culture of complaint, liberalism can turn on itself and devour its young. In chapter 7, Lerner charts the cannibalistic implosion of the Left. The young turned on the old. Black activists turned on white activists. Feminists turned on liberal men. Lesbian

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feminists turned on straight feminists. White-collar activists turned on blue-collar workers. The New Left rebelled against the religious roots of the social gospel. Lerner himself goes on to attack John Kerry (120–121), Jimmy Carter, and George McGovern (190–193).

Compare this attitude with Christianity, which fosters a culture of gratitude. The Christian life is a life of perpetual thanksgiving.

People have simple emotional needs. It doesn't take much to make them happy. They are content with a good family, a few good friends, a good job, and recreation.

You'd never know it from reading Lerner's book, but this is a remarkable time to be alive. Thanks to democracy, capitalism, and technology, many people are better off than at any other time in history.

Some realize there's more to life than that. They fill the void, not by doing more things along this same horizontal plane, but by recovering the vertical dimension: by discovering their true origin and destiny in the Christian faith.

True to its character as a Judeo-Christian heresy, liberalism is also out to redeem the world. This makes the liberal a professional busybody. Everyone's business is his business. Politics is all.

The public square swallows the private sphere.

You can see the religious roots of liberalism in another respect. On the one hand, Lerner repudiates "patriarchal and hierarchical visions of God" (19). On the other hand, it's clear in the course of the book that all he actually does is to transfer this religious vision to the purely politicized vision of a patriarchal and hierarchical government.

His social vision is founded on the principle that we are all made in God's image. But that has reference to the God of the Bible. Lifted out of context, in the image of what sort of God does a radical pluralist and syncretist like Lerner believe we are made?

Religious pluralism can only be pluralistic by endorsing an indefinable, dogma-free version of God. But that presents no clear-cut alternative to the Religious Right.

There is layer upon layer of error in Lerner's economic analysis. He offers no serious discussion of the creation of wealth or sources of poverty. There are several reasons for this omission.

People may be poor because they make imprudent lifestyle choices, or because their country lacks the natural resources to support a large population, or because of widespread corruption.

But Lerner can't allow himself to state the obvious since his whole diagnosis is hinged on victimology. Were he to point out, for example, that single motherhood and out-of-wedlock birth is a recipe for penury, he'd burn a key constituency. So he has to blame it on the "system" instead of imprudent lifestyle choices.

His solution to economic inequality is income redistribution in the form of universal housing (222); universal health care (222, 307); free college tuition (234); full, state-subsidized employment (222); as well as a Global Marshall Plan

(344). Yet this is unrealistic in several respects. The rich can afford to lobby for legislation favorable to the concentration and accumulation of personal wealth. Failing that, the rich can afford to live wherever they please. If one country enacts a soak-the-rich tax code, the rich will simply emigrate, taking their money and their jobs elsewhere.

More fundamentally, a nanny state is expensive to maintain. It feeds others by first feeding itself. It discourages the creation of wealth by penalizing the entrepreneurial spirit while rewarding the slothful. It feeds itself by taking from others.

Underlying this incoherence is Lerner's love-hate relationship with wealth and prosperity. Lerner loves the poor because they're poor and hates the rich because they're rich. But in that event, what's the point of enriching the poor or impoverishing the rich? If everyone were

rich, he'd hate everyone.

Perhaps the most basic problem of all is that Lerner lacks a proper doctrine of creation. He constantly inveighs against people "using" other people. He is against a "me-first" attitude.

But to be a creature is to be dependent. Unlike God, we do have needs. Emotional, material, and spiritual needs. As such, we do "use" other people to satisfy our needs. This is an essential feature of our creatureliness, of our dependence on others.

There is nothing intrinsically evil about that. Instead of demonizing this need, what is necessary is to distinguish between the natural, godly "use" of one another and genuine exploitation.

Another point at which he panders to his constituency is in his support of abortion. How is this consistent with his compassionate rhetoric about the weak?

But Lerner is cynical, too. If he took

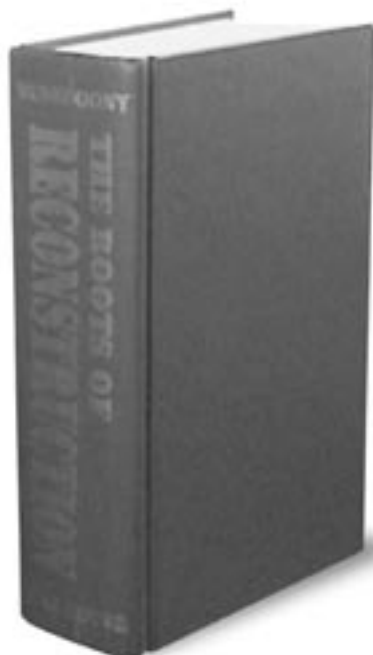
a pro-life position, he would instantly forfeit the support of the political Left. So he's no better than Kerry.

He tries to counter this glaring inconsistency by accusing the Religious Right of hypocrisy for opposing abortion and euthanasia while supporting militarism and capital punishment (187–188). But this is sophistical, for it disregards the elementary distinction between innocence and guilt.

Every heresy is a half-truth. Therein lies the appeal of liberalism. And therein lies its clay-footed failure, for the contaminants of falsehood falsify the remnants of truth. ■

Stephen Hays doubled-majored in history and classics at Seattle Pacific University and is currently both a student and teacher's assistant at Reformed Theological Seminary. He resides in Charleston, SC.

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Burns, Interview ... cont. from page 8

that is effectual in any sphere of life and thought. And if we go after other forms to gain power, we are forsaking God's appointed way. Apart from God's way we will not have His blessing. We will only have His curse."

Rush also spoke of the atonement. He said, "Take away the atonement and its centrality and you take away the Law of God. Take away the Law of God and you take away the purpose of any law in society. Take away the backbone of society and you have jellyfish culture.

"And this is what we have today. We have a vague approbation of the atonement and being saved by the blood but without any relationship to the law or any understanding of what atonement means for society.

"We have to restore the meaning of atonement in order to restore the meaning of law in society. Only this will save our culture from becoming a jellyfish culture in which there are no standards, no backbones, and everything goes."<sup>1</sup>

Can anyone deny that we are living in a jellyfish culture today? We are drowning in the evidence of it. And Rush saw it coming—seventeen years ago! He also pointed to the way out of these circumstances—to the law and to the testimony. ■

Susan Burns is the Executive Assistant and Managing Editor for Chalcedon and *Faith for All of Life*.

1. *The Christian Observer* (Manassas, VA), November 19, 1989, 18.

Schwartz, Preparing ... cont. from page 9

wasn't 100 percent to my satisfaction at all times, I was able to supplement and round out important areas as a result of my own study and application of the Word of God to my life. The resources available from Chalcedon helped me tremendously and made it so that our

homeschool life was consistent with our church life, our sports life, and our professional life.

In the end, it's not only about cost or logistics when choosing between homeschool and a Christian academy. It's about what is the best way to train your children to be ambassadors for the Christian world and life view. There is no more important responsibility than this one that the Lord has entrusted to us. ■

Andrea Schwartz is co-director of Friends of Chalcedon and the author of *Lessons Learned From Years of Homeschooling*. She has been homeschooling her own children since 1983 and has had a number of articles on homeschooling published in various magazines. She continues to advise other homeschooling families in areas of philosophy and curriculum.

Schultz, Priesthood ... cont. from page 13

Dr. Schultz is the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia. Roger and Ann Schultz are the homeschooling parents of nine royal priests. Dr. Schultz may be reached at [rschultz@liberty.edu](mailto:rschultz@liberty.edu).

1. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, revised edition (Oxford University Press, 1974), 1123.

2. John Dillenberger, ed., *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings* (New York: Anchor, 1961), 347, 349, 408. Luther did believe that there is a special calling for ministers of the gospel, as real priests were always preachers. But Luther adds that many Roman priests never preached, and their only labor was in the sacramentalism of Roman Catholicism.

3. *Ibid.*, xxxiii.

4. William Abbott, "Ruling Eldership in Civil War England, the Scottish Kirk and Early New England: A Comparative Study of Secular and Spiritual Aspects," *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Civilization* 75:1, March 2006, 38–68. It is interesting to note that church sessions, which included ruling elders, were given considerable

authority in Scotland. They could excommunicate, banish, impose large fines, and order the cropping of hair. Corporal punishments they could inflict included "Jougs" – iron neck collars; "branks" – iron masks that painfully depressed the tongue; the ducking stool; and wrist manacles, which allowed the contumacious to be chained to the exterior church wall. Now, I don't doubt that the incorrigible deserved these punishments. But I would prefer that the church be presented as a ministry of grace.

5. Rousas John Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (Philipsburg, N.J.: Craig Press, 1973), 739–740.

6. *Ibid.*, 764.

7. *Ibid.*, 765.

8. *Ibid.*, 764.

9. *Ibid.*, 742.

10. *Ibid.*, 765.

11. In a performance review, a boss once observed that being Reformed had helped me with my job. I was surprised, but pleased, by the assessment of a non-Reformed employer. For him, Reformed people worked hard for the things that they could do—and left to God the things that they couldn't change.

12. The pastor of the church emphasizes service. Whenever people complain about a problem in the church, he suggests that they do something to fix it. Is there a cobweb in the bathroom? "Here is a broom," he will say. "You go and take care of it; it's your cobweb!" One of two things will happen, and both are good: either (1) the cobweb will be swept away, or (2) the person will stop complaining.

13. I've actually had a conversation with a zealously Reformed man about the propriety of elders wearing crowns, based upon Revelation 4:4. I think we should first perfect the "broom thing" before we start to worry about the crowns we should be wearing.

14. I am disappointed with the "Front Porch Reconstructionists." They sit on the front porch, drink beer, smoke cigars, commend themselves for being Reformed, and make fun of Baptists. I'd much rather have a Baptist with a broom and a willingness to work for Jesus. This is my new directive for lazy kings: "Give that man a broom!"

15. My series of articles on “Christian Philosophy of History” appeared in *Chalcedon Report* November 2002 through February 2003.

16. Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “The Kingly Priesthood of the Saints” <http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/0010.htm> (accessed 18 May 2006).

17. Spurgeon closes with a memorable fund-raising appeal for new construction at the church: “Now, to close up, one very practical inference. Ye are kings and priests unto your God. Then how much ought kings to give to the collection this morning? Thus speak ye to yourselves. ‘I am a king; I will give as a king giveth unto a king.’ Now, mark you, no paltry subscriptions! We don’t expect kings to put down their names for trifles. Then, again: you are a priest. Well, priest, do you mean to sacrifice? ‘Yes.’ But you would not sacrifice a broken-legged lamb, or a blemished bullock, would you? Would you not select the best of the flock? Very right, then select the very best of the Queen’s coins, and offer, if you can, sheep with golden fleece.”

*Ortiz, Kingdom Now ... cont. from page 17*

... Since none of the tithe agencies have any coercive power to collect funds, none can exist beyond their usual service to God and man. For the modern state, uselessness and corruption are no problem; they do not limit its power to collect more taxes. Indeed, the state increases its taxing power because it is more corrupt and more useless, because its growing bureaucracy demands it.<sup>11</sup>

The power to establish the universal rule of God is based upon the objective work of Christ during His earthly ministry and present Kingship in the heavens. It is as redeemed men seek to apply their faith and conform to God’s law that the Lord works mightily to convert the nations and their governing institutions. This is a long-term process as has often been stated. Yet even then the institutions themselves must always be held in check by Biblical law. The dominion mandate of Genesis 1:28 is

given directly to the self-governing man:

Aspects of that mandate can be exercised through institutions, and sometimes must be, but the mandate can never be surrendered to them. The mandate precedes all institutions, and it is to man personally as man (Gen. 1:28). This is the heart of theocracy as the Bible sets it forth. Dictionaries to the contrary, theocracy is not a government by the state but a government over every institution by God and His Law, and through the activities of the free man in Christ to bring every area of life and thought under Christ’s Kingship.<sup>12</sup> ■

Christopher J. Ortiz is the Director of Communications for the Chalcedon Foundation, and the editor of *Faith for All of Life*.

1. Frederick Clarkson, “Theonomic Dominionism Gains Influence” <http://www.public-eye.org/magazine/v08n1/chrisre1.html>.
2. D. A. Carson, *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 408.
3. Frederick Clarkson, “Thanks to Kevin Phillips, Now We Can Talk About Theocracy” <http://www.talk2action.org/story/2006/4/22/155830/143>.
4. Chip Berlet, “Putting the Right under a Microscope: An Interview with Chip Berlet” <http://www.politicalaffairs.net/article/articleview/269/1/32>.
5. Chip Berlet, “The Christian Right, Dominionism, and Theocracy—Part Two” <http://www.talk2action.org/story/2005/12/5/10810/4239>.
6. R. J. Rushdoony, *Roots of Reconstruction* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1991), 63. The chapter was printed originally as Chalcedon Position Paper No. 15, “The Meaning of Theocracy.”
7. Chip Berlet, “The Christian Right, Dominionism, and Theocracy—Part Three” <http://www.talk2action.org/story/2005/12/12/174651/55>.
8. Bruce Barron, *Heaven on Earth? The Social and Political Agendas of Dominionism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), 22.

9. Clarkson, “Theonomic Dominionism.”

10. “Supreme Court strikes down Texas sodomy law” <http://www.cnn.com/2003/LAW/06/26/scotus.sodomy/>.

11. Rushdoony, *Roots of Reconstruction*, 64–65.

12. *Ibid.*, 68.

*Selbrede, Subversion ... cont. from page 23*

man behind the curtain.

32. Rushdoony states that “[t]he conservatives therefore become fact-finders: they try to oppose the humanists by documenting their cruelty, corruption, and abuse of office” (*Foundations of Social Order*). Rushdoony further illustrates the inadequacy of this approach. Unless Coulter goes beyond this analytic stage, Rushdoony’s criticism would remain applicable to her efforts as well, even though her new book is reportedly the top-selling book in America, as Coulter stated on June 14, 2006. That such efforts, left in the analytic starting gate, are ultimately impotent is made abundantly clear in Rushdoony’s works. That Coulter takes note of the creedal component of modern liberalism is nonetheless a step in the right direction. She’s taken a step where Rushdoony had already trod decades earlier—will she stay the course or veer into political solutions?



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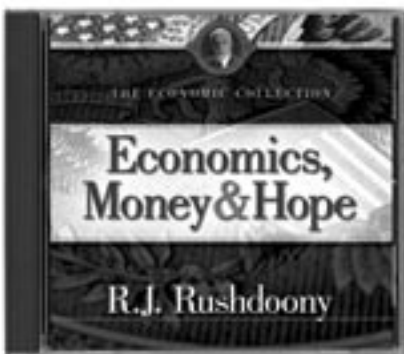
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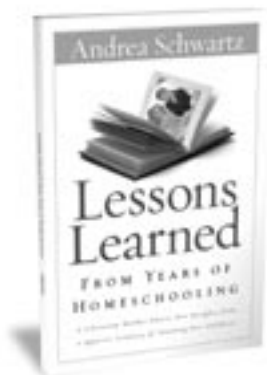


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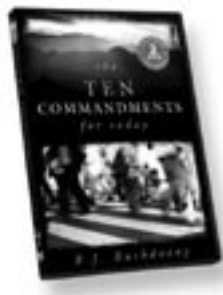
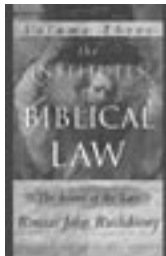
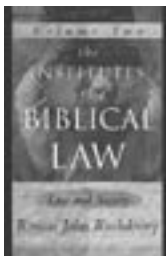
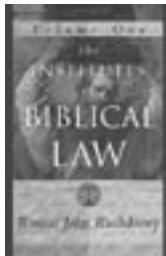
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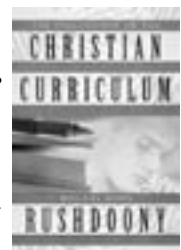


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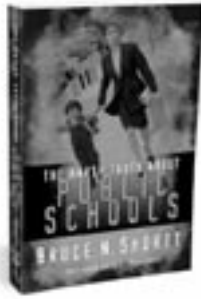
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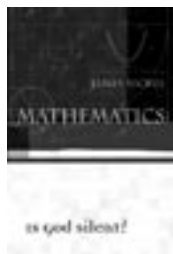
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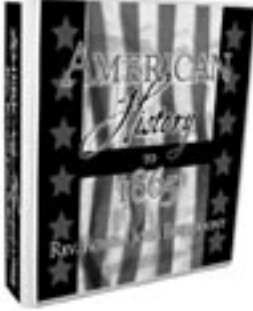
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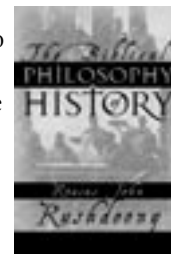
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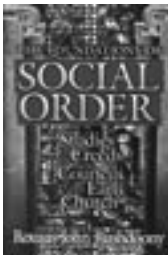
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## *philosophy*

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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 reprovved.

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

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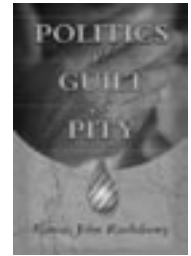


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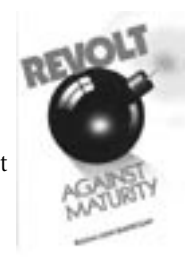
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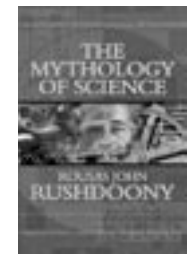


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### **The Mythology of Science**

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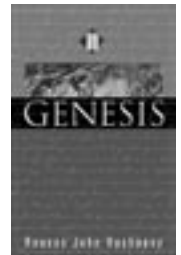


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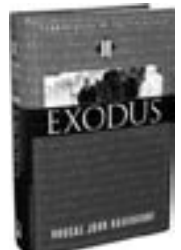
By Rousas John Rushdoony. *Genesis* begins the Bible, and is foundational to it. In recent years, it has become commonplace for both humanists and churchmen to sneer at anyone who takes Genesis 1-11 as historical. Yet to believe in the myth of evolution is to accept trillions of miracles to account for 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.



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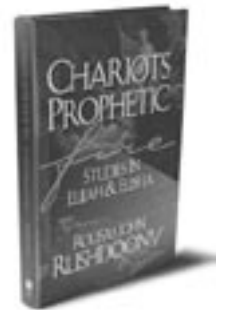
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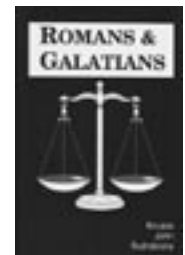


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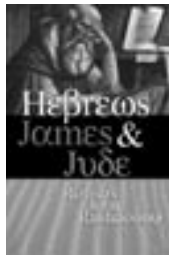
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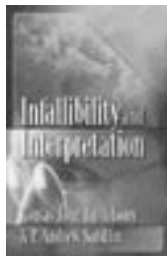
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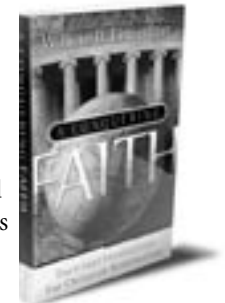
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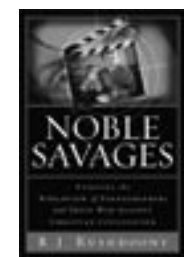


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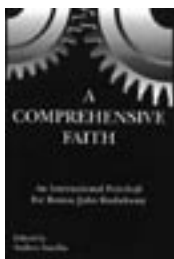
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Edited by Andrew Sandlin. This is the surprise *Festschrift* presented to R.J. Rushdoony at his 80th birthday celebration in April, 1996. These essays are in gratitude to Rush's influence and elucidate the importance of his theological and philosophical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



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