

FAITH FOR ALL OF LIFE

Faith for All of Life
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PROCLAIMING THE AUTHORITY OF GOD'S WORD OVER EVERY AREA OF LIFE AND THOUGHT

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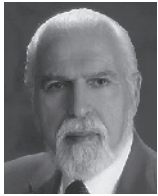


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The Virgin Birth and History

(Reprinted from *The Biblical Philosophy of History* [Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2000 reprint], 81-85.)

R. J. Rushdoony



Few things are more staggering than the audacity of unbelief. The atheist hates God; therefore, there is no God; he finds miracles

an offense; therefore, by definition miracles are an impossibility. And, in particular, as the atheist and agnostic approach the Biblical narrative of the virgin birth, they talk with pseudo-learnedness of myth and legendary accretions. But the narrative, from start to finish, is not only carefully historical, but it also affirms a philosophy of history which is the negation of myth.

The essence of the narrative is that the sovereign and ultimate being, God, became incarnate, was born of the Virgin Mary, in order to establish God's salvation and kingship in history and over history.

The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38) declares that Jesus will be the Son of God, and the son of David, born very God of very God, and very man of very man. He is identified both as the eternal King, and as the promised messianic king. Therefore the purpose of His coming is not mythical, but also historical: it is to accomplish in history the purposes of God. The myth seeks an escape from history: it is offered as a means of overcoming and ending history. The Annunciation, however, declares the coming of Jesus as the One through whom history is to develop to its logical and necessary conclusion, the Kingdom of God. Hence the intensely historical perspective of both Matthew's and Luke's accounts of the virgin birth.

The problem for the critics is not in the narrative so much as in the God of the narrative, the sovereign God with whom "nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37).

To continue with Luke's account, as the more detailed one, the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) is a triumphant affirmation of faith concerning history. Mary views the coming birth of her son as a triumph in history. She exalts the name of the Lord because He is fulfilling His promises made unto the forefathers. Through the Messiah, God is preparing to dethrone all His enemies, avenge His suffering saints, and show the strength of His arm. A reading of the Magnificat is instructive:

**My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God
my Saviour.**

**For he hath regarded the low estate
of his handmaiden: for, behold,
from henceforth all generations
shall call me blessed.**

**For he that is mighty hath done
to me great things; and holy is his
name.**

**And his mercy is on them that fear
him from generation to generation.**

**He hath shewed strength with his
arm; he hath scattered the proud in
the imagination of their hearts.**

**He hath put down the mighty
from their seats, and exalted them
of low degree.**

**He hath filled the hungry with
good things; and the rich he hath
sent empty away.**

**He hath holpen his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy;
As he spake to our fathers, to Abra-
ham, and to his seed for ever.**

We have spoken of the audacity of unbelief. It is of two kinds. First, there are those who deny the virgin birth and all that it means. Second, there are those who affirm the virgin birth but not what it means.

To illustrate: Mary has described what the coming of the Son does to history: it is nothing less than the total overturning and redirection of all things. The major step in this overturning is the coming of the Son; after that, all things else follow inevitably in the course of time, so that they can be spoken of as in effect already accomplished. William Arndt admits that the Magnificat means that "through the Messiah, God will dethrone all enemies."¹ This is well stated; the Magnificat can mean little else. Then what shall we say when Arndt adds later (with reference to 1:52), "In my opinion, the meaning of the words of Mary is exclusively spiritual," and adds as proof, "The coming of Jesus did not abolish political tyrannies and earthly poverty."² Is this not likewise a form of unbelief, and a rejection of history? Does it not reduce Christ to the role of a mythical hero come to rescue man from history? What point then is there in the incarnation and in the bodily resurrection if the world is to be written off as the realm of the devil, as historically irrecoverable?

Martin Luther sees the Magnificat as describing six works of God in his-

tory: *first*, mercy; *second*, God breaks down spiritual pride; *third*, He puts down the mighty; *fourth*, He exalts the lowly; *fifth* and *sixth*, God fills the hungry with good things, and the rich He sends away empty. Commenting on the third, Luther says:

For He does not destroy the mighty as suddenly as they deserve, but lets them go for a season, until their might has reached its highest point. When it has done this, God does not support it, neither can it support itself; it breaks down of its own weight without any crash or sound, and the oppressed are raised up, also without any sound, for God's strength is in them, and it alone remains when the strength of the mighty has fallen.

Observe, however, that Mary does not say He breaks the seats, but He casts the mighty from their seats. Nor does she say He leaves those of low degree in their low degree, but He exalts them. For while the world stands, authority, rule, power, and seats must remain.³

In his "Epilog" to the Magnificat, Luther addresses John Frederick (1503–1554), the Elector's nephew, with these plain words:

Your Grace should reflect that in all the Scriptures God did not permit any heathen king or prince throughout the length or breadth of the world to be praised, but, contrariwise, to be punished; this is a mighty and terrible example to all rulers. Moreover, even in Israel, His chosen people, He never found a king worthy of praise and not rather of punishment ...

All these things were foreordained by God in order to terrify those in authority, to keep them in fear, and to admonish them of their peril.⁴

Arndt calls himself Lutheran, but Martin Luther obviously sees no exclusively spiritual meaning in the Magnificat.

Similarly, John Calvin sees the Magnificat in terms of history, and he compares the worldly powers of the Christian era to the tower of Babel builders, whom God, through Mary, declared He would forever confound:

He hath scattered the proud in the thought of their heart. This expression is worthy of notice: for as their pride and ambition are outrageous, as their covetousness is insatiable, they pile up their deliberations to form an immense heap, and, to say all in a single word, they build the tower of Babel (Gen. xi.9). Not satisfied with having made one or another foolish attempt beyond their strength, or with their former schemes of mad presumption, they still add to their amount. When God has for a time looked down from heaven, in silent mockery, on their splendid preparations, he unexpectedly scatters the whole mass: just as when a building is overturned, and its parts, which had formerly been bound together by a strong and firm union, are widely scattered in every direction.⁵

Throughout his commentary, Calvin very plainly sees the Magnificat as a revelation concerning history, a declaration that God governs history absolutely, and the incarnation as a declaration of His sovereign and redeeming power.

Thus, when Mary says, that it is God who *casteth down nobles from their thrones, and exalteth mean persons*, she teaches us, that the world does not move and revolve by a blind impulse of Fortune, but that all the revolutions observed in it are brought about by the Providence of God, and that those judgments, which appear to us to disturb and overthrow the entire framework of society, are regulated by God with unerring justice. This is confirmed by the following verse, *He hath filled the hungry with good things, and hath sent the rich away empty* ... To such godly persons as feel poverty and almost famine, and lift up their cry to God, no small consolation is afforded by this

doctrine, that he *filleth the hungry with good things*.⁶

As surely as we must beware of the atheists, so must we beware of the unbelief of sniveling preachers who reduce the relevance of the virgin birth to the spiritual realm, who deny its relevance to history, for the Magnificat declares that God has brought salvation to the whole world of man, material and spiritual, religious, political, and economic, and let those who deny this confess their unbelief. The joy of Mary is in the salvation of God, a mighty reversal of all things, of all human values, powers, and plans by God our Savior. The Old Testament promises to the faithful seed are being fulfilled.

In the Benedictus (Luke 1:67–80), this note of triumph in history is carried further. Zacharias rejoices in the fact that God keeps His promises, "as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets" (Luke 1:70, 72–73). A kinsman redeemer has come, God incarnate as man's next-of-kin and redeemer (vv. 68, 72). We are "saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us" (v. 71); the meaning is obviously not "spiritual"! The religious salvation through this God-man is cited as being remission of sins and the mercy or grace of God.

Jesus Christ is called the "dayspring" in the Benedictus, i.e., the rising sun or Sun of righteousness (Mal. 4:2), who gives "light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1:78f). The figure is a striking one. Prior to Jesus Christ, the movement of history was meager, and in the dark. The pilgrims of history were afraid to move; they could not move, having no direction in the dark. The movement of history was God's movement, the Biblical revelation. Now, with the fullness of the revelation, God's people move with

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What Kind of Son Are You?

Mark R. Rushdoony



Biblical accounts are often understood in terms of how we were told them as children. I can remember more than a few recitations of the story of the calling of Elisha by the prophet Elijah (1 Kings 19:19–21). The older Elijah put his “mantle” (or outer cloak, probably a sheepskin) on the younger Elisha. I’m not sure if that ever really made much sense to me.

The brevity and simplicity of Biblical stories makes them ideal for retelling to children, and for the same reason, they are easily retold in children’s storybooks. When adults try to turn those stories into theater or cinema, however, a problem arises. The stories need to be fleshed out, and there is a need to add to the Biblical story for such production. I can remember my amazement when I first saw Charlton Heston in Cecil B. DeMille’s *The Ten Commandments*—“Moses had a girlfriend?” I had not recalled that from any of my Sunday school lessons.

Biblical narratives are almost always summaries of the whole story, so it seems strange that Elijah suddenly threw his mantle on Elisha and that the latter followed him with no questions asked. We are told in three verses the gist of what happened, not the entire encounter. Commentaries, scholarly works, and sermons regularly try to help us see the full picture of what we might easily miss in the narrative.

The placing of Elijah’s mantle on Elisha seems to have come as a surprise to the young man. The account only emphasizes his response, but he seems, unlike us, to have immediately known what Elijah’s action meant.

Sometimes then as now a physical act was used to convey a relationship. There are, for instance, numerous Biblical references to making one’s enemy a footstool. When a rebel or enemy was ultimately defeated, he was brought before the victor and then prostrated himself, literally offering his head at the feet of his new master who could choose whether to execute him or acknowledge him as a subordinate prince. When Baal worshippers wished to dedicate their children to a particular power, they passed their children through fire. Usually, this was merely the heat and smoke of the fire or incense. In both cases the physical act conveyed a known relationship.

Elisha knew what it meant when Elijah placed his mantle on him. It meant the prophet had chosen him to a special relationship. The placing of the mantle represented bringing someone under your care and nurture. This was often the adoption of a child or the acknowledgment of a familial responsibility. Thus, when Ruth confronted Boaz, she said, “I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman” (Ruth 3:9). Ruth was telling Boaz that he was her nearest living relative, and she wanted him to acknowledge that fact and consider her as part of his household. Likewise, there is a Turkish expression for adoption that means to draw through one’s skirt.¹

When Elijah cast his mantle over Elisha, the meaning was clear; the prophet was calling Elisha to be his son and his heir, his successor in his prophetic work. God had told Elijah to do this. The Biblical account is brief, but it is likely this was specifically related to Elisha.

A similar event is seen in reverse in Isaiah 22:21, where a garment and calling is removed from an unworthy man. The Lord told Shebna, captain of the temple, that he would be deprived of his office in favor of another. That man would be clothed with Shebna’s “robe” and “girdle” and would thus be given his authority. The placing of “royal robes” at a coronation still conveys a new authority and hence a new relationship between prince and people.

With any adoption you came under authority. Ruth’s reference to herself as Boaz’s “handmaid” was self-deprecating. She was merely saying she was not seeking status, only to be recognized as a part of the family and under the headship of Boaz.

Elisha would have known Elijah, minimally by reputation. In accepting the mantle so readily, he accepted a new position. Elisha was likely a wealthy heir. His men plowed with twelve teams of oxen, so their farm was very large and their capital extensive. Elisha followed with the plow, apparently keeping the others in view as their supervisor.

Suddenly, Elisha moved from wealthy heir to the poor prophet’s successor. He was under Elijah’s authority and protection. He would serve Elijah as a son would serve his father. This wasn’t a job, but a change in relationship. This is why Elisha immediately *requested permission* of Elijah to say good-bye to his parents. This meant he already recognized Elijah’s authority over him. He was now the son of the prophet. When Elijah was later taken in a chariot of fire, Elisha’s mourning cry was, in part, “My father, my father . . .” Just prior to that, he had

asked Elijah for a double portion of his prophetic spirit; the eldest son always received a double portion of the divided inheritance. Elisha then took up Elijah's mantle, as his disciple, spiritual successor, and adopted heir. None of the students of the school of the prophets objected.

Elisha had, by his adoption, become the son of Elijah. Sonship meant submitting to his spiritual father's authority; hence he requested and received permission to say good-bye to his family. Elisha cooked the two oxen (in an obviously very large feast) and burned their yoke, apparently to signify the end of his work on the farm and the commencement of his new work. Adoption to sonship meant a new fidelity.

Part of Elisha's responsibility as an adopted son was to serve Elijah. Some time later a member of the court of King Jehoram of Israel referred to the [then] prophet Elisha as one who had "poured water on the hands of Elijah" (2 Kings 3:11). Sonship meant service.

The New Testament refers to our adoption, calls God our Father, and calls us His sons. Elijah's adoption of Elisha was accomplished by the covering of a cloak. God has adopted us by a covering as well. The meaning of *atonement* is that of a *covering*. Our sins are covered, but we are ourselves covered or washed in the blood of the Lamb.

When Paul spoke of our adoption in Galatians 4, he noted the expectation of obedience: "[T]he heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all" (v. 1). Elisha had been ordained to succeed Elijah, but he began his ministry by serving him. Sons were taught obedience and responsibility, not only under the father but under tutors and governors until they were of age and ready to assume a position of authority. Hebrews 5 speaks of Jesus as a Son, who learned "obedience by the things which he suffered" (v. 8).

Some commentators have seen a

reference to adoption of slaves (a common practice) in Galatians 4 as well. Only those slaves adopted as sons were allowed to address their former masters as "Abba, Father" or their wives as "Mama, Mother." This was a privilege not allowed to slaves.²

Paul would also warn us that we are not to remain babes in Christ, but that we are to grow up to be "perfect" or "mature," ready to assume the leadership role for which we have been prepared. The maturity of the son, adopted or natural, does not, however, mean we cease to serve our Father. It only means we have moved from the simple service expected of a child to the leadership responsibilities of an heir. "[I]f children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ ..." (Rom. 8:17).

We, as the covered, adopted children of God, are under His authority. This authority is administered through Jesus Christ of whom the Father said, "[H]ear ye him" (Matt. 17:5). Our Lord Himself put us under His authority when He said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore ..." (Matt. 28:18–19). Just as Elijah and Elisha were men of authority, the covering or atonement of Jesus Christ and His commission has put us under authority.


Elisha put on the mantle of Elijah to represent Elisha's willing acceptance of his new role. Paul told us to "put off the old man" and "put on the new man," which is equated with putting on the Lord Jesus (Rom. 13:14; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10).

In Matthew 22 there is a parable in which a man invited to a wedding feast proceeded therein, but without a wedding garment. He was thrown out of the wedding in words describing a man being cast into hell. The sin described is not one of dress, but of coming before God casually and expecting Him to accept us as we are, without any desire to change. The man cast out was self-righteous.

He was saying that, "If God wants me, He can take me as I am; I don't need to change." The doctrine of adoption precludes such presumption. We come to our Heavenly Father on His terms, by His grace, expecting like Elisha to be taught obedience and service.

Too many Christians believe they can come to Christ like the man in the parable of the wedding feast. They come expecting that God ought to accept them as they are. They believe they are as good as they can be and perhaps a bit better than they need to be. They come to God as if He were a service-provider—"I think I'll have salvation, please!"—but then refuse to place themselves under His authority. Approaching God as a service-provider reflects neither repentance nor faith.

Those adopted by God are covered by the blood of Jesus Christ and are called to submit to Him. We cannot just speak of the Father's love of His children and neglect that, as a Father, He is our authority figure. We are called both sons and servants, and the expectations of a godly son involve both roles; we learn servanthood in our training as sons and heirs. We are called to obey and serve as disciples for greater purposes in our Father's Kingdom.

Do you approach God as your service-provider or as His servant-son? 

1. McClintock and Strong, "Adoption," *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, Vol. I (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1981), 78.

2. *Ibid.*, 77.

The Lord Will Perfect That Which Concerneth Me: The Work of Rousas John Rushdoony

Michael J. McVicar, Ph.D.

In December 2007, I found myself sitting at Rousas John Rushdoony's desk in his library in Vallecito, California. From the outside, the structure was simple enough: a small brick building built on the side of a hill just below his former home. Inside, the 1,300-square-foot library housed an intimidating jumble of books, correspondence, records, and the memorabilia of one of the most controversial, influential, and enigmatic figures of twentieth-century American Protestantism.

Rushdoony's desk sat at the head of the library in front of a fireplace. Bronze tile busts of John Calvin and Martin Luther, the two great sixteenth-century church reformers, stared down from the mantel. Rows of floor-to-ceiling bookshelves created narrow cluttered aisles that receded into the darkness. Overhead fluorescent lights proved insufficient for the nearly windowless structure, plunging the ends of the aisles in murky darkness. The long, poorly lit rows created the uneasy sensation that the library receded into infinity. Given that I had heard that Rushdoony's library totaled somewhere between 30,000 and 40,000 books, it was easy to believe that the shelves did indeed run to Kingdom come.

I had come to Vallecito as a Ph.D. student from Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, with the stated purpose of using Rushdoony's library and his correspondence as the foundation for my doctoral dissertation on the topic of Christian Reconstructionism and its relationship to American



"Rows of floor-to-ceiling bookshelves created narrow cluttered aisles that receded into the darkness."

conservatism. Staring into the infinity of bookshelves, I suddenly wondered if such a project was even possible. How could I ever hope to collect, catalog, and assess the material in this library, let alone comprehend the man and how he had accumulated and organized all of this material to produce some fifty books and thousands of essays, lectures, and sermons? Worse still, the library had a decidedly lived-in feeling about it: it seemed as if Rushdoony—who passed away in 2001—had simply set down his pen and walked out to address some matter related to the day-to-day management of the Chalcedon Foundation and would return shortly. I felt like an invader and an intellectual pretender who had been given access to one of the

most significant archives that most historians of twentieth-century American Protestantism had never heard of.

Overwhelmed but undeterred, I used a digital camera to snap thousands of photographs of everything in the library—books, manuscripts, letters, faxes, journals, ledgers—then retired to a budget hotel in nearby Angels Camp where I organized the day's work and prepared to take a thousand more images the following day. After leaving Vallecito, it took nearly four months to arrange the material I collected, which I shifted into massive digital PDF files and printed, much to the confusion of my local Kinko's. The entire output filled several Bankers Boxes, and it took me nearly as long to read it as it did to organize it all.

Three years later I successfully defended my dissertation, a document that I could not have written without access to Rushdoony's library. I am not a Reconstructionist, nor were any of the faculty on my dissertation committee. I began the project with a decidedly negative appraisal of Rushdoony, but I ultimately ended the project with a nuanced appreciation of R. J. Rushdoony's theology and his public ministry. In fact, the time I spent with Rushdoony's personal journals and correspondence left me in awe of the man's work ethic. During my research, I became fascinated with the relationship between Rushdoony's Christian convictions and his *work* for Christ.

Martin Selbrede, the editor of *Faith for All of Life* and vice president of the

Chalcedon Foundation, has asked me to reflect on my time with Rushdoony's library and to discuss my research. I've decided to take the opportunity to reflect on Rushdoony's understanding of his godly calling to preach the gospel and to reconstruct the church. This essay focuses on the ways in which Rushdoony's interpretation of his calling influenced the way he lived and worked.

I begin the essay with an overview of Rushdoony's theology of Christian Reconstruction and outline how it relates to the problem of work and dominion. Then I use the content of Rushdoony's library—his correspondence, journal entries, and personal ledgers—to provide a unique vantage for understanding his work habits and to detail how these habits related to his understanding of Christian governance under the law of God. My hope is that this essay will provide readers of *Faith for All of Life* with a bit of perspective on *how* Rushdoony worked while also providing a perspective on the *nature* and *meaning* of that work.

Liberty Under Law

Beginning in 1972, R. J. Rushdoony began each new year of his personal journals with an epigraph from the 138th Psalm: "The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me." The entirety of the verse—which Rushdoony did not cite in his journals—continues, "[T]hy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands."¹ The point, of course, was to acknowledge Rushdoony's work as God's work; to dedicate the acts, deeds, and labor recorded in his journals to Jesus; and, in turn, to ask Christ to bless Rushdoony's actions as His own. In this sense, Rushdoony's vast library is a *monument* to his work as a Christian man. That is, his library—and the reading, teaching, and writing it facilitated—embody a uniquely Christian form

of government that stands in opposition to any form of governance that places sovereignty in some institution other than Jesus Christ and His delegated authority to Christian men. Consequently, by studying the contents of Rushdoony's library, we can glimpse a life dedicated to the task of Christian Reconstruction and dominion.

The first glimpses of Rushdoony's concern for the self-government of Christian men can be seen in his early missionary work. Long before he ever founded the Chalcedon Foundation, developed the idea of Christian Reconstructionism, or built his library, Rushdoony was a missionary on the isolated Duck Valley Indian Reservation in Nevada.² While on the reservation, Rushdoony became acutely aware of the problem state bureaucracy posed not only to the Paiutes and Shoshones living on the reservation, but also for all men, native or otherwise, who ran afoul of the federal state. Nothing better attests to Rushdoony's appreciation of the challenge the state posed to individuals than his retelling of an exchange with one of his charges on the reservation, a Paiute indentified only as "Pete."

In a 1945 letter to a friend, Rushdoony reported "that as [Pete] saw it the Indian was fit only for Reservation life and the white man [is] 'ripe for the reservation,' waiting for some superior man to drive him there. [Rushdoony] added that the white man, with his increasing predilection for a dictated economy, was rapidly bent on turning the world into a Reservation."³ Pete agreed vigorously, adding, "Only a lazy son-of-a-bitch wants rights. A man wants freedom and justice, and he can take care of himself."⁴ Of the "white man" Rushdoony and Pete concluded, "the German and the Japanese failed to put him there [on the Reservation]: the next people might succeed."⁵ Rushdoony's conversation

with Pete is a microcosm of the central problem that haunted Rushdoony over the next two decades as he worked to establish the Chalcedon Foundation in 1965; namely, how might he cultivate the "freedom and justice" necessary for a Christian man to thrive independently from state governance?

Years later, Rushdoony developed the concept of Christian Reconstruction to answer this question. Reconstruction posits that human beings are primarily religious creatures bound to God. They are not rational, autonomous beings capable of acting or thinking independently of God. Following the teachings of Cornelius Van Til, a Dutch Reformed theologian teaching at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia who fathered an apologetic school known as "presuppositionalism," Rushdoony argued that all human knowledge is invalid if it is not rooted in the Bible. In *By What Standard*, originally published in 1958 and still a standard short introduction to Van Til's presuppositional system, Rushdoony explained that all knowledge emerges from one's theological presuppositions (i.e., there is one God, many gods, or no god). For Christians, that means a triune deity must be the presupposed source of *all* reliable human knowledge.

The implications of these ideas are far reaching. As Rushdoony explained, when Adam and Eve succumbed to the Serpent's temptation "to be as gods, knowing good from evil," they asserted their own intellectual autonomy over that of God's.⁶ Intellectual autonomy (self-rule of the mind) emerges as sinful pretense, whereas *theonomy* (God's rule of the mind) is the only source for legitimate knowledge. Humanity's fall into sin was precipitated by a desire to reason independently from God's authority.⁷ From this perspective, knowledge is a matter of disputed sovereignty. Every

thought that does not begin with God and the Bible is rebellious.⁸ Rushdoony carried this point to its logical end, arguing that if thinking is an explicitly religious activity, then human thought has political implications: thinking becomes a matter of kingship, power, rebellion, and, ultimately, warfare. Either human thought recognizes God's sovereignty, or it does not. There is no middle ground, no compromise.

Rushdoony developed a social and political theology designed to combat humanity's sinful desire to "be as gods." In his most famous statement of this theological system, *The Institutes of Biblical Law*,⁹ Rushdoony argued that Old Testament Biblical law is still binding for modern Christians. Why? Because Biblical law constrains the ability of an autonomous, rational man to think apart from God by setting clear parameters on how one may interpret the world and therefore on how one may act in the world. Furthermore, Biblical law provides a foundation for a Christian alternative to secular, modern society that Rushdoony referred to variously as Christian Reconstruction, theonomy, or dominion theology.

Looking to Genesis 1:26–28, Rushdoony discovered the proactive role a Christian must play in both human culture and as just stewards over God's creation: "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."¹⁰ This "creation mandate" is a "requirement that humankind subdue the earth and exercise dominion over it."¹¹ While many Christians today might interpret this Genesis "mandate" as either nullified by the fall, or as a command for humans to serve as benevolent stewards of the earth, Rushdoony insisted that it is actually

a commandment to "subdue all things and all nations to Christ and His law-word."¹² He argued that Biblical law and the sacrifice of Christ provide the means to allow Christians to abrogate the curse of the fall. Through Biblical law, a reconstructed Christian could "take dominion" over the planet and "reconstruct" all of life in Christ's image.

The concept of "dominion man" was an important component of Rushdoony's ministerial project, and it is directly related to his understanding of work and calling. Reconstruction begins with the assumption that God gave human beings a foundational form of governance located in their minds and bodies. Rushdoony insisted, "[B]asic government is the self-government of the Christian man."¹³ This statement is built on two components, the first related to *self-government* and the second to *man* or the *male* Christian. First, Rushdoony distinguished between those explicitly political forms of state power that we might refer to as "government" and a broader, more amorphous concept of government that orders and structures all aspects of human life. This understanding of governance challenges the notion that government is located primarily in the state and instead insists that it happens elsewhere.

Second, Rushdoony's concept of Christian self-government suggests that *men* are unique creatures created by God who are governed by the *fact* of this creation, not by the various *contexts* or *environments* in which they happen to find themselves by an accident of history. Godly government is inscribed on their bodies and in their minds by the very act of creation. God's command that man exercise dominion over the earth required multiple forms of work¹⁴ that culminated in Adam's classification of creation (Gen. 2:19). Thus, Rushdoony concluded that Adam was not

fully a man until he labored for God.

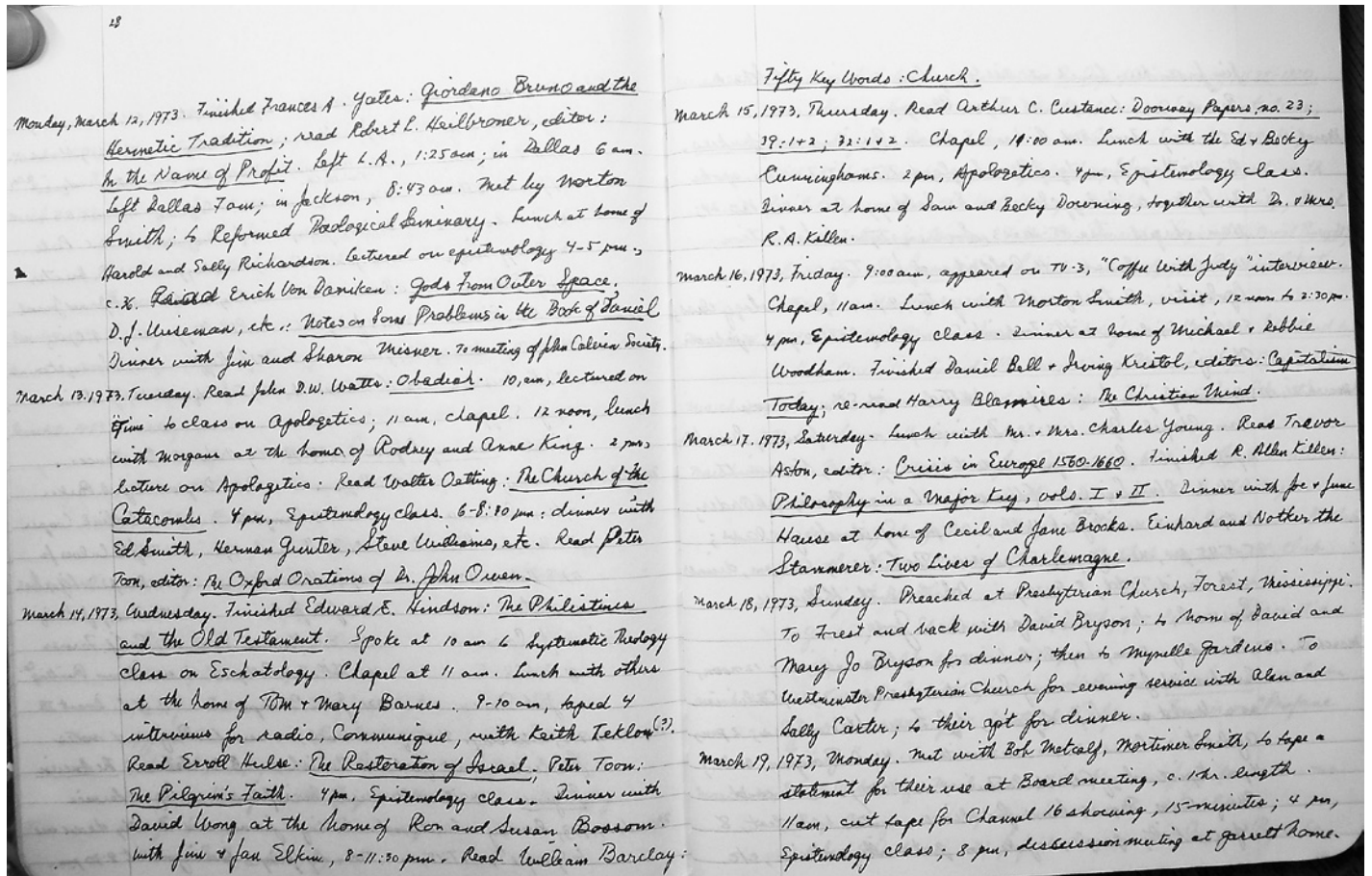
This account of Rushdoony's theology should make clear that work and Christian Reconstruction are inextricably related. A Christian man must not only *believe* in Christ, but he and his family also have an obligation to *work* for the Kingdom of God in all aspects of their lives. Indeed, Rushdoony took this problem of godly work very seriously. In a 1962 letter to his future son-in-law Gary North, Rushdoony wrote,

You asked me about my use of time ... Here again it is a religious matter, and in this respect I cannot begin to compare myself with some of the Calvinists and Puritans of yester-year. It is a question of *calling* ... Modern man, lacking calling, has no focus to his life, and accordingly uses time and money without direction or law ... Once our life has a focus, then time, money, all things are used to that one end. My life is not without its problems, and its severe limitations at times, but I am certain that it is a richer life than most people live ... And as I read the lives of Calvinists of old, I know how much less than they I am able to do, because their's was a more dedicated life of liberty under law. Without calling and therefore focus, life dribbles away. I can be and am lazier than many another man and still accomplish more.¹⁵

This problem of Christian work and calling returns us to Rushdoony's library and its complicated relationship to his public ministry. In the following sections, I turn from this abstract discussion of theology to explore the concrete ways Rushdoony's library stands as a testament to this theology of Christ work. Specifically, I focus on his work as a Christian reader, speaker, and writer.

The Discipline of Reading

To better understand the project of Christian Reconstruction and the effect it had on the life of its leading voice, we can turn to those building blocks of



Rushdoony's journal entries from March 12 through March 19, 1973. Underlined items represent book titles.

any library—its books. Long before he built a small library dedicated solely to his books in Vallecito, Rushdoony and his family shared their living space with his ever-growing library. So, when they moved to Woodland Hills, California, in 1965 to start the Chalcedon Foundation, the Rushdoony family enclosed the patio of their new home to create a wing room dedicated exclusively to Rushdoony's library. As his son Mark Rousas Rushdoony, the current president of the Chalcedon Foundation, remembered, "We had to enclose a large screened-in patio to house the books. Still, they took up much of the rest of the house and the garage."¹⁶

Rushdoony accumulated this extensive library because he was a compulsive book buyer who often went on special

trips in search of new books, preferably hardcovers because he found paperbacks "distasteful" because of their "disposable nature."¹⁷ He scavenged for them wherever he could and bought them by the box load. But Rushdoony was no collector. Like a woodworker's favorite plane, each book was simultaneously a tool and pleasure. He depended on books so he surrounded himself with them. He took them everywhere. Again, to Mark Rushdoony: "If he had to wait anywhere for even a few moments he would open the book and continue reading where he had last stopped. He took a briefcase full of books on speaking trips and would come home with several read and indexed."¹⁸

In these ways and so many others, books structured Rushdoony's life. They

determined the size and nature of his and his family's home. They organized the hours in his day, demanding his time and attention. They disciplined him. And, in return, he organized them by imposing a structure on their informational chaos. He wrote in his books, indexed them, imposed his formidable intellect on them:

When he read a book, he would use a six-inch ruler and a pencil. He would neatly underline, using the ruler (never freehand), an important piece of information. Sometimes he would double-underline something of particular importance. Longer passages he would mark with a single (or double) line in the margin parallel to the edge of the page. An exclamation mark, or an "x" in the margin would denote a particularly significant passage or statement.

He then would write a reference to the marked passage in the back of the book.¹⁹

He noted the date and location where he finished reading every book and logged each completed volume in his journals. Since he read approximately one book a day, this meant that his journals are stuffed with references to completed books or ones he had just started.

This discipline went far beyond marginalia and annotations: he carefully and methodically Christianized every text; a process ordered by the Van Tilian presuppositional philosophy that he used to determine the outcome of every thought, ensuring its accord with the mind of the Creator. This meant that Rushdoony's encounter with his prized books was circular, a closed loop structured from beginning to end by a single book: the Bible. Thus, the Bible ordered his approach to information and determined the way he read every text that he encountered. In turn, his drive to read and write about what he read was determined by his calling to Christian work—to bring the hearts and minds of all men into accord with Scripture.

Speaking for Christ

Nowhere is this calling to Christianize the thoughts of others more clearly illustrated than in Rushdoony's public lecturing. To take a relatively representative period from his earliest years leading the establishment of the Chalcedon Foundation (1965–1970), Rushdoony spoke at least 115 times to various groups. Rushdoony was normally a meticulous note taker, and it appears that he tried to enter all of his lectures into a single ledger and to record them in his personal journals. During this time, he spoke to businessmen, college students, women's groups, and private home Bible studies. These latter meetings were

particularly important because they were organized for the benefit of a small collection of regular Chalcedon supporters. He frequently lectured in Cupertino, California, at the home of "Dr. Simpson," normally to parties of thirty or less. Similarly he recorded speaking at homes that he simply identifies as belonging to "Muller," "Norman Pulty," "Wilson," and "Baliff," with most audiences numbering fewer than thirty. Although it is not clear from his records who attended or why, these home Bible studies were likely made up of women and men who shared his theological position or who grew to agree with him over time as they regularly attended his talks. The subjects of the talks suggest that they were aimed at well-educated, politically active audiences interested in Christian perspectives on popular culture, homeschooling, anti-communism, hard money economics, and revisionist history. For example, he noted speaking on "This Christian Republic" (September 13, 1964); "Psalm 2: Conspiracy and History" (October 25, 1964); "Revolutionary Art" (April 10, 1967); "The Soviet View of Money" (April 11, 1967).

Rushdoony as Author

Rushdoony's prodigious literary output was directly related to his speaking: many of his books emerged from the notes he took to prepare for his lectures. Any reader of his numerous books is already well aware of the physical heft of these texts, but Rushdoony's journals provide a clear image of exactly the kind of work ethic necessary to sustain this output. For instance, in 1970, the year leading up to the publication of his most famous work, *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, Rushdoony recorded in his journal that he had completed a staggering fifty-four chapters of his *magnum opus*, the vast bulk of the nearly 800-page tome. He had begun

the first chapters of the project in 1968. These records suggest that Rushdoony wrote the body of the *Institutes* in less than three years. It's incredible that anyone could *read* and critically assess the content of the *Institutes* in such a time frame, let alone write it in such a compressed period.

But Rushdoony didn't content himself with such achievements. Aside from authoring fifty-four chapters on Biblical law, in 1970 Rushdoony also penned two monthly columns: his regular contribution to the *Chalcedon Report* and an article for a monthly magazine aimed at rural Californians, *The California Farmer*.²⁰ Furthermore, he authored multiple book reviews, chapters, and articles for several other book projects and magazines. He also authored 2,435 individual pieces of mail and lectured and preached a combined 213 times. In the midst of this endless, tireless output Rushdoony also managed to read and annotate 226 books. All of this he dutifully recorded in his journal summary for 1970. In a letter from 1962, Rushdoony recorded a similar testament to his personal discipline under the law: "I read 303 books last year, wrote 23 chapters, plus reviews, conducted 64 meetings, spoke 257 times, and made hundreds of calls."²¹ When we compare Rushdoony's greater productivity as an author in 1970 to his output in 1962, we see a more mature writer who had honed his craft in the subsequent years.

Homeschooling and the Courts

Beside his reading, lecturing, and writing, Rushdoony made another contribution to American culture, one that has been largely ignored or forgotten by many of his supporters and critics: he became an expert witness in many court cases related to the issues of religious freedom and home education. His role as an expert witness emerged from his many lecturing engagements that

often found him making the rounds of Christian colleges, high schools, and homeschooling conferences. As he spoke on the Christian education circuit to promote his interpretation of a Christ-centered elementary and secondary school curriculum, he became increasingly aware of a distressing trend: parents and church leaders who had sought refuge from state education by establishing homeschools and church schools were being prosecuted for running afoul of state and federal regulations. As Rushdoony encountered parents and attorneys involved in these cases, he began putting them in contact with one another, slowly building an ad hoc network of Christians united by their hitherto unknown common goal of abandoning public schools.

By the mid-1970s phone calls came daily from parents and pastors engaged in these cases, and Rushdoony counseled them on how to handle their cases. “One of the growing, time-consuming, but necessary activities,” he wrote to someone seeking Chalcedon literature on independent schooling, “is answering telephone calls from groups facing state and federal pressures to give them counsel.”²² Rushdoony blamed this necessary work on the failure of a previous generation of evangelicals to stand up and resist a half-century’s worth of court rulings: “It has been the dereliction and withdrawal from social relevancy of conservative Christianity which has led to our present plight. It is a happy irony of history that they are now being compelled to make the key resistance.”²³

Through word of mouth and his lecturing tours, Rushdoony’s notoriety also spread in Christian homeschooling and day schooling circles. By the early 1980s, he had become a much sought-after expert witness in court trials related to independent Christian education. As a highly polished public speaker used to

debating and equipped with a seemingly encyclopedic knowledge of U.S. history, educational policy, and Christian theology, his testimony won the affection of Christians and baffled prosecutors. Between 1980 and 1988, Rushdoony testified no less than twenty-three times in court cases all over the United States. These cases related to Christian schooling, the establishment of religion by the state, the independence of Christian churches, and the right of preachers to engage in confrontational evangelistic tactics in public venues.

In his journals Rushdoony recorded many small vignettes—material not available in court records—that provide us with an impression of what his testimony was like and what impact it had on those in the courtroom. For instance, during a trial in Nebraska, as Rushdoony approached the witness stand, one woman associated with the Christian defendant leaned to another and whispered, “Whose side is he on? Our side or theirs?”²⁴ During the course of his testimony, the woman audibly concluded, “He’s not on our side. He’s on the Lord’s side.”²⁵ Rushdoony’s intelligence and ferocity on the stand apparently prompted prosecutors to take him seriously as a threat to their cases. They made efforts in some cases to suppress his testimony, and in a federal case in Maine, the government attorney produced carefully annotated copies of Chalcedon publications and used them during Rushdoony’s cross examination.²⁶

Rushdoony’s interest in these cases intensified to the point that they dominated the other activities of Chalcedon. Unlike his endless writing, researching, and lecture tours, Rushdoony’s work with those seeking his advice and testimony on legal matters took a hard emotional toll, which he registered bluntly:

Yesterday noon, I ate (as often) a cold meal, alone, because, when I sat down

to eat, the phone rang. A pastor I have never met, with a weeping woman before him, called for counsel; he had called a year before in another case. For the same reason, I ate alone at night. In between, I spent a couple hours again on the phone in like matters. This goes on daily ... I will continue, only because the battle is the LORD’S ... In five and a half years, I have not been home all of any month.²⁷

I quote this letter at length because it plainly illustrates the sacrifices Rushdoony made for the work of Christian Reconstruction. By the time he wrote these paragraphs to a supporter, he was in his mid-sixties and gradually beginning to slow in his work.

During the late 1990s, R. J. Rushdoony’s health rapidly deteriorated. His hearing and eyesight began to fail him. But his mind remained sharp. He continued to write and deliver the occasional lecture or sermon into his eighties. In fact, his last years were prolific: he wrote on everything from magic to Christ’s Sermon on the Mount, producing manuscripts that Ross House Books will no doubt be editing and printing for years to come. Eventually, however, doctors diagnosed Rushdoony with prostate cancer. His intense daily regime of reading and writing flagged. By 1998 Rushdoony, now eighty-two, regularly found himself too ill to read or write. He needed surgery for cataracts and regular therapy for his cancer. On February 6, 1998, he confided in his journals: “Did nothing, which is difficult for me.”²⁸ Shortly thereafter his journal entries became sporadic. They ended abruptly in the fall of 2000. With his family at his bedside, Rushdoony passed away on February 8, 2001.

Conclusion

Today, Rushdoony’s legacy is visible in everything from the continuing work

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Freedom: The Lost Tool of Evangelism

Bojidar Marinov

“It’s easy for you Americans to play religious: you are rich, and you have plenty of time, so you can afford to entertain yourselves with your religion.”



The time was the early nineties, somewhere in Eastern Europe. We were street-evangelizing, and I was translating

for an American missionary. The voice came from the crowd that had gathered to listen to our calls for repentance. I was thrilled—usually, when you have someone who asks a legitimate question, he is eager to learn more, and he accepts Christ when he has the answers to his concerns and questions. I expected the missionary to ask the obvious counter-question, “Why do you think America is rich?” and then explain how the faith in Christ changes the culture and creates the foundation for that liberty, justice, and prosperity that the people in Eastern Europe wanted to attain after the fall of Communism. The question came as a golden opportunity to tell the crowd even more about the superiority of the Christian faith.

The missionary simply said: “Oh, riches and poverty have no importance whatsoever. The important thing is to save your soul.”

I was disappointed. The man in the crowd never got an answer, and we wasted the opportunity.

American missionaries often have a very mystic, almost Gnostic idea of salvation. Salvation must be that “spiritual,” nonmaterial reality that has nothing to do with people’s lives here and now. The desire for salvation must lack any motive whatsoever that can be associ-

ated with this present life; otherwise the missionary considers it less than authentic. A person who comes to Christ for salvation of his soul must be completely free from other motives because, like the missionary above said, these other motives “have no importance whatsoever.” Salvation must remain the pure “spiritual” reality that is untainted by the real-world considerations or goals. True, sometimes the missionary would accept certain *personal* pains and misfortunes as a valid tool to lead a person to Christ. But social issues, cultural issues, long-term goals and aspirations about life, thought, knowledge, economy, education, politics, etc., must be left aside when a person makes a decision to follow Christ.

Accordingly, missionaries seldom or never use practical historical examples of the impact of Christianity on cultures. We seldom hear missionaries preaching on the true Christian origin of Western civilization, and we certainly never hear missionaries giving America as an example of what comprehensive, practical Christianity can create in the real world. Of course, they can’t do that; in their Gnostic view, if a man submits to Christ because Christianity exhibits superior fruits here in this life, that man must not be sincere in his faith.

This view of evangelism and motives misses one very important lesson from the Bible: namely, that both Jews and Gentiles are encouraged to come to God *because of what He has done*, in history, on earth. The practical conse-

quences of God’s plan and the practical implications of His law are to be used as an evangelistic tool to teach the nations (Deut. 4:5–8). In the New Testament, the promises of “inheriting the earth” (Matt. 5:5) and “rest” (Matt. 11:28–29) are legitimate tools to lead people to salvific faith in Christ.

Jesus doesn’t stop at promising only heavenly rewards, He certainly declares that the rewards for our obedience to God will manifest themselves in this life also (Luke 18:30). And in 1 Corinthians 7:12–16 Paul encourages believing husbands and wives to remain with their unbelieving spouses, hoping that their practical example will produce salvation. Practical—and even material—motives play a very important part in the evangelistic effort, and the Bible constantly encourages us to use the practical impact of Christianity on the individual and cultural level to spread the gospel.

The Law of Liberty

Freedom—or liberty—is by far the most important of those practical tools for evangelism that the Bible gives us. In fact, quite often in the Bible the very word salvation is defined as freedom. We mentioned above the words of Moses in Deuteronomy 4:5–8, that the nations will come to God because of His just laws. But then he reminds them of that first day when God spoke to Israel from Mount Sinai and gave them His law. And the first words of the law God gave them were about the freedom He gave them from oppression and slavery:

I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. (Exod. 20:2 NASB)

This was the very preamble to the whole law, and it certainly was the chief characteristic of the law, that whoever believes in God will have a law that gives freedom. It is the same law that James discusses in his Epistle (James 2) and encourages the believers to “speak and so do as those who will be judged by *the law of liberty*” (v. 12 NKJV; emphasis added). Jesus Himself says in John 8:32 that abiding in His Word will make people free, and then He promises that whoever the Son sets free is free indeed.

In the context of the Old Testament, salvation for the Jews didn't have simply the religious, spiritual meaning of “going to heaven.” Salvation was first and foremost “deliverance,” being set free, and the Jews were expected to celebrate their “salvation” from Egypt. Both root words used to denote “salvation” in the Hebrew Old Testament—*yasha* and *shava*—have the meaning of “free, to set free, to be free.” God was completely consistent in His dealings with Israel by using the sanctions of *liberty* and *slavery*; when the Israelites disobeyed Him, they lost their salvation and went into *captivity*; when they were obedient, they were saved and therefore *free*. And when He tried to bring them back to Himself, His promise always was: “Repent, and I will deliver you from your oppressors.”

In addition, the law of God gave more liberties to the people under it than any other law anywhere else. It certainly was very “lax” toward foreign slaves who fled to Israel to gain freedom. The return of those slaves to their pagan masters was considered a heavy crime and was forbidden by the law. A fugitive slave was promised his freedom as long he decided to stay in Israel, under the protection of the law of God (Deut. 23:15–16).

It is often argued by theologians and pastors that the freedom that salvation brings is strictly spiritual, freedom from sin. Paul doesn't argue for the liberation of all slaves, they contend, and he admonishes slaves not to “worry” about being slaves (1 Cor. 7:21). But this is a very limited and dualistic view of freedom. While it is true that true liberty starts with freedom from sin, as Jesus argues in John 8, Paul also encourages slaves to use opportunities to become free, and he forbids free Christians from going into bondage. Paul didn't start a revolution for the liberation of slaves, but by his words he certainly laid the foundation for the disappearance of slavery in the future. The law of God—the same law that Jesus said He came to *fulfill*—certainly had many provisions for freedom, both from slavery and from unjust government oppression. And it is that law that Paul talks about when he says in 1 Timothy 1:8–11 that “the law is for ... kidnappers [i.e. slave dealers].” And he adds, “According to the glorious gospel ... with which I have been entrusted” (NASB).

The Concreteness of Freedom

Missionaries and evangelists to cultures that never had any Christian influence, or that have lost it, frequently encounter a major problem. They find that when they preach “salvation,” their local listeners are often confused as to the meaning of it. Others simply cannot see the need for “salvation.” *Salvation* as a term has no concrete meaning in cultures that never had any idea of hell to start with. It remains a vague religious notion; and it has no concrete meaning that can convey to them the dire need of their situation. Unless a person is already deeply touched by the message of the gospel, he has no idea of the need for salvation, and nothing to compare it to.

Very many cultures like the Roman Empire or modern India have ideas of “salvation” that are fundamentally pagan and anti-Christian; using the same term by missionaries creates confusion at best, and dangerous local heresies at worst. When a missionary approaches a person and tells him of the salvation he can have in Jesus Christ, the typical response is, “What do I need salvation from?” In most cultures around the world the word “salvation” has lost—or never had—its original concrete meaning of *deliverance from slavery*. Especially in Europe, with its deep suspicion of any religious terminology, preaching “salvation” automatically relegates a missionary to the list of socially irrelevant activists in the culture.

In contrast to this, preaching the original meaning of “salvation”—freedom, liberty, deliverance—gives the message of the gospel the concrete form that makes it possible to be conveyed to a hostile culture. The need for freedom is much clearer to the listeners, and it is much nearer to their hearts. Unbelievers don't need any special training in Biblical terminology to know they are not free and they need freedom.

Any person anywhere knows he is not free. Even if people do not realize it intellectually, the very reality they live in makes them aware of their slavery. An entrepreneur in Europe who has to wait for hours in front of a bureaucrat's office to get permission for business knows deep in his heart he isn't free. A parent who has no say in the education of his children in the government schools knows for sure that this is a form of slavery imposed on him from above. Every time a person files a tax form, he knows it is a symbol of captivity to the government. A woman in Saudi Arabia who is not allowed to give testimony in court even to save her own life knows she is a slave. Even better knowledge of

her own slavery has a woman in Afghanistan whose husband cut off her nose for disobeying him. A couple in China who see their newborn daughter taken away by the authorities to die under the “one child policy” knows very well there is a better world where parents have the freedom to enjoy raising their children without fear of government policies. An untouchable man in India who can’t find any other job except the lowest dirty jobs knows very well he is enslaved to his culture. Every person has an ingrained feeling of when his freedom is violated. We don’t have to teach people they are slaves; they know it very well.

Slavery has a very concrete reality; unbelievers know what it is long before they know their need for salvation, or even before they know what true freedom is. Therefore liberty, when preached and defended to those people, also has a very concrete reality. Even when there is no rational definition of freedom, there is always a certain intuitive feeling that freedom is preferable to slavery.

Liberty as a Tool of Evangelism

Therefore, an evangelist’s message must start with what his listeners already know very well: they are slaves and they need liberty. He must not limit his definition of liberty to a religious one, or to simply the eternal state of the souls in heaven. The gospel gives clear promises for *comprehensive* liberty for Christians, starting with the individual soul of man and going all the way to liberty for his culture and society. A missionary must use all the examples of slavery in a society to explain the cultural effects of sin. Every instance of violation of the freedom of individuals and institutions must be exposed in the missionary’s preaching; in fact, every instance of slavery is a sign of demonic domination on a particular aspect of society. The best way to expose the idols in the culture

is to point to the slavery they produce. And the missionary must keep repeating what his listeners already know: “You are slaves.”

And then, he must continue: “You are slaves because you are separated from Christ. Only those in Christ are truly free. And that freedom is what I am here to preach.” This is the message that most people will stop to hear. It is a relevant message for their lives because they know they are slaves and they hate it. And it is a theologically correct message because God continually uses the slavery of unrepentant men to bring them to repentance.

But he shouldn’t stop there. If he has gained their attention by pointing to their visible slavery as the result of their inner sinfulness, he should also have a theology that promises them deliverance from slavery—including visible slavery—as a result of their repentance and conversion. If people come to the missionary to hear his message because they know they are slaves, he had better be able to tell them how Christianity can deliver them from their slavery. Whether it is slavery to the welfare state, or slavery to the caste system, or slavery to Islamic shariah law, a Christian missionary must have a comprehensive message that proclaims liberty throughout the land. If he doesn’t, he will only destroy the very hopes he has created.

Indeed, there are many missionaries whose churches and missions eventually failed because they never gave the comprehensive solution to the hopes they raised. If you preach liberty, you had better preach *comprehensive* liberty and how to achieve it; otherwise you will lose your listeners.

What is even better today, twenty centuries since Christ gave us His Great Commission, is that we have a civilization that unmistakably exhibits the fruits of Christianity. Whatever the religion or

the worldview of a man is, millions of people around the world prefer to live in the West where there is much more freedom than in their own cultures. It is the Christian foundation that created the West, and it is the liberty that Christianity produced that attracts immigrants from other nations. Any missionary who doesn’t understand this fact has a twisted view of Christianity.

But more important than understanding the cultural impact of Christianity on the West is using it as an evangelistic tool when going to non-Western cultures. Every American missionary must unapologetically declare to his listeners the cultural superiority of Christianity and give America as the best—although admittedly not perfect—modern example. Yes, America is prosperous and free and just, more than any other nation. But freedom, prosperity, and justice did not appear by random chance in America; there was a reason for them, and it was the Christian faith of the founders of the United States.

Therefore a missionary must declare that if his listeners covet the liberty Americans have, they must start with the Christian faith that founded America. Promising liberty under the law of God is the only message that will be relevant in this world. Any other message that promises “salvation” in its limited, mystic sense is doomed to fail. 🙌

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You Have Heard It Said... But I Say...

Andrea Schwartz



People, whether they like it or acknowledge it, are products of their culture. We all are born into an ongoing story and absorb

premises and presuppositions from early on in our lives. Many who profess belief and loyalty to Jesus Christ and His Holy Word have been educated by those outside the faith and hold a multitude of conclusions drawn from faulty premises. Even within the ranks of Christian homeschooling, too few parents re-examine views they've held since childhood, and fail to use a Biblical lens to evaluate whether cultural norms are in fact Biblical norms.

Take, for example, the concept of "sharing." How many children are forced to allow other children to run roughshod over their belongings because their parents have told them they "have" to share? Is this "rule" a Biblical one, or does it stem from socialistic propaganda that advocates the redistribution of property and capital?

Even in Jesus' day, the religious leaders had perverted God's law to the point that Jesus rebuked them:

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. (Matt. 23:15)

Jesus would begin many of His teachings with the phrase, "You have heard it said," and then follow up with, "But I say." In each case, He was address-

ing some aspect of the Mosaic law that had been hijacked by the religious leaders of His day for their own purposes. As a result, their disciples were unwittingly offending God while under the impression that they were being righteous.

The voice of the modern church is one of accommodation rather than godly rebuke. The "pluralistic" mindset that has been continually force-fed leaves most who enter congregations feeling that all they need is minor tweaking in their lives rather than a complete overhaul. We've been told so often and for so long not to "judge," that "acceptance" has become the mark of holiness, rather than calling people to repentance. As a result, scooping necklines, drooping trousers, body piercings, and the like are all acceptable so long as there are vocal professions of faith to override them.

So, how is anyone to discern if his presuppositions and resultant actions are in line with a Biblical worldview? The answer lies in knowing the law of God within the context of redemption and how it constitutes a faith for all of life. Ecclesiastes concludes,

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. (Eccles. 12:13-14)

Thus, by examining the "givens" in life within the framework of God's law-word, a believer will stand on surer footing when it comes to living out the faith

in all spheres and arenas of life. God's law separates the fact from fiction.

Little Known Facts

The musical comedy *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* features a song sung by the know-it-all Lucy entitled "Little Known Facts."¹

Do you see that tree? It is a Fir tree. It's called a Fir tree because it gives us fur, for coats. It also gives us wool in the wintertime.

This is an elm tree. It's very little. But it will grow up into a giant tree, an oak. You can tell how old it is by counting its leaves.

And way up there, those fluffy little white things, those are clouds; they make the wind blow. And way down there, those tiny little black things, those are bugs. They make the grass grow ...

And this thing here, it's called a hydrant. They grow all over, and no one seems to know just how a little thing like that gives so much water.

Do you see that bird? It's called an Eagle, but since it's little it has another name, a Sparrow. And on Christmas and Thanksgiving we eat them.

And way up there, the little stars and planets, make the rain, that falls in showers.

And when it's cold and winter is upon us, the snow comes up, just like the flowers. After it comes up, the wind blows it around so it looks like it's coming down but actually it comes up, out of the ground—like grass.

It is easy to laugh at these ridiculous explanations, but how many similar "explanations" have millions of students

(and people in general) been fed and swallowed since their youth, not only in humanistic schools but in churches, too, simply because someone in a position of authority proclaimed them as true? Some examples:

- The earth is billions of years old, and all life began as a result of a Big Bang.
- The fetus is not a person.
- A family is defined by people living together who love each other.

But there are other, more subtle deceptions that many believers buy into that result in long-term negative consequences for themselves and their families.

Take, for example, the Pledge of Allegiance, which reads:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands: one Nation under God, indivisible, With Liberty and Justice for all.

How many have ever questioned the origins and premises of this oath?

Most Americans believe that the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was the work of the eighteenth-century founding fathers. In fact, the Pledge did not come about until 1892. It was authored by Francis Bellamy, a defrocked Baptist minister from Boston who identified himself as a “Christian Socialist” and was removed from the pulpit for preaching politics, specifically for espousing the view that “Jesus was a socialist.”²

Although not in the original form, the phrase “under God” was added in 1954 and has somehow legitimized this “loyalty oath” to many professing believers. Because they have compartmentalized their Christian faith and divorced it from politics and history, they miss the fact that the pledge has “much less to do with expressing love for one’s country, than more or less blind obedience to the consolidated, centralized state that

was created in the aftermath of the War between the States.”³

Most Christians think that the solution to our problems is to vote conservative, and many show more loyalty to America than to Christ. They fail to see that God’s law-word is a seamless garment and not a patchwork quilt of unrelated commandments. Jesus summarized the law in two great commandments. The Ten Commandments are an expansion of the two, with the case law designed to demonstrate practical applications. Thus, when you break one of God’s commandments, you really break all because of that unity. Rushdoony points out,

[W]hile a man’s faith has immediate consequences, those consequences are not necessarily apparent at once. Thus, a man who builds without a foundation has at once endangered his life’s structure, but that collapse will become apparent only with a storm. People who try to establish their lives and their children’s lives on a character without faith, on morality without roots, have thereby destroyed their future. The fact that the damage may only become apparent years later does not nullify the causal relationship.⁴

Just as general computer viruses don’t damage immediately, but hide alongside other programs, false premises or revisionist information piggybacked on well-established facts spread in a viral manner throughout our thoughts and life. Just as trojan viruses masquerade as something they’re not and eventually damage or erase a hard disk, so too the unquestioned or unexamined acceptance of what is taught will take its toll in a comprehensive way in our lives and the lives of future generations. It is only through a systematic study of the full counsel of God that one can identify the many “viruses” that have made their way into a person’s computations.

Uncovering these infections would

be an insurmountable task were it not for the reality that:

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Tim. 3:16–17)

In order to be thoroughly furnished unto all good works, nothing should be taken at face value without examining it first through the lens of Scripture.

[T]he man who hears the Lord’s words and obeys them is the man who lives in terms of God’s reality. Consequences are real to him, because actions are not autonomous nor isolated. All thoughts, acts, and words occur in God’s universe, and all have their consequences in terms of the world of God’s law. Nothing exists in autonomy or isolation from God and His law word. Every moment, thought, and event is inextricably linked to God’s total word and is inseparable from it. To be godly means in part recognizing that we are creatures of God, His creation and for His purpose and glory, and in seeing our lives in their totality as a part of that purpose. Then, instead of piecemeal religion, we have a Biblical faith.⁵

In My Life

Back in the seventies as a newly married couple, my husband and I didn’t have many possessions. What we had came as a result of gifts from family and weekend garage sales where we snatched up bargains. We were regularly counseled by friends that we should acquire credit cards, run up some bills, pay them off, and thereby establish a good credit rating. This, we were told, was how to become established, and someday we’d be able to buy a home. I remember the feeling of power when I saw something I wanted and could charge it. I even took enormous pleasure when I paid the monthly bills, knowing

that I was on my way to becoming a good credit risk.

We were nine years into our marriage when a friend introduced us to the writings of R. J. Rushdoony, specifically his *Institutes of Biblical Law*. My husband and I were so taken with the book that we began to fight over who was going to get to read it.⁶ Slowly but surely, we were developing a Biblical mindset, something that we had longed for but up until that point had never acquired. There were many instances where we concluded that premises and perspectives that we'd been taught or picked up were simply not true. We began to reorder our lives so that every area was examined from a Biblical perspective. One episode sticks out in my mind, when an established way of living was confronted with the truth of God's Word faithfully expounded.

We returned home one evening after a long day of shopping in Carmel, California. The whole family was glowing over our purchases, and my husband led us in a prayer of thanksgiving after we examined how much we had been able to buy. After dinner, I sat down to read some Rushdoony, specifically his little gem *Law & Liberty*. Within an hour, I told my husband that we had thanked the wrong person. We shouldn't have thanked God for our purchases of the day; we should have thanked MasterCard. I read to him:

[P]rivate property and moral order are closely linked together. When men are governed by God, they are more provident, more inclined to be debt-free, more responsible in their management of their families and affairs, and much more prone to own, cherish and husband property wisely. A high incidence of debt-free property indicates a high degree of godly living which is both provident and free of covetousness, for it is covetousness which breeds debt-living. The basic principle of Scripture

is clear-cut: "Owe no man anything, but to love one another" (Rom. 13:8). We do not truly own property unless it is debt-free. Debt is in essence a form of slavery, and the basic function of private property is to establish us in material liberty. A man who covets property of various kinds but cannot live debt-free is not seeking property on godly terms but on covetous terms.⁷

That night we took inventory of our financial situation. Ten years into our marriage, we had two children, two car payments, and almost \$15,000 in unsecured debt. With paying the interest on this balance, it dawned on me that we were paying interest for meals that had been eaten, digested, and eliminated. Also, any "great bargains" we procured while purchasing on credit, ended up costing us more than the original price tag. It was then that we had to confront the sinful premises and perspectives in which we were abiding. Dr. Rushdoony's words stung but were redemptive.

In Colossians 3:5, St. Paul defines evil covetousness as idolatry, and he declares that it is a sin that we must mortify or destroy in ourselves. Such covetousness seeks to exalt the man and to increase his possessions, but because it grounds itself on sin rather than God's law, it is destructive of both man and property. Those who move in terms of God's word become the blessed meek, the tamed of God, of whom the Psalmist says, "The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace" (Ps. 37:11).⁸

After this, we increased the earnestness with which we studied God's law and worked our way out of debt. Corrections were made in our thinking, resulting in some drastic changes in our lifestyle.

Another instance comes to mind where, instead of having to alter our course of action, we discovered that by

God's grace we had embarked on a path that was surprisingly orthodox.

During one of our first in-person meetings with Dr. Rushdoony (after having read a number of his books), he inquired about where my son was being educated. Not knowing that the man who stood in front of me in my living room was considered the father of the modern Christian school and homeschooling movements, I sheepishly answered, "Actually, we homeschool." He gave a resounding, "Excellent!" and proceeded to fill my arms with his books on education and a number written by Sam Blumenfeld. I commented to my husband later on, "Guess what? We're accidentally doing the right thing!" However, in retrospect, there was nothing accidental about God's loving, providential hand directing us. The Scriptures are clear that those who ask, receive; those who seek, find; and those who knock will find an opened door (Matt. 7:7-11).

As I continued to read Rushdoony's works, my commitment solidified to provide my children with an education that was not piecemeal, but systematic and thoroughly Biblical. Our family learned that there was nothing piecemeal about living out the implications of God's Word.

Modern man seems to believe in piecemeal religion: he thinks it is possible to profess Biblical faith on the Lord's Day, repeating the Apostle's Creed. On Monday, he sends his children to a state school which teaches humanism. He works in terms of non-biblical economics in a humanistic state. And he sees no contradiction. Our Lord however, was emphatic: piecemeal religion is an impossibility: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24).⁹

The Conclusion of the Matter

Only when all areas of life and thought are examined within the context of Scripture will we be able to discern between truth and falsehoods and unearth errors in our thinking. This examination needs to be systematic if we are going to advance the Kingdom of God on His terms.

The Bible, it cannot be repeated often enough, was not given to man to be an inspiring word, but the command word. It is not intended to please man, but to declare to him what he is in himself, and what he must be in the Lord. The Bible is inspired, not inspiring; it is infallible, because it is the word of God ...

A systematic Biblical theology will thus find it impossible to limit the religious realm to the ecclesiastical domain. God is totally God and Lord: the universe is totally under Him and His law-word.

A systematic theology which is faithful to the living God will thus speak to the totality of man and his life.¹⁰

Proverbs 3:7 instructs us: "Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil." That is how we discern between the "You have heard it said" fallacies and the truth of what God's Word declares. Jesus promised in John 16:12-15 that the Holy Spirit would guide us in all truth and take what is Christ's and impart it to us. Systematically following the Lord's commands with humility and gratitude is the path to victory. 📖

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1. Music and lyrics by Clark Gesner based on the characters created by cartoonist Charles M. Schulz.
2. Thomas J. DiLorenzo, *Lincoln Unmasked: What You're Not Supposed to Know About Dishonest Abe* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2006), 156.
3. *Ibid.*, 19.
4. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law, Vol. 2: Law and Society* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1982), 532.
5. *Ibid.*, 533.
6. The solution was easy: I read Volume 1, and he began with Volume 2.
7. Rushdoony, *Law & Liberty* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1984, 2009), 85.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Rushdoony, *Law and Society*, 527.
10. Rushdoony, *Systematic Theology* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1994), 117.

Rushdoony ... Virgin Birth cont. from page 3

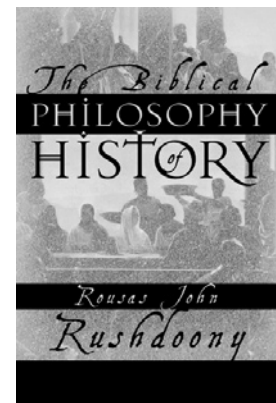
Him in the light of Christ. According to the Benedictus, the great forward movement of man in history began in Christ and with Christ.

Much more could be said. Suffice it to say that every aspect of the nativity narrative is not only historical, but also directed toward the fulfillment of the historical process. Unbelievers will revert to the pagan cyclical view of history, which is in effect a denial of relevance to history. And Christians who fail to see the historical relevance of the nativity will find little relevance in history. The modern "spiritualizing" of the prophecies of the nativity is a witness to the impotence of the contemporary church. As has been noted, there is no such perversion of Scripture and surrender of history in the works of Luther and Calvin. 📖

1. William F. Arndt, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (St. Louis, MI: Concordia, 1956), 60.
2. *Ibid.*, 62.

3. Jaroslav Pelikan, ed., *Luther's Works*, Vol. 21 (St. Louis, MI: Concordia, 1956), 343f.
4. *Ibid.*, 356f.
5. John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists*, I (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949), 58.
6. *Ibid.*, 60.

Time and History Have Meaning... Discover Them!



The Biblical Philosophy of History

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

Paperback, 138 pages, \$22.00

How Well Do American Christians Know Christianity?

Lee Duigon



During the reign of Josiah, King of Judah, the Lord's Temple in Jerusalem was renovated after a long period of neglect. As the repair and cleanup work proceeded, a priest discovered something.

Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD given by Moses ... And Shaphan carried the book to the king ... saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.

And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes ... saying, Go, enquire of the LORD for me, and for them that are left in Israel and Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do after all that is written in this book (2 Chron. 34:14b–21).

The Holy Scriptures had been left on the shelf and forgotten, and the young king was appalled.

The church in America has not yet reached that point—not yet—but according to a new report by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, we may be on our way.

The Survey

“On average,” Pew reports, “Americans correctly answered 16 of the 32

religious knowledge questions on the survey ... Atheists and agnostics average 20.9 correct answers. Jews and Mormons do about as well, averaging 20.5 and 20.3 correct answers, respectively. Protestants as a whole average 16 correct answers; Catholics as a whole, 14.7.”¹

“On questions about Christianity—including a battery of questions about the Bible—Mormons (7.9 out of 12 right on average) and white evangelical Protestants (7.3 correct on average) show the highest levels of knowledge.”²

“Previous surveys ... have shown that America is among the most religious of the world's developed nations,” says the report. “Nearly six-in-ten U.S. adults say that religion is ‘very important’ in their lives, and roughly four-in-ten say they attend worship services at least once a week. But the U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey shows that *large numbers of Americans are uninformed* about the tenets, practices, history and leading figures of major faith traditions—including *their own* ... [emphasis added]

“More than four-in-ten Catholics in the United States (45%) do not know that their church teaches that the bread and wine used in Communion do not merely symbolize but actually become the body and blood of Christ. About half of Protestants (53%) cannot correctly identify Martin Luther as the person whose writings and actions inspired the Protestant Reformation.”³

The Questions

The survey also showed that Americans don't seem very well-informed

about other religions; but our concern is with how much America's Christians know about Christianity.

The Pew Forum admits that the survey did “not necessarily” reflect “the most important things to know ... Nor was it meant to test trivia ... The questions included in the survey were intended to be representative of a body of knowledge about religion: they were not meant to be a list of the *most essential facts*.”⁴

So, what exactly were the questions asked of some 3,000 adult respondents? Some examples:

Name the first book of the Bible and the first four books of the New Testament. Where was Jesus born? Which teaches that salvation comes through faith alone—Protestantism, Catholicism, both, or neither? Who led the exodus from Egypt? Who inspired the Protestant Reformation? And so on—with most of the questions being multiple choice.

This is hardly a theology exam. The casual reader, if he visits the Pew Forum web page, can take a 15-question online quiz. My wife and I took the quiz, both of us scoring 100%. Although we thought the questions rather easy, Pew claims *less than 1% of those who took it scored 100*.

Nowhere did Pew set the bar very high. For instance: “Many Americans are devoted readers of Scripture. More than a third (37%) say they read the Bible or other Holy Scriptures at least once a week.”⁵

Dipping into the Bible once a week

is “devoted”? Sports fans check the box scores *every day*. We visit our favorite websites *every day*. If we were equally devoted to the Bible, we would read it every day. But Pew didn’t ask if anyone read the Bible daily.

Pew did ask:

*“Do you believe in God or a universal spirit, or not?” (#26)

*“How certain are you about this belief?” (#27)

*“The Bible is (choose one) the word of God / a book written by men and not the word of God.” (#28)

*“And would you say that (choose one) it is to be taken literally / not everything in the Bible should be taken literally?” (#29) [The entire body of 65 questions, plus survey methodology and other information, is available on a PDF file made accessible on the Pew Forum website.]

How did people answer those questions? We are not told. Nor are we told what percentage of the respondents believed or did not believe in evolution. In any event, we are left with the image of a churchful of Christians, only half of whom can name the four Gospels.

The Source of the Problem

“The flames of destruction are licking at their world, and the walls of discipline, which are the mainstay of civilization, are crashing down around them, and they are busy straightening pictures on a burning wall. One minister spent a morning recently preaching against the rise of ‘gosh’ and ‘darn.’ Another spent the evening hour preaching against the miniskirt and dress.

“Is this what men are called by God to do? Is this the gospel, or the great commission given to all Christians? Are we to preach on trifles, or do we truly have a great commission?”⁶

Yes, the problem is in the church—more specifically, with the preaching and teaching in the church. And since


Rushdoony wrote those words in a *California Farmer* essay sometime prior to 1991, the situation has gone from bad to worse.

Tibetan prayer chants, goddess worship and “feminist theology,” same-sex “marriages” or “commitment ceremonies,” dance interludes, and so on and so forth, have all been seen in churches lately, in lieu of Bible-based preaching and instruction. At this year’s Presbyterian Church USA General Assembly, some of the “worship services” were indistinguishable from Mardi Gras: there is video available for those who need to see it before they can believe it.⁷ It is difficult, if not impossible, to imagine how anyone could learn anything at all about Christianity in such a church environment.

Time and again the Bible, especially in St. Paul’s epistles, exhorts the church to focus on “the preaching of the cross” (1 Cor. 1:18): “For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2). And yet how many churches today feature sermons about politics, finances, “social justice,” interpersonal relations, the pastor’s own personal experiences, and his personal opinions on a variety of subjects—anything, indeed, but the preaching of the cross?

Any Christian, to be sure, can take it upon himself to know Christianity better. Anyone can read the Bible every day. (And everyone should!) Anyone on the internet can visit “Sermon Audio” (Sermonaudio.com) and numerous websites devoted to the exposition of the Christian faith (including our own, www.chalcedon.edu). A congregation’s ignorance reflects poorly on the church—but also on the individual members of the congregation. Nevertheless, since the days of Moses and Aaron it was the church’s God-given responsibility to instruct God’s people: and

by Josiah’s time, the church had so far failed in its duty that no living man had read the Scriptures. Josiah led a revival movement, but by then it was already too late.

In the next generation, God’s people—who no longer knew Him as their God—were led off into captivity by the pagan Babylonians, to rediscover God amid their tribulation. 

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1. “U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey,” Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion & Public Life, September 28, 2010, <http://pewforum.org/Other-Beliefs-and-Practices/U-S-Religious-Knowledge-Survey.aspx>.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. “U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey,” Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion & Public Life, September 28, 2010, <http://pewforum.org/U-S-Religious-Knowledge-Survey-FAQs-About-Measuring-Religious-Knowledge.aspx>

5. “U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey,” see note 1.

6. R. J. Rushdoony, *A Word in Season* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2010), 69–70.

7. See, for instance, “Liturgical Abuse: Puppets (WCCTA 2008),” May 14, 2008, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rh_nntp3VrU&Features=related.

Augustine of Hippo, Foundational Thinker, Part III

Augustine, *The City of God*

Rebecca Morecraft



My dear young reader, I want to take a moment to explain why I think reading Augustine of Hippo can be so important to your spiritual and intellectual development. This article is going to stretch your mind a little, so keep a notebook and dictionary close at hand. Most likely, you would not be reading the articles presented here if you were not already somewhat “epistemologically self-conscious.”¹ In other words, you already know that ideas have consequences,² and that an even greater truth than “You are what you eat” is “You are what you read.” Therefore, you should fill your mind with great thoughts that will undergird your developing philosophy of life and enable you to process words and ideas that seem difficult or even outdated to our largely illiterate culture.³ As you read and digest the writings of such men as Augustine, your thought processes will expand and you will find yourself, by God’s grace, not only able to grasp the beauty of words and phrases, but you may be brought to deeper spiritual comprehension. My prayer for you as I write is that from an early age you may know and love the God of Augustine as deeply as he did.

In our final look at the great foundational thinker, Augustine of Hippo, we will take a cursory look at his very complex book *The City of God*, written A.D. 413–426. It is exhaustive and sometimes exhausting! In it Augustine presents the world with a Biblical philosophy of his-

tory. Dr. Joe Morecraft⁴ believes it is important to think about history as stories of God’s mighty acts in the lives of men and nations in the past. In other words, “history” is really “His story.” Augustine understood this as well.

We are told that the great ruler Charlemagne delighted in hearing *The City of God* read to him at dinner, probably because this book has the “fascination of being a book about everything.”⁵ Augustine saw “mankind as occupying a battleground between two loyalties, heavenly and earthly, the self-denying love of God and the God-denying love of self.”⁶ He saw every area of life as a battlefield with mortal enemies at war in men’s hearts: will I live for the glory of God or for my selfish motives?

Augustine’s worldview (how we think about all of life) and epistemology (the study of knowledge) rested on this basic presupposition: I believe so that I may know. His actual words are these: “If thou art not able to understand, believe, that thou mayest understand.”⁷ He meant by that what Solomon meant in Proverbs 1:7: “**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.**” Augustine believed that knowledge of God and life does not come by reason, observation, or experience, but by divine revelation in the Bible and divine enlightenment by the Holy Spirit. For a person to possess true knowledge of God, life, and himself, and be able to tell right from wrong, he must subject himself and his mind to the Bible, believing that it is without mistakes and that it tells us what God wants us to know about ev-

erything. The psalmist knew this: “**For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light**” (Ps. 36:9).

Augustine was well-versed in the classical worldview of ancient and pagan Greece and Rome, which taught just the opposite: “I know that I may believe.” The classical method follows this path: reason, observation, and rational argument as the foundation of faith. Pagan Greece and Rome taught that all of life must be understood in terms of that reason, except those “religious” areas, which require faith. Augustine’s response to this man-centered quest for knowledge was this:

Will you be able to lift up your heart unto God? Must it not first be healed, in order that you may see? Do you not show your pride, when you say, First let me see, and then I will be healed.⁸

Augustine wrote the monumental book, *The City of God*, among other reasons, to refute that idea. His higher reason for writing this book was to give pastoral guidance and help to suffering, confused, and fearful Christians. Many Christians in the Roman Empire were being deceived by the pagan apologists. They felt helpless in their new situation—a world without Rome. They wondered why God had allowed Rome to fall. They could not answer the logic of the pagans because they did not have any real understanding of their own faith, the revealed truth of the written Word of God. Here’s what happened:

On August 28, 410, Alaric’s troops had stormed and sacked Rome. This event

had a shattering effect, far beyond its direct political importance. How had it come about that the capital of the ancient empire, the ruler of the world, the eternal city, had experienced such an overthrow? The world seemed to shake at its foundations, and the pagans knew the answer! In their eyes, the catastrophe was the recompense for abandoning the old guardian divinities and the traditional religion; the new Christian God of the empire had obviously proved impotent, and had failed.⁹

Many people who were suffering during and after the fall of Rome blamed the God of the Christians for the catastrophes that befell them. They said to the Christians: “Your God is powerless—we will return to our ‘gods’ to protect and help us.” And, indeed, this would be a tempting reaction when disaster is all around and you seem to be losing everything you once held as dear. Only a strong faith will see you through such a time. Do you have a bedrock understanding of your faith, dear reader? Can you say with the psalmist:

**God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though
the earth be removed, and though
the mountains be carried into the
midst of the sea; though the waters
thereof roar and be troubled,
though the mountains shake with
the swelling thereof. There is a
river, the streams whereof shall
make glad the city of God, the holy
place of the tabernacles of the most
High. God is in the midst of her;
she shall not be moved: God shall
help her, and that right early. The
heathen raged, the kingdoms were
moved: He uttered His voice, the
earth melted. The LORD of hosts
is with us; the God of Jacob is our
refuge. —Psalm 46:1–7**

If this is your testimony in the

midst of a falling-down world, then you understand and agree with Augustine’s attitude: the city of man will someday become the city of God because God will never leave His people. He is always “in the midst of her,” as a Refuge and mighty Warrior, strong to save.

Augustine began *The City of God* in A.D. 412 and completed it over the next thirteen years. It changed “the way a whole society viewed its existence,” from being man-centered toward being God-centered.¹⁰

In reality, one does not truly believe in God so long as one conceives of Him only as a means to provide the good things and happiness in this world, so that they may be enjoyed peacefully, and despairs of Him the moment external disaster occurs . . . He only can participate in the meaning of life who is sincerely humble before God, who accepts all that God sends, and who gladly and willingly continues on his pilgrimage because he believes in an all-perfecting eternity which will be just as much God’s as are all the troubles of this present time . . . [Augustine] explains in detail that suffering is not mere suffering, but, depending on how one bears it, can be a curse or a blessing already in this life, in that it does indeed harden the ungodly, but it purifies and liberates the believer from his remaining inward burden.¹¹

As Augustine studied the Scriptures, he began to understand history in a new way. He had been trained as a rhetorician, in the classical methodology that glorified the mind of man. But as Augustine read Genesis, he realized that from the beginning of the human race two communities have existed in the world in fierce opposition to each other. Genesis 3:15 refers to them as “the seed of the serpent” and “the seed of Eve.” Genesis 4 and 5 describe them as “the ungodly line of Cain” and “the godly line of Seth.” They have also been de-

scribed as the church versus the world, the unregenerate versus the regenerate. Augustine refers to them as two cities—the city of God and the city of Man. These two communities are formed and characterized by two loves: love of God and contempt for self, and love of self and contempt for God. These two streams of humanity will continue in conflict to the end of history and Judgment Day “in the eternal ‘city of God,’ where victory is truth, where dignity is holiness, where peace is happiness, where life is eternity.”¹²

This view of history is directly contradictory to the classical and cyclical view of history. History that merely repeats itself is aimless and completely comfortless. Augustine argued that history is linear. It is moving toward a God-appointed goal and, therefore, it has God-given meaning and purpose. In *The City of God* Augustine traces these two cities throughout the entire course of history. He gives a detailed description of the origin, development, and progress on earth in the history of these cities, concluding with the consummation at the second coming of Christ and Judgment Day.

Dr. R. J. Rushdoony, in *Foundations of Social Order*, makes this astute comment:

After St. Augustine, we can therefore say that two cities, empires, or orders are seeking realization in history, are attempting to become the visible order of history. These two are the City of God and the City of Man. The strategy of the City of Man is to deny the antithesis between the two orders in order to neutralize and destroy the City of God.¹³

The City of God comprises twenty-two books or chapters in two main sections, Books 1–10 and Books 11–22. Its theme, according to Augustine, is “two loves gave birth to two cities” (14.28). Books 1–10 answer three related ques-

tions: “(1) Was Christianity responsible for the fall of Rome, paganism for its rise? (2) If not paganism, what spiritual power had presided over the rise of Rome? (3) Has any pagan system a serious claim against Christianity as the true spiritual religion?”¹⁴ And Books 11–22 set forth the “origin, history, and end” of the City of God and the City of Man.

George Grant offers this helpful commentary on the value of *The City of God*:

According to Augustine, cultures are not reflections of a people’s race, ethnicity, folklore, politics, language, or heritage. Rather they are outworkings of creeds and confessions ... If a culture begins to change, it is not because of fads, fashions, or the passing of time, it is because of a shift in worldview—it is because of a change of faith. Thus, race, ethnicity, folklore, politics, language, or heritage are simply expressions of a deeper paradigm rooted in the covenantal and spiritual matrix of a community’s religion and the integrity of its witness—or the lack thereof ...

Augustine recognized that a people’s dominant worldview inevitably shapes the world they have in view. And he also recognized that the Household of Faith is the genesis point for the development of that worldview as it faithfully fulfills its calling to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with Almighty God ... It is only when the church fails to fulfill its calling in this poor fallen world that we have to really worry. It is only when the church fails to uphold the standards of justice, mercy, and humble faith that the onslaughts of the enemies of truth can possibly have their intended ill-effects. It is only when the church creates a vacuum by its own inactivity and impiety that the minions of this world have the opportunity to exploit the innocent, the foolish, or the inattentive.

That is the real focus of Augustine’s work. He points out that the only reason the sundry enemies of the Gospel

have been able to make headway with their vile plans is that the church has not been all that God has called us to be or done all that God has called us to do ... The reality is that whatever the Church does—or doesn’t do—directly affects the course of civilization. It determines the flow of historical events, Revelation 5–6. The Church has the keys to the Kingdom, Matthew 16:19. It has the power to bind and loose, Matthew 18:18. It has the authority to prevail over the very gates of hell, Matthew 16:18. It is, thus, the Church—not governments or movements or causes or organizations—that will determine our destiny and the destiny of our world ... Without the context of the Church, even the most dynamic Christian character is exposed to atrophy and entropy. But, within that context, our alertness, steadfastness, courage, strength, and love become powerful weapons in our ordained spiritual warfare.

The whole thrust of *The City of God* is to posit this remarkable perspective. It is to portray the Church and its members—and the eternal Kingdom which they manifest—in stark contrast to the world and its worldly-wisdom. Augustine’s aim is to offer a practical exposition of the Gospel hope. Thus the book is a vital resource for substantive encouragement in the midst of a roiling sea of trouble ... After all, the future of our culture ... does not depend upon the machinations of political messiahs or the manipulations of institutional solutions. Neither does it depend on the emergence of some new brilliant spokesman or inspiring leader who has the strength or ability to overcome the forces of darkness. Instead, the future of our culture depends upon ordinary men and women in the Church who are willing to live lives of justice, mercy, and humility before God. It depends on people like you and me who determine to live balanced lives in accord with the good providence of God before a watching world. It depends upon the magnificent emergence of the City of God.¹⁵

The City of God, then, is not only “a book on history, theology, and ethics ... It is also the reflection of a great man’s mind and practically a world in itself. And I think we can understand why Charlemagne enjoyed it.”¹⁶ Later in history, men such as Martin Luther said, “[T]his one book ... set the very course of Western civilization.”¹⁷ And a contemporary of the last century, Cornelius Van Til, remarked: “I can hardly think of a more relevant book than *The City of God*.”¹⁸

With such high recommendations, my friend, I leave you with a suggestion: *Tolle Lege!* “Take and read!” 📖

Becky Morecraft is thankful to be married to Dr. Joe Morecraft, pastor of Chalcedon Presbyterian Church in Cumming, GA. They have been married for 39 years and have four children and seven grandchildren. Becky loves to sing with her sister, Judy Rogers, and to read and write. She is grateful to her parents and grandparents for teaching her to love the Lord at an early age and to appreciate her heritage.

1. Epistemology is the study of how we know what we know.
2. This is the title of an important book by historian Richard Weaver.
3. “[O]ur national literacy has been declining since 1965, not only among disadvantaged children but also among our top students ... [T]he decline has occurred at a time when truly functional literacy is becoming ever more important to our economic well-being ... [P]roviding everyone with a high level of literacy is important in holding together the social fabric of the nation.” E. D. Hirsch, Jr., *The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1988), xi.
4. I am once again greatly indebted to my dear husband, Joe Morecraft, for the research and information comprising much of this article.
5. Edward R. Hardy, Jr., “The City of God,” in *A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine*, ed. Roy W. Battenhouse (1955; reprint, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House,

1979), 259.

6. *Ibid.*, 258.

7. Augustine, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the Gospel; Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 6, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. by Rev. R. G. MacMullen (1888; reprint Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2004), 465.

8. Augustine, quoted by Robert E. Cushman, *Companion*, 299.

9. Hans von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Church*, combined edition of *The Fathers of the Greek Church* and *The Fathers of the Latin Church* (United States: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1998), 241.

10. Colin Wright, "St. Augustine: His Life and Thought, Part V: Augustine's Philosophy," *Christianity and Society*, Vol. 7, No. 1, ed. Stephen C. Perks (Somerset, England, 1997), 6.

11. Von Campenhausen, 242–243.

12. Augustine, *The City of God*, II, 29, quoted by von Campenhausen, 247.

13. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Foundations of Social Order* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1968), 152.

14. Hardy, 260.

15. George Grant, www.kingsmeadow.com

16. Hardy, 281.

17. www.augnet.org

18. Grant, www.kingsmeadow.com

McVicar ... "Rushdoony" cont. from page 11

of those at the Chalcedon Foundation to his numerous books to the wider Christian homeschooling movement, which remains deeply indebted to his ideas and judicial activism. Much of his legacy, however, remains obscured by the past. His vision of Christian Reconstruction is a highly personal one that can only come about through the direct, face-to-face contact between dedicated Christians. The process of Christian Reconstruction happens in homes, living rooms, schoolrooms, board meetings, and in church basements. It is a slow, multigenerational process that builds slowly as women and men work to build the Kingdom of God.

The consequence of this quiet process of Reconstruction means that Rushdoony's library is all the more important because it serves as a critical resource for documenting a largely undocumented movement. As Gary North once noted, "No historian will ever be able to go back and identify in terms of the primary source documents [the history of the Christian Reconstruction movement] because *we* can't possibly do it."²⁹ In many ways, Dr. North is certainly correct. Aside from the major publications of the movement's leaders and their random collections of letters and manuscripts, much of movement's history remains undocumented and undocumentable. Thankfully, however, Rushdoony's tireless work was memorialized in his library, a priceless archive that will provide historians and students a fragmentary glimpse of the life and work of this important American. 🇺🇸

Michael J. McVicar recently completed a dissertation exploring the relationship between the ministry of R. J. Rushdoony and the American conservative movement. He lectures at various universities in Ohio. McVicar is not a Reconstructionist. He can be reached with questions and comments mcvicar.2@gmail.com.

1. Psalm 138:8 KJV.

2. I have recounted some of the history of Rushdoony's life on the reservation in Michael J. McVicar, "First Owyhee and Then the World: The Early Ministry of R. J. Rushdoony," *Faith for All of Life* (November/December 2008).

3. R. J. Rushdoony to Dave Stowe, January 2, 1946, R. J. Rushdoony Library, Chalcedon Foundation, Vallecito, CA (hereafter cited as the RJR Library).

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*

6. R. J. Rushdoony, *By What Standard? An Analysis of the Philosophy of Cornelius Van Til* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1995), 25.

7. *Ibid.*, 30.

8. *Ibid.*, 55.

9. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, Vol. I (Presbyterian and Reformed, 1973).

10. Genesis 1:26–28 NIV.

11. Rushdoony, *Institutes of Biblical Law*, 14.

12. *Ibid.*

13. R. J. Rushdoony, "Chacedon Report No. 1," October 1, 1965, reprinted in *The Roots of Reconstruction* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1991), 545.

14. Rushdoony distills these various forms of work into "manual labor, agriculture, and science." See, R. J. Rushdoony, *Revolt Against Maturity: A Biblical Psychology of Man* (Fairfax, VA: Thoburn Press, 1977), 17.

15. Emphasis in the original. R. J. Rushdoony to Gary North, March 16, 1962, RJR Library.

16. Mark Rousas Rushdoony, "Books, My Father's Treasure," *Chalcedon Report*, no. 439 (March 2002): 9.

17. *Ibid.*

18. Rushdoony, "Books, My Father's Treasure," 9.

19. *Ibid.*, 10.

20. Some of his early columns for the *California Farmer* are collected in Rousas John Rushdoony, *Bread upon the Waters: Columns from the California Farmer* (Fairfax, VA: Thoburn Press, 1969).

21. R. J. Rushdoony to Gary North, March 16, 1962, RJR Library.

22. R. J. Rushdoony to George Pearson, n.d., RJR Library.

23. *Ibid.*

24. R. J. Rushdoony journal entry for February 4, 1983, RJR Library.

25. *Ibid.*

26. R. J. Rushdoony journal entry for February 22, 1983, RJR Library.

27. R. J. Rushdoony to James B. Jordan, March 12, 1981, RJR Library.

28. R. J. Rushdoony journal entry for February 6, 1998, RJR Library.

29. Gary North quoted in Frederick Clarkson, "Christian Reconstruction: Theocratic Dominionism Gains Influence," in *Eyes Right! Challenging the Right Wing Backlash*, ed. Chip Berlet (Boston: South End Press, 1995), 66.

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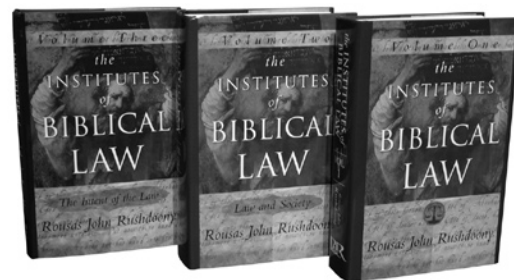
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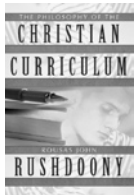
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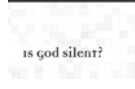
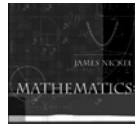
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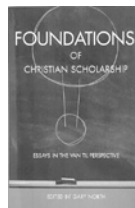
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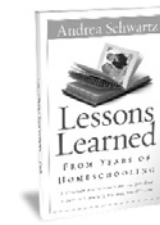


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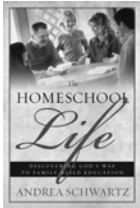


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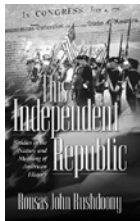
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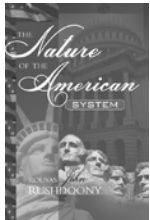
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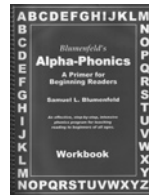
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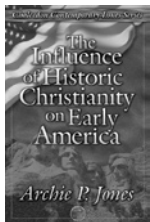
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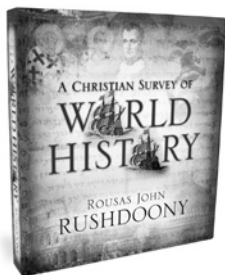
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Includes 12 audio CDs, full text supporting the lectures, review questions, discussion questions, and an answer key.

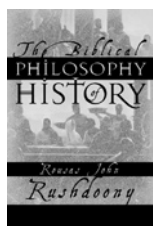
The purpose of a study of history is to shape the future. Too much of history teaching centers upon events, persons, or ideas as facts but does not recognize God's providential hand in judging humanistic man in order to build His Kingdom. History is God-ordained and presents the great battle between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Man. History is full of purpose—each Kingdom has its own goal for the end of history, and those goals are in constant conflict. Nothing about history is meaningless—history is always faith and philosophy in action. Not many history courses can equip Christians for faith and action, but this course has served that capacity for over four decades. A Christian Survey of World History can be used as a stand-alone curriculum, or as a supplement to a study of world history.

- Disc 1 Time and History: Why History is Important
- Disc 2 Israel, Egypt, and the Ancient Near East
- Disc 3 Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Jesus Christ
- Disc 4 The Roman Republic
- Disc 5 The Early Church & Byzantium
- Disc 6 Islam & The Frontier Age

- Disc 7 New Humanism or Medieval Period
- Disc 8 The Reformation
- Disc 9 Wars of Religion – So Called & The Thirty Years War
- Disc 10 France: Louis XIV through Napoleon
- Disc 11 England: The Puritans through Queen Victoria
- Disc 12 20th Century: The Intellectual – Scientific Elite

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The Biblical Philosophy of History

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

Paperback, 138 pages,

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James I: The Fool as King

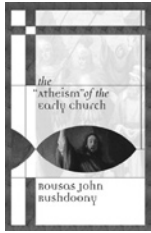
By Otto Scott. In this study, Otto Scott writes about one of the "holy" fools of humanism who worked against the faith from within. This is a major historical work and marvelous reading.

Hardback, 472 pages,

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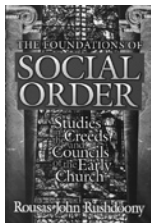
Church History



The "Atheism" of the Early Church

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

Paperback, 64 pages, \$ **\$8.40**



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

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

Paperback, 197 pages, index, \$ **\$11.20**

Philosophy



The Death of Meaning

By Rousas John Rushdoony. For centuries on end, humanistic philosophers have produced endless books and treatises which attempt to explain reality without God or the mediatory work of His Son, Jesus Christ. Modern philosophy has sought to explain man and his thought process without acknowledging God, His Revelation, or man's sin. God holds all such efforts in derision and subjects their authors and adherents to futility. Philosophers who rebel against God are compelled to *abandon meaning itself*, for they possess neither the tools nor the place to anchor it. The works of darkness championed by philosophers past and present need to be exposed and reprov'd. In this volume, Dr. Rushdoony clearly enunciates each major philosopher's position and its implications, identifies the intellectual and moral consequences of each school of thought, and traces the dead-end to which each naturally leads. There is only one foundation. Without Christ, meaning and morality are anchored to shifting sand, and a counsel of despair prevails. This penetrating yet brief volume provides clear guidance, even for laymen unfamiliar with philosophy.

Paperback, 180 pages, index, \$ **\$12.60**



The Word of Flux: Modern Man and the Problem of Knowledge

By R.J. Rushdoony. Modern man has a problem with knowledge. He cannot accept God's Word about the world or anything else, so anything which points to God must be called into question. Man, once he makes himself ultimate, is unable to know anything but himself. Because of this impasse, modern thinking has become progressively pragmatic. This book will lead the reader to understand that this problem of knowledge underlies the isolation and self-torment of modern man. Can you know anything if you reject God and His revelation? This book takes the reader into the heart of modern man's intellectual dilemma.

Paperback, 127 pages, indices, \$ **\$13.30**



To Be As God: A Study of Modern Thought Since the Marquis De Sade

By R.J. Rushdoony. This monumental work is a series of essays on the influential thinkers and ideas in modern times. The author begins with De Sade, who self-consciously broke with any Christian basis for morality and law. Enlightenment thinking began with nature as the only reality, and Christianity was reduced to one option among many. It was then, in turn, attacked as anti-democratic and anti-freedom for its dogmatic assertion of the supernatural. Literary figures such as Shelly, Byron, Whitman, and more are also examined, for the Enlightenment presented both the intellectual and the artist as replacement for the theologian and his church. Ideas, such as "the spirit of the age," truth, reason, Romanticism, persona, and Gnosticism are related to the desire to negate God and Christian ethics. Reading this book will help you understand the need to avoid the syncretistic blending of humanistic philosophy with the Christian faith.

Paperback, 230 pages, indices, \$ **\$14.70**



By What Standard?

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

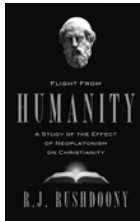
Hardback, 212 pages, index, \$ **\$9.80**



The One and the Many

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

Paperback, 375 pages, index, **\$18.20**



The Flight from Humanity

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

Paperback, 84 pages, **\$9.10**

Psychology



Politics of Guilt and Pity

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

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

Hardback, 371 pages, index, **\$14.00**

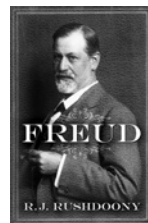


Revolt Against Maturity

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

filled with responsibility to God. Man's psychological problems are therefore a resistance to responsibility, i.e. a revolt against maturity.

Hardback, 334 pages, index, **\$12.60**



Freud

By R.J. Rushdoony. For years this compact examination of Freud has been out of print. And although both Freud and Rushdoony have passed on, their ideas are still very much in collision. Freud declared war upon guilt and sought to eradicate the primary source to Western guilt — Christianity. Rushdoony shows conclusively the error of Freud's thought and the disastrous consequences of his influence in society.

Paperback, 74 pages, **\$9.10**

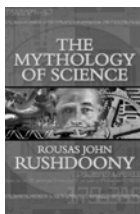


The Cure of Souls: Recovering the Biblical Doctrine of Confession

By R. J. Rushdoony. In *The Cure of Souls: Recovering the Biblical Doctrine of Confession*, R. J. Rushdoony cuts through the misuse of Romanism and modern psychology to restore the doctrine of confession to a Biblical foundation—one that is covenantal and Calvinistic. Without a true restoration of Biblical confession, the Christian's walk is impeded by the remains of sin. This volume is an effort in reversing this trend.

Hardback, 320 pages with index, **\$18.20**

Science

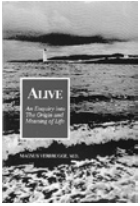


The Mythology of Science

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

Paperback, 134 pages, **\$11.90**

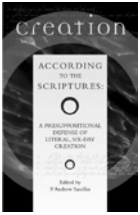
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Alive: An Enquiry into the Origin and Meaning of Life

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

Paperback, 159 pages, **\$9.80**



Creation According to the Scriptures

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

Paperback, 159 pages, \$ **\$12.60**

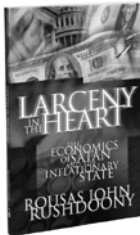
Economics



Making Sense of Your Dollars: A Biblical Approach to Wealth

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

Paperback, 192 pages, index, \$ **\$8.40**

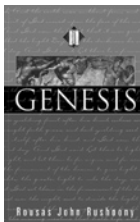


Larceny in the Heart: The Economics of Satan and the Inflationary State

By R.J. Rushdoony. In this study, first published under the title *Roots of Inflation*, the reader sees why envy often causes the most successful and advanced members of society to be deemed criminals. The reader is shown how envious man finds any superiority in others intolerable and how this leads to a desire for a leveling. The author uncovers the larceny in the heart of man and its results. See how class warfare and a social order based on conflict lead to disaster. This book is essential reading for an understanding of the moral crisis of modern economics and the only certain long-term cure.

Paperback, 144 pages, indices, **\$12.60**

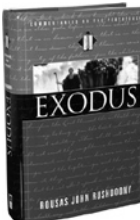
Biblical Studies



Genesis, Volume I of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

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. 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. The entire book of Genesis is basic to Biblical theology. The church needs to re-study it to recognize its centrality.

Hardback, 297 pages, indices, \$ **\$31.50**



Exodus, Volume II of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

Essentially, all of mankind is on some sort of an exodus. However, the path of fallen man is vastly different from that of the righteous. Apart from Jesus Christ and His atoning work, the exodus of a fallen humanity means only a further descent from sin into death. But in Christ, the exodus is now a glorious ascent into the justice and dominion of the everlasting Kingdom of God. Therefore, if we are to better understand the gracious provisions made for us in the "promised land" of the New Covenant, a thorough examination into the historic path of Israel as described in the book of Exodus is essential. It is to this end that this volume was written.

Hardback, 554 pages, indices, **\$31.50**

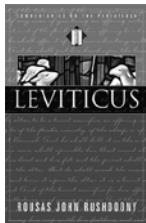
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Leviticus, Volume III of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

Much like the book of Proverbs, any emphasis upon the practical applications of God's law is readily shunned in pursuit of more "spiritual" studies. Books like Leviticus are considered dull, overbearing, and irrelevant. But man was created in God's image and is duty-bound to develop the implications of that image by obedience to God's law. The book of Leviticus contains over ninety references to the 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. This present study is dedicated to equipping His church for that redemptive mission.

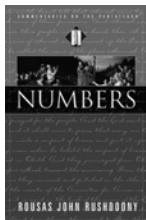
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Numbers, Volume IV of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

The Lord desires a people who will embrace their responsibilities. The history of Israel in the wilderness is a sad narrative of a people with hearts hardened by complaint and rebellion to God's ordained authorities. They were slaves, not an army. They would recognize the tyranny of Pharaoh but disregard the servant-leadership of Moses. God would judge the generation He led out of captivity, while training a new generation to conquer Canaan. The book of Numbers reveals God's dealings with both generations. The rebellious in Israel are judged incessantly while a census is taken to number the armies of Israel according to their tribes. This was an assessment of strength and a means to encourage the younger generation to view themselves as God's army and not Pharaoh's slaves.

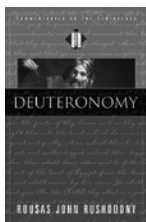
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Deuteronomy, Volume V of Commentaries on the Pentateuch

If you desire to understand the core of Rushdoony's thinking, this commentary on *Deuteronomy* is one volume you must read. The covenantal structure of this last book of Moses, its detailed listing of both blessings and curses, and its strong presentation of godly theocracy provided Rushdoony with a solid foundation from which to summarize the central tenets of a truly Biblical worldview—one that is solidly established upon Biblical Law, and one that is assured to shape the future.

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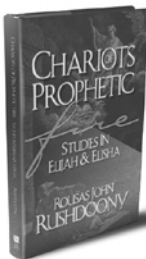
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Chariots of Prophetic Fire: Studies in Elijah and Elisha

By R. J. Rushdoony. See how close Israel's religious failure resembles our own! Read this to see how the modern Christian is again guilty of Baal worship, of how inflation-fed prosperity caused a loosening of morals, syncretism and a decline in educational performance. As in the days of Elijah and Elisha, it is once again said to be a virtue to tolerate evil and condemn those who do not. This book will challenge you to resist compromise and the temptation of expediency. It will help you take a stand by faith for God's truth in a culture of falsehoods.

Hardback, 163 pages, indices

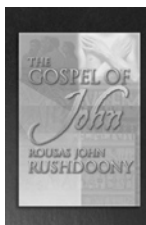
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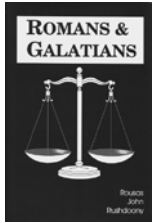
The Gospel of John

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

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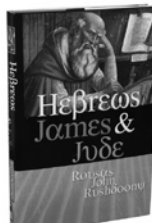
Romans and Galatians

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

The great problem in the church's interpretation of Scripture has been its ecclesiastical orientation, as though God speaks only to the church, and

commands only the church. The Lord God speaks in and through His Word to the whole man, to every man, and to every area of life and thought. . . . To assume that the Triune Creator of all things is in His word and person only relevant to the church is to deny His Lordship or sovereignty. If we turn loose the whole Word of God onto the church and the world, we shall see with joy its power and glory. This is the purpose of my brief comments on Romans."

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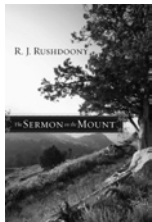


Hebrews, James and Jude

By R.J. Rushdoony. There is a resounding call in Hebrews, which we cannot forget without going astray: "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach" (13:13). This is a summons to serve Christ the Redeemer-King fully and faithfully, without compromise. When James, in his epistle, says that faith without works is dead, he tells us that faith is not a mere matter of words, but it is of necessity

a matter of life. "Pure religion and undefiled" requires Christian charity and action. Anything short of this is a self-delusion. James's letter is a corrective the church needs badly. Jude similarly recalls us to Jesus Christ's apostolic commission, "Remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 17). Jude's letter reminds us of the necessity for a new creation beginning with us, and of the inescapable triumph of the Kingdom of God.

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Sermon on the Mount

By R. J. Rushdoony. So much has been written about the Sermon on the Mount, but so little of the commentaries venture outside of the matters of the heart. The Beatitudes are reduced to the assumed meaning of their more popular portions, and much of that meaning limits our concerns to downplaying wealth, praying in secret, suppressing our worries,

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

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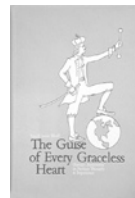
Sermon on the Mount Book & CD Set (12 CDs) \$69.30



The Church Is Israel Now

By Charles D. Provan. For the last century, Christians have been told that God has an unconditional love for persons racially descended from Abraham. Membership in Israel is said to be a matter of race, not faith. This book repudiates such a racist viewpoint and abounds in Scripture references which show that the blessings of Israel were transferred to all those who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Paperback, 74 pages, \$8.40



The Guise of Every Graceless Heart

By Terrill Irwin Elniff. An extremely important and fresh study of Puritan thought in early America. On Biblical and theological grounds, Puritan preachers and writers challenged the autonomy of man, though not always consistently.

Hardback, 120 pages \$4.90



The Great Christian Revolution

By Otto Scott, Mark R. Rushdoony, R.J. Rushdoony, John Lofton, and Martin Selbrede. A major work on the impact of Reformed thinking on our civilization. Some of the studies, historical and theological, break new ground and provide perspectives previously unknown or neglected

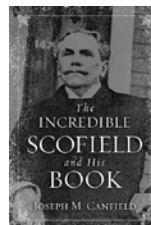
Hardback, 327 pages, \$15.40



Keeping Our Sacred Trust

Edited by Andrew Sandlin. The Bible and the Christian Faith have been under attack in one way or another throughout much of the history of the church, but only in recent times have these attacks been perceived *within* the church as a healthy alternative to orthodoxy. This book is a trumpet blast heralding a full-orbed, Biblical, orthodox Christianity. The hope of the modern world is not a passive compromise with passing heterodox fads, but aggressive devotion to the time-honored Faith "once delivered to the saints."

Paperback, 167 pages, \$13.30

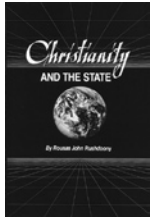


The Incredible Scofield and His Book

By Joseph M. Canfield. This powerful and fully documented study exposes the questionable background and faulty theology of the man responsible for the popular Scofield Reference Bible, which did much to promote the dispensational system. The story is disturbing in its historical account of the illusive personality canonized as a dispensational saint and calls into question the seriousness of his motives and scholarship.

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Taking Dominion



Christianity and the State

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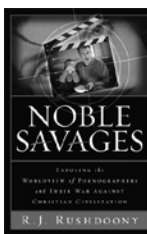


Salvation and Godly Rule

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

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Noble Savages: Exposing the Worldview of Pornographers and Their War Against Christian Civilization

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the Marquis de Sade argued, then all that man does is normative. Rushdoony concluded, "[T]he world will soon catch up with Sade, unless it abandons its humanistic foundations." 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

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

of a humanistic world order. In this book, Rushdoony elucidates the Christian's calling to charity and its implications for Godly dominion. In an age when Christian action is viewed in political terms, a return to Christian works of compassion and Godly service will help usher in a return of the reign of God as no piece of legislation ever could.

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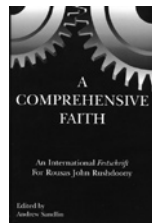


Roots of Reconstruction

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

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A Comprehensive Faith

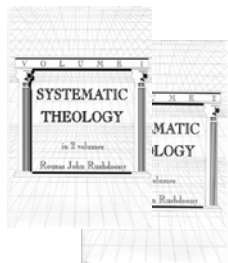
Edited by Andrew Sandlin. This is the surprise *Festschrift* presented to R.J. Rushdoony at his 80th birthday celebration in April, 1996. These essays are in gratitude to Rush's influence and elucidate the importance of his theological and philosophical contributions in numerous fields. Contributors include Theodore Letis, Brian Abshire, Steve Schlissel, Joe

Morecraft III, Jean-Marc Berthoud, Byron Snapp, Samuel Blumenfeld, Christine and Thomas Schirmacher, 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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Theology

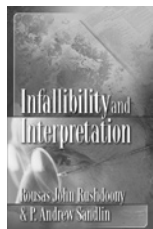


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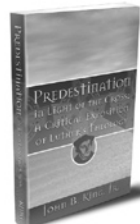
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By Rousas John Rushdoony & P. Andrew Sandlin. The authors argue for infallibility from a distinctly presuppositional perspective. That is, their arguments are unapologetically circular because they believe all ultimate claims are based on one's beginning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

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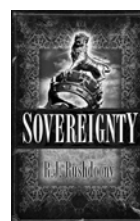


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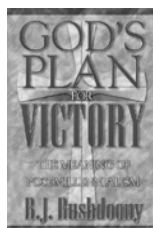


Thine is the Kingdom: A Study of the Postmillennial Hope

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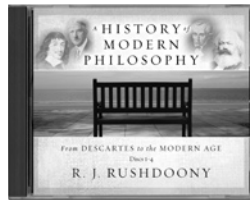
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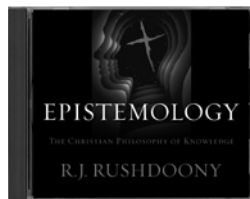
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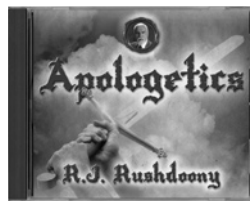
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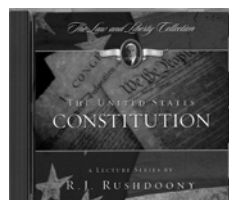
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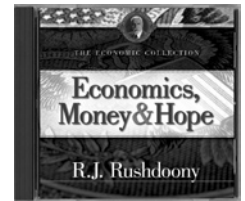
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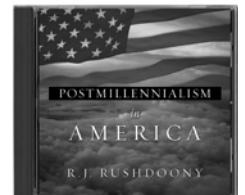


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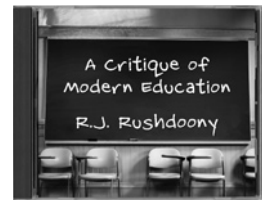
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