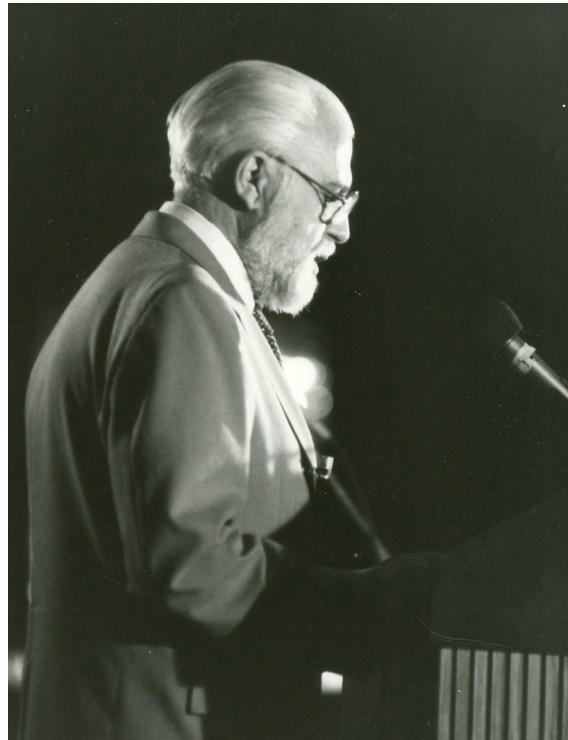


Transcripts of
**CHRIST, POLITICS &
the MEDIA**

A Lecture Series by R.J. Rushdoony



R.J. RUSHDOONY

(1916–2001)

Rev. R.J. Rushdoony (1916–2001), was a leading theologian, church/state expert, and author of numerous works on the application of Biblical law to society. He started the Chalcedon Foundation in 1965. His Institutes of Biblical Law (1973) began the contemporary theonomy movement which posits the validity of Biblical law as God's standard of obedience for all. He therefore saw God's law as the basis of the modern Christian response to the cultural decline, one he attributed to the church's false view of God's law being opposed to His grace. This broad Christian response he described as "Christian Reconstruction." He is credited with igniting the modern Christian school and homeschooling movements in the mid to late 20th century. He also traveled extensively lecturing and serving as an expert witness in numerous court cases regarding religious liberty. Many ministry and educational efforts that continue today, took their philosophical and Biblical roots from his lectures and books.

Learn more about R.J. Rushdoony by visiting: <https://chalcedon.edu/founder>

The State as Sovereign

R.J. Rushdoony

Our subject in this morning's session is 'The State as Sovereign.' In the afternoon our subject will be 'the necessary vision.' To understand the Biblical perspective on civil government we must begin with God, not the state. The fundamental premise of scripture from beginning to end is that God is the Lord. The word 'Lord' in the Old Testament Hebrew 'Adonai' is the most frequently applied term to God. In the New Testament the term 'Kurios,' Lord, in the Greek, is the most frequently applied term to Jesus Christ. Translate that word into modern terminology and it is: 'sovereign.' The Bible makes clear that only God the Lord is sovereign, not the state. But nothing is more basic to the doctrine of civil government today than the sovereignty of the state. We are told in Acts 17:28 that all things live and move and have their being in God.

But basic to the concept of the modern state is that all things must live, move, and have their being in the state. And that the state has the right to control all things; all things must live under its jurisdiction and by its law. So that in many civil governments a meeting such as this cannot take place without the state's permission. And the law actually covers that, I am told, in Florida, so that technically, this is an illegal meeting. The modern state thus sees itself as the sovereign governor over all things, and nothing has a legitimate existence apart from its permission and its approval.

Let us pause for a moment to define the word 'government' as Christians have historically defined it, to review matters that I have covered in Atlanta on another occasion. For us as Christians, the basic government is first the self-government of the Christian man. Second, the family. Third, the school. Fourth, the church. Fifth, your vocation. Sixth, society. And finally, seventh, as one form of government among many-civil governments. All these areas govern us; our work governs us; it sets the pattern of our daily life. The conditions whereby we can and must work. Moreover, each of these seven spheres has many sub-spheres, each equally under God, not a head over each sphere.

Thus, in your vocation, there is no emperor or pope that governs every business activity, every corporation, every home industry, every farm under the sun. Each of these sub-spheres is self-governing. Then there are a multitude of professional societies, labor groups, again, self-governing. Society has a multitude of free agencies and associations, all of which govern many peoples without the state.

Some societies in history have had a government but no state. In fact, as scholars like Friedrich and Bilzer have stated, earlier in European history civil government was not a state, but estates, estates. Each of these estates was interlocking, and to a large degree, self-governing. For example: one of the most common divisions of the state was of; nobles, commoners, and the church. In other instances, lawyers and merchants were 'estates,' so that the various segments of society were self-governing, had interlocking relationships, and together made up the government of society. Thus, instead of a state, there was a realm and within the realm; various estates, each with its prerogatives, liberties, and powers.

We must not idealize this older, medieval and semi-medieval society. It had its problems. But it represented a tremendous Christian advance over paganism, with its statism, with its totalitarianism, with its belief that the state is God walking on earth, and its worship of the emperor, or of the office of the ruler. With the barbarians and the overthrow of Rome as Christian missionaries moved throughout Europe

they began the creation of a new social order; one without a human sovereign, and they struggled re-viving paganism over and over again. We too seldom appreciate the battle in the Middle Ages between kings claiming sovereignty and the right to rule over the church, and the attempt of the church to free itself from that.

Our history books are largely false at this point. They tell us about the attempt of The Papacy to rule over Europe, which, except for one or two popes, is largely a myth. The persistent battle was in the part of the church to free itself from the total control of the state, and the state finally triumphed. It would tolerate no bishop or pope who was truly a Christian. It controlled the college of cardinals, and had men named to high office who were their puppets, who confined themselves to an interest in the arts and left religion and the state alone.

The modern idea of the state is a product of monarchism. Power was gained by the monarchs over the estates, and over the church, and the state replaced them. Before independence in the United States, both church and state were under the British crown. With independence, one of the things dispensed with was precisely this kind of control and sovereignty. We must remember that the constitution at no point uses the word 'sovereign' or 'sovereignty'; it is deliberately omitted. It was believed that the term was theological and belonged only to God.

Step by step, however, the courts began to reintroduce the concept. It is significant that they began it with a claim to sovereignty over money: to control the blood of economics. The doctrine, however, was still not in very great repute until World War I when under Wilson it began to be asserted a little more boldly. With Franklin D. Roosevelt became a basis of Federal operation, and since then it has routinely been claimed and asserted that the state is sovereign.

In state and federal courts where I have been a witness for parents, churches, and Christian schools I've often cited the fact that the constitution makes no reference to 'sovereignty,' and the judges have usually looked surprised, it is routinely assumed.

Using the old pre-independence laws which established the church under the crown in a couple of states after independence, The Unitarians gained control of the church and seized all the property in Connecticut and Massachusetts. And the Calvinistic churches, the old Puritan churches, which broke away from that incorporated to assert their independence and freedom with the state. With the de-Christianization of Western societies there came a steady insistence and a drive towards what David Martin has called 'the secularist monopoly.' That is the Humanist insistence on a monopoly by the state and Humanism over every area of life.

As a result, we have seen the most fanatical religion in all of history in Humanism. It has destroyed millions upon millions of human beings, beginning with The French Revolution, The Russian Revolution, The Chinese Revolution, the revolutions in South-East Asia, in Central Europe, in Africa, and elsewhere. All asserting their duty to annihilate all unwanted religions, all non-humanistic faiths and peoples. This has been done in the name of Democracy, in the name of Fascism, and Nazism, and in the name of Marxism...in the name of every form of Humanism.

Let us pause for a moment now to review briefly the points we have touched on. First, that the state is now equated with government; undermining all old spheres of self-government, the state has replaced the estates.

Second, that the modern state is a secular humanist monopoly. With Comte, the father of sociology and one of the great figures in humanism, there was an attempt to establish a Catholic humanistic church to be a world church. However, this very quickly was scuttled, because the humanistic state

did not want to share power with any other institution even though it was also humanistic.

Now, the third aspect of this development, one we've also cited. The Bible says that God alone is Lord, or sovereign. As we have seen, the U.S. Constitution refused to use the term 'sovereign,' a term now claimed by the federal government. Now sovereignty is a total concept. There can be no partial Lord or sovereign. A sovereign is either sovereign or he is not. When sovereignty was claimed by monarchs, they quickly recognized what it meant, indeed, they did from the very beginning. Simply this; 'no law can limit or restrict a sovereign.'

Because the sovereign is the source of all law. The sovereign is the source of all power in a realm. He can be bound by none. No laws passed can restrain a sovereign. He can make, he can break, he can restrain all law. Thus, it is futile to attempt to pass laws which will limit the power of state and federal governments. In the long run it does not work, in the short run I'm all for it, but in the long run unless we replace the state as sovereign with the Lord Jesus Christ as sovereign our work is futile.

Men cannot live without a sovereign, without a Lord, and if the Triune God is not man's Lord, then some human being or agency will be. And it is because the church has failed in asserting the crown rights of Christ of our king, that we now have the state as our sovereign. The only way a sovereign can be undermined is by faith in another sovereign. This has been the reason why Marxism has been successful. It has propagated the belief that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the only true sovereign, as against the other forms of government. And with a faith in this, Marxists have overthrown government after government.

Now as a growing number of Christians recognize the crown rights of Christ our King, we are beginning to see the impact of God's sovereignty on our nation.

Then fourth, according to scripture God in his infinite wisdom predestines all things, ordains all things, and determines what is right and wrong. With Humanistic Statism the elite planners assume the right to plan and to predestine all things. To determine what is good and evil, and we see today the arrogance of humanism as it plays God, and attempts to provide cradle to grave security for all men.

In a recent review just a matter of days ago in the Wall Street Journal by Guy Thorman, a French journalist, of a book by an American professor David P. Jordan on the revolutionary career of Maximilien Robespierre the French Revolutionary leader, Guy Thorman writes;

"Mr. Jordan following strictly the lines of Robespierre's own text, does not try to reconcile ideology with shrewdness, but Robespierre's great innovation had been to justify any private or public deed by ideology. Revolution was a discourse, Robespierre's discourse. Any enemy of Robespierre was an enemy of reason and progress. When Robespierre intoned 'I am the people,' he set off echoes that still sound today in totalitarian revolutions. It is not by mere chance that the first and perhaps the only statue of Robespierre was erected by Lenin in Moscow. In contrast, no street in Paris bears his name. Robespierre is not a national hero in France, but a Partisan hero. There is a good reason to celebrate the liberal and bourgeois revolution of 1789-1792 which brought to France a constitution guaranteeing political freedom, civil equality, and private property. But the world today still suffers from the stamp of Robespierre, the first Democratic leader who somehow knew better than the people what was good for the people."

This is now the identifying mark of the humanist and the statist. They know better than the people what is good for the people. As the doctors of the state, they prescribe for the people of the state and they compel compliance.

This takes us to our fifth point, the reason for this is the identification of the state and its elite rulers with reason, so that the state is seen as reason incarnate and its elite planners as reason incarnate. For Hegel, one of the great sources of revolutionary thinking, the state manifested the high point in evolution of reason so that reason incarnated itself in the state. Hegel, the father of modern political thinking of every stripe; Fascism, Marxism, Democratic, Nazism, Revolutionary thinking, wrote in his philosophy of history;

“The only thought which philosophy brings with it to the contemplation of history is the simple conception of reason. That reason is the sovereign of the world, that the history of the world therefore presents us with a rational process. This conviction and intuition as a hypothesis in the domain of history, as such, in that a philosophy it is no hypothesis, it is there proved by speculative cognition that reason, and this term may here suffice without investigating the relations sustained by the universe to the divine being is substance as well as infinite power. Its own infinite material underlying all the natural and spiritual life which it originates has also the infinite form. That which sets this material in motion. On the one hand, reason is the substance of the universe by which and in which all reality has its being and subsistence. On the other hand, it is the infinite energy of the universe. Since reason is not so powerless as to be incapable of producing anything but a mere ideal, a mere intention, having its place outside reality, nobody knows where, something separate and abstract in the head of certain human beings. It is rather the infinite complex of things, their entire essence and truth.”

Now that’s a good philosophical definition of God. Hegel says we live and move and have our being in reason, that reason is the substance, the spirit, the matter, the form, the energy of all Creation and it is incarnate in the state. Nothing remains whereby God can be defined, because for Hegel, although he sometimes threw in the word ‘God’ to keep the church happy, made the state God walking on earth. Hegel brought together the divine spirit/reason in the universe and the human mind in his doctrine of ‘geist’ or ‘spirit.’ In the words of Kroner:

“Geist denotes both the human mind, and the divine spirit.”

“In his concept of Geist Hegel found the inseparable connection between mind and spirit, between the human and the divine.”

“Hegel held the shape which the perfect embodiment of spirit assumes is the state.”

Now in terms of this, it follows logically that the state is God walking on earth. It follows in terms of Hegel’s words; “Morality is a political affair.” Thus, neither religion nor morality can come from the church unless the church preaches statism.” In ‘The positivity of the Christian Religion,’ Hegel wrote; “A religion is better or worse according as with a view to producing disposition which gives birth to action in correspondence with a civil for the moral law. It sets to work through moral motives or through terrorizing the imagination and consequently the will.”

What did Hegel say? The purpose of religion is to create obedience to the state! Since the state is the source of all morality as reason incarnate. It is not an accident that since Hegel, churches have been more subservient to the state, because this has been the teaching that everyone gets all the way through the educational process. In terms of Hegelian thought, a peculiar interpretation of Romans 13 is made the only scripture worth considering, so that the church and its members are to obey irrespective of all circumstances. Note too, what Hegel said: There were two means, two stresses that the Christian church should make. (First) The subservience of the people through moral motives...in other words to equate morality to being a good citizen and obeying whatever the state requires. And second, the subservience of the people to be gained through terrorizing the imagination. That’s Hegel’s phrase.

Hegel was not against hellfire and damnation preaching provided it was not with regard to the Christian faith but with regard to the statist faith. Terrorize the people! Bring them into subservience with a horror of what it means to disobey the state! Nothing here but the apostolic affirmation; "We must obey God rather than man." Of course, while the church supposedly terrorizes the imagination, the Hegelian state terrorizes the body, brutalizes it. And terror is now increasingly a part of the operation of the modern state. The more it grows in the direction of Hegelianism, the more it develops its implications, the more it becomes a terror-state.

A couple of years ago when I was still working on my book *Christianity and the State* which will be out shortly, I suddenly came to a recognition of something that was startling. I was dealing at the time specifically with a situation in Mexico, and I realized that the intellectuals in Mexico were so far in advance of the American intellectuals that there was no comparison. They didn't have the drag of all of us to hold them back. They were able to apply their ideas more systematically. They represented a more logical intellectual development. And this is the problem of Mexico. The intellectuals have been in control, they have created, starting a century ago, a totalitarian state in which everything conforms to reason. But reason, we should note, does not conform to reality or to God's world, and hence their crisis. The only reason we are not in the same boat as The Soviet Union and other countries is that our intellectuals have not had their way to the same extent. That we have, as it were, thinking in terms of Hegel, being a more 'backward' people. And hence our progress because we've been able to retain freedom as against this statism. The state as God walking on earth, as reason incarnate.

And the intellectual elite, the planners of the state as the voice of reason telling us what is best for us because we are incapable of knowing what is best, especially if our minds are blinded by the 'superstition' of religion. This is the great evil of our time. Statism. The state seeks to be worshiped and obeyed as God, to be continually exalted and to be made the ultimate authority on good and evil, on law, on education, and much, much more. Two sovereigns cannot coexist; either the state is Lord, or the Triune God is. Two sovereigns cannot coexist.

Therefore, we as Christians must say "the state as sovereign must go!" Only the living God is The Lord, and you'd better recognize and believe that the premise of statism is that Jesus Christ as Lord, as sovereign, must go, because they cannot tolerate a rival Lord. We have a battle ahead, and while you and I may lose, but not Jesus Christ. And if we stand with Him we are then "...more than conquerors..." for "...this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith..." and none other! Thank you.

ENDNOTES:

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G.W.F. Hegel. *Early Theological Writings*. Translated by T.M. Knox and Richard Kroner. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971, 24.

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The Necessary Vision

R.J. Rushdoony

Our subject in this session is 'the necessary vision.' According to Proverbs 19:18 "Where there is no vision, the people perish, but he that keepeth the law happy is he." The word 'vision' can be rendered 'revelation' or 'the prophetic ministry of the revelation,' God's law word. The reference is clearly to God's word, his every word as law. Because the second half of the sentence says "He that keepeth the law, (the vision, the revelation,) happy is he."

Thus the reference is not to a peoples foresight, but their awareness of what God reveals and their obedience to it. There is death where there is no knowledge and faithfulness, but keeping God's law brings blessedness. The word for 'perish' can also be translated 'go naked.' The blindness of a people to God's revelation leaves them naked and defenseless, and they soon perish without his law. Any church or culture blind to God's law is soon stripped naked and destroyed.

Clearly this has been the trend for some years for some generations. Consider a recent case in Nebraska. A man with twisted and bizarre sexual tastes saw a picture of a bride-to-be in the newspaper. He began stalking her, and when he found that she was alone at home he broke in brutally raped her and murdered her; a particularly gruesome and fearful crime. He was convicted, he was sentenced to death, there was not the slightest question with regard to his guilt. But the supreme court of Nebraska reversed the decision. Why? Because the death penalty in Nebraska is prescribed for depraved crimes, and they failed to see the crime as depraved.

As Mike Roy commented in his column:

"The thing is Nebraska laws try to be specific about which murders should or shouldn't be executed, and the state law said that the murder must be especially heinous, atrocious, and cruel, or that it shows exceptional depravity by ordinary standards of morality and intelligence. The state supreme court, in a four to three decision, decided that this murder didn't measure up to those standards. For one thing, the victim hadn't really suffered enough. For another, the murderer wasn't really out to take her suffer, his main objective was to gratify a sexual urge. The majority said the evidence establishes that the victim was rendered unconscious within a short time of the defendant's intrusion into her home. It therefore cannot be said that the murder was of the nature prescribed in the state law."

The 'justices,' as courtesy requires they be called, went on to say:

"To be sure, forcing items into the victim's throat and strangulation itself were cruel, but not especially so, for any forcible killing requires some violence towards the victim, there is no evidence that the acts were performed for the satisfaction of inflicting either mental or physical pain, or that pain existed for any prolonged period of time. Maybe I'm a sissy, but I think that going into a woman's home stuffing clothing down her throat, strangling her, raping her, and drowning her in a bathtub is pretty heinous, atrocious, cruel, and depraved. There is a way that we could be a little more certain about the extent one's suffering over a brief period of time, we could have a scientific experiment, if those four learned Nebraska judges would care to join me. It's simple enough, your honors, just open your mouths real wide and hand me your black robes and we'll begin stuffing. And if it starts getting too heinous, atrocious, and cruel for you, just make a gurgling sound."

This is what happens when the law ceases to be God's law. It becomes then ungodly law; law that does violence to justice, law that does violence to God's order. Paul, in Romans 13:1-4 declares, and this is something all too many forget when they throw this verse at us telling we should be obedient no matter what. Paul tells us civil government should be a terror to evildoers, not to the Godly. The Nebraska supreme court is a terror to the godly. And the same is true in many states, and in many Federal courts. The civil government is a bearer of the sword, according to scripture, and that means the bearer of coercive power!

As such, every civil government is a terror to somebody. The word terror to the Greek is 'phobos,' which we have in the word 'phobia.' Power always leads to fear or terror, but !by whom? That's the question we need to raise. We see in this country a steady rise of confiscatory taxation. If you have moved lately for any distance there's a good chance you will be audited and you will be in trouble because after every move you lose a lot of your records, you have trouble laying your hands on your files and you're an easy target. The tax collectors powers are very great, and more efficient than the policing power of the state towards criminals. Only one percent of all crimes result in any conviction, one percent!

Civil government functions today efficiently only in collecting taxes, regulating families, controlling businesses and churches, not in controlling crime! Not in controlling evil doers! Moreover, those of us who are self-governing are the easiest targets. We're the ones who are honest, who keep records, who are visible, who are not acting like criminals, and trying to evade the tax collectors and the regulators. Tyranny throughout history has always been most hostile to the good. When Tertullian pleaded with the Roman emperor: "Why do you persecute us Christians? We are your most honest citizens, your most honest taxpayers, your best soldiers. Why us?" The answer was an obvious one. Every civil government as it becomes a tyranny begins to oppress its best citizens most of all because it has joined the ranks, as Saint Augustine said, of the criminals. It becomes, as Augustine saw, the supreme Mafia.

The state is the central human coercive power. A very dangerous fact if the state strays from God and his law. It has become now the coercive educator, and in some parts of the world allows only statist education and in some parts of the United States is working towards that end. It has become the educator also in the emotional sense; because in the modern age we speak of one's country as the 'motherland' or the 'fatherland,' a very significant usage.

It existed in paganism, it disappeared with the triumph of Christianity, and it has reasserted itself with the modern era and Humanism. Loyalty to the state has replaced the old family loyalties, and loyalty to Christ's people and congregation. The state teaches by example and the results are devastating to society. The Bible tells us that God reveals himself in his word, in his law. They reveal what he is. This is not true of human sovereigns. They give their laws for their subjects, not to bind themselves.

Years ago, Justice Louis Brandeis was in a famous dissent declared; "Decency, security, and liberty alike demand that government officials shall be subjected to the same rules of conduct that are commands to the citizens. In a government of laws, existence of the government will be imperiled if it fails to observe the laws scrupulously. Our government is the potent, omnipresent teacher. For good or for ill, it teaches the whole people by its example. Crime is contagious; if the government becomes the law breaker it breeds contempt for law. It invites every man to become a law unto itself, it invites anarchy. To declare that in the administration of the criminal law 'the end justifies the means,' to declare that a government may commit crimes in order to procure the conviction of a private criminal would bring terrible retribution."

We are today in the midst of such a retribution. Too often Christians that replace loyalty to the Lord

with loyalty to the state, a false teacher. The Apostles said "...we ought to obey God rather than men...", and yet, it's sad in state after state to see ministers, priests, and nuns parade onto the witness stand to give testimony to the blessings of obeying the state and allowing the state to control their schools. Behind this weakness of the churches is a weak faith, or no faith at all!

James Turner, a contemporary historian, has shown how the churches adapted their faith to the scientific currents of thought and step by step altered the fundamental doctrines of the faith beginning with the doctrines of God. The very personal providential God of scripture has been converted by this process into an impersonal and remote deity. Natural law replaced God's law, and God's wrath and God's love. As Turner commented:

"A willful personal God jarred many sensibilities in the eighteenth century."

Men rethought the doctrine of God in terms of Newton's physics and the divine purpose was replaced by physical causality, and impersonal scientific laws. The churches and theologians accepted Deism without admitting it. With respect to the physical universe and God's relationship to it the churches almost to the last man became Deists, they retained the personal God only in the realm of the spirit. The result was the rise of 'heart religion,' Pietism. God didn't do anything in the outside world to mess up science, but you could know God personally only in your heart. So, the very personal directly acting God of scripture was reduced only to the inner realm of man, and he was barred from the physical universe. God was removed from history to the subjective realm and became irrelevant to history.

Over the centuries it has been the nature of great preaching to take the word of God and to declare it in terms of the problems of the day. To apply The Word of God as a prescription to all man's problems, personal, societal, political, educational, scientific, and so on. The Word of God as the answer to the problems. But today this is far from true. One of our staff members, Otto Scott, when he was converted not too many years ago immediately went to churches that he felt were thoroughly Bible-believing; what he found was preaching that was totally irrelevant to the world he lived in! He said, it was preaching that could have been preached in the tenth century or the seventeenth century because it had no relationship to the world we live in! But the Word of God must be related to our time. The prophets spoke the Word of God to their time, saying to kings and to commoners; "thou art the man!"

It is false preaching that limits the scope of The Word of God to the inner world alone. The result is that Christianity has become, in the modern age, sub-cultural. Instead of being the cultural force which molds and governs the culture, it is sub-cultural. Now what is a sub-cultural fact? Well. Sometime in the past week or two the world Monopoly championship was held, I believe somewhere in the South, perhaps it was in Florida? It was the world championship, but it's a sub-cultural fact because the game Monopoly, even though it continues to be enormously popular the world over, doesn't affect the lives of people. It does not change the world. It does not contribute anything to the development of life in any sphere of life.

Now that's a sub-cultural fact. Christianity is, today, sub-cultural. It has been for generations, we have people today, and we have some legislators including at least one in this room who are trying to make it again a cultural fact, a cultural force.

But, because it has been by most churches reduced to a subcultural level, has withdrawn from the world; we have one of the most amazing facts in human history--in ALL history! Ninety percent of the people in The United States say they believe in God in some more or less vaguely Christian sense. Ninety percent. Fifty-five percent of all adults identify themselves as born-again Christians. Christianity, Biblical faith, should be the one cultural force in this country governing and directing every sphere of life and thought...and it doesn't. Precisely because the churches have reduced it to a sub-cultural

force. By limiting its God, the church has limited its power, and it has today a minimal impact.

This is the most remarkable fact in all of history that so many hold to a faith which has turned the world upside down when it was only a handful of men, The Apostles, today doesn't much outrank Monopoly! We have retreated from one area after another. The two areas which best reveal the faith of a people, what are they? Not the church because the church usually tends to lag behind a culture except when it has a strong forceful faith; it's conservative, it's traditional, it's repeating the past and so it's behind the times too often. The two things which are the quickest index of the life and faith of a people are law and education, law and education. In education a people passes on its faith, its values, its beliefs, to its children. Education is the transmission of religion, what a people believes in. That's why, in public school education today of the teachers there are textbooks like 'Humanistic Source Book of Education; How to Apply Humanistic Values in the Class.' Our public schools are religious schools but they're teaching Humanism, not Christianity.

Law is inescapably religious because what law deals with is right and wrong, good and evil. What the law says is forbidden is forbidden because the society considers it to be wrong. That's a moral judgment, and ultimately a religious judgment because morality is a branch of theology. So, every time a law is passed, it is a religious decision, it is a moral fact. And every law system is an establishment of religion, not of a particular church, but of a religion. Laws reflect the faith of the people; Buddhist, Islamic, Shinto, Christian, Humanistic...inescapably so. And our laws today are largely humanistic. As a result, there is no prophetic ministry, or, only a small but now growing one.

"Where there is no vision, (no revelation, no prophetic ministry as some have translated it,) the people perish. But he that keepeth the law, happy is he."

It always amazes me how many things that people who profess to be Bible believing do believe that really borrowed from our enemies. Do you know who it was in this country who first propagated the idea that Moses gave the law for the Jews because they were an earlier and primitive dispensation of religion and not enlightened enough to have anything better? That idea was first propagated in this country by William Ellery Channing, the founder of Unitarianism! It was a Unitarian idea through and through! It was then picked up and made an article of faith by Alexander Campbell, founder of The Disciples or Church of Christ. By about 1869, it became an article of all the churches because in that year the Southern Presbyterians adopted it. But these ideas came out of Unitarianism and its evolutionary belief which held that The Old Testament had to be regarded as primitive. Implicit in Channing's perspective was that ultimately we may outgrow the New Testament also, and reach a higher level, the level of a 'love religion,' as some subsequently declared it. And yet, all of this was adopted by the pietistic evangelical community.

At the same time, the world was divided into two realms; the Material and the Spiritual, and the Material surrendered to the Humanistic state. Well, what the forgot was that the lord they created in the state wants to be a total lord and will not allow the minds of people to be free of its sway, it will not tolerate dissent, and so we have the battle today. A struggle for the minds and bodies of men the world over on the part of the humanistic state.

Samuel Rutherford, in 1644, wrote a book 'Lex Rex.' A book that still continues to influence people, it was reprinted by Sprinkle Publications a few years ago in Virginia. It has, off and on, been in print for about three hundred and fifty years. In fact, the foundation established, of which I am a board member, by John Whitehead, The Rutherford Foundation to defend Christians in court, took its name from Samuel Rutherford. Rutherford held that submission to a godless state and its lawless acts when they go against God and His power is morally and religiously wrong, and he wrote:

“We hold that the law saith with us that vassals loss their farm if they pay not what is due. Now, what are kings but vassals to the state? Who, if they turn tyrants, fall from their right.”

And he went on to say that the state is vassal to God the Lord, and must obey God.

In the seventeenth century, the hope of some English Puritans was that a godly prince had to impose Christian order on society. Some of The Puritans held to this late medieval view in the need for an earthly sovereign to represent the heavenly sovereign and to establish the realm in God’s order. In 1621 Robert Bolton said in a sermon:

“Take sovereignty from the face of the earth and you’ve turned it into a ‘cock pit.’ Men would become cutthroats and cannibals one unto another. Murders, adultery, incest, rapes, robberies, perjuries, witchcraft, blasphemies, all other kinds of villainy, outrages, and savage cruelty, would overflow all countries. We should have a very hell upon earth, and the face of it covered with blood as it once was with water.”

Well, not only were the ungodly princes of his day failures, but so too were the godly ones. Godly and ungodly princes alike were incapable of establishing any true order. Human sovereigns have through the centuries sought to create ideal republics based on man’s law, man’s economics, politics, and education. From Plato’s Republic at least to the present, men have dreamed of ideal orders created by man. They have rather, all of them, created the moral anarchy described by Bolton. Clearly, “except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.”

What this tells us is first; that no Godly or true order can be established without regenerate men. The building must be by God, beginning with men! So that our first great task is one of evangelism. We need God’s men for God’s world, and we can never cease from that task. But it tells us; second, that the business of the state is too important to leave to the state. The business of your state government, of your local government, and of Washington, D.C., is too important to be left to those people. There is no area of life or thought which is outside of God and his government, and all must be brought under the dominion of Christ our king.

It is easy for us, and a temptation, and often right for us to be critical of those in Washington, D.C. But, I can never forget the first time I spoke to a fairly large number of Congressmen at The Capitol Hill Club. About twelve years ago. I spoke to them at their request on Biblical law. When it was over, and I had a very receptive audience, one of them said to me and everyone else nodded: “We’ve tried everything except God’s law, and we know that nothing else works. If only the people out there would begin demanding a different course, but what they’re asking of us is the same old thing.” They need help. They need your help as Christians to stand for God’s order and to ask that they do also.

There is no area of life or thought which is outside of God’s government, and all things must be brought under the dominion of Christ, our King. No Christian can surrender any area of life, including politics, to Christ’s enemies without sin. Christianity is a total religion. It speaks to and governs all things. A total faith requires a total concern and a total commitment and action. The crown rights of Christ the King command us. They command our world, and they command us in our world totally and without restriction or reservation. “Where there is no vision, (no prophetic ministry,) the people cast off restraint (they are naked). They perish...but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.” Thank you.

ENDNOTES:

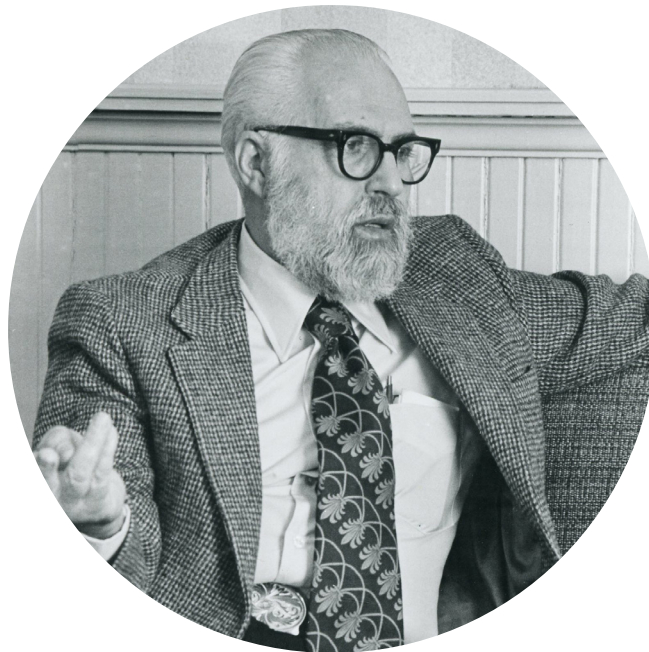
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These professional transcriptions were made possible by permission of the Chaldedon Foundation and the support of Nicene Covenant Church and Grace Community School.

A special thanks to Nathan F. Conkey, whose unparalleled dedication and labor made these professional and polished transcripts a reality.

Additional thanks to the “Mount Olive Tape Library” and “Christ Rules” who participated in the recording, storing, and digitizing of RJ Rushdoony’s lectures as well as the creation of the original lecture transcriptions.