

Transcripts of  
**POLITICS and  
LIBERTY**

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.

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# Politics and Predestination

R.J. Rushdoony

Hear now the Word of God as it is given to us in Romans 9:1-20.

“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?”

The children of darkness are very often wiser than the children of light. And too often, the children of light have shied away from proclaiming predestination. And the children of darkness have been ready over and over again to assail this doctrine as a monstrosity. And surprisingly enough, many people are surprised to see why over and over again, this doctrine is assailed in all kinds of quarters. Someone told me recently that they thought it very strange that professors at certain universities in California were taking time out in the course of their lectures to deal with a completely unrelated subject, predestination, to caricature it and to ridicule it. What business of theirs was it? And what relationship did it have to our world? A great deal!

If we analyze from the days of Augustine to the days of Calvin to the present, we will find recurring, over and over again, a very strongly political motivation on the attacks on predestination and with good reason. What Paul declared in Romans 9, what indeed all of scripture declares is the sovereignty of God, that God chooses whom He wills, and there is no law over God whereby man can bring God to court and say: “nay but why doest thou thus?” God is totally sovereign. His Word, His nature is the law whereby all things are governed. This is the offense because it dethrones man, who has submitted to Satan’s offer, “Ye shall be as gods, knowing,” (that is, determining for yourself) “what is right and wrong;” every man his own god - a man-centered world, a man-centered society, a man-centered political and social order.

Man is a creature. He has come into this world after the world. He is born into it. He finds it here when he arrives, and thus he is a secondary cause, not a primary cause. And as he faces this world which he did not make, he has three possible ways of regarding it. First; he can declare that this is a world of chance, in which case, you reduce all things to chaos, in which case you deny that there is any purpose or direction or meaning, in which case you affirm the death of all meaning itself. Now, there are thinkers who have talked about the ultimacy of chance, but they have done so only in attacking our faith. They actually do not rest in chance as their basic philosophy. For to rest in the ultimacy of chance is to commit suicide intellectually. It is an impossible position. But this is the first way in which we can view the world, as governed completely and totally by chance.

The second way in which we can view this world is in terms of God's sovereignty and predestination. This does not destroy our freedom. And the old argument against predestination, that it is destructive of the liberty of man, is sheerest nonsense. We do not call God's predestination of our race, our color, our time of birth, of our talent as destructive of our free will, of our free agency. None of us had the choice of when we would be born. We didn't pick our parents, or the complexion of our skin or the color of our eyes or the height to which we would grow. We had no choice about those things, nor did we choose the age in which we were born. But this is not a limitation on our liberty, is it? Do you feel that God has restricted your freedom because you were born in the twentieth century, rather than in the sixteenth or the twenty-second? Neither is our predestination with regard to salvation any infringement on our free agency. We still act in conformity to what we are in terms of our inner nature. We are free to be ourselves. This then, the affirmation of the sovereignty and predestinating power of God is the second possible way of viewing the world.

The first is chance, second in terms of the divine sovereignty and predestination, and the third possible way is in terms of predestination by man. Predestination is a very popular doctrine today, outside of Reformed circles. Indeed, in terms of scientific philosophy today, it is a term that is very often used. Predestination is very widely believed in all the capitals around the world; in Washington, in Moscow, in London, Paris and elsewhere. They believe in predestination, but predestination by man. Predestination by the elite planners, the scientific social engineers. And after all, scientific socialism, as propounded by Karl Marx, is nothing more nor less than the affirmation that predestination is true, except that it is not true about God, it is true concerning man. Man is sovereign. Man will seek power and predestine all things, and this is scientific socialism. And predestination is a doctrine on the march today, around the world in this form. And you're not going to defeat Marxism, which is predestination by man, nor are you going to defeat the Great Society, which is also predestination by man, unless you get back to an equally fundamental faith, but one which is the truth. Predestination by the sovereign God.

We understand now something of why biblical predestination is hated, do we not? Because it means God controls all things. And these humanistic predestinators say that man must control all things. And they cannot affirm this without waging war against God. And so they can be lecturing on political science, or sociology, or economics and they come out with an attack on Calvin and predestination and the student wonders: "why did that come in?" It's very obvious why. You cannot affirm man's predestination without attacking God's predestination. Christians cannot surrender this doctrine without ceasing to be Christian. And every attack on it is an attack on the sovereignty of God. The doctrine simply affirms that God is God.

Moreover, Christians cannot logically or morally be socialists or political liberals or advocates of a welfare state. Because all these things are aspects of this tremendous body of belief that is infiltrating its way into every facet of our society, the dream of reason, the dream of the total predestination of man by man by the scientific elite, by the planners, by the sociologists. Political liberalism, and theological liberalism rests on a common ground; the sovereignty of man.

The theological liberal attacks the Word of God and he says: "I cannot accept this doctrine. It doesn't conform to my reason, and I affirm that my reason is a judge over the Word of God so that I can go through and assess what I consider to be valid for our time, and accept that and worship God in my own way." In which case, he has set his reason above God. In which he has ultimately deified himself and said: "I can determine what is true faith and I am the true judge, the ultimate judge of that which constitutes truth." Theological liberalism, I believe we can all recognize. We know what is its fault. It is an assault on God and His Word, on God and His sovereignty.

But political liberalism is the same thing! The political liberal says I do not like the world the way God has predestined it. And the doctrine of predestination is such a fearful, such an ugly doctrine because it says something that is an offense to the humanist, to the planner, to the humanistic predestinarian. It says that God makes the difference between men, and how can you reconcile that with a belief in equality? Why, it simply affirms that inequality is written into the very nature of the universe by the infallible, and ultimate, and sovereign decree of God, that God has said there is a difference, an inescapable difference between the present natures of men. Some are called to one thing and others to another. Others are given great talents while some are given inferior ones. And some are called to be vessels unto honor and others to dishonor, some to election and some to reprobation. Do you realize what that doctrine does to the Great Society? Do you realize what that doctrine does to every champion of democracy and of equality? It shatters its position. It either has to surrender or to wage war against the sovereign God and the doctrine of predestination. The sovereignty of man is its base.

And having declared man to be sovereign, he has to have a unity in the godhead. Because basic to any true theology is this: a theology that does not have a unity of the godhead founders. So that whatever your religion, whether you're a Muslim or a Christian, or a Shintoist or whatever you may be, there is a unity in our godhead, or your system collapses. And if you are a Humanist, and you are affirming the sovereignty of man, you are going to have to assert the unity of the godhead, and so you're going to say: "we've got to bring all people together from all over the world and have a one-world order an integrated order, and therefore it has to be an order that is characterized by equality, otherwise, our godhead, man, will fall apart."

A true Christian theology asserts the unity of the godhead; three persons, one God. There is no subordination of persons in the Trinity. There is a perfect equality of the three persons, and the minute you tamper with that, you destroy the Doctrine of the Trinity. And the same way, if you tamper with the doctrine of the unity and the equality of man, you tamper with the 'godhead of humanism.

It isn't an opinion they come to in terms of observation, they come to it in spite of observation, because they have only to look around them and their observation will confirm the truth of Scripture, that God in His sovereign decree ordained that men should have differences, and different destinies. But no! Against all this, with its fantastic faith. And these are the people who demand a great faith! When we ask people to believe in Scripture, we're not putting faith to the test that the humanists are with their belief in the unity and equality of man. They are really demanding a great faith with this! But they must, or they would have to surrender their religion. Their religion of humanity, their religion of Humanism, their religion of man as sovereign and as the predestinator. And they would have to surrender their Statism. Because it is only when you deny these differences have any right to resist that you can give all power to the State to try to right this terrible wrong and unite all peoples and integrate all peoples, and equalize all differences. And the result is, because you can't raise some of them up, you're going to lower all of them. You're going to have, to use Van Till's excellent phrase, which is applicable to every realm: "integration downward into the void." This is political liberalism.

This is the politics of predestination by man, as against the politics of predestination by the sovereign God. The two liberalisms; theological and political, go hand in hand. Wherever you see a political lib-

eral, you can be sure, though he may profess to be a good, sound churchman, the theological liberalism will not be far behind. The time is coming when we must challenge the right of political as well as theological liberals to remain in the church.

Now, since God is sovereign, not man, it is most important for us to realize therefore, that officers in the church, in the state, in the school must first of all represent God rather than man. A church, of course, is a monarchy, whose monarch is Jesus Christ. It is under His Law and there can be no deviation from that law, no pastor and no member has any right to repeal an iota of it. The representation that our Sovereign allows us within the church is within boundaries firmly fixed by Him, and so it should be in every area. The State has an obligation under God to be Christian. The school has an obligation under God to be Christian, as does the home and every vocation. And we need to elect men who will first of all represent God, and us in God.

For there is true freedom, not in a democracy but in a godly state, and a Christian order where the Law of God is honored and obeyed. Where the Word of God is above and over all men, officers and people. Where God is our Supreme Court and judge, and our conscience is bound by God and unto men only under God and His Word. For in a democracy you have what the word literally implies; 'mob rules.' There's no appeal beyond the people, no rights except state-granted rights, and man becomes a slave.

It is important therefore for us as Christians, if we are to move in terms of the politics of predestination, to reestablish the crown rights of King Jesus, to use the old Calvinist battle cry, in every sphere of life, and to recognize that any sphere that departs from Christ enters into slavery. For the first slavery is unto sin, according to our Lord in John 8, and every other slavery is derivative from that departure and apostasy from Jesus Christ.

One area we need to recapture very quickly, for the time is growing short, for Jesus Christ, is education. Education, like every other sphere of life, is under sovereignty, but to whom? What is education? I was interested not too long ago to read an editorial by a scientist in which he defined 'slavery' very directly and very bluntly.

"Education is currently very widely held to be the great panacea for all ills whether the problem be social, economic, international or physical, education, we are told, is all that's needed. But education is simply slavery. The essence of slavery is the loss of freedom of choice; being compelled to learn a new way of life. The essence of education, the process, is teaching the pupil a new way of life, a new set of values and goals, a set of ideas which he did not choose to have before. 'We've got to teach them a lesson' has usually meant the intention of applying force and pain to change the value judgment of an opposing group; education in other words. Now in the language, 'to be taught' is a passive verb, while 'to teach' is active. Briefly, education may be a panacea. But the process of applying it does, in actuality, involve enslaving the pupil. That's why war has, down through the ages, led to so much intellectual and social progress. It's highly educational. Surely, education is slavery. But that just represents the fact that nothing, not even slavery, is inherently evil or destructive."

So speaks the plain-speaking editor who is not a Christian. He has spelled it out! Education is slavery and dare we hand our children over to slavery to Statism? Have we not an obligation to give our children unto the Lord and only to Him? Is not a Christian school an imperative for the Christian church and for Christian parents? Education, as it exists today in the state schools, is submitting to predestination by the state and although we have forgotten it, education as it was begun under state auspices in this country (and I have traced its history in my book, *The Messianic Character of American Education* and dealt with it also in *The Nature of the American System*), had two purposes, as it was introduced by Horace Mann and his associates.

1. To destroy orthodox Christianity
2. To socialize the child, to introduce Socialism by beginning at the most basic point, to socialize the child.

And how can you object if the state comes in and takes your property and your money if you've already surrendered your child?

To accept Romans 9, the sovereignty of God, means that we must acknowledge His sovereignty in our every institution including our schools, and that we have a positive obligation to establish Christian schools, to declare that only God is God and that we cannot make unto us any graven images and declare them to be our 'potters.' For slavery to God is our freedom, and slavery to man, suicide. And the politics of equality says that the child, that man, must be taken and unified. It insists on doing violence to man and to property, and to liberty and order in order to produce this equality and this unity. That the politics and the education of predestination declares that the ground of our unity is the Triune God. And it shows a respect for differences, for man and his property, for man and his liberty, as God-given. And beyond the state's legitimate power, where no man, nor institution, church or state can go beyond God's appointed boundaries, according to the biblical faith.

It has been the decline of the politics of predestination that has led to the decline of liberty in this country. And we cannot fight against the politics of slavery, the politics of predestination by human planners in Washington and in Moscow, unless we fight it with the truth, with the sovereignty of God and His predestinating power. It has been the absence of this doctrine from the pulpit that has led to the storied decline of this country. The decline began first of all in the churches.

And our liberty as well as the liberty of Western Europe a few centuries ago was borne out of this faith. I was greatly moved some years ago when I read of Cromwell's army, an army that never lost a battle, that was feared all over the face of Europe for its discipline, for its fearlessness, and for its courage. They were all of them, men who believed in the doctrine of predestination. And when that army disbanded, it was a remarkable thing. There were no beggars from that army. All of them, no matter how crippled, were gainfully employed within a very short time. And I had a glimpse of the power of those men when I read through the army debates, theological debates, political debates, and the political debates were based on this doctrine, the sovereignty of God. And I realized that then and there they were hammering out American liberty although they were not thinking about this country, because they were hammering out a system that was based on law, and that law was the sovereignty of God and His purpose. And they were ready to say, concerning themselves, that perhaps they did not have the right to vote under certain circumstances, even though they had been wounded and perhaps might be dead very soon in that war which they were fighting, because they were not interested in human rights, but in the right as the sovereign God had decreed it.

This then must be our proclamation; the crown rights of King Jesus in every area, because He is sovereign. He is the predestinating God. And this is the only gospel that has joy to it, a gospel that proclaims the saving power of an efficacious God who is sovereign. One of the joys of this doctrine is this, and one of its privileges, that it enables us to accept the fact that we are creatures, moreover that we are sinful creatures, and that we stand before God not in our righteousness, but in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and we stand, not in terms of what we have done or may do, else then we might fall. In what He has done and in what He has decreed, and none can say nay unto Him. Therefore, there is nothing in heaven or in earth, in life or in death, in anything in this world or in ourselves that is "...able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus..." For "...it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Can there be a more joyful

gospel?

Let us pray. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we give thanks unto Thee that the government is not upon our shoulders but upon thy shoulders, that thou art the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, that of the increase of thy government there shall be no end. Give us grace, therefore, our Father as we come unto thee to seek for a man whose breath is in his nostrils, to take hands off our lives and to commit them into thy keeping, to move forward boldly in the confidence that if God be for us, who can be against us? To know oh Lord, that thou art God and beside thee there is none other, to overturn, overturn, overturn the powers that set themselves up as little gods until He comes again, whose right it is. Strengthen us, empower us, and make us bold in Thy service unto the end that the kingdoms of this world might become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; in Jesus' name, amen.

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**ENDNOTES:**

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1. "In contrast with this the modern concept of the integration of personality is an integration into the void." Van Til, C. (1971). *Psychology of Religion*. (p. 70). Phillipsburg, NJ.
2. John W. Campbell, "Panacea," *Analog*, vol. LXXV, no. 6 (August 1965): 5-7, 159.

# Liberty and Law

R.J. Rushdoony

On a single day, some three or four years ago, the Supreme Court of the United States said “no” to a very simple school prayer and at the same time, said “yes” to two homosexual magazines. In both of these decisions, the Supreme Court believed that it was striking a blow for liberty. The question immediately comes to mind: “liberty for what, and from what?” And the answer is: “for liberty for man from truth.” And the question that must be faced by us, because it is a question being raised on all sides today: “is truth necessary?”

The historical premise of Western culture has been that the only valid foundation for, and source of social order is in truth. And truth is religious, so that the only real question has been: “which religion?” And men have attempted to establish their societies throughout the history of the west on a particular concept of religious truth. This was affirmed by the Westminster Standards in the Form of Government, Chapter 1, paragraph 4.

“Truth is in order to goodness and the great touchstone of truth, its tendency to promote holiness according to our Savior’s rule, ‘by their fruits ye shall know them. No opinion can be either more pernicious or more absurd than that which brings truth and falsehood upon a level and represents it as of no consequence what a man’s opinions are. On the contrary, they are persuaded that there is an inseparable connection between faith and practice, truth and duty, otherwise it would be of no consequence either to discover truth or to embrace it.”

This was once one of the fundamentals of Western culture. Everyone agreed to this, Protestant or Catholic. They believed that the most pernicious, the most dangerous, the most absurd thing, in the words of the Westminster Standard is to represent that it is: “of no consequence what a man’s opinions are,” and that “truth and falsehood are upon a level.”

Men fought and died for the belief that truth is basic to social order. And this truth is Christian truth; theological truth. This idea stood until the French Revolution, and since then has been steadily under attack. And today for a minister to declare that it is important to social order what a man’s opinions are, what his theology is, for a man so to speak is to startle people. We are so accustomed to believing that this is a matter of indifference.

But the Supreme Court has gone one step further. It has said not only is it a matter of indifference, but it is a matter that is dangerous to society, if we affirm there is a truth. This ridicule of truth became very, very open with the French Revolution, and culminated in Karl Marx. Marx ridiculed the idea of truth and when he said: “Religion is the opium of the masses,” he meant by it the hunger for truth, theological truth, is the opium of the masses, because society cannot be built on truth; truth is mythical. He declared:

“The State is not to be constituted from religion, but from the reason of freedom. Only the crass and ignorant can assert that the theory of making the State concept independent,” [that is, of truth] is a passing whim of modern philosophers.”

He said further:



“the philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways. The point however, is to change it.” Marx’s associate, Frederick Engels, in his eulogy of Marx declared: “Our dialectical philosophy abolishes all the notions of absolute and definitive truth, and any absolute human conditions which correspond to them. For dialectics, nothing is definitive, absolute or sacred. It reveals the relativity of all things, and nothing exists for it but the uninterrupted process of development and change.”

Thus, for Karl Marx, as for Engels, since there is no truth, every man is a law unto himself. And they said that logically, the practical, the wisest position was anarchism, total anarchy! But they said this was not socially feasible, and so the alternative was total statism. That any alternative to that would be a state founded on theology, because if you’ve said there is truth, and society must be grounded upon a concept of truth, you are creating, ultimately, a theological foundation for the state.

The separation of liberty and the state from truth, of law from truth, is not limited to Marxism. It is common to Fabianism, to existentialism, to modernism in its many forms, and to many of our other (in fact, all of) our modern philosophies. And the disestablishment of liberty from truth has increasingly become the policy of the US Supreme Court. Justice William O Douglas has associated relativism with liberty and truth with totalitarianism. He has said in his work, *Freedom of the Mind*:

“To say therefore that the search for truth is not man’s mission may seem to some to be the ultimate sin. But those who construct a political system on the basis of their truth create Totalitarianism.”

He goes on to say that the struggle for liberty in human history is a struggle against the dominion of truth. That man has become free progressively as he has overthrown the very idea that there is truth, as he has progressively affirmed that all things are indifferent. That there is no true or false about reality. And so, he says, it is high time for us to drop truth, and establish society on the premise of liberty. And I quote, again from Justice Douglas:

“Truth is not the goal, for in most areas, no one knows what truth is.”

For Justice Douglas, as well as for many, many others of this school, which is the reigning school of jurisprudence today. This means that laws restrictive of liberty must be dropped in the name of liberty. Therefore, Douglas, together with these other jurists is skeptical of laws against pornography, laws against subversion, laws against various forms of sexual perversion. These are no business of government, because all of these ideas involve the assumption that there is a truth, and that certain forms of sexual behavior are wrong because they depart from the truth, or certain opinions (political or otherwise) are wrong because they depart from the truth, and certain kinds of writing are pornographic because they do not meet a mythical, moral standard.

In another work, *America Challenged*, Justice Douglas declares:

“Freedom in this broad sense is the ultimate aim of the good society.”

Strange how that word ‘good’ creeps in when he’s dropped the idea that there’s something either good or bad.

“Freedom in this broad sense is the ultimate aim of the good society. We have the institutions as well as the traditions that make that freedom possible. That is the one overwhelming advantage we have over the Communist camps.”

His objection to Communism is that they do believe in their particular brand of truth, and so they are not fully liberated. They have traces of conservatism yet. Everything, according to Justice Douglas,

must have freedom. In still another work, *Democracy's Manifesto*, he writes

"We believe that the extinction of any civilization, culture, religion, or life way is a loss to humanity."

You get the implication of that? The extinction of any civilization, culture, religion or life way is a loss to humanity. Moreover, he believes, as others do, that to try to destroy or eliminate any of these is genocide. This means that Christians are very, very guilty when they try to convert cannibals from cannibalism. After all, this is a religion, it's a folkway. And who is to say it's false and our position is true? There must be total liberty for every position in this perspective.

And indeed, today we have all kinds of court cases in process to destroy every kind of legislation that would be premised on an idea of truth. There are two cases that have been filed in San Francisco, California, challenging the right of any governmental body to infringe upon the civil liberties of individuals by having laws against narcotics. And the suit is supported by those who believe their civil liberties are infringed by laws against narcotics, and there are similarly attempts today to say that any form of perversion must have legitimate status because it is an infringement of civil liberties if such practices are banned.

I have here a congressional report of 1964, a series of hearings in which the Mattachine Society, a society of homosexuals appeared before a congressional committee, protesting that their civil liberties were being violated by legislation aimed against them, and demanding that their civil rights as a minority group be vindicated. In the course of the argument, the president of the society said the total government employment roll is about two and a half million, and we estimate that there are two hundred thousand- a quarter of a million homosexuals in the government. Then he went on, interestingly enough, to cite the support for his position, this total liberty for all ideas and the denial that there is any moral truth. He went on to support his position by citations by many clergymen. At this point, one congressman, Mr. Dowdy, found it too much for himself to take, so he got a Bible and he immediately began to read from it the various passages that deal with the biblical condemnation of homosexuality. And he went on to quote from Leviticus 18:22 and from the New Testament, various passages from St. Paul, and he concluded by saying that the condemnation of God upon this was unequivocal, that the Lord says that it is the sin of abomination and they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them. "I cannot see how you can interpret that as you have, or that there could even be a difference of opinion in regard to what that says." And the president of the Mattachine Society said, "This is a matter of theology. I feel that a theological discussion on the part of a member of congress in his capacity is grossly improper under the First Amendment to the Constitution." In other words, truth has no relationship to law, and liberty must be from truth.

This position is not a new one, I indicated it began at the time of the French Revolution and the great advocate of this position was the Marquis de Sade. And the Marquis de Sade in his various writings, which unfortunately, after being banned for a century and a half, are now again being published extensively in this country and throughout the world. The Marquis de Sade demanded a total toleration of all practices because, he said, there is no truth. Therefore, he said, there must be a right to practice every kind of sexual perversion. There must be a right to murder when we feel so inclined and there must be no laws punishing it. There must be a right to cannibalism. There must be a total right for everything, he said, except Christianity. The one thing we must abolish in order to free man is truth! And it is Christianity which stands for truth, therefore Christianity must be abolished!

And this is what we are in process of doing today in this country. We are making it progressively legal for anything to be in the schools. It is legal to teach Marxism in the schools but not the Bible. In Californian recently, a teacher was vindicated for writing a play called *A Cat Called Jesus*. Whereas another teacher whom I know was not only discharged but had his teaching certificate withdrawn for two

offenses. First, this fourth grade teacher, teaching one morning, asked a child a question and the boy broke into tears as he stood to recite, and he called the boy up to him and he said, what's the matter, Tommy? And the boy sobbed, he said, my folks didn't think I understood what was happening when they sent me to school this morning, but my baby brother is dying. And this teacher, Al Lynch, impulsively put his arm around the boy and drew him to him and turned to the class and said let's all bow our heads and pray for Tommy's brother. And the children were all deeply moved. They spoke about it on the playground. It was heard by another teacher and reported to the administration and it was put down as a demerit in his record and it was entered thus that he had been guilty of an irregularity with a fourth grade boy. And he protested, you have implied that I have been guilty of a perversion. If you want to put down that I was guilty of praying in class, put it down. But they refused to change it. And then a little later, they sang Christmas carols, he led them in the singing of Christmas carols. He's lost his teaching certificate.

And yet at the same time, after I spoke about his matter in one community, a teacher came up to me quietly, handed me something and said: "Read it when you have time." And I read it after the meeting. From the Union Teacher, American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, Los Angeles, September 1965, concerning the charges filed against the principal of a certain high school in Southern California, in the Superior Court of the State of California, and here are some of the charges:

"The principal did state on more than one occasion to groups of teachers that the incidents of homosexuality and prostitution among the \_\_\_\_\_ faculty were a matter of great concern to him. The actions of the principal did cause great resentment among the faculty and brought about the circulation of damaging rumors and a general atmosphere of suspicion and tension in the school."

Nothing about the truth of the charges, just that it was damaging to the reputation of the school, and so charges were filed against the principal.

Truth, in other words, is the one thing that is illegitimate today, the one thing against which war is being progressively waged. And so there cannot be Christianity in the schools, or in the State. The implication of it ultimately is that there cannot be any church of Jesus Christ.

And we have seen in certain states, legislation introduced, which in the name of abolishing prejudice, would abolish any preaching which in any way reflected discredit upon anyone else. So that if you said those outside of Christ were sinners, you would be guilty in terms of such legislation. We have moreover, increasingly such things as the Kinsey Reports, which are based upon the premise that there is no truth, and that the great enemy of man is truth. And in the second volume of the Kinsey Report, Kinsey declared that legislation against child molestation was wrong. The real damage, he said, is not done by the molester, but by cultural conditioning. The child, he said, is constantly warned by adults, parents and teachers against strange men and as a result, they are emotionally upset or frightened by their contact with adults. And he said, actually, if they were not frightened by these warnings from their adults, these experiences would be very meaningful. And so, he says, the real offender is not the adult child molester, but the inhibiting parent and society with their moral 'Thou shalt nots!'

"Some of the more experiences students of juvenile problems have come to believe that the emotional reactions of the parents, police officers and other adults who discover that the child has had such a contact may disturb the child more seriously than the sexual contacts themselves. The current hysteria over sex offenders may very well have serious effects on the ability of these children to work out sexual adjustment some years later in their marriages."

These things must be taken seriously. They are increasingly being written into the fabric of our law by legal decisions. It is an all-out warfare against truth in the name of liberty. And this liberty means total

tolerance of all evil and a total love of all evil. It means, ultimately, an hostility to law because law rests on truth. Something is illegal because it is wrong! The law is concerned with right and wrong and with procedures to establishing law and order. Hence, there is an increasing hostility to the very idea of law as a part of the order of truth.

On January 1, 1965, there was, in San Francisco, a benefit ball for homosexuals by a group of clergymen. And when the police interfered, these clergymen protested and one of them made this statement,

“The police department wanted to deal more in theology rather than open up a dialog. They looked at the rings on our fingers and said, we see you’re married. How do your wives accept this? They said, we believe in the Ten Commandments. What do you believe in? They wanted to know what theological concepts we had. I believe their theological jargon and beliefs are somewhat outdated.”

This same demand for the overthrow of truth was behind the free speech movement and the other student movements at the University of California campus in Berkeley. And this statement was made openly over the public address system there in Berkeley, “Students should have the same sexual freedom on campus as the dogs.”

The one thing these people will not tolerate is orthodox Christianity, because this is the foundation, the source of law and of morality, and they are bent progressively in establishing Relativism in our courts and in disestablishing Christianity as the foundation of our law. As long as civil government exists, it will have a rationale, a law of its being, and that law will be its truth. And today, the ‘new truth’ as it were of our society is relativistic humanism. And it is the established religion of the new liberty.

Let’s back up and examine Justice Douglas’s assertion. Is truth totalitarian? Is Douglas right? Does the affirmation of truth mean that we are going to be a persecuting people, a totalitarian people? And the answer is, remove truth and you have Totalitarianism. Why? Civil government, the State, is the coercive branch of society, the coercive arm. Remove truth from the State and all you leave to the state is coercion; coercion without truth. You have coercion in a Christian state. But it is a coercion governed by truth, by the Word of God, by the law of God. And take away truth and you have coercion pure and simple, coercion for the sake of coercion.

As far back as 1936, Justice Stone of the Supreme Court said: “the only check upon our own exercise of power is our own sense of self-restraint.” He recognized that already the Christian foundation was gone, that the Supreme Court by denying that there was Christian truth had said in effect, we can do as we please; there is no restraint of truth upon us. And since we deny truth in the Word of God, certainly we’re not going to affirm it in the Constitution. And so he said the only check upon us is our sense of self-restraint. And this is rapidly going now in the court. What is there to restrain men when they abandon truth? And the new liberty which is separation from truth means the right of the court to do as it pleases with the law, and as a result, total power looms in every area.

And this divorce from truth is the basic fact in the churches of our day. The basic idea of modernism, the basic idea in ecumenicism, is that man no longer has to reckon with an infallible Word. He no longer has to contend with truth and his approach to the problem of church union is pragmatic. We will give a little and you will give a little and we’ll come together with some compromise position which need have no relationship to the Word of God because there is no such thing as an absolute truth. There is only a developing tradition as was so ably expounded to us this morning.

When truth goes from the State, naked power, sheer coercion alone remains. And hence, Stalin defined the essence of State action as coercion. We must coerce and coerce and coerce. And terror

then becomes justified because there is nothing wrong with anything. There is no truth or error about anything. And so, Machiavelli long ago in *The Prince*, spelled out the judicious use of terror, and Lenin advocated it and it became applied. And today Communism is simply the application of total power whenever it is convenient, and we have had Mr. Sylvester representing the federal government, state that it is expedient very often for the State to lie, it is not bound by the truth.

As George Orwell, in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* very discerningly stated it: “The object of power is power.” Divorce the State from truth and it has one goal; power and more power over man. And it seeks to play God over man and to predestinate man totally and to govern him absolutely. Thus, separation of the state from truth, from theological truth, and Marx was right, it’s either theological foundations or it is total relativism. Separation of the state from truth has simply meant liberty for the state to claim total and unlimited power while at the same time paradoxically, promising unlimited freedom from truth to its citizenry. And this freedom is license to immorality as a façade for the steady loss of liberty to the state.

And today, as day after day the Supreme Court whittles away at truth and increases the power of the State, at the same time it deludes the people into believing they are more free because they have more license. They have the right to be pornographers. They have the right to be perverts, and this is the new liberty which is given to man; license! While his true liberty under God is steadily being destroyed. The position of course is a contradiction. There cannot be unlimited power for the State together with unlimited liberty as it is promised to the people. The end will be the total destruction of the liberty of the people and the total power of the State.

Our position as Christians must be, of course, the biblical position, which affirms the sovereignty of God and thereby denies the sovereignty of the State or the sovereignty of man as an individual. The foundations of the American approach to this were laid down by 1635 in New England by John Cotton. The Reverend John Cotton, in his writing and especially in a series of sermons on Revelation 13 declared emphatically: “it is necessary that all power on earth be limited!” And he declared that only God can have unlimited power and therefore neither man nor the State could ever possess it or dare to claim it. And only God can have unlimited liberty and therefore man can never pretend to it. And so he said there can only be limited power and limited liberty on the human sphere. To dream of more is to be guilty of sin. Man is a creature, he said, and power is under law and liberty is under law; God’s law. And only in such an order is there any liberty possible. And he went on to deny the right of any state to offer the good society, and he said, the promise of the good society from the State is the smell of the leopard, of the Beast, because the State cannot offer a saving order. God alone offers salvation. The State cannot offer the good society, but only uphold law, justice. To liberate the state from God’s truth is to surrender man to the state.

Now, in any system of thought, you can locate ‘god’ and truth by going to the source of law. Wherever your source of law is, there is your god and there is the truth in your system. You cannot separate them else you have a broken godhead, which is a philosophical impossibility. Thus, track down the source of truth, the source of law and there you have the god of the system. Now, in our system, where do we derive our law? Is it not from the State? Have we not denied that God is the source of truth? That God is the source of our law? Is it not Congress and the Supreme Court which are themselves the ultimate sources of law and do not recognize the higher lawgiver and the higher court? So that in our system, when you trace down the source of law, it stops in Washington. And there is the god of our system. There is our truth in ‘God’ incarnate, and infallibility is therefore transferred from God to the state and there is no appeal beyond the State.

But man can only live in terms of God’s truth, or perish because he has departed from it. We cannot break God’s Law or depart from His Word without bringing judgment upon ourselves. And to dream of

making a lie work, which is what Washington is doing today as well as Moscow and every other state virtually in the world. To dream of making a lie work is like trying to fly by flapping your arms, it doesn't work. You will have a beautiful and speedy take-off if you take off from the Empire State Building, but you will have a rough landing.

And the same destiny today awaits modern man and the modern State. Jesus said: "I am the truth." The truth is personal. It is not an idea, it is not an abstraction, it is the person of Jesus Christ. "If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed." And I think we are guilty of abusing that passage if we restrict it to the doctrine of salvation. I think its application is total. And there can be no freedom for a state, a church, a school, or a man in his person or in his institutions unless they be built upon the truth of Jesus Christ. Anything else is slavery. Anything else leads to ruin and to judgment. If the Son make you free, then and then alone are we free indeed. May God grant us speedily this freedom in Jesus Christ, the truth and in Him the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

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## ENDNOTES:

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# Liberty and Property

R.J. Rushdoony

Our analysis of 'liberty and property' this morning will be first of all historical and then we will attempt to analyze briefly the biblical foundations. It is very difficult in our day to find anything on property that is acceptable from the Christian perspective because, in virtually every textbook, and every bit of research on the subject, in all college and university teaching, the approach to the subject of property is evolutionary. As a result, it is definitely hostile to property. The evolutionary approach sees property as having developed out of the communism of the primal horde. Originally, according to this perspective, men ran in a pack. They had all things; property, women, food in common. Then certain men by brute force said this piece of land, this cave, and these women are mine, and this ostensibly is the origin of private property.

Unfortunately, this evolutionary perspective has received a body-blow in recent years as the result of biological studies. Some years ago it was commonplace to assert that the sexual instinct was the basic instinct among animals. This seemed to be true as the result of the observation of biologists, but unfortunately, biologists were observing zoo animals, not animals in the wild. And in recent years, studies of animals, of birds have shown that animals have two basic instincts; the first is territoriality or property, the second is a sense of status or of class.

Those of you who are birdwatchers, or those of you who sit in your kitchen, look out of the window, look at the birds in your back yard have come to recognize that your yard is probably the property of certain birds. And these birds will have a strict territory, a certain portion of the yard, a certain branch of the tree is their property, and no other bird of their kind dares trespass without fear of being attacked.

If you go out into the woods, you will find that, for example, having lived in the intermountain area of the West, a certain area will be a cougar's territory, and his territory will extend to a particular rock, to a particular stream, to a particular tree, and cover a number of miles. No other cougar dare trespass. If a man trespasses his territory, he is alarmed and he follows you around suspiciously. What is this enemy doing on my property?

The sense of property is extremely strong among animals. It is one of the two basic instincts. The other is a sense of class, of status. Those of you who've grown up on a farm know that there is a pecking order in the hen yard. There is a top rooster and a top hen. And there is a strict pecking order down to the most miserable rooster or hen. And those of you who have milked cows know that there is a butting order among the cows. There is one cow who will take the chosen stall and none other dare trespass, and that cow will go in first. Any other cow that dares step in their way gets butted. And right on down to the cow who is at the bottom of the butting order; a strict sense of class, of status. So that the biologists have found that the idea that property is a late development evolutionarily speaking is nonsense. Even so, they have not conceded the point in sociology.

All the same, these approaches are futile to our subject, because we are going to analyze first of all, the American tradition which was in its origins thoroughly Christian to the subject of property, and then

evaluate what has taken place in that tradition in terms of the biblical standard.

The founders of the United States, the men of the colonial period were consistently Christian. They were interested in developing a thoroughly Christian republic. Our history books have so thoroughly falsified our history that we have forgotten, for example, that it was once routine for judges, when they found that nothing in the statute book fitted a case, to go to the Bible and give a decision from the Bible, that was valid. And we have forgotten that once in every state of the union, you had to be a Christian, you had to affirm the infallibility of the Scripture and the doctrine of the Trinity to be able to vote. Moreover, it was once the rule in these United States that you could not testify in a court of law unless you were a defendant; in other words, you could not be a witness for any man unless you were a Christian. Your testimony was otherwise invalid. It could not be heard. Indeed, it's only been in the last two or three years that in some states the courts have thrown out such legislation. The perspective in this country was consistently biblical.

It recognized, moreover, that the roots of law are inescapably religious. Every law system is enacted morality and behind that enacted morality is a theology. And as Sir Patrick Devlin with whom we need not agree in other respects, has clearly stated, if you destroy the theology behind the law, you destroy the law. And you are then in process of looking for a new theology and a new law system. The roots of law are inescapably religious.

And as a result, in Christian Europe, there were several areas of law. What we today call the 'ghetto system,' as though it were something horrible, was once one of the glories of Europe. What was the ghetto? The root idea behind the ghetto system was simply this; that law, being religious, meant that some people, because they were of another religion, lived in terms of another law. And therefore, you recognized their right to organize under that type of a law and have a community of their own. The ghetto, therefore, was an area, not where Jews, for example, were compelled to live and lived very miserably. Instead, it was part of the Medieval city which belonged to the Jews, which was totally under Jewish law, and to which no outsider could enter, except by permission. And instead of being something they disliked, they fought bitterly a hundred and fifty years ago, against the attempt to destroy the ghetto, because it meant they were going to lose their law, and they were going to be under the Christian courts.

And if in the Medieval period, you were a student, for example, at the University of Paris, and you were an Englishman or a German, you were not subject to the law of Paris, but you lived in a separate area and you were a part of the English nation and if you in any way offended the university authorities, handed you over to your area for punishment by your own court, because you came from an Anglo-Saxon tradition and an Anglo-Saxon Christian body of law, or from a Germanic body of law in a Christian context.

Now in the United States, from the colonial period on through, this sense of the local context of law, and the thoroughly theological writ was basic; so that the basic unit of law was the county, and it still is to this day. And the county represented a theological entity, and this lingers to this day. Your basic law in the United States; criminal and civil, is county law. If you are tried for a criminal offense, it is before a jury of your peers in a court of the county. Civil and criminal law alike is almost entirely under the county jurisdiction. And what were the counties in the American system? They were settlements of a particular religious group. They were Lutherans, or Presbyterians, or they were Baptist. And they went into a particular area and this became their county, and they established the law and they established their own church.

Do you realize to this day this lingers so heavily in the United States that most of the counties, the overwhelming majority of the over 3,000 counties in the United States are still dominated by a partic-



ular church group with the majority of people in that county of a particular church? They may be all Scots-Irish and Presbyterian, or they may be mostly German and Lutheran, and so on, because originally, the counties represented a law-area of a particular theological framework. And basic to all of them was the biblical perspective on property.

And so, there was no tax on real property, on land, because the Bible has no tax on real property. And it was only on the eve of the War of Independence that one or two New England colonies introduced a very minor tax on land. Indeed, one of the things that alarmed the colonists was the idea of any tax on real property. And in the First Continental Congress, in its first session, 1774, they denied the rights of Parliament to have any jurisdiction over any individuals and over property. As Gottfried Dietze, a German scholar has said, as to property, the delegates thought it should be free from seizure and taxation. They insisted, moreover, that all questions of life and property were a local concern, and they had: "no intentions of submitting to or conceiving the omnipotence of Parliament and acquiescing in whatever disposition they might think proper to make of their lives and property." In an Appeal to Quebec, October 26, 1774, the First Continental Congress asked: "What can protect your property from taxing edicts and the rapacity of necessitous and cruel masters?"

The property tax, when it came in, came in very slowly. It's a curious thing, but a very significant thing, that the property tax spread as Unitarianism spread. It began where Unitarianism began and spread with it. The last area to adopt a property tax was the South. It came in very slowly; in many areas of the South it did not come in until Reconstruction brought it in. And until the Civil War, no right was granted to the Federal government to tax persons in any way. And it was held that there was a total immunity of individuals from federal tax with respect to persons, property, income and inheritance. And that the Federal government could not interfere in the life of the states even to the point of road construction. Only one president even imagined it might be constitutional prior to 1860, John Quincy Adams. Every other president thought the suggestion from a few radicals was outrageous and unconstitutional.

When the property tax did come in, it was trusted only to the county, this local group which was basically of an ethnic and a theological group. And then because it was the local property owners taxing themselves to maintain their local self-government. And this is the hedge with which they surrounded the property tax. And to surrender this right to any other body is of course a total surrender of liberty. When the state can come and assess your property and tax it, it means that the power to control your property is passed from the local governmental unit to a larger body and you no longer truly own your property. This is why there is a steady move today to remove the control of the assessment of property taxes and the collection of them from the county to the state level. There's an all-out move in many states in this direction.

Moreover, the police power rests, significantly, on local foundations, on the county form of government, and on the constituent unit, and on the property tax. In fact, in the American system, the sole means of support for the police power is the property tax, and its framework is the protection of local life and property. A true police force has no national or political reference or responsibility. It is not a political police, nor does it have any political or national reference or responsibility. It is a non-military and a civilian body.

In the American system, the police power is a citizen power, not a state or a county power, and it is a citizen power delegated without surrender to locally-controlled and a locally-created agency. Now, this is significant. When you vote in your state or county government, in the board of commissioners or your parish, or in your state assembly, or in congress, you vote only by delegation. This is the right you hold only by delegation. But the police power is a right you hold even when you delegate it; you have the citizen's power of arrest which is the same as the policeman's power of arrest. And the writs of this are very clearly, very openly in the America system, in the Biblical Law, whereby you have the right

to kill under certain circumstances anyone who trespassed on your property to defend your life. And these were enacted into the American legal system. In fact, the very Bible verses originally were simply put into the legal code.

And this is the basis of the citizen's police power in the United States. You do not have it in the rest of the world. In most of the world today, you have no true police force because they have lost this Christian sense of the person's right under God to defend himself and his property according to the Mosaic law. You only have a national force, which is a political body, not a police. In the Soviet Union, there are no police officers. There are simply military barracks throughout the cities and in the countryside. And there are army detachments that are stationed there, and they patrol the area. And these army detachments move around regularly so they will not develop local roots. Moreover, the Soviet Union does not trust even its own army men when it has them patrol, not only within the Soviet Union, but on the Iron Curtain, the Berlin Wall. They are given only so many shells when they patrol; usually in the Soviet cities, three. When they return from patrol, they either have to turn in the three cartridges full or empty. They don't trust them. It's the same when they are on the rifle range. They bring back the loaded or the empty cartridges, and they are in trouble if they cannot account for even one.

There are no police in England because it has forsaken Christian law. The people have no right of self-defense. The 'Bobbies are paid by Parliament and they are disarmed. This is true in most of the world, and the reason for it is that the old biblical, the Mosaic standard concerning the right of the people of God to defend themselves and their property has been lost and only the State now, in these systems, has the right of self-defense.

Originally, in the American system, because of this strong biblical sense of property, suffrage was closely linked to property. You could not vote unless you owned real property. In the Constitutional Convention, this was discussed. Should the Federal government have a property requirement for suffrage? And they decided against, it because they said, the basic unit in the United States is the county and the county area is the area that has this requirement and since their property and the people of property the government, they should have the requirement, but on the Federal government, we don't touch property; we have no connection with individuals of property, and so we will not require it, but to facilitate the States and the counties to maintain this standard, we will require that in every new territory, as the local self-government is established, there be a property requirement of fifty acres, and this was enacted both before and after the Constitutional Convention by the Northwest Ordinance.

You'll find a long defense of this position, and an excellent one in a book written in the 1830s or '40s by James Fenimore Cooper, *The American Democrat*. In the 1860s, a European observer, as he commented on the relationship of property and suffrage, wrote as follows, a most important statement.

"Man proclaims politically that private property is abolished as soon as he abolishes the property qualification for the vote. Is not private property as an idea abolished when the non-owner becomes legislator for the owner? The property qualification for the vote is the ultimate political form of the recognition of private property."

The man who made that statement was Karl Marx. He said in effect, that the way to abolish property and to have communism is simply to give the people who do not own property the right to vote taxes against property, and you will ultimately abolish property. And this is what is happening. There are a few areas in the country where there still is a limitation on suffrage if you are not a property owner, but they are disappearing. And today we are seeing, not the responsible people of God as voters. We have dropped any theological requirement for suffrage. We are dropping property requirements for suffrage, and as a result, we are having progressively the rule of slaves.

And whether we like it or not, the Bible recognizes slavery as legitimate. And says quite plainly that while the believer is to be a free man: “ye have been bought with a price, therefore be not ye servants of men,” although you are not to be in rebellion against the condition in which you find yourself, but you are to strive lawfully to disentangle yourself, Nevertheless, many men are slaves by nature because the basic slavery is a slavery to sin. And if you are a slave of sin, then you will be a slave politically. You will be a slave economically. This is simply the reality of your spiritual condition. And slavery is in fact the reality of the spiritual condition of these United States today. Most Americans, because they have forsaken the Gospel, are spiritually slaves, and therefore they are in search of a slavemaster in the form of Washington, D.C. and President Johnson, or whoever else is in office. They are slaves in search of a master and we need to preach liberty through the saving power of Jesus Christ to people, and the implications of that liberty.

One of the implications, which people need to be reminded of is this: “owe no man anything save to love one another.” And as Solomon declared: “he that is a borrower is slave (or servant) to the lender.” Debt is slavery. And the Bible does not give us the right, this is in the Law—to go into debt beyond a six-year period, and except for emergency reasons. We have no right under God to mortgage our future, or our children’s future, as individuals or as a people. Debt is slavery.

But many people are slaves and you have to live with the reality of it. And today because we have forsaken the biblical standards, we are becoming a slave people and we are being ruled increasingly by a slave-state and people of a slave mentality. I was not at all surprised therefore, to read in a news item for Sunday, January 23, this item:

“Mrs. Gladys Kyle, 38, the mother of eleven children, is our Sargent Shriver’s choice to represent Chicago on the nation-wide twenty-eight-member advisory council for the War on Poverty, a recipient of Aid to Dependent Children, and an active civic worker, Mrs. Kyle said that she has not seen her husband since 1957 when they were separated. Her eldest son is twenty-one, her youngest children are five, four, and two years old.”

This is how the War on Poverty is being run and the people by whom it is being run. It’s a war on property.

Liberty and property are closely linked to each other, and together two Christian faith. A very interesting statement was made some few years ago, in 1957, by Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, before a congressional committee. And I’d like to quote that statement to you; you’ll find it also in my book, This Independent Republic, on page fifty-two.

“There are several reasons why there is no place for God in communism. One is because of its concept of freedom. Suppose I correlate the problem of religion and the problem of freedom in answering your question, and let me begin with freedom and then go to religion.

A man is free on the inside because he has a soul that he can call his own. Wherever you have the spirit you have freedom. A pencil has no freedom, ice has no freedom to be warm, fire has no freedom to be cold. You begin to have freedom only when you have something immaterial or spiritual.

Now, freedom must have some external guaranty of itself. The external guaranty of human freedom is property. A man is free on the inside because he can call his soul his own; he is free on the outside because he can call something he has his own. Therefore private property is the economic guaranty of human freedom.

Suppose now you concoct a system in which you want to possess man totally. On what conditions can you erect a totalitarian system so that man belongs to you completely? One, you have got to deny spirit; two, you have got to deny property.

That is why the existence of God and private property are both denied simultaneously by communism.

If a man has no soul, he cannot allege that he has any relationships with anyone outside of the state. If he has no property, he is dependent upon the state even for his physical existence. Therefore the denial of God and the denial of freedom are both conditions of slavery.”

With differences with respect to his theological framework, we can essentially agree with Bishop Sheen.

And the purpose of the Biblical land law, which placed property beyond taxation, was to preserve man from the attempts of the State to become god over man, and to assert instead of the total dominion of God over society, the total dominion of the state. In the biblical perspective, the tax as well as the tithe was on a man’s increase, never upon his property. It was immune to taxation. It preserved the independence of the individual from the powers of the state and confirmed him in his liberty under God.

But today, we see the steady erosion of liberty and property because we have had the steady erosion of any respect for the biblical law. In terms of Scripture, we find that biblical religion is first of all land based, property based. Ours is a thoroughly materialistic religion, in the healthy sense of that word. It has a firm basis in the realities of this world, it is not as Hinduism and other religions are, spiritual in its total context. It recognizes the realities of this world and it recognizes the realities of our bodies and its destiny for us is not only our spiritual resurrection, our regeneration, but the resurrection of the body. And so the Biblical Law governs not only things spiritual, but things material. And therefore, in terms of the Biblical Law, property has a very great importance, a centrality, an immunity from any kind of taxation as man’s defense against state power.

And finally, in the biblical context, not only is the land seen as important to man’s independence from the state and his freedom, his liberty under God, but it is seen as important in terms of the Christian destiny of men and of nations. David declared in Psalm 37:11:

“The meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.”

And our Lord, in the Beatitudes, Matthew 5:5 echoed this as one of the Beatitudes, one of the blessings that he pronounced upon his disciples.

“Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.”

I don’t see how you can spiritualize that way without destroying the plain meaning of the Scripture. And we cannot inherit the earth when we become slaves unto sin. And fall therefore slaves unto our covetousness which leads us into debt, and into demanding things from the state which leads into socialism, which leads to the destruction of property and to laying waste of man and the earth.

Only by returning to the full-orbed biblical faith, and to recognize that the land has a place in the promises of God and it has a place in the promises of God according to the Word and the law of God, can we see again a society in which Christian men under God “inherit the earth” and “delight themselves in the abundance of peace.” May God speed the day!

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## ENDNOTES:

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# Christian Social Ethics

R.J. Rushdoony

It is all-important for Christian faith to be firmly grounded on Scripture and on a biblically-informed philosophy. If our foundations be the least bit shaky, we are apt, even when we believe we are most faithful, to come forth with rather strange conclusions. A few years ago, when I first picked up Billy Graham's book, *Peace with God*, I noted in the introduction that he declared that it was his intention to expound simply that which God declared, and he said, this book has been written on my knees. But when I turned to one of the chapters which dealt with 'the Christian in relationship to the state,' he began by declaring that man is a 'social animal. This is Aristotle, not the Scripture. And Billy Graham on his knees had apparently made a little better contact with Aristotle at that point than with God. And this is what happens when we are not firmly grounded on a knowledge of the Scripture, plus a knowledge of the principles, the philosophical assumptions that underlie all of Scripture.

It is imperative for us today to be firmly rooted in the Christian faith, because we face on all sides, deeply rooted traditions which claim to be grounded on Scripture, but which introduce many alien concepts. We are told quite extensively today that love and justice are incompatible, that very often, justice must give way to love, and the true social order must be based on love, on the brotherhood of man, on unity. And I need not tell you that in the name of this 'love and brotherhood,' many people are being coerced and being forced to unite and to integrate. And so love ends up in force.

This doctrine, the doctrine of love as the higher way, and justice as an inferior way, has dual roots. One of the roots of this concept in the Western tradition is Monism. And Monism, which very often appears in mystical forms, has an ancient history. We meet at first, perhaps in Parmenides, we find it in prominent for certainly in Spinoza, certainly Mary Baker Eddy gives us a very extreme form of Monism, Josiah Royce, a milder form. But we need not go to these more conspicuous and open forms of Monism to identify it. We find it in very much milder form, and implicit, rather than explicit, in much of what passes for Christian theology.

According to Monism, the goal of being is 'unity in the one.' The truth of being is its oneness. And therefore, the goal of all being, of all creation is to find itself in the one. Men are metaphysically brothers. They are all members one of another, metaphysically. And therefore the true nature of all being is for all being to be united, and to love every other aspect of it. Therefore, in terms of Monism, love is the higher way of life because love is unitive. Love binds everything together, and love is the natural converging of all things into this one ultimate and glorious unity.

As a result of this concept, justice is seen as a lower way of life. Justice is divisive. And the man who stands on his rights is following a cruder, a primitive, a lower way because he is separating himself from his brother and he is saying his rights are more important than unity. Justice, moreover, emphasizes the individual, the particular, and therefore, it does not tend to unity, it tends to division, because it emphasizes the individual and his rights. It frustrates the goal of being, which is unity; oneness, and hence, in every perspective which is monistic, love is seen as the higher way and justice as the lower way. Monistic thinking is very widespread within the Christian church.

A second root of this concept that love and justice are incompatible is Dualism. Dualism also has a long history and tradition in Western thought. Certainly, the Zoroastrians, the Manicheans, the Gnos-

tics in many cases, the Bogomils, the Albigensians, the Illuminists, and various other groups represent the more extreme forms of Dualism. In Dualism, which also has had a deep influence on Christian thought, you have ultimately, two gods, two ultimate powers; the good god and the evil god, or the good being and the evil being. And here you find love on the side of the good god, whereas justice, standing on one's rights, is a manifestation of the evil spirit or the evil power in the universe. Similarly, spirit is a part of this good god, and the manifestation of his being and power in the universe, whereas matter is seen as something lower and inferior, and a creation of the evil god. Unity is similarly a manifestation of this good god, whereas individuality, or particularity, is an expression of the evil god of being. Therefore, those who are interested in love and in the spirit and in unity represent the higher way, the true way, as against the evil way.

Of course, Monasticism had both strongly monistic roots as well as strongly dualistic roots, depending on the particular monastic tradition. And evil, of course, was manifested in this emphasis on particularity, on the individual, on justice, on matter. Wherever you have an depreciation of matter, you have elements of anti-Christian thinking.

I read several years ago, in a theological work by a very, very fundamentalistic thinker, the assertion that spirit was higher than matter, and that somehow, spirit represented also a nobler element in man than matter. This, of course, is non-biblical. Man, body and soul, is created by God and created wholly good. Man apart from God is fallen; body and soul. And the evil is a part of his whole being, it is not a part of his body [only]. His soul is not exempt from the fall. He is fallen; body and soul. And he is regenerated and his whole being now is in the sight of God a part of the Kingdom of God. And even as his soul is regenerated, his body is destined for resurrection.

Both these traditions; Monism and Dualism, see justice as divisive and love as unitive. And therefore, their basic doctrine of salvation is this; salvation is by love. At this point, they are united. And since men are going to be saved by love, it is important to make men love, this is how they're going to be saved. You're going to save men, you're going to save society, you're going to save the world by love. Therefore, make them love! Coerce them into lovin! Compel them to love! Otherwise, how are they going to be saved?

Now coercion is inescapable from a doctrine of salvation. It is inescapable. And your coercion is either going to be an external coercion, through legislation. Through men telling you you've got to love everybody else in the world, because this is how the world's going to be saved and men are going to be saved. And passing laws to make you do certain things which are defined as acts of love. Or else the coercion is going to be internal. And under Christian theism, the coercion is internal. It is total coercion; it is the act of the Holy Spirit. You had no part in it, but this is a coercion which does not destroy you, which does not infringe upon your liberty, which does not take away from the integrity of your personality, but brings it rather to fulfillment. Because it is the fulfillment of your being, whereas the coercion in Monism and Dualism imposes upon you something alien to your being, and declares that you must submit to it.

It scarcely needs to be said that Christianity is theistic, not monistic or dualistic and only Christianity (although this is a separate issue, is truly theistic). Monism and Dualism say that man's problem is metaphysical. It is finitude. The trouble with man is that he isn't God. He isn't infinite. And the goal of being in Monism and Dualism, ultimately, is not only unity, but self-deification. But Christianity says man's problem is not finitude, it is not metaphysical. It is ethical, it is moral, man's problem is sin. And since man's problem is not metaphysical in Christianity, the goal of salvation is not this great oneness of being. And if the goal of salvation is this great oneness of being, merging into the great 'one,' or merging into the good power, or good god of being. In such a perspective, any individuality, and separateness, any division is an evil.

But our Lord said:

“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth, I came not to send peace but a sword for I am come to set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against her mother and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law”

In terms of ethics, there must be a division and a separation. A moral division, a moral separation is required. It is the act of holiness. Moreover, whereas in these two perspectives; Monism and Dualism, there is a tension between love and justice. In Dualism, they are opposites. In Monism, love is the higher way and justice the lower way. In Christian Theism, love and justice are different sides of the same coin. They cannot be opposed the one to the other. For a man to say that we must emphasize justice rather than love, or love rather than justice, is to talk nonsense if he is a Christian, because these two are different sides of the same coin; both have their common origin in God. And having their common origin in God, they cannot be in conflict. And the supreme coincidence of love and justice as the Bible reveals it is of course the cross of Christ, because in the cross of Christ we see the full justice of God manifested.

We see revealed to us in the cross of Christ, the absolute requirement of justice against man, that his sin must be atoned for, that there can be no setting aside of the requirements of justice. But at one and the same time, the cross of Christ reveals unto us the fullness of God’s love. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.” And in the Christian framework, love and justice are only operative together. They cannot be separated the one from the other without destroying them. And love and justice cannot be defined apart from the cross of Christ, which shows their supreme coincidence. So that to speak of any conflict between love and justice from the Christian perspective, is erroneous. They cannot be put in tension in the Christian system of thought.

For love and justice are not man-centered, they are God-centered. They are not concerned in the Christian theistic framework primarily with human rights, or with the love of men, but with the righteousness of God. And you can only create a tension between love and justice if you have a Monistic and Dualistic framework with a humanistic emphasis.

But in the biblical perspective, love and justice have their primary reference to the righteousness of God, and the fundamental principle of God’s righteousness and law is restitution. And without restitution, there can be no love, no justice. When we study Biblical Law, we find that the basic premise of Biblical Law is restitution; “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,” which means that the punishment must fit the crime and the basic aspect of punishment is restitution. If a man, according to the Biblical Law, stole \$100, he had to restore not only the \$100 he stole, but another \$100, the exact amount he hoped to profit thereby. In the case of cattle, because the cattle could increase and multiply, he not only restored what he stole, but four-fold or five-fold depending on the particular type of stock, because of the increase-potential. Restitution had to be made in terms of biblical law, to the injured party and to God. In other words, it was a restoration of godly order. This is justice in the biblical perspective, and this also is love.

Now when we analyze nonChristian concepts of justice, we find a different concept of what constitutes justice and law. We need not look at modern criminology we can go back to one of the earliest writers in this field, a Greek scholar writing during the Roman period, Aulus Gellius. Now Aulus Gellius, as he deals with law, says that it has a three-fold purpose.

1. He says punishment is to correct and reform.
2. To save the face of the offended man



### 3. As an example, as a deterrent

Now this sounds very familiar. This is the kind of rationale we meet with all the time, and of course the orientation is humanistic. It is not in terms of the righteousness of God, but in terms of man and the criminal is to be saved by coercion. And his prison sentence is for this purpose, to save him, to rehabilitate him. This is basic to the pagan doctrine of salvation and the 'religions of love' always means salvation by legal coercion, by compulsory sharing, by compulsory loving, by compulsory integrating, by some form of external coercion.

Now as I indicated earlier, coercion in some form is inescapable. It is also basic as I indicated, to the biblical position. But we need to examine afresh the nature of coercion and what it does. For example, I was coerced this morning by the institute here because I had to get up at a certain hour to be here and have breakfast. Now, I'm not used to having breakfast that early in the morning, and I like my own hours, and I eat about 11 in the morning and then about 4:30 in the afternoon and then about 10:30 pm or 11:00 pm, I have a snack before I wind up my work for the night. But I was coerced these past three days because I ate at hours that are not normal for me. Now, the purpose of this coercion as exercised by Dr. Smith and the other members of the institute was not to do me any harm or it was not directed against me personally. Its purpose was social order. We could not function here if I had meals at my time and you had them at your time. The whole thing would break down. The purpose of this coercion was social order. But it would be different, if instead of social order, the purpose of that coercion became my 'salvation.' And salvation, from the Latin 'salve' means 'health.' And of course salvation is simply the fullness of health; bodily and spiritually. And our regeneration is our spiritual health, our restoration from death to health, and the fullness of our salvation, our health comes with the resurrection of the body, when we have a perfect body.

Now, for my salvation, Dr. Smith and the seminary could say you must have grits for breakfast (I didn't have them), and you must have tomato juice (which I did not take) and for lunch you must have this and that and certain other things, which perhaps are objectionable to me but which may be good for my health. In this case coercion becomes personal and its purpose is not social order, as set times for meals are, but it reaches out, it interferes with my personal life and coerces me and says: "eat it, it's good for you, and you've got to because we're going to save you whether you like it or not!"

Now, when these 'social gospelers' replace justice as the social goal, with salvation by man-made laws, by love, as opposed to justice, for in their system it is opposed, they are not using law to create social order, they are using it to save man. And the purpose of law is not to save man. They are introducing salvation by law. They are also guilty of the great and central sin of playing God, of becoming man's savior, of saying we are going to save man, to give him perfect personal and social health by means of law; man's law.

Salvation is the province and work of God, not of man. And the saving society or the loving society, or the hating society, whatever you want to call it, is the great society of anti-Christ. When law becomes salvation, it becomes hostile to justice and to liberty. When the law says it's going to save me, the law has to take away my liberty. The law says to me I must eat what the law commands me to eat. I must associate with whom the law commands me to associate with. And this of course is literally what the law increasingly is doing. It is saying I must drink fluoridated water because that is good for me. Maybe I don't want to be healthy. And maybe I don't believe it makes me healthy. And I must integrate with people for my good, but maybe I don't care to be good in their sense. But the law is out to save me because the law says we are going to save, we, the men who are the planners are going to save society and we are going to save men and don't you dare refuse salvation!

But for the Christian, law can never save man. And when law is restored to its rightful place, under

God, law and liberty in the Christian sense, are not opposite the one to the other, but they are different sides of the same coin. It is not for us a bondage to obey God's Law. We were in slavery, we were in bondage when we were lawless. When our heart was in perpetual rebellion and hatred with respect to the law of God. But now by the grace of God the law has been written upon the tables of our hearts and the law is our nature so that it is no longer a handwriting of ordinances against us; Thou shalt not kill, steal, commit adultery, bear false witness or covet, but this is now our nature. Not perfectly, because we are not perfectly sanctified, but it is now our nature and it is our liberty because we are freed from the bondage and the slavery to sin and to death. So that in the Christian perspective, law, which is not salvation, which is restored to its rightful place under God, becomes identical with liberty. Man's laws control as a saving power means tyranny, and civil rights become civil wrongs. And man's rights are made more basic than justice and then law.

The goal of this doctrine of love, of human rights, of unity, its brotherhood, its human solidarity, its unity, its corporateness. But let us examine briefly the concept of corporateness and community. This of course, is what we believe in community, the community of Jesus Christ, established upon His atoning work, and its focal point the Lord's Table. And the world as a whole is saying the goal of man should be corporateness and community. How?

There are two ways in which corporateness or community, being members of one body, can be achieved. One is by imposition from above, by the total power of the state. In this case, liberty is lost, justice is lost, and tyranny prevails. And although this is done in the name of love, there is no love in it, because this enforced corporateness only drives men further and further apart. The other means of attaining corporateness or community is from the heart of the people, by God's grace, in free association, and in terms of this there must be liberty.

Certainly when you have this, the free association in terms of the moving of God's grace, you do run the risk of tensions and of divisions and of hurt. And it would be so easy, would it not, for us as pastors, if we had the absolute say-so and could lay down the law and the people had to listen to us to have no problems in the church. But we would have a greater problem in that our imposed law would then take the place of the grace of God. And it is the grace of God which must be nourished and fostered in the hearts of the people so that it is the grace of God that brings them together rather than our imposed law, for community is personal, and societal; not statist when it is true community.

The religion of love, whether in its monistic or dualistic forms, is a religion of salvation by man's law, by man's love, and by the coercive actions of that humanistic love. And the churches of this faith inevitably must gravitate to statist action because, grant them this, they do in their twisted way, have a tremendous passion for souls, and they do want to save souls by legislation, by works of law. And unhappily they far [too] often excel us in zeal. They do feel the world must be saved, and quickly! And they are ready to march; they are ready to work in state assemblies, ready to do everything; lobbying, marching, compelling people to be loving, because they do want the world to be saved. But the weakness of their position is of course that it is their zeal, not their god. Their zeal is great, but their god is non-existent, and their conception of him very trifling.

I was amused a few months ago to pick up a paper when I was in the northwest and to read that the Reverend Paul Beeman, a Methodist in Seattle, Washington, a legislative representative or lobbyist to the Washington state legislature said:

"If the church doesn't take an interest in the corporate lives of men, who will? If Jesus were alive in America today, He might very well have run for the legislature."

Well, I believe if Jesus were here today, He would set His sights a little higher than the Washington

state legislature. After all, there are better states. And our Lord did refuse the kingship of Israel, according to John 6. Beeman's Jesus is a very limited creature, not the King of Creation.

But this is the religion of salvation by works of law. For, as salvation by God, justification through faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ, rests not on man's law, nor on man's coercive power, but on the coercive power of the Holy Spirit which totally acts within us for our redemption and recreates man. And this supernatural coercion is within the framework of the human personality and without violence to its integrity, but in fulfillment of its potentiality under God. When God by His Holy Spirit coerced us, totally coerced us, and saved us, He did us no violence to our being, but rather liberated, brought it to life from death, and released it into all its potentiality. This too is total control, but it is also the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

The religion of salvation by law, of coercive love in dualism and in monism, cannot work on man's heart. It tries to do so by education and by mental health programs, but these are secondary to their salvation by coercive and total law. The biblical faith and the biblical social ethics provide a slower, but a surer way. And in terms of it, God is sovereign, not man. And in terms of it, God is the savior, not man. And the function of the state is justice, not love. The function of the state is to provide godly order, not to save man. We must reserve to God the sole power of salvation, and the essence of all these social gospel ethics is that salvation is transferred from God to the state, and it is the saving power of the state that confronts us. We then must assert as against this false gospel, "the power of God unto salvation." This is the only answer, and we must reconstruct godly order, a Christian America, a Christian church, because we scarcely have it today, in terms of the biblical faith. And we need to do it in confidence.

Someone yesterday raised a question. I'd like to close by repeating the answer I gave to that question, how can we, when we are a handful, hope to establish again a Christian America, an America in which God's Word is honored, in which again Christian law is the foundation of society? How can we hope to do so when we are so small a minority?

The answer is; history has never once been dominated by a majority, always and only by dedicated minorities. Will we be that dedicated minority?

The premise of the Communists in operating is simply this; they believe that all they need to control any country, any institution, any church, is one percent of its members, with another nine percent sympathetic, whether knowingly or not. And the only thing that can prevent them when they have this from controlling it, is to have another one percent leadership and 9 percent following at the other end. They have their ten percent already in the churches and in these United states. The only reason why they do not govern fully is because there still exists at the other end, the one percent and the nine percent, and hence their attack is centered on discrediting and destroying that element.

But a minority can govern. A minority, if it knows its position and moves in terms of it, can control a situation. In Korea, it is significant what happened in the prisoner of war camps. Dr. Mayer, of the Army Medical Corps, made extensive studies and reported extensively until the army imposed a blackout on him and on his information, on the men who were brainwashed, and the reports were very illuminating. When Americans were taken prisoners, after asking the name, rank and serial number, they asked two or three harmless questions. The purpose of these questions was to determine two things; did these men believe in the Bible as the Word of God and did they believe in the free enterprise system? If they did, they segregated these men. And it amounted to roughly 15 out of every 100; fifteen percent. These men were put behind barbed wire, well cared for, well fed, well-guarded, but they never bothered them.

They took the other eighty-five percent and put them into Korean villages out of which they had driven the natives. They didn't have a single strand of barbed wire around those villages, only one or two guards walking around it, but not a one of those eighty-five percent tried to escape. They gave these men the food, they gave them the equipment, they told them, now go ahead, take care of yourself, prepare your food, build your own latrines. They didn't. The villages became so filthy finally, the Chinese Communists had to come in with squads and clean them up and build the latrines themselves. Only then could they come in and begin lecturing them. They didn't have any trouble brainwashing those men. There was a vacuum there. There was no faith. And so it was very easy to influence them.

This is our situation today. And I think the percentage they found was fairly accurate, fairly reflective of the condition in this country, eighty-five percent without any conviction about anything, about liberty, about Christ, about anything.

We must be that dedicated minority. And we must move in the conviction that God's judgment is on this present order, and I believe it will be manifested in not too many years in the form of a total worldwide economic collapse that will shatter every existing regime. I believe we will go into a period of chaos. But if we prepare now, if we proclaim the Word of God in all its majesty and in all its implications, if we become that dedicated minority, we can, and I believe must and shall command the future.

May God bless you to that purpose.

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**ENDNOTES:**

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