

**BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES**  
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## PREFACE

The summer session in 1971 for the study of social studies in the Protestant Reformed Christian schools makes no claim of being a pioneer endeavor. Manuals have been prepared and are in use in many public and Christian schools. Many of these earlier works have much to offer in the way of practical suggestions and in the selection of teaching materials. Furthermore, both the Federation of Protestant Reformed Schools and the Teachers Institute have previously done work in the fields of history and geography. I refer especially to the Principles of Teaching History and the Manual for Teachers of Ancient World History.

Rather than to duplicate these efforts, it was considered advisable that a different tact be taken. It was noted that frequently in the classroom the interest of the students is centered in real problems of living. The Vietnam war is very real to the ninth grader who considers his own possible involvement in the war. The Christian teacher has an obligation to discuss these issues and apply the biblical truths in answering the concerns of his students. By better understanding the principles of war, the geography of Asia, and the political-economic goals of Communism, the teacher of better equipped to guide the student in his understanding of the world.

A number of frequently recurring social problems or concerns were isolated for study. From these, the members volunteered to undertake a study of a specific problem and to sear for Biblical directives. Each member than wrote a paper and presented it before the workshop where it was discussed and modified. It is hoped that these endeavors will better prepare the participants to teach in their classrooms and also serve as a stimulus to teachers and others who read the papers.

In the early stages of the workshop, the members dedicated themselves to meeting the following objectives in the course of their work:

- to formulate a Biblically-sound understanding of continuing historical problems through reading, preparing papers, and discussion.
- to state goals in teaching social studies in general, as well as in teaching the distinct disciplines of civics, history, economics, and geography.
- to advance scriptural proof, as well as historical evidence, that God's cause is advanced through the events of history.
- to compare the possible methods of teaching social studies, noting the relative strengths and weaknesses of these methods.
- to review current social studies programs (curricula) in the Protestant Reformed schools and to suggest improvements where needed.

We believe that we have achieved most of the above mentioned goals. However, this booklet is not an attempt to reproduce the conference nor could it summarize the accrued benefits derived by the members of the summer workshop. Rather the booklet is a compilation of the revised papers of the various members and as such reflects a seasoned opinion about the topics on which they agreed to write.

It is our hope that these papers may be beneficial to the teachers in our Schools and to all persons interested in the maintenance and development of Christian schools.

Also included within this booklet are a set of principles which we feel are significant for a teacher in preparing a course of study in one of the social studies areas. The principles are not to be considered a final statement in these subject areas. In each case, the principles stated are meant to stimulate the creative and dedicated teacher to make explicit, and specific the principles from the Word of God in his teaching.

Lamm Lubbers, Director

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## THE PROPER RELATIONSHIP OF THE CHURCH AND THE STATE

The student in the Protestant Reformed Christian School should understand and be able to articulate the Reformed position concerning the proper relationship of the church and the state. It is the responsibility of the teacher in the Reformed Christian School to teach this relationship so that the student can acquire this understanding.

The title of this essay indicates that the writer believes that there is a proper relationship which should exist between the church and the state. That the relationship between the church and the state has changed throughout the manifold periods of the history of the world hardly needs to be demonstrated to anyone who is at all acquainted with the history of the church in the world. It is the contention of the writer that there is, however, irrespective of the historical manifestations of this relationship, a proper relationship which should exist, and it is this proper relationship that the Reformed Christian is called to maintain in theory and in practice.

The task of the writer of this paper is an immense one, and the subject can hardly be treated within the scope of a paper of this type. Because this is a position paper, it will be necessary to state briefly the Scriptural definitions of the church and the state which have been espoused by Reformed theologians and have been set down in the Reformed Confessions. This paper shall also distinguish the church from the state by enumerating the basic responsibilities of the church and the state. The paper will also articulate the responsibilities of the state to the church and of the church to the state. The paper will finally develop and describe the ultimate end of the church and the state.

### The Church

The dictionary defines the church as “the collective body of Christians,” or “a body of Christian believers having the same creed, rites, etc.” This definition of the church is neither conclusive nor accurate. Those who are acquainted with the *Belgic Confession* will understand that this definition of the church is not distinctively Reformed but is too general to be accepted by the child of the Reformed Church. The *Belgic Confession*, Article XXVII, discusses the Catholic Christian Church as follows:

We believe and profess one catholic or universal Church, which is a. holy congregation of true Christian believers, all expecting their salvation in Jesus Christ, being washed by His blood, sanctified and sealed by the Holy Spirit.

This Church has been from the beginning of the world, and will be to the end thereof; which is evident from this that Christ is an eternal King, which without subjects he cannot be. And this holy Church is preserved or supported by God against the rage of the whole world; though it sometimes for a while appears very small, and in the eyes of men to be reduced to nothing; as during the perilous reign of Ahab the Lord reserved unto Him seven thousand men who had not bowed their knees to Baal.

Furthermore, this holy Church is not confined; bound, or limited to a certain place or to certain persons, but is spread and dispersed over the whole world; and yet is joined and united with heart and will, by the power of faith, in one and the same Spirit.

The beautiful *Westminster Confession of Faith*, 1647, discusses the church in Chapter XXV as follows:

I. The catholic or universal Church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. (Eph. 1:10, 22, 23; 5:23, 27, 32; Col. 1:18)

Confessions such as these give to the church eternal perspectives and left the church from the domain of temporality to the domain of eternity and habitations with God and His Son our Lord Jesus Christ in heaven. Rev. H. Hoeksema in the *Reformed Dogmatics*, page 563, follows the Confessions and defines the church as follows:

The church is the body of Christ, an organic whole, of which they who are chosen from before the foundations of the world constitute the members, gathered by the Son of God through His Spirit and Word in all ages and from all the nations of the world, and manifesting itself on earth as the gathering of believers and their seed.

*Behold He Cometh* by H. Hoeksema contains a definition of the church on page 584.

It (the church, a.l.) is an entirely different institution. It is the manifestation of the body of Christ on earth and represents the authority of Christ in the world. It is the result, the product, the manifestation of the grace of God through Jesus Christ. Through the church it becomes possible for the people of God to manifest themselves as the body of Christ, worship and glorify their God and King, and reveal his glory in the midst of the world.

These definitions and descriptions of the church are based upon the Confessions, which are an accurate interpretation and explanation of the Scriptures. This ought to be obvious to anyone who knows the message of the Word of God and the content of the Confessions.

The word “church” in both the Old and New Testaments comes from words which refer to a people that is called out. The word “church” acquired different connotations however and referred to a circle of believers in a definite locality, to a church in the house of an individual, but in the most comprehensive sense it referred to the whole body of believers whether they were in the church triumphant in heaven or in the militant church on earth. The church is that spiritual organism which is united by a true faith to Christ. It is this basic comprehensive sense which serves as the definition of church in the Confessions and is adopted by H. Hoeksema and many other Reformed theologians. It is the way the noble hymn by Samuel Wesley describes the church.

The Church’s one foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord; She is His new creation by water and the Word. From heav’n He came and sought her to be His holy bride; With His own blood He bought her, and for her life He died.

Elect from ev’ry nation, Yet one o’er all the earth, Her charter of salvation One Lard, one faith, one birth. One holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food, And to one hope she presses, with every grace endued.

Many other things could be said about the church, but this essay is not to be an exercise in Reformed dogmatics. Yet it must apply the essentials of Reformed doctrine to the problem which confronts us in this essay—the relationship between the church and the state. (This is always the task of the Reformed Christian school teacher.) In order to do this, however, we must understand the exact nature of the church and describe her responsibilities as these are assigned by God through Christ, the King of the church. One can no conclusions nor make any valid generalizations unless and until he has this information.

We should notice, therefore, that in the Reformed tradition the church is essentially invisible and spiritual. The essence of the church in the Reformed Protestant tradition is the Scriptural one and is at complete variance with the position of the Roman Catholic Church which claims that the church is essentially an external and visible

organization. The Reformed conception that the church includes the believers of all ages and no one else, and that the church is the spiritual body of Jesus Christ is the one which I espouse as I write this paper.

One of the essential attributes of the church is that she is one. Romans 12:5, which is quoted in the form for the Lord's Supper, teaches this unity as follows: "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members of one another." This unity confessed and taught by the Reformed Churches is not always evident as the church is manifested here upon earth. The church is divided into many denominations and appears to be hopelessly divided.

The church must also be understood to have a many-sided character. One can speak of the church on earth as being the militant church and the church in heaven as the triumphant church. One can also distinguish the visible church from the invisible church. This distinction can be applied to the church as it exists on earth. That she is invisible is caused by her essential spirituality. She cannot be discerned by the physical eye, and one cannot precisely number all the members of that church. The church is also visible. She is manifested on earth as the gathering of believers and their seed. The church is visible in the ministry of Word and the sacraments. The church is also visible in her external organization and government.

The *Westminster Confession of Faith* writes about the visible church and thereby recognizes this distinction. We quote the following from Chapter XXV.

The visible Church, which is also catholic or universal under the gospel (not confined to one nation as before under the law) consists of all those, throughout the world that profess the true religion, and of their children; and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.

This catholic Church hath been sometimes more, sometimes less visible...

The church, which is the body of Christ, and over which Christ is the head, has received authority from Christ. The authority that the church has received is fundamentally the preaching of the Word of God which is applied by the Spirit to hearts of all those who hear that Word. To some it is a word of condemnation and to others it is a word of grace and reconciliation. Besides the preaching of the Word, Christ has given the church the authority to administer the sacraments which can never be divorced from the true preaching of the Word as they are in the Roman Catholic Church. Finally the authority that God through Christ gives his church is the right and duty to exercise Christian discipline. The purity of the doctrine and the holiness of the sacraments must be maintained and the church that is lax in discipline will find that the light is taken from its midst. (cf. Revelation 2:12-17)

The catholic visible church of Christ has been given the ministry, oracles and ordinances of God so that the church may be gathered and the saints may be perfected in this life to the end of the world. (cf. *Westminster Confession*, Article XXV) When the church is busy exercising these God-given functions, she may be discerned as the true church to which all men should join themselves. When the church does not exercise these God-given functions but is neglecting her responsibilities, she may be discerned as a manifestation of the church which is becoming false or is false.

The catholic church must be visible and sometimes less visible, but the church is called to maintain her distinctive position in the world against all the encroachments of the world and the state. Only when the church exercises the authority with which she has

been vested by God will she fulfill the purpose for which she has been established by God in the world. The Westminster Confession, Article XXV states the purpose in the following way:

Unto this catholic visible Church Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinance of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world: and doth by his promise, make them effectual thereunto. (I Cor. 12:23, Eph. 4:11-13; Matt. 28:19-20; Isa. 49:21)

Rev. H. Hoeksema succinctly and accurately states the purpose of the church in the midst of the world in *Behold He Cometh*, p. 584.

In the first place, it is the establishment and upbuilding of the saints in Christ Jesus, so that they may come to a fuller and clearer knowledge and stronger faith concerning the grace that is in Christ. And in the second place, it is the propagation of the gospel of the kingdom in every land. Its task, therefore, is definitely circumscribed. She does not receive her instructions from the worldly power. The latter cannot tell her what to believe and to confess and how to worship. It has no authority to define the contents of the message which she must bring in the church and in all the world. In all this she acknowledges no other authority than that of Jesus Christ and Word of her God.

## **The State**

The Reformed Christian professes the sovereignty of God in all things. God only, and never any creature, is possessed of sovereign rights. Because the Calvinist believes so intently in the absolute sovereignty of God in all things, he wishes to apply this belief to every area of life. Abraham Kuyper reminds us of this Calvinistic concern. In his *Lectures on Calvinism*, pp. 69-70, we read:

But it remained the special trait of Calvinism that it placed the believer before the face of God, not only in His Church, but also in his personal, family, social, and political life. The majesty of God, and the authority of God press upon the Calvinist in the whole of his human existence. He is a pilgrim, not in the sense that he is marching through a world with which he has no concern, but in the sense that at every step of the long way he must remember his responsibility to that God so full of majesty, who awaits him at his journey's end. In front of the Portal which opens for him, on the entrance into Eternity, stands the *Last Judgment*; and that judgment shall be one broad and comprehensive test, to ascertain whether the long pilgrimage has been accomplished with a heart that aimed at God's glory, and in accordance with the ordinances of the Most High.

Because the Calvinistic confession of the sovereignty of God obtains for all of life, this means that the domain of the state is also under the sovereign control of God. God, who rules through his vice-regent Christ Jesus, has authority over all things. Christ said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matthew 28:18).

The state is defined in the *Random House Dictionary of the English Language* as "a body of people occupying a definite territory and organized under one government, esp. a sovereign government." This man-centered definition will not satisfy the demands of the Reformed Calvinist who desires to see the sovereignty of God and authority of Christ extolled in the domain of the state.

A more proper and Scripturally-grounded definition of the state would include the elements suggested in Romans 13 and reiterated by the Reformed Confessions. We should say then that the state is an institution of God ordained to bear the sword, to punish evildoers, and to protect the good. We can also say that the state is a temporal institution. It is not eternal like the church. It must maintain law and order in the midst of

a corrupt and sin-cursed world. The state employs a God-given instrument to perform its task. This instrument is not spiritual, but it is material. It is not the power acquired because of common grace to restrain evil, but it is only the material power of the sword. This is the scriptural and confessional conception of the state. Romans 13:1-7 correctly defines and limits the authority of the state as follows:

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers (governing authorities, RSV). For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. 'Wilt thou then not afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

Other passages of the Word of God reiterate the same basic position which Paul, the apostle, was inspired to write in the authoritative and infallible Word of God. Such passages are: Matthew 22:21, I Peter 2:13-17, I Timothy 2:1-4, and Ecclesiastes 8:2.

The *Belgic Confession*, Article ;6, also states the Reformed position concerning the responsibility and authority of government in the state.

We believe that our gracious God, because of the depravity of mankind, has appointed kings, princes, and magistrates; willing that the world should be governed by certain laws and policies; to the end that the dissoluteness of men might be restrained, and all things carried on among them with good order and decency. For this purpose he has invested the magistracy with *the sword for the punishment of evil-doers and for the protection of their, that do well.*

The *Heidelberg Catechism* in the discussion of the fifth commandment states that the Christian must "show all honour, love, and fidelity to my father and mother, and to all in authority over me; submit myself with due obedience... since it pleases God to govern us by their hand.

The *Westminster Confession*, Article XXIII, says:

God, the Supreme Lord and King of all the world, hath ordained civil magistrates to be under him, over the people, for his own glory and the public good, and to this end hath armed them with the power of the sword, for the defense and encouragement of them that are good, and for the punishment of evildoers.

It is the duty of people to pray for magistrates, to honor their persons, to pay them tribute and other dues, to obey their lawful commands, and to be subject to their authority for conscience sake.

It ought to be obvious from these quotations from the Scriptures and the Reformed Confessions that the state in the Reformed tradition is recognized and qualified to be a divinely ordained means under the sovereignty of Christ to exercise its authority in a prescribed domain.

The state has not, however, always been viewed from this perspective. Anyone who has studied the history of the world knows that throughout history the correct relationship of the church and the state has been violated. The Reformed position places the church and state in a distinct relationship. Neither the church nor the state encroach

upon the domain of the other. Each domain is responsible to Christ who is sovereign over the state and over the church. More of this relationship later in the paper, however.

It must be emphasized that the state has certain responsibilities and “sovereignties” which she may not neglect. The authority of the state is not based upon a “social contract” or popular sovereignty theory of the authority of the state is based solely upon the sovereign decree and institution of God. (Cf. Romans 13, I Peter) The power that the state receives from God is the power of the sword, and according to Abraham Kuyper the state must exercise this sword power in three basic areas. The state has the sword of justice, the sword of war, and the sword of order. With the sword of justice the state can and must mete out corporal punishment to the criminal. With the sword of war the state can defend the honor, the rights, and the interests of itself against its enemies. With the sword of order the state can thwart at home the acts of forcible rebellion.

In our complex society the state often becomes an octopus which stifles the whole of life. This is not the sovereign God-ordained right of the state, but it is a violation of the ordinance of God. The state must remain in its own sphere and may not encroach upon the domain of the church.

Abraham Kuyper suggests that even though the state must remain in its own God-ordained sphere, this does not mean that the state has no right whatever of interference in the other autonomous domains of life. He says concerning governmental interference into other spheres:

It possesses the threefold right and duty: 1. Whenever different spheres clash, to compel mutual regard for the boundary-lines of each; 2. To defend individuals and the weak ones, in those spheres, against the abuse of power of the rest; and 3. To coerce all together to bear personal and financial burdens for the maintenance of the natural unity of the State. The decision cannot, however, in these cases, unilaterally rest with the magistrate. The Law here has to indicate the rights of each, and rights of the citizens their own purses must remain the invincible bulwark against the abuse of on the part of the government.

It should be obvious that Kuyper is here discussing the problem of state and church relations from the perspective of his situation in time. He realizes that the development of constitutional law has placed an added ingredient into the relationship which must be recognized in the actual working the relationship between the church and the state, but the principle of the Word of God remains the same. That principle we have maintained throughout this essay. The state must only do that which it has been sovereignly appointed and qualified to do. Any infringements it makes upon the other realms which God has established causes the state to become tyrannical. The state must remain within its circumscribed area of responsibility. The magistrates, who are vested must bow in deepest humility before the majesty of God and must only do that which they have been sovereignly appointed and ordained to do. The church likewise may not become a distorted institution by assuming powers which it does not have. When the church through the inquisition of the past extorted confessions by physical torture or when the church demanded adherence to doctrines and practices and used physical means (the sword power) it was brandishing a weapon which the Lord Christ had not given to her. The church’s power is spiritual and the weapons she had received are spiritual weapons. Woe be to her if she does not wield these weapons!

### **The Responsibility of the Church and the State To Each Other**

Civil government and not the government of the church is the proper domain of the state in the Reformed tradition. The Calvinistic branch of the Reformation took this position but Lutherans, Erastians, and Arminians did not see this distinction. Calvinism opposes the Lutheran position which adopted the principle that the state should be above the church. Calvinism also opposes Erastianism which maintains that the civil magistrates control ecclesiastical bodies in doctrine and in discipline. Erastianism like the early position of Luther denies the sovereignty of Christ over His church and it does not maintain the premise of the separation of church and state. During the Arminian controversy in the Netherlands Oldenbarneveld and Hugo Grotius were the illustrious advocates of an opinion that the state was to have control over the government of the church. They claimed that the authority to rule given by Christ extended to the Church and only doctrinal matters were left to the church officials. On this principle the State Church in the Netherlands was justified.

Reformed Calvinism opposes all attempts to justify the close relationship between the church and state that existed in the Middle Ages and which was not completely eradicated by Lutherans, Erastians, and Arminians. The Calvinistic position is therefore that the authority of the state is derived directly from Christ who is the Lord of all things. In Revelation 17:14b, we read: "... for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings ..." I Timothy 6:15-16 states in part: "... who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality: ...to whom be honor and power everlasting."

It ought to be evident that the state and the church should labor to realize their God-assigned tasks in the greatest possible harmony. This means that neither institution should infringe upon the domain or sphere of the other. For the state and church to live harmoniously each must adhere strictly to its own God-ordained business. In a world of sin such harmony hardly seems likely nor does such harmony really exist as it ideally should.

The Reformed Confessions in their original form seem to indicate however that the state has a definite responsibility toward the church. The *Belgic Confession*, Article 36 states:

Their office (the magistrates, a.l.) is not only to have regard unto and watch for the welfare of the civil state, but also that they protect the sacred ministry, and thus may remove and prevent all idolatry and false worship, that the kingdom of antichrist may be thus destroyed and the kingdom of Christ promoted. They must therefore countenance the preaching of the Word of the gospel everywhere, that God may be honored and worshipped by every one, as He commands in His Word.

In the original form we notice that the state must among other things "protect the sacred ministry, and thus may remove and prevent all idolatry and false worship..."

The *Westminster Confession of Faith*, 1647, also maintains that the state has certain responsibilities to the church. We quote:

III. The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the Word and Sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven: yet he hath authority, and it is his duty to take order, that unity and peace be preserved in the Church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and, all ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed. For the better effecting

thereof he hath power to call synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God.

At the Synod of 1910 the Christian Reformed Church addressed itself to the statement of the *Belgic Confession* concerning the office of the magistracy in its relation to the Church. It declared that the principle of the Established Church was the cause for the inclusion of a statement which made the magistrate responsible for the protection of the sacred ministry and the removal of all idolatry and false worship: The American revision of the Westminster Confession addresses itself to the same problem which occurs in Chapter XXIII, as follows:

Civil magistrates may not assume to themselves the administration of the Word and Sacraments (2 Chron. 28:18), or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 16:19; I Cor. 4:1,2); or, in the least interfere in matters of faith (John 17: 36; Mal. 2:7; Acts 5:29). Yet as nursing fathers, it is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the Church of our common Lord, without giving the preference to any denomination of Christians above the rest, in such a manner that all ecclesiastical persons whatever shall enjoy the full, free, and unquestioned liberty of discharging every part of their sacred functions, without violence or danger (Isa. 49:23). And, as Jesus Christ hath appointed a regular government and discipline in his Church, no law of any commonwealth should interfere with, let, or hinder, the due exercise thereof, among the voluntary members of any denomination of Christians, according to their own profession and belief (Psalm 105:15; Acts 18:14-16). It is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the person and good name of all their people, in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered, either upon pretence of religion or infidelity, to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury to any other person whatsoever: and to take order, that all religious and ecclesiastical assemblies be held without molestation or disturbance (2 Samuel 23:3; I Tim. 2:1; Rom. 13:4).

The footnote to the *Belgic Confession* prepared by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, 1910 follows:

This phrase, touching the office of the magistracy in its relation to the Church, proceeds from the principle of the Established Church, which was first applied by Constantine and afterwards also in many Protestant countries. History, however, does not justify the principle of State domination over the Church, but rather a certain separation of Church and State. Moreover, it is also contrary to the New Dispensation that authority be vested in the State arbitrarily to reform the Church, and to deny the Church the right of independently conducting its own affairs as a distinct domain alongside the State. The New Testament does not subject the Christian Church to the authority of the State that it should be controlled and extended by political measures, but only to our Lord and King as an independent domain alongside and altogether independent of the State, that it may be governed and built up only by its officebearers and with spiritual means. Practically all Reformed Churches have relinquished the idea of the Established Church as not in accordance with the New Testament, and advocate the autonomy of the Churches and personal liberty of conscience in the service of God.

The Christian Reformed Church in America, being in full accord with this view, feels constrained to declare that it does not conceive of the office of the magistracy in this sense that it is in duty bound to exercise political authority also in the sphere of religion by establishing a State Church, maintaining and advancing the same as the only true Church, and to withstand, destroy, and exterminate by means of the sword all other Churches as embodying false religions; and also to declare that it does positively hold that, within its own secular sphere, the magistracy has a divine duty with reference to the first table of the Law as well as the second; and furthermore that both State and Church as institutions of God and Christ have mutual rights and duties appointed them from on

high, and therefore *have a very sacred reciprocal obligation to meet*, through the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. They should not, however, encroach upon each other's domain. The Church as well as the State has the right of sovereignty in its own sphere.

It ought to be obvious that when we begin to delineate the responsibilities of the state to the church that we are working in a very sensitive area. The problem of religious persecution and the historical position of church-state relations looms as part of the problem. The historic position in America has been that of the First Amendment to the Constitution. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;..." This amendment usually meant to most people that the civil government in the United States had no right to establish a State Church and require all men to worship according to the rules of that church. Today that amendment to the Constitution has had more far-reaching consequences, and the decisions of the Supreme Court, particularly in the area of prayer in the public schools, have somewhat revised the meaning of this amendment in the minds of citizens and legislators.

I agree that the government may not establish religion nor may it interfere in the domain of the church. The church has received authority from her head, Christ, and the state may not wrest this authority from her. The state must respect this God-given authority. The church must therefore be free from the state.

Although the Calvinist wishes to maintain the principle of separation of church and state, and although the maintenance of this principle seems to imply a free church over which the state can exercise no authority except in certain externalities such as property and buildings, the Calvinist also must maintain that there is only one true church. He wishes to be free to worship God according to the precepts of the Word of God and according to the command of Christ, but he must maintain that every man must worship God in the same way—in spirit and in truth: The *Belgic Confession* in Article XXVIII states that "all men are in duty bound to join and unite themselves with it." They must unite themselves to the true church where the marks of the true church manifest the church institute as being true to the commands of her Lord Christ. Every man must subject himself to the commands of Christ but the state has no right nor authority to implement the beliefs of the Calvinist. The authority of the church is a spiritual authority.

The church of Jesus Christ also has a responsibility toward the state. The church cannot dictate to the state how it should fulfill its God-given duty. This implies that the church shall not lord it over the state. The Westminster Confession, Article 31, Section 4, sums up the official task of church toward the state as follows: "Synods and councils are to handle or conclude nothing but that which is ecclesiastical and are not to intermeddle with civil affairs which concern the commonwealth,..." We maintain therefore that the church as institute cannot directly exert influence upon the state. The membership of the church, who receive guidance from the Word of God concerning the whole of their pilgrimage, does this by influencing the consciences of the state officials and its citizens. Because the citizen of the kingdom of heaven may not consciously work for that which is evil he must consciously in all of his activities seek to legitimately overthrow and remove all workers of iniquity. Christian teachers and men of God in the social sciences in the Christian colleges must address themselves to the problems of the state and develop Scripturally-sound principles so that political leaders and citizens will know the principles that should be practiced in the affairs of the state. The Christian press, radio, and public lecture must also be used to influence and win support for right conduct in the

domain of the state. We urge a state permeated with Christian principles and not a church-dominated state.

In the area of the reciprocal relationships which must exist between the church and the state, between the members of the church who are also members of the state, one finds he confronts most of his difficulties. It is relatively simple to state from the Word of God and the Confessions the exact nature and the prescribed responsibilities of the church and the state. It is in the working out of this relationship in the actual practices of both institutions that one is confronted with many difficulties. Let me state an example.

The members of the church of Jesus Christ have been taught that all forms of sin against the sixth commandment must be abhorred and punished. In our paganizing society sins against the commandments of God are being permitted to go unpunished by the state. The current debate in many states is the abortion question. The Christian believes concerning abortion that it too is a sin against the sixth commandment and that abortion should not be legalized because then flagrant abuses will develop. Although the Christian may not be able to stem the tide and prevent this “abortion reform” issue from being passed, he nevertheless has the responsibility to use all the means to oppose legalized abortion. Although the church may not specifically confront the state on this issue the church does exert moral influence on its membership so that they, as authorized and qualified citizens, can by legitimate means witness and exert influence on those who rule in the state. All this the Christian does so that the Church may lead a quiet and peaceable life and so that the cause of the Gospel is not hindered.

### **The Ultimate End of the Church and the State**

Revelation 17 is one of those remarkable chapters in the Word of God because it gives the waiting church of God an in-sight into the things that shall happen—an insight and interpretation which the world cannot have and does not want. The world is willingly blind and is unable to see the things that the church is able to see. The church sees the end of all things—the church sees all things teleologically—in terms of the goal:

The beast of Revelation 17 is the World-State which Satan has been attempting to establish throughout the history of the world. The World-State presumes to represent the development of the kingdom of Christ and claims to be the eternal kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. This World-State has denied its original character and it refuses its God-ordained purpose—to punish the evil and to maintain public order. The state strives instead for world-wide power and conceives of the possibility of rooting out all evil, disease, poverty, and death. It attempts to establish the kingdom of righteousness and peace by the power of law and by the action of the sword. This attempt to establish the eternal kingdom without the spiritual means of the Word and the royal, life-giving blood of Christ becomes the Anti-Christian kingdom of the beast.

The harlot of Revelation 17 is the false church—the apostate church which unites with the beast. The apostate church is such because she denies the blood of Christ, denies the complete necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit, and, denies, Christ, the Word, made Flesh. She will offer her services to the state and will no more preach the doctrines of sin and total depravity. She substitutes for the doctrine of sin and grace a social gospel. The gospel of reconciliation through the Cross of Christ as this is applied in all the benefits of the Spirit of Christ is neglected and denied.

The true church of God, which is the kingdom of the Son of God typified by the stone in Daniel 2, opposes and eventually destroys the attempts of the anti-Christ. The

children of God, who have the mind of Christ; will also oppose the attempts of the Anti-christian kingdom. They will not make an unholy alliance with the world. The children of God will oppose the attempts of the state to abandon its true calling and its attempts to establish the eternal kingdom of God. The church because of her attempts to uphold things that are right and to prevent things that contribute to Anti-christian goals will be persecuted and the world under the leadership and control of Satan will attempt to destroy the church. The world-power will finally dictate all things and will gain control of art, commerce, science, industry, religion, and worship so that there is no place left for the people of God on the face of the earth. The last of the elect will be born and God will come with the ten thousands of his angels and take His church to glory. Then let the nations rage and people imagine a vain thing. The kings of earth set themselves but he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision.

—Agatha Lubbers

## THE IDEA OF REVOLUTION — A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

As students of history we are confronted with many problems. One of these is how we must understand and deal with the concept of revolution. The “problem”, if you will, of revolution has been with us almost since time began. Even before Adam and Eve sinned there was revolution in heaven by Satan and his cohorts, and the fact of revolution is very much with us today. At first glance, the fact of revolution in history seems to present no problem, and we put it aside, pointing out that all revolution is rebellion against God, and therefore wrong. It seems, however, that even if the above is true, the subject nevertheless, deserves much more attention than that.

In this paper revolution will be discussed from the point of view of the generally accepted meaning—revolution being the overthrow of a government, form of government, or social system, with another taking its place. Revolution implies quick change, upheaval. Violence usually accompanies it, but there are exceptions, notably the English Revolution of 1688. Revolution in this paper is to be understood not as slow change, evolution, but as quick, calculated effort to replace the existing order with something more desirable to the revolutionary. The major part of this paper will be devoted to the question of the right of revolution as seen by non-christians and as seen by Theologians and the Scriptures. This paper is not intended to be a detailed study of the methods and results of revolutions.

Toynbee seems to take a rather dim view of revolution, because he says it is a symptom that the “times are out of joint”. He states in one of his essays that “Revolution, like war, is a resort to violence, and therefore, like war, it is costly, and seldom or never attains the objectives that its makers had in view”. He asserts, citing France and Russia as examples, that many times revolution only serves to restore the former regime (*ancien regime*).

There have, however been historians and philosophers who have looked at revolution as an understandable, necessary, and even a desirable thing, Much has been written by many on this subject, but references to only a few of these authors will be sufficient.

Aristotle, first of all, in his *Discourse on Politics*, gives the following causes for revolution, making them seem understandable in the world:

The universal and chief cause of this revolutionary feeling has been... the desire of equality, when men think that they are equal to others who have more than themselves... Inferiors revolt in order that they may be equal, and equals that they may be superior... The motives for making them, (revolutions) are the desire of gain and honour, or the fear of dishonour and loss... insolence, fear, excessive predominance, contempt, disproportionate increase in some part of the state...

These causes of revolution are as true now as they were in ancient times.

Thomas Aquinas, in his *Summa Theologica*, writes of revolution and states that it sometimes may be necessary to fight against tyranny that develops in the state, as long as there is not a greater wrong committed by the necessary sedition that results. He says, in addition to this, that it is actually the tyrant who is the one who commits sedition.

Another step further is what has come to be known as the *Social Contract* theory of Locke, Rousseau, and others. Locke writes in his *Essay Concerning Civil Government*:

The liberty of man in society is to be under no legislative power but that established by consent in the commonwealth, nor under the domination of any will, or restraint of any

law, but what that legislative shall enact according to the trust put in it, Freedom, then is... freedom of men to have a standing rule to live by, common to everyone of that society, and made by the legislative power erected in it... Nobody can give more power than he has himself, and he that cannot take away his own life cannot give another power over it.

Earlier in his essay; Locke states that a king who attempts to take absolute power and therefore make his people slaves, puts himself in a state of war with his subjects, thus making revolution necessary. He says men should rather live in a state of nature. “Men living together according to reason without a common superior on earth, with authority to judge between them, is properly the state of nature”.

Rousseau, in *The Social Contract*, writes that revolution under certain conditions is necessary. He writes:

The dissolution of the state may come about in either of two ways. First, when the Prince ceases to administer the state in accordance with the laws, and usurps the Sovereign power... The great state is dissolved, and another is formed within it, composed solely of the members of the government, which becomes for the rest of the people merely master and tyrant. So that the moment the government usurps the Sovereignty, the social compact is broken, and all private citizens recover by right their natural liberty, and are forced, but not bound, to obey.

Finally, we can use as an example of the Social Contract theory the Declaration of Independence of the United States. What Locke states as a right of resistance, the Declaration seems to put more positively as a right of rebellion, apparently deducing it from other natural rights—or life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It is to secure these rights that “governments are instituted among men”, so that “Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government.” The Declaration admits that “governments long established should not be changed for light or transient causes”; but when a people suffer “a long train of abuses and usurpations. . . it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their security”.

The *Communist Manifesto* is an example of modern, radical revolutionary doctrine. It calls for violent and complete revolution, wiping out all vestiges of the bourgeois state. Lenin, writing some fifty years later in his work *State and Revolution*, states in very strong terms that when the time is ripe immediate and violent revolution is the desirable thing, at the same time bemoaning the fact many had interpreted the idea of the “withering of the state” in the Manifesto to mean that the change to dictatorship of the proletariat was to be a gradual thing.

There are many others who wrote on the topic of revolution, and on many phases of the subject that have not been mentioned. To treat any of these men properly would necessitate a study of his conception of the state, his idea of authority and obedience to authority, and many other things. Although this is impossible, a few tentative generalizations can be made. Most writers on the subject will not look to violent revolutions as being desirable, although they will readily say that men have been benefited through them. Many seem to agree with William F. Buckley, Jr., that revolutions are caused by dissatisfaction. He points out that the poverty rate goes down, but dissatisfaction increases. As a result, there are increased appetites among the formerly poor, and among those still classified as impoverished. He coined the phrase, “A hungry man is more dangerous than a starving man”. Many others share the opinion revealed by

Alexander Hamilton when he wrote in the “Federalist” urging a strong central government,

It is impossible to read the history of the petty republics of Greece and Italy without feeling sensations of horror and disgust at the distractions with which they were constantly agitated, and at the rapid succession of revolutions by which they were kept in a state of perpetual vibration between the extreme of tyranny and anarchy.

The starting point in any discussion about revolution must be with the idea of authority. Authority, according to Webster, is the power or right to give commands, enforce obedience, take action, or make final decisions. Rev. H. Hoeksema, in his book, *Love Thy Neighbor for God's Sake* states the same idea with some additional ones;

Authority is a spiritual, invisible power that is vested in someone or conferred upon him. It is the right which anyone has over others to declare for those others what shall be considered right and just... (Authority) is the right to demand of those others that they shall conduct themselves in conformity with the laws and rules imposed upon them by him that is in authority... Authority is the right or power vested in someone, or conferred upon him to judge others according to the laws and rules laid down by him, and to maintain those rules and laws by punishing evildoers.

The source of authority is God. What is added to Webster's definition is that the ruler is the conferee of his right to rule. Through Christ this power is given to him. In Matthew 28:18 Jesus says, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth”. And again in I Corinthians 15:27; “For he hath put all things under his feet”. Verses 10-12 of Psalm 2 also show that through Christ power is conferred to rulers: “Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.” More clear yet is Proverbs 8:15-16; “By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth”. And finally from Romans 13:1, 2, and 4, “Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation... For he is the minister of God to those for good”.

The ruler is also the judge appointed by God. Among the hundreds of texts in Scripture which teach this are Jeremiah 23:3, “Thus saith the Lord, Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood”; Deuteronomy 1:16, “Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him”. Asaph also writes in Psalm 82:3-4, “Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked”. Paul, in the New Testament, also emphasizes this when he writes in Romans 13:3-6,

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

Because the above is true, it follows that the citizen must, for the Lord's sake, submit himself to the authority over him. Romans 13 makes this clear, as does I Peter 2:13-17 where the reader is told to submit himself to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. According to the *Heidelberg Catechism*, this is the meaning of the fifth commandment. Hoeksema, in his book before cited, writes, "Because the powers of the government are ordained of God, therefore it is the Christian's calling to be subject unto those powers and assume the position of obedience with respect to them for Christ 's sake". Calvin states the same idea in His Institutes when he declares, "For if it has pleased Him to appoint kings over kingdoms, and senates or burgomasters over free states, whatever be the form which He has appointed in the places in which we live, our duty is to obey and submit".

Mention has already been made of Aquinas who states that obedience to authority is necessary unless that authority is tyrannical. The law of God also makes an exception when it states, "Obey your parents *in the Lord*". This means that if we are demanded something in opposition to the law of God we must refuse to follow the demand. As is taught in the book of Hosea and in other places, the children of Israel should certainly have refused to obey when they were told to worship the golden calves. Daniel too, although most of the time commanded to show obedience even to tyrant Nebuchadnezzar, nevertheless had to refuse to bow down to the image.

It seems, then, that only in occasions such as those mentioned above could a Christian refuse to obey the authority over him. We know of the wickedness and cruelty of the Romans; and yet Jesus commanded the multitudes to render to Caesar what was Caesar's; and Paul wrote the book of Romans to those who knew firsthand the wickedness of Nero, yet they were required to obey. In I Samuel 8 when Israel in disobedience to God demanded a king, God allowed their demand; but notice what Samuel is commanded to tell them concerning the king they will eventually receive.

And he (Samuel) said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horseman; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties, and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvests, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep, and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you in that day. I Samuel 8:11-18.

Ursinus in his *Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism* also writes,

And although it may sometimes be the case that wicked men are elevated to positions of authority, who are not worthy of honor, yet the *office* must be distinguished from the *persons* who are invested with it; so whilst we detest the wickedness of the man, we should nevertheless honor their office, on account of its divine appointment.

The fifth commandment is written to the children. We as children are addressed by God, and told to be obedient. A wicked tyrant is answerable to God alone, and we are not responsible for his acts, but are commanded to obey.

When determining the rightness of “disobedience” by a Christian to a ruler who is a tyrant, we must measure by the ruler of God’s Word. Is this disobedience because of pride, envy, dissatisfaction, or love of self, or is it due to a love for God and his name instead of a love for the precepts of man? Will submission to the law in question require the Christian to commit sin, and in so doing cease to function as a Christian under God? A Christian could not have revolted, or even refused to submit to King George on the basis of the Declaration of Independence written by the rebellious colonists. It must be made clear that the Declaration does not list the king’s refusal to allow the exercise of religion or worship as one of its grievances. The American and French Revolutions, along with most others can be traced to sinful pride.

Regardless of this, the results of some revolutions have certainly been favorable for the church. The revolutions in Northern Europe following the Protestant reformation were a help to the struggling Protestant Church, The French Revolution for a time benefited the French Protestants, and the American Revolution certainly did no great harm to the free exercise of religion in America for the last two centuries. The Christian must realize that God, when he will, uses man’s ambition, pride, and greed to bring about His kingdom. The end of time, in fact, will be brought about when wicked tribes from the east revolt against the wicked Anti-Christ. God has used wicked men, and will use them for his purpose. It is our calling to study what God says to us through these revolutions we encounter in history.

—Gerald Kuiper

## **GOD'S INSTITUTIONAL HIERARCHY OF AUTHORITY**

### **I. The Nature of Authority**

In his radio message on August 8, 1971, Rev. R. Decker defined authority to contain three basic elements:

1. The right to set standards;
2. The right to demand obedience to these standards;
3. The right to judge compliance to these standards and so to reward obedience and punish disobedience.

This is a comprehensive and correct definition which ought to be kept in mind in any discussion of authority since all three of these elements are essential to the nature of true authority.

The immediate and obvious implication of this definition—which Rev. Decker also went on to illustrate—is that all authority must then reside in God and in God alone. Only God possesses by nature the right to do any of these three things; certainly no subject of the creation would dare to claim that he has a subjective universal right to set standards and demand obedience to them by all other humans. Any human positing of standards would necessarily be arbitrary and subjective, while God not only is above the creation and therefore not subject to it but is himself both the Creator and Sustainer so that a creation which coheres in Him must necessarily also conform to Him as the Standard. All authority in this universe is found in God alone as the source, sustainer and goal of the universe, in whose being the universe hangs together.

No human being, then, possesses authority in and of himself. If any human is to possess and exercise authority, he will have to receive the right to exercise authority from God Himself. From this follows a key principle of authority in society: “All human authority is delegated authority.” This concept lies at the heart of a biblical understanding not only of authority but of the whole role of man in this world.

Not only must man receive the right to exercise authority from God, but he must receive the rules which he must enforce from God as well. Just as man has no innate right to place himself over other men, so also he has no innate right to decide what laws other men ought to follow. The only laws to which he possesses the right to demand obedience are those which are established by God for all men. Since the laws of God are known to us only through revelation from God, men are entitled to rule only in conformity with the revealed word of God. Any man who attempts to rule in any area of life without conformity to the Revelation of law which God has given to us in the Scriptures attempts to rule without any sanction for his exercise of authority.

We should notice that the possession of authority is not something which some men possess uniquely in distinction from other men who possess no authority. All men born on the face of this earth possess authority. They possess this authority simply because God has given them authority. To each man God has delegated the authority to work out in his own life the laws which He has set for the world and for man whom He has made the ruler of the world.

This necessarily follows from another principle which is crucial to a biblical understanding of authority: “Responsibility necessitates authority and authority

automates responsibility. Let me illustrate this principle in business. Let us say that an employee is assigned to carry out a given task: he is then responsible to do that which is assigned. Could this responsibility be carried out without an assumed assignment of authority as well? No, for in conferring onto the employee a responsibility, the boss has by necessity also conferred on him the authority to carry out his task. In reverse, let us say that an employee is put in authority over another group of workers; would such a position of authority have any significance at all if it did not by its very nature imply responsibility as well towards those other workers? It is again assumed that if one possesses authority he automatically possesses responsibility as well, so that the employee's authority makes him responsible to make sure that the other employees fulfill the tasks for which they are responsible. Authority automates responsibility.

Just so, when God placed man in the world He gave him both responsibility towards the creation and authority over the creation. Man was placed in a position of rulership with responsibilities of rulership as well. The two work together as necessary conditions for each other.

It is because man has no right to exercise authority unless given that authority by God that we find several statements in Genesis which would otherwise seem very peculiar. While man as a creature possessed by nature no authority over anything, God came to man and in effect said, "I want you, Man, to exercise some authority within My world. I'm going to give you that authority along with correspondent responsibility." And so we read:

- 1<sup>st</sup>, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth}" (Gen. 1:26). Here we see God giving man *authority* over the creation.
- 2<sup>nd</sup>, "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:28). Here we see God giving man *responsibility* over the creation.

So crucial was the need of God's delegation of authority to man that God even went on to specify which part of the creation man was authorized to use for food. It was not until after the flood that God modified his command to authorize man to eat meat as well as vegetation. Man's authority even over creation was not innate but delegated, always limited to the bounds which God gave it.

When we come right down to it, then, human authority as a concept is very parallel to the concept of human stewardship. As authority, man is placed in stewardship over God's creation and is responsible to God for his wise exercise of this authority or stewardship. As a steward over God's possessions, man is responsible to work faithfully, humbly, joyfully, and obediently to maintain God's laws and promote His kingdom through faithful exercise of the responsibility and authority which God has given to him.

It goes without saying that this doctrine of authority is opposed to the limitless self-ego with which man is born and which man usually promotes in education as well. Only God's Word and Spirit will bring man to see himself as nothing before God so that, rather than claiming personal rights, he marvels at God's plan to place his worthless self

in authority. Only a man who sees the greatness of God and the smallness of man will so understand. authority that he will whisper in awe along with David:

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beast of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth:" (Psalm 8;3-9).

## II. Institutions of authority

Such a view of man puts man's ego into proper perspective and as a result puts human authority into proper perspective. Remembering that God is the Author of authority and that man exercises authority only in submission to the Author and therefore only when authorized, we are able to delineate a biblical understanding also of the social structuration which we call institutional authority.

When we speak of institutional authority we refer to human authority expressed in social structures. More than that, we refer to this authority as it exists within God-ordained or God-instituted structures.

Now while there are multiple aspects to our human life, there is a limited number of aspects over which God has instituted social structure for its organization. Man has added countless institutions regulating special areas of social life, which are not wrong as such but which are equally not compulsory or binding simply because they are man-instituted rather than Godinstituted. Those institutions of society which God has ordained in his Word are five: marriage, the family, the state, church, and business.

Each of these God-ordained institutions forms the structure for organization and authority in one defined aspect of our social life. When the basic concept within one of these institutions is understood, the other four are more easily understood as well. Yet there are distinct boundaries and differences which must be clarified and maintained.

The remainder of this paper will seek to outline and clarify these five basic social structures. It is important that we show each structure to be instituted by God, that we clarify its bounds of operation, that we know its distinct tools for enforcement in a world of sin, and that we discuss how far its members must go in obedience to its institutional authority.

### A. The Institution of Marriage

Marriage was instituted by God following the unique story of the creation of the woman. God caused Man to fall into a deep sleep, took from him a rib, and from that rib made a helper suitable for man. The Bible then reads:

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh. (Genesis 2:23-4).

Already here we see the basic concept of authority within the marriage, since God first made the man and then the woman, since the woman was made from a rib of the man, and since God created woman so that there might be a helper suitable for the man. The essential nature of man's authority and therefore responsibility was soon

demonstrated when the woman was deceived by Satan but Adam failed to exercise his authority over her and in this failure fell into sin and plunged all of the mankind whom he represented and fathered into sin.

Later passages of Scripture draw out the beauty and depth of this first social institution. In its purest conception, marriage is essentially a spiritual union (love) between a man and a woman, with the man being the head of the woman just as Christ is the head of the church. This spiritual union becomes marriage when it results in pledges of faithfulness by the partners to each other, and then that marriage finds expression in organic unity. So crucial are these three steps in importance that they are also the order which any courtship ought to follow: 1. spiritual unity, 2. pledges of faithfulness, and 3. physical expressions of love. Note that today's popular procedure works exactly in reverse and is therefore the cause of most marital problems.

## B. The Institution of the Family

We should be quite clear in distinguishing the marriage from the family as an institution. Marriage found its institution in the words of Genesis 2:24:

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother (family), and shall cleave unto his wife {troth union of a man and woman) and they shall be one flesh (organic union of a man and a woman).

The family as an institution is an outworking of marriage as an institution; although we may not confuse the two, we yet recognize their close connection. While marriage is troth founded and organically-qualified, the family is organically founded and formatively qualified (i.e., qualified by training). The family originates in the bond of love which exists in the marriage and must continue in this spiritual unity as well, but it is qualified by the training of the child in all spiritual ethics, to be what he ought to be before God in faith, love, diligence, and total obedience. As the child observes love with authority exercised in marriage, he will be able to understand the authoritative demands of love being exercised also within the family and he will learn to accept the training which his parents give him because he will observe and be taught that this training is not subjective; it is authoritative only because it is ordained by God and also under Him.

In point of chronology, although the family may be a social outworking of marriage, yet God addressed himself to the family before marriage. In Genesis 1:28 God already came with the command to reproduce (the home's organic foundation). Speaking only of its genetic origin, the family already exists by its biological base. This is why we can speak very loosely of mankind as one huge family or why we speak of a "family tree" or why the Bible distinguishes the "family of God" (its members are genetically one through the rebirth of the Holy Spirit and through adoption into God's family). Yet the children born into a human family are children who are sinful and void of understanding, and God has appointed the, home as the institution through which children shall be trained. This essential role of training the child—of forming the coming generation—is given by God only to the home, and is clarified in many later passages of Scripture.

It ought to be obvious that the parents as head of the family are its authority as well. If it is not obvious, we have the Word of God to teach us that in many places. We may not forget the hypothetical command in Proverbs 22:6 to "Train up a child in the way he should go" or in Ephesians 6:4 to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." And covenant parents ought to keep in mind always that the covenant promise

is based on the family not merely because it is a biological unity but because it is the institution of training. Read Genesis 18:19 for a very clear-cut statement by God connecting his covenant promise and training.

### C. The Institution of the Church

To delineate the nature of the church is difficult while we hunt for its distinctiveness among the various modes of life as if it functioned merely within one aspect of life. For while the church originates within the single confessional aspect of life, it is unique among the institutions in that it is pistically qualified. Members enter the church through confession of faith and then remain in the church through an outworking of this faith in all areas of life. This pistical qualification is what makes the pure preaching of the Word and diligent exercise of discipline so crucial to a true church, while the confessional founding is what makes the Sacraments, prayer, and songs of praise so important.

(Notice that we are speaking here of the institutional church as we see it in the world. The invisible church is founded upon Christ and is pistically originated through the rebirth of the Holy Spirit, which results in confession also in life. But this external confession "with the mouth" of the invisible church is also the basis for the uniting of believers into the visible church on the earth).

We may assume that the instituted church began as soon as there were two believers to meet together in worship and praise. Since God had at creation set aside the seventh day as a day for rest and worship, we can expect that early believers obeyed God and worshipped him on this day. That this worship may not have been highly structured and that it may have usually met as families should not disturb us. We see confession and pistical obedience expressed already in the sacrifice by Abel (Gen. 4:4), in the worship of Noah (Gen. 8:20) and of Abraham (Gen. 12:8, 13:4, etc.), and in the giving of tithes to Melchizedek (Gen. 14:17-20). The close patriarchal ties between church and family were seen when Abraham carried out God's command to circumcise his family and household (Gen. 17). The first theocratic organization of the instituted church occurred when the church merged with the state in the nation of Israel. Here we find a tabernacle built and we find the Word of God giving foundations for faith and life which were to be regularly practiced in the worship of the tabernacle. This whole ritual of the tabernacle was God's Word looking forward to the coming of Christ who was to be the foundation for the existence of the Church. Along with this we find Moses writing down the Words of God with the story of redemption to that point, and this writing became the basis also for the manner in which this early church was to live. This Word of God was increased during the Old Testament as the scribes continued to write God's dealings with His people and as God spoke to his people through his servants the prophets, so that the instituted church had been well developed before the time of Christ. Following the resurrection of Christ, the New Testament church was instituted when the Spirit was poured out on the apostles in the second chapter of Acts.

Since the church is the institution of society through which God is pleased to have his Word preached and spread and through which He draws out a living universal Church for all eternity, God is very concerned with the government of that institution. In the Old Testament church he laid out very specific rules for the propagation of church officials, which were based chiefly on heredity except where He himself specially chose someone else to serve in an office. In the New Testament church, with which we are most

concerned right now, God has ordained that there shall be the teaching elders—who will both instruct the congregation and watch for their spiritual wellbeing in life—and the administrators of mercy, or deacons as we call them. The qualifications for such office demand very rigidly that a man shall evidence in his conduct a complete concord with his spiritual confession; his life must demonstrate the power of the Spirit through its exemplary spiritual character, It is only the man who has learned to live in complete submission to the authority of the Word of God that has the right qualifications to exercise authority under God over others in His church. Paul makes a detailed point of these qualifications in each of the pastoral epistles to Timothy and to Titus.

#### D. The Institution of Business

The Bible nowhere takes the position of some false accusers of Christianity who say that the Christian is necessarily a bad businessman since he is always looking heavenward with disdain for all present economical concerns. Nor does the Bible anywhere take the position of the Weber-type accusers that wealth is an indication of the special favor of God so that the Calvinist Christian will nervously seek to prove his favor before God through economic advancement. The Biblical Christian understands rather that God has instituted business as an integral part of man's role before God as God's Image-bearer; but that while man must labor in obedience, and while he must labor with economic diligence, he may not labor for greedy gain but must leave the reward up to God, still trusting God as the real Provider of his sustenance.

When we speak of the institution of "business", we do not refer to the sprawling "big business" of today but we rather refer to the universal concept of economic labor, or, of laboring to increase the substance with which the labor begins. Business is founded upon labor and is qualified economically. Business is concerned with efficient utilization of its original material so that it will multiply through its labor. Business is concerned to produce through labor.

It is labor which is primarily ordained by God. Labor was first commanded in Genesis 1:26-8, verses already quoted in this paper. Labor was then put into action when God "took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it" (Gen. 2:15). After the fall into sin, labor took on a new characteristic of occurring only in company with fatigue and "sweat", so that difficult and often unpleasant labor became the condition for earning a living. Genesis 3:19 reads:

In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground.

We can add to these verses a multitude of Bible passages in which it is either commanded or emphasized that "six days shalt thou labor" (Ex. 20:9).

But God is not just concerned that man-like a buffalo in India or a horse on a farm--shall exert himself physically, no, God also expects that this work shall be qualified by diligence and efficiency. Business is founded in labor but is qualified economically. Jesus stresses this point in the Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:14-30 (cf. Luke 19:12-27) and the Parable of the Unjust Steward in Luke 16:1-12.

To complete the picture of the institution of business, we must add that here, too, we have an institution of delegated authority. In the area of business, a boss stands over his employees in a God-ordained position of authority which the employees much honor and obey. God holds the employer responsible for how he treats the employee, and the

employee responsible for how he serves his employer. This teaching is clearly laid out in Colossians 3:22 through 4:1. The first and last of these verses read:

Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God;

Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

#### E. The Institution of the State

Deliberately we have placed the state at the end of this discussion of the institutions of authority. Most sociologists place the state first in their thought and writing, but the Bible sees the state as simply one among several spheres of authority, while recognizing both that it is the servant of God and that it can easily expand beyond its sphere of original authority (cf. I Samuel 8).

The state, with or without government, is a territory as it is jurally qualified. A state exists by the very fact of people living within a common territory and having to get along with one another, to exist in cooperation and in harmony. To provide for good order within the society, God has ordained that there shall also be government within the state, so that we can speak of the authority of the instituted state government. We find it difficult to conceive of the state and government apart from a world of sin. As we know government, it has been endowed with the power of the sword as a necessary means to enforce jural order, i.e., to maintain social harmony within its territory. Faced with the problem of sin among its membership, its task becomes less to coordinate boundaries between neighbors and more to punish external expressions of greed and hate between neighbors. Almost in our world we can define the state's task in the single word, "protection", seeing the state as responsible to protect its members from other members and to protect itself from external attack and destruction. Just what the state would be without sin is impossible to say with finality, but it would conceivably still be necessary to regulate, e.g., safe speeds of travel, on which side of the road to travel) over which air waves various radio stations should broadcast. The task is jural coordination.

#### III. Enforcement of Authority

If we could conceive of these five institutions existing in a world without sin, the exercise of authority would not conflict with the exercise of obedience. Within a sinful world, however, man's rebellious heart by nature defies God's authority and therefore also defies God's instituted authorities. As a result, God has in this temporal world not only ordained institutions of authority but has given to these institutions special means of enforcing their given authority.

Within the institution of marriage there is no given method of the husband enforcing his authority over his wife. Without doubt, he is responsible to exercise his authority so that he must be the head of the marriage as well as of the family and must enforce his decisions when they conflict with those of his wife, and yet internal commands never suggest that a man ought to treat his wife with anything other than gentleness and love. The biblical principle within the marriage seems to be that the husband should seek to have his wife understand and agree with him in his decisions, but that he must yet follow God's leading and command his wife to accompany him even if she should not agree with him. The wife's pledge of faithfulness to her husband binds her to him to accompany and help him no matter where he is led to go. If a woman's refusal

to obey her husband would be of such a serious nature as to refuse to accompany -the husband, the only result could be separation. Separation and divorce are the only channels for discipline within the institution of marriage. While this may be the only internal answer, we recognize immediately that it is a response of sin to an already sinful situation, and that there are also implications here for the spiritual social institution, the church.

The Bible is fairly clear concerning the methods by which family authority is to be exercised. When a child is disobedient, he is to be punished—always in love—"with the rod". The Bible clearly pictures the child as inherently sinful and disobedient and never suggests that any child can be raised without times of testing the authority of the parents. Here in the home first of all the child is to be trained to be obedient to all authority, and when corporal punishment is applied as a result of disobedience in the home, the child will quickly learn to understand the principle of authority and obedience. As a child grows older, it is possible that an undisciplined child may become a problem to handle, and the Bible does not suggest anywhere that at this age the child is then to be given license because the parents can no longer handle him; rather, the problem is then—if it truly gets that serious—to be taken outside of the home and handled by the state authorities. The Old Testament takes this disobedience within the home so seriously that it even recommends death for the wholly disobedient child; we must assume then that if the state first undertook to handle the overgrown disobedient youth with bodily punishment it would not be doing wrong, but that it would also be within its bounds if it responded to the appeal of incompetent parents letting such a youth be a public example also in this biblically suggested method.

We probably need to spend little time discussing the enforcement of church authority as a principle; the main problem in this area is the Christian exercise of discipline in actuality. The means of church discipline given to it by God is the removal of the means of grace—first of participation in the Lord's Supper and then by full excommunication from the church and from fellowship with its members. This is often heart-rending to carry out in practice, but where church discipline is not faithfully practiced, church life and subsequently church doctrine will quickly yield to the spiritual pressures of Satan and the church will become an institution without spiritual power, with a qualification of a social institution only of mercy but with no claim at all to being a true church of God, pistically qualified.

Business, too, has its own internal methods of discipline. These methods are not specifically laid out in Scripture, but are clearly suggested and are integral to the nature of business. In the first place, business if founded upon the Scriptural command to labor; accordingly, when a person is employed by another person, he must labor or be disciplined. The internal discipline which follows is that if a person will not work he ought not to be paid; this is in accord with the Scriptural command that then he must not eat (II Thess. 3:10). If the person persists in not wanting to work, he automatically has no job, for the very nature of a job implies working; and so a business has the disciplinary right to "fire" an unproductive worker.

Of all of these social institutions, the state alone possesses the right to use force of arms in its enforcement of authority. To the state is given the right to punish people physically, even to the point of death. Not only is the state given this power of the sword,

but it must use that power in its exercise of authority, or else it is disobeying the God under whose authority it rules and is destroying itself internally.

#### IV. Limitation of Authority

It is a natural result of the sinfulness of man's heart that when he possesses any form of authority he misuses it either by refusing to exercise it (cf. the promiscuous homes of today or our government which never exercises the death penalty) or else by reaching far beyond its bounds. In each area of instituted social authority, the respective government has no right given to it by God to make laws that ought to be made by another institution, and accordingly has no right, either, to punish anyone who would break these laws. The church, for example, has no right to decree that its membership should drive their cars on the left side of the street when the government has decreed that cars should drive on the right side. Similarly, the government has no right to decree that a man in business may not fire an employee who refuses to work, or that a parent may not spank his child for disobedience, or that the church does not have its own right to admit or excommunicate members. We see many examples of abuse of this principle in our world, and we ought to be diligently fighting to keep our God-given authority in its bounds.

This does not mean, however, that one institution will close its eyes and ignore what occurs within another institution. The church must analyze by Scripture any problem which it confronts, even though that problem concern business or the state. The home must train the child to live antithetically by the Bible in every sphere of life. And the state must deal with problems between either individuals or institutions that demand a forceful solution (e.g., church property when two church institutions quarrel). But one institution never has the right to control another institution internally; e.g., although the state may compel an employer to obey a contract by releasing his employee at the promised time, it may not dictate what jobs the employee should perform or how much he should get paid.

#### V. Obedience to Authority

If all authority is delegated by God, then it follows that to obey God we must obey also our authorities. Obedience to authority does not rest either in our subjective approval of the authority nor in its objective ability to rule well, but in its institution by God.

Embedded in this principle of authority is the concept of a hierarchy of authority and also of obedience. It is always and only God whom we are actually obeying. Because God says to obey those through whom He chooses to rule us, we also obey these men. If these men delegate their authority to other men to carry out their responsibilities, we obey also these men. E.g., we do not obey a policeman simply because he dons a uniform and blows a whistle, but because he has a delegated authority from the government of the state which has been delegated. its authority by God; and so in obeying the policeman we are obeying God. We obey God in obeying the government, even though the government may not itself realize that it rules only as God's servant.

Then it follows that disobedience to government may only occur when that government demands something immoral, when it demands that its member break a command of God. A child must disobey a parent who asks him to tell a lie or to steal; a wife must disobey a husband who asks her dress immodestly; an employee must disobey

a boss who asks him to cheat; and a church must disobey a government who demands that it integrate regardless of doctrinal matters. In this disobedience, we are following the hierarchy of obedience and obeying God rather than man. And such obedience to God is the whole duty of man, performed out of a redeemed heart and honoring God's Name before all men.

## **Appendix**

After the reading of this paper in the seminar, discussion centered in points of the paper which were considered to be either incomplete, unclear, or inconclusive. Agreeing that these points deserve attention, I am adding a section on each of them as an addition to the paper.

1. "How can the topic of authority be discussed without mentioning Christ? Does not all authority center in Him?"

The Bible always identifies God's Self-Revelation with our Lord Jesus. In Proverbs 1 and 8, we hear Wisdom crying out, and we soon realize that Wisdom is one with Christ (cf. especially Prov. 8:20ff). John 1 introduces the subject of Jesus Christ by presenting Him as the Word, existent already in the beginning. For this reason, too, in Psalm 2 the rulers of the earth are called to kiss the Son lest he be angry and they perish. For as the full and obedient Revelation of God in earth, Christ has been given all authority and all power in heaven and in earth (cf. Matt. 28:18).

This means, of course, that there is actually another step in the delegation of authority besides those mentioned in this paper. God the Father has given to God the Son all authority on earth, and it is through Him that men on earth are vested with authority. In obeying rulers we are obeying Christ.

The confusion that arises always concerns whether a ruler who hates Jesus Christ must still be obeyed as the servant of Christ. We must respond as does God's Word (as does Christ, then, in Word), that even if a ruler is unaware of the fact, he still possesses authority and power only because Christ has given it to him; and although he may grossly misuse his power, we must yet obey him unless he compels us to sin, because we must always obey our Savior and Lord, God's Revelation.

2. Some confusion also arose over the idea of an "institution." I think the confusion results from a concept that an institution is a building within which certain activities occur—although I doubt that any seminar member would maintain that. Or the confusion may result from thinking that if an institution of society is to be God-instituted, it must be God-constituted as well (that is, given its actual workable form by God, e.g., state form as totalitarian or as democratic). Again then, it is necessary to define our terms more clearly.

When something is instituted, we mean that it is originated as an establishment. It is "set up", "founded" for the first time. This does not mean that it is full-blown and developed, but simply that it exists because it was begun.

In this paper, then, we went on to point out that when God starts something, when God sets something up, then we may not abolish that something. God has begun it and God must end it. We have also tried to show that God started different activities as different activities, different social structures as different social structures, and we may not try to erase boundaries which God has put into existence. Rather, we must try to delineate what those structures and their boundaries are according to the Word of God.

3. “How is it possible to call ‘marriage’ a distinct institution from the ‘family’. When someone gets married, is he not setting up a family as well as a marriage?”

The paper tried already to show the close relationship yet clear distinction between marriage and the family. During the discussion in the seminar, we came to an agreement that while we maintain two institutions here, each qualified and founded differently, we yet see them as united under the single concept of “home”. A home is already established at marriage, is widened when a marriage is blessed with a family, and still exists when the family has grown up and left. So it would be proper at a marriage ceremony to say that a couple is establishing a home, but not to say—at that point—that they are establishing a family. A family may result, but does not yet exist at the time of the marriage.

4. “I can see the state, church, and home as institutions; but is it proper to call business an institution, too?”

The chief problem here may be one of terminology. When we substituted “employer-employee” relations for “business”, the questioner was satisfied.

But, of course, employer-employee relations exist only as the result of business. These relations are not a definition of business, but a statement of the hierarchy of authority within a business.

Business exists as soon as I go to work with the aim of producing something; of course, there are no employer-employee relations when I am working for myself, although there is still business. If my business expands, I may desire to hire help to get the work done more efficiently and to produce more; then employer-employee relations exist. But whether business is small or large, it is still business, founded on the command to labor and qualified by efficiency in labor so as to produce more than was possessed at the origin of the labor.

We also had to clarify the purpose for the existence of business. Business was instituted by God first of all simply because God has created man to rule over the universe, and this rule was to occur by means of labor. Secondly, business was supposed to exist so that deeds of mercy would be possible. For this reason, it is altogether proper to go to a man in “business” to seek donations for Kingdom causes; God will prosper a business which first supports its homes and secondly supports God’s work.

Notice that in our lingual habits we also distinguish business by its economic qualification when we speak of “profit” and “non-profit” organizations. Organization for profit is the qualifying definition of business.

5. “Where does the school fit into this whole picture? Is it a separate institution is wrong because it is man-made. Notice, secondly, that God has not instituted the school; it is a man-made institution.

A school is a group of people who get together to study some aspect of reality. As long as the school does not infringe on God’s structure for society, it may—and historically has—developed in several ways. Usually a school rises from a source which is qualified to instruct (cf, the Old Testament temple schools and schools of the prophets, Paul’s training under Gamaliel, or the medieval Cathedral Schools).

Today’s elementary and secondary schools, however, are not just concerned to teach some aspect of reality; they are concerned to teach reality as it really is. They are concerned to educate in that word’s basic meaning, to work for “development in the realization of reality”. Today’s schools are usually geared to the training of the child.

Now the education of the child has already been delegated by God to the home. This does not mean that the parents may not delegate this authority to someone else; but does mean that their authority and responsibility over the child continue so that they are - to blame if the child is not well spiritually trained.

In our state, civil obedience demands education of the child in a school; Of necessity, such a school will be man-instituted. If competent teachers would decide to set up a school as a form of “business” and if those teachers had the same understanding of reality as did the parents, then parents would be fulfilling their covenant obligations in sending their children to that school. But where no school exists with a biblical understanding of reality, then parents (who are compelled to send their children to school) are obligated to originate their own schools. This is the basis on which our own covenant schools were begun and on which they must continue, with parents watching very diligently to make sure that they remain faithful to God’s written Word.

— Carol DeJong

## LINGUISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE

The study of the history and development of the world's languages is a very broad field. Many men have spent their entire lives studying the history and development of only one language. Some have spent years on the study of only the dialects here in the United States and in Europe. Volumes have been written on the subject in several different languages. Some of these volumes take years to write and almost as long to read and comprehend. Dictionaries, word studies, and lexicons of every description line miles of library shelves. Although the field is broad and immense, we Christian teachers of history, language, and social studies in this day of skepticism, higher criticism and rampant apostasy have a duty and an obligation to teach our covenant youth the basic truth of this subject.

Most linguists and serious language students of today have propounded many theories about the origin and the historical development of the world's languages. Almost without exception their theories leave God out entirely. They base their theories on man's human nature, and worst of all, they make a mockery of His Holy Word. One searches in vain for a truly Christian approach to this subject. Because there is this dearth of Christian materials on this subject, we must look to God's Word for some guiding principles.

In faith we begin with God—the speech of God. The Scriptures as we have them before us in our own language is the very speech of God. The Scriptures describe how the speech of God operates. First of all, God's speech, His words, create, i.e., they cause creatures to come into being. In Genesis 1:3 we read: "And God said, Let there be light and there was light." The writer of Psalm 33 testifies that: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth" (verse 6). The writer to the Hebrews also bears record: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Hebrews 11:3). Similar proof can be found in II Peter 3, Job 38-41, and Psalm 29.

Not only did God's speech, His voice, His word, create all things and cause them to come into being; but also all these creatures are and remain His words. In this way He reveals and manifests Himself to us His creatures.

The pinnacle of God's creation was the creation of man-Adam. He, too, was created as a word of God, but he had a unique creation. Man above all creatures was created to bear the image of his Creator. Adam could read and interpret all the other words in God's magnificent creation perfectly, exactly, and succinctly. Bearing the image of the Perfect One, he was perfect. When Adam named the animals, as recorded in Genesis 2:18-20, he was doing precisely that—reading God's Word in the creation. In this way Adam communicated with God, and God communicated with Adam; it was man's first communication, and beautiful it was. Then, came the Fall.

Adam's fall into sin changed all this perfect communication. After his fall into sin Adam could no longer communicate with God; he could not read His Word; he tried instead to hide from God. In the words of the Confession of Faith man is described as follows: "And being thus become wicked, perverse, and corrupt in all his ways, he hath lost all his excellent gifts, which he received from God..." (Art. XIV). That man lost this perfect communication with God, that man lost this excellent gift to read and interpret the very words of God in creation, and that man is now a slave to sin are some of the most

fundamental principles in the study of any history of any language, because in the words of the apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans we read “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all man, for that all have sinned;” (Romans 5:12)

Human language, as we know it, begins right here, but thanks be to God that in Jesus Christ it does not end here. We have Christ, the second Adam, our risen and ascended Lord who even now makes continual intercession for us so that through the guidance of His Spirit we can see more clearly and read more accurately God’s revelation in his creation and in his word in our own language. This is the focal point of all language study—historical, etymological, linguistical, or phonological. All language study focuses on Christ and serves to one end here on earth, the gathering of his elect to life eternal. And to meet this end Christ has given us means, all kinds of means, in which to study language and the history of language. He has given us dictionaries, lexicons, the works of the godly and ungodly, the studies and analyses of believers and unbelievers, but we must use them discreetly, and we must not become tainted by their vain philosophies.

Man sinned, God promised and gave a Savior, and Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden of Eden. They bore children, their generations grew, and the following generations became more wicked than the previous. The Lord sealed up in an ark eight souls, Noah, his wife, and his three sons and their wives, and all the living creatures male and female, and destroyed those who would not obey his voice.

Again the earth was peopled by the generations of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, Noah’s sons. These generations were unified for we read in the Genesis account, “And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech” (Genesis 11:1). They sought to build a city and a tower on a plain in the land of Shinar. They wanted a unified world—a world with one language, one chief city, one tower “whose top may reach unto heaven”. But God came and confounded their language. Here is another principle of language study which is very important, God and God alone confounded the language. He caused and still does cause a language to change, flourish, or die. He is sovereign and omnipotent in this area also. Many today do not want anything of this idea because it puts God first and man second.

Since Babel man has tried desperately to heal this wound of the confusion of tongues. Throughout history men have tried to make the world speak one language. We observe three good, examples as we read the superscription above the cross of Christ. The three languages used were Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. Greek and Latin were, for a long time at least, the two major languages of the then known world. Greek began to fade as a major language as Rome became more and more powerful and influential. Latin was the major language for thousands if not millions of people up until the time of the Reformation. And even after the Reformation many, especially the scholars and intellectuals, used Latin as their second language. Hebrew, too, was a universal language of sorts, for the Jews of the dispersion still used Hebrew as their language of home and religion. But we know that many, if not most, Jews learned the language of the land in which they settled. Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, three writers in captivity, spoke and wrote Aramaic, a language related to Hebrew but quite different. The wound has not been healed.

Closely related to the above is one of the events that took place at Pentecost that again proves that the Lord is the master of all things including language, for we read in Acts 2:5-11:

And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

And they were amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?

And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and dwellers of Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers and of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

We may conclude from this that the Holy Spirit speaks to every man of God in his own particular language. Also, we may conclude that the Holy Spirit is not limited by language. How could he be when the Triune God caused this confusion in the first place? We may also conclude that God will see to it that every believer has his written word in his own language, too. That, however, is another subject, interesting though it may be.

As we approach the end of time we again see vain-glorious man attempt to make of this world one speech and one language. And we know, too, that for a time he will succeed, for in order for the man of sin to rule this world as one gigantic city, Babylon, he must have one language. The establishment of a United Nations is but one small step. Wait until the translators are out of work in the UN, then, it will be time for our Lord to come. Let us be watchful, pray, study, to prepare ourselves for that day when we shall see Him once again in heavenly perfection in the new heavens and the new earth,

— Darrel Huisken

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## COMPARING ECONOMIC SYSTEMS IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE

It shall be my object in this paper to introduce the topic of comparative economic systems. I shall endeavor to compare four economic systems which have had their major impact on world history in the last century. In so doing, I hope to show the similarities and differences of these systems and to point to the necessity of understanding them for a better knowledge of the history of this era. Finally, I shall note the Biblical viewpoint on the question of economics.

It would seem that little attention has been given to the study of economics in our school systems. I believe this is the result of a number of factors. First, there is the ever-present problem of time. Secondly, there is the attitude that economics and the study of monetary matters is not essential for the pilgrim Christian in his search for the heavenly kingdom and might well be a hinderance. Finally, there is the Sputnik value system which places mathematics and science in predominant position to subjects in social studies areas.

I would like to suggest that any high school curriculum should offer at least one course in the study of economics. Also, it would seem to me, that every junior high department ought to consider an addition to their present civics or history courses which would make possible some study of economics as a formal science. The need for every student to understand his economic world is certainly as important as his knowing the political world in which he must live. Also, there is the very important responsibility of each student to live responsibly before God with the gifts which have been given to him.

The specific topic which was assigned by the workshop planning session was *Comparing Economic Systems*. I have broadened this topic because I feel that the Biblical position on the question of which economic system is best is not defined. This is understandable, it seems to me, because the Bible is concerned with the ethics of living before God. In any system of economics, the Christian has the responsibility to live righteously, keeping God's commandments in every sphere of life. This means that it is equally important to be righteous before God in communist Russia as it is in a completely free economic system.

### **What is Economics?**

The dictionary definition of the term 'economics' is a "social science dealing chiefly with the description and analysis of the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services." The stress of the definition is on the working of the economic system under consideration.

An economic system, on the other hand, is the economic way of life by which men live and order their economic activities. There are four major Isms in the history of economic systems in the last century: capitalism, Socialism, Communism, and Fascism.

The followers of each of the above "Isms" believe in controlling the economics of their countries in a different way. Each economic system has an answer to the question what, how, how much, and for whom goods and services are to be produced. Each system derives its wealth through the same means of production: labor, land, capital, and management.

### **The Free Enterprise System**

For those of us born in a country in which freedom in politics, religion, and economic activity are taken for granted, the birth of the free enterprise system may seem rather passé. During the Middle Ages guilds tightly controlled the means of production in the towns, and the manor system tightly prescribed the economic activities of rural patrons. In the increased economic activity generated by the commercial revolution of the sixteenth century the predominant economic theory was mercantilism. These economists argued that the monarchs (government) should control the trade so that there be a favorable balance of payments. Trade should always be controlled so that the countries sold more than they bought on the foreign market. By doing this, the balance of payments would result in gold fattening the public treasury. The mercantilist advocated the establishment of colonies which could be manipulated and by which such a favorable trade arrangement could be maintained.

Into this atmosphere Smith introduced his major work, *The Wealth of Nations*. Like the physiocrats which preceded him advocated the *Laissez-faire* system in which government was to keep its hands off the economy and the activity of free capitalists would enrich the greatest number of people. Smith's viewpoint became the foundation of the "English classical school of economics and to a large extent the basis of our own free enterprise system.

Free-economy-thinking is still with us today, but because of the greed of man, the evils which such a system generated have forced government to step in and control, to greater extent each year, the economy of this country. Especially since the great Depression of the thirties the new economic policy is one which is a modification of the pure free enterprise system.

The trend toward government control has made some people in our country very unhappy. Franklin D. Roosevelt is still anathema to many a good capitalistic Calvinist. They like to equate Calvinism with the free enterprise system. There is a movement in this country which is writing to turn the tide of government encroachment on the free market place. Their magazine the *Freeman* serves as a worthy sourcebook for quotes establishing their principles.

The concept of the free market is not difficult to understand. Like all good things in life, it is simple and basic if approached in the right way. The free market is simply the voluntary exchange of goods and services between free individuals... the free method of facilitating exchange is natural aggregation of human interactions which result from a process of growth due to the nature of man... In short the Market is what it is because man is what he is.

*Freeman*, Vol. 19, p. 389

The Founding Fathers of America recognized that man is free by nature, and they stated this fact in the Declaration of Independence. In so doing they uncovered once again the moral base of cooperative society which has largely been obscured for thousands of years. Their declaration reiterated man's inherent right to be free and self-responsible before God and in relation to his fellow man. Their declaration re-echoed the cry of Moses some 3000 years earlier when he stood before the Egyptian Pharaoh and said, "Thus saith the Lord, let my people go that they may serve me!" (Exodus 8:1).

*Ibid.*

Political intervention is responsible of the moral degradation and misery we are rushing toward. Those people in government who feel they can improve on reality, who feel they can "plan" things and do better than the law of supply and demand are thoroughly evil

and immoral because of the inevitable lowering of living standards their planning creates. It makes no difference whether they do this with conscious intent or are merely well meaning but naive. The end result is the same—misery, poverty, lack of respect for law and order, and bloodshed. I hold politicians who advocate this intervention as well as those who cooperate with them in the “planning,” be they physicians or businessmen, personally responsible for the mess this country is in today.

Richard E. Hunt, *Freeman*, “Political Intervention in Medicine,” Vol. 19, p. 437

This ambitious notion that state legislating will change man’s environmental conditions and achieve utopia without poverty, discrimination, hatred, envy, and the like, is the pleasant reverie of social scholars in a dream world. The heart of the problem lies within man’s heart. Only when man’s inner self-seeking rebellious nature is changed can he set his mind to overcoming covetousness, jealousy, and racial hatred.

Bearce, Robert G., *Freeman*. “A Free Lance in the Free Market,” Vol. 19, p. 752

The above quotes serve to illustrate that the breakdown of the free enterprise system is not without its opposition. The qualities of freedom are heralded for their productivity. Notwithstanding, the laissez-faire capitalism in America is a thing of the past.

## **Socialism**

In reading economic history one finds that there have been several attempts to improve on the structure, goals, and operation of capitalism. In order of time, there have been three leading contenders for the honors of providing an alternative to capitalism: Socialism, Communism, and Fascism.

By the early part of the eighteenth century the mushrooming factories had created frightful labor conditions for most of those who worked to keep the wheels of industry rolling. Children and women worked long hours in unsafe and unsanitary working conditions. A sixteen hour work day was the rule. Large numbers whose work had been replaced by machines were at the point of revolt and in 1779 had stormed into a mill and burned it to the ground.

A small group of intellectuals sympathized with the plight of the workmen and suggested the establishment of communal settlements where all members would work together and share the benefits. One group led by Robert Owens has been called the Utopian Socialists. Owen borrowed money and purchased a factory in New Lanark, England. Here he tested the theories that man can be improved if his environment is improved. The workers lived in clean well-kept homes, the children attended school, and the work day was ten and one half hours, considered to be a short working day. In spite of this, Owen became a rich man. Although Owen had other ideas and even transplanted his experiment to New Harmony, Indiana, he failed to bring about any lasting changes in the factory system. If any thing he called attention to the evils of the system and demonstrated the possibility of dealing with them as was done in the factory reform movement of the late nineteenth century.

Another Utopian Socialist was Charles Fourier who advocated the establishment of phalanxes, industrial and agricultural units in which the ownership and distribution would be shared by all. Simonde de Sismondi believed in government regulation of business and in social legislation. Count Henri Saint-Simon wanted to create a

dictatorship of experts and scientists to run the government and society. But the greatest of all revolutionaries was Karl Marx who preached a gospel of world revolution, dictatorship of the people, and the abolition of private property.

One of the most influential groups of socialists were the Fabians. Like their namesake, they advocated delaying tactics and, therefore, disagreed with Karl Marx's call for a violent revolution. Rather they favored an orderly change of the existing government through the political process and education. Among the ranks of the society were such notables as George Bernard Shaw, Sidney Webb, and Annie Besant. Although they never formed a political party they backed labor and helped to form the British Labour Party in 1900.

It wasn't until 1924 (a notable year) that the labor party won its first election and not until 1945 that Labor was able to form a government for any period of time. When it did, the party carried out the nationalization of British industry and a radical program of economic "reform". Probably even more significant is the fact that in many ways our own federal government has adopted programs similar to those advocated by the early socialists of England. Today the American system is a mixture of private, semi-private, and public undertakings. At the same time Russia is modifying its Socialism in favor of some of the incentives of capitalism.

## **Communism**

The characteristic of communism which distinguishes it from socialism is the notion that all property, not only the means of production should be owned by the whole community rather than the individual. This idea became popular in France about 1840 although it was already expounded by Plato in the fourth century, B.C. in *The Republic*. It has been claimed that the early Christians also practiced a form of common ownership. "Neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common." (Acts 4:32b). Later, communistic settlements were attempted both in France and in the United States.

A second characteristic of communism is the violent means by which it comes to power. Revolution is the means by which the proletariat comes to power and by which the people gain ownership and control of the property of the individuals. In the communist mind the individual loses his identity to the state. The process of historical evolution justifies any abuses perpetrated against property owners in the free economy. Hegelian dialectic denies that the morality of personal freedom is even an issue.

Karl Marx defined the goals and principals of modern communism in his massive life work, *Das Kapital*. In it he traced the dire effects of the capitalistic system to the worker and, predicted that the rich would get richer and the working class poorer until they would rise up in revolt against their masters. "Working men of the world unite!" Such a revolt would be completely justified by Marx on the theory that labor is the only means of production that adds value to goods and services.

It was in Russia that communism first found success. Led by Lenin and Joseph Stalin the Social-Democratic Workers party plotted the revolution to overthrow the Czarist government in 1917. Peasant uprisings, general strikes, rebellions, and even mutinies in the army and navy created the situation which made possible the installation of a dictatorship in behalf of the proletariat.

In the Russia established after the Revolution everybody works. Wages vary greatly from the well-paid industrial workers to the common laborers. The amount of the

paycheck depends on how much the worker produces. There are also the privileged class—Communist party workers, secret police, and members of the armed forces. In addition certain privileged workers (managers, artists, scientists, athletes) may enjoy special favors such as vacations, travel, better housing, and automobiles.

However, if you were to live in Russia you might be struck with profound differences from America. You might own property such as clothes, tools, and a share in a cooperative but never the land. You may choose your work in industries for which you are trained or have an aptitude, but you can not bargain for higher wages than those set by the state. You may vote, but for the candidate selected by the party for that office. You cannot start business in the hope of making a profit for yourself. You must be careful of what you say and to whom because you might arouse the suspicion of the secret police for crimes against the state. Your extra earnings can never be invested in an enterprise for gain.

In 1965 Alexei Kosygin announced one of the most interesting changes since the revolution of 1917. Managers of individual factories were freed to operate their businesses as they deemed best. They were freed to make as large a profit as possible. Part of the profits (euphemistically called “economic stimuli”) would go to the state and part to the managers to be used at their discretion.

Commenting on this change the *London Daily Telegraph* said:

The present changes are recognizing what in part already exists. More important, they amount to a repudiation of the Marxists doctrine that all value derives from labor, and a move towards accepting, in however disguised a form, the capitalist concepts of rents, interest, profit, markets and prices. How encouraging to see the Soviets making a dash for economic freedom! It would be ironic if Britain should choose this moment to move in the opposite direction.

## **Fascists**

The turmoil which followed World War I prepared the soil of Europe for another variety of economic organization. Fascism in Italy and Nazism in Germany promised the answer to the widespread chaos that lay everywhere in Europe. People were starving, unemployment was wide spread, and inflation made the currency practically worthless.

Meanwhile, the peasants seeing the success of the Bolshevists in Russia were ranging the country side seizing the lands and possessions of the wealthy landowners. Benito Mussolini stepped into this chaotic situation and organized a group of intensely nationalistic ex-service men. By 1922 more than 200,000 had joined his army of “Black Shirts” and were known to oppose Communists, Socialists, and revolutionists. They promised stability, employment, and a return to national honor. By a military coup Mussolini forced the king to place him in control of government so that all economic and political power were in the hands of the Fascist Grand Council while he was the supreme dictator-boss.

Under this new arrangement a new economic policy was announced: total employment by means of directing all economic activity towards meeting the military needs of the state. Most of Italy’s resources and output were directed to the production of war materials. Consumers had little or no say in what they might want. Industrialists were allowed to keep their property but were told what they were to produce, how much they were to pay their workers, and how much profit they might keep for themselves.

The story was much the same in Germany. In a bold rise to power Hitler and the Nazis overthrew the Weimar Republic in 1933 and the Third Reich was established. The storm trooper became the police power to enforce the new regime. Soon unemployment was unknown; everybody was working on one of the greatest machines of destruction the world had ever seen.

Fascism involves government controls like communism. However, instead of destroying the distinction between the capitalist and the workers Fascism fostered a close cooperation. Instead of eliminating capitalism, fascism worked with it. Government encouraged businesses to grow, and at the same time supervised this growth closely to insure that the needs of the militaristic state might be met. Nevertheless, Fascism stripped the profit motive from capitalism and left little or no initiative to the entrepreneur.

### **Which System Is Best?**

It must be apparent that men would have his preference to live in one of these economic systems or another. Since it is the nature of man to be free he would no doubt choose a free capitalistic system. However since every man is by nature greedy, he soon seeks for government intervention because of the inequities and evil fostered.

A rather amusing look at the problem is presented by the following illustration.

Socialism

You have two cows and give one to your neighbor.

Communism

You have two cows; the government takes both and gives you the milk.

Fascism

You have two cows; the government takes both and sells you the milk.

Nazism

You have two cows; the government takes both and shoots you.

Bureau-ism

You have two cows; the government takes both, shoots one, milks the other and throws the milk away.

Capitalism

You have two cows; you sell one and buy a bull.

Although the author of this bit of farce is lampooning a bit, he makes an essential point. The free enterprise system works the best for the maximizing of production because it provides the incentive for work.

### **Biblical Principles of Economics**

It ought to become quite apparent that the Bible is not a textbook in economics. Jesus was almost indifferent to economic considerations. He chided his disciples for their earthly cares and called them to consider the lilies of the field and birds of the air. (Matt. 6:26-28)

Jesus even said, "Lay not up for yourself treasures upon earth where moth and rust doth corrupt." (Matt. 6:19)

Even in the Old Testament there is little indication of a divinely ordained economic system. There is every indication that all of the elements of economics today were present in the Old Testament period. Consider the goods of the patriarchs which were an indication of private property. Jacob worked for wages as an employee of his Uncle Laban. Joseph's brothers purchased corn in Egypt in the monopolistic market place of a famine-torn land. Lands were inherited. Properties bought and sold. Yet in the midst

of all this everyday economic activity God does not establish an ordinance to adopt any particular economic system.

The closest one comes to a divine ordinance is the Mosaic laws given at Sinai for the regulation of the life of Israel when they would inherit the land. One must remember, however, that the land of Canaan was the picture of heaven for Israel and that ownership of the one portion in the land was a picture of God's promise to heaven. Therefore the seven year came as reminder of the sabbath of rest to be realized in Heaven. Even more the year of Jubilee showed the completed symbol of seven times seven. In a real sense the prisoners were to be set free and the land of the original owners would be returned. God would have his people know that the eternal sabbath would know no economic hardship, no disinheritance. Each of the redeemed of the world would be celebrating the eternal sabbath.

Although lacking in specific references to economics, the Bible is crystal clear on the principle that the earth is the Lord's and that man is but a steward who holds possessions for a time. God the creator and upholder of all things maintains his ownership of the earth (Ps. 115:16, Ps. 89:11). Yet it is also true that God gives man dominion in the earth and commands him to take hold of the creation and to serve him in using it (Gen. 1:26-28).

The capitalist, on the other hand claims ownership on the basis of man's nature, that he is free. Communism denies the right of private property and serves the atheistic state. Socialism tries to legislate the morality of ownership by limiting ownership and Fascism appropriates the use of property to serve the goals of the military state. Not one of these systems acknowledges the sovereignty of God or make men responsible to God for their use of His possessions.

### **Care of the Poor**

“For the poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land” (Deut. 15:11).

The sin of man brought God's curse on the earth so that with the sweat of his brow man must work to bring forth a living from the earth. This is a fact that is denied by every form of socialism.

Israel was blessed by the fact that there were the poor in the land. Caring for the widows and the orphans was the privilege of the church. Distribution of the alms became, for the early new testament church, the occasion for the establishment of the office of the deacon. (Acts 6:1-6). Care of the poor is one of the cardinal tests of true religion according to James.

Any economic system which denies the right of private property robs the Christian of the gift of alms giving. This includes the welfare state. When the poor, the blind, the old aged, the sick, go to the state for their care the church is denied the blessing of caring for them. The poor and indigent are denied the mercies of Christ. And this is the American dream. The guaranteed annual wage, is the closest thing to the equal distribution, advocated by Karl Marx, that the world has ever seen.

Although the Christian may have to obey the laws of the welfare state, he must see their evil and recognize their anti-christian goal. Utopias of the kingdom of man are doomed to failure. We read that the black horse of the apocalypse will continue to run. In the hands of this haggard rider will always be the balances signifying want, need, hunger,

and inequality. And through it all the white horse comes on victorious. Christ has the victory and takes his church to a land flowing with milk and honey, where the streets are pure gold, where the expectations of all the believers are realized.

### **Interest and Usury**

John Calvin is generally credited with the change of the churches' attitude allowing for interest in business dealings. Although this is not quite correct (the Catholic Church had already begun to liberalize its position) he did distinguish for the first time the difference between usury and interest. Excessive interest and that charged to the poor to purchase their necessities were forbidden by the Mosaic laws, according to Calvin. I agree with this position. There are references to legitimate lending in the Bible. Furthermore, each admonition against usury is given by God in connection with the care of the poor.

Calvin's breakthrough does sharply deny a cardinal Catholic principle related to money and interest. The scholastic position stated that money is sterile and therefore unproductive. Because of this it was immoral for anyone to charge for the use of money. Calvin, on the other hand, stressed that man was God's servant to use the creation but to use it responsibly. It is not strange, therefore, that there has been an attempt to link the growth of capitalism to the Calvinist.

Max Weber is one who claims such a connection. In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* Weber noted that contemporary statistics and historical analyses proved that business leaders in every community were Protestants. More specifically they were usually Calvinists and more often than not they were English or Dutch. Weber concluded that such glaring evidence could not be overlooked. To him the key concept was the Calvinist conception of "calling," the performance of God's work on earth. Although he admitted that Calvinists desired to be busy in the cause of God, "there was a congruence between their ethic and capitalism's necessities."

### **The Calling of the Christian In the Free Enterprise System**

The Christian in modern America stands on slippery ground. Materialism is the philosophy of man seeking to increase the goods of this world. Who of us is not in a measure guilty. As we teach the children of the covenant we have the responsibility to point out the dangers of a system which produces goods so abundantly. Prosperity with godliness is great gain but that same prosperity leads many to live lives of godlessness. The danger of living in a land of luxury must be stated. It is unlikely that you will be able to convince the students that they are as prosperous as they really are. If you do realize this objective then you must certainly present its corollary. Rich men have great responsibility. They must be sure that there are no poor who suffer because of their activities or in spite of them. God will not exempt anyone of the responsibility of loving his neighbor. The Christian teacher desires that each child in his classroom may learn to live as responsible stewards of God's gifts. Then whether rich or poor he must work out his salvation with fear and trembling. Christ will be served as king, also in the economic realm.

## THE DECLINE OF NATIONS

Scattered about on nearly every continent on the surface of the earth lie the remains of ancient civilizations; the mighty winged bulls of Assyria buried beneath the shifting desert sands, the splendor of the Hanging Gardens reduced to a pile of dirt and stone, the Parthenon and the Coliseum empty except for the voices of the tourists. The ancient civilizations which were the wonder and the terror of their times must be patiently excavated by archeologists who attempt to piece together their secrets and rebuild them in the minds of men today.

Even among us today there are several nations that retain only remnants of former greatness. Spain, once the wealthiest and strongest of nations, is hardly noticed in world affairs. England, upon whose empire the sun never set, admitted just a few years ago that it is now only a secondrate power. France looks back on the glories of Napoleonic days. The lists of nations that have risen, shone with great splendor for a brief time, and then declined into obscurity could go on and on. This is probably the simplest and most predictable pattern of history.

One of the most pressing problems of the historian is to answer the question why. Why does a nation whose power exceeds all others and whose glory is the admiration of all people fall? Would it not seem a simple thing to ascertain those qualities that contributed to its rise and to its high position and to retain them? These questions are particularly relevant today when we wonder about the future of our own nation, and when we teach our children to interpret the signs of the times.

In an attempt to answer these questions it is important to remember that history does not interpret itself. However painstakingly the archeologist may piece together its bits of ancient pottery or however neat the dialectic of Hegel or Marx may appear to be, the answers to history do not come from history itself. Happily, we have a guide to the interpretation of history in the Scriptures. The Old Testament prophets, inspired by the infallible Holy Spirit, were the greatest news commentators and analysts the world has every known. Guided by their inerrant instruction, we can learn a great deal about the fall of the ancient civilizations and by comparison a great deal about the decline and fall of nations of more recent times.

We find, first of all, from a study of the Scripture, that God raises up nations to serve a particular purpose, and when that purpose is served, He causes them to fade away. Thus Assyria was used by God to take the Kingdom of Judah, the Persians to return the Jews to their homeland. A nation, then, can fall and will certainly fall when it has served the purpose for which God has raised it up.

But it is certainly not enough to say that nations decline because they have served God's purpose. While this is certainly true, no nation at that point simply bursts like a bubble for unaccountable reasons. God also causes them to fall for specific reasons so that they may be lessons for us and may aid us in the understanding and interpretation of our own times.

The basic reason for the failure of every nation is, of course, sin. All human institutions fall because of corruption of the builders. The fundamental wickedness of man is the flaw that lies in the foundation of his building that causes it eventually to fall of its own weight.

This fatal flaw of man that brings about the fall of his great nations is clearly pride. The building of the Tower of Babel already displayed this evil. "Go to, let us build

us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name..." The reason for the fall of mighty Assyria is given in Isaiah 10:12 and 13: "I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom..." (see also the prophecy of Nahum, Ezekiel 31, and Zephaniah 2:13-15). God spoke these words against mighty Babylon through the mouth of Jeremiah: "...recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her; for she hath been proud against the Lord, against the Holy One of Israel." (Jeremiah 50:29b, see also Isaiah 13 and 47). That this same evil undermines the nations of the modern world we find in Revelation 18 which speaks of the fall of modern "Babylon": "How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her; for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow."

The primary manifestation of pride is idolatry. According to Romans 1: all those who are guilty of the sin of pride are idolators. Pride and idolatry are therefore linked repeatedly by the prophets as the causes for destruction of nations.

Although pride brings about the fall of nations, there are so many ways in which pride manifests itself that it is very difficult often to demonstrate this fact in the history of a particular nation. There are, however, several striking examples in history of obvious national pride and a dramatic punishment by God for that pride. It certainly must have been pride that moved Philip II to send the Invincible Armada against England. In the factors that defeated the Armada; the design of the Spanish ships, the ferocity of the defense by the English, and particularly the great storm that destroyed so much of the Spanish fleet, we can point out the clear hand of God upon the Spanish nation. Clearly, it was also personal and national pride which drove Napoleon and the French people as well as Hitler and the Germans to their catastrophic defeats.

National pride manifests itself in so many ways that we can list a large number of these manifestations as contributing causes of the decline and fall of nations. It should not be forgotten that these are all manifestations of the sin of pride and therefore forms of idolatry. Without classification of relative importance, these are some of the "contributing causes" or symptoms that indicate the presence of the fatal disease.

The failure to use properly the treasures and the national resources of a nation will cause it to decline. The vast treasures that Spain brought back from the new world disappeared in the fleeting pleasures and luxuries of the rich as a large part sank to the bottom of the sea with the Armada.

Exploitation of other peoples also exhibits pride and leads to the decline of nations. The best illustration to this is the results of colonialism, Spain, France, England, and the Netherlands still suffer the effects of their exploitation of other lands during the last few centuries.

The breakup of the structure of the family is certainly an important factor in the breaking of nations. This is traceable as an important factor in the decline of Rome as well as many other nations. Breakup of the family leads inevitably to the disregard of authority and the eventual dissolution of the state.

The improper exercise of authority by the government is another certain way to destroy the nation. The improper exercise of authority may be in the abdication of authority by the distractions of personal interests or the fear of exercising it, or authority may be improperly exercised by causing it to interfere in areas that are not the legitimate

concern of the government. Examples of the improper exercise of authority abound from the times that the prophets bemoaned the laxity of the kings of Israel and Judah to the over-extension of authority in the totalitarian states of more recent history.

The decay of moral behavior on the part of the citizens of a country is a symptom of the decline of a nation, a contributing cause of its decline, and a certain factor that will bring upon that nation the judgment of God.

All of these factors are so inextricably linked in the decline and fall of any nation that it is impossible to say that any particular one is the primary cause. Nor is it possible to say that any one of these factors will more quickly or certainly bring down the judgment of God than any other. It is, however, most important to point them out as they develop in a nation and to show the certain results of these evils.

We should recognize, though, that all of the secondary factors named (and we could certainly list more factors) are all rooted in the one primary cause, pride. If history teaches any lesson at all, it is that God will certainly punish that sin in individuals and in nations. The sin of pride will result in the misuse of the authority that God has given to the government, and so include a breakdown of authority in the home and a collapse of morality. God only rarely causes destruction in a moment as with Sodom and Gomorrah. More commonly God causes them to decay gradually so that other nations bring upon them the destruction they deserve.

—Fred Hanko

## WAR AND PEACE IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE

The century in which we are living is a century in which both war and peace are having their heyday. Two of the most disastrous wars in the history of mankind have been fought and with them talks of a permanent peace have reached a crescendo. Wars, whenever and wherever, have always brought up the topic of peace. This cycle of war and peace is as old as history and yet there has never been a lasting peace. Today, especially with the threat of atomic or hydrogen warfare looming on the horizon, man not wanting history to repeat itself is desperately seeking a permanent world peace and yet there is war and rumors of war.

We as teachers of the social studies must deal with this problem of war and the world's attempt at peace. To the secular historian war is a thing to get rid of and peace is the thing to strive for. How should we interpret war and this apparent failure at peace. It is my purpose in this paper to deal briefly with these two related problems from a biblical perspective.

### WAR

In any discussion of the place of war in history, one must begin with what history is. For purposes of this discussion, I believe that the definition found in *Principles of Education of Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School* will do. Prof. H. Hanko has written: "History is the temporal revelation of the counsel of God with respect to all things beginning with creation and ending with the realization of God's purpose in the new heavens and earth." (page 2)

I believe there are a few fundamental points that must be made in connection with this definition. First, God is the author of all history, and because of this fact his counsel is as he is, eternal, unchangeable, all comprehensive and efficacious. (See *Heidelberg Catechism* Lord's Day 9 and 10). We also read in Acts 17:24-26:

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

We also have this idea in Psalm 139:1-16. Secondly, the purpose of God's decree and history is His glory. Thirdly, because God decreed sin, God through His Son also redeems the creation and the church. This idea Rev. H. Hoeksema expresses in *Reformed Dogmatics*:

That purpose was not to perfect all things in the first Adam, who was out of the earth, earthy, but to bring them to final perfection in Christ, Who is the Lord from heaven. The final goal of all things which God conceived in His counsel was the new creation, in which righteousness shall dwell forever, of which Christ shall be the eternal head in Whom all things shall be united. (page 236)

Finally, notice that the definition uses the words "*all things*". War, therefore, is part of God's decree.

War is one of the means through which God brings about the final coming of His kingdom. War is not something that just happens, or is inevitable, nor is it for the good of

civilization, but war is predetermined from eternity by the all-wise God for His own purpose. I believe this is evident from Rev. 6:4 where we read: “And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.” You will recall that the focal point of the vision John received is Christ as the Lamb slain. He it was that took the scroll from God who sitteth on the throne (Rev. 4:11). The scroll was taken after the question was asked “Who is worthy to open the book...” (Rev. 5:2). Only Christ could open it (Rev. 5:9). The scroll represents the counsel of God as it pertains to the history of the world and the things which had to come to pass in order that Christ might realize the kingdom of heaven. The opening of the second seal brought forth the red horse. Power is given to it to take peace from the earth by means of the sword. I think it worthy of note that Christ opened the seal and He gives the power. This horse by his color represents lust and passion of sin which is scarlet. This evil lust for power produces war and bloodshed as we read in James 4:1-3:

From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?

Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

This red horse runs throughout history and serves to keep it in constant turmoil.

It should be stated at the same time that even though God decreed. war, war itself is a product of man’s sinful imagination. War is the by-product of sin, and therefore, is a product of man who loves sin. Just as God uses sin to gain his purpose, so God uses war. God is the sovereign controller even though man is doer. “I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things” (Isaiah 45:7). (cf. also Amos 3:6).

How does God use war in history to fulfill His purpose? God uses war as punishment for man’s sins. The Old Testament is full of it. Israel sins; God punishes them. God used Israel in the same way to punish the nations around them. Man hates war because of the tremendous suffering that it brings and yet war is always with us. Everything that God does in history is directed to the saving of His Church and the punishment of the wicked both temporally and eternally because He loves His church in Christ and hates sin. The Catechism discusses the idea of punishment in Lord’s Day 4, particularly question and answer 10:

Q. 10. Will God suffer such disobedience and rebellion to go unpunished?

A. By no means; but is terribly displeased with our original as well as actual sins; and will punish them in his just judgment temporally and eternally, as he hath declared, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law, to do them.”

War serves the purpose of the Church. It is the purpose of God in history to glorify Himself through the gathering of His Church in Christ. War serves the purpose of the gathering of the Church by protecting it. Throughout history man scoffed. at God’s sentence of death. Man wants a utopian kingdom of pleasure. He hates Christ and His kingdom. Man strives passionately in envy and greed to build his kingdom. He wars with his neighbor to achieve his ends. This makes a divided world. Instead of concentration

against the Church, man fights his neighbor. It is while this deadly struggle is going on in the world that the Church is gathered by the preaching. If we go back to the discussion of the red horse in Rev. 6, we find that the white horse is first. The point to be made is that the other horses serve the white horse. This white horse is commonly associated with the preaching of the gospel as it is carried on by the Church. This must mean that war serves the spread of the gospel and thereby the Church by its use in history. This idea is also substantiated in Rev. 13:3 when the deadly wound is healed and the Great Tribulation will begin (Matt. 24:9, 10). The tribulation will be so severe that even the Church institute will be destroyed (Rev. 11: 7, 8). The wound of Rev. 13:3 I believe to be the one which appeared at Babel. This may also provide another reason for war. Man is always trying to heal his wound by means of war.

War serves the Church also by making it -aware that this world is not our home and that our only help is in the name of Jehovah. The child of God sees man in his attempt to make peace, making war instead. He sees his children going off to fight in the ungodly attempts to bring about the kingdom of worldly peace. The Church can only say my help is in the name of the Lord and pray the prayer of Rev. 22 where Christ says, "Surely I come quickly", and the Church answers, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

God uses war to show man just how totally depraved he really is. Outwardly civilization is prosperous. Civilization has come a long way, and yet man with all his inventive genius cannot get rid of the one thing he hates most, war. Instead he finishes one war, he prepares for the next arming himself for peace. Peace making becomes just as dangerous as war making. Man's peace never lasts. I believe in this; connection that just as man has gotten progressively worse so war has grown to such hideous proportions that an all-out war is impossible without genocidal consequences.

God uses wars to bring about his kingdom. Christ comes through wars and rumors of wars. If there were no wars, then it follows that Christ would not come. In Matt. 24:3 in answer to the question of the disciples "Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and the end of the world?" Jesus includes in these signs, war. Christ would be a liar if he did not come through wars. Christ comes as the bearer of heavenly Peace to our sin-racked, war-wrecked world. Christ through love for His own brings peace and spells everlasting disaster to the world.

Finally, I believe that God uses war to show us that the end is getting close. In Matt. 24 in answer to the disciples' question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?", Jesus says in vs. 6: "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." Jesus exhorts us further in vs. 42 "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." War also shows that the end is close by the way in which it expresses itself in history. War has increased in its killing power and in the sophistication of its weapons. Revelation demonstrates this in the use of seals, trumpets and vials. Each one shows an increase in intensity and destructive power of the one before so that in the seals one-fourth die, in the trumpets one-third die and in the vials there is total annihilation. We know that the end is getting close when the Antichrist comes as the forerunner of Christ. This forerunner of Christ must also come through wars. The world knows the only way to get rid of the hideous aspect of war is through one world government. Consider this idea of the philosopher Immanuel Kant:

In the absence of what he calls a “cosmopolitical constitution” or world state, “war is inevitable.” In their external relations to one another, states, “like lawless savages, are naturally in a nonjuridical condition,” and this, according to Kant, “is a state of war, in which the right of the stronger prevails; and although it may not in fact be always found as a state of actual war and incessant hostility... yet the condition is wrong in itself in the highest degree, and the nations which form States contiguous to each other are bound mutually to pass out of it.” He pictures the nations of the world “after many devastations, overthrows, and even complete internal exhaustion of their powers” as “driven forward to the goal which Reason might well have impressed upon them, even without so much sad experience. This is none other than the advance out of the lawless state of savages and the entering into a Federation of Nations... However visionary this idea may appear to be... it is nevertheless the inevitable issue of the necessity in which men involve one another.”

There are also the modern day attempts of the League of Nations and the United Nations. These have failed) but there will be one that will not; a mock peace will be established. Yet there will be a battle going on between the Church and the world power. In this battle the Church is the victor. This world kingdom of which I have spoken will not last for it is to us a sign that Christ the King is coming.

And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird (Rev. 18:1-2).

How must the child of God look at war in the light of the foregoing? He must first see war as predetermined in God’s counsel. The child of God must also see that God directs and controls war to punish the wicked and preserve the Church. He must also see that wars will and must occur because they are predicted in Scripture and it is the only way through which Christ can come. He must also see that the cause of all war is man himself because of his great lust for power. War is a product of the fall. The child of God must be aware that war will increase in its horrible consequences and as it does, he recognizes it as a sign of the times. He must finally see war as an attempt by the world to bring about its kingdom of peace. We have in the vision of Daniel 7 types of the anti-christian kingdom. All had this in common: Each rose by force of arms, each continued to exist by arms and each was conquered by arms.

I do not believe that we can stop here in as much as we have not answered a number of practical questions that arise. The student cannot talk about war as an academic question. He is a part of the world in which these wars and rumors of wars are an everyday occurrence. The country of which he is a member is at present in the throes of a Vietnam War. We must be able to provide him with some leadership in answering these questions.

The main problem the child of God faces in his earthly sojourn is because of the nature of war. Can the child of God participate in war? War by its very nature breeds hate of the opponent, and, therefore, appears to run contrary to Christ’s mandate to love the neighbor. The strict pacifist generally follows this line of thinking and condemns all wars. How must the Christian react to this? I believe that the answer lies in the answer to the question of the government’s right to wage war. Probably the most familiar and only passage that speaks about the sword power of government is Romans 13:4. “For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath

upon him that doeth evil.” In I Peter 2:13-15 and Titus 3:1 we are given the command to obey government even in the call to war. “Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,” (Titus 3:1). I say this also because it is confessional. I believe it is implied in the *Belgic Confession*, Article 36. It is certainly stated in later Reformed confessions, especially the *Second Helvetic Confession*, which Rev. H. Hoeksema quotes at length on page 53 in *Love Thy Neighbor for God’s Sake*. Christ has conferred his authority on government and this makes government sovereign in its own sphere, which is the state. Citizens are duty bound to obey government when it acts within this sphere. If we agree that war is the proper sphere of government, I believe we are then obligated to obey when the government calls to war.

What is the child of God to do when he is called upon to fight in an unjustified war? The Bible does not condemn war as such. In the history of mankind there certainly were wars that were more justifiable than others. Israel certainly fought wars that were justified because of the command that they were given of God. I find it very hard to put any war since that time in the same class with Israel’s wars no matter how justifiable in terms of human logic they were. Also Christ himself never condemned wars as such even though the opportunity presented itself. Nor do we read of any of the converted Roman soldiers being asked by the apostles to quit the Roman army. (See Acts 10, Acts 27, Luke 3:14). Getting back to the question, the answer of the conscientious objector will be that *he* deems it an unjustified war, and therefore, he will not obey government. This is the idea of the stand also taken by the Christian Reformed Church in 1939 and also in 1964 with the problem of nuclear warfare added. See the appendix insert for the quote from the 1939 decision. Both statements agree that it is the government’s obligation to wage war and both agree that the citizen must obey the government’s call, but it is the individual’s obligation to determine the rightness and wrongness of a government’s decision on war. The individual can refuse if the government is wrong. Without going into it too deeply, there are some points that should be made against this idea, which is principally followed by most conscientious objectors. It leaves the individual to judge. How is this possible in our age of secret documents and propaganda? In order to be absolutely sure he would have to have all available evidence. This puts the government at the mercy of the individual. Also how in the world is it ever possible to have any war entirely justified? I am in agreement with Rev. H. Hoeksema on this point when he states:

As long as the government wields the sword given her by God within her own domain, that is, the civil state, whether it be within its own borders and with respect to its own citizens, or over against other governments and states, she alone has authority. And the citizens must obey unconditionally. However, as soon as the civil government would attempt to exercise her authority in the domain of the church and would turn her God-given sword against Christ and His cause, the government would move in a sphere in which she has no authority whatsoever, and therefore is no longer government, but mere man. And the principle would have to be applied that we must obey God rather than men.

This implies that the individual Christian is not morally responsible for the justness or unjustness of the war that is declared by the government. Nor is he responsible for any act which he performs in strict obedience to the government as such when he is called to the colors and summoned to military service (*Love Thy Neighbor for God’s Sake*, page 59).

Does this mean blind obedience? No, man has the duty to object and show government where it is not doing right. We are not robots, but rational moral creatures.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the strict pacifist on purely logical grounds is more convincing than those who try to determine which are just or unjust wars. Neither one has put war in its proper scriptural perspective and that is why they do not answer the problem correctly. We must always see war as a means God has purposed to bring about his kingdom. War is not something to get rid of from an earthly point of view. We must look beyond this world and its problems to a heavenly kingdom that is eternal. I realize that I have not answered nor have I attempted to answer these questions from the point of view of what happens in war. I suppose I could get emotional about its bloodshed, terrible devastations, its purposelessness, etc. I do not think we can approach the question from this point of view because it does not take into account what scripture says about the purpose of war.

## **PEACE**

Peace is a term that has been often abused and misused by its users mainly because they have no or very little idea of what it really means: For most it is the absence of war. They define war as “a means of attempting to settle international or civil disputes, by armed military forces... in which each side seeks to impose its will upon the other by force.” (*The Abolition of War*, page 27). It seems that force is the key word here. Most are not worried about the dispute but it is the force used to settle them that causes consternation.

Consequently, they have come up with various proposals for peace. The most prominent of these is to get rid of the possibility of war by forming one world government and subject all nations to a code of (international) law. (See quote from Kant in appendix). This they hope will make lawabiding citizens of nations. By forcing nations to go to court instead of war it is hoped that man will get rid of the instinct of war for more peaceful methods. The things that strikes me most is the idea of a universal government which is going to be closely tied to the anti-christian kingdom. God is certainly going to allow a universal peace during the last days at the time of the healing of the wound of Babel.

Why is the world so desperately seeking peace? First, it desires peace in order to establish a great utopian kingdom which will fill all the wicked desires of the heart. “And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth” (Genesis 11:4). Secondly, to get rid of the ghastly horrors of war. This is why Isaiah 2:1-4 is often misquoted. Thirdly, to concentrate on the Church to get rid of it. This makes Genesis 3:15 a reality. “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” (Cf. Psalm 140).

How does the child of God conceive of peace? True and lasting peace is heavenly. Christ did not come as the Prince of Peace to bring peace to the world. “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send. peace, but a sword” (Matthew 10:34). (Cf. Luke 12:49-51). Christ was the Prince of a heavenly kingdom. We must not make the same mistake the disciples first made in believing Christ had come to deliver us from our enemies in this world. In Matt. 26 Christ reprimanded Peter after he had drawn his sword with these words: “...Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matt.

26:52-54). Christ also answered Pilate with these words: "...My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36). The child of God must see that peace is accomplished through reconciliation with God through Christ. "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col. 1:20). (Cf. John 16:33 and Eph. 2:14). Peace on earth exists in the heart of the child of God. "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:7). "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith" (Gal. 5:22). Therefore, the peace of Isaiah 2:1-4 and Micah 4:1-3 implies the peace of heaven where man will have the love of Christ and will want to obey God and His laws instead of the enmity of Genesis 3:15. (Cf. Romans 8:7; Col. 1:21; and Luke 10:19).

There is another idea that should be brought up in this discussion of peace. Righteousness and peace are closely related terms in Scripture. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. 85:10). "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places" (Isaiah 32:17, 18). (Cf. Psalm 37:37 and Psalm 119:165). The point made here is that peace is only for the righteous in Christ. They receive peace on this earth in principle in regeneration and in heaven it will be finally realized.

What can we say then to the child of God as he is confronted with these two mutually exclusive ideas? First, war must necessarily come. Secondly, war is of the fallen world. Thirdly, when one is called upon to participate he must do so. Fourthly, if one is convinced in his heart that the war is wrong, he must still submit, but he can use the lawful method of protest. Fifthly, when the war ends a just and equitable peace must be arrived at. Sixthly, the peace of this world will not last. Finally, the child of God must be aware that he is called to spiritual warfare and that as the end approaches the battle will get worse. During the antichristian kingdom this battle will reach its height. Yet through it all we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us because He has given us the armor of Eph. 6:10-18. The child of God must realize this is by far the most important battle that he can participate in.

—Harry Langerak

## APPENDIX

### **Quotes from *Britannica Great Books of the Western World***

They have to do with what various men in history have said about war and peace. I found them very interesting and revealing.

Hegel points out that "in peace civil life continually expands; all its departments wall themselves in, and in the long run men stagnate... As a result of war, nations are strengthened, and people involved in civil strife also acquire peace at home through making wars abroad."

To Prince Andrew in *War and Peace* who says that “the aim of war is murder; the methods of war are spying, treachery, and their encouragement.”

It is an illusion, Freud thinks, to suppose that civilization so transforms human nature as to lift it above the impulses of war. In war, he says, “our fellow-citizens have not sunk so low as we feared, because they have never risen so high as we believed.” The sad fact, he concludes, is that “war is not to be abolished; so long as the conditions of existence among the nations are so varied, and the repulsions between peoples so intense, there will be, there must be wars.”

Machiavelli may not be too cynical a realist when he advises the prince that he “ought to have no other aim or thought, nor select anything else for his study, than war and its rules and discipline... When princes have thought more of ease than of arms, they have lost their states.” The prince “ought never, therefore, to have out of his thoughts this subject of war, and in peace he should addict himself more to its exercise than in war.” The prince who delays in order to save himself from war makes a serious mistake. War, Machiavelli tells him, “is not to be avoided, but is only deferred to your disadvantage.”

The whole life, according to Aristotle, is “divided into two parts, business and leisure, war and peace... There must be war for the sake of peace, business for the sake of leisure, things useful and necessary for the sake of things honorable... Men must be able to engage in business and go to war, but leisure and peace are better; they must do what is necessary and indeed what is useful, but what is honorable is better.”

Aquinas believes “there is no peace when a man enters into concord with another counter to what he would prefer. Consequently men seek by means of war to break this concord, because it is a defective peace, in order that they may obtain peace, where nothing is contrary to their will. Hence all wars are waged that men may find a more perfect peace than that which they had heretofore.”

Locke holds that “want of a common judge with authority puts all men in a state of nature)” it follows for him that, though the state of nature and the state of war may not be identical, the state of nature, unlike that of civil society, inevitably lapses into the state of war. If in a state of nature men fail to settle their differences by reason, they enter into the state of war which is the realm of force “or a declared design of force... where there is no common superior on earth to appeal to for relief.”

War, writes Rousseau, “is a relation, not between man and man, but between State and State.” Because they are “in a state of nature among themselves,” bodies politic experience, in his opinion, “the inconveniences which had obliged individuals to forsake it... Hence arose national wars, battles, murders and reprisals, which shock nature and outrage reason.”

“In a word, we must found a form of government holding universal sway, which should be diffused over the whole world without destroying the bonds of citizenship, and beside which all other governments can continue in their customary course and do everything except what impedes the great aim of our order, which is to obtain for virtue the victory over vice.” (Tolstoy in *War and Peace*)

### **Christian Reformed Synod of 1939**

Report of Committee on Testimony Concerning our Attitude Toward War

## I.

“It is a fundamental Christian duty to promote mutual understanding and peace wherever possible between individuals as well as groups and nations. We are admonished in the Epistle to the Romans: ‘If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men.’ (Rom. 12:18) The Christian should be the sworn enemy of all malice, bitterness, animosity, and hatred, which is the root of murder. This is likewise the duty of the government and of every citizen in the sphere of civil, national, and international life...

There is a militarism which the Christian cannot support but must oppose. This term is often used in a twofold sense. Militarism in the sense of maintaining and developing an adequate army and navy for the defense of a country and the protection of the national interests, is not an evil but a good, a good without which no government could perform its God-given duty in a sinful world. But militarism as an attitude of mind which glorifies war as war, i.e., war for war’s sake, or war for national aggrandizement—this is a great evil which no Christian should promote. All glorification of war for its own sake must be branded as unchristian and a direct violation of the apostolic injunction cited above. Against this militaristic spirit the Synod would strongly warn the members of our Churches to be on their guard.

## II.

Recognizing the evils of such militarism on the one hand, Synod would issue a no less serious warning against the evils of present-day pacifism on the other.

The solemn duty which the Christian has to exert himself to the utmost in behalf of peace and the peaceful settlement of conflicts and disputes, should at no time be used to cancel his equally solemn duty to defend his country against the attack of the aggressor, to protect the weak in the international family from the wanton assault of the strong, and in general to promote justice and fair dealings between the nations of the world...

In condemning pacifism Synod desires to be clear and unambiguous. If by pacifism were meant the attitude of those who are prompted by a strong and persistent desire to promote international peace and understanding, every Christian should be a pacifist. But this is a loose and improper use of the term. Pacifism, properly used, stands for the conviction and attitude of those who condemn every war, and hence refuse to bear arms under any conditions. In its most radical form this pacifism not only involves the refusal to bear arms, but even the refusal to take part in any type of work incidental to warfare, such as medical, nursing, or welfare service when such service is occasioned by and required for the prosecution of a war...

Pacifists also often urge that all going to war is incompatible with the gospel of the Prince of Peace. In this connection they are wont to stress love and to ignore justice, both of which are essential in the Christian moral life. In fact, they are inclined to forget that ‘in the face of unjust aggression the law of love may actually urge a demand for forcible resistance...

But this pacifism is fundamentally to be condemned because it is in irreconcilable conflict with the teaching of Scripture and of our Creed or the duty of the government in the matter of war and the corresponding duty of the Christian citizen.

One of the clearest and most explicit passages of Scripture on this subject is Rom. 13:1-5, and our Reformed fathers have formulated their convictions on this subject in Article XXXVI of our Belgic Confession...

### III.

From all this it must be clear that the Christian who consistently refuses to bear arms at the call of his government not only is disloyal to his country, but in so doing fails to discharge his solemn God-given duty to obey his government and to defend his country. The Church should bear witness against this pacifism, point out its unscriptural character, and warn its members against its subtle, religiously garbed propaganda.

But can it be said that the Christian citizen's duty to obey his government in its call to arms is absolute and unconditional?...

As was pointed out above, both Scripture and our Confession place a restriction upon our duty to obey the government. Peter at one time refused to obey the civil authorities and appealed to a higher loyalty to God in doing so. And our Creed restricts the duty of the citizen to the State to 'all things which are not repugnant to the Word of God.' From this it is clear that the Church must not only recognize the right of Christians but even their duty under certain definite circumstances to refuse obedience to the civil magistrate.

But under what kind of circumstances must such a right—or even duty—be recognized?...

Not only must the Church reject the claim of the pacifistic conscientious objector, but there is also another kind of conscientious objector whose claims can not stand the test of Scripture and the Creed. There are those who would refuse to take part in any war when, and as long as, they are not persuaded of the justness of the given war. With the frequent complexity of the causes of modern wars and the difficulty of the average citizen to be adequately informed on this complexity of causes at the time the war breaks out, it is clear that they may be in the predicament in which many a Christian will find himself. But in such a situation he is not justified in refusing to perform military service. He who would maintain this position overlooks the fact that in such a situation the prior duty of each citizen to obey the government must have the right of way. This type of conscientious objector does not face the moral alternative: to fight or to do nothing; but: to fight or to disobey his government. His uncertainty as to the justice of the given war can be no justifiable ground for refusing obedience to his government.

The only conscientious objector to military service whose claim the Church cannot repudiate is he who, recognizing his duty to obey his government and to defend his country in response to its call to arms, has intelligent and adequate grounds to be convinced that the given war to which he is summoned is an unjust war. When he is absolutely certain in the light of the principles of the Word of God that his country is fighting for a wrong cause, he cannot morally justify his participation in the given war. War is killing people and for anyone to engage in such killing of fellowmen when he is convinced in his heart that the cause for which he is fighting is an unjust one, this procedure cannot be justified before the tribunal of God and His Word. The only course open to such a person is to resort to passive resistance and to refuse to bear arms in that given war.

In closing, Synod would urge upon all to pray for righteousness and peace in national and international affairs; to study the revealed Word for an understanding of the will of God for the guidance of the life of citizens and their government; to obey all lawfully constituted authorities for God's sake; and, if a serious conflict of duty should occur, to obey God rather than men."

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## OBJECTIVES FOR TEACHING HISTORY

### A. Cognitive

1. That the covenant child may interpret all of history as centering in Christ (Col. 1:17, Rom. 11:36).
2. That the covenant child may illustrate the way in which the history of the world has served the history of the church and the history of the church has influenced the history of the world (cf. Habakkuk).
3. That the covenant child may understand the biblical principles of God-ordained institutions and may recognize human distortions of these institutions.
4. That the covenant child may learn how the character and behavior of society result from the response of its members to God.
5. That the covenant child may trace the organic development of sin in the world (Rom. 1:18-32).
6. That the covenant child may learn the origin and history of the culture in which he lives and thus understand his antithetical relation to his context (John 17:14-17; I John 4:4-6).
7. That the covenant child, understanding cultural development also in sin, may discern biblical signs of the times before the return of Jesus Christ (Matt. 24; Mark 13).
8. That the covenant child may come to these biblical insights of history through a learning of the important facts of history.

### B. Affective

9. That the covenant child may recognize and reject the futility of humanistic endeavor and may consciously place his hope in the new creation (II Tim. 3:1-7; John 16:32-33; Phil. 3:20; Col. 2:8, 3:1-2).
10. That the covenant child may identify with the historic church by realizing that it has given him a religious heritage through continuous struggle and that he is now engaged in a continuance of this same struggle (I Cor. 1:8-10; Rom. 1:5-6; Heb. 12:1).
11. That the covenant child may make right decisions for his own behavior through an understanding and application of biblical principles to current problems (Col. 3:16-17, 23; Rom. 14:23; I John 4:1; II Tim. 3:1-7).
12. That through his study of history the covenant child may learn to trust God more fully as the God who controls all things to His glory in Jesus Christ (Col. 1:14-20; Rev. 22:13; Hab. 2:4; Eph. 1:17-23; Joel 2:32).

## OBJECTIVES FOR TEACHING GEOGRAPHY

Definition of geography: Geography is the study of any phenomena of distribution and interrelationship on the earth that God created.

Basic approach questions:

1. Where are things?
2. Why are they there?
3. How do they interrelate with their ' environment?

The child should be instructed to understand that:

1. The existence of the earth is the result of the work of God in His six days of creation (Genesis 1, Hebrews 3:11).
2. The earth is the setting prepared by God for man to glorify God or, negatively, to fill his measure of iniquity.
3. Basically little is known about distributions and interrelationships before the flood. However, Genesis 4-6 suggest that a fairly complex civilization existed.
4. The earth after the flood is basically different from the earth as it existed before the flood (II Peter 3:5-6).
5. Physical features do not preclude a particular type of civilization. An outstandingly beautiful example is the provision of God to Israel in Canaan (Judges-II Chronicles).
6. Physical features are sometimes used as a means to deliver or devour a people (I Kings 20:23, 29).
7. God has given resources for man to use to the best of his ability in thanksgiving (II Kings 6:5,6; Genesis 4:22; 1 Timothy 4:4).
8. Man in unfaithfulness pollutes his habitat, thereby stealing and ultimately destroying the resources needed for his earthly existence.
9. Catastrophic phenomena portray the work of God in His judgments against sin and in His preserving His people as a sign of our final deliverance (Exodus 9:28; I Kings 19:11b-19; Acts 16:26-30).
10. The final catastrophic climax of the cosmos is to destroy the wicked and to give His Church everlasting life.
11. Most cultural phenomena exists in hierarchical form. Jerusalem portrays this nationally and religiously, but more than that: God said He would establish His Name; there fore Jerusalem was a unique capital.
12. Urban developments accommodate human agglomerations. (Genesis 4:17; Genesis 10:10-11).
13. God controls the laying of national boundaries. He did this uniquely for Israel in the Old Testament.
14. Cultural phenomenas are sometimes used and referred to as a means of the preaching and spreading of the gospel (Acts 16:26-30).

15. Transportation developments function as socioeconomic threads. They are also importantly used to go to worship and to transport those who are instrumental in preaching and spreading the gospel (Acts 28:14-16).
16. The political age of a country influences the economic affairs therein. This was uniquely true of Israel as portrayed mainly in her spiritual life.
17. All cultures of history still exist in some form and place on the earth today.
18. Technology tends to redistribute.
19. Many factors of change redistribute.
  - a. Rebellion: Jonah 1:3-4; Genesis 11:8
  - b. Captivities: Ten tribes in 722 B.C.  
Two tribes in 586 B.C.
  - c. Persecution
  - d. Utilization of resources
  - e. Depletion of resources
  - f. War

## OBJECTIVES FOR TEACHING CIVICS

Definition: Civics is the study of the function and structure of government and the duties and responsibilities of the citizen to that government.

The covenant child will understand the following:

1. That all authority is ordained of God through Christ.
2. That because all authority is conferred through Christ disobedience to any authority is disobedience to Christ (Cf. I Peter 2:13,14; Romans 13:1,2,4; I Cor. 15:27).
3. That all institutions of government are based upon the family where the father rules through Christ (Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day XXXIX; Col. 3:18,20; Eph. 5:22; 6:1,2; Proverbs 1:8,9; 23:22).
4. That he is commanded to obey Christ in all institutions of government (Cf. Eph. 5:21-6:1; Romans 13:1-8; Col. 3:18-24).
5. That he must exercise his duties as citizen and that in that exercise he must be a living witness of the principles of Christ (Cf. Phil. 2:14, 15).
6. That he be commanded to obey those in authority only so far as their ordinances do not conflict with his faith in Christ; then he must not revolt but must be ready to submit to the resulting punishment (Cf. Romans 13:1; Daniel 3 and 6; I Peter 2:13-16).
7. That the function of government is to praise the good and punish the evil so that the church can live a quiet and peaceful life (Cf. I Peter 2:13,14; I Timothy 2:1,2).

The covenant child will know specifically:

1. The different kinds of government found in the world today.
2. That the American government has developed from European roots, and from the Articles of Confederation.
3. The controversies which resulted during the writing and ratification process of the Constitution.
4. The organization, duties, functions, and powers of the three branches of government – Legislative, Executive, and Judicial.
5. How the system of Checks and Balances affects each branch of the government.
6. How the amendment system and the "Elastic Clause" have made our Constitution an enduring one.
7. The duties, rights, and privileges of citizens of the United States, pertaining to voting, political action, direct lawmaking, etc.
8. The organization of our federal system, with the sharing and delegating of powers between national and state levels.
9. The organization, functions, and powers of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state and local government.

10. The role of the United States government in world affairs.

## OBJECTIVES FOR TEACHING ECONOMICS

Definition: Economics is the study of the production and exchange of goods and services.

The covenant child will understand that:

1. The earth is the Lord's and, therefore, man as a steward is responsible for all his possessions (Cf. Psalm 115:16; Psalm 89:11).
2. Man is obligated to provide for his needs by the sweat of his brow because of the curse (Cf. Gen. 3:19; II Thess. 3:8-12; Prov. 26:30-34).
3. As a steward man is personally responsible for the care of the poor and for the material well-being of the causes of God's kingdom on earth (Cf. Deut. 15:7-11; Eph. 4:28; Matt. 26:11 and James 2:15 and 16).
4. Since the fall sin entered the world and man's greed prevents any economic system from accomplishing its purpose of meeting the needs of all the people or the wants of any of the people (Cf. James 5:1-10; Prov. 1:19 and I Tim. 6:10).
5. There is no divinely ordained economic system but rather more-ethical principles which are normative in every system.
6. God's law (especially the 8<sup>th</sup> commandment) is the norm in all human economic activity (Cf. I Cor. 6:10; Matt. 7:12; I Kings 21 (Naboth's vineyard, "remove not the ancient landmark")).
7. Employer-employee relation is ordained by God and requires the employee to be obedient and the employer to rule justly.

The covenant child will know more specifically that:

1. The free enterprise system operates on the basis of individual freedom and initiative.
2. There are alternate systems to the free economy which attempt to provide methods for controlling production and distribution of goods: Manorialism, mercantilism, fascism, socialism, communism.
3. Nothing in our material world is produced from nowhere, nor can it be free: everything in economic life has a source, a destination, and a cost that must be paid.
4. Price is determined by the law of supply and demand.
5. Government is never the source of goods but that everything is produced by the people; so that everything government gives to the people it takes from the people first.
6. The only valuable money that government has is that which is taxed or borrowed out of the people's earnings, and that deficit spending results in a decreasing value of money.

7. Because wages are the principal cost of everything, widespread wage increases, without corresponding increases in production, simply increase the costs of everybody's living.

## A RECOMMENDED SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAM

The members of the Protestant Reformed Workshop in Social Studies considered at length the problems of the social studies program in our schools and after much discussion recommends the following program as being best suited to the goals of our schools.

Grade	Material	Comments
Kindergarten through Grade Three	Basic concepts of social studies taught through major units dealing with various cultures and times.	The teacher should consult the discussion of units in the N.U.S.S. Social Studies Research Unit #4.
Four	Study of the pupils' own state.	The study of history should be introduced in four and five by biographical readings.
Five	Western Hemisphere	
Six	Eastern Hemisphere (Systematic of economic geography)	
Seven	United States history (through the Civil War)	
Eight	Ancient and Medieval history	
Nine	Modern nations (Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America) Christian stewardship (especially civics and economics)	
<b>High School</b>		
Eleven	* United States History (two semesters)	* Indicates required course
Eleven or Twelve	World Geography (one semester)	
Twelve	* Modern History (two semesters)	
	* Government (one semester)	
	Economics	
	Readings in History (one semester)	

## COMMENTS ON THE RECOMMENDED PROGRAM

For those of you who might have raised your eyebrows a little at the term "social studies" we recognize that the term is usually used to designate a single study which centers about the social functions of man. Except for the lower grades, where the material treated could be called social studies with some accuracy, we teach history, geography, government, and economics as separate disciplines in grades four through twelve. We have nevertheless retained the label for convenience.

You will notice first that what the members of the workshop recommend for kindergarten through the third grade involves little or no change from what is now being done. There were several reasons for this: First, the method of teaching primary children the basic concepts of social studies by a variety of selected units is recommended by the authorities. Second; as teachers of junior high and high school the workshop members did not feel qualified to recommend changes. Third, the teaching of social studies in those grades is relatively less important than the teaching of reading and mathematical skills and can be used to develop at least reading skills when taught under a looser structure.

There are few changes recommended for grades four and five for some of the same reasons mentioned above. The current program up to this point appears to be a good one. By studying his own state the student is introduced to the more formal study of geography and history built on a background of his own observation and experience. The global overview in fourth grade will whet his normal curiosity about distant lands and people. Although we do not recommend a change in the material taught in fifth grade geography, we recommend a different approach based on the methods used by Miss Hoekstra who describes her methods in another paper. Since fourth and fifth grade students are great lovers of biography, we feel that these students can best be introduced to history by biographical readings.

If you observe our program from sixth grade through high school, you will notice that the student will encounter a study of world history and a study of United States history twice in his passage through these grades. In the program that is currently followed in our schools all students study United States history on three different occasions and world history twice in grade school and, for some, a third time in high school.

There were two major objections to the current program: One is that the teacher must move so rapidly to cover the necessary material in one year that he cannot provide the "depth" of study that will increase both understanding and appreciation. In theory, of course, the second and third exposure to the subject should provide the greater depth. In practice this does not appear to work, and this leads to the other objection. Some students gain a reasonable mastery of the subject on the first exposure to it. Since other students have not gained this mastery, much repetition is necessary the second and even the third time the course is taught. This seems to be a very inefficient way to teach and results in boredom for those that mastered the material the first time.

We believe that our program will do much to overcome these problems by giving the teacher time to travel through history at a more leisurely pace. He will then have time to provide background material which helps so much to make history "live" and he will have time to engage the students in special projects that help to stimulate interest and strengthen understanding.

In our present program a course in government is taught in the eighth or the ninth grade. We would like to see the contents of that course included in a broader course that we would call "Christian Stewardship". It is important that our children understand our economic system as well as our political system so that they will be able to function as Christians in it. It is equally important that they learn value judgments for their use of the material goods that God entrusts to them. Since not all students can take the high school course in economics, these concepts should be taught to everyone in the junior high school.

We have included a course in world geography in the high school program because we believe that geography is becoming increasingly important in the modern world and has been sadly neglected in the past. One semester of world geography ought to be the minimum offered in our high school.

The course called "Readings in History" is recommended for the history major\*. This course should encompass a wide range of materials including the important documents of history, the viewpoints of various historians, and other writings that will greatly enrich the knowledge of the student of history.

Mr. Oosterman of the National Union of Christian Schools, whom we consulted in preparing our recommended program, emphasized repeatedly the point that whatever program we adopted must be designed to fit our particular objectives as Protestant Reformed Christian Schools. We did not agree with all of Mr. Oosterman's observations, but we agree entirely with that point. We have tried to devise a program that will carry out the objectives of our schools. We hope that you will agree at least enough to try the program we recommend.