

## *Law and Society (I)*

By Andrew McColl, 19/6/2012

*At the Council of Trent, in their Canons on Justification, the Roman Catholic church declared: CANON XXI.-“If any one saith, that Christ Jesus was given of God to men, as a redeemer in whom to trust, and not also as a legislator whom to obey; let him be anathema.”*

Right from the Garden of Eden, mankind’s greatest problem has been his sin. The devil’s promise then, was that “you shall be as God, knowing good and evil” (Gen.3:5), and so sin has been endemic to our race.

Sin doesn’t have to be spectacular. If I read the Bible and decide unilaterally that I don’t wish to obey a certain command, only God knows about it. But it’s still sin, and will have its consequences at some point.

There are of course, different manifestations to man’s sinfulness. Societies that turn away from God will quickly manifest sinfulness in the laws they enact, for an ungodly people will not long tolerate godly law. If the people and their legislators are hostile to God, they will be saying, “We do not want this man to reign over us” (Luke 19:14), and they know exactly Who they are referring to.

This should serve as a warning to us. An ungodly culture is not going to suddenly turn around and embrace Biblical law. We can explain till we are blue in the face how much better it will be, and how much more liberty there will be, and how much less tax there will be under Biblical law, but it will make little difference.

Why? Because apart from the intervention of God, people want to cleave to their sinful practices. They may know instinctively that it’s wrong, and that they will suffer in the long run, but that doesn’t convince them to change; only God can do that by His grace, through the Gospel.

But before we get to that, there is an even more important thing that needs to happen. The Church, which the Bible says is to be “...the pillar and support of the truth” (I Tim.3:15), has to come to terms with the fact Jesus Christ is our legislator.

“Legislator? You mean we have to actually OBEY all that Jesus commanded?” Yes, that is correct. You see, it is easy to accept God’s promises to His people, but all His promises are conditional on our obedience. He did say “you are My friends *if* you do what I command you” (Jn.15:14).

Think of the time when God spoke to Solomon. “...If you will walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you and will keep My statutes and My ordinances, then I will establish the throne of your kingdom Israel forever...” (I Kings 9:4-5).

When God spoke to Israel through Isaiah, He promised that “if you will consent and obey, you will eat the best of the land” (Isa. 1:19).

Thus it is futile to think about having all that God has promised, without our consistent obedience to His Word. That means the Ten Commandments (which themselves are only a summary of God’s law) should be a part of the spiritual diet of every believer.

Jesus made it abundantly clear: “do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfil. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished” (Mat. 5:18-19).

I know that 95% of the Church would tell me to get lost. “Don’t give me that stuff about God’s law. I don’t want to know about it. We’re under grace, don’t you know?”

And that’s why God’s people are uncertain, confused and divided about what has to happen in the nations of the world. Our subsequent ineffectiveness can be traced to this very issue.

What happened to Solomon? The Bible clearly says that he turned from the Lord to idolatry. As a result, God appeared to him telling him He would strip parts of the kingdom from his son (I Kings 11:1-13).

What’s happened to us? God hasn’t given the nations of the world into the hands of the Church. We’re the ones trodden underfoot. We’re the ones who can rarely win a trick, and it is our fault.

Our great need? Obedience to Jesus Christ, the great legislator.

## *Law and Society (II)*

By Andrew McColl, 26/6/2012

*Without justice, what are kingdoms but great robber bands? What are robber bands but small kingdoms? The band is itself made up of men, is ruled by the command of a leader, and is held together by a social pact. Plunder is divided in accordance with an agreed upon law. If this evil increases by the inclusion of dissolute men to the extent that it takes over territory, establishes headquarters, occupies cities, and subdues peoples, it publicly assumes the title of kingdom! Augustine, "The City of God," circa. 400 A.D.*

In 2012 as a member of the Liberal-National Party, I went to a meeting in Brisbane. We had a meal at a Chinese restaurant, with about 35 members present. Federal and State Parliamentarians (if they are available) generally bring a report.

At my table was a barrister, who had an interesting story to tell. He claimed that his parents owned a good sized property (over a hundred acres), not far from the city of Brisbane, which they planned to leave to their children.

Some years ago he claimed, a decision was made in the Labor State government, that a portion of the land (many acres) would be confiscated from the family for some sort of environmental purpose. Was this spelled out? No. Was there compensation? No.

Is the family upset about what it perceives as a great injustice? It most certainly is. Does it have any recourse? Not at the moment, and this man is a barrister.

But there's more. During the conversation, the barrister alleged that there was no real "environmental purpose" at all. It was really a deal between the Labor Party and the Greens to ensure Greens' support at a forthcoming State election; it would make the Greens look as though they were *caring for the environment*.

Now, I don't know if this was all true or not, but it certainly is worth someone investigating. Would it surprise me? Not really. Why? Because this is what frequently happens when the people in power are God haters. "Ethics" becomes what they want them to be, because they are intent on consolidating power. And when power is the overall goal, Biblical ethics (if it was ever around) quickly gets tossed out the window.

Now, there's nothing new about the improper confiscation of property by government for evil purposes. Ahab and Jezebel showed themselves to be quite competent at it, around 800 BC (see I Kings 21). But as I pointed out to this fellow (and he already knew), the protection of people's property rights from executive abuse is what led to the Biblically based Magna Carta in 1215.

The lesson?

You remove Biblical ethics from a society's law and government, and that society will go into a steep decline. Whose fault is this? Is it the wicked sinners in Parliament? Partially.

But I'll tell you where most of this fault lies. In the Church, which has failed to forcefully advocate the adoption of Biblical ethics, because the Church doesn't believe in these ethics itself. And now, society (including the Church) is suffering oppression.

The solution? "To the law and the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn" (Isa.8:20).

Could this be anything other than Biblical law?

## *Law and Society (III)*

By Andrew McColl, 3/7/2012

*The foundations of all law are in essence religious and theological: they are questions of ultimacy and moral necessity. Law without faith is an impossibility. Every law order is a moral and a theological order, a structuring of society in terms of a fundamental faith.<sup>1</sup>*

Man without God deeply resents the idea of his dependence on God. “Don’t give me any of that God stuff!” But his problem won’t go away. He is a creature of God’s making, and the only way he can truly understand himself is when he accepts the theological and therefore practical fact that he is made in the image of God, and dependent on God.

Furthermore, man is always and at all times a religious person. When he ignores this fact and tries to be “Mr Independence,” his religious nature manifests in humanism. His faith in God is thus transferred to a faith in man-himself or other people.

Humanistic man’s relationship to law is similar. Of course he rejects the idea of Biblical law, so he come forth with a substitute: humanistic law. But humanistic law is one that quickly moves towards tyranny; it always has. Why? Because it lacks the Biblical absolutes that alone can guarantee freedom, which Jesus spoke of in John 8:31-32. The way to determine the origin of a law is to determine who we’re supposed to have faith in for its operation. And if a law is Christian, you’ll be able to find it in the Bible.

So we have to resolve two questions. Which law, and which faith? The future of any society revolves around the successful resolution of these two questions.

*Culture follows from, arises from, and is dependent upon faith. Spiritual loyalty to God, in faith, must precede and be the ground of all cultural change. It not only must be, it inevitably will be. The gospel has inevitable consequences, and so does Baalism.<sup>2</sup>*

What has the West done historically? It has been heavily influenced by Christian law, because of the West’s Christian faith. This faith has had a significant impact in terms of the development of the West. Since 1660, this faith has been progressively undermined by humanism, whilst there has been a healthy residue in the West’s common law tradition. This too is being undermined, right under the nose of the Church.

This means that Christians individually must be the advocates of change. It means that we must know what we believe, and why. It means that we cannot be passive in the face of continued cultural and national decline, but must be prepared to speak out boldly and confidently on the matters of the day, from a sound Christian and Biblical base.

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<sup>1</sup> Rousas Rushdoony, “Roots of Reconstruction,” 1991, p.893-4.

<sup>2</sup> James Jordan, “Judges: God’s War on Humanism,” 1985, p.59.

This will not happen successfully, without a quantum change of attitude, and a good deal of education in what really constitutes a Biblical world view, so that a remnant is prepared to fight. And so what's also required is time, patience and resilience in the face of a continued humanistic assaults on society and the Church; we cannot fight something with nothing. David had his band in the cave of Adullam (I Sam.22:1-2). Furthermore, the real solution is far more than something merely political. It must have its foundations in the grass roots of the community, if change is to be effective.

But we must approach this issue with faith in God. Do our present circumstances have any historical precedents? Of course, especially in the history of the children of Israel, which had a great number of setbacks and defeats, all marked by a turning from God, and His subsequent judgment.

And what brought about the necessary changes? A remnant of people who were prepared to both serve God faithfully, and also to serve as spokesmen and leaven in the community, leading the way in instigating change.

Sometime, some unlikely looking person (or people) with only five stones and a sling, will have to step out in front of a well armed humanistic giant, bring him down, and cut his head off.

Would you like to be part of a team that does this? Today, begin the process of filling your heart and mind with a Biblical world view, and prepare to receive your Captain's marching orders.

They might come sooner than you think.

## *Law and Society (IV)*

By Andrew McColl, 10/7/2012

*Where men insist on their natural privileges, powers and rights before God, they will soon feel free to go their own way without God: they are confident in their own power and ability. The language of law will then shift from God's law to human rights, and justice begins to fade. The term human rights has no definition: it means what the speaker wants it to mean...homosexuality, abortion, child molestation, the sexual revolution, drugs, and more are all defended in terms of 'human rights.' Men and the state define human rights, and it can mean anything.<sup>3</sup>*

Christians should never be ashamed or even embarrassed at what they find in the Bible. They should especially not be embarrassed at what they find in God's law, and the number of offences that could result in capital punishment. Apparently these punishments are so offensive to many people today.

I have a message for these people, supposedly so morally offended. How would you like to have lived in the Soviet Union, or under Mao in China, or Hitler in Nazi occupied Europe, or the killing fields of Cambodia? In these four places alone, over a hundred million people suffered and died, under arbitrary, despotic, tyrannical and *humanistic* government, where there was no due process of law, no insistence on witnesses to verify criminal behaviour, no opportunity to appeal to a higher authority, and no protection for the innocent and the weak against predatory people.<sup>4</sup> What was there? A desire to kill.

Now there would be some that might say, "Well, that was those countries. It's not like that now in the West." My response is, "Oh, really? Try being a child in the womb in any nation in the West today. Your chances of making it out of the womb alive, before having your head crushed, or being cut into small pieces, or burnt to death in a saline solution injected into the womb of a murdering mother by a murderous abortionist, are about 80-90%. And that murderous act is sanctioned in Australia at both State and Federal level, and paid for by Medicare."

The murderous regimes of the last century have been followed up by murderous regimes of this one. Would you have really wanted to be an unarmed woman or child in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, or Libya, when the US or NATO decided in their great wisdom to drop bombs or send in missiles? How brave.

*Obama is drone-attacking Pakistan. He's expanded this war greatly. One or 2 million Pakistani refugees have had to leave the Swat Valley. It's one of the greatest refugee crises since Rwanda. Obama's bombed Yemen; he's bombed Somalia; he even threatened Eritrea, this tiny little country near Ethiopia, with invasion.<sup>5</sup>*

*Thousands of suspected "militants" and civilians have been executed in drone strikes so far. At least 168 children were killed by such attacks just in Pakistan over a seven*

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<sup>3</sup> Rousas Rushdoony, "Romans and Galatians," 1999, p.182.

<sup>4</sup> See R. J. Rummel. "Death by Government," 1994.

<sup>5</sup> Anthony Gregory, "On War, Obama has Been Worse than Bush," Rockwell website, 26/8/2011.

year period, according to [a study](#) released last month by the London-based Bureau of Investigative Journalism. The real figure is probably even higher.

*But few of the targeted suspects, if any, were formally charged with committing a crime before being blown apart – often with their entire families. Even fewer had been convicted in a court of law.*<sup>6</sup>

*The US government has made war on Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya, resulting in massive destruction of homes, infrastructure, and lives of civilians, all in the name of one lie or the other. In addition, the US government is conducting military operations against the populations of three more Muslim countries – Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia, with extensive loss of civilian life in Pakistan, a US ally. Drones are sent in week after week that blow up schools, medical centers, and farm communities, and each time Washington announces that they have killed "militants," "al Qaeda," "Taliban leaders."*<sup>7</sup>

Imran Khan acknowledged (15/11/2011) on the ABC's 7:30 that 35,000 Pakistanis had died in the U.S. War on Terror.

The U.S. term to describe the percentage of civilian casualties that would result from a bombing raid? *Bugsplat*.<sup>8</sup>

The 2007 US helicopter gunship attack in Baghdad, shooting 18 peaceable, unarmed, innocent civilians in broad daylight using a .50 cal. machine-gun. What was this? Not "collateral damage," or "unintended consequences of war:" it was *State sanctioned murder*. Bradley Manning, the officer who correctly reported this atrocity is now... in goal.

We don't have a lot to brag about today in the West, but we do have a lot to repent of. And that repentance has to begin right where you and I are sitting, today.

The problem? Humanism. It always brings death and disaster. How do we know this? Because the Bible warns us of it: "...he that sins against me injures himself; all those that hate me love death" (Prov.8:36).

You're not sure about God's law? His law ALWAYS required the testimony of multiple witnesses before conviction for a capital crime. Furthermore, false witnesses to crime would receive the punishment they were seeking to bring on a defendant, which could be death. His law protects children in the womb, and people from the abuse of power. His law protects people's property rights, and under a truly godly government, tax rates would always be under 10%.

His law appeals to me for its justice and protection for the innocent. It appeals to me because no government bureaucrat or thug could manipulate the economy through inflation, a Reserve Bank or fractional reserve banking, take away my property or my wife and children, send my sons to fight in foolish and evil foreign wars, stop me educating my children how I wish to, take away my

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<sup>6</sup> CIA has Become "One Hell of a Killing Machine," Official Says. Alex Newman, Lew Rockwell website, 6/9/2011.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Craig Roberts, "Stuck Pigs and Pressitutes Squeal," Lew Rockwell website, 16/9/2011.

<sup>8</sup> William Grigg, "Imperial Priorities: Obedience First, Character Last," Rockwell website, 19/7/2011.

opportunities to protest, to publish, or go to a public meeting, move around the country or travel internationally, or own a firearm for whatever purpose I want.

When Christians and the Church come to realise the relevance of God's law for all societies at all times, and that God commands us to implement and obey His law in all places, we'll really have a contribution to make to the community.

Till then...



# *Law and Society (V)*

By Andrew McColl, 17/7/2012

*Laws grounded on the Bible do not attempt to save man or to usher in a brave new world, a great society, world peace, a poverty-free world, or any other such idea. The purpose of Biblical law, and all law grounded on a Biblical faith, is to punish and restrain evil, and to protect life and property, to provide justice for all people. It is not the purpose of the state and its law to change or reform men: this is a spiritual matter and a task for religion. Man can be changed only by the grace of God through the ministry of the word...*

*Humanistic law has a different purpose. Humanistic law aims at saving men and remaking society. For humanism, salvation is an act of state. It is civil government which regenerates man and society and brings man into a paradise on earth...*

*Only when we return to a Biblical foundation for law shall we again have a return to justice and order under law. 'Unless the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain that build it.'*<sup>9</sup>

When ungodly men in government try to remake society, look out society. They want to change everything around us. Denying original sin which they consider just a myth, they believe that man is basically good. So, nothing that they do could ever be evil, and every remembrance of Biblical Christianity in the community has to be removed because, after all, it's just a hindrance, isn't it? Then, its full steam ahead for change, and yes, "We can do it!"

This has been the attitude of the revolutionaries, ever since the French Revolution. It continues today (but in more camouflaged forms), in the socialist politics of the left. And it must be said that conservative parties are influenced by this too.

But laws cannot save man; they only affect us externally. Only God can ever save us, in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Not only can God save us, He has the only true prescription for the construction of a free society, based on His law. Every other form of law quickly shows itself to be abusive, or tyrannical.

Is Biblical law ever enough? No, for that would infer that salvation by law is possible. But even Biblical law cannot save us from our sins. Why should we expect man's law to do so? Without the grace of God in a community, there is no salvation. That's why God's law AND His grace are the essential components of a free and healthy community.

This illustrates something else. In a godly society, there will be a healthy interaction between preachers of God's Word, and the lawmakers. Why? Because they both get their marching orders from the one true God, in His book, the Bible. The Church and civil government are to be interdependent institutions, working in harmony with the other essential social institution, the family, to carry out God's purpose.

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<sup>9</sup> Rousas Rushdoony, "Law and Liberty," 1984, p.5-7.

So, there must be an awareness of roles, and a willingness to stay inside the God appointed spheres of life. These spheres are identified in the Bible for our understanding and benefit. In fact, the Bible gives us clear examples of how men have sometimes got themselves into hot water (or worse, been killed) when they failed to observe the God defined spheres of institutional responsibility.

Now, some would probably be saying, "Is it really as simple as that?" Well, it is. When Christians, the Church and the community at large begin to understand the Biblically defines spheres of responsibility, and the majority of the community is willing to submit to God, observing His will, the potential for the community (wherever it may be in the world), is remarkable.

And this is the outcome He wants us to work towards, for "blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord..." (Ps.33:12).

## *Law and Society (VI)*

By Andrew McColl, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2012

*The Israelites had experienced firsthand [in Egypt] the institutional effects of a social order governed by a law-order different from the Bible's. They had been enslaved. The God who had released them from bondage announced at Sinai His standards of righteousness - not just private righteousness but social and institutional righteousness. Thus, the God of liberation is simultaneously the law-giver. The close association of Biblical law and human freedom is grounded in the very character of God.*<sup>10</sup>

The Reformation had a significant impact in Europe. Where the gospel was preached and received, all manner of changes took place, over time. Many of those changes are still evident today, even though it is almost five hundred years since the Reformation began.

The whole rise of Western Civilisation-science and technology, medicine, the arts, constitutionalism, the jury system, free enterprise, literacy, increasing productivity, a rising standard of living, the high status of women-is attributable to one major fact: *the West has been transformed by Christianity.*<sup>11</sup>

It was Northern Europe and then North America that was most impacted by the Reformation and in Europe, especially Germany, Switzerland, England and Scotland. Southern Europe was not impacted nearly as much, in particular Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece.

Is there any relationship between this historical fact, and the economic problems that are now besetting Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain? I believe so. The so-called "PIGS," are in their predicament, for a reason. Of course it's economic, but it's also spiritual. This is what God warned His people about in Deuteronomy 28, if they would not obey Him: "He [the alien] shall lend to you, but you will not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you will be the tail" (Deut.28:44).

What does this really mean? The gospel brings liberty, and it is liberty of every possible kind. The promise of God to His people was that "...all the peoples of the earth will see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they will be afraid of you" (Deut.28:10).

There is no liberty apart from law, and no liberty apart from God's law. The Psalmist proclaimed, "... I will walk at liberty, for I seek Your precepts" (Ps.119:45). But when evil men reject the law of God, saying of the members of the Godhead, "let us tear their fetters apart and cast away their cords from us" (Ps.2:3), they think in their folly that they will be free, but they will not. They may make great promises of freedom, "...while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved" (II Pet.2:19).

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<sup>10</sup> Gary North, "The Sinai Strategy," 1986, p.19

<sup>11</sup> David Chilton, "Paradise Restored," 1994, p.7.

This should embolden us. If we really want to enjoy the privileges of living in a free country, the first document we should turn to isn't the Constitution of the nation we're part of, but the real constitution of liberty, the Bible. This is what the children of Israel failed to do after they received the law on Sinai (to their great loss), and this is what nations of the world have been increasingly unwilling to do for over a hundred years, and it has gotten us in to all sorts of strife; think of the PIGS.

*The Christian capital of the West is rapidly disappearing. Unless it is replenished, the West has no future and has nothing to give the nations other than death.*<sup>12</sup>

Conclusion:

If the Church and Christians in general are serious about the future of the nations, we have only two options to choose from, and there is nothing new about them; they go back to Joshua's era. Either we act with clarity and confidence, pursuing a series of Biblical outcomes for our nation, or ultimately see it swallowed up in the judgments of the Lord on His people for their refusal to obey Him.

*Our yesterdays led to our todays. Only the suicidal can afford non-involvement in the great task of a new foundation for civilization. The foundation must not be institutional; it cannot be either church or state without unhappy consequences. It must be theological, and it must be Christian.*<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Rousas Rushdoony, "In His Service," 2009, p.12.

<sup>13</sup> Rousas Rushdoony, "The Roots of Reconstruction," 1991, p.478.

## *Law and Society (VII)*

By Andrew McColl, 31/7/2012

*The fact is that all law is 'religious.' All law is based on some ultimate standard of morality and ethics. Every law system is founded on the ultimate value of that system, and that ultimate value is the god of that system. The source of law for a society is the god of that society. This means that a theocracy is inescapable. All societies are theocracies. The difference is that a society that is not explicitly Christian is a theocracy of a false god.<sup>14</sup>*

A great scandal has taken place in the Church, over the last four hundred years. What's this been? The abandonment in the belief that God wanted His law to be used in every society of the world.

How do we know this is true? God has never given us another option to the use of His law. All of the other substitutes men have come up with, or of humanist origin. As such, they are hostile to God, to people, and to liberty. Furthermore, the more men have rejected God and His law, the more their societies have degenerated into bondage and tyranny. The totalitarian nations of the twentieth century were good examples of this.

This has been a very serious business. Worse than that, it has been lamentable for us. The Church has been in a state of decline, and as a consequence, our societies have been in a state of decline. We sow and reap, and every generation our circumstances deteriorate.

There is no easy solution to this problem. The Church and Christians in general, must acknowledge that this has been sin on our part, and we need to repent of our disobedience to God.

Now I can imagine some are saying at this point, "Wait a minute Andrew. You have missed something here, very important. The Bible tells us that '...you are not under law but under grace'" (Ro.6:14).

Yes, it does tell us that. But what also must be noted is that the presence of God's grace, doesn't mean that God's law is now inoperable for individuals, or for society. God gives His people His grace through Jesus Christ, so that we can meet His holy standards. Those standards do not pass away; they are forever. The Bible tells us that, "Forever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in heaven" (Ps.119:89). The grace of God through Jesus Christ, doesn't mean we can take the law of God and throw it in the bin.

Moses said to the children of Israel, "For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the Lord our God whenever we call on Him? Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today?" (Deut.4:7-8)

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<sup>14</sup> David Chilton, "Paradise Restored," 1985, p.219.

Bahnsen wrote in relation to our Lord, that

*He directed His followers to do those things which conformed to the law's demand (Mat.7:12), told the rich young ruler to keep the commandments (19:17), reinforced the Old Commandment law by summarizing it into two love commandments (22:40), indicted the Pharisees for making commandments void through traditions of men (Mk.7:6-13), and insisted that even the most trite or insignificant matters of the law ought not to be left undone (Luke 11:12).<sup>15</sup>*

God's command for His law to be obeyed throughout the whole earth (which was the basis of the Great Commission), is going to require change, beginning with God's people. We are the ones who are supposed to be bringing salt and light into the community, so we must be the first to return to the law of the Lord, with all our hearts.

Are you ready?

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<sup>15</sup> Greg Bahnsen, "By This Standard," 1991, p.57.

## *Law and Society (VIII)*

By Andrew McColl, 7/8/2012

*At the present time, the existence of law is being denied. Men no longer believe that there is such a thing as a law of God; and naturally they do not believe that there is such a thing as sin. Thoughtful men, who are not Christians, are aware of the problem that this stupendous change in human thinking presents to the modern world. Now that men no longer believe that there is a law of God, now that men no longer believe in obligatory morality, now that the moral law has been abandoned, what is to be put in its place, in order that an ordinarily decent human life may be preserved upon the earth?*

*It cannot be said that the answers proposed for that question are as satisfactory as the way in which the question itself is put. It is impossible to keep back the raging seas of human passion with the flimsy mud embankments of an appeal either to self interest, or to what Walter Lippmann calls "disinterestedness." Those raging seas can only be checked by the solid masonry of the law of God...<sup>16</sup>*

Nature always abhors a vacuum. When the Church decided that the law of God was unnecessary, and that we could get along well enough with the law of man whatever the form, the world didn't stay warm and cosy. The degeneration set in straight away.

One of the outcomes was the outrageous political doctrine of the divine right of kings. England fought a civil war over this in the 1600's. What did Charles I believe? Well, it was essentially like this: "God made me king. Now do it my way, or else!"

Now, that was a convenient political doctrine, wasn't it? Forget the Bible (which has clear restraints on rulers, see Deut.17:14-20), or the constitution, or the Parliament, or democracy. If a king or some other political ruler has absolute authority, then there are no absolutes to restrain him from doing as he will. And anybody who opposes this ruler, must be a rebel!

The seventeenth century's absolute rulers were soon followed up by the even more absolute rulers of the French Revolution, and of the twentieth century. The lesson? You get rid of the law of God from the education of children, from the minds of people and from government, and you gain a new form of absolutes, centred in the State. It was Mussolini who claimed that so far as he was concerned, "Might is Right," and as he soon plainly stated, in "Fascism: Doctrines and Institutions:"

*The fascist conception of life stresses the importance of the State and accepts the individual only in so far as his interests coincide with the State.<sup>17</sup>*

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<sup>16</sup>Gresham Machan, "The Importance of Christian Scholarship," (1932), p.41-42, and "Reforming the Christian Schools," (1925), p.62-63). Quoted in "Theonomy, an Informed Response," 1991, p.90-91.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in Di Lorenzo, T., "Fascialism: The New American System," Lew Rockwell website, 11/6/09.

Mussolini's doctrine was a new form of the divine right idea, adapted for the twentieth century. It led to police brutality, concentration camps, gas-chambers, genocide, the deliberate bombing of cities of innocent civilians, along with many other forms of abuse that were legitimised in the twentieth century. What does this show?

*The more power a government has, the more it can act arbitrarily according to the whims and desires of the elite, the more it will make war on others and murder its foreign and domestic subjects. The more constrained the power of governments, the more it is diffused, checked and balanced, the less it will aggress on others and commit democide. At the extremes of Power, totalitarian communist governments slaughter their people by the tens of millions, while many democracies can barely bring themselves to execute even serial murderers.<sup>18</sup>*

These are the facts of life. It is no pleasure to speak of what men will do to men, when the knowledge and law of God are removed from their hearts. But we must recognise that there are consequences for all of our actions. And when the church in utter (or wilful) ignorance decided that the law of God was obsolete for the modern world, it didn't take long for the world to come up with its brutal substitute: "all those who hate me [God] love death" (Prov.8:36).

Conclusion:

The Lordship of Jesus Christ in a society is not merely some kind of spiritual ideal. It means real-life, practical changes to individuals, families, churches and other institutions, including government. It means decentralisation, and the restraint of power.

If "the government will rest on His shoulders" (Isa.9:6), and we are to be "the light of the world" (Mat.5:14), Christians have a lot of work to do to bring reform. It begins with us.

*The mark of a community's commitment to liberty is its commitment to Biblical law. God's law must be enforced.<sup>19</sup>*

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<sup>18</sup> R. J. Rummel, "Death by Government," 1994.

<sup>19</sup> Gary North, "Inheritance and Dominion," 1999, ch.4.



## *Law and Society (IX)*

By Andrew McColl, 14/8/2012

*Mosaic civil law did not compel anyone to offer positive sanctions. Rather, it imposed negative sanctions for evil acts. It should be the ideal for every system of civil law to remove all positive sanctions by the State and impose only those negative sanctions authorized by Biblical law. The State is to impose negative sanctions only: punishing public evil. It is not a wealth-creator... It is not safe to entrust to the State the power of making one man rich at the expense of another. It is also not moral.<sup>20</sup>*

Anyone who has followed this series through from the beginning, may well be saying by now, “All right Andrew. Let’s see the evidence that we should be utilising Biblical law today.”

God clearly indicated to the children of Israel, that blessing or cursing awaited them, depending on their obedience to His law. This was the message of Deuteronomy 28. And it is not as though they were not repeatedly warned. The prophets sent by God had repeatedly made it plain to Israel what would be the consequences of their disobedience. Isaiah had warned,

“Therefore, as a tongue of fire consumes stubble and dry grass collapses into the flame, so their root will become like rot and their blossom blow away as dust; for they have rejected the law of the Lord of hosts and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel” (Isa.5:24).

Later, Isaiah added, “who gave Jacob up for spoil, and Israel to plunderers? Was it not the Lord, against whom we have sinned, and in whose ways they were not willing to walk, and whose law they did not obey” (42:24). And then he added, “if only you had paid attention to My commandments! Then your well-being would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea” (48:18).

Jeremiah added to this list of prophesied woes: “Who is the wise man that may understand this? And who is he to whom the mouth of the Lord has spoken, that he may declare it? Why is the land ruined, laid waste like a desert, so that no one passes through? The Lord said, ‘Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them, and have not obeyed My voice nor walked according to it, but have walked after the stubbornness of their heart and after the Baals, as their fathers taught them’ ” (Jer.9:12-14).

Amos adds, “Thus says the Lord, ‘For three transgressions of Judah and for four I will not revoke its punishment, because they rejected the law of the Lord and have not kept His statutes; their lies also have led them astray, those after which their fathers walked’”(Amos 2:4).

Thus since the time that Moses wrote Deuteronomy (around 1,500 BC), Israel had endured numerous defeats in battle, then dispossession from their land and captivity under the Babylonians, were subject to subjugation under the Romans in Jesus’ day, and history tells us

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<sup>20</sup> North, ch.54.

that in AD 70, they were all either killed or enslaved by the Romans, and Jerusalem was burnt.<sup>21</sup> They rejected the warnings of their final and greatest prophet, Jesus Christ (see Mat.21:33-46; 22:1-7), before murdering Him, and thus as a nation they met up with the ultimate consequences of disobedience to His law.

I can almost hear someone saying, “Well that was true then. But this is the New Testament era. Now, it’s all different.” Well, here’s my test.

Take me to the New Testament scripture that clearly shows that all of the Old Testament law is invalid today. I don’t believe it’s possible to find one. And for the person who quotes Romans 6:14 (“...you are not under law but under grace”), I say, “you haven’t solved the problem. We are not under the law as a means of salvation, and in that context, no one ever has been. God has always dealt with His people on the basis of His grace, because we are all sinners that need grace.”

The fact is, the scripture never legitimises the abandonment of God’s law, for humanistic law. Such a thought would be abhorrent to God. And for those who then say, “Well, what about natural law?” I respond that natural law is Greek in origin: pure humanism.

Bahnsen’s comments are helpful in this regard:

*Anyone whose attitude toward the Old Testament law is informed by the teaching and practice of the New Testament must maintain the law’s full and continuing validity today. Those who, in the name of a distinctive “New Testament ethic,” downgrade or ignore the Old Testament law are sternly warned by the apostle John: “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him (I Jn.2:4).”<sup>22</sup>*

The Church has been learning the bad habits from its enemies for two thousand years, and this must stop. God warned His people not to do this (see Deut.12:29-32). Instead of us learning from them, it is time that we believed what the scripture clearly teaches about God’s law, and began teaching the nations just what it means to obey God. In fact, God Himself promised that His law would be a powerful evangelistic tool (Deut.4:5-8) to the nations.

Now is the time for us to turn to the Lord and acknowledge that we have fallen short of His glorious plan, to repent of our sin and ask Him to forgive us. Then we can take out the Bible, including the law of God, and begin the process of applying it to ourselves, our families, our churches, our communities and our nations. And at some point we may begin to understand more what the Bible means when it says “blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord” (Ps.33:12).

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<sup>21</sup> This was recorded by the Jewish historian, Josephus.

<sup>22</sup> Greg Bahnsen, “By This Standard,” 1991, p.92.

# *Law and Society (X)*

By Andrew McColl, 28/8/2012

*The Judeo-Christian and constitutionally mandated relationship between government power and individual liberty is not balance. It is bias – a bias in favour of liberty. All presumptions should favour the natural rights of individuals, not the delegated and seized powers of the government. Individual liberty, not government power, is the default position because persons are immortal and created in God's image, and governments are temporary and based on force.*<sup>23</sup>

One of the biggest drawbacks with State based education, is that the State gets to determine what children will study. And if the State determines it isn't a good idea that children should understand too much about the origins of liberty, well that will be the end of that!

I mean, we wouldn't want too much discussion about that now, would we? There might be some well informed children, who actually know the limits of government, according to the Bible! They could develop a following-what a thought! These children might ultimately attain positions of power and influence in the community!

This should teach us: don't expect humanistic political rulers to be protecting our political liberty. The institution which historically has been the most antagonistic to the liberties of individuals can hardly be made responsible for instructing the community about history and liberty. It is not an accident that it was Pharaoh who responded to Moses, "Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and besides, I will not let Israel go" (Ex.5:2).

It was Wycliffe who wrote that "*this Bible is for the government of the people, by the people, and for the people.*" The only novel thing about this in his day, was that "*the people themselves should not only read and know that law but also should in some sense govern as well as be governed by it.*"<sup>24</sup>

A Christian society is one where victim's rights are protected. Criminals are required to pay restitution for their crimes (a minimum of double-see Ex.22:7-9), or forfeit their life for capital crimes.

Capital punishment was to be utilised for a number of other crimes, such as kidnapping (Ex.21:16; Deut.24:7), a child striking or cursing their father or mother (Ex.21:15, 17), some cases of manslaughter (Ex.21:28-31), perjury (Deut.19:16-21), adultery (Ex.22:22; Lev.20:10), incest (Lev.20:11-12), homosexuality (Lev.20:13), the rape of a betrothed or married woman (Ex.22:25), fornication (Ex.22:20), bestiality (Ex.22:19), sacrificing to another god (Ex.22:20), false prophecy and promoting rebellion against the Lord (Deut.13), and blasphemy (Lev.24:16).

Executing people for violations of God's Law would mean that the taxpayers in the community would not be compelled any more to pay to keep criminals convicted of capital crimes, bearing in mind that the cost for maintaining a criminal in goal is over \$40,000 annually. It would mean that people would fear for their life if they were considering committing a capital crime. It would probably mean less work for the police, and would bring a wholesome fear into the community. I believe that is perfectly wholesome and necessary for any community.

The community from which the Bible is removed, or which ignores the Bible, will soon lose its liberty. And if we are serious about protecting our liberties, we will need to return to Biblical law.

*To whatever degree a society allows the teaching of the Bible to bring forth its natural conclusions, it is able to have form and freedom in society and government.*<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Andrew Napolitano, "Where is the Outrage?" Lew Rockwell website, 7/6/2012.

<sup>24</sup> Rousas Rushdoony, "The Institutes of Biblical Law," 1973, p.1.

<sup>25</sup> Francis Schaeffer, "How Shall We Then Live?" 1976.

## *Law and Society (XI)*

By Andrew McColl, 11/9/2012

*Men naturally rebel against the injustice of which they are victims. Thus, when plunder is organized by law for the profit of those who make the law, all the plundered classes try somehow to enter -- by peaceful or revolutionary means -- into the making of laws. According to their degree of enlightenment, these plundered classes may propose one of two entirely different purposes when they attempt to attain political power: Either they may wish to stop lawful plunder, or they may wish to share in it. Frederick Bastiat, "The Law," 1849.*

The Bible doesn't condemn the principle of self-interest, though it does condemn *some* practices of self-interest: "Whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God dwell in him?" (I Jn. 3:17).

But if I know there is a sale on of items I want, and that they could run out early, it isn't wrong to get there early so I can get what I want. I am looking after my own interests. Is this wrong? No. The early bird catches the worm.

On a hot day at the beach, people want be ice-creams, cold drinks, sun hats and sun cream. People will often pay for these, so you (or someone else) can go to the trouble and risk of finding the products, getting them to the beach, setting up a stall with a generator or power source, and selling things like a good capitalist.

And at the end of the day you go home, do the sums and determine if you made any profit!

Self-interest drives the international economy. People want? People get. The key to prosperity in a free market economy (which the Bible endorses) is to find what it is that people need, and sell it to them.

Today, the Chinese and other nations are buying vast amounts of Australian coal and iron ore. They want it for their industry, and we have it in the ground, so they say, "How much?" and some Australian says "This much." Arrangements are entered into, and a deal is done. And so it goes on, everywhere.

The Bible specifically indicates that Abraham, Isaac and Job were wealthy men, and it communicates no stigma in relation to this. Rather, it says that "it is the blessing of the Lord that makes rich, and He adds no sorrow to it" (Prov.10:22).

*Abraham built wells (Gen.21:30; 26:18) for he understood the asset value of water in a dry land, especially as he had flocks and herds, and the welfare of hundreds and possibly thousands of people to consider. He shows us, that "physical resources are useless without capital and skills to develop them, or without access to markets."<sup>26</sup> He built up assets in gold, silver and livestock (Gen.13:2) through commercial activities*

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<sup>26</sup> P. T. Bauer, quoted in Gary North, "The Dominion Mandate," 1985, p.159.

*which are not stipulated in scripture. He was a long-term planner, and these assets would be important in years to come (Gen.23:14-20; 24:22, 52-53; 49:29-32). He made the best of his abilities to understand markets, and to manage men, money and livestock in his era. Abraham it seems, believed in the Biblical virtue of diligence; that “the hand of the diligent makes rich” (Prov.10:4).<sup>27</sup>*

So honest, profitable trading is perfectly legitimate, and provides people with many of their needs in a far more efficient way than if they had to procure each one of these things personally. The butcher, baker and candle-stick maker make life easier for us all, and each makes a living by serving the needs of their customers. Economists call this the division of labour.

How can Christians match their economic wisdom with their walk of faith? North comments, “Self-interest should not be devoid of covenantal understanding.”<sup>28</sup>

It’s when people ignore the God-ordained limits of government that problems of self-interest arise. If people in power say, “What’s in this for me?” corruption will ensue.

We see this in the Bible. When Samuel was old, he appointed his sons to judge Israel. But “his sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice” (I Sam.8:3). They had neglected the fact that God had said that “the same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you” (Ex.12:49). Jethro later instructed Moses, “you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens” (Ex.18:21).

Later, Solomon wrote that “...to show partiality in judgment is not good. He who says to the wicked, ‘You are righteous,’ peoples will curse him, nations will abhor him; but to those who rebuke the wicked will be delight, and a good blessing will come upon them. He kisses the lips who gives a right answer” (Prov.23:23-26).

The curse of government is partiality. Partiality to the rich, or the poor, or to anyone in particular. It can even be on the basis of race. Graduated taxation reflects a form of partiality. Instead of people paying a specific proportion of their income at a flat rate, graduated taxation (which is itself a Marxist invention) penalises those who have done better.

Why? It is not jealousy, it’s envy. Governments that invoke graduated taxation are saying, “You’ve done well this year? We’ll hit you hard. We’ll teach you a thing or two. We’ll take what was yours, and give it to people less fortunate than you.” And in the process, governments penalise the innovative, the risk-takers and the profitable, who may go somewhere else in the world to do business.

Governments that invoke the “too big to fail” idea (especially in relation to financially supporting banks and big companies) are being partial to the rich. Sometimes this is done because these organisations can make big donations to political campaigns. Governments implicitly (or

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<sup>27</sup> Andrew McColl, “They Shall Become One,” 2009, ch.3.

<sup>28</sup> Gary North, “Hierarchy and Dominion,” 2012, p.207.

explicitly) say, “You scratch my back, and I’ll scratch yours.” Donating to political parties is not wrong of itself, as any business wants to see political parties returned that are not going to damage or hamper it in the market place. But if donations are made with an expectation of favours in return, it most certainly is corrupt.

Sometimes, governments lack the courage to let poorly performing companies go under. They feel guilty, thinking, “we could have saved them.”

At other times, governments think, “there are a lot of voters in that company. We’d keep their vote if we gave them a bail-out.” Each of these statements may be true, but it isn’t the role of government in a free society to save failing companies by giving them access to tax-payers’ monies. That’s partiality, and creates a very ugly precedent.

In recent decades the “too big to fail” ideal has become so endemic, that there is every chance that it will lead to an international financial catastrophe; the finances of banks and governments (especially in Europe and the US) have become utterly intertwined and compromised, as these institutions have ignored or by-passed Biblical ethical constraints. Now, the birds are coming home to roost, and it will be painful.

Nevertheless, it will be good when this happens. Why? Because there will be an undoing of unholy alliances, of Fascist style relationships between businesses and government, where partiality or nepotism has reigned supreme, to the detriment of justice, the individual and society.

Conclusion:

Self-interest of itself is generally not wrong. It is the legitimate motivator behind 99% of international trade and business everywhere. Christians should not ever feel guilty or reluctant to deal in business, but should make every effort to be diligent, successful and profitable. The Bible applauds this.

God’s people however, must determine the Biblical limits to self-interest. The Bible specifically condemns all forms of partiality in the application of law, and tells us that “God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether good or evil” (Eccles.12:14). This should both warn and encourage us; evildoers will not prosper in the long-term, but the diligent godly will be blessed by God.

## *Law and Society (XII)*

By Andrew McColl, 4/9/2012

*The paternal state not only feeds its children, but nurtures, educates, comforts, and disciplines them, providing all they need for their security. This appears to be a mildly insulting way to treat adults, but it is really a great crime because it transforms the state from being a gift of God, given to protect us against violence, into an idol. . . . The paternalism of the state is that of the bad parent who wants his children dependent on him forever. That is an evil impulse. The good parent prepares his children for independence, trains them to make responsible decisions, knows that he harms them by not helping them to break loose. The paternal state thrives on dependency. When the dependents free themselves, it loses power. It is, therefore, parasitic on the very persons whom it turns into parasites.<sup>29</sup>*

The state of the nations today is not something new. It has been a trend, building quietly and incrementally for generations. Christian writers like Robert Dabney, Gresham Machen and G.K. Chesterton began commenting on this trend, eighty to a hundred years ago.

What is the trend? More power to governments, less power to individuals, to families and to the Church. And with this increased power to government, has gone the power of government to tax. In Australia today, some people are paying 47% of their income in taxation, when at Federation in 1901, there was NO income tax. An Australian on average wage pays 30-40% tax, overall.

The greatest irony in this, has been that in the face of the growth of government the Church, charged by Jesus Christ with being the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world” (Mat.5:13, 14), has been largely silent. In the face of Darwinism and then Marxism, we failed to speak a clear message to our people, and to the world at large.

In fact our relative silence has been interpreted as tacit endorsement, as if we really didn’t want to make too many waves, didn’t want to offend too many, and would prefer to “go with the flow.”

So we have in Australia (as in most parts of the west), Public Education, Public Health and a massive Welfare system. And what had this produced?

*One of the surest means of enslaving another person is through dependence...This is one of the major characteristics of our modern welfare oriented society. Few persons who have received monthly welfare for any extended period of time are any longer capable of taking care of themselves.<sup>30</sup>*

Where did this begin? It began in the Church with liberal theology in the mid eighteenth century, which denied the natural depravity of man since the Fall. If man is not inherently a sinner, perhaps he could be perfected. It led to a reduced view of God’s Word, and the fundamental Biblical institutions: the family and the Church. We allowed for the family and Church to be down-graded, and their potential for influence and power in society (which has always been God’s plan) was reduced.

And where was this potential for influence and power to go? Why, to the government of course!

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<sup>29</sup> Herbert Schlossberg, “Idols for Destruction,” 1983.

<sup>30</sup> E. Powell & R. Rushdoony, “Tithing and Dominion,” 1979, p.122.

Today, the logic of liberal theology leads the Church (or parts of it) to accept the legitimacy of same-sex marriage. Why not? If we began with a denial of the Fall in its entirety, there will be no place to stop and say, “We’ve come far enough now.”

Liberal theology leads immediately to liberal politics. After all, what better institution to accomplish this easily attained accomplishment of the perfectibility of the human race, than the government?

So when it denies the status of the true Messiah Jesus Christ, the fallen human heart goes looking for a substitute, and messianic status is imputed to government. As it was in king Saul’s day (I Samuel 8), so it is now. The people rejected the notion that God should be their king, then said to Samuel, “give us a king...” (v.6).

Rather than accept the Biblical position concerning Jesus Christ, that “...the government shall rest on His shoulders” (Isa.9:6), the fallen heart locates the messianic institution in Canberra, or Washington, or London; political capitals where big decisions are made. “These are the real places of hope!” cries the liberal. And it will progressively get worse, until the Church gets the message.

In Australia, the Catholic Archbishop Vaughn saw the trend before many. In terms of education, he said in 1880 that

*There is one greater curse in the world than ignorance and that is instruction apart from moral and religious teaching. To instruct the masses in reading writing and arithmetic and to leave out religion and morality is to arm them with instruments for committing crime.*

He predicted that government education would be

*“lawless education” and “plots of immorality, infidelity and lawlessness, being calculated to debase the standard of human excellence, and to corrupt the political, social and individual life of future citizens.”<sup>31</sup>*

Today, the Federal Minister for Education, Peter Garrett, has his solution to Australia’s educational problems:

*Putting more faith in the knowledge and expertise of school leaders is a vital piece of our overall agenda to give every young Australian a great education.<sup>32</sup>*

What are we supposed to have? “More faith...” So, it is a religious issue from the same recipe book. “Got a problem? No worries! More government action will solve that!”

When people suggest to me that we Christians really should be at work to reform public education, I say, “forget it.” Go to the fundamental issue. According to the Bible, who is responsible for the education of children?” When parents (beginning with Christian parents) will take complete responsibility for their children’s education, and not expect the government to pay and provide, we will begin to see changes.

Till then? Decline, waste and pain.

How do I know this? Because the Bible predicts it, in I Samuel 8.

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<sup>31</sup> Alan Roberts, “Australia’s First Hundred Years- the Era of Christian Schools,” 1984, p.16.

<sup>32</sup> Peter Garrett, 5/7/2012.



## *Law and Society (XIII)*

By Andrew McColl, 11/9/2012

### *The Lesson from I Samuel 8: "He Will Take..."*

One of the frequent lessons we can learn from scripture, is that there is always a clear correlation between the godliness of a community or a nation, and the kind of government they seek. Israel in Samuel's day wanted a king. They said to Samuel, "*Appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations*" (v.5).

Now, it must be said that the Lord had made provision in His law for Israel to have a king, (Deut.17:14-20) so their request was technically legitimate. But there was a problem. The rationale for the request was clear; they wanted to be "*like all the nations.*" It was clear that they were refusing to accept the Lord's requirement of them, for He had required that "*you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation*" (Ex.19:6).

Religiously, culturally and morally they were to be set apart for God. This meant that they were to be free of the religious, cultural and moral contaminants of the people around them; they were not to be influenced by the other nations. These nations were so corrupted, that God said that "*the land has spewed out its inhabitants*" (Lev.18:25).

It is important to note God's commentary on *why* Israel wanted a king. God said that "*they have rejected Me from being king over them*" (v.7). Even after Samuel explained to the people what this new king would be like; that he would

*create a standing army and a forced draft; he would make himself rich by taking over large land holdings; he would take their daughters for his own purposes; he would confiscate their traditional family property; he would tax them heavily and take a tithe (making himself God); he would take their servants and their best animals; and finally he would make them all his slaves.*

*This would all be done in the name of efficient central government. This was the warning Israel refused to heed. This same warning was given us by our Puritan forefathers, who knew firsthand what they were talking about. We have not heeded it either.<sup>1</sup>*

The people still said, "*no, but there shall be a king over us, that we also may be like all the other nations...*" (I Sam.8:19-20).

We can deduce from this, that apostasy in any community, inevitably leads to centralised control. When people reject the government of God, they will get it from man, and it will be rough! If King Saul was bad for Israel, think of Stalin and Mao. Apostasy is the only reason for centralised control. This was the hall-mark of governments throughout the twentieth century, as nation after nation (whether totalitarian or democratic), deliberately sought governments that made grand, god-like promises to them. This common desire has reflected the religious views, not only of the people, but

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<sup>1</sup> James Jordan, "Judges: God's War on Humanism," 1984, p.202.

of the Church; the problem is not political, but spiritual. The people have been content with centralised, non-Biblical control, because the Church is.

*The threat to liberty of central authority is too great. Even with God's agent Moses as the supreme civil judge, Jethro warned that Israel would suffer. Moses possessed too much authority. Better to decentralize State authority to untrained judges than to concentrate authority in one man. Such centralized authority will undermine freedom, reduce complexity, reduce the division of labour, and cut short the multiplication of wealth. Men will stand in long lines seeking justice rather than getting on with living.<sup>33</sup>*

But the requirement of the Lord concerning His people has not changed. We are still called to be “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession” (I Pet.2:9). Thus we are not to be influenced by the world’s ways, but beginning with ourselves, our families, our churches, and our communities, we are to be devoted to the Lord. This has a lot of implications.

*The mark of a community's commitment to liberty is its commitment to Biblical law. God's law must be enforced. The countenances of the citizenry must be set against the countenances of criminals. The citizenry represents God. Their ordained civil agents represent them before the face of God and represent God before the faces of criminals. Civil authority flows from God to citizens to the civil magistrate. They are judges insofar as they bring sanctions, positive or negative, against their ordained representatives. They are told not to fear the face of man.<sup>2</sup>*

Australia, along with the rest of the world, is under judgment. But it is the Church that is under judgment most of all, because of our failure to obey God’s Word. We only have abortion in the nation, at over 80,000 annually, because much of the Church is indifferent to it. We only have anti-family practices such as legal prostitution, legalised homosexuality and pornography, because much of the Church is indifferent to it. Politicians won’t make changes to the laws, because there is insufficient pressure on them from the community, and the Church. In fact, there is a level of complicity.

Is the answer, to muster political pressure? I doubt it. The answer lies in God’s Word; it is a total reversal of attitude (repentance) amongst God’s people (see II Chron.7:14). Not until then will there be a people who will function as salt and light in the nations of the world.

Political action is actually ridiculous, unless the real problem (the compromise and apostasy of God’s people) is solved. We have sinned, and these things are happening to us as a result. Until there is a change of heart amongst God’s people, there will not be real change in the community, or the nation. We are the ones who have to get right with God, and only then can real change in the nation come.

And it will.

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<sup>33</sup> Gary North, “Inheritance and Dominion,” 1999, Ch.3.

<sup>2</sup> North, Ch.4.

## *Law and Society (XIV)*

By Andrew McColl, 18/9/2012

*restoration of a culture will be marked by restoration of marriage as a source of joy and a cause for celebration...this renewal must be heralded as divine renewal has always been, by 'the voice of bride and bridegroom.' The church cannot experience a full or valid renewal unless it once again embraces the Biblical pattern of marriage.<sup>1</sup>*

A church nearby puts on what they call "The King's Table" every Thursday lunch time. People come for a free meal, where they will hear a brief presentation of the gospel, while they sit and mix with Christian people for an hour or so. I like to help them, and it seems to be an enjoyable opportunity for 20-30 people (few of whom belong to the church), each week.

Recently I sat down there with a couple in their late seventies who have one daughter, now in her early 40's. They told me she met a man whilst in her early thirties, and though her parents didn't like him and told her he was a liar, she ignored their advice and married him. The man had told her that he'd been married, but his wife had run off with another man. She believed him. The new wife immediately fell pregnant, and her husband told her that it would be best if they bought a house in his name, as it would be easier to get a mortgage that way. She agreed.

Before they'd been married long, she came to the conclusion her parents had been right. Her husband soon threw her out of the house, and brought in his mistress. The aggrieved wife suffers from Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) in her forearms, which means she cannot work, and survives (with her son) on a pension. She got a modest payout from their divorce, but it was all swallowed up in the resultant legal costs.

The aggrieved woman somehow met the first wife (whom she gets on well with), and now has a little more understanding of what had happened to her, what sort of man she was really married to, and why her parents' advice was wise. The man now has three children to different women, and a fourth woman is pregnant to him.

According to this woman's parents, he has made threatening remarks about coming to get anyone who bothers or upsets him, and this can mean only one thing to her: he is a licensed firearm owner with many weapons, and a crack shot. She fears for her life.

I got to thinking: how widespread is this sort of thing? Setting aside the extra issue of threats to life, how many cases of divorce like this (whether it be an aggrieved wife or husband) are occurring? I guess (bearing in mind Australia has a population of 23 million), it could be a couple of million. Maybe it's much more.

Then I began to think: what is the cost of divorce to the nation, overall? Of course, there are direct financial costs (which would run now to billions annually), along with personal and emotional costs: the costs to the community in increased police and legal work, the domestic violence, the dreadful outcomes for children that result from a family breakup, the turmoil for grandparents, and the reduction in inheritances children receive as a result.

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<sup>1</sup> Derek Prince, quoted in "Charisma," August 1986. (Quoted in Mary Pride, "All the Way Home," 1989, p.3.)

There are many more costs: children not doing as well in their studies and work because of grief that they are facing through family breakup, and not achieving as well later on. The need for increased security for women who are afraid of their former husbands. The loss of parental instruction, example and leadership because one parent is not present, and much, much more.

*Research during the last decade continued to show that children with divorced parents, compared with children with continuously married parents, score lower on a variety of emotional, behavioural, social, health, and academic outcomes, on average.<sup>34</sup>*

I pointed out to the couple that the Family Law Act was amended by socialists in 1975, so that “No-Fault Divorce” was legalised. (Previously, the innocent party in a divorce gained the bulk of the money. Now, regardless of “fault,” the money and property are split down the middle.) This has had a huge impact on the number of divorces (which has gone through the roof) and the consequences for innocent spouses have been devastating.

My wife and I know eight Christian men whose wife walked out on them, with it seems, little fault on the part of the man. Do we really know the full story? No. But what is painfully evident is that marital breakup causes tremendous heartache for numbers of people.

What a mess, what a disaster. It does not reflect well on the Church, because most of us took no notice when the law was passed, and in 1979-80, when the controversial law was reviewed in Parliament, most of the Church still had little to say.

This sort of outcome should show us how critical Christian responsibility really is in the community. If we had acted firmly in 1979-80, and put consistent pressure on those responsible for the Parliamentary review, the law could have been amended to reflect a more Christian view of marriage. The prevalence of divorce today in the community shows us that Burke was right: “evil triumphs when good men do nothing.”

What if 95% of divorces today were unnecessary? And what if the innocent spouse in the small percentage of cases where divorce became necessary, got the majority of the settlement? The shift to the Biblically oriented notion of victim’s rights would result in the dramatic improvement in the lives of thousands of children, and the subsequent transformation of society.

The Bible says that God hates divorce (Mal.2:16), and there is still hope for change. But we will have to talk about it in the Christian community and act in a unified way, otherwise our families and our society as a whole will continue to suffer needlessly.

The God hating, life hating (Prov.8:36), family hating socialists had their legislative way in 1975, and an earthly hell descended into millions of Australian households as a result. Let’s hope and pray this evil can soon be reversed, and marriage and family can be restored to a God honouring, Biblical position in the community.

It’s our job.

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<sup>34</sup> Quoted in Professor Patrick Parkinson, “Fragile Families and the Looming Financial Crisis for the Welfare State,” in “Viewpoint: Perspectives on Public Policy,” issue 8, February 2012, p.43.

## *Law and Society (XV)*

By Andrew McColl, 18/9/2012

*Natural law theory rests on the assumption that there is a source of common ethics and common wisdom irrespective of theological confession. This common system of ethics is said to serve as the basis of a common judicial system. This common legal order is supposedly accessible to all rational men, however men define rational. This presumed commonality is the basis of the civil law's legitimacy. Natural law is said to be grounded in the nature of man as a rational being, whether or not he was created by God. Because natural law has authority irrespective of theological confession, it is to be the basis of civil government, for civil government has authority over all men who reside in a geographical area irrespective of their confession of faith. So runs the familiar intellectual defence of natural law theory.<sup>35</sup>*

There are a number of issues in the Church today that are controversial, and one of these is the use of the law of God, today. Why is it controversial? Because the Church has been confused on this subject, almost since the first century.

What has happened?

Early on, there was a great tolerance in the church for the Greek's Hellenistic natural law philosophy. We had a blindspot, which we still have: a widespread failure to note that the Greek's natural law philosophy, was humanistic - utterly in opposition to Biblical faith. In fact, there was little understanding that law and religion were inextricably linked. We couldn't tell the wheat from the tares.

The idea that God gave the law to Moses in 1,500 BC had no credibility with the Greeks. Their approach to law was essentially pragmatic: "we work it out as we go along." Natural law can be made to suit almost anyone's purpose and it has, including totalitarian dictators.

So the early church had little answer to the Greek philosophy and law, and was unable to stem the tide of this Hellenistic influence. Because law always has religious presuppositions, the church was glibly accepting a Greek philosophical and legal Trojan horse. The soldiers haven't stopped spilling out of it ever since, with dire consequences for the church and culture around the world. Here's an example: *religion and politics don't mix*.

But this has to change, and we must play our part in initiating the change in our generation. How do we do this? By considering how to apply the law of God today, and starting the ball rolling.

The Bible has a lot to say about the applications of God's law to society, regardless of the era. One of the key New Testament texts is Romans 13:8-10:

*Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law. For this, "You shall not commit adultery, you*

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<sup>35</sup> Gary North. "Inheritance and Dominion," 1999, ch. 72.

*shall not murder, you shall you shall not steal, you shall not covet,” and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, “you shall love your neighbour as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.*

One writer who grasped the implications of Paul’s teaching, was John Murray. He wrote:

*If love is the fulfillment of the law, this means that no law is fulfilled apart from love...it is only through love that we can fulfil the demands of justice...this appeal to the Decalogue [the Ten Commandments]demonstrates the following propositions: 1)The Decalogue is of permanent and binding relevance. 2) It exemplifies the law that love fulfills and is therefore correlative with love. 3) The commandments and their binding obligation do not interfere with the exercise of love; there is no incompatibility. 4) The commandments are the norms in accordance with which love operates.<sup>36</sup>*

God promised the generation of Moses, that the embrace and utilisation of God’s law in Isarel would cause other nations to say, “...surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people” (Deut.4:6). Later, God promised through Isaiah in 700 BC that the nations would stream to the house of the Lord, and the result would be that “...the law will go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem” (Isa.2:3).

As Jesus neared the end of His ministry, He had some blunt words of warning for Israel. “...the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it” (Mat.21:43).

What was He referring to? Israel had been in rebellion against the Lord, for almost the whole period since they had left Egypt. The periods of revival and restoration under godly kings had been incidental, rare periods in the whole 1,500 years. Now, Israel was about to commit their worst possible offence: they would conspire against and murder the Son of God. And as a result there would be a transfer of the inheritance of Israel, and the culmination of judgment on Israel would be the destruction of the temple, along with the death or enslavement of every person in Jerusalem to the Romans, in 70AD. This is what Jesus was speaking about in Mat.24:1-34; Mk.13:1-30, and Luke 21:5-32. They would need to make sure they had exited Jerusalem by this time.

Whom would the inheritance be transferred to? The church. This is what Paul was referring to when he explained that “...the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places” (Eph.3:10). The focus has now shifted in geographical terms from Israel and Jerusalem to the church international, and the implications of this are remarkable.

The church has a great deal to contribute to the world. That is what God has placed us here for, as “...the pillar and support of the truth” (I Tim.3:14). One of our most important roles is

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<sup>36</sup> John Murray, “The Epistle to the Romans,” (2 vols, Vol. II,) 1959, 1965, p.159, 161-162. Quoted in Gary North, “Cooperation and Dominion,” 2012, p.137-138.

evangelism, but we must also be concerned and active in influencing society and government, especially in the adoption of God's law as the basis for every society. Every other law system is chaotic and ultimately leads to totalitarianism.

It is true that there is a great deal wrong with the church, and there is much to do in terms of reforming this vital social institution. This process will take generations. But we must take heart that we won't be doing this alone, because God is with those who want to see His house strengthened and purified, and who will do it His way.

And as the church shakes off the influences of humanism which have plagued it for centuries, it will again be able to take its God-ordained place in the community, declaring the truth to the community concerning the applicability of God's law today, and the need for the embrace of God's law around the world.

May this happen soon, because it can only do us good.

## *Law and Society (XVI)*

By Andrew McColl, 25/9/2012

Merriam-Webster's Dictionary defines casuistry as "a resolving of specific cases of conscience, duty, or conduct through interpretation of ethical principles or religious doctrine."

Casuistry has a long and very important history, with its origins in Biblical law. How do we know this? Because Biblical law deals with specific criminal cases, from a background of Christian morality. In Exodus 20 God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses and the children of Israel, and in chapters 21-23, He gave specific examples of how His law was to be applied and enforced. This is casuistry.

How was casuistry to work? Take the issue of murder. The Bible teaches that "He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death" (Ex.21:12). So, if the death was clearly pre-meditated, it was murder. The Bible uses the illustration of a man who "hates his neighbour and lies in wait for him..."(Deut.19:11) to kill him. This applies clearly today to women who have an abortion, and doctors who perform abortions. They commit murder and should die, for what the Bible calls in a number of places, the "shedding of innocent blood."

What about witnesses? There had to be two or three witnesses for conviction for a capital crime. One witness was not sufficient (Deut.19:15). If there were malicious witnesses who sought to bring false evidence to a court, and they were proven as such, they would be liable to the same punishment they had sought to bring against the accused person, even to stoning for a capital crime. "...You shall do to him just as he intended to do to his brother" (Deut.19:19).

How was execution to take place? Normally by public stoning. Why? This meant the whole community had to take responsibility for justice in the community, it precluded professional executioners, and it meant that execution was always a very public affair. With the invention of firearms, we could use a firing squad.

Does this mean that in all cases where there has been a loss of life, an offender had to lose his life? No, because Biblical law acknowledged the fact of accidental death, or manslaughter. God used the illustration of two men going into the forest to cut down trees, and as one "swings his hand to cut down the tree, and the iron head slips off the handle and strikes his friend so that he dies..." (Deut.19:5).

In some cases of manslaughter, such as when an ox that was known to gore was not properly restrained by its owner, and it gored and killed someone, "...the ox shall be stoned and its owner shall be put to death. If a ransom is demanded of him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is demanded of him" (Ex.21:29-30).

What does this mean? The case laws deliberately permit individual application of God's law, so that justice is done, and seen to be done. They also require speedy collective community



responsibility for justice without gaols, with restitution for criminal activity (such as theft) that does not require capital punishment. It also precluded State-sanctioned murder, political manipulation of a national economy, and the large-scale abuses of power (so prevalent in the modern era, world-wide) would be a thing of the past.

The psalmist said, “give me understanding, that I may observe Your law and keep it with all my heart” (Ps.119:34), and “I will walk at liberty, for I seek Your precepts” (Ps.119:45).

David also said, “the law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul...” (Ps.19:7). It seems he believed in casuistry: “a resolving of specific cases of conscience, duty, or conduct through interpretation of ethical principles or religious doctrine.”

King David went further: “O how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day” (Ps.119:97).

But the Church has ignored David’s enthusiasm for the law of God. In fact, it’s ignored God’s law and casuistry for centuries. This is one of the reasons nations (along with the church around the world) are in decline. They will continue to slide, while we in the Church continue to ignore the practical, real-life applications of God’s law to our societies.

It’s time to change, and if church leadership is disinterested, it will have to start in the grass-roots. The hierarchy didn’t want to know Jesus Christ, or His followers such as Luther, Wesley, and Whitefield, so these men went on their way regardless, and God used them. Will it be any different with our willingness to accept the law of God?

*It is these laws [the case laws of Exodus] and their amplification in the Book of Deuteronomy that must serve as the foundation of any systematically self-conscious Christian revolution.<sup>37</sup>*

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<sup>37</sup> Gary North, “Ethics and Dominion,” 2012, p.1742.