

The Ideology of Freedom (I)

By Andrew McColl, 31/1/2012

A true revolution has to be ideological (Ron Paul).

I Samuel 8 is a critical text in understanding a Biblical ideology of freedom. Why? Israel at this time (circa 1,050 B.C.) was in a degenerative state. For the moment it had a godly prophet leading the nation in the person of Samuel, but the nation had moved religiously away from God; they had shifted their allegiance. They demanded of Samuel, "...appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations" (v.5).

God's commentary to Samuel on this was that

...they have not rejected you, but they had rejected Me from being king over them. Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day-in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods-so they are doing to you also (v.7-8).

As George Grant comments,

Samuel attempted to warn the people of the inherent dangers of their scheme. There would be taxation. There would be conscription. There would be coercion. There would be tyranny. It was inevitable. But the people would not be swayed.¹

We must learn from this that when individuals and nations abandon God, their perception of everything begins to deteriorate. They tend to stumble from one disaster to another, because having rejected the truth about God, they can no longer comprehend the truth about anything. The Bible teaches us that "...just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind..." (Ro.1:28).

A truly Christian ideology of freedom then, will only be accepted and take root in a nation which believes in God, and is prepared to accept God's Word (the Bible) as the first rule of society. But when a nation is explicitly or implicitly hostile to God and His Word, it abandons all hope of freedom.

This explains the disasters of the French and Russian Revolutions, along with the Third Reich in Germany, and the Chinese Communist Revolution. In each case the existing regime was overthrown, but soon enough the new government made every attempt to rid the nation of all vestiges of the Christian faith, particularly utilising State education. These revolutions were not merely political events; they were inherently religious ones with a political manifestation.

What the successful bearers of the torch of the Enlightenment did was set Europe on fire-in the name of liberty, fraternity and equality. James Billington's book has described it well: "Fire in the Hearts of Men" (1980). It was the left wing of the

¹ George Grant, "The Changing of the Guard," 1987, p.137.

*Enlightenment that triumphed. When men deify mankind, they almost always wind up deifying the State, the highest collective of mankind, the apotheosis of man's power. They become adherents of the power religion.*²

What resulted from all four revolutions? A national bloodbath. The French Revolution's Committee of Public Safety was a revolutionary tribunal responsible for the deaths of thousands of innocents. As the Bible warns us "...he who sins against me [God] injures himself; all those that hate me love death" (Prov.8:36).

Thus Mises was right in saying that

*Whoever wants lastingly to establish good government must start by trying to persuade his fellow citizens and offering them sound ideologies... There is no hope left for a civilization when the masses favour harmful policies.*³

This should be a warning to us. The ideology of freedom is found in the Bible: in Christian faith, obedience and responsibility. There is no other source for it. Attempts to replace Christianity and its associated freedoms with something else inevitably finish up in tyranny, as the twentieth century so amply showed us.

For those of us living in a western nation who say, "but Andrew, ours is a Christian nation," I say, "what part is Christian? The people? The laws? The culture?"

When the atheist Julia Gillard became the Australian Prime Minister of Australia in 2010, and declared that she didn't believe in God, what was the response? I'd say over 90% of the nation would have shrugged their shoulders.

Why shouldn't they? After six generations of deliberately secular, politically manipulated public education in Australia, what would we expect? If the grass-roots of a nation haven't changed, how can we expect there to be real and lasting change elsewhere?

This is the lesson: if we really want to see the ideology of freedom again in our western nations, we have a lot of work to do, beginning in the Church.

*Politics cannot produce character: Christianity must. The decline of faith is a decline of character and a decline of character is the forerunner of political decay and collapse. Christianity has an obligation to train a people in the fundamentals of God's grace and law, and to make them active and able champions of true political liberty and order.*⁴

² Gary North, "Moses and Pharaoh," 1986, p.xii.

³ Ludwig von Mises, "Omnipotent Government," 1944, p.120.

⁴ Rousas Rushdoony, "Roots of Reconstruction," 1991, p.552.

The Ideology of Freedom (II)

By Andrew McColl, 7/2/2012

Rebuilding a Christian culture...will involve a long-term view and the discipline of systematically following a well-executed series of Biblical steps. This process begins with a clear vision of *who* we are, *what* we are commanded to do and *how* we are supposed to do it.⁵

My mother lived for many years near a town in North-East England called Kings Lynn, which had originally been called Bishop's Lynn. Why the name change?

Bishop's Lynn in the time of King Henry VIII had a monastery, and the monks were responsible for feeding the poor from the Church's tithe barns, particularly in winter. The tithe barns were a vital means of local charity. But when Henry had a long-running dispute with the Pope, anybody or anything remotely connected to the Pope became fair game. Under the guise of ridding the community of corrupt priests, he confiscated monastic property around England, and the town was thus re-named Kings Lynn. But the loss of the Church's tithe barns created great hardship for the poor.

Of course no monk has been perfect, but Henry's allegation about the sins of monks was certainly a case of the pot calling the kettle black, when he had a great number of innocent people executed, and kept his mistresses.

Why is this relevant in 2012?

Evil political leaders have loved to cite supposed evidence of corruption in others, with a view to using their political power to gain an advantage. This has been happening since at least as far back as Ahab and Jezebel. Ahab wanted Naboth's vineyard, so Jezebel utilised to slander and murder. Ahab wanted it, Ahab got it! (See I Kings 21).

In the twentieth century, totalitarian leaders turned this into an art form. The Marxists made much of the supposed sins of the "capitalist exploiters of labour," but as Rushdoony points out,

*on June 23, 1851, Helene Demuth, the Karl Marx family servant, gave birth to a son. Marx had either seduced or raped her, and Payne [Marx's biographer] feels the slim evidence suggests that "it was rape rather than seduction." (Robert Payne: Marx, p. 260. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968.) The Communists, having made much of the bloated capitalists ravishing working girls, worked to suppress the fact that their great theoretician is the best example of this kind of exploitation, as have been most other Communists.*⁶

⁵ Buddy Hanson, "Rx for Turning America 'Rightside Up,'" Part 2, in "Faith for all of Life," Jan/Feb 2012, p.18.

⁶ Rousas Rushdoony,, "Roots of Reconstruction," 1991, p.829.

All this should teach us something. Individual corruption is in every human heart, but when corruption moves from mere individuals to become institutionalised in government, that corruption becomes much more destructive.

*There has been no greater threat to life, liberty, and property throughout the ages than government. Even the most violent and brutal private individuals have been able to inflict only a mere fraction of the harm and destruction that have been caused by the use of power by political authorities.*⁷

Political powers like Henry VIII arrogate power to themselves, claiming that individuals, families and private institutions are not up to the task of what government institutions can accomplish. But historically, this tends to take place in the context of the Church's decline in responsibility and power. Now if Christians accept this status quo; if we say, *Oh, we don't have to do anything because the government will take care of us through our taxes,*" we are effectively saying that we would prefer to be slaves.

*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.*⁸

This was what the children of Israel really would have preferred, when they complained to Moses, "...it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness" (Ex. 14:12).

But Paul's instruction was that "...you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13).

When governments keep making promises about how much they will be able to do for the community, and how good that community will be to live in the future as a result, it's time the Church reacted by saying, "we don't think so," and started picking up the responsibility ourselves, as we should have been. That means tithing a tenth of all we earn to our local church; it means the Church caring for the poor, the widows, the fatherless and the alien, as the Bible commands; it means responsibly involving ourselves in the needs of the local community: not leaving it with government.

Then you will see real power coming back to the Church, as Jesus Christ intended.

Ready to get your hands dirty?

⁷ Richard Ebeling, quoted on the Rockwell website, 16/2/2009.

⁸ E. Powell, and Rousas Rushdoony, "Tithing and Dominion," 1979, p.122.

The Ideology of Freedom (III)

By Andrew McColl, 14/2/2012

People's perceptions of freedom vary from one to another, depending primarily on their religious pre-suppositions. Jesus said that "...*the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil*" (Jn.3:19).

A prisoner in gaol may long for the day when his path will not be impeded by an armed guard or barbed wire, but for an alcoholic, "freedom" may mean an unlimited supply of alcohol on tap. Marxist "freedom" often meant the death of all non-Marxists, whereas for a lazy person, it may be a steady, uninterrupted supply of cash. Many people in western society today claim they want to be free, but don't threaten to take away their Social Security card!

Egypt was a welfare state for the Hebrews. The State "cared" for them, so long as they obeyed, and fulfilled their obligations as slaves. So when Moses initially sought to effect deliverance for his people, Pharoah "tried to kill Moses" (Ex.2:15). He immediately became persona non gratia.

This was the incident in Moses' early life, when he stepped in to protect one of his brethren from an Egyptian's beating, and subsequently killed the Egyptian. The Bible tells us that "he went out the next day, and behold, two Hebrews were fighting with each other; and he said to the offender, "Why are you striking your companion?" But he said, "Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" (Ex.2:13-14).

This man's reaction surprised Moses. Stephen later explained that "he [Moses] supposed that his brethren understood that God was granting deliverance through him, but they did not understand" (Acts 7:25). What had happened?

The guilty man who had been challenged by Moses did not want judgment by another Hebrew. He preferred to act immorally against a Hebrew brother, striking him if necessary, while remaining in bondage to the Egyptian State. He was ready to call the wrath of the Egyptians down upon Moses, who represented Israel's best hope and highest placed representative. He wanted to remain free to commit violence against another Hebrew, even if this freedom to act immorally would continue to cost him his opportunity to live as a free man. He preferred bondage under Egypt rather than the rule of Biblical law. He preferred slavery under pagan law to freedom under Biblical law. This was to be the continuing theme for many years: Biblical law vs. slavish Israelites.⁹

⁹ Gary North, "Moses and Pharoah," 1986, p.71.

What does this mean? Freedom and responsibility are inseparable. When people act irresponsibly, they are placing their freedoms in jeopardy. They are saying effectively, “I don’t want to be free.” God gives those people exactly what they want.

The Hebrews preferred to live in bondage to a socially distant, cruel, self-proclaimed divine monarch than to subordinate themselves under a man of their own covenant. They preferred to be slaves than to be under God’s representative, Moses. They preferred the delights of rumour-spreading to the delights and responsibilities of freedom. They preferred to tear down Moses from his pedestal rather than elevate themselves, under Moses’ leadership, to freedom. They received what they wanted, another generation of servitude.¹⁰

This is why the political doctrine of socialism is such a deception. It teaches that “your government will look after you, womb to tomb. You won’t have to do anything (except of course, to give us a lot of your tax money for us to squander on stupid government schemes).” This is why the person who votes for ANY socialist scheme is really saying, “I don’t want to be free.” And this is why the Hebrews (even with Moses leading them) took another generation to get the bad habits of Egypt’s slavery out of their system. Slavery is addictive.

The Hebrews cursed Moses, for he had served them as a deliverer. He had enabled them to cast off the chains of bondage. They looked to the uncertainty that lay before them (the Red Sea) and the chariots behind them, and they wailed. They had lost what they regarded as external security in Egypt, a welfare State existence, and they resented Moses’ leadership.¹¹

Don’t take for granted that your perception of freedom is a Biblical one. If you have benefitted from Social Security payments, free education, or free medical care for a while, you begin to take these payments for granted. You think, “*this is normal.*” It is, for slaves. When the Hebrews were leaving Egypt, that was when the fun started for Moses, because all of the things the people had taken for granted in Egypt, were disappearing. Old habits die hard. Now, God wanted them to trust and obey Him, and they found that a major challenge.

Conclusion:

There are no short-cuts to freedom, and not all of God’s people want freedom, as Moses learned. But when individuals and nations are prepared to take complete responsibility for their lives, rejecting the pretentious promises of evil governments, freedom will logically follow for them. That means tithing, taking total responsibility for your families’ education, health and welfare, caring materially for others and much more.

Are you ready?

¹⁰ *ibid*, p.78.

¹¹ North, G., “Moses and Pharaoh,” 1986, p.256.

The Ideology of Freedom (IV)

By Andrew McColl, 21/2/2012

If there has been any universal religion in the second half of the twentieth century, it has been the religion of the bureaucratic welfare State.¹²

All over the world, but particularly in Australia of late bureaucracies have been failing in their responsibilities.

First there was Hurricane Katrina. It was well-known that extensive preparations including engineering works would be needed to prevent a massive inundation of New Orleans, if a hurricane were to hit the city. Were these engineering preparations properly done? No. The task had been left with Army engineers, but never completed.

Furthermore, a manual had been prepared in case of disaster, but in the haste of the emergency, it was left on the shelf and never consulted.

Then there were the Victorian bushfires of 2009. A number of bureaucracies contributed to this tragedy, which was worsened by the fact that government departments for thirty years have been increasingly affected by environmentalist ideology. Despite painful lessons provided from previous bush-fire enquiries in Victoria (such as the Ash Wednesday fires in 1983), back burning had been heavily restricted, trees were not removed near houses, towns and roads, and when a dreadful fire began to unfold, the bureaucracy responsible was overwhelmed and unable to respond.

As Victoria burned on Black Saturday in Australia's worst peacetime disaster, none of those who were in command showed any real leadership, but instead were passive, as though they were "powerless, behind the glass, unable or unwilling to influence or attempt to influence the tragedy that was unfolding..."

Jack Rush, counsel assisting the Royal Commission into Victoria's bushfires, quoted in *The Australian*, 26/5/2010.

A government enquiry has been proceeding into the events concerning the disastrous Queensland's floods of January 2011. There were a number of aspects to these flood events. One was the length of time that elapsed from when emergency personnel were notified that a wall of water was moving east down the Toowoomba ranges (as a result of a very heavy storm in the Toowoomba area), to when people in the path of the water were notified. Some whose properties were destroyed more than two hours after those initial notifications, claim that no warning was issued. What had happened?

Another aspect to the floods was the operation of Wivenhoe Dam, which is about 60 kilometres upstream from Brisbane, home of about a million people. Wivenhoe was built originally to protect against river flooding in Brisbane, and finished some twenty five years ago. The Dam had specialist experts in water management employed to oversee the level of the Dam and release water when necessary. How could a task, which a group of five sensible, common-sense but unqualified

¹² Gary North, "Moses and Pharaoh," 1986, p.280.

individuals could have easily managed, have finished up being managed by an institution with a large number of “experts” so ineptly, to almost defy understanding?

A lay person reading of the enquiry’s progress, the questions dealt with in terms of the dam’s operation, and the attitudes and responses of the Dam’s hydrologists to the potential crisis of December 2010/January 2011, would wonder if they were reading something from the Book of the Bizarre.

I can only conclude one thing: these individuals, and possibly their whole institution, seem to have lacked any sense of responsibility for what they were doing, and that this lack of personal or corporate responsibility led to the inundation of many thousands of homes in Brisbane itself, preceded by the suburbs further west, such as Ipswich. The damage bill has run into the billions.

Now of course, everyone is human: “we all stumble in many ways...” (James 3:2), and make our own errors over time. We regret these, and hope to learn from these mistakes.

But when a government bureaucracy has a specific task to fulfil, with specialist people employed who are supposed to be fully knowledgeable about all aspects of their responsibilities, and that bureaucracy utterly fails its basic test under fire, this raises serious questions in the community.

We have now seen [after Hurricane Katrina] what to expect from civil government in a major crisis, even one for which there was advanced warning. There is a lesson here that only the politically blind will miss, and undoubtedly will: to the extent that you become dependent on some tax-funded bureaucracy to save you in a disaster, to that extent you become vulnerable to that disaster and also poorer because of the expense of the government's protection.¹³

Why do we have bureaucracies? We accept government responsibility for many things, perhaps too many things. We leave matters in the hands of government departments, trusting that all will be well. We say, “it’s not my problem to be bothered with this; the government will look after it.”

But this attitude has a sting attached.

Every bureaucracy sees itself as the answer to all possible problems. Instead of the free workings of the people, of the market-place, of the churches, families, and institutions of a society, a bureaucracy sees all solutions in terms of bureaucratic action and control. In terms of this, nothing is more dangerous to a bureaucracy than freedom, and the ideas of a bureaucracy and a free people are mutually contradictory.¹⁴

Conclusion: Maybe all bureaucracies ought to go. But that will require a new level of individual responsibility that most people don’t want, yet. We’ll either stay complaining under the thumb of incompetent, self-serving bureaucrats, or we accept responsibility for what they’ve been doing, and gain our freedom.

What’s it to be?

¹³ Gary North, 2005.

¹⁴ Rousas Rushdoony, “The Roots of Reconstruction,” 1991, p.355.

The Ideology of Freedom (V)

By Andrew McColl, 28/2/2012

A world-transforming gospel is not one that offers a religious way of life whose visible positive effects are strictly confined to family and church-hearth and home-because people demand more from a world-and-life view than the promise of a safe place of temporary retreat when the work day or work week is done. What people insist upon is a system for their life's work that really does work. What they demand, in short, is a system for dominion.¹⁵

The Australian Federal government decided some time ago that Australia needed a national broadband network and recently, *The Australian* newspaper detailed the costs of launching the National Broadband Network (NBN) in the mainland states of Australia. The launches were held in five towns: Willunga (S.A), Townville (Qld), Brunswick (Vic), Kiama (NSW), with a special mainland launch at Armidale (NSW). The costs of these launches respectively (as detailed to a Senate estimates committee), were \$101,000, \$90,000, \$83,000, \$78,000 and \$138,000, coming to a total of \$490,000.

On top of this, the organisation responsible engaged in “media monitoring services,” which cost \$152,000. Total cost of all this to the taxpayer? \$642,000.¹⁶ Present cost expectation for the NBN? 35 billion dollars.

This is what happens when governments try to supplant the free market in providing goods and services for people. It is as Ludwig von Mises predicted in 1920, in his article called “Economic Calculation in the Socialist Commonwealth,”¹⁷ concerning the Soviet Union. Mises essentially argued that

socialism is economically irrational. It is irrational because it does not allow the private ownership of property. This means that the capital markets cannot accurately price capital in terms of supply and demand. The planners' pricing will be irrational.¹⁸

There are a number of lessons to be learned from Labor's decision to proceed with the NBN, without one page of cost/benefit analysis.

Firstly, the ALP is committed to the principles of socialism, just as Christians are committed to believing in Jesus Christ. People who believe that socialism is merely one political philosophy amongst others, don't understand that socialism is actually religious in nature. For the Labor Party, socialism is a matter of faith. *Government can solve problems!* It doesn't matter how much something costs if it is socialistic in nature, the Labor Party will go ahead with it.

¹⁵ Gary De Mar and Peter Leithart, “The Reduction of Christianity,” 1988, p.360.

¹⁶ *The Australian*, 12/1/2012.

¹⁷ Reprinted in F. A. Hayek, (Ed) “Collectivist Economic Planning,” [1935], 1963, ch.3.

¹⁸ North, G., his website, 22/1/2009.

Christians are sometimes accused of having “blind faith,” but the Labor Party seems to be blind to a profound economic fact:

*There is not a single example in human history of central economic planning producing more prosperity than a free market.*¹⁹

Secondly, what is self-evident is that freedom doesn't come with socialism-bondage does. The more government schemes are foisted upon us against our will, the more we are running up a substantial deficit that must be re-paid. After thirteen years of Labor government from 1983-1996, the Coalition was elected and took ten years to pay back the accumulated debts. Then in 2007 Labor was returned to office, and quickly started to borrow again.

As Davy Crockett is reputed to have written, "a government big enough to supply you with everything you need, is a government big enough to take away everything that you have..."

Thirdly, we learn that

the single most exciting thing you encounter in government is competence, because it's so rare (U.S. Senator Daniel P. Moynihan).

Fourth, the Bible has to be taken note of if the world is going to re-discover freedom. Keynesian economists like our present Treasurer, believe that government deficits overcome recessions. This is the curse of the West today, and it was an Australian economist, commenting before a Senate Committee, who testified that "the use of Keynesian economics has been one of the great catastrophes for economic theory in the West."²⁰

Conclusion:

*The rejection of God's law is the most expensive rejection of a capital resource that any man or any society can make.*²¹

Knowledge of and obedience to the Bible is the key to liberty, including economic liberty. That was the key to the West's dominance in the world up till the First World War, and that necessitates (in brief) more individual responsibility, less government spending and less taxes.

Is that the ideology that you want?

¹⁹ Andrew Napolitano, "How Much Economic Freedom do we have in the United States?" Rockwell website, 20/1/2012.

²⁰ Dr Steven Kates, 21/9/09.

²¹ Gary North, "The Dominion Covenant," 1987, p.109.

The Ideology of Freedom (VI)

By Andrew McColl, 6/3/2012

Liberation and the law of God go together. God's announcement to His people that He is the God who delivered them from Egypt, and then His presentation of the Ten Commandments, makes this connection between freedom and Biblical law inescapably clear. The Christian economist who takes God's word seriously has a responsibility to begin to examine the case-law applications of God's law to see where economic issues are involved, and what requirements God sets forth for economic relationships.

To abandon faith in the reliability of God's law in economics is to abandon faith in what the Bible proclaims as the only basis of liberation, namely, liberation under the sovereign power of God, who sustains the universe and calls all men to conform themselves to His ethical standards in every area of life, in time and on earth.²²

Christians do not know just how important the Bible is. It has been Biblical ideology that has been at the forefront of the West's progress, and has been the key to freedom historically.

Should we be surprised about this? God designed and made us, and everything He made was "very good" (Gen.1:31). He has provided the Ten Commandments and the rest of His law, as a foundational blue-print for every society's health and success. When Christian people take their knowledge of the Bible and apply it to themselves, their family, their Church and then to society and government, good things can begin to happen around them.

Concerning the godly man, the Bible says that "his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does he prospers" (Ps.1:2-3).

The great tragedy is that we have not done this consistently throughout the Church for over two hundred years, and so a great rot slowly set into the West. Now, the West is in steep decline, and the only thing that will change the West now for good, is Christian people picking up their Bible, getting some understanding of it and obediently applying it again, everywhere. Yes, this will take time, but it can be done. It must be done, or else the West will inevitably end up in tyranny. We're nearly there now.

Israel's society went into decline when Israel turned from God, but God saw to it that prophets came and spoke to the nation, ordering it to repent. Mostly, those prophets were ignored, so God turned up the pressure by sending judgment in some form: drought, invasion, even captivity. Economic pressures are the things that tend to bring a change of heart amongst God's people, if they have initially been resistant.

²² Gary North, "The Sinai Strategy," 1986, p.23-24.

Is that where we are now? I don't know, but I do know that unless we Christians make radical changes, our societies are going to continue to deteriorate.

Jesus said that "the kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened" (Mat.13:33). What did He mean? The Bible elsewhere explains that "leaven" is like teaching, or doctrine (Mat.16:12). Thus God's will is that the teaching or doctrine of the kingdom of God is to permeate everything in society, and our task as His ambassadors is to see that this happens.

We must not be intimidated about this. We must not say as Moses said, "Lord, choose someone else," or as Jeremiah, "I'm not old enough." Of course we have to start with ourselves, and combat the evil that is in our own hearts, lest we be exposed to the charge of hypocrisy when we confront another.

The field of Christianity is the world. The Christian cannot be satisfied so long as any human activity is either opposed to Christianity or out of all connection with Christianity. Christianity must pervade not merely all nations, but also all of human thought. The Christian, therefore, cannot be indifferent to any branch of earnest human endeavour.... The Kingdom must be advanced not merely extensively, but also intensively. The Church must seek to conquer not merely every man for Christ, but also the whole of man....

*What is today a matter of academic speculation begins tomorrow to move armies and pull down empires. . . . The Church has no right to be so absorbed in helping the individual that she forgets the world. . . .*²³

God knows all about freedom. He said, "I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt...so I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians" (Ex.3:7-8). He got them out with signs and wonders under Moses at the Exodus. He is the authority in the universe about freedom, as He is about all things. Thus an ideology of freedom is to be found in the Bible in many places, and Christians must be able to expound that ideology, becoming authoritative in it.

It also means we must be willing to confront violations of freedom, when they appear. They may be spiritual, personal, moral, economic and governmental, to name just a few. We must be quick to spot violations (beginning with ourselves), and readily confront them so that they are removed from society. Wilberforce for one was successful in this, in relation to slavery in England.

That might be new for us, and represent a change of focus, but that's all right. Christians have been successful at this over the centuries, because we have Biblical knowledge, along with confidence and power: "...the righteous are bold as a lion" (Prov.28:1).

Let's find our individual places in the kingdom, where the Lord wants us to expound His ideology of freedom. God knows we need it, the Church needs it, society needs it. He will equip us, but we must be willing to get off our tails and get to work. Ready?

History has never been dominated by majorities, but only by dedicated minorities who stand unconditionally on their faith (Rousas Rushdoony).

²³ Gresham Machan, "Christianity and Culture," 1913, pp.49-52, quoted in "Theonomy," (G. North), 1991, p.92.

The Ideology of Freedom (VII)

By Andrew McColl, 13/3/2012.

...it is imperative for Christians to revive the Biblical doctrines of grace and heirship. In a world of grace, we are all heirs: we have received unearned wealth without any work or works on our part. Heirship imposes upon us a major task of stewardship. The whole of the law gives us the pattern of stewardship for the heirs of grace. Our Lord sums it all up in six words: "freely you have received, freely give" (Mat.10:8).²⁴

As heirs of the Lord, Christians have a huge responsibility in the earth, one of these being to perpetuate the Biblical ideology of freedom. The West's freedom for three hundred years has really been Christian freedom: "...if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (Jn.8:36). Take the Bible out of any society and over time, it will collapse. Think of the Soviet Union.

But for many generations, perpetuating the Biblical ideology of freedom has been a task we have been progressively failing in. Because the Bible and the Christian faith has been increasingly interpreted in personal and pietistic terms, and not applied beyond the walls of home and Church, this has left the door open for others to apply their evil ideologies to society, and the results have been devastating, and led us into bondage.

This fact could hardly be clearer than in what governments in the twentieth century. Scripture shows how Ahab and Jezebel departed from the Ten Commandments through their idolatry, covetousness, use of false witnesses, murdering and stealing from Naboth (I Kings 21). Well, governments of our era all over the world have made Ahab and Jezebel (in their abuse of one innocent man and his family) look like under-achievers.

Twentieth century governments murdered some 130 million people, more than in all of history put together, and we would be deceiving ourselves if we believed this evil was limited to the totalitarian regimes.²⁵ Socialist policies of Western governments (under the nose of the Church, and often with its tacit approval) have been vehicles for the perpetuation of great evil.

This means we Christians have a lot of work to do; the Bible must be applied everywhere. If God would send a prophet in the person of Elijah to confront Ahab and Jezebel for their disobedience to the Ten Commandments (promising them judgment), and if He sent John to confront Herod for his adultery with Herodias (Mat.14:1-12), would He not want to send His ambassadors, to confront evil governments today?

The Ten Commandments must be urgently applied to every aspect of society, just as God commanded Elijah to apply them to Ahab: "Have you murdered and taken possession?" (I

²⁴ Rousas Rushdoony, "The Roots of Reconstruction," 1991, p.132.

²⁵ See R. J. Rummel, "Death by Government," 1994.

Kings 21:19) For instance, are governments stealing from individuals (a violation of the Eighth Commandment) in their confiscatory tax policies, and labelling this “social justice?”

In my view, unquestioningly they are. Therefore, it’s time to stop the rot. But it has to start with us in the Church, for judgment must begin with the household of God (I Pet.4:17).

We must begin to search the scriptures, saying “Who does God make responsible for Education, Health and Welfare? And what is the role of the individual, the family, the Church and government, according to the Bible? How must we re-apply the law of God to society?” These are big questions, but they are not difficult ones, and we have been negligent in failing to seek answers to them, and the world at large has suffered immeasurably.

Conclusion:

The Bible teaches us that “...each one of us will give an account of himself to God” (Ro.14:12), and on that day, God doesn’t want to hear our excuses for disobedience. The Church has been called to be leaders of action in the world, just as Adam and Eve were called to rule (Gen.1:26-28) through their work in the Garden of Eden.

For too long, we’ve been inclined to say, “all that work beyond the family and the Church is way too hard,” and through our negligence the serpent has had his way in our societies. It’s time we grew up, repented of our disobedience, took up our responsibilities and assumed our places as God’s rightful heirs in the world.

And that will mean lots of faithful, diligent work in making the proper applications of God’s Word and His law to society. That work has been done for us by others (like Rousas Rushdoony, Greg Bahnsen and Gary North) already, but it must be embraced and acted upon by the Church.

If all is of grace, there is no place for envy. We are heirs by the adoption of grace in order that we might give of that which we have received in order to be faithful citizens and members of the Kingdom of God.²⁶

²⁶ Rushdoony, p.133.

The Ideology of Freedom (VIII)

By Andrew McColl, 20/3/2012

In any advanced social order, social financing is a major public necessity. The social order cannot exist without a vast network of social institutions which require financing and support. If a Christian concept of social financing is lacking, then the state moves in quickly to supply the lack and gain the social control which results. Social financing means social power.²⁷

Jesus commented that "...where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Mat.6:21). People put their money into those things that they consider to be worthwhile; the things they believe will prove to be profitable for themselves or others. When this is done in an irresponsible way (such as in a godless society), some institutions and people will receive monies that they cannot use wisely, and those people and institutions that are responsible, are deprived.

This is why proper, Biblical tithing is so critical for health of any community. Time after time, we have seen governments everywhere confiscate large amount of money from the community in the form of taxation, only to fritter it away on foolish and inefficient schemes. We cannot always do a lot to stop this, other than voting for governments that will tax less, and encouraging government to tax and spend less. But what we can do, is ensure that we are honouring God in the use of our tithe.

The tithe belongs to the local Church. If all Church members who earned an income tithed, it would mean the Church was able to employ more people and do more things in the community.

But it would mean much more than this. I am heartened by the proliferation of Christian schools, hospitals and aged care institutions in the Australian community. They indicate that Christians are seeing these places as worthy of their dollars, and are building them up. Yes, they may be receiving money from the taxpayer (which is far from ideal), but they do exist.

The will to rebuild is basic to those who see sin as the problem, and God and His law-word as the answer. They are concerned with rebuilding in their own lives, to exercise dominion over themselves and the earth, and they are thus the forerunners of reconstruction in every realm. To them all things are possible under God.²⁸

When there are natural disasters such as floods and bushfires, and churches and Christian people can turn up there to care with food, medical supplies and blankets, that is wonderful. It is a huge statement of our beliefs (think of Mat.25:31-46, and the Good Samaritan) in action. As Christians are relied on in the community, and trusted to steadily take this kind of responsibility, it then means that tax resources do not need to be set aside for this in future by governments.

²⁷ Rousas Rushdoony, "Roots of Reconstruction," 1991, p.605.

²⁸ Rushdoony, p.837.

What is happening? A snow-balling effect has commenced, where Christians have begun to really impact their community and nation. It is never in some grandiose way, but quietly coming along to assist where there is a need.

We should never minimise this, saying, “Oh well, it wasn’t much.” It WAS much. It is the beginnings of something remarkable in the community. We have always had the potential for this, and in some way, it has been taking place from the beginning. But the tithe (when paid by Christians across a whole nation) permits this on a massive scale that we may not ever have dreamed of. It means the Church and Christian people becoming responsible for all manner of essential social activities, which means that over time, we get to do a lot more, and to influence more.

And so we get to be community builders, line upon line. The Biblical principle is always, “power flows to those that take responsibility.” As non-believers see this taking place it becomes clear to them that the Church is really doing something. It has an agenda, and is going about its tasks successfully, getting results for its investment of money and time, and really helping people. And this encourages people to want to join this institution. To say, “well, maybe this crowd is worth being a part of.”

Conclusion:

The Bible warns us: “Who has despised the day of small things?” (Zech.4:10). Every journey starts with a few small steps. The tithe is God’s means of financing social reconstruction, and the Bible promises that “...the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Hab.2:14). A big part of this will be Christians honouring God and tithing, and taking responsibility in their local community. Are you ready?

Make no mistake about it: social financing is a social necessity. It will either be done by an irresponsible and godless state, subsidizing irresponsibility and godlessness and penalizing the godly, or it will be done by godly men, who, through Biblically grounded administration and godly wisdom, will further social order, true churches, Christian education, and a society flourishing in liberty under God.²⁹

²⁹ Rushdoony, p.609.

The Ideology of Freedom (IX)

By Andrew McColl, 27/3/2012

It is not a post-Christian era that we face but a post-humanistic world. Every thinker who evades that fact is past-oriented and blind; he is incapable of preparing anyone for the realities of our present situation. Humanism on all sides is busy committing hara-kiri; it is disembowelling itself with passion and fervour; it needs no enemies, because humanism is now its own worst enemy. We have lived thus far in a post-Christian era, and it is dying. The important question is, what shall we do?

We must recognise that this is one of the greatest if not the greatest opportunity yet to come to Christianity. This is a time of glorious opportunity, a turning point in history, and the wise will prepare for it.³⁰

The critical factor for national reformation has always begun with some fundamentals: Christian obedience and responsibility. There are no substitutes for these, and Deuteronomy 28 bears this out. When governments around the world (particularly since 1905), told their people that “we will solve your national problems,” you could pretty well guarantee that the results would be abuse, tyranny and disaster.

Think I am referring to the totalitarian regimes? This happened with the democracies as well, and it’s happening in Australia today.

This should warn us that top-down reformation attempts are not enough. Why? Reformation must include the grass-roots of the community: families, churches, communities and ultimately nations. This was the basis of the Wesleyan revivals.

The gospel has always begun with individuals. When Jesus came to Zaccheus’ house and effected a huge change in his life, the change was personal, not institutional. Zaccheus said, “Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much” (Luke 19:8).

Zaccheus did not say, “won’t the government be so good for us now?” He did not say, “public education, health and welfare is going to be just wonderful in Israel, now that Jesus has visited my home.” Zaccheus only laid claim to those significant changes that had impacted his life. He had been transformed through an encounter with Jesus Christ. His attitude to his money, to theft and to the poor had changed, and he was a different man.

Now if we extrapolate the testimony of Zaccheus over say a million people, we have the potential for huge social change in a community and nation. One million people who have been transformed by the gospel, become powerful instruments in their community. If on average, these one million people joined or formed churches that then averaged 150-200 people, that would mean around 6,000 churches. The opportunities for influence and social impact would be tremendous.

But that is not all, it is only the beginning. A church of 200 people would average around 40-50 people earning a full salary. If all of these people are tithing, it means that Church has resources

³⁰ Rousas Rushdoony, “Roots of Reconstruction,” 1991, p.826-827.

beyond its own immediate needs to care for needy people, for missions, and for all manner of social activities such as food-banks, etc.

God has only given governments grace for certain things. Civil government with the power of the sword (Ro.13:1-4) has the power to do great harm, but very little good. In fact, there is not really much good that governments can do, other than maintain godly law, and build infrastructure such as roads and bridges. My guess is that no more than 10% of serious social problems anywhere, are related to evil laws. Evil laws can and must be changed, but these are relatively insignificant, compared to the outcomes resulting from individual sin and folly. Government attempts to “do good” generally accomplish the opposite.

The civil government is basically an institution for establishing God’s justice by means of courts of law. The principles of Biblical law are to be imposed on the market: restitution, prevention of coercion, prevention of fraud (false weights and measures: Leviticus 19:36), national defence, law enforcement, enforcement of contracts (including marriage contracts)...

The state is to prevent moral evil. The Old Testament is clear on this point. Sexual deviancy is prohibited: homosexual acts (Lev.20:13), prostitution (Lev.19:29), bestiality (Ex.22:19), adultery ((Lev.20:10), and incest (Lev.20:11). The state is not creating good men by enforcing such laws; it is merely preventing evil acts between consenting, but deviant adults. These laws protect the family, and the holiness of God demands that the state enforce such laws.³¹

Modern man has refused to believe this. In rejecting Christ, he has wanted the State to be his Saviour, and to solve all his problems. He believes the lies of the tempter, as surely as Adam and Eve did. This is really why we have the modern nonsense of socialism, which has proved to be a shocking failure, especially in those areas it was supposed to bring the most benefit: education, health and welfare.

But as individuals, families and churches begin to take up the load of their Biblically defined social responsibility, it means a whole list of things begin to come into play. Those churches can become social beacons of light, which through their evangelism, discipleship, practical care and instruction of the community in all aspects of a Christian world view can have a major impact locally. (This is what happened under Calvin in Geneva.) The word of Christian reconstruction applying initially to the individual, the family and the Church, begins to go out into the community and nation, and effect change.

Conclusion: *...our recovery will come slowly. It will come as men, each in their sphere of action, begin the task of reconstruction. Reconstruction begins with our lives and God’s grace; it extends to our vocation, our institutions, homes and society...It is time then for shovel work, a great and exciting time when new foundations shall be laid, and a future established by those who will work for it.³²*

³¹ Gary North, “Unconditional Surrender,” 2010, p.266.

³² Rushdoony, p.752.

The Ideology of Freedom (X)

By Andrew McColl, 3/4/2012

*Freedom is a theological concept. It is especially concerned with liberation, or salvation. The great religious battle of history, and especially of our time, is thus: does salvation mean freedom from God, or freedom through God's grace and to God's purpose? Freedom from God, or under God?*³³

There is hardly a human activity that doesn't involve some kind of risk. When we drive a few kilometres down to the local shops, there is no guarantee there won't be a car accident. But knowing there are risks in life doesn't stop people doing what they think is best for themselves and others, based on the information they have at hand.

Knowledge is an asset, and good information has to be paid for, either with money or experience. People who are embarking on some new activity should find out as much as possible beforehand, so they can maximise their chances of success. No one wants to "jump in the deep-end," only to find the pool is full of sharks. For instance, we have sometimes engaged in profitable share trading, partly because we paid for someone else's knowledge.

The most important source of information for mankind is scripture. The Bible tells us about God, the world God made, man and our state before Him. It is frank, but factual. People who ignore the Bible are ignoring the document that could save them from disaster, and from hell eternally. (Even with the Bible, people can still suffer disaster, as Job discovered).

This was the first mistake the children of Israel made. They knew the promises of God made to Abraham. They had seen first-hand the disastrous outcomes for Pharaoh when Moses under God repeatedly confronted him. They had participated in the Exodus, and been miraculously fed in the wilderness. Every day they witnessed a remarkable provision of food and water from the hand of God.

But when the twelve spies were sent to spy out the land, they saw some new things. Ten of them saw some things they were quite unprepared for: giants! They said "...the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large." They said "...we are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us... and all the people we saw in it are men of great size...we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight" (Nu.13:28, 31-33).

What had happened? Through fear, they had abandoned their greatest source of knowledge, God's promises. Their fear led them directly to a form of bondage, not the freedom God had promised. They decided that the risks of obeying God now, were just too much. What they saw in the land was true, but they refused to interpret these facts, according to faith and the promises of God. The facts of life around them intimidated them such, that they abandoned the Word of God.

³³ Rousas Rushdoony, "Roots of Reconstruction," 1991, p.998.

God killed these ten men (Nu.14:36-37). The irony for them was that while they considered the prospect of obedience to God in their circumstance too risky, they had taken a much greater risk in disobeying God and rejecting His plan through unbelief, and they died.

This shows us that

The rejection of God's law is the most expensive rejection of a capital resource that any man or any society can make.³⁴

There is nothing about their experience (and the victory of Joshua and Caleb), that doesn't apply to the Church today. In fact, it has always applied to the Church.

If Gideon had been intimidated by the Midianites (Judges 6), he would never have delivered Israel.

If David had considered Goliath just too powerful, he would never have done the same.

If the Church of Jesus' day had been intimidated by the power of the Roman empire, the Church might have been still-born.

If Athanasius had been intimidated by the proponents of religious and political humanism of the 4th century, he would never have stood firm in his faith, and defeated them.

If Luther had placed too much emphasis on the power and intimidatory threats of the Catholic Church of his era, the Reformation might never have commenced.

If we are intimidated by the power of statism to such a degree that we refuse to take bold steps of faith we will never act, and our children the Church and the world will be robbed of our examples, our contribution and the freedom that will result from our obedience.

But men and women of godly faith refuse intimidation, because they are God's servants: they believe the word of God, knowing like Joshua and Caleb there is a great future and a hope for us all, as we do so.

This generation would do well to remember the words of Christ, concerning the kingdom of God, words too rarely if ever preached on: "For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear" (Mk.4:28). There is a spontaneity of growth which is not dependent upon man: the earth brings forth growth. But man must sow the seed, till the field, and work to bring forth the harvest. There must be, first, faith that results will come, and, second, work to plant and till for that harvest.³⁵

Conclusion:

God's Word is our greatest resource in this life. We all sow, based on faith and knowledge, and sowing always involves risk: risk in sowing, or in not sowing.

Are you sowing out of obedience to God, or avoiding it because you're intimidated? Only one can ever lead you to liberty.

³⁴ Gary North, "The Dominion Covenant," 1987, p.109.

³⁵ Rushdoony, *ibid.*