

# *The Path to Christian Dominion (I)*

By Andrew McColl, 7/6/2011.

*Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom (Luke 12:32).*

It is impossible to read Jesus' Words without noting the immense confidence He had that the Father's will was going to be accomplished in human history, through the power of the Holy Spirit. We are obliged as believers to accept His confidence, and give ourselves to playing our part in His program for the conquest of all the nations.

Of course, it will always appear an utter impossibility, and those who have no faith in God will claim it is an impossibility for God's plan to be fulfilled. But that is not our immediate problem. We are to play our part, and leave the results with the Lord. But there are some things that are evident.

*Any social movement that is serious about changing the shape of history must have at least two features. First, it must have a doctrine of the possibility of **positive social change**.... Second, it needs **a unique doctrine of law**... There is another feature of a successful program of social reconstruction which is usually present, and which is undeniably powerful: **the doctrine of predestination**.<sup>1</sup>*

The gospel always begins with individuals. The testimony of the woman at the well who met the Lord resulted in many of the Samaritans believing in Jesus Christ (Jn.4:39). The Bible tells us how Zaccheus was transformed by the gospel (Luke 19:1-10). It also says that "he who steals must steal no longer, but rather he must labour..." (Eph.4:28).

Families are impacted too, because individuals are a part of families. We see this in the Book of Acts. When the Philippian gaoler was converted, he believed in God "with his whole household" (Acts 16:34). These converted individuals and families can impact their neighbourhood, and ultimately their nation for Christ.

The changed lifestyle of the convert, his family, his neighbourhood and his nation shows that positive social change results from the propagation of the gospel. This can be great indeed. Wesley's preaching changed England; parents abandoned the pubs and drinking houses and stayed home with their children, and as a consequence the infant mortality rates dropped progressively for decades. Historians have commented that Wesley's preaching saved England from the violence and depravity that overtook France at the same time, due to the French Revolution.

## Conclusion:

*We need to revive our hope in God. We need to revive our hope in His good*

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Gary North, "Unconditional Surrender," 2010, p.315-316.

*judgment. We need to revive our hope in ourselves, as redeemed men, so that we can face the dominion assignment with confidence.<sup>2</sup>*

Joshua and Caleb believed in the possibility of positive social change. After spying out the land, they said “if the Lord is pleased with us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us—a land which flows with milk and honey” (Nu.14:8).

The prospect of positive social change as a result of our Christian labours, gives us encouragement to continue what can seem to be frustrating and unrewarding work. Jesus said that “...you shall be My witnesses...” (Acts 1:8), and so we are to be “steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord” (I Cor.15:58).

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<sup>2</sup> North, p.312.

## *The Path to Christian Dominion (II)*

By Andrew McColl, 14/6/2011.

*The Lord says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet" (Ps.110:1).*

The all-encompassing nature of the authority of the resurrected Jesus Christ shown forth in this Psalm, and in the Great Commission, teaches us that we cannot exclude anything from the realm of His authority in the earth today. That includes the law.

If the second thing we need for a social program of reconstruction is *a unique doctrine of law*, we have to ask ourselves, "Which law?" or perhaps more accurately, "Whose law?"

When God gave Israel the Ten Commandments, they were a nation of recently released slaves. They were really in a bad state, and this became evident when Moses (under God) attempted to lead them. They had some handed down oral traditions received from their fathers, but not much more. But God said, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" (Ex.20:2).

Now, God was to begin the process of constituting the nation as His people. He had released them from bondage by a series of miracles, and His plan was that they would be a free people, under Him. And He had to begin from the beginning. What with? The law structure for His new nation.

Freedom does not mean the absence of law; on the contrary, the law-abiding person is the one who possess the greatest freedom. Jesus promised (Jn.8:31-32) that it would be His disciples who would possess the greatest freedom.

It is significant that the totalitarian governments of the twentieth century were deliberate and systematic in their atheism, and their rejection of anything to do with the God of the Bible. Their law was consistent with this approach. This should be a warning to us: get away from God and all He represents intellectually, and you get away from all of the true foundations of liberty for any nation.

The word "law" is used some 430 times in the Bible. Can anyone say with any confidence that law is not important to God? It should also be important to us. Speaking of the Ten Commandments and God's law in general, Moses commented that "what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today?" (Deut.4:8). Moses also said that the nations around Israel would "hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people' " (Deut.4:6a).

The unique doctrine of law that Christians must embrace today as an essential aspect of Jesus Christ's dominion in the world, is God's law. The other options which have been pursued historically, always end up in some form of tyranny or abuse. Moses said to Israel, "so you shall keep His statutes and His commandments which I am giving you today, that it might go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may live long on the land which

the Lord your God is giving you for all time” (Deut.4:40). The embrace of God’s law would lead to the blessing of God.

In Psalm Two, the rebels say of God and His Messiah, “let us tear their fetters apart and cast away their cords from us” (Ps.2:3). This shows us that one indication of an individual or a nation’s rebellion against God, is the rejection of His law.

When Rehoboam and Israel forsook the law of the Lord, the Biblical commentary is that they were being unfaithful to God (II Chron.12:1-2). As a result, God sent judgment: an invasion force from Egypt (v.2-3).

But Jehoshaphat was different. The Bible says that “the Lord was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the example of his father David’s earlier days and did not seek the Baals, but sought the God of his father, followed His commandments, and did not act as Israel did” (II Chron.17:3-4).

As a consequence, “the Lord established the kingdom in his control” (v.5). Furthermore, Jehoshaphat sent teachers around Judah “having the book of the law of the Lord with them; and they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught among the people” (II Chron. 17:9). As a consequence, “the dread of the Lord was on all the kingdoms of the lands which were around Judah, so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat” (II Chron.17:10).

The Bible says that “the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our king; He will save us” (Isa.33:22). God’s law is a blessing, and the man who delights in God’s law will be blessed (Ps.1:1-3).

Does this mean that judgment falls on any nation that rejects God’s law? Of course. To remove God’s law from our midst is to remove an aspect of God’s gracious sovereignty and rule. Everybody needs God’s law.

Today, the Church has inherited a lot of baggage; false ideas to discard in relation to God’s law. Just as Jesus needed to come and cleanse the temple in His day, the Church needs cleansing from the many pollutants that have plagued us for centuries. In fact, we’ve been picking up false teaching for two thousand of years, due to ignorance, misunderstanding and belief in lies.

*All of the Old Testament remains normative and relevant for Jesus’ followers (2 Tim.3:16), but none of it can be rightly interpreted until one understands how it has been fulfilled in Christ. Every Old Testament text must be viewed in light of Jesus’ person and ministry and the changes He introduced by the new covenant He inaugurated.*<sup>3</sup>

Here’s one commonly misunderstood text:

...you are not under law, but under grace (Ro.6:14).

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<sup>3</sup> C. Blomberg, “Matthew,” 1992, p.103-4. Quoted in “Perspectives on Tithing,” Croteau, D., (Ed.), 2011, p.35.

If people believe that this somehow entitles them to reject any requirement to acknowledge God's law, they are living in a deception. God's law (with adjustments plainly stated in the New Testament) will be the same for eternity. Jesus said, "do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. 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.5:17-18).

North's comments here are helpful:

I have adopted a general principle of judicial interpretation: unless an Old Testament law is annulled in principle or specifically by the New Testament, it is still in force. I agree with Dr Greg Bahnsen: "the *methodological* point, then, is that we presume our obligation to obey any Old Testament commandment unless the New Testament indicates otherwise. We must assume continuity with the Old Testament rather than assume discontinuity."<sup>4</sup> With respect to all Old Covenant laws: "Innocent until proven guilty." An unchallenged Old Covenant law possesses continuing authority in the New Testament era. No additional proof of authority is required by Biblical law. Unless its authority has been revoked by the New Testament, a Mosaic law automatically crosses the boundary between the two covenants. The law's adoption into the New Testament kingdom of God is automatic.<sup>5</sup>

### Conclusion:

The Bible tells us that "great are the works of the Lord; they are studied by those who delight in them" (Ps.111:2). If the Church really wants to be effective and authoritative in the world again, it will have to develop a love for God's law. But more than that, the Church will have to believe that God's law is the greatest and most desirable law for all the nations of the world, at all times.

Like Ezra, who the Bible says "was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given..." (Ezra 7:6), we in the Church will need to become proficient in the law. This will begin with familiarising ourselves with, and mastering Exodus 20-23,<sup>6</sup> along with the associated texts in the rest of the Pentateuch. We will need to master the text-book and the case for Biblical law, be able to handle most of the hard questions, and go and find the answers for the remainder.

The Psalmist said, "I hastened and did not delay to keep Your commandments" (Ps.119:60), while Moses addressed Israel, saying, "the secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law" (Deut.29:29).

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<sup>4</sup> Greg Bahnsen, "By This Standard: The Authority of God's Law Today," [1985] 2008, p.2.

<sup>5</sup> Gary North, "The Covenantal Tithe," 2011, p.11.

<sup>6</sup> See also Rousas Rushdoony, "The Institutes of Biblical Law," 1973, Greg Bahnsen, "By This Standard," 1991, Gary North, "Tools of Dominion: The Case Laws of Exodus," 1990, (4 Volumes, 1,200 pages).



## *The Path to Christian Dominion (III)*

By Andrew McColl, 21/6/2011.

### *The Doctrine of Predestination.*

*And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose (Ro.8:28).*

To say that the Bible says a lot about God's providence is an understatement, for there are hundreds of verses referring (directly or indirectly) to the fact of God's providential control of history.

Consider firstly, the life of Joseph, Jacob's son. The Bible tells us that "until the time that his word came to pass, the word of the Lord tested him" (Ps.105:19). Joseph's commentary on God's predestination at work in his life, was what he later said to his brothers concerning their mistreatment of him: "you meant it for evil, but God meant it for good..." (Gen.50:20).

Then Samson. His parents did not understand why he was interested in a Philistine woman. They said, "is there no woman ...among all our people, that you go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" But the Bible says that "...it was of the Lord, for He was seeking an occasion against the Philistines" (Judges 14:4a).

The Bible tells us that Jesus was "delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God..." (Acts 2:23). God used the evil plans of men who hated and wanted to destroy His Son, to further His own plan in history of making Jesus Lord of all. These events tell us why we must appreciate the significance of God's predestination in our lives.

The Bible says that "the steps of a man are established by the Lord..." (Ps.37:23). We certainly may never understand all the complexities of how God accomplishes His plan, and to some degree, we don't need to. What is more important is that we accept the fact that God is working in our lives as individuals, and in all of human history, and that we act accordingly in faith. That takes a lot of pressure off us to think we have to do it all.

History is the record of God's providential oversight of His world. It is not a list of endless cycles, as in Greek tradition, but is linear, as God progressively establishes His kingdom. Only God could be at the root of all temporal events... every action derived from God gives unity and meaning to history, and because man is the instrument of God, one is denied the luxury of being a spectator...this unbroken activity of God pushes man into an unbroken cooperation with history.<sup>1</sup>

God's predestination of all events should give the believer great encouragement. It means that the devil's work and all his temptations are subject to God, and God is using the devil for His own purpose, as the Book of Job conclusively shows. It also means that all activity is subject to God, so that we do not live in some kind of sea of uncertainty, but in a world of God's covenant

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<sup>1</sup> John M. Headly, "Luther's View of Church History," 1963, p.1.

with His people, His love for them, and His providential care of them. In fact, we did not choose Him, but He chose us (Jn.15:16).

There is no piece of knowledge that God doesn't know, no activity that He is not aware of, and no area of power that is outside of His oversight. Because of all this, Paul exclaimed, "Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! (Ro.11:33).

God has predestined that His people be on the winning team. Oh, we may not see all that we would like to in our lifetime, but that's not the point. Like all of the saints of history, God wants to use us in our time and our generation, and He is using His providential oversight of time and history to do so.

The knowledge of His predestinating power should motivate and encourage us concerning His total victory established at the cross and with the resurrection, to get on with the job of confirming His dominion in the world.

How can we be confident of this? Because the Bible says that "the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Isa.11:9b).