

*The Trail of Blood of the
Martyrs of Jesus*
A Case of Premeditated Murder

Christian Revisionists on Trial
The Christian History and Meaning
of the First Amendment

Jerald Finney

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Acknowledgements

I thank Jesus Christ for saving me
and making a new creature of me.

I thank the martyrs of Jesus for their
willingness to give all for the savior.

This book attempts to glorify the Lord
by indicting Christian Revisionists
—past, present, and future—
for murder and/or conspiracy to murder
his saints.



“And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.”

Revelation 17.6

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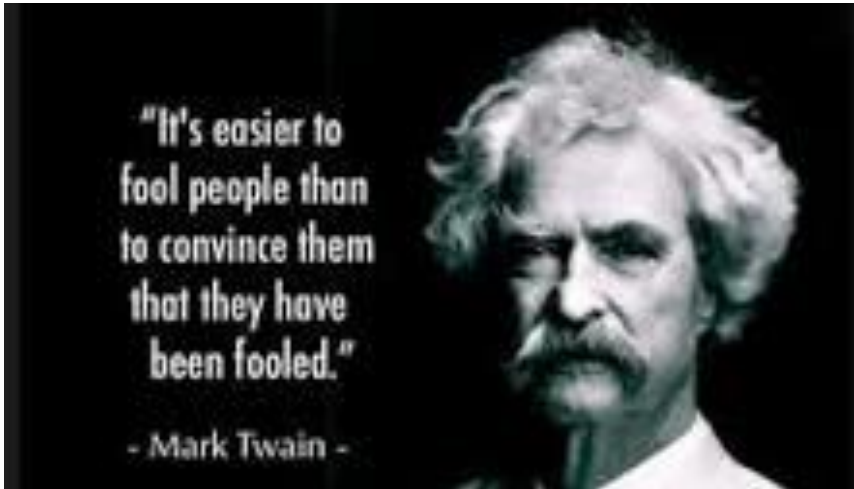
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“The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.”
Luke 18.8

Preface

“But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.”¹

After the Lord saved me, I was dedicated to serving him. I went to church, read my Bible, read “Christian” books advertised on Christian media, and listened to “Christian” radio. I read *The Trail of Blood*² and was much moved by the stories of Christian martyrs, but had no idea that the descendants of the “Christians” who killed millions of my spiritual ancestors were hard at work in America to reconstruct America according to the theology of the persecutors of old.

I unknowingly went to work for the same cause that, when in control as history proves, murders everyone labeled “heretic.” Christian Right propaganda motivated, educated, and led me to become a Christian Activist. America was in a mess and needed redirection. I went to Republican Party meetings, introduced Platform Resolutions, became a precinct chairman, served on various committees, put up yard signs, made calls for candidates, served as a delegate to Party Conventions, etc.

By the late 1990s, my enthusiasm waned because of the obvious steep decline in all that we had worked for—respect for the true Gospel, more heretical and apostate churches, declining morality to depths inconceivable in 1980, the year I was saved, and increasing political tyranny. Since then, things have gotten much worse, and the rates of decline are accelerating.

Twenty-two years after Christian Revisionists lured me into the political arena, I began a self-study of Bible doctrines of church, government, and separation of church and state. Sometime in 2006, I began to learn that books and other writings and teaching by some mainline Christian authors, which I and millions of believers had depended on, were not accurate.

One Nation Under Law,³ some of the books it cited, and some other books that came to my attention launched me into the universe of historical information which I never dreamed existed. I discovered that Christian

¹ Re. 2.14.

² In the 1980s I was first made aware of the history of Christian martyrs when I bought, read, and put aside the following book: J. M. Carroll, *The Trail of Blood*, (Distributed by Ashland Avenue Baptist Church, 163 N. Ashland Avenue, Lexington KY 40502, 606-266-4341). J. M. Carroll was a leader among Baptists who studied history and the Bible in an attempt to “find the church which was the oldest and most like churches described in the New Testament.” In the course of his studies, he gathered “one of the greatest libraries on church history. This library was given at his death to the Southwestern Baptist Seminary, Ft. Worth, Texas.” Carroll, Introduction at pp. 1-2, 11.

³ Mark Douglas McGarvie, *One Nation Under Law: America’s Early National Struggles to Separate Church and State* (DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005). Mark Douglas McGarvie: Ph.D., Indiana University Bloomington; M.A., Marquette University; J.D., Marquette University; B.A., Northwestern University.

Historical Revisionism is fiction peppered with selected facts taken out of context to support brutal church/state theologies.

Christian Right Activists follow Christian Revisionist teachings which secularists call Christian Rightest ideology. Sadly, they are not Christian at all. Christian Revisionism follows Old Testament guidelines for worldly warfare,⁴ not New Testament guidelines for spiritual warfare. History puts them in a bad light so they lie, select facts out of context, and state conclusions without proof. They claim they seek a nation “under God,” but actually, as always, wish the state/church to comprehensively enforce morality and God’s law, as they see it. The results of their efforts:

- (1) Christian Activists continue to fight the same misguided battles under the same leadership and lies;
- (2) deceived Christians do not fight the eternal spiritual warfare the Bible calls them to fight;
- (3) deceived Christians fight a temporal warfare as directed by Christian Revisionists;
- (4) Christ is blasphemed and his cause discredited;
- (5) religious apostasy expands, morality sinks into the cesspool at an accelerating rate, and political tyranny abounds.

Secularists who expose the lies of Christians do their homework. For example, this book gleans much from the writings of Leo Pfeffer⁵ and other secular scholars and writers. Their facts are far more reliable and thorough than those of Christian Revisionists. Their analyses of Christian Revisionist theology are very insightful.

However, secularists also lie and offer their own dangerous conclusions, analyses, and revisions of history. They fill their biased writings with humanist slants, beliefs, and conclusions. Their support for “America’s open and pluralistic democracy” is totally misguided. Nonetheless, their writings and those of reliable Christian historians prove that Christian Revisionist historical facts are manipulative and not to be trusted for any purpose. Yet when another Christian Revisionist book repeating the same false information comes out, especially one authored by a popular Revisionist such as Rush Limbaugh or David Barton, Christians rush to buy and study it. Christian Activists continue to follow Christian Revisionist leaders down the road to destruction.

⁴ Christian “jihad.”

⁵ Leo Pfeffer, *Church, State, and Freedom* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1953). Leo Pfeffer (December 25, 1910 in Austria-Hungary— June 4, 1993 in Goshen, New York) was an American Jewish lawyer, constitutional scholar, and humanist who was active in movement for religious freedom in the United States, and was one of leading legal proponents of the separation of church and state. Sadly, the facts presented by Pfeffer are far more reliable than those published by Christian Historical Revisionists. Although Pfeffer was right in his conclusion that church and state should be completely separate, his reasoning is fatally flawed. His influence was very important in Supreme Court jurisprudence which resulted in separation of God and state (removed God from practically all civil government affairs in America). For more analysis of this, see Jerald Finney, *God Betrayed, Separation of Church and State: The Biblical Principles and the American Application* (Xulon Press, 2008 (www.xulonpress.com)), Section V. A reading of Pfeffer’s writings emphasizes the need for Christians to read and analyze, from a Biblical perspective, the issues of the day before proceeding behind the heretical and apostate teachings of Christian Revisionists.

INTRODUCTION

The topics covered in this INTRODUCTION are:

- (1) The Case Presented**
- (2) Some Brief Opening Remarks**
- (3) Relevant Bible Facts and Doctrines**
- (4) Relevant Pre-Colonial History**
- (5) Relevant Contemporary Matters**

(1) The Case Presented

This book is a public indictment¹ and presentation of a criminal case. The indictment charges Catholic/Reformed (Christian) Revisionists prior to the adoption of the First Amendment with murder and conspiracy to commit murder. It charges Catholic/Reformed Revisionists since then with conspiracy to commit murder since the First Amendment has prevented them from murdering “heretics.” Within these pages are the prosecution’s opening statement, presentation of evidence, and closing argument.

You are the jury. You have a solemn duty to render a just verdict. To do so, you must set aside your opinions, beliefs, life experiences, and anything else that will prevent you from reaching a verdict based upon the law and the facts. The law is clear—murder without legal justification or defense is a crime.

Since the evidence will show that none of the victims attempted to use force against anyone, there is no justification or defense for murder and conspiracy to commit murder. For example, to assert the justification of self-defense, one must admit he committed the crime charged. The guilty party must then present evidence that he was acting in self-defense. If he does so, the prosecution must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defense does not apply.

During the guilt phase of the trial, the prosecution asks that judicial notice be taken of (1) the easily verifiable historical facts

¹ “Indictment” as used here means “a thing that serves to illustrate that a system or situation is bad and deserves to be condemned.”

presented throughout the book and (2) alleged facts published by Christian Revisionists. Those facts will prove, as one Secular Revisionist correctly observed, since “[Christian Revisionists] are unable to establish a consistent way of ascertaining facts that does not incorporate the conclusions they seek to draw from them,” they select evidence “on the basis of whether it validates one’s own case and undermines one’s opponents.”² The truth of the facts presented to support the prosecutions are so authoritatively attested that they cannot reasonably be doubted. The facts have been recorded by many reliable sources over more than sixteen hundred years, from the fourth century to this day. Many of those facts will be from the writings and records of the accused. Those facts expose the theologies, motives, goals, and track records of those accused. They prove that the millions of Christian martyrs, whom those accused viciously persecuted, left a trail of blood proving that the pre-First Amendment religious zealots charged in this case are guilty of murder and conspiracy to commit murder. Facts will establish that post-First Amendment Christian Revisionists are guilty of conspiracy to commit murder. Other uncharged crimes will also be proved.

More specifically, the facts presented will show many horrendous crimes. The most noticeable and atrocious consequences of all church-state and state-church unions have been the confiscation of property, dissemination of lies about “heretics” as defined by the state-church, and other persecutions such as the beating, torture, imprisonment, drowning, burning at the stake, beheading, and burying alive of untold millions of innocent people who have dissented from the views of the state-church.

The ultimate result of alliances of church and state is always the same. Revisionist interpretation of Scripture forces others to profess allegiance to the doctrines of the official church under penalty of persecution; according to their theology, they attempt to stamp out those who, acting according to their free will, refuse to bow down to their false theology.

The church-state always enforces its own peculiar doctrines including all of the Ten Commandments including the first four

² James C. Sanford, *Blueprint for Theocracy/The Christian Right’s Vision for America*, (Providence, Rhode Island: Metacommet Books, 2014), p. 177.

commandments which deal with man's relationship to God. In effect, this requires many to be dishonest with both man and God. Since no one can be forced to choose to believe a particular religious belief in their heart, many religious hypocrites are thereby created.

The prosecution, in closing, will summarize the facts and logical inferences therefrom. He will then ask you, the jury, to find the accused "guilty, as charged."

You are on the jury because you are reading this book. As you deliberate, pay close attention to the facts. Unlike formal court trials, the jury can take all the time needed to check the evidence for accuracy and investigate beyond the evidence presented. This work, which could fill many volumes, has been distilled. Citations are provided for all authorities. Those authorities provide much more information and insight, all of which strengthens the case against those accused. Please examine as many of those authorities as possible. Your active participation is desired and profitable. Truth supports the case for prosecution.

Since no jury selection process is possible, biased jurors cannot be eliminated by challenges for cause or by peremptory challenge. Thus, the jury consists of people of various persuasions, some of whom will be inclined to nullify the law because of their presuppositions.

No matter how overwhelming the evidence, Christian Revisionist leaders on the jury will find those accused "not guilty." They believe that the end justifies the means. As always, they will resent and deny the truths presented herein. They seek the implementation of the same theology and methods which guided their conspiring murdering forefathers. Their theology justifies the use of any means to obtain their goals—lying, revising history, taking facts and portions of writings out of context, reaching conclusions without proof, confiscation of property, murder, etc.

Some Christian Revisionists followers on the jury sincerely believe in the worthiness of their cause and trust and rely on their leaders. However, once they are presented with truthful evidence which proves not only the guilt of the those accused but also that

their cunning Revisionist leaders have fooled them, they may do what is right and find those accused “guilty.”

Some jurors may be secularists. Many secularists are biased against anyone identified as Christian, including those accused and their victims. Even though they may write or read secular literature which exposes, to some extent, Christian Revisionists, they neither know nor reveal facts concerning the beliefs, motivations, and actions of Christian martyrs. They wish to annihilate everyone they view to be Christian. However, they may find the accused “guilty” since the facts presented will prove that, should the Christian Revisionists achieve their goal of once again regaining control, they will enforce their theology and morality upon all, including those secularists who will not bow down to their hideous church/state establishment.

Christian Revisionists interpret the Bible to justify their motives, goals, and actions. Many of the victims, on the other hand, believe, but do not interpret, the Bible. Thus, a look at some Bible teachings and doctrines is relevant since part and parcel of the facts of the case.

Facts presented will prove that, although contemporary Christian Revisionists support all the beliefs, motives, goals, and actions of their forefathers, they have not murdered anyone. However, they seek to nullify, do away with, and replace Bible based American law, namely the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and corresponding state constitutional provisions which separate church and state, guarantee freedoms of religion, conscience, press, association, speech, and the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances. They actively work to again unify church and state, control morality of individuals, force parallel civil government and church citizenship, and to murder all those whom they label to be “heretics.” Thus, the evidence will prove beyond doubt that they are conspiring to commit murder.

(2) Some Brief Opening Remarks

Now to some more detailed introductory remarks. Among other things, this book reveals:

- (1) the mindset, philosophy, and revisionism of the dominion, reconstructionist, postmillennial theologies of Christian Revisionists (the persecutors);³
- (2) their lies, distortions, out of context citations, ridiculous conclusions, etc.;
- (3) their motives;
- (4) their goals;
- (5) their theological heresy and apostasy;
- (6) the inescapable consequences of implementation of their heretical and apostate revisionist teachings;
- (7) the reasoning, strategy, and tactics of historical Christian persecutors and contemporary persecutor wannabes;
- (8) easily verifiable historical facts about the persecutors and the persecuted which the Revisionists wish to conceal:
 - (a) from New Testament church times until the colonization of America (this INTRODUCTION);
 - (b) from the beginning of their theology (Augustine) until this very day (This INTRODUCTION and Sections I and II);
 - (c) during the colonial period (Section II).
- (9) the effects of Christian Revisionism on the cause of Christ;
- (10) analysis of the Bible beliefs of true believers—the remnant, the persecuted—who have never ceased to exist (albeit hidden by mainline “Christianity” and almost invisible) in spite of the efforts of Christian Revisionists to annihilate them, their writings, teachings, and history;
- (11) the beliefs, actions, and writings of the persecuted Baptists in the colonies which not only exposed the truth about establishment (church/state union) theology and persecutions but also led to the adoption of the First Amendment.
- (12) Bible principles for both Jewish theocratic and Gentile civil government organization and jurisdiction; and
- (13) Bible principles regarding the relationship between church and state.

This INTRODUCTION lays a foundation for both Sections of this book. It explains relevant literal—not revised, spiritualized, allegorized, and philosophized—Bible facts and doctrines.⁴ It also

³ Any one revisionist may not adhere to all these aspects of theology. For example, not all dominionists are reconstructionists; John W. Whitehead, Pat Robertson, and Jay Grimstead are dominionists, but not reconstructionists. See Sanford, p. 125.

⁴ Christian Revisionists interpret the Bible by revising, spiritualizing, allegorizing, and philosophizing much of what the Bible teaches. Followers of Christ believe the Bible and apply what it says; they do not interpret it. Believing leaves no room for interpretation. The object, when

summarizes germane Bible and secular history before and after the colonial period. Although this INTRODUCTION gives some information concerning colonial Christian Historical Revisionism, Section II fully explores easily verifiable facts concerning the spiritual conflict in the colonies, and, taken in consideration with the information in Section I, exposes Christian Revisionist history for what it is.

(3) Relevant Bible Facts and Doctrines

Christian Revisionists, although perhaps right about some matters, incorrectly divide the word of God as to many preeminent issues. Their doctrines of government, church, and separation of church and state are all wrong. The reason for this—they base their doctrines on revised, spiritualized, allegorized, and/or philosophized interpretations, not a literal belief in Scripture. This book exposes their interpretations and the results of the implementation of their theologies. It proves that they are “guilty, as charged.”

Some influential leaders of the Christian Right correctly observe that man is totally depraved.⁵ However, God’s solution for that depravity is not the solution adopted by Christian Revisionists. The Bible solution for that depravity is not earthly, but spiritual. God’s solution is the new birth.⁶ One who is born again is in Christ. “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”⁷ The Bible further teaches that this “new creature” will not wallow in sin as before. He will sin, but not to the frequency or degree and not with the same attitude as before.⁸ As a spiritual creature, he is “in the Spirit” and therefore “minds the things of the Spirit” not the “things of the flesh.”⁹ He has “crucified the flesh with the affections and lust.”¹⁰

believed, interprets itself. “Interpret” means, “explain what it says; understand as having a particular meaning or significance.”

⁵ This truth runs from Ge. to Re. See e.g., Is. 64.6, Ro. 3.8-23.

⁶ Jn. 3.

⁷ 2 Co. 5.17.

⁸ See, e.g., 1 Jn., Ro. 8.1-17, 1 Co. 6.9-12, Ga. 5.17-24, Ep. 2.1-10.

⁹ Ep. 8.5, 9.

¹⁰ Ga. 5.24.

“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”¹¹

Christ commissioned believers to fight a spiritual, not a worldly, battle. As stated in Matthew 28.19-20:

“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”¹²

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.”¹³

Believers are to fight a spiritual warfare using spiritual weapons.¹⁴ The Apostles and other believers in the New Testament taught and exemplified how God wishes his children to use those weapons. God’s word does not prohibit Christians from taking part in politics. However, should they do so, the Bible directs them to glorify him by proceeding with truth, knowledge, understanding, and wisdom—things foreign to Christian Right.

Christian Revisionists adopt a non-Biblical framework and offer unscriptural solutions. The core error of Christian Right theology lies in the way they wish to make men virtuous. The Bible teaches that only the grace of God, bestowed on an individual at the moment of salvation, can make a pious man.¹⁵ A pious man is virtuous. Virtue means “moral goodness.”¹⁶ The Bible teaches that only a regenerated believer, justified by the

¹¹ 1 Co. 6.9-11.

¹² Mk. 16.15-16.

¹³ Mt. 28.19-20.

¹⁴ Ep. 6.10-18.

¹⁵ “Piety in principle, is a compound of veneration or reverence of the Supreme Being and love of his character, or veneration accompanied with love; and piety in practice, is the exercise of these affections in obedience to his will and devotion to his service.” NOAH WEBSTER’S 1828 DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, definition of “piety.”

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, definition of “virtue.”

blood of Christ, “can voluntarily obey the truth.”¹⁷ The theology of the Christian Right, Calvinism, by seeking virtue through force seeks the impossible. That is why its application results in corruption of all institutions and people except the remnant.

Christian Revisionists “make human autonomy the catchall equivalent of ungodliness and idolatry.”¹⁸ According to their teaching, since man is totally depraved, only God’s Sovereign governance can produce a moral order. Thus, their view of the Sovereignty of God is unbiblical. They declare that the enemy is human autonomy as manifested by individual, family, church, and state governance. According to their self-spun philosophy, on the moral level the Sovereign God must use the totally depraved to subdue the depravity of the totally depraved. God, through church/state government administered by the totally depraved, the Catholic/Reformed says, must directly control depravity to produce a degree of virtue, at least outwardly.

The Christian Right does not realize that, in today’s America, truth is not the focus. The focus is rights and freedoms, the most important of which “is the freedom to arrive at truth by one’s preferred means and to act accordingly.” Thus, the Christian Right and the progressives “are talking past each other because they have very different points of focus.”¹⁹ They have different concerns. One is concerned with controlling all morality, the other with claiming its democratic right to sin. To bring the debate to common ground, truth, both sides of the debate must be concerned with truth, not rights—both sides must be Christian. At present, neither side is Christian.

One secularist correctly observes, “[T]he religious Right today behaves more like an ideological party attempting to enforce a dogma than a religious movement simply advancing its point of view in the public square.”²⁰ Too bad the Christian Right does not turn to Bible truth for precept and method while they can do so without persecution. Method matters to God, and use of the wrong method always produces negative consequences.

¹⁷ One definition of “virtue” is “voluntary obedience to truth.” *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Sanford, p. 105

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 155-156.

²⁰ Sanford, p. 216.

Christianity is not under direct attack. In fact, everyone in America, including those on the Christian Right, have—in line with the Bible doctrine of separation of church and state—freedom of religion, press, assembly, and speech, and the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances. The First Amendment to the United States Constitution and corresponding state constitutional provisions protect believers who do things God’s way. Those protections apply to everyone.

Christians are free to perform their God-given duties without persecution. God’s way is for them to assemble in local, autonomous New Testament churches for spiritual edification; study their Bibles and apply its lessons in all areas of their life; plant new churches; go out into the public forum (the world) and proclaim the Gospel of salvation and Bible truth; and print and distribute God’s word. Instead, they build worldly organizations patterned after businesses and call them churches; take part in assemblies dedicated to their own temporal happiness, not the glory of God; confine themselves, for their social pleasure, to the four walls of buildings; go outside their edifices and fight, not a spiritual battle in obedience to God, but a worldly political battle in a worldly way; and lead the way to the end time political/spiritual Babylon as foretold in the word of God.

To understand the basic error of Christian Rightists, one must compare what the Bible teaches about relevant doctrines—salvation, government, church, and separation of church and state—with the teaching of the Christian Right. Bible teachings on those doctrines follow.²¹

Government means “direction” or “control.” The Sovereign, in his order, ordained different types of earthly governments, each of which still exists today. God, the Sovereign, gave man free will. The Sovereignty of God and the free will of man are not inconsistent, when properly understood. God, as Sovereign, blesses or curses each lower government—individual, family, civil, and church—depending upon whether or not that government, in the exercise of its free will, loves, follows, and obeys God. God set the

²¹ See *God Betrayed*, Sections I-III for literal explanations of the Bible principles of government, church, and separation of church and state.

rules, man chooses whether to observe them, and God rewards or punishes him accordingly.

No unregenerate man can love God and keep his commandments. Man becomes a child of God capable of understanding and observing God's law only by turning to the Lord Jesus Christ, repenting of sin, and receiving God's saving grace.²²

The law of God teaches man that he cannot live up to the standards God set. Saying "the sinner's prayer" saves no one. To be saved, the Bible teaches that a man must humbly and contritely acknowledge his sinful hopeless state which condemns him to the lake of fire; admit that he cannot do enough good works to earn his eternal salvation from sin; admit that he deserves eternal punishment; and repent (turn to the Lord Jesus Christ the son of God, who was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died on the cross for the sins of the world, and was resurrected the third day gaining victory over sin, death, and the grave) in faith for salvation from sin. Repentance and faith are not works,²³ but the opposite of works. At the precise moment of his salvation, God regenerates a man.²⁴ The Bible teaches that individual salvation followed by spiritual growth toward maturity is the only foundation for the proper functioning of all governments.

Prior to the fall, God, ruler of all lower governments, ordained self-government—the only type earthly government before the fall of man. Each individual was responsible for directing or controlling himself or herself. God gave only one rule for individuals. Man failed to obey that rule. Individual government was the first worldly government and is the foundation of all earthly governments prior to the second return of Christ.

God ordained family government immediately after Eve and Adam sinned. Individual government continued alongside family government. After the fall and prior to the flood, the only control

²² See, e.g., Ac. 20.21, He. 6.1. The Bible is replete with Scripture teaching that repentance is part and parcel of salvation.

²³ Ro. 4.1-5.

²⁴ Ep. 2.8-10: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." See also, e.g., Tit. 2.11-14; 2 Co. 5.17: "Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

over individual and family government was conscience (knowledge of good and evil).²⁵ During that period, God retained exclusive temporal, as well as eternal, jurisdiction over men. He ruled over individuals and families only. He had not yet ordained either civil government (direction and control of man by man) or church government. He made clear that man had no jurisdiction over his fellow man; he forbade civil government.²⁶

Conscience alone proved insufficient to control evil. The time came when the only remedy was judgment. “The wickedness of man was great in the earth,” and “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”²⁷ “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. ... [A]ll flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.” There was only one righteous man, and his family, on the earth. “But Noah who was a just man, perfect in his generations, and walked with God, found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”²⁸ God saved Noah and his family and destroyed all others in the flood. “For by grace are ye saved through faith....”²⁹ “And [God] spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth *person*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.”³⁰

God, in his covenant given to mankind through Noah at the time of the flood, ordained civil government to provide an additional check on temporal evil.³¹ Man retained his conscience. God, to further address and control worldly corruption, ordained a direct civil power with jurisdiction over certain temporal, not eternal or spiritual, matters. God desired that all civil governments choose to operate under him within their God-given worldly jurisdiction. God granted them temporal or earthly, not heavenly or spiritual, jurisdiction over certain evils or sins. Three God-ordained governments—individual, family, and civil—were now simultaneously at work as they are to this day.

²⁵ Ge. 4.10-15.

²⁶ Ge. 4.1-15.

²⁷ Ge. 6.5.

²⁸ Ge. 6.8-9.

²⁹ Ep. 2.8a.

³⁰ 2 Pe. 2:5.

³¹ Ge. 9.8-17.

The Bible calls all nations except Israel, “Gentile.”³² Gentile government proceeded alongside individual and family government. Primitive men and Gentile nations united behind earthy “kings” from their beginnings.

“The differentiation between the religious and secular is itself a comparatively modern development.... Every important event in the life of primitive man, from birth to death, was consecrated and solemnized by religious ceremonies. Obviously, an attempt to differentiate between the religious and the nonreligious would have been meaningless to him.... In time, the king not only interceded for his people with the divine powers, but he himself was regarded as a divine being and his laws as divine decrees.”³³

The god or gods of those pagan governments were idols.

Gentiles “knew God” but “glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.”

Instead of proceeding under him, they established idols, fake gods.³⁴ All pagan nations unite religion and state.

After the flood, all men spoke the same language. They rebelled against God and came together to build the tower of Babel. God, knowing their intent, said “And the LORD said, Behold, the people *is* one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.” God then confounded their language and “scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.”³⁵

Sometime after that, in the midst of universal idolatry, God ordained a second type of civil government. God ordained only one nation to proceed under a new plan, the nation Israel. All other nations proceeded under the original plan for civil government.

³² Ge. 10.5 is the first occurrence in the Bible of the word Gentile: it is in the plural.

³³ Pfeffer, p. 3, citing Wieman, Henry Nelson, and Horton, Walter M., *The Growth of Religion*, Chicago, Willett, Clark & Co., p. 22.

³⁴ Ro. 1.21-23 gives the seven stages of Gentile apostasy. Ro. 1.24-32 explains the result of Gentile apostasy. Gentiles, as well as Jews, are without excuse. Ro. 1.18-20.

³⁵ See Ge. 11 for the story of the tower of Babel.

Christian Revisionists misinterpret Scripture to mean that Israel is to serve as the model for all civil governments. However, Israel, and no other nation, is unique. God was over the civil government and religion of Israel. He initially used judges and priests, who were directly under him, to administer his law, which he gave to Israel through Moses.

God was the judge, lawgiver, and king of Israel. He intended no king for Israel, but foreknew that the Jews would set a king over themselves. Knowing that they would do so, he instructed them as to that king.³⁶ Israel, displeased with being under God only, when they saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against them, demanded a king³⁷ “like the nations, to judge them, to go out before them, to fight their battles.”³⁸ After committing the great wickedness of asking for a king,³⁹ God warned them again, but granted their wish after they refused to withdraw their demand. God’s word always warns people of the consequences of deviating from his principles and guidelines. Nonetheless, God always gives “the people” what they ask for.

Israel is the only nation to this point which has had a heavenly King who was directly over the earthly and spiritual, the temporal and eternal. Yet Israel was not pleased with God’s order for them. Their leadership, as with no Gentile nation, was in order; but they demanded disorder, like the other nations.

God called out Israel, and made covenants with Israel, not the other way around. God’s covenants with Israel apply to Israel only. One can call the government, which God ordained for the nation Israel, “theocracy.” Josephus coined the term “theocracy” to describe the Mosaic creed of Israel.⁴⁰ The theocracy, the Jewish religion/state, enforced all the law, which God gave them.⁴¹ The state was directly under God and the religion was directly under God. The civil government and religion of Israel were to work hand in hand for the same God-given goals; but, for Moses, “[t]he

³⁶ De. 17.14-20.

³⁷ 1 S. 12.12.

³⁸ 1 S. 8.

³⁹ 1 S. 12.19-20.

⁴⁰ Pfeffer, p. 4, citing *Against Apion*, Book II, paragraph 17, in *Complete Works of Josephus*, New York, World Syndicate Publishing Co., X, p. 500.

⁴¹ See Jerald Finney, *God Betrayed*, Section I, Chapters 7-8 for more on the Jewish theocracy.

religious motivation was primary and all-embracing.... The ancient [Gentile] kings used religion as an engine to further the purposes of the state.” Moses “acted differently. He exploited the natural ambitions of the Hebrew slaves for freedom and independence to further the purposes of God.”⁴²

God gave Israel, and only Israel, the Law—the Ten Commandments, the statutes (pertaining to man’s social life), and the ordinances (dealing with man’s religious life).⁴³ God made clear to Israel that he would bless or chastise her depending upon her love for him and her obedience or disobedience to the Law.⁴⁴

God had several purposes for Israel. God called Israel to be a witness to the unity of God in the midst of universal idolatry;⁴⁵ to illustrate the blessedness of serving the true God;⁴⁶ to receive and preserve the divine revelations;⁴⁷ and to produce the Messiah.⁴⁸ From Genesis 12 to Matthew 12.45, the Scriptures have primarily in view Israel, the little rill, not the great Gentile river, though repeatedly the universality of the ultimate divine intent breaks into view.⁴⁹ The Old Testament mentions other nations primarily as they related to Israel.

The human race outside Israel, henceforth called Gentile in distinction from Israel, continued under God’s covenants with Adam and Noah. For Gentiles, the dispensations of Conscience and Human Government continue.

God judges Israel. He also judges Gentile nations. He has given them their authority⁵⁰ and jurisdictional boundaries.⁵¹ He holds

⁴² Pfeffer, p. 5.

⁴³ Ex. 20-31.18.

⁴⁴ See, e.g., Le. 26.14-46; De. 4.25-31, 28; 1 K. 9.1-9; Is. 9.8-21; Is. 29; Is. 8; Is. 42.8-12; Is. 42.13-25; Je. 2.1-3.5 (Jeremiah’s first message to backslidden Judah); Je. 3.6-6.30 (Jeremiah’s second message to backslidden Judah); Ez. 7. (Prophecy of the destruction of Israel); Ez. 8-33.21; Ho. 2.1-13; Am. 2.4-16, 3.1-9.10, 4, 9; Mi. 1.1-2.13, 3.1-5, 15, 6.1-7.20; Hab. 1.5-11; Zec. 1.1-2.3, 3.1-7.

⁴⁵ De. 6.4; Is. 43.10-12.

⁴⁶ De. 33.26-29.

⁴⁷ Ro. 3.1,2; De. 4.5-8.

⁴⁸ Ge. 3.15; 21.3; 28.10-14; 49.10; 2 S. 7.16, 17; Is. 4.3, 4; Mt. 1.1.

⁴⁹ E.g. Ge. 12.3; Is. 2.2, 4; 5.26, 9.1, 2; 11.10-12; 42.1-6; 49.6, 12; 52.15; 54.3; 55.5; 60.3, 5, 11-16; 61.6, 9; 62.2; 66.12, 18, 19; Je. 16.19; Jl. 3, 9, 10; Mal. 1.11; Ro. 9., 10., 11.; Ga. 3.8-14.

⁵⁰ Da. 2.37-40; Ro. 13.1.

⁵¹ Ge. 8.20-9. 27 (God’s covenant given mankind through Noah); Ro. 13.3-13.

them to account.⁵² A power that ordains a lesser power is over the lesser power. God, the governor of the universe, ordained and is over nations, but temporarily gives them freedom to honor or dishonor him. Romans 13 and other passages in both the Old and New Testaments make clear the jurisdiction of Gentile civil government. God blesses or curses a Gentile nation depending upon whether or not that nation honors God and her God-given responsibilities.

However, the main test for a Gentile nation, as always, is the way a nation treats Israel. “And I will make of thee [Israel] a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”⁵³ Nations that blessed Israel have invariably been blessed; those that have persecuted Israel have suffered ill.⁵⁴ A careful study of Old Testament history, secular history, and current events reveals that disaster follows when a nation “curses” the nation Israel.⁵⁵ As made clear by the examples of New Testament believers, the duty of individual believers to the Jews, as well as the Gentiles, is to bless them by preaching the Gospel of salvation to them. Some Jews respond to the preaching of the Gospel by getting saved; some others, like many New Testament Jews, may wish to kill God’s preachers.

God gave Israel the law through her God-appointed representative, Moses. Both tables of the Ten Commandments, God’s statutes, and God’s ordinances were to be practiced and enforced in Israel by man, directly under God, and sometimes by God himself, not by civil government working under, with, or over the priest(s) of an established religion.⁵⁶ Christian Revisionists seek to establish the same type of pagan union of religion and state

⁵² Le. 18, 20.22-23; Ps. 9.17, 20, 47.2-3, 47.2-3; 135.6, 10-11, 136.17-21; Is. 10.5-19, Is. 15-16, 17, 19, 20, 23, 28, 34, 47, 49.22-26, 51; Je. 9.25-26, 25.11-14, 15-38, 26.18-38, 30.11, 36.2, 46.1-51.64, 50.17-18, 50.24, 51.24, 35-36; Ez. 3.8-13; Zec. 2.8, 14.2, 14.16.

⁵³ Ge. 12.2-3, Ge. 27.29, Nu. 24.9.

⁵⁴ See Ge. 15.13, 14; De. 30.5-7; Is. 14.1, 2; J. 3.1-8; Mi. 5.7-9; Mt. 25.31-40.

⁵⁵ See, e.g., William P. Grady, *How Satan Turned America Against God* (Knoxville, Tennessee: Grady Publications 2005), pp. 1-13, citing John McTeman and Bill Koenig, *Israel: The Blessing or the Curse* (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: Heathstone Publishing, 2002).

⁵⁶ See Ex. 20.1-31.18.

that their historical Catholic and Protestant ancestors established, with disastrous results.

Again, God gave the Law to Israel only. Gentiles have not the law, but the law is written in their hearts.⁵⁷ God gave Gentile governments jurisdiction over some temporal sins, but not over eternal sins having to do with man's duties to God.⁵⁸

God established his relationship with Israel through covenants applicable to Israel only. Only with severe twisting of Scripture can one conclude otherwise. Only a revised, allegorized, spiritualized, and/or philosophized interpretation of the word of God teaches that theocracy, as used in defining God's relation with Israel, is the God-ordained pattern for all nations. Theocracy, in the Biblical sense, was and is impossible for any nation other than Israel.

After the nation Israel rejected Jesus, the rejected King turned from Israel and offered, not the kingdom, but rest and service to such in the nation as were conscious of the need. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."⁵⁹ This was the new message of Jesus. It was a pivotal point in the ministry of Jesus. Jesus then announced the establishment of the church, another type of government: "And I [the Lord Jesus] say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."⁶⁰ A church, as established by God and as described in the New Testament, is a spiritual organism with eternal jurisdiction.⁶¹

The New Testament epistles explain that God desires his churches to be spiritual entities under the Lord Jesus Christ only. God desires his churches to be totally separate from civil government (the state).⁶² The church proceeded under the New Covenant, whereas the Jewish theocracy operated under the Mosaic covenant. Isaac Backus, in pointing out that Jesus did away with the Old Testament Covenant of Law, wrote:

⁵⁷ Ro. 2.14-15.

⁵⁸ See Finney, *God Betrayed*, Sections I-III.

⁵⁹ Mt. 11.28.

⁶⁰ Mt. 16.18.

⁶¹ Mt. 16.18-19.

⁶² See Finney, *God Betrayed*, Sections I-III.

“When our Savior came, he fulfilled the law, both moral and ceremonial, and abolished those hereditary distinctions among mankind. But in the centuries following, deceitful philosophy took away the name which God has given to that covenant, (Acts vii.8) [the covenant of circumcision] and added the name *Grace* to it; from whence came the doctrine, that *dominion is founded in grace*. And although this latter name has been exploded by many, yet the root of it has been tenaciously held fast and taught in all colleges and superior places of learning, as far as Christianity has extended, until the present time; whereby natural affection, education, temporal interest and self-righteousness, the strongest prejudices in the world, have all conspired to bind people in that way, and to bar their minds against equal liberty and believer’s baptism.”⁶³

Scriptures, other than those already cited to show that the church and state are not to wed or to enter into any kind of relationship, especially for persecution of those who do not submit to the official religion, teach that the church is not to enforce spiritual laws in society in general, even with the help of civil government. The Lord commanded that men not remove the tares “lest [they] root up also the wheat [the children of the kingdom].”⁶⁴ Instead, they are to be permitted to grow together until the harvest when the Lord shall send forth his angels to gather the tares and cast them into a furnace of fire.⁶⁵ The Lord commanded his disciples to leave the Pharisees, whom he referred to as the “blind leading the blind,” alone because “every plant, which [His] heavenly father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.”⁶⁶ He told his disciples: “Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall in the ditch.”⁶⁷

As Roger Williams noted, “This sentence against [the blind Pharisee], the Lord Jesus only pronounceth in his church, his spiritual judicature, and executes this sentence in part at present, and hereafter to all

⁶³ James R. Beller, *America in Crimson Red: The Baptist History of America* (Arnold, Missouri: Prairie Fire Press, 2004), p. 446, citing Isaac Backus, *An Abridgement to the Church History of New England* (Boston: Harvard University, 1804; reprinted. 1935), p. 136.

⁶⁴ Mt. 13.24-30, 37-43.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Mt. 15.13-14.

⁶⁷ Mt. 15.14.

eternity. Such a sentence no civil judge can pass, such a death no civil sword can inflict.”⁶⁸

Other relevant scriptures dealing with the actions of a Christian against his enemies, those who curse, hate, despitefully use, persecute, and disagree with him, include:

“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so?”⁶⁹

The Lord said to his disciples, “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in they synagogues; [a]nd ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.”⁷⁰ What sheep ever attacked a wolf or anything else?

“And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.”⁷¹

The Lord Jesus said to his disciples, James and John, who desired to command fire down from heaven to devour Samaritans who would not receive him, “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye be of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.”⁷²

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more

⁶⁸ Roger Williams and Edward Bean Underhill, *The Bloody Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience Discussed and Mr. Cotton’s Letter Examined and Answered* (London: Printed for the Society, by J. Haddon, Castle Street, Finsbury, 1848), p. 97.

⁶⁹ Mt. 5.44-47.

⁷⁰ Mt. 10.16-18.

⁷¹ Mk. 9.38. See also Lu. 9.49-50.

⁷² Lu. 9.55-56.

abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”⁷³

“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient, [i]n meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; [a]nd they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”⁷⁴

The reason for not attempting to remove heretics, the tares, from the world seems to be, as Roger Williams noted:

“because they who now are tares, may hereafter become wheat; they who are now blind, may hereafter see; they that now resist him may hereafter receive him; that that are now in the devil’s snare, in adverseness to the truth, may hereafter come to repentance; they that are now blasphemers and persecutors, as Paul was, may in time become faithful as he; they that are now idolaters, as the Corinthians once were, 1 Cor. vi. 9, may hereafter become true worshippers as they; they that are now no people of God, nor under mercy, as the saints sometimes were 1 Pet. ii. 10, may hereafter become the people of God, and obtain mercy, as they.

“Some come not till the eleventh hour, Matt. xx. 6: if those that come not till the last hour should be destroyed, because they come not at the first, then should they never come, but be prevented.”⁷⁵

Jesus made clear that his followers would be the persecuted, not the persecutors. Jesus preached to the multitudes concerning persecution of his followers:

“Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”⁷⁶

Jesus declared the coming persecutions of his followers:

“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are

⁷³ Jn. 10.10-11.

⁷⁴ 2 Ti. 2.24-26.

⁷⁵ Williams and Underhill, pp. 11-12.

⁷⁶ Mt. 5.10-12.

not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. **But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.**⁷⁷ [Emphasis mine.]

Our Lord also said of the coming persecutors, “[Y]ea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.”⁷⁸

His crucifixion and the martyrdom of eleven of the apostles and untold millions of other believers over the next two thousand years up to this very day confirm Jesus’ prophecies of persecution. Following the crucifixion of the Savior:

“in rapid succession fell many other martyred heroes: ... Matthew was slain in Ethiopia, Mark dragged through the streets until dead, Luke hanged, Peter and Simeon were crucified, Andrew tied to a cross, James beheaded, Philip crucified and stoned, Bartholomew flayed alive, Thomas pierced with lances, James, the less, thrown from the temple and beaten to death, Jude shot to death with arrows, Matthias stoned to death....”⁷⁹

The promises to the Jew were significantly different from the promises to the Christian. Perhaps no greater example can be cited than the contrast between the Old Testament promises to Israel, and the New Testament promise to Christians. God promised Israel earthly prosperity and material blessing for keeping God’s commandments and statutes and judgment for failure to do so.⁸⁰ God promised believers that “all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”⁸¹ The distinctive note of First Peter is preparation for victory over suffering. Members of the persecuted church are not to fear their blasphemous persecutors, those “Christian Revisionists” who call themselves Jews.⁸²

⁷⁷ Jn. 15.18-21.

⁷⁸ Jn. 14.2b-3.

⁷⁹ Carroll, p. 11.

⁸⁰ See, e.g., Ex. 15.26; 19.5-8; 24.3, 7; 34.18-35.3; Le. 18.3-20.27; 20.22-23; 26 (read in conjunction with De. 28-30); De. 4-11; 12.30-31; 28-30; 28.1-68; 1 S. 12.1-5; 1 K. 6.12-13; 9.1-9; 2 Chr. 7.12-22; 15.1-7; etc.

⁸¹ 2 Ti. 3.12.

⁸² Re. 2.8-11.

(4) Relevant Pre-Colonial History

The first “Christian” establishment occurred hundreds of years after the death of Christ. All Catholic and Protestant establishments have mercilessly tortured and killed true believers and others they have deemed to be “heretics.”

Churches remained separate from civil government until some of them made a covenant with Constantine and united with the Roman state. Those churches became the Catholic “church.” Catholicism adopted a pagan definition of theocracy: “a system of government in which Popes (priests) rule in the name of God or a god.” Catholics are Revisionists as are their harlot offspring.

As Jesus and the apostles forewarned, Christians have been persecuted. Christians were persecuted from the beginning of the church. After union of church and state in the fourth century, the established Catholic church, in conjunction with the state, persecuted Christians.

Catholicism justified union of church and state and persecution of those the establishment (the unified church/state) deemed to be heretics; they did so by revising, spiritualizing, allegorizing, and philosophizing portions of Old Testament Scripture concerning the Jewish theocracy in conjunction with certain New Testament Scriptures. They applied a perverted pagan concept of theocracy to Gentile nations.

At first, the persecution of Christians was by the Jewish religious leaders. Paul (then called Saul) was present at the stoning of Stephen, the first Christian martyr.⁸³ Paul, before salvation, was actively involved in persecution: “As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison.”⁸⁴ After Paul’s salvation, he was persecuted and finally beheaded. The Jews seized him during his last visit to Jerusalem. They would have killed him, but as they were beating him, the chief captain of the Romans took soldiers and centurions, intervened, and held him. At that time, the chief captain permitted Paul to speak to the people. He said,

⁸³ Ac. 8.1.

⁸⁴ Ac. 8.3.

“I am verily a man *which am* a Jew, born in Tarsus, a *city* in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.”⁸⁵

Rome persecuted Christians off and on until the early fourth century. The persecution varied in extent and duration with various emperors.⁸⁶ Then, Rome recognized some “churches” that then united with the state and became the official state “church.”

“[U]nder the leadership of Emperor Constantine there [came] a truce, a courtship and proposal of marriage. The Roman Empire through its emperor [sought] a marriage with Christianity. Give us your spiritual power and we will give you of our temporal power....

“In A.D. 313, a call was made for a coming together of the Christian churches or their representatives. **Many but** not all came. The alliance was consummated. **A Hierarchy was** formed. In the organization of the **Hierarchy, Christ was dethroned** as head of the **churches** and Emperor Constantine enthroned (only temporarily, however) as head of the **church**.

“[This was the beginning of what became the Catholic church.]

“Let it be definitely remembered that when Constantine made his call for the council, there were very many of the Christians ... and of the churches, which declined to respond. They wanted no marriage with the state, and no centralized religious government, and no higher ecclesiastical government of any kind, than the individual church.”⁸⁷

The wedding of church and state in the early fourth century resulted in the formation of the Catholic church. This satanic marriage followed the pattern of pagan nations and was in direct opposition to New Testament church doctrine, the Bible doctrine concerning Gentile civil government, and the Bible doctrine of separation of church and state.

The Catholic church is one of the most diabolical religions ever conceived. It has contaminated the earth. Other religious establishments, which arose with the Reformation, adopted variations of Catholic theology. In every instance, they corrupted themselves, their clergy, their church members, government

⁸⁵ Ac. 22.3-4.

⁸⁶ See, e.g., Pfeffer, pp. 10-12.

⁸⁷ Carroll, p. 16.

leaders and officials, and the population in general. The only ones not corrupted by the church/state union were the remnant, those “heretics” who refused to bow down to the establishment and deny their Lord Jesus Christ and his teachings. The establishment hunted them down, imprisoned, tortured, and viciously murdered them.

Before the union of church and state, both Judaism and Paganism persecuted Christians. After the union, “Christians” began to persecute Christians. “Thus [began] the days and years and even centuries of a hard and bitter persecution against all those Christians who were loyal to the original Christ and Apostolic teachings.”⁸⁸ Some leaders of that new state church who had supported liberty “forgot what they had preached in their youth” and supported persecution of dissenters. The most significant of these was St. Augustine.

“Augustine made much use of the passage in Luke 14.23: ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.’ His position on religious liberty has been summarized in the maxim commonly (though erroneously) ascribed to him: ‘When error prevails, it is right to invoke liberty of conscience; but when, on the contrary, the truth predominates, it is just to use coercion.’

“Augustine’s influence on the course of religious liberty and the relationship of church and state can hardly be measured. Fifteen hundred years have passed since his death, yet his teachings are still a potent factor in the position of the Catholic Church on the subject of religion and government. As a result of his teaching,

“The principle that religious unity ought to be imposed in one way or another dominates the whole of the Christian Middle Ages and finds a concise and rigorous sanction in civil as well as in ecclesiastical legislation.

“Because of Augustine, more than any other person,

“the Medieval church was intolerant, was the source and author of persecution, justified and defended the most violent measures which could be taken against those who differed from it.”⁸⁹

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁸⁹ Pfeffer, p. 14 citing Bates, M. Searle, *Religious Liberty: An Inquiry*, New York and London, International Missionary Council, 1945, p. 139; Rufinni, Francesco, *Religious Liberty*, New York, The Macmillan Co., 1949, p. 36; and Carlyle, Alexander J., *The Christian Church and Liberty*,

The Middle Ages reflected the thinking of Augustine and Aquinas,

“who taught that salvation could be achieved through compulsion, and that oppression and persecution of heretics was not merely the right, but the holy duty of the church....Augustine preached that heresy was worse than murder, because it destroyed the soul rather than the body. Aquinas added that the counterfeiting of God’s truth was worse than forging the prince’s coin (which was punishable by death), and that the ‘sin of heresy separates man from God more than all other sins, and, therefore, is to be punished more severely.’”⁹⁰

Over 50,000,000 Christians died martyr deaths ... during the period of the ‘dark ages’ alone—about twelve or thirteen centuries.⁹¹

The Inquisition was instituted in 1215 A.D. at a Council called by Pope Innocent III.

“[P]robably the most cruel and bloody thing ever brought upon any people in all the world’s history was what is known as the ‘Inquisition,’ and other similar courts, designed for trying what was called ‘heresy.’ The whole world is seemingly filled with books written in condemnation of that extreme cruelty, and yet it was originated and perpetuated by a people claiming to be led and directed by the Lord. For real barbarity there seems to be nothing, absolutely nothing in all history that will surpass it.”⁹²

The atrocities and heresies of the Catholic church eventually led to an effort to reform that church from within. Among the greatest of the reformers were Martin Luther, who started the Lutheran church (which became the state-church of Germany), and John Calvin, founder of the Presbyterian church (which became the state-church of Scotland). The Reformed churches became Christian Revisionists working contemporaneously with their Catholic Revisionist predecessors.

During this period of reformation, there existed those who dissented from Catholic and Reformation theology. In early sixteenth century Germany, two currents flowed in opposite

London, J. Clarke, 1924, p. 96; See also, Leonard Verduin, *The Anatomy of a Hybrid* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1976), pp. 105-111 and other excerpts.

⁹⁰ Pfeffer, p. 18; Verduin, *Anatomy of a Hybrid*.

⁹¹ Carroll, p. 14.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 28; see also Pfeffer, pp. 18-20.

directions. One, fostered by the established church, was toward a state-church. The other, promoted by dissenters, was toward separation of church and state. When a Protestant church became an established church, it continued the persecution practiced by its harlot mother.

“Both the Lutheran and Presbyterian Churches brought out of their Catholic Mother many of her evils, among them her idea of a State Church. They both soon became **Established Churches**. Both were soon in the persecuting business, falling little if any, short of their Catholic Mother.”⁹³

Martin Luther wrote:

“It is out of the question that there should be a common Christian government over the whole world. Nay, over even one land or company of people since the wicked always outnumber the good. A man who would venture to govern an entire country or the world with the Gospel would be like a shepherd who would place in one fold wolves, lions, eagles, and sheep together and let them freely mingle with one another and say, ‘Help yourselves, and be good and peaceful among yourselves. The fold is open, there is plenty of food, have no fear of dogs and clubs.’ The sheep forsooth would keep the peace and would allow themselves to be fed and governed in peace; but they would not live long nor would any beast keep from molesting another. For this reason, these two kingdoms must be sharply distinguished and both be permitted to remain. The one to produce piety, the other to bring about external peace and prevent evil deeds. Neither is sufficient to the world without the other.”⁹⁴

“When Luther was expecting excommunication and assassination, he pleaded that:

“Princes are not to be obeyed when they command submission to superstitious error, but their aid is not to be invoked in support of the word of God.

“Heretics, he said, must be converted by the Scriptures, and not by fire. With passion, he asserted:

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁹⁴ Philip Hamburger, *Separation of Church and State* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2002), p. 22, citing *Works of Martin Luther, Volume 4* (Philadelphia: A. H. Holman Co., 1931), p. 265.

“I say, then neither pope, nor bishop, nor any man whatever has the right of making one syllable binding on a Christian man, unless it be done with his own consent. Whatever is done otherwise is done in the spirit of tyranny.... I cry aloud on behalf of liberty and conscience, and I proclaim with confidence that no kind of law can with any justice be imposed on Christians, except so far as they themselves will; for we are free from all.”⁹⁵

Nonetheless, Luther later, when he had made an effective alliance with the secular power, advocated that the magistrate, who does not make the law of God, enforce the law of God. According to Luther:

“The law is of God and from God. The State is the law-enforcing agency, administering a law of God that exists unchangeably from all eternity....

“The need for a state arises from the fact that all men do not hear the word of God in a spirit of obedience. The magistrate does not make the law, which is of God, but enforces it. His realm is temporal, and the proper ordering of it is his responsibility. Included in the proper ordering the maintenance of churches where the word of God is truly preached and the truly Christian life is taught by precept and example. In his realm, subject to the law of God, the Prince is supreme, nor has man the right to rebel against him. But if the Prince contravenes the law of God, man may be passively disobedient, in obedience to a higher and the only finally valid law.”⁹⁶

“Heretics are not to be disputed with, but to be condemned unheard, and whilst they perish by fire, the faithful ought to pursue the evil to its source, and bathe their hands in the blood of the Catholic bishops, and of the Pope, who is the devil in disguise.”⁹⁷

Luther espoused that coercion by the state to achieve religious unity was justifiable. This was an expansion of Erastian philosophy—“the assumption of state superiority in ecclesiastical affairs and the use of religion to further state policy.” Erastianism

⁹⁵ Pfeffer, p. 21, citing Acton, “The Protestant Theory of Persecution,” in *Essays on Freedom and Power*, p. 92, and Wace, Henry, and Bucheim, C. A., *Luther's Primary Works*, Lutheran Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1885, pp. 194-195, quoted in Noss, John B., *Man's Religions*, New York, The Macmillan Co., 1949, p. 92.

⁹⁶ William H. Marnell, *The First Amendment: Religious Freedom in America from Colonial Days to the School Prayer Controversy* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964), pp. 13-14. Marnell is a secularist whose facts are reliable.

⁹⁷ Pfeffer, p. 21, quoting Acton, pp. 102-103; see also Verduin, *The Anatomy of a Hybrid*, pp. 158-160, 163-168, 186-198; Leonard Verduin, *The Reformers and Their Stepchildren* (Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Erdsmans Pub. Co., 1964) and Thomas Armitage, *The History of the Baptists, Volumes 1 and 2* (Springfield, Mo.: Baptist Bible College, 1977 Reprint).

... pervaded all Europe, with the exception of Calvin's ecclesiocratic Geneva, after the Reformation.⁹⁸ Erastianism achieved its greatest triumph in England.⁹⁹

Luther's position resulted in persecution of dissenters such as Anabaptists who believed in believer's baptism. Opposition to a state-church follows logically from the thinking behind believer's baptism.

"Believer's baptism [was] the key to religious thought of the Anabaptists. Infant baptism implies that a child may be admitted into the Church without his understanding or personal consent. Such a church must be a formal organization, with sponsored membership possible for those whose years permit neither faith nor understanding. Adult baptism implies a different concept of the Church. The anabaptized are the elect of a visible church which is essentially a religious community of the elect. But obviously such a church could in no sense be a State Church. The Prince could neither bring it into being, regulate it, nor enforce membership in it; indeed, **any connection between the State and such a church could only be injurious to the Church.** Adult baptism on the surface is remote from the concept of a separated Church and State, yet such separation is implicit in the rationale of Anabaptism. The call to such a church can never come from the palace of the Prince; it must come from the Kingdom of Heaven...."¹⁰⁰ [Emphasis mine.]

Zwingly continued the persecutions of "heretics:"

"The foremost duty of the state "was the preservation and promotion of true religion. Civil rulers were bound to establish uniformity of doctrine, and to defend it against papists and heretics. Rulers who did not act in accordance with this duty violated the condition of their office and must be removed."¹⁰¹

John Calvin pointed out that:

"these two [church and state] ... must always be examined separately; and while one is being considered, we must call away and turn aside the mind from thinking about the other.' He followed this approach in order to expound the '[d]ifferences between spiritual and civil

⁹⁸ Pfeffer, pp. 23-24.

⁹⁹ See *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25 for a concise history of Erastianism in England.

¹⁰⁰ Marnell, pp. 18-20.

¹⁰¹ Pfeffer, pp. 22-23.

government,' insisting that 'we must keep in mind the distinction ... so that we do not (as so commonly happens) unwisely mingle these two, which have a completely different nature.'"¹⁰²

He taught, "The church does not assume to itself what belongs to the magistrate, nor can the magistrate execute that which is executed by the Church."¹⁰³

However, when he established his ecclesiocracy¹⁰⁴ in Geneva, all the commandments and more were enforced. Calvinism punished those who were absent from the sermon, and missed the partaking of the Sacrament. "Criticism of the clergy was included in the crime of blasphemy and blasphemy was punishable by death" as was the contention that "it is unjust to put heretics and blasphemers to death."¹⁰⁵ Government had "the duty of rightly establishing religion' and had as its 'appointed end' to 'cherish and protect the outward worship of God, to defend sound doctrine of piety and the position of the church.'"¹⁰⁶ Calvin's ecclesiocratic relationship of church and state was "based on ecclesiastical supremacy and the use of state machinery to further religious interests."¹⁰⁷

Calvin preferred an "oligarchy of prominent citizens elected by all the people, all committed to honoring the God of the Bible." "As one scholar puts it, 'citizens and rulers alike were participating in what has been authorized by God.' This formula "is similar to that fostered by contemporary religious rightists."¹⁰⁸

During this same period, the Church of England arose from a split or division in the Catholic ranks. Henry VIII, king of England, "threw off papal authority and made himself head of the Church of

¹⁰² Hamburger, pp. 22-23, citing Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 1:847 (IV.xix.15) 2: 1486 (IV.xx.1), trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), "[Calvin] also wrote: 'But whosoever knows how to distinguish between body and soul, between the present fleeting life and that future eternal life, will without difficulty know that Christ's spiritual Kingdom of Christ and the civil government are things completely distinct.'" *Ibid.*, 2: 1488 (IV.xx.1).

¹⁰³ Pfeffer, p. 22, citing *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, quoted in Stokes, Anson Phelps, *Church and State in the United States*, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1950, I. p. 110.

¹⁰⁴ Again, the author uses this term to denote a civil government in which the church and state work together to enforce spiritual and earthly laws unlike the theocracy in Israel in which God himself was directly over both the religion and the state.

¹⁰⁵ Pfeffer, p. 22.

¹⁰⁶ Hamburger, p. 23, citing *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2: 1211 (IV.xi.1; *ibid.*, 2: 1487-1488 (IV.xx.2-3).

¹⁰⁷ Pfeffer, pp. 23-24.

¹⁰⁸ Sanford, p. 67.

England” when the Pope refused to grant him a divorce from Catherine of Spain so that he could marry Anne Boleyn. Henry’s successor, Mary, reinstated Catholicism, but her successor, Elizabeth, reestablished the Church of England.

“Thus, before the close of the Sixteenth Century, there were five established Churches—churches backed up by civil governments—the Roman and Greek Catholics [the Greek Catholics separated from the Roman Catholics in the ninth century] counted as two, then the Church of England; then the Lutheran, or Church of Germany, then the Church of Scotland now known as the Presbyterian. All of them were bitter in their hatred and persecution of the people called Ana-Baptists, Waldenses and all other not established churches, churches which never in any way had been connected with the Catholics.... Many more thousands, including both women and children were constantly perishing every day in the yet unending persecutions. The great hope awakened and inspired by the reformation had proven to be a bloody delusion. Remnants now [found] an uncertain refuge in the friendly Alps and other hiding places over the world.”¹⁰⁹

Sometime in the early seventeenth century, the Congregational church began. That church repudiated preacher rule and returned “to the New Testament democratic idea” while retaining many other “Catholic made errors such as infant baptism, pouring or sprinkling for baptism, and later adopted and practiced to an extreme degree the church and state idea. And, after **refugeeing** to America, themselves, became very bitter persecutors.”¹¹⁰ The persecution of dissenters moved to America along with colonization.

The Augustinian theology of the Catholic church rationalized union of church and state based upon a revised, spiritualized, allegorized, and philosophized, as opposed to a literal, study of Scripture. This teaching was followed, with various modifications, by the offspring of Catholicism—the Protestant “churches.”¹¹¹ Christian proponents of union of church and state have always falsely proclaimed that God’s word supports their beliefs.

¹⁰⁹ Carroll, p. 34.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

¹¹¹ Others in the same category include Islam, Calvinism, Presbyterianism, Anglicanism, Lutheranism, and Protestantism in general.

During the rule of Catholicism and the Protestant Reformation, the light of God's remnant always shined. Even though untold millions of God's faithful were tortured and killed in the most horrendous manners by the established church/states, a remnant remained true to Bible principles, one of which was separation of church and state.

Different versions of the original Catholic union of church and state theology were at work in the American colonies. The philosophical bases for colonial ecclesiocrasies (rule of the state by the church or rule of the church by the state) and contemporary American Christian Activism and Revisionism derive from Calvinism and its subsequent modifications. Even secularists point out this and many other facts about Christian Revisionism.¹¹² It is important to note that even though secularists reveal many facts about the lies, revisionist history, errors, false conclusions, and consequences of Christian Revisionism, they also revise, lie, reach erroneous conclusions, and promote a destructive worldview.

(5) Relevant Contemporary Matters

A detailed examination of the modifications of Calvinism leading to the Calvinistic forms relied upon by Christian Revisionists to direct the Christian Right is beyond the scope of this book. Christians, in general, turn their back on presentations of the truth about these matters. However, secularists such as James C. Sanford have addressed modern Christian Right theology. Factually, philosophically, theologically, and historically, Sanford's *Blueprint for Theocracy: The Christian Right's Vision for America* exposes the Christian Right for what it is.

Of course, some of what Sanford exposes incorporates secularist bias and views which an educated believer should be able to discern. For example, *Blueprint for Theocracy* analyzes "the Religious Rights rejection of empirical science and historical method," as he puts it. Believers support honest "empirical science and historical method." Unfortunately, the left totally controls secular centers of science and history; and secular institutions reject any who attempt to present science and facts which

¹¹² See, e.g., Sanford, pp. 59-82.

contradict their humanistic evolutionary point of view. Before a follower of Christ reads *Blueprint for Theocracy* or any other work, he should have a solid understanding, from a Biblical perspective, of the biases, weaknesses, and prejudices of secular science, history, philosophy, and reasoning.

Blueprint for Theocracy “follows the historical rise of Christian Worldview as a puritanical, anti-modernist ideology long before the Christian Right existed...” It:

- (1) “begins with ‘its Calvinist roots ... and considers its revival in the nineteenth and early twentieth century in the form of a militant Neo-Calvinism;’
- (2) “takes up its adoption in the 1960s and 1970s by the Christian Reconstructionist movement, which fused it with right-wing political and economic theory;
- (3) “looks at the rise and fall of the Moral Majority and the Christian Coalition, and other so-called Christian organizations;
- (4) “summarizes the Christian activities of the George W. Bush presidency;
- (5) “addresses Christian Worldview’s eventual transformation under the current Religious Right into a platform for ‘reclaiming America;’
- (6) “attempts to examine Christian Worldview as it is expressed in three major areas: jihadism, truth and knowledge, and worldly affairs;
- (7) “examines the Christian Worldview of ‘antithesis,’ or conflict, as it plays out in the strategy and rhetoric of the Christian Right;
- (8) “focuses on how the framework of ‘culture war’ is used to advance the movements objectives;
- (9) “explores the role of Christian Worldview in redefining fact or truth according to the standards of revelation;
- (10) “discusses the Religious Right’s rejection of empirical science and historical method in favor of so-called theistic realism and Christian revisionist history;
- (11) “examines the use of Christian Worldview by Christian rightists to approach government, economics, and law.”¹¹³

Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977), Francis Schaeffer, and apologists like Nancy Pearce, and Cornelius Van Til¹¹⁴ added key modifications to Calvinism.

¹¹³ See Sanford, p. 8 for this summary.

¹¹⁴ See *Ibid.*, pp. 59-82.

Modern day Calvinist leaders include R. John Rushdoony (the founder of the modern movement), Gary North, and Greg Bahnsen. As the relationship between R. John Rushdoony, Gary North, and Greg Bahnsen evolved, they splintered into different factions, each pursuing the cause according to differing beliefs.¹¹⁵ Gary DeMar is now the most active of the movement. Some of these men chide reluctant “Christians ‘unwilling to go the distance’ in fighting the enemy.” They also offer plans for action based upon their illegitimate Christian perspectives.

The intellectual leaders of the Christian Right revert to the false theologies of Christian persecutors. They attempt to reconstruct society according to Old Testament directives for Israel and establish what they call “theocracy.” This requires unity of church and state and control of morality, religion, press, assembly, and speech. Thus, to implement their plans in America, they must redefine the First Amendment which, as shown in Section II, was meant to separate state from church and church (not God) from state.

To achieve their goals, they reconstruct history and circulate lies such as, “Separation of church and state is not found in the Constitution;” “America is the New Israel;” “America is under covenant with God as was Israel;” “America has a Judeo-Christian heritage which is reflected in the Constitution;” “separation of church and state is a myth;” “Samuel Rutherford was a formative influence on the American Revolution;”¹¹⁶ etc. They have completely rewritten the history of church and state, and especially the history of colonial America. This book, especially in Section II, presents historical facts which tear down their playhouse. Unfortunately, their lies predominate the Christian landscape where truth is ignored or marginalized.

The goals of the Catholic/Reformed are the same as always: to take dominion of the earth and enforce God’s law, as they see it, thereby legislating morality and establishing the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

¹¹⁵ See *Ibid.*, pp. 88-96 for a short biographies of Rushdoony, Gary North, and Greg Bahnsen, their relationship, and the subsequent rise of Gary DeMar.

¹¹⁶ Francis Schaeffer, without any evidence, makes this claim. Samuel Rutherford was an obscure Scottish Presbyterian thinker. See Sanford, p. 123.

History warns them of the consequences of their efforts. Israel, the only legitimate theocracy, failed miserably. The Catholic/Reformed have had many opportunities to achieve their goals through counterfeit theocracies. History records the formation and operation of various church/state combinations. In every such instance, they felt they would be successful. They always failed, and they always viciously murdered and persecuted those true followers of Christ and other dissenters who would not bow down to them. An inevitable result of the operation of their false “theocracies” is the corruption of church, state, and everyone in society except the persecuted remnant.

Nonetheless, they keep trying. Christian Activists, led by Christian Right leaders, have made significant gains in American politics. Anti-government rhetoric has recently “assumed unmistakably religious overtones.”¹¹⁷ This would be great news if the “religious overtones” were according to truth and Christian knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. As explained above, that is not the case.

Christian Revisionists, most notably David Barton—whose historical teachings have been exposed for what they are—have made great strides on both the national and some state levels. Barton’s disciples include Rick Perry, Mike Huckabee, Newt Gingrich, and Michele Bachmann, among others. Other powerful proponents for the Christian Worldview include:

- (1) the Tea Party;
- (2) Sharron Angle;
- (3) Rick Perry;
- (4) Jim DeMint;
- (5) Glenn Beck;
- (6) Howard Phillips (founder of the U.S. Taxpayers Party later renamed the Constitution Party. Its 1996 Platform called for “a republic under God” to be governed by Constitutional law “rooted in Biblical law.”);
- (7) Sarah Palin;
- (8) Tom Tancredo;
- (9) Randall Terry;
- (10) Rus Walton;

¹¹⁷ Sanford, p. 185.

- (11) Joseph Morecroft;
- (12) libertarian Ron Paul (Gary North was one of Ron Paul's mentors; Libertarians have no concept of the Bible doctrine of government; libertarianism requires a separate analysis which is beyond the scope of this book.);
- (13) the Texas GOP (with Barton as its public face¹¹⁸);
- (14) Steven Hotze, (a dominionist member of the Coalition on Revival); and
- (15) many more.

They never question the veracity of the theology and history they follow and promote. Therefore, they never learn what is clear from the Bible and from history: their goal of establishing a nation under God is impossible; the establishment of their proposed theocracy will not fulfill their vision for a virtuous America. God ordained only one theocracy, Israel. That one legitimate theocracy failed. Israel even rejected the Kingdom when offered. The Bible and history prove that man's counterfeit "theocracies" cannot do what God's ordained theocracy could not do. Man cannot bring in the kingdom. The Bible prophesies a time when final judgment will be God's only available remedy. Christ will crush the armies of all Gentile nations that come against Israel and forcefully establish and rule directly over his earthly kingdom.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

Section I

Christian and Secular Revisionism

“[I] appeal to the conscience of every reader, whether he can find three worse things on earth, in the management of controversy, than, first, to secretly take the point disputed for truth without any proof; then, secondly, blending that error with known truths, to make artful addresses to the affections and passions of the audience, to prejudice their minds, before they hear a word that the respondent has to say; and thirdly, if the respondent refuses to yield to such management, then to call in the secular arm to complete the argument?”¹

Isaac Backus was born in Connecticut in 1723/24, a time when religious establishments persecuted those who refused to abandon dissenting views and practices. He withdrew from the established Congregational church, became a Separate, and later a Baptist. Puritans persecuted him, first as a Separate and later as a Baptist. He witnessed, researched, and wrote about the persecutions going on in New England. He was a leader in the fight for religious liberty in America. For more information on Isaac Backus see, e.g., William G. McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Piestic Tradition* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967); *Isaac Backus on Church, State, and Calvinism, Pamphlets, 1754-1789*, Edited by William G. McLoughlin (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968); Isaac Backus, *A History of New England With Particular Reference to the Denomination of Christians Called Baptists, Volumes 1 and 2* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, Previously Published by Backus Historical Society, 1871).

Isaac Backus and others such as Roger Williams, Dr. John Clarke, and many other persecuted colonists led the fight against the establishment of the church in the early history of America. To their efforts, we owe the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, which guarantees religious liberty. See Section II below for more on these and other colonial dissidents.

¹ Isaac Backus, *A History of New England With Particular Reference to the Denomination of Christians called Baptists, Volume 1* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, Previously published by Backus Historical Society, 1871), p. 150. This comment follows and precedes illustrations of how those in favor of church/state marriage, infant baptism, etc. advance their cause. On pp. 151-152, Mr. Backus illustrates how those in favor of infant baptism argue their position, pointing out the fallacies of their arguments. The tactics of the Reformed have not changed, although in America, due to the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, they can no longer call upon civil government to enforce their beliefs.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Christian Revisionist books¹ and other resources—such as lectures, speeches, and guest appearances on Christian radio—have motivated, inspired, and educated Christian Right Activists since the 1980’s as they seek to “retake America for God.” Christian Revisionism gives unwary Christians philosophical and historical underpinning and leads them into battlefields such as politics, law, and education. Sadly, Christian Revisionists—by their own admission and as proven by examination of their teachings—lie, and follow a heretical and apostate theology based upon Calvinism. Christian Revisionism and Catholicism are hard at work to establish a fake theocracy with church over state.

Christian Revisionist history predominates the Christian landscape. Political leaders, Christian Activists, Bible Colleges, churches, homeschool curriculums, Christian schools, many churches, and millions of professed believers rely on it without question. Most reject easily verifiable historic truth if brought to their attention. They are ignorant victims of religious wolves who come to them in sheep’s clothing.

Christian Revisionists are imposters who pose as Christians. Charismatic and impressive in their speech and demeanor, their leaders quote *ad nauseam*, without pause and with smiles on their faces, selected historical facts, lies, and erroneous conclusions. These articulate leaders deceive many naïve, unknowledgeable believers and lure them into their fight. Their victims, as does every believer, know that Christians are truthful. The Lord Jesus Christ was truth.² God hates a “lying tongue” and a “false witness

¹ E.g., Francis A. Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto*, (Westchester, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1981). Peter Marshall and David Manuel, *The Light and the Glory*, (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1977); Peter Marshall and David Manuel, *From Sea to Shining Sea* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1986); David Barton, *The Myth of Separation, What is the Correct relationship between Church and State?* (Aledo, Texas: Wallbuilder Press, 1992); other works by David Barton; Catherine Millard, *Rewriting America’s History* (Camp Hill, Pennsylvania: Horizon House Publishers, 1991); William J. Federer, *America’s God and Country, Encyclopedia of Quotations* (Coppell, Texas: FAME Publishing, Inc., 1994); David C. Gibbs, Jr., *One Nation Under God, Ten Things Every Christian Should Know About the Founding of America* (Seminole, Florida: Christian Law Association, 2003).

² Jn. 14.6.

that speaketh lies.”³ They do not know that every self-proclaiming Christian is not what he claims to be; that many so-called Christians have perverted and revised the teachings of the word of God and history; that those deceivers are liars and apostates who seek to implement anti-biblical agendas as prophesied in the Bible.

Educated Secularists are more sophisticated than most believers. Secular Revisionist writers and scholars expose some easily spotted lies, distortions, false conclusions, goals, and consequences of implementation of the agenda of Christian Revisionists. The attempts of Christian Right organizations to reconstruct America as a “theocracy” according to the philosophy of John Calvin alarm secularists. Secularist writings, speeches, and guest appearances reveal that authoritarian church/state establishments:

- (1) enforce their rules with the arm of the sword;
- (2) always do away with freedoms of conscience, religion, speech, press, assembly; and the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances;
- (3) persecute all those who refuse to bow down to the mandates, rules, and goals of the church/state.

Largely because of secularist light shed on the Christian Right, society in general blasphemes God. When a believer merely mentions God, the Bible, Jesus Christ, or that they are Christians, the secularist instantly dismisses him, by association with Christian Revisionists, as ignorant and unlearned.

The remnant of authentic Christians, their history and beliefs, remain almost invisible. Historically, visibility usually meant death for the remnant. This phenomenon is old. The Old Testament tells its story. God has always had only a remnant, which was nearly always invisible. 1 Kings 19:14, 18, records the dismay of the prophet Elijah and the Lord’s reply. Elijah stated, “I, *even* I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.” The Lord replied to Elijah, “Yet I have left *me* seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.” Even Elijah, one of God’s greatest prophets, was not aware of the remnant in Israel. A remnant is a very small part of

³ Pr. 6.17, 19.

the whole and is almost invisible. The Christian remnant during the eighteen or nineteen hundred years of persecution by church/state combinations had to hide out. The establishment hunted down and killed millions of them.

The goal of Christian Revisionists is to impose, once again, their heretical apostate theology on all of society. Catholics and the Reformed continue the warfare today, not as controllers, but as those who are seeking to regain control. They use the Christian Right in the American political arena to spearhead their endeavor.

Full and honest disclosure of all historical information discredits the Christian Revisionist agenda. Therefore, they clothe their atrocious past with carefully selected and revised facts while covering up, hiding, and lying about many very important historical facts. Among them are David Barton, William Federer, R. J. Rushdoony, and Peter Marshall.

They claim to be Christian, yet they lie. Facts presented in Section II prove that they, like their forefathers, lie about, never mention, or marginalize vital historical information, its relevance, and importance. They state conclusions without proof. They state facts out of context, then false conclusions. That Christian Activists accept such foolishness without question puts a serious question mark over their overall capability and credibility.

As descendants of persecutors, Christian Revisionists follow the example of their spiritual ancestors (Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, Knox, et al.). They seek the same misguided ends and use the same methods, as far as they can within the constraints of American law, as have the leaders of and advocates for all historical church/state establishments. Their theology, goals, and techniques are significantly different from those of true followers of Christ. In the realm of Christian Activism, truth is nearly invisible because the followers trust their Revisionist leaders.

We now proceed, in Section I, to expose Christian Revisionism for what it is. We also look at examples of the fruitful efforts of secularists, revisionists of another despicable variety, as they uncover and publish truth about Christian Revisionism and Revisionists.

Chapter 2

Confronting Lies with the Truth

“These *six things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”¹
(All seven are attributes of Christian Revisionists.)

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:”²

Christian Revisionists lead, to one degree or another, modern day Christian Activists in America. Many Christian Revisionist leaders, and a large number of their followers, justify lying to advance their cause. Baptist historian James R. Beller points out that the modern day “catholic Reformed Reconstructionists,” under the leadership of Rousas John Rushdoony, justify lying based upon a perverted interpretation of certain Biblical passages.³ Rushdoony believes in “religious establishments in civil government and that it is acceptable to lie” to promote the cause he supports.⁴

This movement promotes a strategy of lying which states that Christians have “no obligation to speak truthfully to those who have forfeited the right to hear the truth,” and that the “commandment does not say that ‘thou shalt never tell a lie.’”⁵ “Even the famous Reformed lawyer, John Whitehead, founder of the Rutherford Institute, apparently approves of this strategy: Rahab risked everything in order to follow God, including telling lies.”⁶

A contextual reading of the verses they rely on does not support their interpretation. When presented with a moral dilemma,

¹ Pr.6.16-19.

² Ep. 4:14-15.

³ James R. Beller, *The Coming Destruction of the Baptist People: The Baptist History of America* (St. Louis, Missouri: Prairie Fire Press, 2005), pp. 30-35 citing works of Rushdoony and others.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 34, citing John Whitehead, “Christian Resistance in the Face of State Interference,” *Christianity and Civilization 3: The Theology of Christian Resistance* (Tyler, TX: General Divinity School, 1983), p. 8.

the Hebrew midwives and Rahab the harlot lied. God rewarded them. Why? Because, they lied to save the lives of innocent babies and God's men. Their dilemma: truth and murder or lies and life?

Reconstructionist Revisionist history dominates the Christian landscape in America. Obviously, Christian Revisionists want blind acceptance of, not open debate about, their version of American history. They do not reveal the truth because many believers would not to accept their strategies, revisionist history, philosophy, and goals. Many blind Christians continue to follow them; and, as a result, look like fools. They continue riding their horses through the streets of Christendom naked and no one shouts, "They have no clothes on."

Most Christians blindly accept Revisionism and continue to argue it. That secularists are exposing their lies deters them not at all. One should keep in mind that secularists, while accurately exposing some lies of Christian Revisionist history, also rely on selected facts, articulate different problems that they believe mankind needs to overcome, and propose erroneous conclusions and solutions.

Sometimes the proclamation of truth in love, and nothing more, brings one into conflict with others. Most of the time, such is the case when a believer tries to disseminate historical truth to bigoted victims of Christian Revisionist history. For that reason, one may find it hard and distasteful to proclaim truth. The Puritans banished Roger Williams from the colony of Massachusetts because he would not come around to their way of believing on some very important matters.⁷ Williams told the truth and refused to accept their lies.⁸ He wrote a dialogue between truth and peace. The following is an excerpt:

"Peace. Dear truth, I know thy birth, thy nature, thy delight. They that know thee will prize thee far above themselves and lives, and sell

⁷ Roger Williams was the founder of Rhode Island, a government unique and revolutionary in that it granted complete freedom of conscience. Due to the efforts of Mr. Williams, Dr. John Clarke, and others who followed, America has the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, which protects freedom of religion and conscience. Section II gives the history of the efforts of Roger Williams. Christian Revisionists never reveal this history. They never mention the writings of Williams or other "heretics" in the colonies. Those writings are powerful arguments against the fallacies of Calvinism and its offspring, represented in America by Protestants such as Anglicans and Puritans.

⁸ "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Ga. 4:16).

themselves to buy thee. Well spake that famous Elizabeth to her famous attorney, Sir Edward Coke; ‘Mr. Attorney, go on as thou hast begun, and still plead, not *pro Domina Regina*, but *pro Domina Veritate*.’

“*Truth*. It is true, my crown is high; my scepter is strong to break down strongest holds, to throw down highest crowns of all that plead, though but in thought, against me. Some few there are, but oh! how few are valiant for the truth, and dare to plead my cause, as my witnesses in sackcloth, Rev. xi. [3]; while all men’s tongues are bent like bows to shoot out lying words against me?

“*Peace*. Oh! how could I spend eternal days and endless dates at thy holy feet, in listening to the precious oracles of thy mouth! All the words of thy mouth art truth, and there is no iniquity in them. thy lips drop as the honey-comb. But oh! since we must part anon, let us, as thou saidst, improve our minutes, and according as thou promisedst, revive me with thy words, which are sweeter than the honey and the honey-comb.”⁹

Warren Smith points out in his book, which addresses the New Age teachings of the Purpose Driven Church Movement:

“When it comes to teaching about the things of God, nobody gets a free pass.... We are all accountable to truth. We must preach the whole truth and nothing but the truth. We cannot overlook *any* false teaching or dismiss godly criticism by pointing out all the perceived good that seems to be coming from our ‘good works’ or whatever else we are doing. Jesus never operated this way and He doesn’t want us to either.”¹⁰

Christian Revisionists tell lies to obtain followers and unify them. Truth brings conflict and division. Unity in avoidance of conflict is the easy way, and sometimes it is probably the right way. To cause unrest for light and transient causes is usually foolish. However, at times God leads his children to stand for fundamental truth. Thomas Armitage realized this when he delivered his message *Christian Union: Real and Unreal* on March 25, 1866, at a meeting of the Christian Union Association.¹¹

⁹ Williams and Underhill, pp. 32-33. Cotton was a Puritan. The written dialogue between Williams and Cotton gives great insight as to the thinking of both Williams and the Puritans, the persecuted and the persecutors.

¹⁰ Warren Smith, *Deceived on Purpose* (Magalia, CA: Mountain Stream Press, 2004), pp. 172-173.

¹¹ Beller, *America in Crimson Red*, p. 471.

“He said with charity, clarity, calmness and incisive reasoning: ‘As far as I can discover, my Pedobaptist brethren seem to think that [Christian Union] consists very largely in a warm-hearted, loving feeling toward each other as regenerated men.’ He said the effort at Christian union meant a setting aside of disagreement for the sake of worship and concluded that the association believed ‘disagreement, if you can agree with it, is unity!’ To the Dutch Reformed, Congregational, Presbyterian and Methodist congregation he said, ‘That is, kneeling on the same floor, sitting on the same seat, singing the same hymn, uniting in the same prayer (when you have never been divided at all as to the floor, the bench, the hymn, or the prayer); and being as different as possible, in all other respects, constitute Christian union!’

“This ‘good feeling’ Armitage said, ‘is looked upon, very generally, as good, fair, Bible Christian union. Well, it may be; but if it is, things have changed vastly since apostolic times. The truth is that kindly feeling is not Christian union, and may exist where ‘the unity of the faith,’ is rent into a thousand shreds.’”¹²

The Lord Jesus Christ always spoke the truth, even though it offended the highest religious leaders of God’s chosen nation and prevented unity with the Jewish religious leaders. The apostles and the early Christians, in spite of the resulting persecutions, continued to love their neighbors by speaking truth about the Gospel of salvation, the errors of the Pharisees, and the heresies that were already creeping into the church. A remnant of faithful believers have honored their duty to speak truth from the time of Christ to this day. Establishments have always hated, imprisoned, tortured, and killed the Saints of God for refusing to abandon Bible truth and accept establishment lies.

Christians should diligently seek, follow, and communicate truth and expose lies. Sadly, many shun and ignore truth, and distance themselves from those who proclaim it. Rejection of truth is conformity with lies.

The Apostle Paul warned believers to beware of false teaching:

“For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and *for* them at Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the

¹² *Ibid.*, citing Thomas Armitage, “Christian Union, Real and Unreal,” *Doctrinal and Practical Tracts* (New York: Thomas Holman, 1884), p. 5.

acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father and of Christ: In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say, lest any man entice you with enticing words.... As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”¹³

He warned the churches:

“For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you [the wife and bride of Christ, the church] to one husband, that I may present *you* as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if* ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him*.”¹⁴

The reference to Eve, in the above passage, is not accidental, for Eve was a type of the church. As God wanted Eve to remain pure, he wants his churches to remain chaste virgins. Eve was deceived by lies from Satan—lies which were directly contrary to God’s word. Satan deceived her about a simple truth. She gave up paradise and introduced sin into the world because she followed the deception. Just as her deviation from God’s word had far-reaching consequences for her, Adam, and every person who has ever lived, the deception of God’s believers and churches will lead to dire consequences for untold millions.

Scripture teaches that God hates “a lying tongue” and “a false witness that speaketh lies.”¹⁵ Scripture also teaches believers to stand on truth, not lies. “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.”¹⁶ The church is to

¹³ Col. 2.1-4, 6-8.

¹⁴ 2 Co. 11.2-4.

¹⁵ Pr. 6.17, 19.

¹⁶ Jn. 17:17-19.

be “the pillar and ground of the truth.”¹⁷ Jesus said to some religious leaders:

“Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.”¹⁸

Lies, especially about important and historically verifiable matters, in conjunction with spiritual ignorance and falsehood never help anyone, at least in the long run. Secularists and others have exposed the history, philosophy, and lies of Christian Revisionism. Historical and spiritual lies weaken the Christian position, especially when it is exposed. Historical revisionism which anyone, even secularists, can easily research, discover, and expose, hurts the cause of Christ.

Historically, God's men have always presented truth concerning history, Bible facts, and Bible principles. Those heroes of the faith exposed the much more widely accepted but inaccurate views. Roger Williams, Dr. John Clarke, Isaac Backus and others—the persecuted—stood against American colonial establishments—the persecutors—and wrote books and tracts chronicling and exposing the fallacies of church/state union, Puritan theology, and other matters. Isaac Backus wrote:

“And if it should be found, that nearly all the histories of this country which are much known, have been written by persons who thought themselves invested with power to act as lawgivers and judges for their neighbors, under the name of orthodoxy, or of immediate power from heaven, the inference will be strong, that our affairs have never been set in so clear light as they ought to be; and if this is not indeed the case I am greatly mistaken; of which the following account will enable the reader to judge for himself.

“The greatest objection that I have heard against this design is, that we ought not to rake up the ashes of our good fathers, nor to rehearse those old controversies, which will tend to increase your present

¹⁷ 1 Ti. 3.15.

¹⁸ Jn. 8.44-47.

difficulties. But what is meant by this objection? To reveal secret, or to repeat matters that have been well settled between persons or parties, is forbidden, and its effects are very pernicious; but what is that to a history of public facts, and an examination of the principles and conduct, both of oppressors, and of the oppressed?

“Men who are still fond of arbitrary power may make the above objection; but a learned and ingenious paedobaptist that felt the effects of such power, lately said, ‘The Presbyterians, I confess, formerly copied too nearly the Episcopalians. The genuine principles of universal and impartial liberty were very little understood by any; and all parties were too much involved in the guilt of intolerance and persecution. The dissenters in our times freely acknowledge this, and condemn the narrow principles of many of their oppressors; having no objection to transmitting down to posterity, in their true colors, the acts of oppression and intolerance of which all sects have been guilty. Not indeed, as is sometimes done, with view of encouraging such conduct in one party by the example of others; but of exposing it alike in all, and preventing it wholly, if possible, in time to come.’ This is the great design of the ensuing work; and such a work seems essentially necessary to that end.”¹⁹

Establishments have always opposed the truth. For example, members of the established churches in Connecticut and Massachusetts vehemently opposed the teachings of Isaac Backus and Roger Williams, both of whom argued for religious liberty and freedom of conscience.²⁰

During the first Great Awakening in America, George Whitefield and the army of itinerant preachers, which arose out of his preaching, exposed false teachers and false teachings. “THE GREAT AWAKENING, an unprecedented movement of religious revival, appeared early in the eighteenth century in Great Britain, in Protestant Europe, and in America.”²¹ George Whitefield’s first visit to New England around 1740 during the Great Awakening brought revival. Whitefield preached in buildings owned by churches, out of doors (many times church buildings could not contain the crowds seeking to hear him), and at colleges such as Yale.²² Because of Whitefield’s preaching, in a brief six weeks

¹⁹ Backus, Author’s Preface to *A History of New England...*, Volume I, pp. vii-viii.

²⁰ See Section II for more on the history of these men.

²¹ William L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Foundations in the South* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2006), p. v.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 2-4 citing M. H. Mitchell, *The Great Awakening and Other Revivals in the Religious Life of Connecticut* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1934), F. W. Hoffman, *Revival Times in*

period, the religious climate of New England was changed. The churches experienced unprecedented growth. Entire communities flocked to hear the gospel, and hundreds were converted in single localities.²³

Some aspects of the Great Awakening, such as the emphasis on individual conversion and the new birth, the dramatic expressions of their feelings by the excited converts, the many itinerant preachers which came out of the revival, and the sharp criticism hurled by revivalists at the established ministry were offensive to the established churches.²⁴ Conservative groups became alarmed.²⁵ Whitefield hurled epithets such as “hypocrites” and “wolves in sheep’s clothing” at the unconverted or anti-revivalist clergy, and he did not hesitate to go uninvited into their parishes.²⁶

Because of the offenses of the Great Awakening, many of the establishment did not warmly receive Whitefield when he returned to New England in 1744. In fact, he faced a confused situation. Although multitudes supported him and continued to attend his revival meetings, a formidable body of opposition to him and his methods had developed in his absence of four years.²⁷ The faculty of Harvard College condemned Whitefield, the Connecticut legislature declared that no minister should preach in the parish of another without the incumbent’s consent, and later the General Court forbade all itinerant preaching with penalty of loss of right to collect one’s legal salary and imprisonment. He found few pulpits open to him, and a barrage of declarations and testimonies were aimed at him.²⁸ Most of the ministers of the established churches, as well as the faculties of Yale and Harvard Colleges, were opposed to him.

Nonetheless, he continued to preach; the revival continued; and many, including Shubal Stearns and Daniel Marshall, two men

America (Boston: W. A. Wilde Co., 1956), A. H. Newman, *A History of the Baptist Churches in the United States* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1915), p. 242.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-7 citing Mitchell, pp. 11, 15; Joseph Tracy, *The Great Awakening* (Boston: Tappan & Dennet, 1842); Williston Walker, *A History of the Congregational Churches in the United States* (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1894).

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

who were to become Baptists and chief instruments for carrying the Great Awakening to the South, were converted because of being strongly moved by Whitefield.²⁹

Within the last thirty years, a remnant have stepped to the front and alerted their brethren to the unholy alliances with the government that churches are forming. Some have sounded the alarm through preaching. Some have written books, preached, and/or spoken on the issue.³⁰ For the most part, most “fundamental Christians” marginalize those brethren.

Catholic, Protestant, and even Baptist historical revisionists lead the way to the final church/state union. Many “fundamental Bible believing” preachers and church members follow them and continue to fight a warfare that God did not call them to fight in a manner inconsistent with God’s rules for spiritual warfare.

“Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which *is* in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.”³¹

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10. For the story of Shubal Stearns and Daniel Marshall, see Section II, Chapter 6.

³⁰ See e.g., such books as Beller, *America in Crimson Red*, Beller, *The Coming Destruction of the Baptist People*; Grady, *How Satan Turned America Against God*; Dr. William P. Grady, *What Hath God Wrought: A Biblical Interpretation of American History* (Knoxville, Tennessee: Grady Publications, Inc., 1999); Dr. Greg Dixon, *The Trail of Blood Revisited*, (Ft. Pierce, Florida: Faith Baptist Publications, 2005); Pastor Jason Cooley’s online sermons on Baptist History, church organization, and important issues facing Christians at http://www.sermonaudio.com/source_detail.asp?sourceid=pastorcooley and <https://www.youtube.com/user/oldpathsbaptistmn>.

³¹ Is. 28.14-18.

Chapter 3

Christian Revisionists Are Heretical and Apostate

Christian Revisionists are heretical and apostate. Their efforts are hastening the final political/religious establishment. Their philosophy contradicts most, if not all, essential doctrines of the faith. They have slyly established a realm of Christian Activism that runs from the church house to the state house. Professing Christians, many of whom are authentic believers, study and follow their false teachings. Thus, many authentic believers are ignorantly aiding the cause of their adversary, the devil, as they work to restructure America while ignoring the heretical and apostate status of their churches. This chapter takes a brief look at what the Bible has to say about the apostasy and heresy of the church and its relationship to Christian Revisionism.

Prior to the return of the Lord, the churches, except for a remnant, will go into apostasy. “Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition: who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”¹

Apostasy means “the abandonment or renunciation of a religious or political belief.” In the Christian context, “Apostasy, ‘falling away,’” is the act of professed Christians who deliberately reject (1) revealed truth as to the deity of Jesus Christ, and (2) redemption through his atoning and redeeming sacrifice.² “For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.”³

Apostasy differs therefore from error concerning truth, which may be the result of either ignorance⁴ or heresy. Christian heresy may be defined as “belief or opinion contrary to Bible teaching,”

¹ 2 Th. 2.3-4.

² 1 Jn. 4.1-3, 2 Pe. 2.1.

³ Ph. 3.18.

⁴ Ac. 19.1-6.

both of which may consist with true faith, and may be due to the snare of Satan.⁵

The apostate is perfectly described in 2 Timothy 4.3, 4: “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned into fables.” Apostates depart from the faith, but not from the outward profession of Christianity.⁶ Apostate teachers are described in 2 Timothy 4.3; 2 Peter 2.1-19; and Jude 4, 8, 11-13, 16.

Apostasy in the church, as in Israel,⁷ is irremediable, and awaits judgment.⁸ Inevitably, there is no remedy for apostasy but judgment.⁹

“Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”¹⁰ The reference is not to personal faith, but to belief in the whole body of revealed truth.¹¹ “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.”¹²

The New Testament treated the apostasy as having already set in. In fact, the Asian churches had not disbanded, nor ceased to call themselves Christian; but they had turned away from the doctrines of grace distinctively revealed through the Apostle Paul. Thus, even in the beginning of the church, the apostle Paul and Jude were concerned with the tendency to depart from the faith due to the influence of false teachers:

“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you; and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”¹³

⁵ 2 Ti. 2.25, 26.

⁶ 2 Ti. 3.5.

⁷ Is. 1.5, 6; 5.5-7.

⁸ 2 Th. 2.10-12; 2 Pe. 2.17, 21; Jude 11-15; Re. 3.14-16.

⁹ Is. 1.2-7, 24, 25; He. 6.4-8; 10.26-31. For example, Noah preached for 120 years, won no converts, and the judgment predicted by his great-grandfather fell (Jude 14, 15, Ge. 7.11).

¹⁰ Lu. 18.8b.

¹¹ See, e.g., Lu. 18.8; Ro. 1.5; 1 Co. 16.13; 2 Co. 13.5; Col. 1.23, 2.7; Tit. 1.13; Jude 3.

¹² 1 Ti. 4.1.

¹³ Ga. 1.6-8.

“For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”¹⁴

Christian Revisionists pervert the gospel of Christ and turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness (“Looseness; irregular indulgence of animal desires; wantonness; lustfulness; Tendency to excite lust, and promote irregular indulgences.”¹⁵) They believe in Jesus Christ in the sense expressed in James 2.19: “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.”

Gentile world apostasy comes in seven stages:

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.”¹⁶

Because of this worldwide apostasy, mankind sinks to the depths of depravity:

“Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents. Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural

¹⁴ Jude 4.

¹⁵ NOAH WEBSTER, AMERICAN DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE (1828) definition of “LASCIVIOUSNESS.”

¹⁶ Ro. 1.21-23.

affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”¹⁷

Ungodly men will “wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.” Our Lord warned against false teachers:

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”¹⁸

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”¹⁹

“And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.”²⁰

“And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.”²¹

“For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if *it were* possible, even the elect.”²²

“Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven[.]”²³

“But in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.”²⁴

Heresy and apostasy leave God’s doctrines and goals in the dust. Heretics and apostates deceive believers about many matters. As a result, God is not glorified.

¹⁷ Ro. 1.24-32.

¹⁸ Mt. 7.15.

¹⁹ Mt. 7.21-23.

²⁰ Mt. 24.4-5.

²¹ Mt. 24.11.

²² Mk. 13.22.

²³ Mt. 5.19.

²⁴ Mt. 15.9.

Peter, Paul, and Jude traced the origin of apostasy to false teachers, explained their methods of operation, and warned the church to beware of heresy and apostasy:

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock: Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.”²⁵

“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?”²⁶

“For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.”²⁷

“For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if* ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him*.”²⁸

“For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision; Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake.”²⁹

“Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.”³⁰

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and

²⁵ Ac. 20.28-31.

²⁶ Ga. 3.1.

²⁷ 1 Co. 11.19.

²⁸ 1 Co. 11.4.

²⁹ Tit. 1.10-11.

³⁰ 1 Ti. 4.1-2.

shall be turned to fables. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”³¹

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.... Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son* of Bosor, who loved wages of unrighteousness; But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man’s voice forbad the madness of the prophet. These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. For when they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage.”³²

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”³³

“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation.”³⁴

A little false teaching can completely change and pervert Gospel truth:

“Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”³⁵

³¹ 2 Ti. 4.3-5.

³² 2 Pe. 2.1-3, 15-19. All of 2 Pe. 2 deals with false teachers.

³³ 2 Jn. 9-11.

³⁴ 2 Pe. 3.3-4.

³⁵ Ga. 5.7-9.

False teachers deny redemption truth: “[False teachers] shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”³⁶ Others deny the truth concerning Christ’s person as Son of God, God himself.

“BELOVED, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.”³⁷

All phases of apostasy are seen in Jude.

The tone of the New Testament writers when dealing with heresy and apostasy is never one of dejection or pessimism. God & his promises are still the resource of the believer. Paul, as recorded in 2 Timothy and Peter, as recorded in 2 Peter, aware that martyrdom is near,³⁸ are apparently sustained and joyful:

“For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”³⁹

The whole book of 2 Timothy reflects Paul’s joyful attitude as 2 Peter shows Peter to be likewise joyful and sustained.

2 Timothy, 2 Peter, Jude, and 2 & 3 John deal with the personal walk and testimony of a true servant of Christ in a day of apostasy and declension. For example, Paul instructs the “good soldier” in the face of apostasy:

“[B]e strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou has heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth

³⁶ 2 Pe. 2.1.

³⁷ 1 Jn. 4.1-5; See also, 1 Jn. 2.18-28.

³⁸ See 2 Ti. 4.6-8, 2 Pe. 1.14, and Jn. 21.18-19.

³⁹ 2 Ti. 4.7-8.

entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life: that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.... Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel: ... *It is* a faithful saying: For if we be dead with *him*, we shall also live with *him*: If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him*: If we deny *him*, he also will deny us: If we believe not, *yet* he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.... Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: ... Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”⁴⁰

Paul instructed Timothy, a preacher whom Paul called his “dearly beloved son”⁴¹ and his “own son in the faith.”⁴²

“Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned into fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of the evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”⁴³

The believer’s resources in a day of general declension and apostasy are faith,⁴⁴ the spirit,⁴⁵ the word of God,⁴⁶ the grace of Christ,⁴⁷ separation from vessels unto dishonor,⁴⁸ the Lord’s sure reward,⁴⁹ and the Lord’s faithfulness and power.⁵⁰

⁴⁰ 2 Ti. 2.1-4, 8, 11-13, 15-17a, 22-25.

⁴¹ 2 Ti. 1.2.

⁴² 1 Ti. 1.2.

⁴³ 2 Ti. 4.2-5.

⁴⁴ 2 Ti. 1.5.

⁴⁵ 2 Ti. 1.6-7.

⁴⁶ 2 Ti. 1.13, 3.1-17; 4.3-4.

⁴⁷ 2 Ti. 2.1.

⁴⁸ 2 Ti. 2.4, 20-21.

⁴⁹ 2 Ti. 4.7-8.

⁵⁰ 2 Ti. 2.13, 19.

The tempter would always have us claim God's promises without regarding his precepts, "which is the practice the tempter would have drawn our Saviour into."⁵¹ The first Adam failed when Satan approached and deceived Eve by misquoting the word of God. The second Adam, our Lord Jesus Christ, showed us how to face the deceptions of the devil. Satan approached him in the wilderness where Christ had gone "to be tempted of the devil."⁵² After Christ had fasted forty days and nights, Satan came to him with a threefold temptation.⁵³ In responding to Satan's temptations, Jesus demonstrated to Christians how to confront the devil: quote the word of God accurately.

The falling away is here. The church, rather than the "pillar and ground of the truth,"⁵⁴ has followed religious heretics and apostates. Many believers betray the churches they are members of by failing to study and apply Bible doctrines—including those of government, church, and separation of church and state. World events indicate that the man of sin, the son of perdition, may soon be revealed. The efforts of unknowledgeable believers who, led by Christian Revisionists, follow Satan's paradigm into the political arena are hastening that day.

⁵¹ Backus, *A History of New England ...*, Volume 2, p. 254.

⁵² See Mt. 4.1-11; Mk. 1.12, 13; Lu. 4.1-13.

⁵³ Backus, *A History of New England....*

⁵⁴ 1 Ti. 3.15.

Chapter 4

Christian Revisionism Explained

According to the Bible, Christian Revisionist leaders and writers are not Christian. Their line of succession leads directly back to the heresies and apostasy already at work in New Testament times.¹ That heresy and apostasy continued forward in time to Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, and neo-Calvin philosophers. This book refers to them as Christian Revisionists because they pose as Christians, and because their Revisionism is meant not only to deceive the world, but more importantly to influence true Christians who would not otherwise follow them. Many of their victims are true but unknowledgeable born again believers who sincerely desire to glorify God. The Revisionists lie to gain the allegiance of believers and direct Christians to their cause. Many true Christians ignore Bible directives to study and to grow in knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. Therefore, they are easy prey for “wolves in sheep’s clothing.”²

Secularists, on the other hand, have uncovered, by dedicated study, the truth about Christian Revisionism. They have done a good job in exposing Christian Revisionist lies, out of context statements, unsupported conclusions, theologies, and goals.

Sadly, secularists have no spiritual understanding, knowledge, or restraints. They examine the theology and tactics of the persecutors and apply what they learn to all Christians. They never look at the truths of Scripture and the history of the persecuted believers who followed those truths.³ They are admittedly biased in favor of “pluralism, tolerance, and evidenced-based thinking [allegedly, but not in reality].”⁴ Therefore, within their examinations, they also revise, distort, speak of that which they

¹ See Chapter 3, “Christian Revisionists Are Heretical and Apostate” above. “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. (Mt. 10:16).” “But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ” (2 Co. 11:12-13). See also, e.g., Ga. 2.4, 2 Pe. 2.1, 1 Jn. 4.1.

² “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.” Mt. 7.15.

³ See, e.g., 1 Co. 2.

⁴ Sanford, p. 8.

know not, leave out relevant facts, take facts out of context, support destructive philosophies and goals, and reach false conclusions. They are revisionists of a different sort.

The tactics of Christian Revisionists do not change. As Isaac Backus noted, concerning the revisionism and lies of the leaders of the established churches in the colonies:

“[I] appeal to the conscience of every reader, whether he can find three worse things on earth, in the management of controversy, than, first, to secretly take the point disputed for truth without any proof; then, secondly, blending that error with known truths, to make artful addresses to the affections and passions of the audience, to prejudice their minds, before they hear a word that the respondent has to say; and thirdly, if the respondent refuses to yield to such management, then to call in the secular arm to complete the argument?”⁵

Contemporary Christian and Secular Revisionists are using the tactics mentioned by Backus, absent the third component which is, to their dismay, presently unavailable.

Christian Rightist ideology allegedly embraces and promotes a “Christian Worldview.” It is supposedly based on Bible teaching and covers almost all conceivable areas of experience—science, economy, history, politics, and culture. It is advanced by numerous organizations among which are Worldview Weekend, numerous churches, homeschooling associations, missions, and other groups. All or most publish Revisionist propaganda and have their conferences and seminars. The Christian Worldview movement is meant to educate and unify. As secularist James C. Sanford points out:

“And, being action-oriented, it [Christian Worldview] embraces a social and political program that fits its framework. If we take ideology in its dictionary sense to denote an ‘integrated’ package of doctrines that finds expression in ‘a sociopolitical program,’ it is in a real sense ideological. Like an ideology, and unlike a religion or philosophy, Christian Worldview is at home in a secular landscape where

⁵ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, p. 150. This comment followed and preceded illustrations of how those in favor of church/state marriage, infant baptism, etc. advance their cause. On pp. 151-152, Mr. Backus illustrated how those in favor of infant baptism argued their position, pointing out the fallacies of their arguments. Their tactics have not changed, although in America, due to the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, they no longer can call upon civil government to enforce their beliefs.

considerations of political power are paramount. Its doctrines provide an organized framework that allows it to articulate comprehensive agenda and adopt a disciplined approach toward other claimants in the secular sphere.”⁶

Those on the Christian Right who promote a Christian Worldview emphasize remaking the world according to their Bible model for nations. They are driven. Why? Because their authority is the Bible and they are certain the Bible is true. Sadly, the followers within the Christian Right have never diligently studied the Bible. They believe and act contrary to what it teaches concerning church, civil government, separation of church and state, and many other matters. Their authority is the Bible; but they rely on the wrong people to tell them what the Bible teaches rather than diligently testing what they are taught against the teaching of their authority. They are committed to their cause because Christian Revisionists hit their hot buttons and motivate them to get busy in politics.

A secularist observes, accurately in most respects:

“Avid proponents of the Christian Worldview see it as nothing less than an inspired expression of Christianity. They would defend it as a package of truths that makes religious orthodoxy applicable to today’s world. But Christian Worldview is a big step away from Christianity as normally defined. It has little to do with worship, salvation, or the teaching of Jesus, and much to do with culture, society, and politics. While advocates would see Christian Worldview as an authentic rendering of God’s perspective, a sober observer would view it as a product of historical forces and earth-bound motivations. The historical record shows that Christian Worldview was formulated by doctrinaire theologians reacting with hostility to the rise of empirical science, secularism, and popular democracy. Their aim was to mount an attack on modernist trends and to reassert Christianity’s ancient claims in the secular domain.... Its theological roots go back to the Protestant Reformation and earlier.... [I]t’s scriptural elements are carefully selected and distilled.”⁷

⁶ Sanford, p. 5.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 48-9.

Christian Revisionists adopt an unbiblical definition of “theocracy;” their version has failed every time it has been implemented.⁸

Since the late 1970s, various authors, preachers, and scholars have worked in the political system to achieve theocratic goals. They all pervert Scripture and revise history. Among them are Francis Schaeffer, Jerry Falwell, Paul Weyrich, Howard Phillips, Richard Viguerie, Pat Robertson, Ralph Reed, John Whitehead, James Dobson, Gary Bauer, Michael Farris, D. James Kennedy, Herb Titus, James Dobson, Nancy Pearcey, David Barton, and William Federer.

In response to the degenerating state of American society, as evidenced by things such as federal educational policies, the advance of feminism, drugs, judicial activism, relativism, and the legitimization of abortion, Francis Schaeffer introduced a religion-based political movement with “a theology that defined dramatically what one was fighting for and against in the secular realm.”⁹

Christians felt they needed to turn the culture around through political activism. To them, Schaeffer introduced a comprehensive Christian worldview to oppose the advance of humanism. Jerry Falwell established the Moral Majority in 1979 to get Christians actively involved in the Republican Party. The Moral Majority reached out to all “Christians:” Catholics, Protestants, Baptists, Pentecostals, Charismatics, et al. Its strategy of calling itself “moral,” not “Baptist,” in order to recruit non-Baptists, failed. Little support came from anyone other than Baptist fundamentalists.

With the demise of the Moral Majority came the formation of the Christian Coalition, which became the standard bearer for the Religious Right. The Christian Coalition wished to pressure, infiltrate, and control the Republican Party. In the 1990s, the Family Research Council became a force to “promote family legislation in Congress. Christian conservatives were able to lead the fight to elect George Bush, an alleged Christian, in 2000. Bush seeded the executive department with “Christians” and initiated

⁸ See pp. 13-14 above for definitions of “theocracy.” See also Sanford, p. 6.

⁹ Sanford, p. 18.

social and family policies favored by the Religious Right. He proposed a faith-based initiative whereby government funds were allocated to religious organizations in providing social services. Of course, government funding meant “a line drawn between a service group’s religious purpose and the legislative purpose of the program it was administering.”¹⁰ In order to get around that, Bush established a faith-based program by executive order. The program “evolved into a pork barrel program largely for the benefit of zealous supporters”¹¹ such as Operation Blessing (Pat Robertson), Prison Fellowship Ministries (Chuck Colson), and Right to Life Educational Foundation. Christian Rightists got involved with various political matters. The Christian Right influence attempted various other goals such as the Federal Marriage Amendment and curtailing of the power of the federal judiciary.

Christian reconstructionism, dominion theology, and theonomy—all elements of the Christian Revisionist movement—are closely related. Adherents of these views believe God gives Christians the duty to usher in the Kingdom of Heaven—to create a worldwide kingdom to enforce the Mosaic Law.

Dominionism follows naturally from reconstructionism, but the two are not synonymous. Dominion theology teaches that God has declared, in the Bible, that man has a duty to exercise dominion over the earth, according to God’s law, which he gave Israel through Moses. Revisionists base dominionism on what they call the “Dominion Mandate” of Genesis 1.28-30. Some, such as R. John Rushdoony and Gary North, claim that the mandate is repeated in the New Testament in Matthew 28.18-20, the Great Commission. According to Dominionism, Christians are to rule the world. Christian Reconstructionism reasons the church/state will reconstruct society according to the Law of God.

The principal goal of dominion theology and Christian Reconstructionism taken together is political and religious domination of the world by Christians through the precise implementation of God’s Biblical law. This is not a government system ruled by the church, but rather a religion/state conformed to the Law of God, a so-called “theocracy.”

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 27-28.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

The theonomist believes that the magistrate has the duty of enforcing the law of God.

All three are postmillennial. They believe Christ will return to earth at the end of the thousand-year reign of God's kingdom. Postmillennialism teaches that the ultimate progress of history is upward. Led by the church and the spreading of God's word by God's people, eventually the whole world will be brought into subjection. In other words, the church, working with civilization, science, and political agencies will bring in the Kingdom of Heaven. Christ will return at the end of the millennium.

Dominion theology and Christian Reconstructionism are also based on covenant theology which is a belief that Bible history is divided into three major covenants—the covenants of redemption, of works, and of grace.¹² Adherents believe that we currently exist under the covenant of grace, that the church has replaced Israel, and that we are now in the Kingdom of God. Man, under the covenant of grace, is responsible to rule the world, to hold dominion over it, in obedience to the laws of God. Obviously, man is not ruling at present in obedience to the laws of God, hence the need for reconstruction.

The problem with these beliefs is that they rest upon a distorted view of Scripture. Scripture teaches a premillennial return of Christ.¹³ The "covenant of grace" is an extra-biblical construct.¹⁴ Gentile nations and Israel are distinct,¹⁵ as are Israel and the Church.¹⁶ God never commanded the Church to revamp society through political activism. Instead, the Lord, after his resurrection instructed his followers:

“[T]hat repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”¹⁷ “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”¹⁸

¹² See Finney, *God Betrayed*, pp. 137-153 for an examination of covenant theology.

¹³ See, e.g., Jl. 2.1-3.21; Zec. 14; 1 Th.. 2.1-12; Mt. 24.27-31; Re. 19-22; Mk. 19.13-27; Lk. 21.8-33.

¹⁴ See Finney, *God Betrayed*, Section III, Chapter 3.

¹⁵ See Introduction, pp. 12-16 above for explanation.

¹⁶ See Finney, *God Betrayed*, Sections I-III.

¹⁷ Lu. 24:47.

¹⁸ Ac.1:8.

God clearly intends to set up his Kingdom.¹⁹ Though it is clearly unbiblical, dominion theology persists in teaching that God's people, not God, will set up the Kingdom. Thus, dominion theology is directly opposed to biblical Christianity. Once at home solely within Reformed circles, dominion theology and Christian Reconstructionism are now creeping into many authentic churches and are making a large impact on the beliefs of Charismatic churches in particular.

R. John Rushdoony first used the term "reconstruction" in 1965. It referred to a "Christian Renaissance" capable of challenging "humanism and statism."²⁰ Its purpose was to build something solid in place of something flawed. It plans to "reconstruct the social order from the ground up" using a comprehensive plan "encompassing every sector of society." Government, to the reconstructionist, means civil government, and "the disparate units of society: self, family, church, business, etc.," each remaining in its God-given jurisdiction.²¹ The model of the reconstructionist is Israel.

"In its Christian form, it signifies the establishment of a religio-political order faithful to the dictates of God's will to replace the current godless order." ... "[A] corp of God's elect would undertake the 'task of reconstruction,' taking the Bible as a blueprint and seeking to apply Old Testament civil codes, often harsh, to contemporary society. In so doing, they would establish God's sovereignty over all of society."²²

Rushdoony and his Christian Right allies "brought a new, dynamic perspective to Christian Worldview that helped in politicizing it." Almost all leaders of the movement were Presbyterians who adhered to "centuries old confessional statements."²³

Andrew Sandlin calls Christian Reconstructionism "a version of the Reformed, Postmillennial Theology that emphasizes the concepts of Theonomy and Dominion."²⁴ Theonomy refers to law

¹⁹ See, e.g., Ps. 2, 72; Is. 11, 26.20-27.13; Zec. 14.9-21; Jl. 3.17-21; Re. 19.11-22.21.

²⁰ Sanford, p. 83, citing R. John Rushdoony, *The Roots of Reconstruction* (Vallecito, California: Ross House Books, 1991) 545-546.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 109; see pp. 109-116 for Sanford's insightful analysis of reconstructionism.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 83.

²³ See *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85.

²⁴ Beller, *The Coming Destruction of the Baptist People*, p. 33.

that is divinely decreed, the law as revealed by God through Scripture. That law includes, according to theonomy, the codes outlined in Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy. “This large corpus of laws provided rules for Hebrew daily life and had moral, ceremonial, and civil application.... Reconstructionists treat virtually all of these Hebrew codes, except for the strictly ceremonial ones, as binding for all Christian nations.”²⁵ As Rusdoony put it, “Wicked persons are to be removed as the surgeon removes ‘a hopelessly diseased organ to save the body.’”²⁶ “The crime of murder requires the death penalty for the perpetrator, but so do a multitude of other infractions including adultery, sodomy and bestiality, homosexuality, rape, incest, incorrigibility in children, Sabbath breaking, kidnapping, apostasy, witchcraft, sorcery, false pretension to prophesy, and blasphemy.”²⁷ The goal, according to Rushdoony, is the “restitution of God’s order” through God’s justice.

“Theonomists believe that Matthew 5:13-16 presents the Church with ‘a mandate for complete social transformation of the entire world.’ The Church is to play the key role in this transformation by spreading the gospel throughout the world, taking over the function of government, and enforcing the Mosaic Law. Thus, Chilton stated, ‘Our goal is world dominion under Christ’s Lordship, a ‘world takeover’ if you will; but our strategy begins with reformation, reconstruction of the church. From that will flow social and political reconstruction, indeed a flowering of Christian civilization.’ Again he said, ‘The Christian goal for the world is the universal development of Biblical theocratic republics, in which every area of life is redeemed and placed under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the rule of God’s law.’

“Another theonomist declared that ‘the saints must prepare to take over the world’s governments and its courts.’

“Theonomists optimistically believe that ‘As the gospel progresses throughout the world it will win, and win, and win, until all the kingdoms become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

“This optimistic belief makes theonomy a genuine form of Postmillennialism....

“[R.J.] Rushdoony wrote,

²⁵ Sanford, p. 106.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, citing Greg L. Bahnsen, *Theonomy in Christian Ethics*, 3rd ed. (Nacogdoches, Tx.: Covenant Media Press, 2002, p. 35; John Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, (The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1973), p. 216. See Sanford, pp. 105-109 and the citations therein for more in-depth explanation, analysis and acceptance by other “Christians” of theonomy.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, citing Bahnsen, *Theonomy*.

‘Postmillialism thus believes that man must be saved, and that this generation is the starting point for a mandate to exercise dominion in Christ’s name over every area of life and thought. Postmillennialism in its classic form does not neglect the church and it does not neglect also to work for a Christian state and school, for the sovereignty and crown rights of the King over individuals, families, institutions, arts, scientists, and all things else. More, it holds that God has provided the way for this conquest: His Law.’²⁸

“Theologically optimistic, postmillennialists consider it their evangelical mission not simply to preach the Gospel, but to redeem the world, reform institutions, and Christianize civilization.”²⁹ They believe they will achieve this by working in the earthy realm under the God’s spiritual leadership.

Some Religious Right advocates, such as Conservative journalist Anthony Williams, now downplay Reconstructionism. Others, such as James Dobson and Charles Colson, ignore it “as though it never existed.” Some, “with past ties to Reconstructionism often attempt to distance themselves from it. For example, Herb Titus, John Whitehead, and Howard Ahmanson, former students and associates of R. John Rushdoony, insist they are no longer strict followers.”³⁰

Nonetheless, Reconstructionism has had considerable impact on the Religious Right’s agenda and outlook. Christians still widely study and believe the reconstructionist view of history. Most Bible colleges, Christian Schools, and homeschoolers subscribe to curriculums which teach Christian Revisionist history.

Obviously, Christian Revisionists are not interested in honest debate because such a debate would reveal that some of the founders of this nation, such as the Puritans and Anglicans, were deceived and adhered to a theology which, as the world correctly

²⁸ Renald E. Showers, *There Really Is a Difference: A Comparison of Covenant and Dispensational Theology* (Bellmar, New Jersey: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, 1990), pp. 152-154, citing Meredith G. Kline, “Comments on the Old-New Error,” *Westminster Theological Journal*, p. 41 (1978), pp. 172-173; David Chilton, *Paradise Restored: An Eschatology of dominion* (Tyler, Texas: Reconstruction Press, 1985), pp. 12, 214, 226, 192; R.J. Rushdoony, “Government and the Christian,” *The Rutherford Institute*, 1 (July-August, 1984), p. 7; R.J. Rushdoony, “Postmillennialism versus Impotent Religion,” *Journal of Christian Reconstruction*, 3 (winter, 1976-77), p. 126.

²⁹ Sanford, p. 86.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

points out, advocated and practiced the union of church and state, and enforced all Ten Commandments, including that having to do with man's relationship to God, and severely persecuted dissenters such as the Baptists and Quakers whom they labeled "heretics." A summary of colonial historical facts Christian Revisionists do not wish people to know is given in Section II. Believers in America interested in honoring God need to know those facts. The educated secularist, in contrast to the dumbed down Christian Activist, knows that these revisionists are seeking to implement their theology yet again.

Chapter 5

Catholic Revisionism

For numerous reasons, one could make the argument that Catholic Revisionism should not be included in an examination of Christian and Secular Revisionism. Of course, Catholicism, as does Protestantism, believes that God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—is one God. That does not make them “Christian.” The devils know and believe as much and tremble.¹ Christians are followers of Christ, not merely those with head knowledge of Christ. According to the Bible, only born again believers can become “Christians” or followers of Christ.² Catholics follow their church and its teachings, not Christ and his teachings as recorded in Scripture. Catholic salvation is no salvation at all. Catholicism teaches salvation is through the church—that the church imparts grace through the sacraments. The Bible teaches that one is saved by grace through faith.³

Catholicism claims to be the only true church since only Catholicism can trace their leader, the Pope, directly back to Peter whom they, not the Bible, designate as the first Pope. According to the Bible, this teaching is false on its face. Furthermore, succession of leaders does not mean succession of doctrine. Even if Catholicism’s claim of succession of Popes back to Peter were true, it proves nothing because Catholic doctrine is heretical and apostate. Catholic doctrine does not go back to “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”⁴

Nonetheless, since they are the original establishment revisionists who say that their roots go back to Christ and his Apostles, specifically Peter; since they have been a great force in attempts to reconstruct America; since Catholicism also, like true Christianity but by different authority, creates absolute moral standards and makes it impossible to revise those standards on the

¹ “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. (Ja. 2.19).”

² Jn. 3, 8.30-59.

³ See e.g., Ep. 2.8-10, Tit.2.11-14.

⁴ An unproven claim.

basis of any other authority, a brief examination of their efforts is in order.

By the early fourth century, Catholic Bishops had certainly departed from the faith. It was then that Catholicism and the state combined under the Roman Emperor Constantine. Before that union, all churches had been separate from the state. Catholicism is the mother of all “Christian” spiritual harlots.

Catholicism differs from Biblical Christianity on almost all doctrines. For example:

- (1) Church/state relationship: Catholic: The proper order is union of church and state. Bible: The proper order is separation of church and state.
- (2) Doctrine of the present church. Catholic: Universal. Bible: Local, autonomous assemblies until the Marriage Supper of the Lamb at which time the church will become a universal visible assembly.
- (3) The goal of man. Catholicism: the happiness of man. Bible: the glory of God.
- (4) Salvation. Catholicism: The church imparts salvation and grace through the sacraments. Members earn salvation through observance of the sacraments. Bible: a gift from God obtained by repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ neither of which is a work, both of which are the opposite of work.
- (5) Baptism. Catholic: Baptism is a sacrament. Infants are to be baptized by sprinkling. When church and state are in order and combined, both church and state require baptism. Baptism makes one a member of the church and a citizen of the state. When not combined, baptism by a Catholic priest makes one a member of the church. Bible: After salvation, a believer is baptized by immersion into the local autonomous church body. Only church membership requires baptism. The state is not involved with, nor can it require or sanction, baptism.

Catholicism despises separation of church and state and is an ardent promoter of their own historical, legal, and theological revisionism. Catholic theology calls for union of the Catholic church and state. According to Catholicism, all nations and individuals should submit themselves to the church; and “the church” means the Catholic church. When that is the order of things, the church, being superior to the state, effectively controls and the state becomes the enforcement arm of the church. Catholicism concedes that union of church and state is no longer

the norm and is working unceasingly to restore order. When in power, Catholicism, as already addressed, is a vicious persecutor of those deemed to be heretics.⁵

Catholicism set out early to destroy separation of church and state in America. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Samuel F. B. Morse discovered and publicized a Catholic political conspiracy against the United States of America.⁶ “At least 45 fanatically anti-Catholic newspapers and periodicals could be purchased in the ... U.S. of A.... There were also well over 500 books and pamphlets written on this anti-popery theme as well.”⁷

Dr. Morse [wrote]: “From whom is authority to govern derived? Austria and the United States will agree in answering,—from God. The opposition of opinion occurs in the answers to the next question. To whom on earth is this authority delegated? Austria answers, To the EMPEROR, who is the source of all authority,—‘I the Emperor do ordain,...’ The United States answers, To the PEOPLE, in whom resides the Sovereign power,—‘We the People do ordain, establish, grant,’... In one principle is recognized the necessity of the servitude of the people, the absolute dependence of the subject, unqualified submission to the commands of the rulers without question or examination. The Ruler is Master, the People are Slaves. In the other is recognized the supremacy of the people, the equality of rights themselves; the Ruler is a public servant, receiving wages from the people to perform services agreeable to their pleasure; amenable in all things to them; and holding office at their will. The Ruler is Servant; the People are Master.

“The fact and important nature of the difference in these antagonistic doctrines, leading, as is perceived, to diametrically opposite results, are all that is needful to state in order to proceed at once to the inquiry, which position does the Catholic sect and the Protestant sects severally favor? The Pope, the supreme Head of the Catholic church, claims to be the ‘Vicegerent of God,’ supreme ‘over all mortals;’ ‘over all Emperors, Kings, Princes, Potentates and People;’ King of kings and Lord of lords.’ He calls himself, ‘the divinely appointed dispenser of spiritual and temporal punishments;’ ‘armed with power to depose Emperors and Kings, and absolve subjects from their oath of

⁵ See pp. 21-24 above for more on the atrocities of the Catholic church.

⁶ Grady, *What Hath God Wrought!*, pp. 221-222, citing S. Ireneus Prime, *The Life of Samuel F. B. Morse* (New York: Arno Press, 1974), p. 730; Samuel F. B. Morse, *Foreign Conspiracy Against the Liberties of the United States* (New York: Arno Press, 1977), pp. 19-20, 28-29, 31; Samuel F. B. Morse, *Imminent Dangers to the Free Institutions of the United States Through Foreign Immigration* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), pp. 7, 8.

⁷ Grady, *What Hath God Wrought!*, p. 225.

allegiance:’ ‘from him lies no appeal;’ ‘he is responsible to no one on earth;’ ‘he is judged of no one but God.’”⁸

The Pope determines what writings are heretical, and reading heretical writings, according to the “Congregation of the Index”—an essential department of the papal court—shall be regarded as an offense against the church and against God.⁹ In 1832, Pope Gregory XVI referred to:

“that absurd and erroneous doctrine, or rather raving, in favor and defence of ‘liberty of conscience,’ for which most pestilential error, the course is opened to that entire and wild liberty of opinion, which is every where attempting the overthrow of religious and civil institutions.... Hither tends that worst and never sufficiently to be execrated and detested LIBERTY OF THE PRESS, for the diffusion of all manner or writings....”¹⁰

Accordingly, the Provincial Council of Baltimore, in order to guard against error, forbade the reading of Scripture “without the advice and permission of the pastors and spiritual guides whom God has appointed to govern his Church.”¹¹ If Catholic principles had prevailed in the United States, the First Amendment would never have been adopted because the two are diametrically opposed.

The Vatican plans a Romanized America. The plan has been and is being expedited through Catholic immigration. Although men such as Samuel F. B. Morse, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and others warned against allowing immigration of those whose principles were contrary to those upon which America was founded, their warnings were not heeded and huge numbers of Catholics have come into America, bringing with them their abominable religion as well as their base morality. A lot of money has been spent on the significant number of immigrant paupers, and mob violence by immigrants has been a new part of the American culture. Catholic mobs have disrupted meetings where those of other faiths renounce Catholicism, and Roman

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 226-227, citing Morse, *Foreign Conspiracy*, pp. 34-35.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 227, citing R. W. Thompson, *The Papacy and the Civil Power* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1876), p. 91.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 228; Morse, citing *Foreign Conspiracy*, pp. 41-42.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, citing Thompson, p. 79.

shepherds have bartered the votes of their flocks to politicians, and fought over the reading of the *King James Bible* in America's public schools.¹²

Jesuit author F. X. Weninger wrote in 1862, "One of the most glorious enterprises for the Catholic Church to engage in at this day is the conversion of the United States to the Catholic faith."¹³ "Vallestigny, a Jesuit priest and deputy of Alva, stated in his address to His Majesty:

"The mass of the human family are born, not to govern, but to be governed. This sublime employment of government has been confided by Providence to the privileged class, whom he has placed upon an eminence to which the multitude cannot rise without being lost in the labyrinth and snares which are therein found."¹⁴

Catholic clergy themselves admit that there is a conspiracy against the United States and that Catholicism plans to take over America. For example:

"The *Shepherd of the Valley*, the official journal of the Bishop of St. Louis ..., declared in 1851: The Church is of necessity intolerant. Heresy she endures when and where she must, but she hates it and directs all her energies to destroy it... If Catholics ever gain a sufficient numerical majority in this country, religious freedom is at an end. So our enemies say, so we believe."¹⁵

Naturally, Catholic spokesmen and writers have attacked the phrase "separation of church and state" since religious liberty and separation of church and state are antithetical to Catholic theology and power. For example,

"Father John Courtney Murray described the phrase 'separation of church and state' as a 'negative, ill-defined, basically un-American [sic] formula....' After the McCollum decision the Catholic bishops of the United States, in a statement issued through the National Catholic Welfare Conference in November 1948, called the phrase 'separation of church and state' the 'shibboleth of doctrinaire secularism.' Father Robert I. Gannon, former president of Fordham University, in an

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 229-236, 244-253.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 236, citing Thompson, *The Papacy and the Civil Power*.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, citing Morse, *Imminent Dangers*.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 254, citing Charles Chiniqy, *50 Years in the "Church" of Rome* (Chino, Calif.: Chick Publications, 1985), p. 285.

address delivered in St. Louis in November 1951 used the phrase ‘the current fraud of separation of church and state.’ James M. O’Neill, a Catholic writer whose interpretation of the First Amendment was adopted by the Catholic bishops termed ‘spurious’ the ‘so-called’ ‘great American principle of complete separation of church and state,’ and affirmed that ‘There is no such great American principle and there never has been.’ Father Thomas F. Coakely, on the front cover of a pamphlet, ‘Separation of Church and State,’ published by the Catholic Truth Society, says unqualifiedly: ‘Church and State have never been separated in America.’ Even the Attorney General of the United States, in an address before the National Catholic Educational Association, charged that the Supreme Court had ‘distorted’ the First Amendment in referring to ‘a wall of separation of Church and State.’”¹⁶

Catholic clergy and scholars continue their efforts to bring about a one-world church/state with special emphasis on the United States. Jesuits infiltrate everywhere they can. They are Chameleons.

Usually, Jesuits operating incognito, are never found out; they are not exposed for what they really are. Many pastors, scholars, Christian Revisionist leaders, politicians, presidential advisors, evangelicals, and others are, or may as well be, Jesuits. They advance theologies, techniques, strategies, and revisions of history—all of which promote union of church and state. A politician, such as Newt Gingrich, who praises Jesuits and promotes Christian Right goals, Glen Beck, David Barton, William Federer, and many other Christian Revisionists, if they are not, may as well be Jesuits.¹⁷ Catholicism is attempting to unite all religions, under their banner, as they attempt to bring about the final one world religious/political order.

¹⁶ Pfeffer, p. 118.

¹⁷ Examine what they say and do to see if this is a reasonable conclusion. Start on the internet to find their teachings. For example, google “Newt Gingrich Jesuit.” Pay most attention to his actual teachings, statements, and actions. Closely scrutinize articles, commentaries, and statements of others since there are a lot of nuts on the internet.

Chapter 6

Christian and Secular Historical Revisionism

Christian Historical Revisionists promote a fictional Christian view of the American founding and espouse a specific American Christian identity and agenda. They argue against separation of church and state. On the federal level, they have a huge obstacle to overcome, the First Amendment. Their revisions of American colonial history which attempt to convince the unknowledgeable that “separation of church and state is not found in the Constitution” and is a “myth” are disgraceful to the cause of Christ. Yet millions fall for their deceitful revisions and lies.

They also try to divert attention to the state level. They argue that religion is the prerogative of the states, that the First Amendment does not apply to the states. See the doublespeak? If the First Amendment does not separate church and state, Christian Revisionists would want it to apply to the states.

They are partially correct as to their argument mentioned in the last paragraph. However, Massachusetts became the last state to separate church and state. All states now effectively provide all the protections provided by the First Amendment. However, the law of all states also provide means for churches to renounce some of their God-given and First Amendment and state constitutional protections. Laws are in place which allow churches to incorporate under state law. State non-profit corporation statutes also encourage church Internal Revenue Code § 501(c)(3) status or § 508 status.¹

Church non-profit corporation status is a form of union of church and state made possible by state law. It is granted under the authority of state law, establishes the state as sovereign over the corporate part of a church, makes a church a creature of the state, and gives the state some control over an incorporated church, and gives churches no power over the state.

Christian Revisionists appeal to the patriotism within the Christian community. They promote and incessantly teach their

¹ See Finney, *God Betrayed*, Section VI for a thorough discussion of church corporate and 501(c)(3) or 508 status. The online version at: jeraldfinney.wordpress.com corrects some misconceptions in the original book concerning 508 status.

fatally flawed history to their followers. “Their main advocates are amateur Christian history buffs like Texan GOP operative David Barton and itinerant pastor Mark Beliles.”² Their efforts have not gone unnoticed and unreported by secularists.

The secularist Frederick Clarkson is right when he writes:

“[T]he Christian nationalist narrative has a fatal flaw: it is based on revisionist history that does not stand up under scrutiny. The bad news is that to true believers, it does not have to stand up to the facts of history to be a powerful and animating part of the once and future Christian nation. Indeed, through a growing cottage industry of Christian revisionist books and lectures now dominating the curricula of home schools and many private Christian academies, Christian nationalism has become a central feature of the political identity of children growing up in the movement. The contest for control of the narrative of American history is well underway.”³

He is partially correct in pointing out that:

“We’ve seen how religious beliefs (and other ideologies) inspire people to view others as subhuman, deviant, and deserving of whatever happens to them, including death.⁴ It is the stuff of persecution, pogroms, and warfare. The framers of the U.S. Constitution struggled with how to inoculate the new nation against these ills, and in many respects the struggle continues today.”⁵

He is right when those beliefs are based upon certain false theologies. Such religious beliefs led to the murder of millions of believers in Christ and many others who were viewed by the established churches as dangerous heretics or abominable sinners. However, his statement cannot be applied correctly to the true Christianity which fought for freedom of religion in America and which produces results opposite those he mentions. Christians who practiced and taught Biblical principles concerning separation of church and state have been persecuted since the union of church and state was instituted in the early fourth century. Their stand in the face of persecution ultimately resulted in the adoption of the

² Sanford, pp. 130-131.

³ Frederick Clarkson, “Why the Christian Right Distorts History and Why it Matters,” *PublicEye.org* (Spring 2007): online at <http://www.publiceye.org/magazine/v21n2/history.html>.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

First Amendment. Mr. Clarkson should read and study the history presented in Section II below. Christian Revisionists and some Secular Revisionists ignore or are unaware of that history. Those revisionists who do not ignore it misrepresent and revise it.

Mr. Clarkson then goes on to factually tear apart some of the assertions being made by what he calls the Christian nationalists. For example, he asserts:

“John Blanchard [a current Christian leader] claims that the Jamestown landing signifies that, ‘We were started as a Christian nation and I feel it’s God’s purpose we stay a Christian nation.’ Indeed, to read the Assembly 2007 website, one would think that the King had sent missionaries to Virginia. Far from it. The London Company behind the venture pooled investors interested in making money. For years it floundered badly. Eventually, the company gave up the commercial charter and control reverted to the Crown. The gauzy view of Christians claiming the land for Christ and King is clarified by history.

“When news of the Assembly 2007 and Blanchard’s claim reached Joe Conn at Americans United for Separation of Church and State, he pulled out his history books in rebuttal: ‘According to Anson Phelps Stokes’s *Church and State in the United States*, the London Company’s November 20, 1606 ‘Articles, Instructions, and Orders’ did, indeed, demand that the prospective American colony ‘provide that the true word, and service of God and Christian faith be preached.’ But the charter added that the ‘true word’ must be ‘according to the doctrine, rights, and religion now professed and established within our regime in England.’”⁶

Christian Revisionists, Calvinists, and Puritan supporters Peter Marshall and David Manuel include some truth in their revisionism. They wrote, amidst many historical revisions, that Jamestown was a disaster and that the people who settled the colony were motivated by greed and not the love of the Lord.⁷ They told the truth about Jamestown, which was settled by Anglicans whose revisionist point of view is motivated by a love for a church/state system distinct from Puritanism. Marshall and Manuel, in the Puritan/Calvinist tradition, have no trouble with either telling the truth or lying depending upon which serves their cause. They have no trouble revising either to make Puritanism

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

⁷ See Marshall and Manuel, *The Light and the Glory*, pp. 80-105.

look good or to make those whom they consider to be in error look bad.

Neither Calvinism nor Anglicanism produce positive results. As will be seen in Section II of this book, although there may have been godly ministers in the established church, much of the clergy of the Anglican church in Virginia prior to the Revolution had loose morals, were mainly concerned about their financial security, were lacking in Biblical and spiritual knowledge, and supported persecution of dissenters. The clergy of that church fought to keep their establishment to the bitter end. By far their most consistent and determined opponents were the Baptists.

A publication of a law firm that encourages churches to become corporate 501(c)(3) religious organizations recently led off with an article laughingly entitled (to one who knows the real facts about the settlement) “Jamestown, Where America Became a Christian Nation.”⁸ The unnamed author, a Christian Revisionist of a kind different from Marshall and Manuel, states some truth in the article but also gives a totally distorted view of the early history of Jamestown and fails to mention the depravity of the people who originally settled there. Neither Marshall and Manuel nor the author of the aforementioned article make mention that the theology behind the settlement was ecclesiocratic and against religious liberty: the “Articles, Instructions, and Orders” from the homeland said that the “‘true word’ must be ‘according to the doctrine, rights, and religion now professed and established within our regime in England.’”⁹

Some of what Christian Revisionists such as Marshall, Manuel, David Barton, William Federer and others teach is factual when taken alone out of context; but even their facts are incomplete and out of context, slanted, intermixed with lies, and followed by false conclusions. Truth makes their theology look bad. In order to further their cause, they must lie and revise history. They must and do condemn true history and theology and its adherents out of which came religious freedom in America.

⁸ “Jamestown: Where America Became a Christian Nation,” *Legal Alert* (Monthly Newsletter of the Christian Law Association), April 2007, p. 1.

⁹ Marshall and Manuel, *The Light and the Glory*, pp. 80-105; see Clarkson for this excerpt from “Articles, Instructions, and Orders” from the homeland.

Since they do not believe in free will, Christian Revisionists attribute everything to the providence¹⁰ or the Sovereignty of God. Mr. Clarkson is correct when he says,

“Indeed, the general approach [R.J.] Rushdoony outlined has become widely accepted among Christian nationalists, specifically that God actively intervenes in and guides history, and that God’s role can be retroactively discerned, from creation to the predestined Kingdom of God on Earth. Historical events described as ‘God’s providence’ are then interpreted in terms of what God must have been up to. This is how Rushdoony arrives at what he called Christian history, based on ‘Christian revisionism.’”¹¹

Christian Revisionist concepts of God’s providence and Sovereignty are false as is their view of the free will of man. The most that revisionists of the founding era (and probably those of today) might assert about free will is that if a man has it and uses it wrongly, those with superior insight must step in to correct him; and if he refuses to be enlightened, the heretic must be banished, imprisoned, tortured, and/or killed. This was the view of free will in Puritan New England.¹²

Neither past and present Christian Revisionists nor secularists like Mr. Clarkson correctly describe God’s desired church-state relationship, history, problems faced, and/or solutions. As expected of a secularist, Mr. Clarkson, guided by his human reasoning, revises as he accurately, for the most part, trashes the Christian Right. His proposals cannot and will not work. For example, he says that the rest of society needs only to:

“recognize the role of creeping Christian historical revisionism, but also our need to craft a compelling and shared story of American history, particularly as it relates to the role of religion and society. We need it in order to know not how the religious Right is wrong, but to know where we ourselves stand in the light of history, in relation to each other, and how we can better envision a future together free of religious prejudice, and ultimately, religious warfare.”¹³

¹⁰ See Sanford, pp. 173-184, for additional insights into the Christian Revisionist view of the providence of God and American history. Sanford’s examination of the Christian Revisionist story of Benjamin Franklin’s observation at the Constitutional Convention and the effects thereof is particularly instructive.

¹¹ Clarkson, p. 2.

¹² See Section II, Chapter 3 below.

¹³ *Ibid.*

Mr. Clarkson, who by his own admission is not a Christian, understandably does not comprehend the doctrine of holiness which runs throughout Scripture. In any institution, including any civil government, anytime the unholy is mixed with the holy, the unholy will corrupt the holy. A civil government dominated by lost people is corrupt. A civil government made up of true Christians and lost people will be corrupted because the worldly wisdom of the lost will pollute the Godly wisdom of Christians. The good will not prevail, at least in the long run. An unsaved person cannot know, understand, and apply truth and the wisdom which is from above. All Mr. Clarkson's wisdom is of this world, which is "foolishness with God."¹⁴ "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain."¹⁵

Mr. Clarkson is right about religion. But what he says about religion cannot be said about true Christianity. True Christianity is a man, the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the religious perversion of the teachings of Christ that brings all the tragedies referred to by Mr. Clarkson. The greatest tragedy is that, because of revisionism, many will never come to the one who can give them true liberty, the Lord Jesus Christ.

It appears that many who have come to Christ have been deceived about, for one thing, the roles of church and state and their relationship to each other and to God. They have not become partakers of the divine nature, having not added to their faith, virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, to patience godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity.¹⁶ Perhaps an individual Christian has added some of these ingredients to his life, but what about the others? What about knowledge? "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children."¹⁷

¹⁴ 1 Co. 3.19.

¹⁵ 1 Co. 3.20.

¹⁶ See 2 Pe. 1.3-9.

¹⁷ Ho. 4.6. The whole chapter, Hosea 4, is very instructive for purposes of this book. God tells of his dealings with his earthly people, Israel, in Old Testament times and with his spiritual people,

Only a civil government whose leader or leaders are truly Christian can prevent the decline of a nation. For this to ever occur, the majority of individuals, families and churches would have to know, understand and apply God's principles as taught in the Bible.

The founding document of such a nation would clearly state:

- (1) the difference between separation of church and state and separation of God and state;
- (2) that the word of God teaches separation of church and state, not separation of God and state;
- (3) that there is only one God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—the God of the Bible;
- (4) that the Bible is God's word;
- (5) that God's word is to be consulted for guidance by the nation;
- (6) that God ordained all nations to include Gentile nations;
- (7) the God-given jurisdiction for Gentile nations;
- (8) that the God-given jurisdiction of Gentile nations extends to certain temporal matters only;
- (9) that God ordained Gentile nations to directly control certain evils;
- (10) that America is a Gentile nation;
- (11) that God did not give the law to Gentiles but to the Jews;
- (12) that civil government functions would involve the administration of matters within its God-given jurisdiction only and not with eternal spiritual matters such as prayer, worship, and Bible preaching and teaching since those matters are strictly within the God-given jurisdiction of the local, autonomous, New Testament church;
- (13) that the word of God teaches civil government protection of exercise of religion and soul liberty (thus protecting every citizen's right to the religion of their choice or no religion at all and to follow God, no god, or a false god or gods.), press, assembly, speech, and the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances;

No such document will ever be adopted by any nation. The fate of all nations that have ever existed or will exist before the return of Christ has already been foretold.¹⁸

When an alleged Christian substitutes his reasoning for Bible truth and principle, when he revises historical facts and/or lies to

Christians, in the New Testament. Of course, Jesus Christ will reestablish Israel as he promised in everlasting covenants. See *God Betrayed*, Section I, Chapters 7 and 8.

¹⁸ See Finney, *God Betrayed*, Section I for a comprehensive Bible study.

and about other Christians, their history, and theology in order to advance his underlying theology and goals, something is wrong with his theology. The consequences of such a strategy will ultimately backfire, as it is backfiring today in America, because even secularists, when truth about facts will aid them, will reveal that truth. When it is revealed that Christians have seemingly borrowed a page from the secular book of tactics and resorted to revising history and lying, the effectiveness of Christian spiritual warfare is much weakened.

Mr. Clarkson's article and much other secular writing reveal the vulnerability of the Christian Right position as it has been promoted in America. Clarkson includes pertinent quotes (out of context) from men such as Roger Williams, Isaac Backus, and even Thomas Jefferson who are not usually quoted by Christian Revisionists. It is sad that Christian Revisionists, in their effort to deceive the entire Christian community and advance their agenda, have belittled, misrepresented, lied about, and/or totally ignored many great and influential men and their teachings. Their efforts have done great and irreparable damage to the cause of Christ.

Many volumes could be written to expose Christian Revisionism. This author has already published some articles addressing the problem. For example, in 2008, he published a book that included which covered many matters, including Christian Revisionism.¹⁹ Then, in 2009, he posted two articles online about David Barton's revisionism and the exposure thereof by secularists.²⁰ Those articles link to additional information. Once one gets a basic knowledge of unrevised Christian history and of revisionism, he can easily spot the latter and expose it for what it is. No less can be required of soldiers of the Cross.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* Christian Revisionism is exposed throughout *God Betrayed*, especially in Section IV, but not as thoroughly as in this present effort. The updated online version may be viewed at <https://jeraldfinney.wordpress.com/god-betrayed/books/god-betrayedseparation-of-church-and-state-the-biblical-principles-and-the-american-application/online-version-of-the-book-god-betrayed/>.

²⁰ Online at: <https://jeraldfinney.wordpress.com/2009/08/29/david-bartons-christian-revisionism/> and <https://jeraldfinney.wordpress.com/2009/09/04/exposing-the-dangers-of-david-bartons-teachings/>.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

Evidence has been presented in the INTRODUCTION and Section I which proves the motives, goals, tactics, and philosophies of those accused, the Christian Revisionists, prior to and after colonization of America and the ratification of the First Amendment. Evidence has also been adduced which shows the consequences of Bible interpretation versus Bible belief. Interpretation is used to justify union of church and state and the most horrendous, anti-Christian crimes imaginable—the most painful torturous murders that the mind can conceive—in maintaining those unholy unions. Belief, on the other hand, leads the followers of Christ to seek separation of church and state and to suffer persecution but never to persecute.

The ultimate result of church-state alliances is always the same—the alliance of church and state forces others to profess allegiance to the doctrines of the official church under penalty of persecution and the elimination of those who refuse to accept all the principles and practices of the establishment. The doctrines which justify unification of church and state are perversions of the teachings of Christ. Our Lord desires freely given love, not a forced counterfeit.

Corruption is inevitable when church and state are intermixed. To quote one Bible teacher:

“The church that sets out to spiritualize the world will soon find that the world will secularize the church. When wheat and tares compromise, it is the wheat that suffers. Light and darkness, right and wrong, good and evil, truth and error are incompatibles, and when they compromise it is the light, the right, the good, and the truth that are damaged.”¹

The *Holy Bible*, the basic source for all truth proclaims:

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what

¹ “Quotable,” *The Berean Call*, February 2006, p. 5, available at <http://www.thebereancall.org/content/february-2006-quotable>, citing W. Graham Scroggie, born 1877, twelve times the Bible teacher at the famous Keswick, England conference, *They Knew Their God*, Vol. 5, 194.

communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God: as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in *them*: and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord Almighty.”²

Separation or holiness means set apart for God. Combining the holy with the unholy always makes the holy unholy. Being around someone who is sick may make a well person sick. Being around a well person won’t make a sick person well. If you are grounded and touch a power line, you are cooked. If you try to touch God and touch the world, you will be corrupted.

“Be ye holy; for I am holy.”³ With holiness, separation, and tribulation comes peace. “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”⁴

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”⁵

The union of church and state always corrupts, as history proves. All such combinations have failed in their goals. They all brought about continuing downward corruption. The same fate awaits the church/state union called for by contemporary Christian Revisionists.

With those things in mind, we now proceed, in Section II, to colonial historical facts which expose the continuing atrocities of the Christian Revisionists in America from the beginning of colonization until the adoption of the First Amendment and after.

² 2 Co. 6.14-18. The doctrine of separation is taught extensively in the word of God.

³ 1 Pe. 1.16b.

⁴ Jn. 16.33.

⁵ 1 Jn. 2.15-17.

Section II

Christian History of the First Amendment

“[B]y the dawn of the American Revolution all the colonies were approaching or had reached a readiness to separate Church and State. Only Rhode Island had traveled no road and followed no route to reach that destination; Rhode Island had been there from the start. For Pennsylvania the route was short and direct; full civil rights had to be granted to Catholics and to disbelievers in the Trinity for full civil liberty to be achieved. In the other colonies ... far reaching and profound changes in attitude were necessary before the ... concept could become a possibility.”¹

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceable to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”²

¹ Marnell, p. 93.

² U.S. CONST. amend. I.

Chapter 1

Introduction

God's people, in spite of their display of love for God and man, have been persecuted more often than not. Paul wrote in the midst of persecution. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;"¹ "We, having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak."²

In the preceding verse, Paul quoted a portion of Psalm 116.10: "I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted." Believers can expect persecution, as history proves, for exercising their God-given freedoms. Christ expects those to whom he has given religious freedom and soul liberty to speak,³ write, publish the Bible (God inspired the writing and dissemination of the Holy Bible⁴ which in certain times past was banned and burned.), associate or meet together,⁵ and to proclaim to all the truths of the Gospel. The First Amendment was written and ratified with the intent of protecting God's churches, the exercise of religion, the preaching of the Gospel (and other speech), the coming together to worship God (and assembly for other reasons), the dissemination of literature, mainly the dissemination of God's word, and the right to petition the civil government for a redress of grievances. The Old Testament prophets, and the Apostles and other believers in the New Testament exemplified and exercised these God given freedoms, even though they knew they would be persecuted for doing so.

The First Amendment was the culmination of the long spiritual warfare between established churches and dissenters, mainly the

¹ 2 Co. 4.8-9.

² 2 Co. 4.13.

³ "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mk. 16.15.

⁴"All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Ti. 3:16-17.

⁵ "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*;" He. 10.25a.

Baptists. God's power moved mightily during that period of conflict.

Bible-believing Christians continued in the footsteps of their spiritual ancestors by fighting spiritual warfare in the colonies. They made spiritual Bible-based arguments, which gradually convinced others. They practiced believer's baptism; preached in public; spoke at political conventions and gatherings; published books, tracts, and other literature; met in houses; and petitioned colonial governments for official recognition and protection of their God-given freedoms. They continued following the examples of their spiritual ancestors by seeking separation of church and state and religious freedom. They exercised their liberties under God. Colonial establishments persecuted them for obeying God rather than man. For practicing their faith despite persecution, they paid a high price. Their sacrifice resulted in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

The INTRODUCTION traced the struggle (1) from the fourth century to the colonization of America and (2) after the adoption of the First Amendment, especially the last seventy or eighty years. It did not cover the period of colonization in America.

This section covers the American colonial period. The roots of the struggle in America were embedded in New England, spread to the south, to Virginia, and then to the new nation. The steadfastness of the dissenters resulted in civil government protection of religious liberty in America!

Christian Revisionists, as they attempt to redefine the First Amendment, have ignored and hidden the true history of the First Amendment. One historical example involves the claims made by the Presbyterians and the Honorable William Wirt Henry near the close of the nineteenth century. Mr. Henry "told of Virginia's leadership in bringing in religious liberty but made no allusion to the Baptists, and said it was 'under the leadership of Patrick Henry that religious liberty has been established as a fundamental part of the law of our land.'"⁶ Because of Mr. Henry's assertions, Charles F. James published the historical truth about the matter and

⁶ Charles F. James, *Documentary History of the Struggle for Religious Liberty in Virginia* (Harrisonburg, VA.: Sprinkle Publications, 2007; First Published Lynchburg, VA.: J. P. Bell Company, 1900), p. f.

exposed the lies of Mr. Henry. Mr. James was a Baptist who revealed that “at the date of the [American] Revolution the Baptists were the only denomination of Christians which, as such, held to the idea of religious liberty, and that, of the political leaders of that day, James Madison and Thomas Jefferson were chiefly instrumental in establishing that principle in the laws of our land.”⁷

Secular Revisionists have also influenced modern misconceptions of the First Amendment. The teachings of influential constitutional scholars such as Leo Pfeffer, since they have no concept of God or his sovereignty, are misleading as to an important aspect of debate—the spiritual aspect. Pfeffer, generally but not totally a master of the facts, misrepresents spiritual matters because he does not understand them. He relegates the spiritual to the merely “ideological.” For example, he attributes Madison’s positions on the issue of separation of church and state to his reliance on John Locke. He quotes Locke. Then, even though Locke, in the quotes cited by Pfeffer, talks of government interference with the care and salvation of souls which belongs to God, Pfeffer never mentions God but stresses Locke’s “social contract theory.” He also over-emphasizes the influence of rationalism and deism in the adoption of the First Amendment. He falsely proclaims that the “first four presidents of the United States were either Deists or Unitarians.” He asserts that the Great Awakening “emphasized an emotional, personal religion” which appealed directly to the individual, stressing the rights and duties of the individual conscience and its answerability exclusively to God.⁸ He, like all secular scholars, simply did not get it even though he did mention God. In the scenario he addressed, he had no choice but to mention God. Because of his biased point of view, he simply did not and could not honestly examine the facts. However, he presents a multitude of reliable facts.

The establishment clause of the First Amendment forbids federal government establishment of religion.⁹ The free exercise clause protects soul liberty (the free exercise of religion according

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. e.

⁸ Pfeffer, pp. 81-93.

⁹ The establishment clause: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion.”

to the dictates of one's conscience).¹⁰ Thus, the religion clause of the First Amendment prevents the establishment of religion and secures freedom of conscience. In other words, the First Amendment implements the Bible principle of separation of church and state.

Many of the early colonists were Protestants who thought Luther, Calvin, or the Church of England was correct about union of church and state. Dissenters believed in and fought for separation of church and state. The First Amendment was primarily the result of a spiritual warfare between those holding opposing Scriptural interpretations, the established churches versus the dissenters, primarily the Baptists.

“Of the Baptists, at least, it may be truly said that they entered the conflict in the New World with a clear and consistent record on the subject of soul liberty. ‘Freedom of conscience’ had ever been one of their fundamental tenets. John Locke, in his ‘essay on Toleration,’ said, ‘The Baptists were the first and only propounders of absolute liberty, just and true liberty, equal and impartial liberty.’ And the great American historian, Bancroft, says: ‘Freedom of Conscience, unlimited freedom of mind, was from the first a trophy of the Baptists.’ Vol. II., pages 66, 67.

“The history of the other denominations shows that, in the Old World, at least, they were not in sympathy with the Baptist doctrine of soul liberty, but in favor of the union of Church and State, and using the civil power to compel conformity to the established church....

“... It was left to the sect once ‘everywhere spoken against’ to teach their Protestant brethren the lesson of soul liberty, and this they did in the school of adversity in the New World.”¹¹

At times, members of the persecuting established churches became the persecuted when they moved to a colony controlled by another sect. When that happened, the persecutors generally became dissenters seeking religious tolerance or religious freedom.

The First Amendment to the Constitution resulted from “a factual relationship that was rapidly solidifying when the Constitution was amended by the Bill of Rights.” The First Amendment was the final product of a long struggle by men who believed strongly in the God of the Bible and who were willing to

¹⁰ The free exercise clause: “or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

¹¹ James, pp. 14-15.

die rather than bow down to false religion. Their spirit was fused into the ordering of the affairs of the United States. “A wall of separation which would bar that spirit from making itself felt in secular concerns can never be built, because it would have to bisect the human heart.”¹² William H. Marnell correctly observed that

“[t]he First Amendment was not the product of indifference toward religion. It was not the product of the deism which prevailed in the Enlightenment, however much the spirit of deism may have been present in certain of the Founding Fathers. Above all, it was not the product of secularism, and to translate the spirit of twentieth-century secularism back to eighteenth-century America is an outrage to history. The First Amendment was rather a logical outcome of the Reformation and its ensuing developments. It was so far removed from secularism as to be the product of its exact opposite, the deep-seated concern of a people whose religious faith had taken many forms, all of them active, all of them sincerely held. It was so far removed from indifference toward religion [specifically Christianity] as to be the result of its antithesis, the American determination that the diversity of churches might survive the fact of political action.”¹³

The dissidents in the colonies, mainly the Baptists, gained a foothold and played it for all it was worth. Baptist theology of the founding era, first expounded by Roger Williams and John Clarke, successfully challenged the doctrines of the established churches concerning the relationship of church and state. Among the results were civil governments which protected religious and related freedoms—Rhode Island colony and thereafter the United States and all the states. The First Amendment did not apply to the states; but by 1833, all the states inserted separation of church and state, soul liberty, and other First Amendment freedoms into their Constitutions.

Primarily due to the efforts of our Baptist forefathers, a time came when, as Baptist pastor and historian John Callender said in 1838:

“[e]xperience has dearly convinced the world, that unanimity in judgment and affection cannot be secured by penal laws....

“Indulgence to tender consciences, might be a reproach to the Colony [of Rhode Island], an hundred years ago, [that is in 1738, one hundred

¹² Marnell, pp. xii-xiii.

¹³ *Ibid.*

years before Callender wrote this], but a better way of thinking prevails in the Protestant part of the Christian church at present. It is now a glory to the Colony, to have avowed such sentiments so long ago, while blindness in this article happened in other places, and to have led the way as an example to others, and to have first put the theory into practice.

“Liberty of conscience is more fully established and enjoyed now, in the other New-English Colonies; and our mother Kingdom grants a legal toleration to all peaceable and conscientious dissenters from the parliamentary establishment. Greater light breaking into the world and the church, and especially all parties by turns experiencing and complaining aloud of the hardships of constraint, they are come to allow as reasonable to all others, what they want and challenge for themselves. And there is no other bottom but this to rest upon, to leave others the liberty we should desire ourselves, the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free. This is doing as we would be done by, the grand rule of justice and equity; this is leaving the government of the church to Jesus Christ, the King and head over all things, and suffering his subjects to obey and serve him.”¹⁴

By the time the First Amendment was added to the United States Constitution, only New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut had established churches. In 1833, Massachusetts became the last state to disestablish.

Baptists wanted religious freedom. Some probably could foresee the ideal of a church under God, a civil government under God, with neither church nor state working with or over the other. However, few knew how to have a civil government under God without establishing a church. Why? Fifteen hundred years of history had witnessed Christian establishments made up of church-state unions. Therefore, one should not be too hard on those early Protestants in America who continued those unions, since, as Isaac Backus stated:

“[many things] prove that those fathers [the leaders of the Puritans in Massachusetts] were earnestly concerned to frame their constitution both in church and state by divine rule; and as all allow that nothing teaches like experience, surely they who are enabled well to improve the experience of past ages, must find it easier now to discover the mistakes of that day, than it was for them to do it then. Even in 1637, when a number of puritan ministers in England, and the famous Mr.

¹⁴ John Callender, *The Civil and Religious Affairs of the Colony of Rhode-Island* (Providence: Knowles, Vose & Company, 1838), pp. 108-109.

Dod among them, wrote to the ministers here, that it was reported that they had embraced certain new opinions, such as ‘that a stinted form of prayer and set liturgy is unlawful; that the children of godly and approved Christians are not to be baptized, until their parents be set members of some particular congregation; that the parents themselves, though of approved piety, are not to be received to the Lord’s Supper until they be admitted set members,’ &c., Mr. Hooker expressed his fears of troublesome work about answering of them, though they may appear easy to the present generation.”¹⁵

Nor should one be too critical of those leaders of the founding era who struggled with the question of how to construct this nation. They produced the best governing document of any nation in history, but, since the founders were influenced by Enlightenment thinking more than Biblical thinking, that document had some serious flaws which are playing out to the detriment of the nation as well as individuals, families, and churches within the nation. Nonetheless, because of great revivals which began shortly after ratification of the Constitution, huge numbers of people were saved and those regenerated individuals held back the spiritual and moral decline of America.

How can a civil government be under God without entanglement with the church? A civil government, like other governments, can choose to be under God. Since God was directly over only one nation, the nation Israel, the only way God chooses to speak to a Gentile government prior to his second return is through his word, the Bible. Therefore, for a nation to be under God, the leader(s) of that nation must understand and apply Biblical principles including those principles concerning civil government (state), and separation of church and state.

As has been shown, only born-again believers have the power, through the Holy Spirit, to understand the word of God. Only studied regenerate leader(s) of a civil government can operate the government according to those principles laid down for Gentile nations in the Bible. In America, the people choose the leaders. Therefore, America will have a regenerate leadership only if America should have a population made up of a majority of knowledgeable active Christians who choose Christian leaders.

¹⁵ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume I, pp. 37-38.

Except for a remnant, American “Christians” are ignorant, heretical, and/or apostate. As has been shown, most Christian Activists depend almost entirely upon heretical and apostate Christian Revisionist leaders for historical, Biblical, and political guidance.

This section will succinctly summarize the true history of religious liberty in America. As will be proven in this section, the Constitution provided for separation of church and state; but the Constitution and the amendments thereto, even when the Declaration of Independence is considered, was not a Christian document. The Constitution was a product of a blend of Enlightenment thinking and Bible principle, the former being dominant.

A God-honoring constitution would proclaim that:

- (1) The nation is under God, Jesus Christ.
- (2) The purpose of the nation is to glorify God.
- (3) God is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
- (4) The nation will follow the precepts for Gentile nations as declared in the Bible.
- (5) The nation will remain within its God-given jurisdiction.
- (6) The civil government protects everyone’s freedom of religion, conscience, assembly, press, speech, and the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances.
- (7) Civil government can enforce only the second table of the law (those laws dealing with man’s relationship to man).

Here are a few examples of the many teachings of Christian Revisionists which the facts in this section disprove.

- (1) America owes her religious freedom to the Pilgrims and Puritans. They do not prove this with historical fact, but with facts or lies followed by conclusions without proof.
- (2) The Mayflower Compact speaks of a covenant with God. Then, they summarily conclude that, based upon that true statement in the Mayflower Compact, America is also in covenant with God, as was Israel. Again, they give no contextual historical analysis and facts or relevant Bible teachings to support their conclusion.
- (3) The Puritans came to America for religious freedom. They leave off part of the sentence: The Puritans came to America and settled in Massachusetts for religious liberty *for themselves only*.

- (4) America has religious freedom because the Puritans came to the New World for religious liberty. They forgot to report the history between the arrival of the Pilgrims and Puritans and the adoption of the First Amendment which disproves their conclusion.
- (5) America is the New Israel.
- (6) “Puritans were the people who, more than any other, made possible America’s foundation as a Christian nation.”¹⁶ Herein are two lies: The early colonial Puritans would never have approved the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution as adopted. Second, there is no such thing as a Christian nation. God ordained only Gentile nations and the theocracy of Israel. America is a Gentile nation founded upon predominantly Enlightenment principles with some Bible principles, such as the First Amendment, mixed in.

Christian Revisionists do not teach the following facts, among many others, that will be revealed and developed in this section:

- (1) The Mayflower compact implemented Calvinism.
- (2) Calvinism viciously persecuted those labeled to be “heretics.”
- (3) The Puritans enforced all ten commandments.
- (4) The Puritans punished all that they deemed to be sin.
- (5) The Puritans persecuted dissenters.
- (6) The Puritans banished those who were deemed to be heretics and mercilessly murdered those who returned after being banished until England put a stop to that practice.
- (7) The Puritans banished Roger Williams from Massachusetts.
- (8) The reasons they banished Roger Williams.
- (9) The history and substance of the dispute between Williams and the Puritans as expressed in Williams’ writings and those written in reply by Puritan John Cotton and the importance of those matters in the development of the First Amendment.
- (10) The history and influence of Dr. John Clarke and his writings on the development of the First Amendment.
- (11) The Puritan experiment, as have all church/state establishments, failed miserably.
- (12) The Puritan experiment proved corruptive to the church, the state, and members of society.
- (13) The history and importance of Baptist preachers such as Shubal Stearns, Daniel Marshall, John Leland, and many others in the development of the First Amendment.

¹⁶ Marshall and Manuel, *The Light and the Glory*, p. 146.

- (14) The importance of Isaac Backus and his activities and writings in the development of the First Amendment.
- (15) The Puritans were forefathers of today's Christian Revisionist leaders of the Christian Right.
- (16) Today's Christian Revisionists use the same tactics and seek the same goals as did the Puritans, absent persecution which is presently forbidden by the First Amendment and corresponding state constitutional provisions.
- (17) The First Amendment was the result of a spiritual warfare which had raged since the beginning of establishment in the early fourth century.

Wound into Christian colonial history is the conflict between Christian Revisionists and true believers in Christ and the Bible. The irrefutable facts already presented and those pointed out in this section prove the accused guilty as charged.

Chapter 2

The Light Begins to Shine

Many forces came together to bring religious freedom to America. The Protestant Reformation was one step in that direction, even though the resulting Protestant denominations took from the Catholic church the idea of the church-state—the church controls the state. Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire established a church-state. England established a state-church—the state controls the church—and several of the early colonies in the South established a state-church.

With the Reformation, new light was beginning to shine over the English-speaking world. The printing press made it possible to print and distribute the Bible in large quantities to the public. The Bible became available in English and all could compare what they were told with the word of God. Of course, this would result in some heresies, but no heresy is more contrary to the word of God and more destructive to eternal life, temporal human life, and the glory of God than the heresies and apostasy of the Catholic church. Alongside new heresies would continue the light of truth—which had before been attacked mercilessly by the establishment which had attempted to brutally stamp it out—about matters such as salvation, baptism, and the relationship of church and state. Men were beginning to study the Bible and to debate issues. Those debates were published and disseminated and the light of truth further extended.

God assures man that one can find truth. “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”¹ The Bible tells believers, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”² Of course, Catholicism would have one believe that only the clergy has the God-given ability to understand Scripture—such a belief assures the power of the clergy, but the loss of God’s power. God

¹ Jn. 8.31-32.

² 2 Ti. 2.15.

commended the Jews at Berea for studying the Scriptures: “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”³

While the colonial debate was going on, the establishment persecuted dissenters. These persecutions gradually began to soften even members of the established churches, as people began to realize that persecution did not stand up to the test of Bible truth. The Baptists were by far the most active of all the colonial dissidents in their unceasing struggle for religious freedom.

Unlike those areas of the New World where only Catholics could immigrate and hold offices, and where the official religion was maintained by the government, “the English statesmen opened the gates of their American colonies to every kind of religious faith that could be found in Europe.” Additionally, unlike church-state relationships in Spain and France where no significant change occurred, England experienced changes of religion, which ranged from Catholicism (which was a minute minority) to Protestantism. As a result, only in Catholic Mexico and Catholic Quebec was uniformity of religion achieved.⁴

“The individualism of the American colonist, which manifested itself in the great number of sects, also resulted in much unaffiliated religion. It is probably true that religion was widespread but was mostly a personal, noninstitutional matter.”⁵ This contributed to the growing movement toward religious liberty since “[p]ersons not themselves connected with any church were not likely to persecute others for similar independence.”⁶

In the English colonies, unlike in Mexico and Quebec, no single faith dominated the others and religious uniformity was very limited. On the European Continent, “the Reformation from the start was an effort to return the Church itself to the doctrines and practices of its apostolic days.” However, while discarding some of the heresies of the Catholic “church,” Protestantism, under pressure from civil governments, soon resumed the Catholic

³ Ac. 17.11.

⁴ Pfeffer, pp. 74, 83.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁶ *Ibid.*

conceived theology which united church and state. The final, logical thought of the reformers was reached at Geneva, where the church absorbed the state and the church-state originated. The state became an aspect of the church. “That is the tradition which the Puritans of England and later of New England inherited.”⁷ New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut had church-state establishments—the church used the state to enforce the Ten Commandments and dissenters were persecuted.

In England, the problem was to “wean the Church in England away from the Pope, but otherwise to leave it as little changed as possible.”⁸ The monarch created the state-church and became the head of the church. The church became an aspect of the state. The king was the final authority on church doctrine and practice. “[T]he Church in England [became] the Church of England, [and] the Church [became] an aspect of the State.”⁹ Under Queen Elizabeth, such Catholic doctrines as transubstantiation, the communion of saints, and purgatory were abandoned and the Mass was labeled a “blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit;” but ecclesiastical organization remained mainly unchanged, and episcopacy was its principle. Because she wanted a united state, Queen Elizabeth wanted a church where the Anglo-Catholics and the Anglo-Calvinists could worship together. The Anglo-Catholicism of England was later transferred to the southern colonies.¹⁰ Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia had state-church establishments—the state was over the church.

“The Calvinists who governed New England and oppressed Anglicans were themselves persecuted in Virginia, and forced to pay taxes to support the hated Anglican establishment from which they fled.”¹¹ “[T]he Reformed Church was the state-church in New Amsterdam; the Quakers dominated Pennsylvania, ... and, for a short time, the Catholics Maryland.”¹² In New England—Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Hampshire—Congregationalism was the established church. In Virginia and

⁷ Marnell, pp. 32, 33, 37.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

¹¹ Pfeffer, p. 65.

¹² *Ibid.*

North and South Carolina, the Church of England was established. New York, New Jersey, Maryland, and Georgia experienced changes in church-state establishments. "In ... Pennsylvania and Delaware, no single church ever attained the status of monopolistic establishment."¹³

"From Maryland south to Georgia there were recurring periods of persecution and repression."¹⁴ In Maryland, the Calverts tolerated the Puritan settlers who later suppressed Catholicism. Anglicanism was established in 1689 after conflict in charters granted the second Lord Baltimore and William Penn.¹⁵

The Anglican Church was established in North and South Carolina much as in Virginia. However, dissenters were allowed to immigrate into those states due to the need for settlers. From 1700 on, the major political clash in South Carolina shaped up around the conflict of the establishment and the dissenters, with the latter growing in the back country and a pronounced shift to Anglicanism on the coast. In 1704, a bill was jammed through to exclude all dissenters from the legislature. In 1706, the Church Act was passed, with dissenters excluded from voting; the land was divided into parishes.... Anglican clergy were frequently immoral and guilty of gross neglect of their people. In 1722, nearly one fourth of the taxes went to the established church. With independence in South Carolina came disestablishment.¹⁶

Emigrants from the persecuted Baptist church in Boston came to Charleston, South Carolina in 1683. The second Baptist church in South Carolina was Ashley River, founded in 1736. By 1755, there were four Baptist churches in South Carolina and the second Baptist Association in America, the Charleston Association, was founded in 1751.¹⁷ The General Baptists established several churches in North Carolina between 1727 and 1755. All but three of those churches converted to Particular Baptist churches in 1755 or 1756. By 1755, there were only twelve Baptist churches in

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Franklin Hamlin Littell, *From State Church to Pluralism: A Protestant Interpretation of Religion in American History* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1962), p. 12.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁷ Beller, *America in Crimson Red*, pp. 139-140, 142.

North Carolina.¹⁸ However, as will be seen, this was about to change with the arrival of some Baptists from Connecticut.

New York colonial history was unique in some ways. Until 1664, the state established and supported the Dutch reformed church. Imprisonment was required for those who failed to contribute to the support of the church minister. All children were required to be baptized by a Reformed minister in the Reformed Church. Only the Reformed, the English Presbyterians, and the Congregationalists could build church buildings. Lutherans were imprisoned for holding services; and Baptists were subject to arrest, fine, whipping, and banishment for so doing.

In 1664, New Amsterdam surrendered to the English, and New York extended its jurisdiction over all sects. The Protestant religion, and not one church, was established as the state religion. The head of the state was head over every Protestant church. All Protestant churches were established. Only four counties conferred preferential status upon the Church of England after attempts to confer such status throughout the state were unsuccessful.¹⁹

“In New Jersey agitation by Episcopal clergy for the legal establishment of the Church of England failed to attain even the partial success achieved in New York.”²⁰

“In Georgia, the original charter of 1732, which guaranteed liberty of conscience to all persons ‘except Papists,’ was voided in 1752, and the Church of England was formally established.”²¹ Nonetheless, Georgia had a history of public hostility toward dissenters even before the church-state establishment. Jews and Moravians were persecuted to the extent that nearly all of these peoples fled that state in 1740 or retreated to their own enclaves. “In 1754, the colony reverted to the status of a royal province and several efforts were made to enforce the Anglican establishment.”²² There were no Baptist churches in Georgia in 1755.²³ In 1758, the law of Anglican Establishment was passed. By 1786, there were not over five hundred active Christians in

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142.

¹⁹ Pfeffer, pp. 70-71.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Littell, p. 15.

²³ Beller, *America in Crimson Red*, p. 142.

Georgia: “there were three Episcopal parishes without rectors and three Lutheran churches, three Presbyterian churches, three Baptist churches—all small and struggling.”²⁴ The Constitution of 1798 provided for complete religious freedom including Catholicism.

Maryland, established in 1631 and settled by both Catholics and Protestants, practiced a degree of toleration. Catholics attempted to procure the preferred position possessed in European countries with Catholic establishments, but they were unsuccessful since they were never in the majority. Although the Maryland Act of Toleration of 1649 has been lauded as “the first decree granting complete religious liberty to emanate from an assembly,” “even a superficial examination of the law shows quite clearly that it is far from a grant of ‘complete religious liberty.’” The first three of the four main provisions of the act “were denials rather than grants of religious liberty; only the last four dealt with toleration.” The first imposed death for infractions such as blasphemy, denying Jesus Christ to be the son of God, using or uttering any reproachful speeches, words or language concerning the Holy Trinity,” etc. The second imposed fines, whipping, and imprisonment on any who called another any one of certain names. The third imposed fines or imprisonment for profaning the Lord’s day. By 1688, the Anglicans had the upper hand and the Church of England was established in Maryland.²⁵

Pennsylvania, like Maryland, was colonized partly as a business venture and partly as a “holy experiment.” The proprietor of the colony, William Penn, joined the Quakers while a student at Oxford. Penn opposed coercion in matters of conscience and provided for it in the fundamentals of the government of Pennsylvania. “Nevertheless, profanity was penalized, and Sunday observance for church, scripture reading, and rest was required. Political privileges were limited to Christians, and complete freedom of worship, at least at the beginning, was not allowed Catholics or Jews. As in Calvert’s Maryland, Penn’s motivation was at least partly his desire to reap substantial profits and this required attracting large numbers of settlers.”²⁶

²⁴ Littell, pp. 16-17.

²⁵ Pfeffer, pp. 71-75.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 78-79.

King James made New Hampshire a royal colony in 1679. Liberty of conscience was allowed to all Protestants, but the Church of England was “particularly countenanced and encouraged.” Each town in New Hampshire determined the church to be supported with its tax revenues. Dissenters, with submission of a certificate proving regular attendance and financial support of a dissenting church, were exempted from the tax. However, the assembly was slow to accord financial recognition to dissenting sects.²⁷

²⁷ McGarvie, p. 153.

Chapter 3

The Pilgrims and Puritans in Massachusetts

Being the continuation of the religious upheaval in Europe, the early history of New England was one of religious turmoil.

“It is acknowledged, on all hands, the first settlements of New-England were a consequence of the disputes which attended the Reformation in England; and therefore we must observe, that during this time, viz. 1517, learning having revived all over Europe, the Reformation was begun by Luther, and others in Germany, and carried on in several parts of Christendom, particularly in England, where, after a long struggle, it was finally established, by act of Parliament, under Queen Elizabeth, who began to reign November 17, 1558.

“As the whole Christian religion had been corrupted and disfigured by the inventions and impositions of Popery ... it could not but be expected that many, who were justly and equally offended, at the horrid corruptions of Popery, should yet be unable entirely to agree in their sentiments, of what things were to be reformed, or how far they should carry the Reformation at the first.”¹

The theological turmoil that resulted from the Reformation continued in the new world, and out of that storm emerged a separation of church and state that had never before existed of any lasting influence in any nation in the history of the world.

John Calvin had the greatest influence of any continental reformer on the relationship of church and state in the American colonies. The founders of the Massachusetts Bay Company modeled the Massachusetts church-state after that constructed by Calvin. Calvin taught predestination—that God predestined men to heaven or hell—and effectively denied freedom of human will. He further taught that the Prince, to whom God grants his power and who is responsible directly to God, is God’s leader on earth, and men have a duty to absolutely honor and obey him. Those who rebel against the ruler rebel against God, even if the ruler rules contrary to the word of God.

The state, according to Calvin, must enforce God’s spiritual and moral laws. The state is responsible for enforcing all of the commandments, including the first four. Therefore, the state must

¹ Callender, pp. 60-61.

suppress, for example, “idolatry, blasphemy, and other scandals to religion.” Church and state must work together although the church is “competent to declare what is the godly life.” Calvin believed that “there is but one possible correct interpretation of the word of God, and it is the only interpretation possible for an honest man of sound intelligence to reach.”²

At the same time, “we should obey God rather than men;” when the law of the ruler contradicts the law of God, according to Calvin, man should obey God, but only passively. The Calvinistic ideal, the superiority of an aristocratic republic form of civil government, led naturally to election of both pastors and civil rulers and was implemented in the Mayflower Compact the night before the Pilgrims first came onto shore in America. Subsequent leaders of Calvinistic thought “added the right of rebellion against the wicked Prince to their spiritual arsenal. The United States of America was born when that right was exercised, and none exercised it with greater enthusiasm than the Calvinists of Boston.”³

John Knox modified Calvinism.

“[T]he one conviction at which the legalistic mind of Calvin quailed.... If the Prince does not perform [his God given duty] said Knox, the people have the duty to put him to the sword of vengeance. In Calvinism the Church is the State, but in Knox far more than in Calvin the State and the Church both are the People. In neither man is there the faintest glimmer that even suggests to the backward-looking eye the distant dawn of tolerance. But in Knox the sword of the Almighty’s vengeance in the hands of an outraged People is the first strange symbol of what some day will be democracy.”⁴

Jesus said, “They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.”⁵ In fulfillment of prophecies of the Lord, the established churches thought they were doing God’s will. “And

² *Ibid.*, pp. 21-28; see also Verduin, *Anatomy of a Hybrid*, pp. 198-211 for insight into Calvin’s church-state theology.

³ Marnell, pp. 21-28.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-30.

⁵ Jn. 16.2.

these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.”⁶

The Old World patterns of church-state union and religious oppression were transplanted to the New World with all their rigor.⁷ Eleven of the original thirteen colonies established a church prior to the Revolution. One of those eleven was Massachusetts. Puritans, most of whom were Congregationalists, founded Massachusetts. All New England colonies, except Rhode Island, had established churches based upon the same theology. As noted by the Rhode Island Baptist, John Callender, in the early nineteenth century:

“[The Puritans] were not the only people who thought they were doing God good service when smiting their brethren and fellow-servants. All other Christian sects generally, as if they thought this was the very best way to promote the gospel of peace, and prove themselves the true and genuine disciples of Jesus Christ—‘sic,’ who hath declared, his kingdom was not of this world, who had commanded his disciples to call no man master on earth, who had forbidden them to exercise lordship over each other’s consciences, who had required them to let the tares grow with the wheat till the harvest, and who had, in fine, given mutual love, peace, long-suffering, and kindness, as the badge and mark of his religion.”⁸

The fight for religious liberty started in the New England colonies and then spread throughout the other colonies. The seventeenth century ended with firmly established church-states in all New England colonies except Rhode Island. The ecclesiocracies there were as absolute as the world has known, with persecution of “heretics” but, because of intervention by England, not as brutal as past ecclesiocracies in Europe.

The Church of England was established in the southern colonies.

In the Southern colonies, “the church enjoyed the favor of the colonial governors but it lacked the one pearl without price which the Congregational Church had. No Anglican ever left England to secure freedom of worship; no Virginia Episcopalian had the fervent motivation of a Massachusetts Puritan. In Massachusetts, the church

⁶ Jn. 16.3.

⁷ Pfeffer, p. 63.

⁸ Callender, p. 71.

was the state. In Virginia and, to a lesser degree, in the rest of the South the Church was formally part of the State although hardly a part that loomed large in southern minds.”⁹

The theology of the established churches in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire led to a combination of church and state; infant baptism; taxing for payment of clergy, church charities, and other church expenses; persecution of dissenters; and many other unscriptural practices.¹⁰ Persecution of dissenters follows the example of Israel. For example, after Moses came down from the mountain with the Commandments, three thousand were killed.¹¹ In contrast, after Jesus came down from the cross and was resurrected, three thousand were saved.

The Pilgrims, the original settlers in Massachusetts, landed at what was to become Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620. The Pilgrims “have been described as men with their ‘hearts full of charity, kindness, and toleration; their minds broadened by experience in a land where religion was free to all men.’” “The Puritans, who arrived a few years later, had no such ideas. They desired liberty for themselves and perfect toleration; but they were not willing to grant this liberty to others.”¹² The Pilgrims were Separatists who had left the Church of England in the Autumn of 1608 and formed their own church. The Bishops of the Church of England considered them to be dangerous radicals. “They believed that the Reformation had not gone far enough, that the Reformers had assumed an infallibility no more palatable when lodged in a ruler than when lodged in the Pope, that the Church of England had rejected the Pope but not Popery, that the bishops of the Church of England had no more authority than the bishops of the Church of Rome.”¹³

Under James I, the Bishops were given a free hand to suppress the less than a thousand Separatists before they got out of hand. Puritan followers Peter Marshall and David Manuel, who approved

⁹ Marnell, pp. 63-64.

¹⁰ Lumpkin, p. 1; Edmund S. Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop* (Boston, Mass., Toronto, Canada: Little, Brown and Company, 1958).

¹¹ Ex. 32.27.

¹² John T. Christian, *A History of the Baptists, Volume II*, (Texarkana, Ark.-Tex.: Bogard Press, 1922), p. 19.

¹³ Marnell, p. 44.

of the persecutions of the dissenters by the Puritan established churches in the colonies, complained that these were “dedicated followers of the Lord” who were:

“hounded, bullied, forced to pay assessments to the Church of England, clapped into prison on trumped-up charges, and driven underground. They met in private homes, to which they came at staggered intervals and by different routes, because they were constantly being spied upon. In the little Midlands town of Scrooby, persecution finally reached the point where the congregation to which William Bradford belonged elected to follow those other Separatists who had already sought religious asylum in Holland.”¹⁴

Because of the persecution in England, some Separatists went elsewhere, going first to Leyden, Holland. After over ten years of a hard life in Holland, they decided to try to go to America. They reached an agreement with an English merchant named Thomas Weston under which they were able to set sail. They could not obtain assurance of liberty of their consciences. “However, they determined at length to remove, depending on some general promises of connivance, if they behaved themselves peaceably, and hoping that the distance and remoteness of the place, as well as the public service they should do the King and Kingdom, would prevent their being disturbed.”¹⁵ One hundred and one Pilgrim souls sailed from Plymouth, England, on September 6, 1620, arriving at Cape Cod on November 11, 1620, and at a place they named Plymouth, in December 1620.¹⁶ Upon arrival, they drafted the Mayflower Compact:

In the name of God, amen. We whose names are under-written, the loyall subjects of our dread Sovereigne Lord King James by ye Grace of God of Great Britain, France, Ireland king, defender of the Faith, etc., having undertaken, for ye glorie of God, and advancemente of ye Christian faith and honour of our king & countrie, a voyage to plant ye first colonie in ye Northerne parts of Virginia, doe by these presents solemnly and mutually in ye presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine our selves together into a civill body politick, for our better ordering & preservation & furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by vertue hereof to enacte, constitute, and frame such

¹⁴ Marshall and Manuel, *The Light and the Glory*, pp. 108-109.

¹⁵ Callender, p. 64.

¹⁶ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume I, pp. 27-28.

just and equall lawes, ordinances, acts, constitutions and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete & convenient for the generall good of ye colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cap-Codd, ye 11. of November, in ye year of ye raigne of our soveraigne lord, King James of England, France, & Ireland, ye eighteenth, and by Scotland ye fiftie fourth. Ano: Dom. 1620.

As a matter of human compassion, the Pilgrims were hospitable to all; and, at first, grudgingly tolerated those of other creeds. However, they gradually began to close their doors to those of other creeds. "Plymouth was a Church-State ruled by a governor and a small and highly select theological aristocracy, a Church-State with various grades of citizenship and non-citizenship."¹⁷ By 1651, the government of Plymouth colony was enforcing the laws of Congregationalist Massachusetts. "By the time Plymouth was united with Massachusetts in 1691 all major differences between the two had disappeared."¹⁸

The Pilgrims overcame much adversity, such as hunger, drought, and heat which caused their corn to wither, and the failure of delivery of much needed supplies from England.¹⁹ They increased to three hundred souls and obtained a patent from the New England Company on January 13, 1630. The comparative handful of Pilgrims who were eventually absorbed by the Puritans are much admired by Americans. Neither they nor their Mayflower compact influenced the development of the Constitution or the Bill of Rights in any way which can be supported by the factual history of the colonies.

The Puritans wrongly, but truly, believed they could build the Kingdom of God on earth, in their lifetime. Since they were the right people who "were willing to commit themselves totally," all they needed, they felt, was "the right time and the right place"²⁰ to show the world God's truths in action. They would be a city set on a hill.²¹

¹⁷ Marnell, p. 48.

¹⁸ Pfeffer, p. 66, citing Sanford H. Cobb, *The Rise of Religious Liberty in America* (New York: The McMillan Co., 1902), pp. 70-71.

¹⁹ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, pp. 28-29.

²⁰ Marshall and Manuel., *The Light and the Glory*, pp. 145-146.

²¹ Mt. 5:14, says, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." However, Mt. 5:10-11, which the Puritans forgot to read, says, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for

The Puritans, unlike the Pilgrims who wanted to separate from the Church of England, wanted to purify the Church from within. "The State, in their view, had the duty to maintain the true Church; but the State was in every way subordinate to the Church."²² King James I was far more belligerently opposed to the Calvinistic church-state than even Queen Elizabeth had been, and his "determination toward the Puritans was to make them conform or to harry them out of the land."²³ The Puritans who suffered under the combined pressure of accelerated persecution and the advanced moral decay in their society began to flee England for the new world.²⁴ "There was no ground at all left them to hope for any condescension or indulgence to their scruples, but uniformity was pressed with harder measures than ever."²⁵ Cheating, double-dealing, the betrayal of one's word were all part of the game for London's financial district. Mercantile power brokers loved, honored, and worshipped money, and accumulated as much of it as possible and as fast as possible. The ends justified the means. "London was an accurate spiritual barometer for the rest of the country, for England had become a nation without a soul."²⁶ England was morally awful, and this came about under the auspices of a state-church practicing its theology.²⁷ 1628 marked the beginning of the Great Migration that lasted sixteen years in which twenty thousand Puritans embarked for New England and forty-five thousand other Englishmen headed for Virginia, the West Indies, and points south.²⁸

A young Puritan minister named John Cotton preached a farewell sermon to the departing Puritans:

righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." Puritans persecuted others, including true believers who rightly divided the word of God. "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me." (Jn. 16.2-3).

²² Marnell, p. 40.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

²⁴ Marshall and Manuel, *The Light and the Glory*, p. 146.

²⁵ Callender, p. 66.

²⁶ Marshall and Manuel, *The Light and the Glory*, p. 148.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 147-148.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

“He preached on 2 Samuel 7.10 (KJV): ‘Moreover, I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime.’

“‘Go forth,’ Cotton exhorted, ‘... With a public spirit,’ with that ‘care of universal helpfulness.... Have a tender care ... to your children, that they do not degenerate as the Israelites did....’

“Samuel Eliot Morison put it thus: ‘Cotton’s sermon was of a nature to inspire these new children of Israel with the belief that they were the Lord’s chosen people; destined, if they kept the covenant with him, to people and fructify this new Canaan in the western wilderness.’”²⁹

The Puritans landed at Salem at the end of June 1629. They were motivated by religious principles and purposes, seeking a home and a refuge from religious persecution.³⁰ Having suffered long for conscience sake, they came for religious freedom, for themselves only. “They believed [in] the doctrine of John Calvin, with some important modifications, in the church-state ruled on theocratic principles, and in full government regulation of economic life.”³¹ The Puritan churches “secretly call[ed] their mother a whore, not daring in America to join with their own mother’s children, though unexcommunicate: no, nor permit[ed] them to worship God after their consciences, and as their mother hath taught them this secretly and silently, they have a mind to do, which publicly they would seem to disclaim, and profess against.”³² In 1630, 1500 more persons arrived, several new settlements were formed, and the seat of government was fixed at Boston. Thinking not of toleration of others,” they were prepared to practice over other consciences the like tyranny to that from which they had fled.”³³

Although they differed from the Church of England and others on some doctrines, “[t]he Puritans brought 2 principles with them from their native country, in which they did not differ from others; which are, that natural birth, and the doings of men, can bring children into the Covenant of Grace; and, that it is right to enforce & support their own sentiments about religion with the

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

³⁰ Williams and Underhill, p. v.

³¹ Marnell, p. 48.

³² Williams and Underhill, p. 244.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. vii.

magistrate's sword."³⁴ The Puritans built their false theocracy on Old Testament Jewish principles. The state, as well as the church was to be a community of believers.³⁵

John Cotton was called upon to arrange the civil and ecclesiastical affairs of the colony.³⁶ They set up a ecclesiocracy in which no one could hold office who was not a member of an approved church.³⁷ "The civil laws were adjusted to the polity of the church, and while nominally distinct, they supported and assisted each other."³⁸

"It was requested of Mr. Cotton,' says his descendant Cotton Mather, 'that he would from the laws wherewith God governed his ancient people, form an abstract of such as were of a moral and lasting equity; which he performed as acceptably as judiciously.... He propounded unto them, an endeavour after a theocracy, as near as might be to that which was the glory of Israel, the peculiar people.'"³⁹

The goal of the Puritans was to build the Kingdom of God on Earth. Two modern day Covenant Theologians wrote:

"They determined to change their society in the only way that could make any lasting difference: by giving it a Christianity that worked. And this they set out to do, not by words but by example, in the one place where it was still possible to live the life to which Christ had called them: three thousand miles beyond the reach of the very Church they were seeking to purify.

"[T]he legacy of Puritan New England to this nation, which can still be found at the core of our American way of life, may be summed up in one word: *covenant*.... [O]n the night of the Last Supper, to those who were closest to Him, Jesus said, "This is my blood of *the new covenant*, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins...."⁴⁰

Covenant cannot be found, as understood by the Puritan theologians, now or anytime in the past, at the core of our American way of life. The idea of covenant at the core of our

³⁴ Backus, *A History of New England, Volume 1*, pp. 34-35.

³⁵ Christian, *Volume II*, p. 23.

³⁶ Williams and Underhill, p. xii.

³⁷ Backus, *A History of New England...*, *Volume 1*, p. 35; Williams and Underhill, pp. x-xi.

³⁸ Williams and Underhill, pp. xii-xiii.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, footnote 8, pp. xii-xiii, citing sources.

⁴⁰ Marshall and Manuel, *The Light and the Glory*, p. 146.

American way of life was that of the Baptists as expressed by the Warren Association at the close of the War for Independence:

“The American Revolution is wholly built upon the doctrine, that all men are born with an equal right to what Providence gives them, and that all righteous government is founded in compact or covenant, which is equally binding upon the officers and members of each community.... And as surely as Christianity is true, Christ is the only lawgiver and head of his church...”⁴¹

Nor is there a Biblical principle that allows any nation to covenant with God contrary to the principles laid down in God’s word. The Puritans incorrectly believed that every nation is in covenant with the Lord to enforce all the laws he gave to Israel. As shown in the INTRODUCTION, the Puritans incorrectly interpreted the Bible by applying the principles for the Jewish theocracy to all nations. They did not distinguish between Gentile nations and the theocracy of Israel. Scripture gives no authority for any nation to initiate a covenant with God. God alone initiated the Old Testament covenants to which he was the controlling party, thereby, among other things, establishing Israel as a theocracy. He made no such covenant with any other nation. All other nations, as was shown in the INTRODUCTION, are called Gentile, and are judged by God primarily based upon their treatment of Israel.

As has been pointed out in Section I, Chapter 4 above, Covenant Theology asserts that there are only two covenants, or three, in the Bible, with the other covenants which came after the Covenant of Grace being only a continuation thereof. Covenant Theology superimposes the New Testament over the Old. Herein lies some of the fatal flaws in this interpretation of the Bible. In the Puritan formulation of those covenants, the principles and practices of the nation Israel and the Jewish religion were applied to the church and state. As has been shown, this presents irreconcilable conflicts with Old and New Testament teachings concerning law and grace and the relationship of church and state.

God permits a mutual compact or covenant between a ruler or the rulers and the people—a covenant that does not include God and His principles and that is not initiated or ordained by God. God

⁴¹ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, pp. 265-266.

allowed even the people of the theocracy of Israel to reject him and, like the Gentile nations, to have a king.⁴² Isaac Backus taught as follows:

“Now the word of God plainly shows, that this way of mutual compact or covenant, is the only righteous foundation for civil government. For when Israel must needs have a king like the rest of the nations, and he indulged them in that request, yet neither Saul nor David, who were anointed by his immediate direction, ever assumed the regal power over the people, but by their free consent. And though the family of David had the clearest claim to hereditary succession than any family on earth ever had, yet, when ten of the twelve tribes revolted from his grandson, because he refused to comply with what they esteemed a reasonable proposal, and he had collected an army to bring them back by force, God warned him not to do it, and he obeyed him therein. Had these plain precedents been regarded in later times, what woes and miseries would they have prevented? But the history of all ages and nations shows, that when men have got the power into their hands, they often use it to gratify their own lusts, and recur to nature, religion or the constitution (as they think it will best serve) to carry, and yet cover, their wretched designs.”⁴³

Several things disprove the Puritan ideal: correct interpretation of the word of God; Bible history and prophecy; and secular history, including the history of the colonies of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire. Israel, populated by God’s chosen race, was directly under God, yet the Israelites rejected his theocracy so that they could have a king like all the other nations. Israel fared ill when they did things their way and kings ruled. Under both God and king, Israel refused to do things God’s way, and rejected his commandments and statutes. After the death of King Solomon, the nation divided in two. All of the kings of the northern kingdom, Israel, were bad. The southern Kingdom, Judah, had twenty kings—eight were good,⁴⁴ and twelve were bad. Both Israel and Judah, in accord with God’s philosophy of history, became apostate, morally awful, and politically anarchist. They failed to love God and keep his commandments and statutes. As a result, other nations conquered them and took them into captivity.

⁴² See 1 S. 8, 12.

⁴³ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume I, APPENDIX B, p. 530.

⁴⁴ Manassa started out bad and was judged of God. He then did good, making him the only bad king in Judah or Israel to repent and turn from his wicked ways. See 2 K. 21.1-18, 2 Chr. 33.1-20.

The Puritans failed to correctly interpret both the Old and New Testaments and secular history which clearly show that all nations that have ever existed have been judged by God, are in the process of being judged by God, or will be judged by God. They misinterpreted prophecy concerning the end times to say that the church, working hand in hand with the state, will establish the kingdom of heaven on earth.

Oh, had they only realized that the New Covenant for the church had so much better promises and procedures than the Old Testament covenants. “But now hath he [Jesus Christ] obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.”⁴⁵

The Puritans did not realize that the philosophy of history in the Bible and the basic nature of man rendered impossible their goal of establishing the Kingdom of Heaven. God describes the cycle of every civil government, Jewish and Gentile.

“The book of Judges is a philosophy of history. ‘Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people’ (Proverbs 14.34).”⁴⁶

“We see that philosophy in the book of Judges. Israel at first, for a short time, served God. Then they did evil in the sight of the Lord and served Baal and Ashtaroth. The anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and He delivered them into the hands of their enemies. Israel then entered into a time of servitude. Israel cried out to God in their plight and distress. They turned to God and repented. God heard their prayers and raised up judges through whom they were delivered.

“This cycle was repeated over and over. The book of Isaiah opens with God giving his philosophy of history. Isaiah outlines three steps that cause the downfall of a nation: (1) spiritual apostasy, (2) moral awfulness, (3) and political anarchy.”⁴⁷

“Every nation goes down in this order: (1) religious apostasy; (2) moral awfulness; (3) political anarchy. Deterioration begins in the [church], then to the home, and finally to the state. That is the way a nation falls.”⁴⁸

“In Judges 17-21, we have presented that philosophy of history [that was mentioned above]. In Judges 17-18, we see spiritual apostasy. In Judges 19, we see moral awfulness. In Judges 20-21, we see political anarchy. This period ends in total national corruption and confusion.

⁴⁵ He. 8.6; See all of He. 8.

⁴⁶ J. Vernon McGee, *Joshua and Judges* (Pasadena, California: Thru the Bible Books, 1980), p. 111.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 112-113.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 113, 203.

‘In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes. (Judges 21.25).’⁴⁹

“If you want to know just how up-to-date the book of Judges is, listen to the words of the late General Douglas McArthur: ‘In this day of gathering storms, as moral deterioration of political power spreads its growing infection, it is essential that every spiritual force be mobilized to defend and preserve the religious base upon which this nation is founded; for it has been that base which has been the motivating impulse to our moral and national growth. History fails to record a single precedent in which nations subject to moral decay have not passed into political and economic decline. There has been either a spiritual reawakening to overcome the moral lapse, or a progressive deterioration leading to ultimate national disaster.’”⁵⁰

All nations, prior to the establishment of the kingdom of heaven, are doomed to judgment because of the depravity of man which always seeks the lowest common denominator, the principles of the god of this world. As to the nature of man, the word of God points out that “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”⁵¹ Even after salvation, men have a great struggle with the flesh. False teachers from within and without the church immediately began to introduce heresy and apostasy into the first churches. Many pernicious doctrines have deceived God’s people, who are led by heretical pastors. Most churches will become apostate and many professing members will be unregenerate.

The Puritans felt that they were dedicated to serving the Lord and to doing things his way. They believed that they could set up a civil government modeled after Biblical principles. They did not realize that even should they have been upright in God’s eyes, future leaders would depart from the faith and lead the civil government downhill into depravity just as happened in all Gentile nations as recorded in the Old Testament; in all nations which will ever exist as prophesied in God’s word; in the theocracy of Israel; in all church-state marriages starting with the Catholics and up to the established churches after the Reformation, including the Church of England from which they were fleeing.⁵²

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 203-214.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

⁵¹ Ro. 3.23. The Bible teaches, and reality reveals, the depravity of man.

⁵² See Section I above.

Soon after the founding of Massachusetts, events there proved the folly of their false theology and the truth of accurate Biblical and historical interpretation. As Isaac Backus reported, by 1660 or 1670 Puritan theologians and pastors in New England were pointing out the “general religious declension” that was already taking place as the first generation of settlers passed away.⁵³ “Mr. Willard published a discourse in the year 1700 entitled, ‘The Perils of the Times Displayed,’ in which he said:

“That there is a form of godliness among us is manifest; but the great inquiry is, whether there be not too much of a general denying of the power of it. Whence else is it, that there be such things as these that follow, to be observed? that there is such a prevalency of so many immoralities among professors? that there is so little success of the gospel? How few thorough conversions [are] to be observed, how scarce and seldom.... It hath been a frequent observation that if one generation begins to decline, the next that follows usually grows worse, and so on, until God pours out his Spirit again upon them. The decays which we do already languish under are sad; and what tokens are on our children, that it is like to be better hereafter.... How do young professors grow weary of the strict profession of their fathers, and become strong disputants for the [those] things which their progenitors forsook a pleasant land for the avoidance of.

“And forty years after, Mr. Prince said, ‘We have been generally growing worse and worse ever since.’ The greatest evils that [the founders of New England] came here to avoid were the mixture of worthy and unworthy communicants in the churches, and the tyranny of secular and ministerial Courts over them; but these evils were now coming in like a flood upon New England.”⁵⁴

The Halfway Covenant, established by the Massachusetts synod in 1662, was witness to the spiritual decline of the Puritan Congregationalist church. As a result, a large number of church members were baptized into the church without conversion. Any person who professed belief in the doctrines of Calvinism and who lived an upright, moral life was allowed to join the parish church and sign the covenant or membership contract. Such persons were only allowed halfway into the church—they could have their children baptized but they could not take communion or vote in

⁵³ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, pp. 457-464. Examples of what the religious leaders were saying are given in those pages.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 461.

church affairs. The church to which Isaac Backus' parents belonged practiced this method.⁵⁵

The Puritans, unlike the Separatists, although continuing to acknowledge canonical authority, desired to purify the church from within. The Massachusetts Bay Company, a trading corporation with powers of ownership and government over a specified area, enlisted Puritans. The leaders of this company devised a plan to effectively remove the colony of Massachusetts from control of the Crown.⁵⁶ Their purpose was to become a self-governing commonwealth able to enforce the laws of God and win divine favor—a citadel of God's chosen people, a spearhead of world Protestantism, a government of Christ.⁵⁷ They believed this was a common goal, which all must seek together, with church and state working side by side.⁵⁸ They believed that the pure church they intended to establish in New England would someday, somehow, rescue its English parent from the mire of corruption.⁵⁹

Since the Puritans believed that every nation existed by virtue of a covenant with God in which it promised to obey his commands, as a modern legal scholar has pointed out, "They knew, in the most elementary terms, that they must punish every sin committed in Massachusetts. And punish they did, with the eager cooperation of the whole community, who knew that sin unpunished might expose them all the wrath of God."⁶⁰ Sins punished included those in the first four commandments, those dealing strictly with man's relationship to God, as well as other sins, including those dealing with man's relationship to man. Thus, the churches were thronged every Sunday with willing and unwilling worshipers—everyone was required to attend.⁶¹ Although the church could not enforce the commandments, the state, which was charged with the colony's commission, had the

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 264-268; Lumpkin, pp. 1-2; William G. McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Pietistic Tradition* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), pp. 5-6.

⁵⁶ Morgan, p. 46.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47, 48.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

final and supreme responsibility for suppressing heresy as well as drunkenness and theft and murder.⁶²

In 1629, the trading company in Massachusetts was transformed into a commonwealth.⁶³ According to the Puritan theology of these early Massachusetts settlers, after the people joined in covenant with God, agreeing to be bound by his laws, they had to establish a government to see those laws enforced, for they did not have enough virtue to carry out their agreement without the compulsive force of government.⁶⁴

“[They] soon discovered themselves as fond of uniformity, and as loath to allow liberty of conscience to such as differed from themselves, as those from whose power they had fled. Notwithstanding all their sufferings and complaints in England, they seemed incapable of mutual forbearance; perhaps they were afraid of provoking the higher powers at home, if they countenanced other sects; and perhaps those who differed from them took the more freedom, in venting and pressing their peculiar opinions, from the safety and protection they expected, under a charter that had granted liberty of conscience.

“In reality, the true grounds of liberty of conscience were not then known, or embraced by any sect or party of Christians; all parties seemed to think that as they only were in the possession of the truth, so they alone had a right to restrain, and crush all other opinions, which they respectively called error and heresy, where they were the most numerous and powerful; and in other places they pleaded a title to liberty and freedom of their consciences. And yet, at the same time, all would disclaim persecution for conscience sake, which has something in it so unjust and absurd, so cruel and impious, that all men are ashamed of the least imputation of it. A pretence of public peace, the preservation of the Church of Christ from infection, and the obstinacy of the heretics, are always made use of, to excuse and justify that, which stripped of all disguises, and called by its true name, the light of nature, and the laws of Christ Jesus condemn and forbid, in the most plain and solemn manner....”⁶⁵

After arriving in Massachusetts, they quickly formed churches. Mainly under the leadership of the Reverend John Cotton, they arranged ecclesiastical and state matters. “Whatever he delivered in the pulpit was soon put into an order of court, if of a civil, or set

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 82.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 84-100.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁶⁵ Callender, pp. 69-70.

up as a practice in the church, if of an ecclesiastical concernment.”⁶⁶ The established Congregational church differed from other churches in four main points:

- “(1) The visible church was to consist of those who made an open profession of faith, and did not ‘scandalize their profession by an unchristian conversation.’
- “(2) A particular visible church should preferably explicitly covenant to walk together in their Christian communion, according to the rules of the gospel.
- “(3) Any particular church ought not to be larger in number than needed to meet in one place for the enjoyment of all the same numerical ordinances and celebrating of divine worship, nor fewer than may conveniently carry on church work.
- “(4) Each particular church was subject to no other jurisdiction.”⁶⁷

“But this people brought two other principles with them from their native country, in which they did not differ from others; which are, that natural birth, and the doings of men, can bring children into the Covenant of Grace; and, that it is right to enforce and support their own sentiments about religion with the magistrate’s sword.”⁶⁸ Compulsive uniformity “was planted at a General Court in Boston, May 18, 1631 when it was ordered that no one could be admitted ‘to the freedom of [the] body politic’ who was not a member of a church.”⁶⁹ “This test in after times had such influence, that he who ‘did not conform, was deprived of more civil privileges than a nonconformist is deprived of by the test in England.’”⁷⁰ Since rulers, however selected, received their authority from God, not from the people, and were accountable to God, not to the people, their business was to enforce the nation’s covenant with God.⁷¹ Ministers were not to seek or hold public office, but were counted on to give the people sound advice and to instruct them about the kind of men who were best fitted to rule.⁷² Although only church

⁶⁶ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, p. 33.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁷¹ Morgan, p. 94.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 95-96.

members had political rights, this was a larger group than had political rights in England.⁷³

By 1635, the General Court regulated the affairs of the local churches and passed on the qualifications of preachers and elders, since:

“[t]he civil authority ... hath the power and liberty to see the peace, ordinances, and rules of Christ observed in every Church, according to His word.... It is the duty of the Christian magistrate to take care that the people be fed with wholesome and sound doctrine.”⁷⁴

The Court continued to put its theology into force by act of law. At the General Assembly held March 3, 1636, it was held (1) that no church would form and meet without informing the magistrates and elders of the majority of the churches of their intentions and gaining their approval and (2) that no one who was a member of a church not approved by the magistrates and the majority of state-churches would be admitted to the freedom of the commonwealth.⁷⁵

Soon thereafter, the Court passed an act that stated that they were entreated to make “a draught of laws agreeable to the word of God, which may be the fundamentals of this commonwealth, and to present the same to the next General Court,” and that “in the mean time the magistrates and their associates shall proceed in the courts to hear and determine all causes according to the laws now established, and where there is no law, then as near the laws of God as they can.”⁷⁶ This act immediately led to the persecution by banishment, disfranchisement and the forbidding of speaking certain things, removal from public office, fines, and the confiscation of arms.⁷⁷ Soon to that act was added that anyone convicted of defaming any court, “or the sentence or proceedings of the same, or any of the magistrates or other judges of any such court, would be punished by ‘fine, imprisonment, or

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

⁷⁴ Pfeffer, p. 66.

⁷⁵ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume I, p. 61.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 64-70.

disfranchisement of banishment, as the quality and measure of the offence shall deserve.”⁷⁸

The banishment and the voluntary exile of many dissidents “did not put an end to the unhappy divisions and contentions in [] Massachusetts.”⁷⁹ As a result of animosities and contentions between what were called the *Legalists* and the *Familists* or *Antinomians*, a synod was held, eighty erroneous opinions were presented, debated, and condemned; and a court was held which “banished a few of the chief persons, among those who were aspersed with those errors, and censured several that had been the most active, not it seems, for their holding those opinions, but for their pretended seditious carriage and behavior; and the church at Boston likewise excommunicated at least one of her members, not for those opinions, but for denying they ever held them, and the behavior which these heats occasioned[.]”⁸⁰

On September 6, 1638, the Assembly at Boston made 2 laws: (1) anyone excommunicated lawfully from a church would, after six months and if not restored, be presented to the Court and there fined, imprisoned, banished or further “as their contempt and obstinacy upon full hearing shall deserve;” and (2) that every inhabitant would be taxed to pay for all common charges as well as for upholding the ordinances of the churches; and, if not so doing, would be compelled thereto by assessment and distress, to be levied by the constable or other officer of the town. The first law was repealed the next fall, but the second remained.⁸¹

On March 13, 1639, acts were passed which fined, disenfranchised if no repentance made, and/or committed certain men for certain acts or pronouncements against the established churches.⁸² On November 13, 1644, the General Court passed an act which provided:

“that if any person or persons, within this jurisdiction, shall either openly condemn or oppose the baptizing of infants, or go about secretly to seduce others from the approbation or use thereof, or shall purposely depart the congregation at the ministration of the ordinance, or shall

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

⁷⁹ Callender, p. 75.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 75-76.

⁸¹ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, pp. 79-80.

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 93-94.

deny the ordinance of magistry, or their lawful right and authority to make war, or to punish the outward breaches of the first table, and shall appear to the court willfully and obstinately to continue therein after due time and means of conviction, every such person or persons shall be sentenced to banishment.”⁸³

As to this law, Isaac Backus appropriately commented:

“A like method of treating the Baptists, in Courts, from pulpits and from the press has been handed down by tradition ever since. And can we believe that men so knowing and virtuous in other respects, as men on that side have been, would have introduced and continued in a way of treating their neighbors, which is so unjust and scandalous, if they could have found better arguments to support that cause upon? I have diligently searched all the books, records and papers I could come at upon all sides, and have found a great number of instances of Baptists suffering for the above points that we own; but not one instance of the conviction of any member of a Baptist church in this country, in any Court, of the errors or evils which are inserted in this law to justify their making of it, and to render our denomination odious. Much has been said to exalt the characters of those good fathers; I have no desire of detracting from any of their virtues; but the better the men were, the worse must be the principle that could ensnare them in such bad actions.”⁸⁴

In 1644, a law against the Baptists was passed asserting that the Anabaptists “have been the incendiaries of the commonwealths, and the infectors of persons in main matters of religion, and the troublers of churches in all places where they have been.”⁸⁵

In 1646, the General Court adopted the Act, imposing “banishment on any person denying the immortality of the soul, or the resurrection, or sin in the regenerate, or the need of repentance, or the baptism of infants, or ‘who shall purposely depart the congregation at the administration of that ordinance’ or endeavor to reduce others to any of these heresies.” Also, in 1646 an act against “contemptuous conduct toward preachers and nonattendance on divine service were made punishable, the former by ‘standing on a block four feet high’ having on the breast a

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

placard with the words ‘An Open and Obstinate Contemner of God’s Holy Ordinances.’”⁸⁶

The magistrates passed a bill in March 1646 which required “the calling a synod to settle ... ecclesiastical affairs,”⁸⁷ the synod to be convened not by command, but to motion only to the churches (This was agreed because some questioned the power of civil magistrates over the churches.). In August, 1648, the synod met and “completed the Cambridge platform; the last article of which sa[id]:

“If any church, one or more, shall grow schismatical, rending itself from the communion of other churches, or shall walk incorrigibly or obstinately in any corrupt way of their own, contrary to the rule of the word; in such case the magistrate [Josh. 22,] is to put forth his coercive power, as the matter shall require.

“This principle the Baptists and others felt the cruel effects of for many years after.”⁸⁸

The Assembly passed laws against gathering churches without the consent of the assembly, and another “wherein they enacted, ‘that no minister would be called unto office, without the approbation of some of the magistrates, as well as the neighboring churches.’”⁸⁹

In 1657, laws were passed which imposed fine or whipping on those who entertained a Quaker, required citizens to report Quakers, fined those who allowed Quakers to meet on their property, and fined anyone who brought in a Quaker or notorious heretic.⁹⁰ Although these laws were repealed on June 30, 1660, they were reenacted immediately, “with slight modifications, or to give place to new laws quite as oppressive.”⁹¹ In September, 1658, the Commissioners of the United Colonies recommended that all the New England colonies “make a law, that all Quakers formerly convicted and punished as such, shall (if they return again) be imprisoned, and forthwith banished or expelled out of the said

⁸⁶ Pfeffer, pp. 66-67, citing Cobb, pp. 176-177.

⁸⁷ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, p. 155.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, fn. 1, p. 214.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, fn. 3, pp. 263-264.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

jurisdiction, under pain of death.”⁹² In October 1658, the Assembly at Boston passed a law banishing “Quakers on pain of death” but no other colony passed such a law.⁹³

“Many [Quakers] were whipped, some were branded, and Holder, Copeland and Rouse, three single young men, had each his right ear cut off in the prison at Boston....” Three of them who were banished, on pain of death, returned to Boston and were condemned to die. Two of them, men, were executed. One, Mary Dyre, was released and sent away. She returned and was hanged on June 1, 1660. William Leddra was hanged on March 14, 1661. Charles II ordered that such persecutions cease, and that Quakers that offended were to be sent to England to be tried. “How justly then did Mr. Williams call the use of force in such affairs, ‘*The bloody tenet!*’”⁹⁴

Members of the first Baptist church in Boston were imprisoned. Thomas Gould, Thomas Osborne, William Turner, Edward Drinker, and John George were imprisoned for starting that Baptist church without approbation from other ministers and their rulers.... Isaac Backus recorded:

“But when their ministers were moved to exert such force against Baptists, though they saw the chief procurers of that sentence struck dead before the time came for its execution, and many more of them about that time, yet their posterity have approved their sayings even to this day. Robert Mascall of England wrote his Congregationalist brethren in Massachusetts pointing out that they, in England, admitted those who practiced believer’s baptism to their churches as required by the Love of God, that their persecutions of the Baptists were contrary to Scripture, that they themselves had been persecuted, and now their brethren were persecuting so that ‘Whatever you can plead for yourselves against those that persecute you, those whom you persecute may plead for themselves against you,’ and ‘Whatever you can say against these poor men, your enemies say against you;’ that ‘[Y]ou cast a reproach upon us, that are Congregational in England, and furnish our adversaries with weapons against us;’ and ‘Persecution is bad in wicked men, but it is most abominable in good men, who have suffered and pleaded for liberty of conscience themselves.’”⁹⁵

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 253.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, fn. 1, p. 249; pp. 254-255.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, fn. 1, p. 252; pp. 258, 262-263, 265.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 287, 298, 299, 311-313.

The persecutions of the Baptists in Massachusetts for withdrawing from public meetings continued.

“On May 15, 1672, the Assembly ordered their law-book to be revised and reprinted.” Banishment was required for those who broached and maintained any damnable heresies among which were denying justification by faith alone, denial of the fourth commandment, condemnation of or opposition to infant baptism, denial of the power of the magistrate to punish breaches of the first four commandments, and endeavoring to influence others to any of the errors and heresies mentioned in the law.⁹⁶

After some Baptists organized a church in Boston, and erected a meetinghouse there, the General Court ordered:

“That no persons whatever, without the consent of the freemen of the town where they live, first orderly had, and obtained, at a public meeting assembled for that end, and license of the County Court, or in defect of such consent, a license by the special order of the General Court, shall erect or make use of any house as above said; and in case any person or persons shall be convicted of transgressing this law, every such house or houses wherein such persons shall so meet more than three times, with the land whereon such house or houses stand, and all private ways leading thereto, shall be forfeited to the use of the county, and disposed of by the County Treasurer, by sale or demolishing, as the Court that gives judgment in the case shall order.”⁹⁷

However, a special act was procured to exempt Boston “from any compulsive power for the support of any religious ministers.” As a result, the Baptist church in Boston, which had begun in 1665, was able to build a meetinghouse.⁹⁸ Thus, Baptist churches in Boston had equal liberties with other denominations since 1693, but this liberty was denied throughout the rest of Massachusetts.⁹⁹

As a result of these repressive laws, the king of England sent a letter requiring that liberty of conscience be allowed to all Protestants, that they be allowed to take part in the government, and not be fined, subjected to forfeiture, or other incapacities,

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 321-322.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 383-384.

⁹⁸ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, p. 418.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 424.

“whereas,” he said, “liberty of conscience was made a [one] principle motive for your first transportation to these parts.”¹⁰⁰

Soon a synod was called which condemned Quakers and Anabaptists. The General Court agreed. The magistrates had the doors of the Baptist meeting house boarded up, fined some of their members, forbade the Baptists to meet anywhere else, and fined some who were found to have gone to Baptist meetings. Following this came much controversy between the Baptists and the establishment.¹⁰¹

The established church ignored pleas to leniency toward those with whom it disagreed. For example, they ignored the plea Sir Henry Vane wrote John Winthrop, governor of Massachusetts, in 1645: “The exercise and troubles which God is pleased to lay upon these kingdoms, and the inhabitants in them teaches us patience and forbearance one with another in some measure, though there be difference in our opinions, which makes me hope that, from the experience here, it may also be derived to yourselves....”¹⁰²

Because of their strong bias, the Congregationalists wrote much against the dissenters, their method being asserting the disputed point taken by them:

“for truth, without any evidence, they blended that with many known facts recorded in Scripture, and thereupon rank the opposers to that point with the old serpent the devil and Satan, and with his instruments Cain, Pharaoh, Herod, and other murderers; yea, with such as sacrifice their children to devils! This history contains abundant evidence of their adding the magistrate’s sword to all these hard words, which were used in their prefaces before they came to any of the Baptist arguments.”¹⁰³

The atmosphere in Massachusetts, amidst the persecutions and debate of the issues, began to shift toward toleration and even

¹⁰⁰ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, p. 384.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 384-404.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 147.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 151. Mr. Backus gives examples of such establishment arguments on pp. 148-150. On pp. 151-153, he thoroughly debunks the argument for infant baptism as well as arguments that baptism under the New Covenant follows the principles of circumcision under the Old Covenant. For example, Backus points out, “God says his new covenant is not according to that he made with Israel. Heb. viii. 8-11.... By divine institution a whole family and a whole nation were then taken into covenant; now none are added to the church by the Lord but believers who shall be saved. Acts ii.41, 47....”

freedom of conscience. Even Governor John Winthrop, who had been a leader of the Puritans from the beginning of the colony, refused on his deathbed in 1649 to sign a warrant to banish a Welsh minister, “saying, ‘I have had my hand too much in such things already.’”¹⁰⁴ “The second Massachusetts charter, which was dated October 7, 1691, allowed equal liberty of conscience to all Christians, except Papists.”¹⁰⁵

Many of the establishment resisted the allowance of liberty of conscience contained in the 1691 charter. The ministers of the established churches construed the liberty of conscience provided for in the 1691 charter to mean, “that the General Court might, by laws, encourage and protect that religion which is the general profession of the inhabitants.”¹⁰⁶ “For thirty-six years after ... Massachusetts received [the 1691 charter], they exerted all their power, both in their legislative and executive courts, with every art that ministers could help them to, in attempts to compel every town to receive and support such ministers as they called orthodox.” Thus, despite the new charter, on October 12, 1692, in 1695, 1715, and 1723, the Assembly in Massachusetts enacted new laws requiring that every town provide a minister to be chosen and supported by all the inhabitants of the town; giving the Assembly and General Court power to determine, upon recommendation of three approved ministers, the pastor of a church; and requiring the towns of Dartmouth and Tiverton to tax to support ministers. In 1693, the 1692 law was changed to allow each church to choose its own minister and exempted Boston from the requirement that all citizens be taxed to support that pastor.¹⁰⁷

Thus, equal religious liberty was enjoyed in Boston, but was denied in the country. Many, including Baptists and Quakers, were taxed to support paedobaptist ministers. Those who did not pay the tax were imprisoned for failing to pay the tax, and some officials were taxed for failing to assess the tax. The cattle, horses, sheep, corn, and household goods of Quakers were from time to time taken from them by violence to support the approved ministers. In

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 436.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 445.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, APPENDIX B, p. 532.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 446-448, 499-505.

1723, Richard Partridge presented a memorial to King George requesting that inasmuch as the Massachusetts charter allowed equal liberty of conscience to all Christians except Papists, the laws contravening the charter be declared null and void, and the prisoners who refused to pay the tax be released. In 1724, the King ordered that the prisoners be released and the taxes remitted. The Massachusetts assembly passed an act in November 1724 that required release of the prisoners held for failing to assess the tax.¹⁰⁸

In 1728, the Assembly passed a law exempting poll tax for ministerial support and forbidding imprisonment of those Baptists and Quakers, who gave their names and regularly attended their church meetings, for failure to pay ministerial taxes assessed on their “estates or faculty.” In November 1729, an act was added that exempted their estates and faculties also, under the same conditions.¹⁰⁹

The law exempting Baptists was renewed when it expired. Persecutions continued. The law which exempted taxes to Baptists expired in 1747, but was renewed for ten years. Nonetheless, the establishment found ways to persecute members of Baptist churches in various towns in Massachusetts for not paying the tax—some imprisoned, and property such as cows, geese, swine, oxen, cooking utensils, implements of occupation such as carpenter’s tools and spinning wheel, etc. of some was confiscated.¹¹⁰ The law expired in 1757, but a new one to continue in force thirteen years was made which exempted Baptists and Quakers if certain requirements were met. The law was renewed in 1771, even though Isaac Backus wrote Samuel Adams, never a supporter of separation of church and state, warning that the Baptists “might carry their complaints before those who would be glad to hear that the Legislature of Massachusetts deny to their fellow servants that liberty which they so earnestly insist upon for themselves.”¹¹¹ Isaac Backus said of the oppressions under this law, “[N]o tongue nor pen can fully describe all the evils that were practiced under it.”¹¹² Baptists, including single mothers with

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 501-505, n. 1 pp. 501-503.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 517-519 and appendix B, pp. 534-535.

¹¹⁰ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, pp. 94-98 and fn. 1, p. 97.

¹¹¹ McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Piestic Tradition*, p. 128.

¹¹² Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, p. 141.

children, were unjustly taxed in violation of the law, property was unjustly taken from Baptists to pay established ministers, lies were disseminated about Baptists and their beliefs, and courts of law conducted grossly unfair trials and rendered obviously unjust opinions against Baptists.¹¹³

In 1786, the legislature passed a law which allowed each town to tax for the support of ministry, schools, and the poor, and other necessary charges arising within the same town. This tax resulted in collectors' efforts to get their taxes, which caused much business in courts, and a great increase in lawyers. Some citizens arose in arms. They were subdued by force of arms. Before fourteen men who were condemned for their rebellion could be hanged, the Governor and over half the legislature were voted out and the men were all pardoned.¹¹⁴

On February 6, 1788, delegates from Massachusetts who were meeting in Boston voted to adopt the newly drafted and proposed constitution for the states. One of the greatest objections against it had been that no religious test for any government officer was required. During debate, prior to adoption, a Congregational minister, Reverend Philips Payson, of Chelsea, arose and said, "... I infer that God alone is the God of the conscience, and consequently, attempts to erect human tribunals for the consciences of men, are impious encroachments upon the prerogatives of God."¹¹⁵ Isaac Backus arose also and said:

"Nothing is more evident, both in reason, and in the Holy Scriptures, than that religion is ever a matter between God and individuals; and therefore no man or men can impose any religious test, without invading the essential prerogatives of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ministers first assumed this power under the Christian name; and then Constantine approved of the practice, when he adopted the profession of Christianity as an engine of State policy. And let the history of all nations be searched, from that day to this, and it will appear that the imposing of religious tests hath been the greatest engine of tyranny in the world.... The covenant of circumcision gave the seed of Abraham a right to destroy the inhabitants of Canaan, and to take their houses, vineyards, and all their estates as their own; and also to buy and hold

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 141-166.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 330-331.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 336.

others as servants. And as Christian privileges are much greater than those of the Hebrews were, many have imagined that they had a right to seize upon the lands of the heathen, and to destroy or enslave them as far as they could extend their power. And from thence the mystery of iniquity carried many into the practice of making merchandise of slaves and souls of men.”¹¹⁶

By 1794, very few if any were collecting taxes to pay ministers,¹¹⁷ but establishment remained in Massachusetts until 1833.

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution did not prevent establishment on the state level. Opponents of establishment in Massachusetts never gained a majority. Rather, law, under the contract clause of Article I, Section 10 of the Constitution of the United States of America proved to be the tool used by the legal system to bring about disestablishment in that state. Massachusetts held a constitutional convention in 1820, but declined to eliminate a religious test for officeholders, control of Harvard, and public support for religion. However,

“[i]n 1821, the Massachusetts Supreme Court, in [*Baker v. Fales*, 16 Mass. 487 (1821) (known as the Dedham case),] a holding consistent with the Supreme Court of the United States in *Trustees of Dartmouth College v. Woodward*, 17 U.S. (3 Wheat) 1 (1819), ruled that only corporations could hold property, not amorphous societies of believers. Only in response to these court decisions did the citizens support disestablishment, putting all the churches on equal footing in 1833. Contract law succeeded where politics would not, in overcoming support of religion.”¹¹⁸

It should be noted that even with disestablishment, a church was not forced to incorporate and other methods of possessing (not owning) property on which to assemble as a body of believers were available. In reality, a true church is a spiritual, not an earthly, entity.¹¹⁹ Therefore, a New Testament church cannot own property. Any kind of legal entity cannot be a New Testament church.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 379.

¹¹⁸ McGarvie, pp. 17-18.

¹¹⁹ See Finney, *God Betrayed*, Section II for a study of the Bible doctrine of the church.

¹²⁰ See *Ibid.*, Section VI for explanation.

Chapter 4

The Baptists in Rhode Island

As pointed out by John Callender in 1838:

“Bishop Sanderson says [] that ‘the Rev. Archbishop Whitgift, and learned Hooker, men of great judgment, and famous in their times, did long since foresee and declare their fear, that if ever Puritanism should prevail among us, it would soon draw in Anabaptism after it.—This Cartwright and the Disciplinarians denied, and were offended at.—But these good men judged right; they considered, only as prudent men, that Anabaptism had its rise from the same principles the Puritans held, and its growth from the same course they took; together with the natural tendency of their principles and practices toward it especially that ONE PRINCIPLE, as it was then by them misunderstood that the scripture was *adequate agendorum regula*, so as nothing might be lawfully done, without express warrant, either from some command or example therein contained....”¹

History certainly proves that to have been the case in the English colonies, as shown by the establishment of Rhode Island. Biblical disagreement with Puritan theology was the force behind the creation of the first government in history of any lasting significance with religious freedom, the government of the colony of Rhode Island.

“Mr. R[oger] Williams and Mr. J[ohn] Clark[e], two fathers of [Rhode Island], appear among the first who publicly avowed that Jesus Christ is king in his own kingdom, and that no others had authority over his subjects, in the affairs of conscience and eternal salvation.”² “Roger Williams was the first person in modern Christendom to maintain the doctrine of religious liberty and unlimited toleration.”³

Although America owes its present form of government to Roger Williams, along with Dr. John Clarke, as much or more than to any men, Mr. Williams is vilified and Dr. Clarke is generally ignored by Peter Marshall and David Manuel, who laughably assert that the “Puritans were the people who, more than any other,

¹ Callender, pp. 113-114.

² *Ibid.*, p. 70.

³ *Ibid.*, Appendix IV, p. 190.

made possible America's foundation as a Christian nation."⁴ Because Roger Williams disagreed with those in the established church in Massachusetts, Marshall and Manuel condemn him as a hopeless heretic. For example, Marshall and Manuel, in condemning and lying about Williams, reveal that Christian Revisionists condemn, in a way that praises their own views, anyone who disagrees with their contorted interpretation of Scripture. They also justify the intervention of the civil government, at the behest of the established church, into spiritual matters. Marshall and Manuel sharply criticize Williams for his views and for refusing to change his views because those views were contrary to those of the established church in Massachusetts:

"Williams insistence upon absolute purity in the church, beyond all normal extremes, grew out of his own personal obsession with having to be right—in doctrine, in conduct, in church associations—in short, in every area of life. This need to be right colored everything he did or thought; indeed, it drove him into one untenable position after another. For the alternative—facing up to one's self-righteousness and repenting of it on a continuing basis—was more than he could bring himself to accept.

"For Williams, then, Christianity became so super-spiritualized that it was removed from all contact with the sinful realities of daily living. In his view, the saints of New England belonged to a spiritual Israel, in the same way as did all Christians everywhere. But there should be no talk of any attempt on God's part to build his Kingdom on earth through imperfect human beings. For Winthrop and the others to even suggest that God might be creating a new Israel in this Promised Land of America was to '... pull God and Christ and Spirit out of Heaven, and subject them unto natural, sinful, inconstant men....'"⁵

Actually, Williams was driven by his determination not to betray his Lord, not by his desire to be right. He believed the Bible and acted according to what the Bible said. Puritans interpreted the Bible and acted according to their philosophized interpretation.

⁴ Marshall and Manuel, *The Light and the Glory*, p. 146. What is a Christian nation? No such thing is mentioned in the Bible which talks only of Gentile nations and the theocratic nation Israel. Only individuals can be "Christian" (Ac. 11.26). Certainly, the Constitution does not so much as mention Jesus Christ. America is a Gentile nation. Of course, a Gentile nation can honor God as discussed in other parts of this book. See, e.g., pp. 83, 95-96.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

Marshall and Manuel glorified the Puritans for disagreeing with the Church of England, but condemned Roger Williams for disagreeing with the Puritans. They applauded the Puritans for persecuting Roger Williams and other dissenters, but condemned the Church of England for persecuting the Puritans and Pilgrims.

Their biased account of Williams does not chronicle the facts. Instead, it is a distortion of facts. Williams did not super-spiritualize Christianity. He pointed out that the Bible teaches that a church and a Gentile nation are to operate under different rules than did Judaism and the nation Israel. He did not remove Christianity from all contact with the sinful realities of daily living. He correctly argued that the church deals with those realities in a manner differing from that of Judaism and the nation Israel in the theocracy. He believed that man should have freedom of conscience in all things spiritual, a concept diametrically opposed to the theology of the established church of Massachusetts. He believed that penal laws should deal only with man's relationship with his fellow man. He believed, contrary to Puritan theology, that the church should not merge with the state for any reason, and that the state should enforce only those commandments dealing with man's relationship with man (the last six of the Commandments), not the first four of the Commandments which deal with man's relationship to God. He condemned the king's patent and taught that it was wrong to take the land of the natives without payment.⁶

Marshall and Manuel continue their distortions and inaccuracies. They define liberty of conscience as meaning, "Nobody is going to tell me what I should do or believe."⁷ As to the issue of "liberty of conscience," they state:

"Liberty of conscience is indeed a vital part of Christianity—as long as it is in balance with all the other parts. But taken out of balance and pursued to its extremes (which is where Williams, ever the purist, invariably pursued everything), it becomes a license to disregard all authority with which we do not happen to agree at the time. This was the boat which Williams was rowing when he landed at Boston. Since, at its extreme, liberty of conscience stressed freedom from any

⁶ See page 142.

⁷ *Ibid.*

commitment to corporate unity, Williams was not about to hear God through Winthrop or anyone else. (And tragically, he never did.)”⁸

Williams did not believe that liberty of conscience becomes a license to disregard all authority with which we do not happen to agree. He correctly believed that the laws of a civil government should protect freedom of conscience, and that God limited the jurisdiction of every Gentile civil government to certain actions by citizens against other citizens—to the Second Table of the Ten Commandments.

Williams believed that both church and state were to be under God. He wrote and taught concerning the jurisdiction of civil government and the church. Here is one example:

“I acknowledge [the civil magistrate] ought to cherish, as a foster-father, the Lord Jesus, in his truth, in his saints, to cleave unto them himself, and to countenance them even to the death, yea, also, to break the teeth of the lions, who offer civil violence and injury to them.

“But to see all his subjects Christians, to keep such church or Christians in the purity of worship, and see them do their duty, this belongs to the head of the body, Christ Jesus, and [to] such spiritual officers as he hath to this purpose deputed, whose right it is, according to the true pattern. Abimelech, Saul, Adonijah, Athalia, were but usurpers: David, Solomon, Joash, &c., they were the true heirs and types of Christ Jesus, in his true power and authority in his kingdom.”⁹

Marshall and Manuel attribute the qualities of the leaders of the established church in Massachusetts to Roger Williams instead. They assert that he “desperately needed to come into reality and see his sin—how arrogant and judgmental and self-righteous he was.”¹⁰ They assert that he could have been “a great general in Christ’s army” since “he was tremendously gifted: in intellect, preaching, personality, and leadership ability.”¹¹ However, he had one tragic flaw: he believed in freedom of conscience, held other views contrary to that of the established church, and could not be persuaded otherwise, or, as Marshall and Manuel put it:

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

⁹ Williams and Underhill, pp. 100-101. In this book, *The Bloody Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience Discussed and Mr. Cotton’s Letter Examined and Answered*, Williams addresses the arguments presented by Covenant Theology.

¹⁰ Marshall and Manuel, *The Light and the Glory*, p.194.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 194-195.

“[H]e would not see his wrongness, and he was so bound up in his intellect that no one could get close to the man, because he was forever hammering home points on ‘the truth.’ Trying to relate to him on a personal level was like trying to relate to cold steel—highly polished and refined.”¹²

On the other hand, Marshall and Manuel have nothing but praise for the Puritans. Every page of *The Light and the Glory* dealing with the Puritans and their leaders is filled with praise and notations as to how the providence of God was opening the door for the right people, at the right time, in the right place to correct all the errors of Christendom. For example, they write:

“Since God’s will was made known to them [the Puritans] through His inspired word in the Bible, they naturally wanted to get as close to a Scriptural order of worship as possible. Indeed, what they ultimately wanted was to bring the Church back to something approximating New Testament Christianity.

“The Puritan dilemma was similar to that of many newly regenerate Christians of our time. They faced a difficult choice: should they leave their seemingly lifeless churches to join or start a live one, or should they stay where they were, to be used as that one small candle to which William Bradford referred?

“God was bringing the Puritans into compassion and humility.

“As historian Perry Miller would say, ‘Winthrop and his colleagues believed ... that their errand was not a mere scouting expedition: it was an essential maneuver in the drama of Christendom. The [Massachusetts] Bay Company was not a battered remnant of suffering Separatists thrown up on a rocky shore; it was an organized task force of Christians, executing a flank attack on the corruptions of Christendom. These Puritans did not flee to America; they went in order to work out that complete reformation which was not yet accomplished in England and Europe.’”¹³

The Puritans grew into such compassion and humility that they horribly persecuted Christians and others who did not agree with the unbiblical doctrines which they proudly believed to be inerrant.

Marshall and Manuel follow the example of prior Puritan Revisionists such as John Quincy Adams who stated, “in the annals of religious persecution is there to be found a martyr more gently dealt with by those against whom he began the war of

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 195.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 150, 151, 152, 159.

intolerance.”¹⁴ Few accept this verdict. The facts are clear: they banished him because of his religious opinions. “Charles Francis Adams states the case thus:

“The trouble with the historical writers who have taken upon themselves the defense of the founders of Massachusetts is that they have tried to sophisticate away the facts.... In Spain it was the dungeon, the rack and the fagot; in Massachusetts, it was banishment, the whip and the gibbet. In neither case can the records be obliterated. Between them it is only a question of degree—one may be in color a dark drab, while the other is unmistakably a jetty black. The difficulty is with those who, expatiating with great force of language on the sooty aspect of the one, turn and twist the other in the light, and then solemnly asseverate its resemblance to driven snow. Unfortunately, for those who advocate this view of the Old and New World records, the facts do not justify it.”¹⁵

Williams, in his relationship to the religious leaders of Massachusetts, was a lot like the Lord Jesus and the apostles in their relationship to the religious Jews. The religious leaders of Massachusetts made a mistake—they did not call upon the civil government (which was at their disposal) to kill Williams as they did with some other dissenters. Had they done so, we might not have our present form of civil government. They only banished him, to them a tragic error of highest proportions as it turned out.

As to the issue of persecution by the established church, Marshall and Manuel are hypocrites. They condemn the persecution of the Separatists (later called Pilgrims) and the Puritans in England, but glorify the Puritans when they were persecuted and when they persecuted those dissenters such as the Baptists and Quakers who did not conform to their theology in the New World. They complain that the Separatists:

“were hounded, bullied, forced to pay assessments to the Church of England, clapped into prison on trumped-up charges, and driven underground. They met in private homes, to which they came at staggered intervals and by different routes, because they were constantly being spied upon. In the little Midlands town of Scrooby, persecution finally reached the point where the congregation to which

¹⁴ Christian, *Volume II*, p. 33.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33, citing Adams, *Massachusetts: Its Historians and Its History*, 34, 1893.

Bradford belonged elected to follow those other Separatists who had already sought religious asylum in Holland.”¹⁶

As to the Puritans ... they write, “[The Puritans accepted the pressure of the mounting persecution] with grace and, as persecution often does, it served to rapidly deepen and mature the movement, bonding them together in common cause and making them more determined than ever to live as God had called them.... For a number of Puritans, [the marking of the Puritans for suppression by Charles I] was a watershed. It appeared no longer possible to reform the Church of England from within.”¹⁷

Under the theology of Marshall and Manuel, and those of like mind, the government of Rhode Island—which provided a model for the First Amendment—would not have existed nor would the United States exist in its present form. America would have no First Amendment to the United States Constitution, the amendment written and adopted to provide for freedom of religion and conscience. Men would still be forced to accept infant baptism, pay taxes to support the established church, attend the established church, proclaim allegiance to the established church, etc. Dissenters would still be persecuted. The church would still be working with the state to “bring in the kingdom.”

Roger Williams, like the Puritans, fled tyranny over thought and conscience and sought refuge for conscience amid the wilds of America. He arrived in Boston on February 5, 1631. He was highly educated and well acquainted with the classics and original languages of the Scriptures, and had been in charge of a parish in England. In England, he had attended the preaching of Samuel Howe, a Baptist minister in London who practiced immersion. He was very intimate with Baptists in London; they uniformly pleaded liberty of conscience. By the time he arrived in Massachusetts, “[i]t is probable that Williams already believed in immersion and rejected infant baptism,” and, in “1633 he was ‘already inclined to the opinions of the Anabaptists.’”¹⁸ “He was sorely persecuted by Archbishop Laud, and on that account he fled to America.”¹⁹

¹⁶ Marshall and Manuel, *The Light and the Glory*, pp. 108-109.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

¹⁸ Christian, *Volume I*, p. 360; see also Christian, *Volume II*, pp. 28-45.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 370.

Upon arrival, he was invited to become pastor of the church in Boston but declined because he found that it was “an unseparated church,” and he “durst not officiate to” it.²⁰ Mr. Williams, not being a man who could hide his views and principles, declared, “the magistrate might not punish a breach of the Sabbath, nor any other offence, as it was a breach of the first table.”²¹ He also, contrary to the practice of the church at Boston, hesitated to hold communion with any church who held communion with the Church of England. “He could not regard the cruelties and severities, and oppression, exercised by the Church of England, with any feelings but those of indignation.”²²

Mr. Williams remained at odds with the established church and government ministers in Massachusetts. He was accepted by the church at Salem, but that was blocked by the General Court of the Colony. Plymouth warmly received him into the ministry where he labored two years. Exercising their right under congregational governance, the church at Salem called him, over the objections of the magistrates and ministers, to be their settled teacher. At Salem, he filled the place with principles of rigid separation tending to anabaptism.²³ In spite of the fact that “Mr. Williams appears, by the whole course and tenor of his life and conduct [], to have been one of the most disinterested men that ever lived, a most pious and heavenly minded soul,”²⁴ the Court soon summoned him “for teaching publicly ‘against the king’s patent, and our great sin in claiming right thereby to this country’” by taking the land of the natives without payment;²⁵ “and for terming the churches of England antichristian.”²⁶ Charges were brought. “He was accused of maintaining:

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, p. 41; Williams and Underhill, p. ix, noting in fn. 1, “Such is Governor Winthrop’s testimony. Knowles, p. 46.”

²² Williams and Underhill, p. x.

²³ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, p. 44.

²⁴ Callender, p. 72.

²⁵ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, pp. 44-46. Williams and Underhill, p. xiii. The colonies held their land under the royal patent. Under the royal right of patent, Christian kings (so called) were given the right to take and give away the lands and countries of other men. Armitage, *The History of the Baptists*, Volume 2, pp. 638-639.

²⁶ Williams and Underhill, pp. xiii-xiv.

- “(1) That the magistrate ought not to punish the breach of the first table of the law, otherwise in such cases as did disturb the civil peace.
 “(2) That he ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man.
 “(3) That a man ought not to pray with the unregenerate, though wife or child.
 “(4) That a man ought not to give thanks after the sacrament nor after meat.”²⁷

The ministers of the Court, when Mr. Williams appeared before them, “had already decided ‘that any one was worthy of banishment who should obstinately assert, that the civil magistrate might not intermeddle even to stop a church from apostasy and heresy.’”²⁸ The “grand difficulty they had with Mr. Williams was, his denying the civil magistrate’s right to govern in ecclesiastical affairs.”²⁹

He was banished from the colony and ordered to board ship for England. Instead, he went, in the dead of winter, to what was to become Rhode Island where he was supported by the Indians whom he, throughout his long life, unceasingly tried to benefit and befriend.³⁰ He bought land from the Indians and founded the town of Providence where persecution has never “sullied its annals.”³¹ “[T]he harsh treatment and cruel exile of Mr. Williams seem designed by his brethren for the same evil end [as that of the brethren of Joseph when they sold him into slavery], but was, by the goodness of the same overruling hand [of divine providence] turned to the most beneficent purposes.”³² In 1638, “[m]any Massachusetts Christians who had adopted Baptist views, and finding themselves subjected to persecution on that account, moved to Providence.”³³

“[W]hat human heart can be unaffected with the thought that a people who had been sorely persecuted in their own country, so as to flee three thousand miles into a wilderness for religious liberty,

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. xiv; Callender, p. 72; Backus, *A History of New England..., Volume 1*, p. 53 (Backus adds item 2, as, according to footnote 1, p. 53, his is from Governor Winthrop’s Journal, Vol. 1, pp. [162, 163]).

²⁸ Williams and Underhill, pp. xv, 387-389.

²⁹ Backus, *A History of New England..., Volume 1*, p. 53; Armitage, *The History of the Baptists, Volume 2*, pp. 627-640.

³⁰ Williams and Underhill., p. xxiii.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Backus, *A History of New England..., Volume 1*, p. 59.

³³ Christian, *Volume 1*, pp. 370-371, citing Winthrop, *A History of New England*, I. 269.

yet should have that imposing temper cleaving so fast to them, as not to be willing to let a godly minister, who testified against it, stay even in any neighboring part of this wilderness, but it moved them to attempt to take him by force, to send him back into the land of their persecutors!”³⁴

Thirty-five years later Mr. Williams wrote, “Here, all over this colony, a great number of weak and distressed souls, scattered, are flying hither from Old and New England, the Most High and Only Wise hath, in his infinite wisdom, provided this country and this corner as a shelter for the poor and persecuted, according to their several persuasions.”³⁵ By 1838 in Rhode Island, there were no less than thirty-two distinct societies or worshipping assemblies of Christians of varying denominations, including eight of the Quaker persuasion, eight Baptist churches, four Episcopal, and three Presbyterian or Congregationalist.³⁶

Notable historians have praised Roger Williams for his contributions in the quest for religious freedom. For example:

Isaac Backus wrote that Rhode Island “was laid upon such principles as no other civil government had ever been, as we know of, since antichrist’s first appearance; “and ROGER WILLIAMS justly claims the honor of having been the first legislator in the world, in its latter ages, that fully and effectually provided for and established a free, full and absolute LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.”³⁷

“We cannot forbear to add the oft-quoted tribute paid to Roger Williams by the historian Bancroft:—‘He was the first person in modern Christendom to assert in its plentitude the doctrine of liberty of conscience, the equality of opinions before the law; and in its defence he was the harbinger of Milton, the precursor and the superior of Jeremy Taylor. For Taylor limited his toleration to a few Christian sects; the philanthropy of Williams compassed the earth. Taylor favored partial reform, commended lenity, argued for forbearance, and entered a special plea in behalf of each tolerable sect; Williams would permit persecution of no opinion, of no religion, leaving heresy unharmed by law, and orthodoxy unprotected by the terrors of penal statutes.... If Copernicus is held in perpetual reverence, because, on his deathbed, he published to the world that the sun is the centre of our system; if the name of Kepler is preserved in the annals of human

³⁴ Backus, *A History of New England...., Volume 1*, p. 56.

³⁵ Williams and Underhill, p. xxv, citing in fn. 5: Letter to Mason. Knowles, p. 398.

³⁶ Callender, pp. 121-122.

³⁷ Backus, *A History of New England...., Volume 1*, pp. 75-76.

excellence for his sagacity in detecting the laws of the planetary motion; if the genius of Newton has been almost adored for dissecting a ray of light, and weighing heavenly bodies in a balance,—let there be for the name of Roger Williams, at least some humble place among those who have advanced moral science and made themselves the benefactors of mankind.”³⁸

In 1638, others driven from Massachusetts by the ruling clerical power settled in Rhode Island. Massachusetts had such great hate for Rhode Island that it passed a law prohibiting the inhabitants of Providence from coming within its bounds.

Another leader instrumental in the formation of the government of the Rhode Island colony was Dr. John Clarke, a physician from England. Dr. Clarke moved to Boston in November of 1637. He proposed to some friends “for peace sake, and to enjoy the freedom of their consciences, to remove out of that jurisdiction.”³⁹ Their motion was granted & Dr. Clarke and eighteen families went to New Hampshire, which proved too cold for their liking. They left and stopped in Rhode Island, intending to go to Long Island or Delaware Bay. There Dr. Clarke met Roger Williams. The two “immediately became fast friends and associates, working together in a most harmonious manner, both socially and politically, throughout the remainder of Clarke’s life.”⁴⁰ With the help of Mr. Williams, they settled in that colony at Aquidneck. “The first settlement on the Island was called Pocasset; after the founding of Newport, it was renamed Portsmouth.”⁴¹

Perhaps Marshall and Manuel had good reason, from their point of view, for making not a single mention of Dr. Clarke in *The Light and the Glory*. Isaac Backus found it to be very extraordinary that he could find from any author or record no reflection cast upon Dr. Clarke by any one.⁴² Dr. Clarke left as spotless a character as any man [Isaac Backus] knew of, that ever acted in any public

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 76, fn. 1; Armitage, *The History of the Baptists, Volume 2*, p. 644; Christian, *Volume I*, p. 377. Christian also includes comments of Judge Story, Straus, and the German Philosopher Gervinus.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 71. See also John Clarke, *Ill News from New-England or A Narrative of New-Englands Persecution* (Paris, Ark.: The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc., Reprint: 1st printed in 1652), pp. 22-25.

⁴⁰ Louis Franklin Asher, *John Clarke (1609-1676): Pioneer in American Medicine, Democratic Ideals, and Champion of Religious Liberty* (Paris, Arkansas: The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc.), p. 27; Clarke.

⁴¹ Asher, p. 29; Clarke.

⁴² Backus, *A History of New England...*, *Volume I*, p. 349.

station in this country.⁴³ “The Massachusetts writers have been so watchful and careful, to publish whatever they could find, which might seem to countenance the severities, they used towards dissenters from their way, that [Mr. Backus] expected to find something of that nature against Mr. Clarke.”⁴⁴

The first government of note in history that was to have complete freedom of conscience and religious liberty also declared that the government was to be under the Lord Jesus Christ. Signed on March 7, 1638, the Portsmouth Compact read:

“We whose names are underwritten do swear solemnly, in the presence of Jehovah, to incorporate ourselves into a body politic, and as he shall help us, will submit our persons, lives and estates, unto our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and to all those most perfect and absolute laws of his, given us in his holy word of truth, to be guided and judged thereby.”⁴⁵ [19 signatures followed: Thomas Savage, William Dyre, William Freeborne, Philip Sherman, John Walker, Richard Carder, William Baulstone, Edward Hutchinson, Sen., Henry Bull, Randal Holden, William Coddington, John Clarke, William Hutchinson, John Coggshall, William Aspinwall, Samuel Wilbore, John Porter, Edward Hutchinson, Jun., and John Sanford.]

Three passages were marked in support of the compact: Exodus 24.3, 4; II Chronicles 11.3; and II Kings 11.17.

The chief architect of this concise and powerful piece of political history was either William Aspinwall or Dr. John Clarke, probably Dr. Clarke.⁴⁶ This compact placed Rhode Island under the one true God, the Lord Jesus Christ and his principles and laws given in the Bible. That Dr. Clarke “sought to help establish a government free of all religious restriction, one which in no way infringed upon the freedom of any religious conscience” is “evident from his remarks to the leaders of the established colonies upon his first arrival in Boston and by his subsequent activities throughout New

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 348.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 349.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 77, 427. On p. 427 is the exact copy from Rhode Island records. In the margin are citations to Exodus 34.3, 4; 2 Chr. 11.3, and 2 K. 11, 17.

⁴⁶ Asher, p. 23; Beller, *America in Crimson Red*, p. 24. Mr. Beller states that the author was John Clarke. Mr. Asher asserts that Clarke was probably the writer since the passages referenced in support of the agreement were marked in Dr. Clarke’s Bible.

England.”⁴⁷ A Gentile civil government under Jesus Christ with freedom of religion is consistent with Biblical principles.

Isaac Backus commented on this compact:

“This was doubtless in their view a better plan than any of the others had laid, as they were to be governed by the perfect laws of Christ. But the question is, how a civil polity could be so governed, when he never erected any such state under the gospel?”⁴⁸

Mr. Backus asked a good question. Too bad America’s founding fathers did not find and apply the answer.⁴⁹ On the same day the Portsmouth Compact was signed, “[n]ineteen men incorporated into a body politic, and chose Mr. Coddington to be their judge or chief magistrate.”⁵⁰ The first General Meeting of the Portsmouth government convened on May 13, 1638. “The apportionment of land, a mutual defense of territory, and provision for a ‘Meeting House’ were ordered.”⁵¹ Soon, a civil government was formed which invested power in the freemen, none of whom were to be “accounted delinquents for doctrine,” “provided it be not directly repugnant to or laws established.”⁵²

In August of 1638, the people of Providence approved the first public document establishing government without interference in religious matters, the Providence Compact:

“We whose names are here underwritten being desirous to inhabit in the town of Providence, do promise to submit ourselves in active or passive obedience to all such orders or agreement as shall be made for public good to the body in an orderly way, by the major consent of the present inhabitants, masters of families, incorporated together into a township, and such others whom they shall admit into the same, *only in civil things*.”⁵³ [Signed by Stukely Westcoat, William Arnold, Thomas James, Robert Cole, John Greene, John Throckmorton, William Harris, William Carpenter, Thomas Olney, Francis Weston, Richard Waterman, and Ezekiel Holliman.]

⁴⁷ Asher, p. 27.

⁴⁸ Backus, *A History of New England..., Volume 1*, p. 78.

⁴⁹ See pp. 83, 95-96 for more insight.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 72; Asher, p. 27.

⁵¹ Asher, p. 29.

⁵² Williams and Underhill, pp. xxvii-xxviii.

⁵³ Beller, *America in Crimson Red*, p. 13, citing Backus, *A History of New England..., Volume 1*, p. 74; Armitage, *A History of the Baptists, Volume 2*, p. 643.

As James R. Beller proclaims, the document was “the first of a series of American political documents promulgating government by the consent of the governed and *liberty of conscience*.”⁵⁴ Thus, liberty of conscience was the basis for legislation in Rhode Island, and its annals have remained to this day [when Underhill wrote this] unsullied by the blot of persecution.⁵⁵

Rhode Island was ruled according to the original covenant, “til on January 2, 1639, an assembly of the freemen said:

“By the consent of the body it is agreed that such who shall be chosen to the place of Eldership, they are to assist the Judge in the execution of the justice and judgment, for the regulating and ordering of all offences and offenders, and for the drawing up and determining of all such rules and laws as shall be according to God, which may conduce to the good and welfare of the commonweal; and to them is committed by the body the whole care and charge of all the affairs thereof; and that the Judge together with the Elders, shall rule and govern according to the general rules [rule] of the word of God, when they have no particular rule from God’s word, by the body prescribed as a direction unto them in the case. And further, it is agreed and consented unto, that the Judge and [with the] Elders shall be accountable unto the body once every quarter of the year, (when as the body shall be assembled) of all such cases, actions or [and] rules which have passed through their hands, by they to be scanned and weighed by the word of Christ; and if by the body or any of them, the Lord shall be pleased to dispense light to the contrary of what by the Judge or [and] Elders hath been determined formerly, that then and there it shall be repealed as the act of the body; and if it be otherwise, that then it shall stand, (till further light concerning it) for the present, to be according to God, and the tender care of indulging [indulgent] fathers.”⁵⁶

In March 1639, Mr. Williams attempted to become a Baptist, together with several more of his companions in exile.⁵⁷ However, since he was never Scripturally baptized, he could not have been a Baptist. Williams, being familiar with “the General Baptist view of a proper administrator of baptism, namely, that two believers had the right to begin baptism,”⁵⁸ was baptized by immersion⁵⁹ by one

⁵⁴ Beller, *America in Crimson Red*, p. 13.

⁵⁵ Williams and Underhill, p. xxviii.

⁵⁶ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume I, pp. 427-428.

⁵⁷ Williams and Underhill, p. xxvi; Isaac Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume I, pp. 86-89.

⁵⁸ Christian, *Volume I*, p. 371.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 372-373.

Holliman. He, in turn, baptized ten others. Thus, according to some accounts, was founded the first Baptist church in America.⁶⁰ However, the fact that Roger Williams was not a genuine Baptist and many other facts prove that Dr. John Clarke started the First Baptist Church in America.⁶¹

Mr. Williams stepped down as pastor of the church after only a few months because his baptism was not administered by an apostle, but the church continued.⁶² Isaac Backus commented on the requirement of apostolic succession for baptism at length, stating, “And if we review the text (II Tim. ii. 2-Ed.) that is now so much harped upon, we shall find that the apostolic succession is in the line of ‘faithful men;’ and no others are truly in it, though false brethren have sometimes crept in unawares.”⁶³

Mr. Williams “turned seeker, i.e. to wait for the new apostles to restore Christianity. He believed the Christian religion to have been so corrupted and disfigured in what he called the ‘apostasy, as that there was no ministry of an ordinary vocation left in the church, but prophecy,’ and that there was need of a special commission, to restore the modes of positive worship, according to the original institution. It does not appear to [Mr. Callender], that he had any doubt of the true mode, and proper subjects of baptism, but that no man had any authority to revive the practice of the sacred ordinances, without a new and immediate commission.”⁶⁴

Mr. Williams set sail for England in June 1643 to attempt to secure a charter for Rhode Island. With help from his friend, Sir Henry Vane, he quickly obtained a charter, dated March 14, 1644,

⁶⁰ “Others suspect “that Mr. Williams did not form a Church of the *Anabaptists*, and that he never joined with the Baptist Church there. Only, that he allowed them to be nearest the scripture rule, and true primitive practice, as to the mode and subject of baptism. [Some who] were acquainted with the original settlers never heard that Mr. Williams formed the Baptist Church there, but always understood that [certain others] were the first founders of that church.... [Some asserted that this church hereupon crumbled to pieces.] But [John Callender] believe[d] this to be a mistake, in fact, for it certainly appears, there was a flourishing church of the Baptists there, a few years after the time of the supposed breaking to pieces; and it is known by the names of the members, as well as by tradition, they were some of the first settlers at Providence[.]” Callender, p. 110-111.

⁶¹ See Graves, J.R., *The First Baptist Church in America not Founded by Roger Williams*. (Texarkana, AR/TX: Baptist Sunday School Committee, 1928). See, for more insights, Christian, *Volume I*, pp. 374-375. For a more recent study, see also Joshua S. Davenport, *Baptist History in America Vindicated*.

⁶² Williams and Underhill, p. xxvii; Isaac Backus, *A History of New England..., Volume I*, p. 89; Christian, *Volume I*, pp. 373-374.

⁶³ Backus, *A History of New England..., Volume I*, p. 91.

⁶⁴ Callender, pp. 110-111.

which empowered the Providence Plantations “to rule themselves, and such as should inhabit within their bounds, by such a form of civil government as by the voluntary agreement of all, or the greater part, shall be found most serviceable, in their estate and condition; and to make suitable laws, agreeable to the laws of England, so far as the nature and constitution of the place shall admit, &c.”⁶⁵

The knowledge which was being disseminated through the power of the press was affecting the religious leaders as well as the general population in America. People were now able to read the Bible and other works and thereby make decisions as to the accuracy of what others were asserting. “Many books [were] coming out of England in the year 1645, some in defence of anabaptism and other errors, and for liberty of conscience, as a shelter for a general toleration of all opinions, &c....”⁶⁶

Mr. Williams wrote *The Bloody Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience* which was published in London in 1644. “In this work he maintains the absolute right of every man, to a ‘full liberty in religious concernments,’ supported by the most luminous and powerful reasoning ... [w]hich have excited admiration in the writings of Jeremy Taylor, Milton, Locke and Furneau.”⁶⁷ John Cotton’s reply, *The Bloody Tenent washed, and made white in the Blood of the Lamb*, was printed in London in 1649. Mr. Williams’ reply entitled *The Bloody Tenent yet more Bloody*,⁶⁸ was published in 1652.⁶⁹ “The same clear, enlarged and consistent views of religious freedom are maintained in this last work, as in his preceding, with additional arguments, evincing an acute, vigorous, and fearless mind, imbued with various erudition and undissembled piety.”⁷⁰

“To the point we have arrived, the history of Roger Williams and the state he founded were indissolubly allied together. Others imbued with his principles henceforth took part in working out the

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

⁶⁶ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, p. 145, quoting Hubbard, [413-415.].

⁶⁷ Callender, Appendix IV, p. 191.

⁶⁸ Roger Williams *The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody* published in *The Complete Writings of Roger Williams*, Volume 4 (Paris, AR, The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc.).

⁶⁹ For an excellent summary of some of the more important arguments presented by both sides see Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, pp. 134-145.

⁷⁰ Callender, pp. 191-192.

great and then unsolved problem—how liberty, civil and religious, could exist in harmony with dutiful obedience to rightful laws.”⁷¹

The first Baptist church in Newport was formed under the ministry of Dr. John Clarke. According to some who suppose that the church was founded by Clarke and his company upon their arrival in Rhode Island, it could have been established as early as 1638.⁷²

Under the leadership of Dr. Clarke, Rhode Island became a government of religious liberty. When elected General Treasurer and General Assistant for Newport in 1650, Dr. Clarke added law and politics to his already crowded professions of medicine and religious ministry. “As a servant of the people, Dr. Clarke would steer the colony toward a government of unprecedented civil and religious liberty—convinced that any other move would be in the direction of a self-centered autocratic theocracy.”⁷³ The people followed him as he steered a course between democracy with its “attending threat of anarchy and all of its evils of disorder, violence, and ultimate chaos,” and aristocracy and its restrictions on all forms of liberty.⁷⁴

Dr. Clarke and two friends were persecuted when they went to Massachusetts in 1651. He, Obadiah Holmes,⁷⁵ and John Crandal went to visit a friend in Boston. They were on “an errand of mercy and had traveled all the way from their church in Newport to visit one of their aging and blind members, William Witter.”⁷⁶ They stayed over, and held a service on Sunday. During that service, they were arrested and jailed. Before they were brought to trial, they were forced to attend a Congregational Puritan religious

⁷¹ Williams and Underhill, p. xxx.

⁷² Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, pp. 125-26 and fn. 1, p. 125; see also Beller, *America in Crimson Red*, pp. 31-33. Mr. Beller argues that the Baptist church in Newport, meeting in the wilderness in 1637 with Dr. John Clarke as pastor, was the first Baptist church to meet in America. Mr. Beller considers the writings of Isaac Backus, John Callender, and John Winthrop on this subject.

⁷³ Asher, p. 35.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

⁷⁵ Obadiah Holmes moved from England to Massachusetts. He and several others decided the Baptist way was right and were baptized. He and others were excommunicated in 1650. They moved to Rhode Island where Mr. Holmes became a member of the church pastored by Dr. John Clarke.

⁷⁶ Asher, p. 57; See Clarke, pp. 27-65 for a full account of the event; Christian, *Volume 1*, pp. 379-381.

meeting. There, they refused to remove their hats, and Dr. Clarke stood and explained why they declared their dissent from them.

They were charged with denying infant baptism, holding a public worship, administering the Lord's Supper to an excommunicated person, to another under admonition, proselytizing the Baptist way and rebaptizing such converts, and failing to post security or bail and other ecclesiastical infractions. He asked for a public debate on his religious views, which the Puritans avoided. "Clarke said they were examined in the morning of July 31 and sentenced that afternoon without producing any accuser or witness against them," and that "Governor John Endicott even insulted the accused and denounced them as 'trash.'"⁷⁷ Dr. Clarke was "fined twenty pounds or to be well whipped;" Mr. Crandal was fined five pounds, only for being with the others; and Mr. Holmes was held in prison, where sentence of a fine of thirty pounds or to be well whipped was entered.⁷⁸ A friend paid Mr. Clarke's fine. Mr. Clarke and Mr. Crandal were released.

Mr. Holmes was beaten mercilessly. His infractions were denying infant baptism, proclaiming that the church was not according to the gospel of Jesus Christ, receiving the sacrament while excommunicated by the church, and other spiritual infractions.⁷⁹ Mr. Holmes refused to pay his fine, prepared for the whipping by "communicat[ing] with [his] God, commit[ting] himself to him, and beg[ging] strength from him."⁸⁰ Holmes was confined over two months before his whipping. He related the experience of being whipped for the Lord as follows, in part:

"And as the man began to lay the strokes upon my back, I said to the people, though my flesh should fail, and my spirit should fail, yet my God would not fail. So it please the Lord to come in, and so to fill my heart and tongue as a vessel full, and with an audible voice I broke forth praying unto the Lord not to lay this sin to their charge; and telling the people, that now I found he did not fail me, and therefore now I should trust him forever who failed me not; for in truth, as the

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 59, citing John Clarke, *Ill News from New England: or a Narrative of New-Englands Persecution...Also four conclusions touching the faith and order of the Gospel of Christ out of his last Will and Testament, confirmed and justified* (London: Printed by Henry Hills, 1652), pp. 30-31, 33.

⁷⁸ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume I, pp. 180, 187; Asher, p. 60.

⁷⁹ Backus, fn. 1, p. 189.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

strokes fell upon me, I had such a spiritual manifestation of God's presence as the like thereof I never had nor felt, nor can with fleshly tongue express; and the outward pain was so removed from me, that indeed I am not able to declare it to you, it was so easy to me, that I could well bear it, yea, and in a manner felt it not although it was grievous as the spectators said, the man striking with all his strength (yea spitting in [on] his hand three times as many affirmed) with a three-corded whip, giving me therewith thirty strokes. When he had loosed me from the post, having joyfulness in my heart, and cheerfulness in my countenance, as the spectators observed, I told the magistrates, You have struck me as with roses; and said moreover, Although the Lord hath made it easy to me, yet I pray God it may not be laid to your charge."⁸¹

Mr. Holmes "could take no rest but as he lay upon his knees and elbows, not being able to suffer any part of his body to touch the bed whereupon he lay."⁸²

Two men who shook Mr. Holmes' hand after the beating were, without trial and without being informed of any written law they had broken, sentenced to a fine of forty shillings or to be whipped. Although they refused to pay the fines, others paid their fines and were released.⁸³

Of course, the Puritans were fully persuaded of the righteousness of persecution. Here are two examples of their reasoning. Sir Richard Saltonstall wrote to Messrs. Cotton and Wilson of Boston condemning them for this tyranny in Boston, for "compelling any in matters of worship to do that whereof they are not fully persuaded" thus making "them sin, for so the apostle (Rom. 14 and 23) tells us, and many are made hypocrites thereby," etc.⁸⁴ Mr. Cotton replied in part:

"If it do make men hypocrites, yet better be hypocrites than profane persons. Hypocrites give God part of his due, the outward man, but the profane person giveth God neither outward nor inward man. We believe there is a vast difference between men's inventions and God's institutions; we fled from men's inventions, to which we else should have been compelled; we compel none to men's inventions. If our ways (rigid ways as you call them) have laid us low in the hearts of God's

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 192; Clarke, pp. 50-51.

⁸² *Ibid.*, fn. 1, p. 193. (This from a manuscript of Governor Joseph Jencks).

⁸³ See Clarke, pp. 55-62 for the personal accounts of John Spur and John Hazell.

⁸⁴ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, pp. 198-199.

people, yea, and of the saints (as you style them) we do not believe it is any part of their saintship.”⁸⁵

A second example occurred when some protested being taxed to support the state-church with which they did not agree. The main point of the answer received was as follows:

“What we demand of you is equal and right; what you demand of us is evil and sinful; and hence we have the golden rule upon our side, while you are receding and departing from it; for if we were in an error, and out of the right way, as we see and *know* that you are in several respects, and you see and *know* it is of us, as *we do* of you, we think the golden rule would oblige you to tell us of our error, and not let us alone to go on peaceably in it, that is without proper means to recover and reclaim us; whether by the laws of God, or the good and wholesome laws of the land, as we now treat you.”⁸⁶

In November 1651, Dr. Clarke went to England with Roger Williams to promote the interests of Rhode Island. The objects of their commissions were different, but they mutually aided each other in removing a dangerous threat to their experiment of democracy—a Parliamentary Commission granted Governor Coddington, whose autocratic rule threatened the future of Rhode Island, on April 3, 1751, which installed him as governor of Aquidneck for life. “Mr. Clark[e] was the sole agent of the island towns, to procure a repeal of Mr. Coddington’s commission” and “Mr. Williams was the sole agent of Providence and Warwick, to procure a new charter for these two towns.”⁸⁷

Dr. Clarke published his book *Ill News from New-England: or a Narative of New-Englands Persecution...Also four conclusions touching the faith and order of the Gospel of Christ out of his last Will and Testament, confirmed and justified* shortly after he arrived in London.

The work clearly demonstrated “Clarke’s subjection to an orderly state” showing that, to “him the secular rule is ordained of God, but it should not interfere with one’s religious convictions.”⁸⁸ “Both the church and the status of mankind, he argue[d], are ‘a two fold administration of

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

⁸⁷ Asher, p. 72.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

power suitable to the two fold state of being of man.’ Love and conscience are emphasized by Clarke as inducements toward state honor and subjection rather than as engagements by force and fear. He implore[d] rulers to distinguish between these two ‘administrations of Christ’s power here on earth’ and to leave the spiritual realm to the control of God’s Spirit.”⁸⁹

“The book combines a spirited defense on liberty of individual conscience toward God in religious matters, with pleas directed to England’s consideration in such matters.”⁹⁰ “While the letter appears as an apology for the Baptist faith, it seems that Clarke probably intends it as a timely and effective instrument, aimed at drawing British sympathy.”⁹¹ Of Dr. Clarke’s book, Louis Franklin Asher commented, in part:

“Clearly and forcefully, Clarke calls attention to what he conceives as the necessary separation between the two real administrations of Christ’s power as exercised in the world—that is, the sword of steel, ‘whose Sword-bearers you are,’ as he styles the magistrates. The other administration he calls Scripture, the ‘sword that proceeds out of the mouth of his servants, the word of truth.’ Thus Clarke views ‘this spiritual administration as far as it concerns the outward man...[as] managed not by a sword of Steel,’ he argues, but by the Scripture of truth.

“In a bold but subservient manner, Clarke sets forth four simple but imploring proposals to the British Counsel of State. He begs the magistracy not to forcibly inhibit spiritual ministers but allow time to minister according to each one’s own conscience toward God. In so doing, he advises—even if they are heretics—they merely represent the tares among the wheat, to which Christ referred in his prohibition of their harvest or persecution by the secular arm of government. Clarke then asks that the secular power or ‘sword’ be withheld from use against the spiritual ‘tares’ rather than heaping abuse on them. In the fourth proposal, Clarke compares his majesty to that of a prophetic nursing Father in the Old Testament; thus he pleads for encouragement by spiritual ministers....

“[Included in the book is a letter to the Puritan clergy at Massachusetts.] [That] letter served as a fitting climax to Clarke’s encounter with the Bay officials and, it seems, he made use of it to maneuver the Rhode Island Colony into an advantageous posture with the English government. [He pointed out his persecution, contrasting it

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

with] “the much kinder treatment and other ‘curtesies with far greater liberties in point of conscience,’ which previously the Puritan messengers had enjoyed on their tour through Rhode Island....

“[He also] denounces the Puritan church order ..., and [t]he firm allegiance of the Puritans to the magistrates in matters of religion.... Clarke’s entire letter appears as a scorching public censure against the Massachusetts Puritanical system and its integrated form of civil power over ecclesiastical liberties.

“Never, under any circumstances, Clarke preached, should Christians force their persuasion on others nor should they resort to obeying magistrates in matters of religious concerns.”⁹²

Through Mr. Clarke’s mediation and statesmanship, Coddington’s commission was revoked in 1652. Mr. Clarke was then further commissioned to stay in England to obtain a better and more substantial safeguard against “any further encroachments on their new [] way of life.”⁹³ Mr. Williams returned to New England in the early summer of 1654.

Mr. Clarke remained in England until, on July 8, 1663, he secured a new charter from Charles II. “By this Charter all the powers of government were conferred on the Colony, the King not having reserved to himself the right of revising its proceedings.”⁹⁴ This charter was in effect until the constitution, which was adopted in November 1842, became operative the first Tuesday of May 1843. In addition to other matters, the charter cleared up land disputes with Massachusetts and some of the other colonies, provided for the organization of the government, and provided for freedom of conscience.⁹⁵ That charter stated, in part:

Inhabitants of Rhode Island “pursuing, with peaceable and loyal minds, their sober, serious, and religious intentions, of godly edifying themselves, and one another, in the holy Christian faith and worship, as they were persuaded ... did ... transport themselves out of this kingdom of England into America,” and did then “leave their desirable stations and habitations, and with excessive labor and travel, hazard and charge did transport themselves into the midst of Indian natives” ... **“whereby, as is hoped, there may, in time, by the blessing of God upon their endeavors be laid a sure foundation of happiness to all America:**

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁹⁴ Callender, Appendix XXI, pp. 261-262.

⁹⁵ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume I, pp. 277-280.

And whereas, in their humble address, they have freely declared, that it is much on their hearts (if they may be permitted) to hold forth a lively experiment, that a most flourishing civil state may stand and best be maintained, and that among our English subjects, **with a full liberty in religious concernments; and that true piety rightly grounded upon gospel principles**, will give the best and greatest security to sovereignty, and will lay in the hearts of men the strongest obligations to true loyalty: ... **and to secure them in the free exercise and enjoyment of all their civil and religious rights, appertaining to them, as our loving subjects; and to preserve unto them that liberty in true Christian faith and worship of God, ... that no person within the said colony, at any time hereafter shall be any wise molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question, for any differences in opinion in matters of religion, and do not actually disturb the civil peace of our said colony.**⁹⁶ [Emphasis mine.]

The charter granted

“unprecedented liberties in religious concerns. Moreover representation for the people and the limit of power to public officials provided a basic check and balance to popular sovereignty. The Royal Charter of 1663 proved to be distinctive, installing safeguards in the election process through the governing body of the State Assembly, made up of a governor, deputy-governor, assistants, and representatives from each of the towns,”⁹⁷ each elected by the people.

The most important Biblical principle of the government they founded was incorporated into the supreme law of the United States of America by the First Amendment to United States Constitution.

Sadly, the founding documents of America, although the best governing documents ever conceived, as a whole fell short of the ideal. For example, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution blended Enlightenment and Biblical principles. The Founding Fathers hoped for virtue, not piety. The Founding Fathers desire was to secure the “happiness of man,” whereas, under the Portsmouth Compact and the Rhode Island Charter, the goal was the Glory of God; they desired that the colony be under God and his principles contained in the Bible.

⁹⁶ See Callender, Appendix No. XXI, pp. 241-262 for the complete charter; see also Beller, *America in Crimson Red*, Appendix D, pp. 505-506.

⁹⁷ Asher, pp. 78-79.

As to the effect of the Rhode Island government thus established, John Callender wrote in 1838:

“The civil State has flourished, as well as if secured by ever so many penal laws, and inquisition to put them to execution. Our civil officers have been chosen out of every religious society, and the public peace has been as well preserved, and the public counsels as well conducted, as we could have expected, had we been assisted by ever so many religious tests.

“All profaneness and immorality are punished by the laws made to suppress them; and while these laws are well executed, speculative opinions or modes of worship can never disturb or injure the peace of a State that allows all its subjects an equal liberty of conscience. Indeed, it is not variety of opinions, or separation in worship, that makes disorders and confusions in government. It is the unjust, unnatural, and absurd attempt to force all to be of one opinion, or to feign and dissemble that they are; or the cruel and impious punishing those, who cannot change their opinions without light or reason, and will not dissemble against all reason and conscience. It is the wicked attempt to force men to worship God in a way they believe He hath neither commanded nor will accept; and the restraining them from worshipping Him in a method they think He has instituted and made necessary for them, and in which alone they can be sincere worshippers, and accepted of God; in which alone, they can find comfort and peace of conscience, and approve themselves before God; in which alone, they can be honest men and good Christians. Persecution will ever occasion confusion and disorder, or if every tongue is forced to confess, and every knee to bow to the power of the sword: this itself is the greatest of all disorders, and the worst of confusions in the Kingdom of Christ Jesus.

“[T]his Colony with some since formed on the same model, have proved that the terrible fears that barbarity would break in, where no particular forms of worship or discipline are established by the civil power, are really vain and groundless; and that Christianity can subsist without a national Church, or visible Head, and without being incorporated into the State. It subsisted for the first three hundred years; yea, in opposition and defiance to all the powers of hell and earth. And it is amazing to hear those who plead for penal laws, and the magistrate’s right and duty to govern the Church of Christ, to hear such persons call those early times the golden age of Christianity.”⁹⁸

Mr. Clarke, on his return to Rhode Island, was elected Deputy-Governor three successive years. “He continued the esteemed pastor of the first Baptist Church of Newport, till his death” on

⁹⁸ Callender, pp. 163-164.

April 20, 1676.⁹⁹ Of Mr. Clarke, Isaac Backus wrote: He “left as spotless a character as any man I know of.”¹⁰⁰ “The testimony which Backus proceeds to give of the purity of [Mr. Clarke’s] character and to his good name, even among his enemies, has been fully corroborated by later writers.”¹⁰¹ “To no man, except Roger Williams, is Rhode Island more indebted than to him.”¹⁰²

“An eminent American historian justly observed:

“The annals of Rhode-Island, if written in the spirit of philosophy, would exhibit the forms of society under a peculiar aspect. Had the territory of the State corresponded to the importance and singularity of the principles of its early existence, the world would have been filled with wonder at the phenomena of its early history.”¹⁰³

An example of the manner in which Rhode Island honored the doctrine of freedom of conscience is the way they upheld the standard in regards to the Quakers. Other colonies persecuted the Quakers from 1656 until 1661. Massachusetts hanged four Quakers who returned to the colony after being banished. The Commissioners of the United Colonies threatened Rhode Island with cutting off all commerce or trade with them if Rhode Island did not likewise persecute the Quakers by enacting penal legislation against them. Rhode Island “refused, and pointed out that it had no law for punishing people because of their utterances ‘concerning the things and ways of God, as to salvation and to eternal condition.’”¹⁰⁴ The Commissioners of Rhode Island notified John Clarke. As a result, King Charles II ordered, “neither capital nor corporal punishment should be inflicted on Quakers, but that offenders should be sent to England.”¹⁰⁵ This decree of the King probably saved the lives of other dissenters.

Not all that was happening was for naught. Isaac Backus wrote, “It is readily granted that the sentiments of Mr. Williams and Mr. Clarke, about religious liberty, have had a great spread since that

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, Appendix IX, p. 211.

¹⁰⁰ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, p. 348.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, fn. 1, pp. 348-349.

¹⁰² Callender, p. 212.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, Appendix XVI, p. 230, citing Bancroft’s History of the United States, vol. 1, p. 380.

¹⁰⁴ Pfeffer, p. 75, citing Evarts B. Greene, *Religion and the State* (New York: New York University Press, 1941), pp. 24-25.

¹⁰⁵ Callender, Appendix XIX, pp. 234-236.

day, so that men of a contrary mind cannot carry their oppressive schemes so far now as they did then,”¹⁰⁶ but they still had a ways to go to achieve religious liberty. It was not until 1838 that John Callender declared “[t]he principles of religious freedom, which they [of Rhode Island] clearly and consistently maintained, are now the rule of action adopted by all Christian sects.”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, pp. 202-203.

¹⁰⁷ Callender, Appendix XIX, p. 238.

Chapter 5

The Separates and the Baptists in New England

“Congregationalism claimed a large class of inferior church members by 1720, baptized into the churches without conversion.”¹ Generally speaking, by 1740, religious decay had spread throughout New England. However, “the relentless preaching of Jonathan Edwards of complete surrender to the will of God introduced the novel phenomenon of revival in Massachusetts.”² Although the revival spread down the Connecticut Valley into Connecticut,³ the initial revival was of short duration ... and did not touch the people of New England generally.⁴

Then, George Whitefield, the world-famous English evangelist arrived at Newport. Great crowds greeted Whitefield wherever he went to preach. In Connecticut, he was greeted with great enthusiasm. All Connecticut was at his feet.

As a result of that great revival, many were converted and churches experienced unprecedented growth. The Great Awakening emphasized individual conversion and the new birth.⁵ “[T]he new converts were dubbed ‘New Lights’ by their critics because the awakened people emphasized the immediacy of the Holy Spirit’s illumination and leadership in their personal lives.”⁶ The members of the old churches were called “Old Lights.” “The former favored Whitefield’s type of evangelism and the idea of the regenerate church; the latter opposed revivalism and defended the state church order.”⁷

¹ Lumpkin, p. 2.

² *Ibid.*

³ Asher, p. 21: Between 1635 and 1640 Congregationalism had been planted in the Connecticut colony. Callender, pp. 67-68: “As the country was more fully discovered, the lands on Connecticut river grew so famous for their fruitfulness, and convenience to keep cattle, that great numbers from New-Town, Dorchester, &c., removed there, under the conduct of Mr. Hains, Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Ludlow, and Mr. Hooker, &c., and through inexpressible hardships, through famine, and weariness, and perils of the enemy, they at length settled at Hartford, 1635 and 1636, which was the beginning of the Connecticut colony; and, in 1637, New-Haven colony was begun by a people directly from England[.]”

⁴ Lumpkin, p. 2.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-5.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁷ *Ibid.*

Many itinerant preachers arose because of this revival. Consequently, the General Court of Connecticut “forbade all itinerant preaching under penalty of loss of the right to collect one’s legal salary and imprisonment. Itinerant lay preachers or strange ministers were to be silenced or expelled from the colony.”⁸ “In Connecticut, legal action was taken against the revivalists, their churches were deprived of legal status, and some of the preachers were thrown into jail.”⁹

The Great Awakening brought as many as 50,000 new converts, and brought into being, between 1740 and 1760, one hundred and fifty new Congregationalist churches and added to the number of Separatist and Baptist churches. “It brought the personal and pietistic religious tradition into a section previously dominated without challenge by Calvinistic rationalization.... As always and everywhere, the New England situation shows that such separation and disestablishment arose out of religion and not its opposite.”¹⁰

A number of New Lights who initially tried to influence the church to return to the concept of the pure church were forced out of the established churches. The term “Separates” referred to those who believed that the church should only include regenerate members and those who separated from the state-churches on this conviction. The Separate movement started in Connecticut and moved to Massachusetts. Separate churches began to appear at various towns.

There was great prejudice against Baptists. England forced New England to exempt Baptists from taxation in 1728, but the establishment found ways to circumvent this exemption. Operating clandestinely because of opposition by the authorities, Baptist preachers had come into Connecticut from Rhode Island, as they had done in Massachusetts, starting in 1674. They made some converts and even started some churches in Connecticut in 1704, 1710, 1735, and 1740. All dissenters were taxed to support the established church unless certified to pay the tax to their own churches. To be exempted they had to regularly attend their own

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 8; see also for the actual wording of the act against itinerant and other preachers, Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, pp. 44-46.

⁹ Marnell, p. 87.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

church and live within five miles of their meeting place. Those who belonged to no church were also assessed the tax.¹¹ However, Separates were not given the privileges accorded Baptists, Quakers, and Anglicans.

One of the most prominent of the Separates was Isaac Backus. Although he spent much of his ministry in Massachusetts, he was a native of Norwich, Connecticut. In the new movement, he became the leading figure; and his shift from the Separate to the Baptist camp is central to the religious history of New England.¹²

Mr. Backus was saved in 1741. On August 24, 1741, Mr. Backus, in his own words, speaking of himself, realized:

“that he had done his utmost to make himself better, without obtaining any such thing; but that he was a guilty sinner in the hands of a holy God, who had a right to do with him as seemed good in God’s sight; which he then yielded to and all his objections against it were silenced. And soon upon this a way of relief was opened to his soul, which he never had any true idea of before, wherein truth and justice shine with luster, in the bestowment of free mercy and salvation upon objects who have nothing in themselves but badness. And while this divine glory engaged all his attention, his burthen of guilt and evil dispositions was gone, and such ideas and inclinations were implanted in his heart as were never there before, but which have never been rooted out since, though often overclouded..”¹³

Two years later, he, his mother, and some of his other relatives walked out of the established Norwich Church they belonged to and started holding meetings of their own. They left the church because the church voted to admit new members by a majority vote without evidence of conversion, the minister appeared to think that the Lord’s Supper was a converting ordinance, and the church exhibited a “strong affection for the Saybrook scheme.”

A revolution had begun.

“The essence of the religious revolution which the Separate movement began (and the Baptists finished) lay in church government and not in theology—though it became necessary eventually to modify Calvinism in order that it might conform more nearly to the unforeseen ramifications of the new practices in church discipline and polity. The

¹¹ Lumpkin, pp. 11-13.

¹² McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Piestic Tradition*, pp. 60-61.

¹³ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, p. 107.

major issues involved in church government were the autonomy and purity of the church, the nature of the ministry, and the relationship between Church and State.”¹⁴

The church and state were interwoven in New England. Into the eighteenth century, the Puritan tradition continued in greater strength in Connecticut than elsewhere. The state taxed all citizens to support religion. In 1708, the Connecticut legislature ordained the Saybrook Platform. Under it, county associations of ministers met frequently to deal with matters of common interest, regional bodies called consociations were to handle all kinds of ecclesiastical difficulties, and a general state association exercised a general superintendency over churches and ministers. Under the Saybrook Platform, the county associations approved, licensed, and ordained the ministers of the parishes.¹⁵ The state supported the actions of the county associations, and could deny the right of a minister to preach and collect his salary.¹⁶

Various struggles arose. In 1742 and 1743, laws were passed forbidding itinerant preachers from preaching without permission of the parish minister with penalty of imprisonment, excluding settled ministers who preached in any other parish without consent of the parish minister from any benefit of the laws for their support, removing from Connecticut any minister from any other colony who preached in Connecticut, and giving the legislature authority to license dissenting churches which complied with the British Toleration Act of 1689.¹⁷ The Legislature disciplined members of the Council and General Assembly known to sympathize with the New Lights. “Unauthorized schools and colleges were forbidden and only university graduates were eligible for ministerial standing before the law.”¹⁸ The county associations began to act. The New Haven Consociation in 1742 expelled pastors of established churches for preaching to a group of Separates and Baptists against the wishes of the established minister. In Canterbury, Windham County the majority of the

¹⁴ McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Piestic Tradition*, pp. 23-24.

¹⁵ Lumpkin, p. 11; Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, pp. 472-474; Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, p. 319.

¹⁶ McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Piestic Tradition*, p. 24.

¹⁷ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, pp. 319-320.

¹⁸ Lumpkin, p. 15; see also Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, p. 57, fn. 3.

church, New Lights, voted for a certain man to be pastor, but the Old Lights who were the majority in the parish voted for another. By law, both the church and parish had to concur, but the Windham Consociation declared that the minority of Old Lights in the church were the true church and ordained their choice.¹⁹ In Plainfield, the Windham Consociation “reversed the position it had taken in Canterbury and sided with a minority of Old Lights in the church to choose an Old Light minister over the objection of the majority of New Lights in the parish.”²⁰

The inequities and the persecutions by the established church and civil government resulted in more and more defections to the New Light position. The civil government used repressive measures to compel the Separates to return to the fold. “Revivalistic ministers were shut out of meeting houses; members were moved from civic office and, when they refused to pay taxes for support of the regular ministry, imprisoned.”²¹ At first most Separates that left the state-churches seemed destined to become Baptists. However, great disagreement arose between those who still adhered to infant baptism and those who insisted upon believer’s baptism—baptism after a confession of faith only. Because of this disagreement, the Baptist members left the Separate churches and formed their own churches.

This Separate movement had enduring consequences. One writer appropriately noted:

“[T]he Separatist movement is not appreciated as it deserves. We have too nearly forgotten our obligations to those men who dared to break away from the corrupt and worldly churches of the Standing Order, though they were armed with all the power of the State, of which they were a part, and to establish other churches in which vital godliness was the condition of membership. It was a transition movement, it is true, and of necessity only temporary, but its results were enduring. Many of the Baptist churches in New England spring from it directly, and through them, indirectly, almost all the rest; and other evangelical churches are largely indebted to it for their vitality and efficiency.—ED.”²²

¹⁹ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, pp. 68-74; McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Piestic Tradition*, p. 26.

²⁰ McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Piestic Tradition*, pp. 26-27.

²¹ Lumpkin, p. 14, citing Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, p. 176.

²² Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, fn. 1, p. 64.

From the point of his conversion, Isaac Backus gradually became a leader of the Baptist movement. He was asked to preach to a church at Titicut in 1748, a revival resulted, people were saved, and a Separate church was formed in February, 1748, in defiance of the authorities. Mr. Backus and sixteen men signed the church covenant which provided for election and dismissal of the ministers, deacons, and elders by a majority vote, repudiated the claim that the minister was superior in authority to the brethren, stated that the minister was to be supported by free contribution of the members, and asserted the priesthood of all believers and the right and duty of all members to exercise any ability they had to preach or pray in public.²³

Mr. Backus was opposed by scurrilous opposition. As he said, "I had many things thrown upon me to represent my Carecter odious and hinder me in this glorious Work." Lies were told about him, such as that he had a wife and children in the country, that he had "bastards in this place or that, that there was a girl or two with his child."²⁴

The members of the church were taxed to support the established church. The church protested the tax, but parish committee refused to exempt Mr. Backus and his followers from religious taxes. Their rationale was basically that the golden rule required them to do so, and that the committee would want their neighbors to force them to pay such a tax if they were in error. "[N]either doth God himself countenance or give Liberty to any men to follow the 'Dictates of a misguided Eronius Conscience.'"²⁵ The reply gave an argument over the separation of church and state with which Backus had to wrestle the rest of his life.

"Oppression 'can't mean and intend that Tis unwarrantable or sinfull for men to urge and press others to a compliance with their Duty as it is pointed out by the Laws of God or the good and wholesome Laws of the Land and in case men through obstinacy and willfulness [refuse] and so will not make good either Lawfull Contracts [&] Covenants the original good and Design of their being incorporated into Distinct

²³ McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Piestic Tradition*, pp. 42-43.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

[religious] societies [or parishes] and so Tis no oppression....' Under the Golden Rule the committee said it would want their neighbors to force *them* to do their duty if *they* were in error. 'Liberty of Conscience according to the word of god is not for men to Live as they list or Do as they please while they maintain Errors in Judgment, Disown the truth of god, Exclaim against a faithful ministry, make Light of that good order and government which Jesus Christ has set up in his church; neither does God himself countenance or give Liberty to any men to follow the Dictates of a misguided Eronius Conscience....' 'Let it be observed that there is a great difference between persecution and prosecution.'"²⁶

In February 1749, Backus was arrested for not paying a ministerial tax, but someone paid it for him, and he was released. Other members of the church were imprisoned or had their property confiscated for failing to pay the tax.

"Three-quarters of a century were to pass and Backus was to be in his grave before the people of Massachusetts yielded to the radical New Light view that the state should allow individuals to 'act and Conduct as they pleas' in matters of religion even if it meant imperiling their souls, the destruction of the parish system, the end of compulsory religious taxation, and the abandonment of the Puritan ideal of a corporate Christian commonwealth."²⁷

Backus struggled with the issue of baptism, studied Scripture, rejected infant baptism, and was baptized by dipping on August 22, 1751.²⁸ He set out to refute the anti-pedobaptist position by first turning to the Bible, and then to the claims of Baptist scholars in England that infant baptism was a corruption brought into the Christian church in the 2nd or 3rd century. What he found surprised him.

Next, Backus examined the Covenant Theology which lay at the heart of New England Puritanism. The relevance of this theology to Backus was mainly its effect on the church-state issue.²⁹

First, "[T]he Jewish church was clearly a national church, a theocracy in which Moses and Aaron ruled together, and thus the Puritans were able to utilize the covenant theology to justify their ecclesiastical laws

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

²⁸ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, pp. 108-111.

²⁹ McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Piestic Tradition*, pp. 61-63.

and their system of territorial parishes and religious taxes. Second, the covenant theology provided the Puritans with justifications for the Halfway Covenant, thus polluting the purity of the mystical body of Christ. And in the third place the covenant theology, by emphasizing that grace ran ‘through the loins of godly parents,’ that the baptized children of visible saints were somehow more likely than others to obtain salvation, thereby established a kind of hereditary spiritual aristocracy; it also undermined the sovereignty of God by implying that God was bound by this covenant to save certain persons rather than others. [Etc.]”³⁰

The Puritans supported the unity of the Abrahamic Covenant in Romans 11.17.

“Here, the apostle Paul spoke of the Christian covenant as being grafted on to the Jewish covenant as a branch is grafted on to an olive tree, from whence the Puritans ‘argued the right of professors now to baptize their children, because the Jews circumcised theirs.’ This Backus rejected as misinterpretation. ‘The Jews were broken off thro’ unbelief, and the Gentiles were grafted in, and stand only by faith.’ Faith was essential to baptism. What Puritans stressed as organic continuity, Backus and the Baptists stressed as a complete break.”³¹

Backus concluded that the Separates must explicitly reject the Covenant Theology, the whole conception of the corporate Christian state, which the Puritans had so painstakingly constructed in the wilderness of New England. Backus decided against infant baptism and was baptized. “[H]e rejected the Covenant Theology of the Puritans by arguing as the Baptists had long done that the Bible contained two covenants, the old Covenant of Works made with the Jews, and the Covenant of Grace made with those who believe in Christ....” “[T]he Puritans had confused the gospel of grace with the doctrine of works and transformed the gospel church of visible saints into a national church with a birthright membership.”³² “Backus and the Baptists stressed the discontinuity, the antithetical nature of the two, the complete and distinct break between the past and the present dispensations. That Americans were ready to grasp this new outlook after 1740 and to pursue it to its logical conclusions marks

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 62-64.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 73-76.

the real break with the Old World, the medieval mind and the Puritan ethos....”³³

At first the Separatists and Baptists desired to meet together. This proved untenable.

“[They] were bound together by the closest ties. The [Baptists] left the [Separate Congregational churches] with no ill feeling but with heartiest love, and this love continued, on both sides, after their separation. Their members had been converted together in the Great Awakening; together they had come out from the Standing Order; together they had suffered and were still suffering for the truth; they had the same enemies and oppressors; they felt the force of the same unjust and cruel laws; their plundered goods were sold at the same auctions, and their bodies confined in the same prisons; they had many kindred views and feelings, by which they sympathized most closely, and in which there were no others to sympathize with them. Moreover, they mutually desired inter-communion. Council after council and conference after conference recommended it, and there seemed to be no voice against it. And yet it failed. Practical difficulties arose.... The truth could not be escaped that Baptist churches, by renouncing infant baptism and sprinkling, and then practically recognizing them again as a proper declaration of discipleship and initiation to membership in the visible church, placed themselves in a position of direct inconsistency. One by one, reluctantly, but at last universally, they abandoned the untenable ground.—ED.”³⁴

By 1754, “the alliance between the two groups within Separatism was practically at an end, and the Baptist members left to form new churches or join existing ones.”³⁵

A Baptist church was instituted in Middleborough, Massachusetts by a number of brethren led by Mr. Backus from the Titicut Separatist church who were convinced communion should be limited to believers baptized upon a profession of their own faith. On July 23, 1756, Mr. Backus was installed as their pastor.

“He ... published a discourse from Gal. iv. 31, to shew that Abraham’s first son that was circumcised was the son of the bond-woman, an emblem of the national church of the Jews; in distinction from regenerate souls, the spiritual seed of Abraham, of whom the Christian

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

³⁴ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, fn. 1, p. 115; on pp. 116-119 Backus gives further arguments.

³⁵ Lumpkin, p. 18.

church was constituted; into which neither natural birth, nor the doings of others, can rightly bring any one soul, without its own consent. Upon these principles was the first Baptist church in Plymouth county then founded[.]”³⁶

The revival died out almost as fast as it had appeared. Conversions became rare. People turned their attention to politics and controversy. The Separate churches and groups either died, or found their way into the Baptist camp. The Baptist denomination experienced an unprecedented growth. In 1740 no more than six Calvinistic Baptist churches existed in New England; but by 1800 there were more than 325 Baptist churches, most of them Calvinistic.³⁷

The Warren Association, an association of Baptist churches, was formed in 1770. The main goal was to obtain religious liberty. This marked an important movement in the history of New England. An advertisement to all Baptists in New England was published requesting them to bring in exact accounts of their cases of persecution to the first annual meeting on September 11, 1770. The establishment feared the association and countered by dealing deceitfully with it and spreading lies about the association.³⁸

Isaac Backus was the key member of the grievance committee of the Warren Association in September 1771. “[He soon] became the principal spokesman for the Baptists in their efforts to disestablish the Puritan churches. As such he did more than any other man to formulate and publicize the evangelical position on Church and State which was ultimately to prevail throughout America.”³⁹

“An Appeal to the Public for Religious Liberty Against the Oppression of the Present Day” was the most important of the 37 tracts which Backus published during his lifetime and was central to the whole movement for separation of church and state in America. “It remains the best exposition of the 18th century

³⁶ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, pp. 117-118.

³⁷ Lumpkin, p. 20.

³⁸ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, pp. 154-156; pp. 408-409 of *A History of New England...* gives more on the formation of the Warren Association.

³⁹ McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Piestic Tradition*, p. 109.

pietistic concept of separation.”⁴⁰ In that tract, Backus argued, among other things:

“Basic to the Baptist position was the belief that all direct connections between the state and institutionalized religion must be broken in order that America might become a truly Christian country. Backus, like Jefferson and Madison, believed that ‘Truth is great and will prevail’—but by ‘Truth’ he meant the revealed doctrines of grace. His fundamental assumption was that ‘God has appointed two different kinds of government in the world which are different in their nature and ought never to be confounded together; one of which is called civil, the other ecclesiastical government.’ The two had been ‘confounded together’ by the Emperor Constantine and the Papacy and had ultimately been brought to New England by the Puritans ‘who had not taken up the cross so as to separate from the national church before they came away.’ A ‘Brief view of how civil and ecclesiastical affairs are blended together among us [in 1773] to the depriving of many of God’s people of that liberty of conscience which he [God] has given us’ utilized also the long–forgotten arguments of Roger Williams to defend the doctrines of separation.”⁴¹

Amidst persecutions of Baptists for failing to pay ministerial taxes, the association met on September 1773 and voted to refrain from giving any more certificates for tax exemption to pay the established minister. Backus listed the reasons why they would no longer obey “a law requiring annual certificates to the other denomination.” “Jefferson in his preamble to the Religious Liberty Act of Virginia and Madison in his famous Remonstrance of 1785 utilized essentially deistic arguments based upon reason and natural law. Backus’s arguments were pure pietism[:]”⁴²

1. [To get a certificate] “implies an acknowledgement that religious rulers had a right to set one sect over another, which they did not have.”
2. Civil rulers have no right to impose religious taxes.
3. Such practice emboldens the “actors to assume God’s prerogative.”
4. For the church, which is presented as a chaste virgin to Christ, to place her trust and love upon others for temporal support is playing the harlot.
5. “[B]y the law of Christ every man is not only allowed but also required to judge for himself concerning the circumstantial as well as the essentials of

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 123. The entire contents of the tract are in *Isaac Backus on Church, State, and Calvinism, Pamphlets, 1754-1789*, Edited by William G. McLoughlin (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 303-343.

⁴¹ McLoughlin, pp. 123-124.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 126.

religion, and to act according to the full persuasion of his own mind.” The practice tends to envy, hypocrisy, and confusion, and the ruin of civil society.⁴³

“*An Appeal to the Public* was pietistic America’s declaration of spiritual independence. Like Jefferson’s Declaration three years later, it contained a legal brief against a long train of abuses, a theoretical defense of principle, and a moral argument for civil disobedience.”⁴⁴ No answer was ever given to “An Appeal to the Public” which was published in Boston. The collection of taxes for support of the established religion continued with confiscation of property and imprisonments occurring.⁴⁵

Attempts to gain religious freedom continued. The Warren Association sent Isaac Backus to the Continental Congress in 1774 where he met with an Association of other Baptist churches from several adjacent colonies which had elected a large committee to assist. They presented their appeal for religious liberty. John Adams and Samuel Adams, neither of whom was a friend to separation of church and state, falsely asserted that Massachusetts had only a “very slender” establishment, hardly to be called an establishment, that the General Court was clear of blame and always there to hear complaints and grant reasonable help.⁴⁶ While Mr. Backus was gone, the lie was spread that he had gone to Philadelphia to break the union of the colonies.

All the time these happenings were going on, the issues were being debated in the newspapers. The Warren Association continued to publish to the public instances of persecution as well as to actively seek religious liberty from the government. The Warren Association presented a memorial on July 19, 1775, requesting religious liberty and pointing out the inconsistency of rebelling against England for taxing without representation while doing the same thing in the colonies. Ultimately, nothing came of this. In 1777, Mr. Backus prepared an address, which was supported by a large number from various denominations, urging

⁴³ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, p. 178, citing “An Appeal to the Public for Religious Liberty.”

⁴⁴ McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Pietistic Tradition*, p. 127.

⁴⁵ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, pp. 178-182. Christian, Volume I, p. 388.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 200-202, and fn. 1, p. 201.

religious liberty to the Assembly which had been empowered to frame a new Constitution which was accomplished in 1780. The Third Article of the new constitution “excluded all subordination of one religious sect to another,” but imprisonment, and confiscation of property from men who refused to acknowledge such subordination continued.⁴⁷

In 1778, Mr. Backus wrote “Government and Liberty Described and Ecclesiastical Tyranny Exposed.” He quoted Charles Chauncy:

“We are in principle against all civil establishments in religion. It does not appear to us that God has entrusted the State with a right to make religious establishments.... We claim no right to desire the interposition of the State to establish that mode of worship, [church] government, or discipline we apprehend is most agreeable to the mind of Christ. We desire no other liberty than to be left unrestrained in the exercise of our principles in so far as we are good members of society.” This, said Backus, was all that Baptists asked.⁴⁸

“Perhaps as a result of this tract, the General Assembly tried to conciliate the Baptists by appointing a Baptist minister to deliver the election sermon in May 1779. That minister, in his sermon, remained faithful to the principle of separation.”⁴⁹

Massachusetts began efforts to adopt a new constitution in 1777. The proposed constitution was defeated, but a new effort which began in 1779 proved successful. John Adams worked against the Baptist position at the convention. Mr. Backus, although not a delegate, went to Boston to stand for Baptist principles during the constitutional convention. He lobbied, wrote newspaper articles, published new tracts, and informed his brethren of what was going on.⁵⁰

Mr. Backus worked at the convention for a Bill of Rights. The first basic rights he listed were:

“All men are born equally free and independent, and have certain natural, inherent and unalienable rights, among which are the enjoying

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 203-204, 219-220, 225-229, 228-229.

⁴⁸ McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Piestic Tradition*, p. 140. The entire tract is reproduced in *Isaac Backus on Church, State, and Calvinism, Pamphlets, 1754-1789*, pp. 345-365.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 141.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and persuing and obtaining happiness and safety.”

“As God is the only worthy object of all religious worship, and nothing can be true religion but a voluntary obedience unto his revealed will, of which each rational soul has an equal right to judge for itself; every person has an unalienable right to act in all religious affairs according to the full persuasion of his own mind, where others are not injured thereby. And civil rulers are so far from having any right to empower any person or persons to judge for others in such affairs, and to enforce their judgments with the sword, that their power ought to be exerted to protect all persons and societies, within their jurisdiction, from being injured or interrupted in the free enjoyment of his right, under any pretence whatsoever.”⁵¹

Backus’ position, although seeking the same end, was from a different point of view than that of George Mason, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.

“Three years earlier George Mason, with Jefferson’s approval and Madison’s amendments, had written a statement on religious freedom into the Bill of Rights in the Virginia Constitution:

‘That religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence and therefore all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love, and charity towards each other.’

“Backus’s tone was that of a New Light pietist; Mason’s that of an Enlightened latitudinarian. The Virginians spoke of the ‘Creator,’ Backus spoke of ‘God.’ Mason stressed reason and duty, Backus stressed ‘religious worship.’ Backus referred directly to God’s ‘revealed will’ and to the ‘soul.’ Mason omitted any reference to them.

“The difference was obvious and fundamental. The Virginia separationists were interested in leaving the mind free to follow its own rational direction. The Massachusetts pietists believed that separation was necessary in order to leave the ‘rational soul’ free to find ‘true religion’ as expressed in the Bible, ‘the revealed will’ of God. Implicit in both statements was a belief in God, in natural law, in man’s ability to find them. But the deistic separationists of Virginia trusted entirely to man’s reason and free will. The pietists insisted that only through the supernatural grace of God would men find the Truth that is in Jesus

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 142-144.

Christ. Though both views were individualistic, the deist was anthropocentric, the pietist theocentric.”⁵²

The humanistic view of Mason, Jefferson, and Madison that man, through his reason could successfully address all his problems, and the humanistic goal of the “happiness of man” were inherent in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, the two greatest governing documents of all time, although blended with Biblical principles. Neither the name of Jesus nor the goal of “the glory of God” was in the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution.⁵³

The Warren Association, on September 13, 1780, published a remonstrance, authored by Mr. Backus, against Article Three of the proposed constitution. The remonstrance stated, among other things, that the provision therein requiring the majority of each parish “the exclusive right of covenanting for the rest with religious teachers,” thereby granting a power no man has a right to; and further stating that “the Legislature, by this Article, are empowered to compel both civil and religious societies to make what they shall judge to be *suitable provision* for religious teachers in all cases where such provision shall not be made voluntarily.”⁵⁴ However, support for ministry could only be through voluntary support, not coercion that denied freedom of conscience. Backus and other Baptists “did not object to the view that Massachusetts should remain a Christian commonwealth; piety, religion, and morality could only be maintained with the institution of the public worship of God and of public instructions in piety, religion, and morality” were “generally diffused throughout the community.”⁵⁵

“Jefferson, Mason, and Madison, designing the creation of a secular state, not only opposed all such practices but also objected to the use of chaplains in the Congress and armed forces, the authorization by the state of certain days of fasting, thanksgiving, and prayer; and the compulsory religious services in state universities. Jefferson explicitly stated that America was not and ought not to be a Christian country....

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 142-144.

⁵³ Again, the Constitution is the greatest governing document ever conceived by a nation, but the Biblical principle of “leaven”—bad doctrine always corrupts the good—has proven again, by the national experience, to be true. To understand and address a problem, one must be willing to face all the facts head on.

⁵⁴ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, fn. 2, pp. 229-230.

⁵⁵ McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Piestic Tradition*, pp. 148-149.

Backus never qualified his belief in a Christian commonwealth. He consistently argued for ‘a sweet harmony between’ Church and State. ‘It is readily granted,’ he wrote in 1784, ‘that piety, religion, and morality are essentially necessary for the good order of civil society.’”⁵⁶

The Baptists fought on. They took their case to the courts. Attleboro, Massachusetts assessed a religious tax on everyone. Some members of a Baptist church in Attleboro refused to file a certificate and refused to pay the tax. The property of some was sold to pay the tax. Elijah Balkcom, after being arrested, paid the tax under protest, and then sued to test the constitutionality of Article Three. They won an initial victory in county court.

However, the case was overturned two years later on appeal of the favorable trial court decision in the case of *Cutter v. Frost*. *Cutter* also held that only incorporated religious societies were entitled to legal recognition. Since most, if not all, of the Baptist churches in Massachusetts were unincorporated, they were not qualified for exemption.⁵⁷ A lawyer advised Mr. Backus and the grievance committee to file the certificates, pay their taxes, and sue if the parish treasurer refused to turn the money over to their own pastor. The committee voted to follow this advice, Mr. Backus casting the lone negative vote. This was a reversal of the 1773 stand against giving of the certificates. “The spirit of the times did not call for martyrdom and fanaticism. The other members of the committee were more interested in improving the status and respectability of their denomination.”⁵⁸

As a result, three cases were brought in three different courts and the Baptists prevailed at trial court and on appeal. In other cases over the years, much time and expense was expended to get tax money earmarked for Baptist ministers. One case required fourteen lawsuits before the town treasurer yielded the taxes. In some towns, when it was shown the Baptists would sue, the “Standing Order” ceased to argue the matter.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 149-150.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 160-161; see Backus’ reaction to the decision in the *Balkcom* case in McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus on Church, State, and Calvinism*, “A Door Opened for Christian Liberty,” pp. 428-438.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 163-164.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 164-165.

Mr. Backus, being disappointed with his twelve-year battle against certificates, turned his zeal to other outlets—to fighting the threat to Baptist doctrines.

As new Baptist churches continued to be constituted, and the number of Baptists continued to increase, the persecution continued in Connecticut. In 1784, Connecticut made a new law continuing the support of established ministers by taxation. However, another act exempted all persons from that tax who filed a certificate to the effect that they regularly attended and supported worship services in any type of gospel ministry. Mr. Backus said of this act, “[I]s not this a mark of the beast? ... Blood hath ever followed the support of worship by the sword of the magistrate.... And how can any man keep himself unspotted from the world, if he forces the world to support his worship?”⁶⁰

Then, in May of 1791, Connecticut passed an addition to the ineffectual law of 1784 which held that “no certificate could be legal, until it was approbated by two justices of the peace, or only by one, if there was no more in the town where the dissenter lived,” and that such certificate was ineffective as to taxes granted before the certificate was lodged.⁶¹ However, after a remonstrance and petition were presented, the law was repealed in October 1791 and another law made to allow every man to give in his own certificate, if he dissented from the ruling sect.

The quest for religious freedom in Connecticut continued until 1818 when state support was withdrawn from the Congregationalist Church.⁶²

⁶⁰ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, pp. 320-321.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 345.

⁶² Marnell, p. 114.

Chapter 6

From New England to the South

By 1755, only a few Baptist churches had been constituted in the South. This was about to change. The change came partly as a result of the Great Awakening.

Shubal Stearns and Daniel Marshall, both members of Congregationalist churches in Connecticut, separated from the established churches, later became Baptists, as had Isaac Backus, and became chief instruments in carrying the Great Awakening to the South. The Separates were subject to persecution—fines, imprisonment, placing in stocks, and whipping—for their defiance of the laws of the commonwealth. They were subjected to a more intense persecution than the dissenters such as Baptists and Quakers, and many of them were imprisoned for practicing their beliefs.

Shubal Stearns was born in Boston on January 28, 1706. His family moved to Connecticut in his youth and joined the Congregational church in Tolland. He was converted to New Light views in 1745 because of the Whitefield revival. Mr. Stearns led others in his church to become a Separate church. After a thorough study of the Scriptures, he declared himself a Baptist and was baptized.¹

Daniel Marshall was born in 1706 in Windsor. He became a prosperous farmer and a deacon in the established Congregational church. Deeply affected by George Whitefield, by 1747 he was a Separate; and by 1751, he, along with Shubal Sterns, was a radical Separate.²

George Whitefield's preaching had a grand effect on his converts. A "twofold conviction was borne in and upon the hearts of the Separates around 1750." Since all men can be saved, the urgency of missions and the need for men to hear the gospel now was impressed upon their hearts. "Love for [all] others, said Whitefield, stands alongside aversion to sin, a spirit of

¹ Lumpkin, p. 21.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 21-23.

supplication, and a spirit of conquest over the world as a mark of having the Holy Spirit.”³

In 1751 or 1752, as had others before him, Mr. Marshall set out with his wife and three children and possibly with one other couple, with no prospect of material reward, to minister to the Indians in New York. They settled at the Indian town of Onnaquaggy. They had to leave after eighteen months because strife among the Indians caused by the French and English struggle and attempts to gain the support of various tribes disrupted his work and threatened his family. He went to Connogogig, Pennsylvania for a short stay, then moved to Opekon, Virginia. The pastor of Mill Creek Baptist Church baptized him. His powerful preaching ability was recognized and a revival ensued.⁴

Shubal Stearns and his wife, along with five other families, possessed with missionary zeal, left Tolland, Connecticut in August 1754. They moved to Virginia. Daniel Marshall greeted them there. They settled in Cacapon Creek, Virginia, but did not stay there long. Members of some neighboring churches (later called “Regular” Baptist churches), which upheld dignity and orderliness in worship, were upset with the “noisy and emotional preaching of the Separates,” by some of the preaching, which “may have suggested Armenianism to them,” and by “the prominent place occupied by women in some Separate meetings which hinted at disorder.” The Indians broke into open hostility in 1755. Consequently, Mr. Stearns and his party moved to Sandy Creek, North Carolina, “a strategic center from which he could itinerate to a growing and spiritually destitute population.”⁵ There they constituted the Sandy Creek Church with Mr. Stearns as minister and Daniel Marshall and Joseph Breed as assistant ministers.

Mr. Stearns immediately began to preach. People from neighboring farms began to attend, for the first time hearing the doctrine of the new birth.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 24, citing Stuart C. Henry, *George Whitefield, Wayfaring Witness* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 124.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-28 citing Stewart Pearce, *Annals of Luzerne County* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1960), pp. 34-35; J. B. Taylor, *Virginia Baptist Ministers* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1859), I, 19; R. B. Stemple, *A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists of Virginia*, revised and extended by G. W. Beale (Richmond: Pitt & Dickinson, 1894), p. 370.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-30.

“The enthusiastic manner of preaching, too, was unprecedented. Stearns’ delivery was warm and appealing, full of persuasive zeal, not at all the commonplace, lecture-type discourses which the people had formerly heard. Strong gestures and a fervent plea told the people that the preacher was intensely involved in his message. It was obvious he wanted a verdict.

“The preachers deep feeling and personality passed to the members of the church and from them to the visitors. The music in the little pastor’s voice soon penetrated every heart, and his piercing, discursive eye seemed to peer into every soul. The tears, tremblings, and shouts of the members quickly affected the visitors, and from the little meetinghouse a tumult of grief at sin and joy at salvation ascended to heaven. Men who came to the meetings to mock returned home praising and glorifying God. The church began to grow!

“Then the Separates knew that they had found their home and that God’s will was being perfected in them. The heart of their little community held a plan worthy of the heart of an empire.”⁶

The population of North Carolina was growing rapidly. People were coming from Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania; and large families were common. Although law established the Church of England in 1701 in North Carolina, it had a feeble career there, and the colony gained a reputation as an asylum for the religiously persecuted. By 1755, the population of North Carolina was nearly a hundred thousand.⁷

The Quakers preached the first sermon in North Carolina in 1672 and were the earliest dissenters. The Moravians also flourished there. The Anglicans were few in number, had only one or two ministers in the colony at any given time, and were looked upon with indifference and hostility by the people of North Carolina. Except for the Quakers and Moravians, until the middle of the eighteenth century, “[r]eligious concerns among the early dissenters were doomed to steady decline because of the shortage of churches, religious instruction, and pastors.”⁸

The work at Sandy Creek soon began to produce much fruit. Mr. Stearns and the other preachers in his church were in great demand to go preach at other settlements. He and Daniel Marshall

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34, citing G. W. Paschal, *History of North Carolina Baptists* (Raleigh: General Board of North Carolina Baptist State Convention, 1930), I, pp. 252-254.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-36.

decided, before having been at Sandy Creek a year, to go on a preaching mission all the way to the coast. Converts were being called into ministry, and the Separate Baptist movement was seeing the birth of new churches. Within three years, there were three churches with a combined membership of over nine hundred, and these churches had numerous branches. Young evangelists were “beginning to occupy the land of promise.” In 1758, the Sandy Creek Association was organized. The plan for the association “required careful planning, for the associational movement would usher in a grand new chapter in Separate Baptist expansion.”⁹

The movement exploded. Ministers and converts went all over North Carolina, then into South Carolina and Georgia. The power of God was with these Separate Baptist preachers. Churches were planted and many were converted. In North Carolina, the Baptists displaced the Anglicans and the Presbyterians. Daniel Marshall went to South Carolina with some others in his church and started a church there. From there, he went on preaching trips into Georgia. He was so successful in some of his forays there that he was arrested, convicted, and commanded to preach no more in Georgia. “The arresting constable and even the magistrate who tried Marshall were soon converted and baptized.” In 1771, Mr. Marshall moved to Kiokee Creek, Georgia and formed the first Baptist church in Georgia at Appling in 1772.¹⁰

In 1771, the so-called War of the Regulation broke out. The government of North Carolina tried to suppress the Separate Baptists, but succeeded only in spreading their movement all along the southern frontier. Before the suppression began, the established church, the Anglican Church, was ineffectual in North Carolina and only had five ministers in the state in 1765.

Before 1765 the western counties, made up of frontiersman, a large percentage of whom had become Baptists, were disproportionately taxed and represented in the Assembly. “Sheriffs, judges, and other officials of county government, were notorious for their injustice, and in the western counties they were,

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 41-45.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 55, citing J. H. Kilpatrick, *The Baptists*, (Atlanta: Georgia Baptist Convention, 1911), pp. 37-38.

as a rule, dishonest, haughty, and overbearing.”¹¹ A license was required for teachers, and no place of higher education could be administered, except by ministers of the Church of England. The Church of England was given exclusive rights to perform marriages. In 1755, poll and vestry taxes were imposed upon North Carolinians.¹² The settlers mounted protests against these injustices.

When William Tryon became governor of North Carolina in 1765, the troubles moved quickly to a crisis. Governor Tryon set out to strengthen the position of the Church of England. He called for twenty-seven more Anglican clergymen, increased taxes, and raised a military force. By 1770, Governor Tryon had established eighteen Anglican priests in thirty-two parishes in North Carolina. Property was seized for back taxes, people accused of rioting were arrested and set for trial, and others were fined and imprisoned. “In several places the Regulators yielded to mob spirit, broke up courts, and whipped the officers” and “some court records were destroyed.”¹³ Armed conflict finally broke out. On May 16, 1771, the state militiamen routed a poorly trained and supplied force of two thousand regulators. Although Shubal Stearns and the Sandy Creek Association forbade Baptists to take up arms against the government, many did.

After the defeat of the regulators, Tryon “laid waste to plantations, burned homes, and sent numbers of men in chains to Hillsboro. The countryside was terrorized.”¹⁴ Tryon seized Benjamin Merrill, who appears to have been a church leader. Merrill was convicted as a traitor, hung publicly, cut into pieces—quartered—and his body scattered.¹⁵

The Baptists had a mass exodus from North Carolina. By 1772, Sandy Creek Church had only fourteen members, down from six hundred and six. Little River Church went from five hundred to a dozen members. Nevertheless, as with the persecution of the first Christians in Jerusalem, the persecuted spread to other parts and carried out the Great Commission. The departing Baptists went

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 72-74.

¹² Beller, *America in Crimson Red*, pp. 181-182.

¹³ Lumpkin, pp. 78-79.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

¹⁵ Beller, *America in Crimson Red*, p. 197.

into South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee, spreading the Gospel and reaping the harvest. What Satan meant for evil, God used for His glory.

Shubal Stearns, the chief light and the guiding genius behind the Separate Baptist movement, died on November 20, 1771, at the age of sixty-five. Forty-two churches and one hundred and twenty-five ministers had sprung from the Sandy Creek Church by 1772. Fires, which could not be quenched, had been started in North Carolina and in other states.¹⁶

¹⁶ Lumpkin, p. 59.

Chapter 7 To Virginia

Although the final expression of religious freedom that would be incorporated into the Constitution came from Virginia, the final motivation came because of the convictions of the dissenters, mainly the Baptists, and the thrust for their growth and influence came from the Great Awakening.

“[T]he early Baptists of Virginia, ... while they could not boast of great wealth, or culture, or refinement, they possessed some things of more real value, and which the Commonwealth greatly needed. In the first place *they had religion—genuine* religion; not a sham, nor an empty form, but *the old time religion* of the heart. Then they had a *personal worth* or *character*, that character which always follows from having genuine religion. And then, again, those early Baptists had an *unquenchable love of liberty*. The *truth* of the New Testament *makes men free* indeed, and it inspires them with a love of freedom, not for themselves only, but for all men. And it was because they possessed these traits that they resisted the temptations of the General Incorporation and General Assessment, and stood their ground amid the general desertion. They resolved to continue to fight.”¹

The conflict in Virginia originally involved the Anglicans and Presbyterians, neither of which originally believed in either religious freedom or separation of church and state. Religious freedom and separation are owed mainly to the Baptists who believed in both. What Jefferson and Madison wrote about and did for religious freedom resulted from their observance of the conflict among Christians and is not to be found in the pages of philosophers of the Enlightenment.²

“The Presbyterians [in Virginia] won religious liberty for themselves against the opposition of the Episcopalians. Next the Baptists won religious liberty for themselves against the opposition of the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians. By 1775 about three quarters of the people of Virginia were outside the Church of England, but many of the most influential Virginians were inside. When the war started, there were ninety-five Anglican parishes in Virginia. The war killed off at least a quarter of them. Nowhere in the colonies was Tory sentiment

¹ James, Appendix A, pp. 207-208.

² See, e.g., Marnell, pp. 89-90.

stronger than among the Anglican clergy of Virginia, and they found themselves at the gravest of odds with their flocks.”³

Virginia “was founded by members of the Church of England and none others were tolerated in its jurisdiction.”⁴ The Episcopal church, the Church of England, in Virginia was established from the founding of Jamestown in 1607.

“It was known, also, as the ‘Established Church,’ because it was made, by legal enactment, the church of the State and was supported by taxation. Not only so, but it was designed to be the established church, to the exclusion of all others. Rigid laws, with severe penalties affixed, were passed, having for their object the exclusion of all Dissenters from the colony, and the compelling of conformity to the established, or State, religion. Even after the Revolution of 1688, which placed William and Mary upon the throne of England and secured the passage of the ‘Act of Toleration’ the following year, the ‘General Court of the Colony’ of Virginia construed that act to suit themselves, and withheld its benefits from Dissenters ... until they were compelled to yield to the force of circumstances.”⁵

The Church of England was stronger in Virginia than in any colony.

In Virginia, the established Anglican church was controlled by the state, unlike in New England where the established church controlled the state. From the beginning of the colony, the “company knew not how to control the members composing the colony but by religion and law.”⁶ The original “Lawes Divine, Moral and Martial” which were decreed in 1612, were severe. Speaking impiously of the Trinity or of God the Father, Son, or Holy Spirit, blaspheming God, incorrigibly cursing, a third failure to attend religious services, and a third “Sabbath-breaking,” were punishable by death. Other spiritual offenses were punished by whipping and other penalties.⁷

Upon appeal to England, these laws were repealed. The laws enacted in support of the Anglican establishment were less severe. Still, the Anglican church was established (and this establishment

³ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁴ Christian, *Volume I*, p. 381.

⁵ James, pp. 10-11.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁷ See Pfeffer, p. 69 for the text of this law.

continued until the revolution with one short interruption), nonattendance at church services was the subject of fines, the payment of tithes were mandatory, every parson was entitled to the glebe—a piece of land—parish churches were built by taxes, and ministers were required to “conform themselves in all things according to the canons of the Church of England.”

“Puritan clergy were banished for failing to conform to Anglican services; Quakers [and Baptists] were fined, imprisoned, and banished. Catholics were disqualified from public office, and any priest who ventured to enter the colony was subject to instant expulsion. Penalties were imposed on those who having scruples against infant baptism, neglected to present their children for that purpose.”⁸

A 1643 law forbade anyone to teach or preach religion, publicly or privately, who was not a minister of the Church of England, and instructed governor and council to expel all nonconformists from the colony.⁹ In 1643, three Congregationalist ministers from Boston were forced to leave the colony. Also in 1643, “Sir William Berkeley, Royal Governor of Virginia, strove, by whippings and brandings, to make the inhabitants of that colony conform to the Established church, and thus drove out the Baptists and Quakers, who found a refuge in ... North Carolina.” Quakers first came to Virginia in “1659-60, and ... the utmost degree of persecution was exercised towards them.” “During the period of the Commonwealth in England, there had been a kind of interregnum as to both Church and State in Virginia; but in 1661, the supremacy of the Church of England was again fully established.” Only ministers of the Church of England were permitted to preach, and only ministers of that church could “celebrate the rites of matrimony,” and only “according to the ceremony prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer.”¹⁰

Although some Presbyterians settled in Virginia from 1670 to 1680, the number & influence of Presbyterians in Virginia was small until the mid-1700s. In the mid-1700s an influential body of Presbyterians settled in Hanover County as a result of a 1738

⁸ *Ibid.*; see also James, pp. 17-20 for a more comprehensive overview of the laws of Virginia which provided for religious persecution and the established church.

⁹ Lumpkin, p. 105.

¹⁰ James, pp. 17-20.

agreement between the Presbyterian Synod of Philadelphia and Virginia governor William Gooch which allowed “emigrants to occupy the frontier portions of Virginia and enjoy the benefits of the Act of Toleration.”¹¹

The first non-Anglican minister to receive a license under the Act of Toleration passed by the British Parliament in 1689, which instructed liberty of conscience for all but Papists, was Francis Makemie, a Presbyterian minister in Accomac County. By 1725, no more than five conventicles, “three small meetings of Quakers and two of Presbyterians,” were licensed, and these in poorer counties who were unable to pay the established minister enough to stay. In 1725, a similar license was granted to “certain parties (doubtless Presbyterians)” in Richmond County.¹²

Presbyterian families from Pennsylvania and Maryland began to move to remote parts of Virginia on the western frontier in 1738. The Presbyterian Synod of Pennsylvania wrote Governor Gooch of Virginia asking for religious freedom for those Presbyterians. Governor Gooch, knowing these people “to be firm, enterprising, hardy, brave, good citizens and soldiers,” and desiring “to form a complete line of defense against the savage inroads,” welcomed them. “At so great a distance from the older settlements, he anticipated no danger to the established church.” The conditions of settlement were that they “were not only to settle in the frontier counties as a buffer between the Churchmen and the Indians, but they had to swear allegiance to ‘His Majesty’s person and government,’” pay the taxes levied in support of the Established Church, and never by word or deed seek to injure the said church.... “Houses for public worship could not be occupied without permission from the civil authorities, and each application for a house of worship was heard on its own merits.” “[Those early Presbyterians] did not break their promise nor violate their oaths.” Up to the Revolution, “they never demanded anything more than their rights under the Act of Toleration, and ... not until the Revolution was accomplished, and Virginia had thrown off allegiance to Great Britain, did they (the Presbyterians) strike hands with the Baptists in the effort to pull down the

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 20-22.

Establishments.” However, with the fury of the French and Indian War, which broke out in 1755, Presbyterians east of the Blue Ridge occupied houses of worship without license or molestation.¹³

Different bodies of Baptists came to Virginia during the colonial period. The “Regular Baptists,” like the Presbyterians, “applied for license and took the prescribed oaths.” As for the “Separate Baptists,” the “body spread so rapidly throughout the State from 1755 to the ... Revolution,” and “did not recognize the right of any civil power to regulate preaching or places of meeting.” They were the “most active in evangelizing Virginia and most severely persecuted, and ... had the largest share of the work of pulling down the ‘Establishment’ and securing religious liberty for all.” “While yielding a ready obedience to the civil authorities in all civil affairs, in matters of religion they recognized no lord but Christ. They were truly apostolic in refusing to obey man rather than God.”¹⁴

Conditions were favorable for the rapid growth of Baptist principles. “First, the distress of the colonists, consequent upon the French and Indian wars, inclined them towards religion.” Secondly, the distressed people could find no solace or comfort in the immoral established clergy.

“The great success and rapid increase of the Baptists in Virginia must be ascribed primarily to the power of God working with them. Yet it cannot be denied but that there were subordinate and cooperating causes; one of which, and the main one, was the loose and immoral deportment of the Established clergy, by which the people were left almost destitute of even the shadow of true religion. ‘Tis true, they had some outward forms of worship, but the essential principles of Christianity were not only not understood among them, but by many never heard of. Some of the cardinal precepts of morality were discarded, and actions plainly forbidden by the New Testament were often proclaimed by the clergy as harmless and innocent, or, at worst, foibles of but little account. Having no discipline, every man followed the bent of his own inclination. It was not uncommon for the rectors of parishes to be men of the lowest morals. The Baptist preachers were, in almost every respect, the reverse of the Established clergy.”¹⁵

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-25, citing Foote, “Sketches of Virginia,” pp. 99, 160-162, 307, 308.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-14, 26.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27, citing Robert B. Semple, “History of the Baptists of Virginia,” 1810, p. 25.

Their own authorities prove the bad character and actions of the established clergy. Many of that clergy came to Virginia “to retrieve either lost fortune or lost character....” “Many of them had been addicted to the race-field, the card-table, the theatre—nay, more, to drunken revel, etc....” “They could babble in a pulpit, roar in a tavern, exact from their parishioners, and rather by their dissoluteness destroy than feed the flock.”¹⁶

The Baptists grew stronger and more numerous in Virginia. Robert Nordin, when he arrived from England in 1714, established the first Baptist church in Virginia. By 1755, there were six Baptist churches in Virginia.¹⁷ 1758 to 1769 was a period of slow but persistent growth in the face of a determined popular hostility. The early opposition to the Baptists came from the lower classes and was based upon prejudice.

The Virginia expansion was intimately tied up with the ministry of Colonel Samuel Harris. Harris—who served at various times as churchwarden, sheriff, justice of the peace, colonel of the county, and captain and commissary of Fort Mayo and its military garrison—was the first person of prominence to join the Separates in Virginia and was just one of many examples of the power of this movement. He was saved at a house meeting after hearing a sermon preached by a Separate Baptist from North Carolina. He resigned from his official positions and narrowed his business interests almost to the vanishing point in order to preach. He began to preach throughout Virginia, and many were converted because of his ministry.¹⁸

Harris was a fearless preacher. “The excellence of his preaching lay chiefly in ‘addressing the heart,’ and Semple holds that ‘perhaps even Whitefield did not surpass him in this.’”¹⁹ He had the assistance of several North Carolina itinerant evangelists planting the earliest Separate churches in south central Virginia. In 1760, Daniel Marshall and Philip Mulkey with seventy-four

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28, citing Foote, p. 38 quoting from the Bishop of London; Bishop Meade, “Old Parishes and Families of Virginia” (Vol. I, 118, 385, etc.; Dr. Hawks, “History of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Virginia,” p. 65.).

¹⁷ Beller, *America in Crimson Red*, pp. 140-142.

¹⁸ Lumpkin, pp. 48-49.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 90, citing A. B. Semple, *A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists of Virginia* (Richmond: Pitt & Dickinson, 1894), p. 380.

charter members, eleven of whom were Negroes, started the Dan River Church. Other churches were soon constituted from the Dan River Church.²⁰

Wherever the Baptist itinerants preached, great crowds came to hear them. Many were converted in Virginia, and many Baptist churches were started. In 1770, there were only two Separate churches north of the James River, four south of it. The General Association of Separate Baptists of Virginia was held in May 1771 in Orange County with twelve churches represented, and three not represented.

By 1772, the Separate Churches outnumbered those of the Regular churches. In that year, as many as forty thousand Virginians may have heard the gospel. By 1773, thirty-four churches were represented at the General Association meeting, and they reported a combined membership of 3,195. By May 1774, when Baptist expansion and Baptist persecution were at high tide, the Southern District in Virginia had twenty-seven churches with 2,033 members and the Northern District had twenty-four churches with 1,921 members. By the end of 1774, there was at least one Separate Baptist church in twenty-eight of the sixty counties of Virginia. During the Revolution, Baptist growth continued, but at a much slower pace.²¹

From 1768 through 1774, the Baptists were persecuted severely. "Baptist preachers were whipped, arrested, fined, imprisoned on bread and water, although the authorities sanctimoniously denied that punishment was for 'preaching'; the crime they said, was 'breach of the peace.'"²² The first instance of actual imprisonment was on June 4, 1768, when John Waller, Lewis Craig, James Childs, James Reed, and William Marsh were arrested at Craig's meetinghouse in Spotsylvania and charged with disturbing the peace. The magistrates offered to release them if they would promise to preach no more for a year and a day. They

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 90-98.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 90-103.

²² Pfeffer, p. 95. citing Edward F. Humphrey, *Nationalism and Religion in America* (Boston: Chipman Law Publishing Co., 1924), p. 370.

refused and were jailed. Many more were jailed and otherwise persecuted until 1774.²³

“[The persecutors] seemed sometimes to strive to treat the Baptists and their worship with as much rudeness and indecency as was possible. They often insulted the preacher in time of service, and would ride into the water and make sport when they administered baptism. They frequently fabricated and spread the most groundless reports, which were injurious to the characters of the Baptists. When any Baptist fell into any improper conduct, it was always exaggerated to the utmost extent.”²⁴

“The enemy, not contented with ridicule and defamation, manifested their abhorrence to the Baptists in another way. By a law then in force in Virginia, all were under obligation to go to church several times a year; the failure subjected them to fine. [Little action against members of the Established church was taken under this law, but] as soon as the ‘New Lights’ were absent, they were presented by grand jury, and fined.... [Others were imprisoned for preaching without a license.] ‘When persecutors found religion could not be stopped ... by ridicule, defamation, and abusive language, the resolution was to take a different step and see what they could do; and the preachers in different places were apprehended by magisterial authority, some of whom were imprisoned and some escaped. Before this step was taken, the parson of the parish was consulted [and he advised that] the ‘New Lights’ ought to be taken up and imprisoned, as necessary for the peace and harmony of the old church....”²⁵

“[An Episcopalian wrote,] No dissenters in Virginia experienced, for a time, harsher treatment than did the Baptists. They were beaten and imprisoned, and cruelty taxed its ingenuity to devise new modes of punishment and annoyance.”²⁶

Because of the persecutions and oppressions, Baptists began to petition the House of Burgesses for relief. Their first petition in 1770 requesting that Baptist ministers “not be compelled to bear

²³ James, pp. 29-30. Included is a listing of some of those jailed and otherwise persecuted. See also Beller, *America in Crimson Red*, pp. 230-250; Lumpkin, pp. 105-120; Grady, *What Hath God Wrought*, Appendix A, pp. 593-598 citing Lewis Peyton Little, *Imprisoned Preachers and Religious Liberty in Virginia*, (Galatin, Tenn.: Church History Research and Archives, 1987), pp. 516-520 (lists many Baptists and the persecutions they endured in Virginia; persecutions such as being jailed for preaching, civil suit, being annoyed by men drinking and playing cards, being jerked off stage and head beaten against the ground, hands being slashed, beaten with bludgeons, being shot with a shotgun, ousted as a justice for preaching, being brutally beaten by a mob, severely beaten with a stick, etc.).

²⁴ James, p. 30, citing Semple, p. 19.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31, citing William Fristoe, “History of the Kettocton Baptist Association,” p. 69.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, citing Dr. Hawks, “History of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Virginia,” p. 121.

arms or attend musters” was rejected. Other petitions from Baptists in several counties were submitted in 1772 requesting that they “be treated with the same indulgence, in religious matters, as Quakers, Presbyterians, and other Protestant dissenters enjoy.” The petitions continued until 1775.²⁷ The Presbyterians petitioned also, but for the right to incorporate so that they could receive and hold gifts of land and slaves for the support of their ministers. One of the Presbyterian petitions was improperly hailed as proof “that the Presbyterians anticipated the Baptists in their memorials asking for religious liberty.” An examination of that petition reveals that it “contemplate[d] nothing more than securing for Presbyterians and others in Virginia the same privileges and liberties which they enjoyed in England under the Act of Toleration,” and contained no “attack upon the Establishment, or any sign of hostility to it.”²⁸

During this time, James Madison wrote to his old college friend, Bradford of Philadelphia, in a letter dated January 24, 1774. He expressed his belief that if

“uninterrupted harmony had prevailed throughout the continent [in matters of established religion as practiced in Virginia] it is clear to me that slavery and subjection might and would have been gradually insinuated among us. Union of religious sentiments begets a surprising confidence, and ecclesiastical establishments tend to greatly ignorance and corruption, all of which facilitates the execution of mischievous projects.... Poverty and luxury prevail among all sorts; pride, ignorance, and knavery among the priesthood, and vice and wickedness among the laity. This is bad enough; but it is not the worst I have to tell you. That diabolical, hell-conceived principle of persecution rages among some, and to their eternal infamy, the clergy can furnish their quota of imps for such purposes. There are at this time in the adjacent country not less than five or six well-meaning men in close jail for publishing their religious sentiments, which in the main are very orthodox. I have neither patience to hear, talk, or think of anything relative to this matter; for I have squabbled and scolded, abused and ridiculed, so long about it to little purpose, that I am without common patience.... So I must beg you to pity me, and pray for liberty of conscience to all.”²⁹

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 31-35.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-47.

²⁹ Lenni Brenner, editor, *Jefferson and Madison on Separation of Church and State* (Fort Lee, NJ: Barricade Books, Inc, 2004), pp. 11-12; James, p. 36.

[In another letter to Bradford dated April 1, 1774, Madison wrote that he doubted that anything would be done to help the dissenters in the Assembly meeting beginning May 1, 1774.] He spoke of “the incredible and extravagant stories [which were] told in the House of the monstrous effects of the enthusiasm prevalent among the sectaries, and so greedily swallowed by their enemies.... And the bad name they still have with those who pretend too much contempt to examine into their principles and conduct, and are too much devoted to ecclesiastical establishment to hear of the toleration of the dissentients.... The liberal, catholic, and equitable way of thinking, as to the rights of conscience, which is one of the characteristics of a free people, and so strongly marks the people of your province, is little known among the zealous adherents to our hierarchy.... [Although we have some persons of generous principles in the legislature] the clergy are a numerous and powerful body, have great influence at home by reason of their connection with and dependence on the bishops and crown, and will naturally employ all their arts and interest to depress their rising adversaries; for such they must consider dissentients, who rob them of the good will of the people, and may in time endanger their livings and security.

“... Religious bondage shackles and debilitates the mind, and unfits it for every enterprise, every expanded prospect.”³⁰

1775 closed the period of “Intolerance, Toleration, and Persecution.”

“The colony is involved in trouble with the mother country. Virginia has denounced the ‘Boston Port Bill,’ and made common cause with Massachusetts. The First Continental Congress has already met in Philadelphia. Patrick Henry has electrified the country by his memorable speech in the popular Convention which met March, 1775.... The Battles of Lexington and Concord have been fought (April 19), and Virginia has taken steps to enroll companies of volunteers in every county. The war of the Revolution is on, and the times call for union and harmony among all classes. Hence, there is no more persecution of Baptists. There are no more imprisonments in 1775, and that obnoxious Toleration Bill is indefinitely postponed. The same ruling class that admitted the Presbyterians to Virginia and to the benefits of the Act of Toleration, on condition that they occupied the frontier counties, and thus protected them against Indian raids, are now inclined to tolerate, not only the Presbyterians, but the Baptists also, with all their ‘pernicious doctrines,’ if only they will help in the

³⁰ Brenner, pp. 12-13; James, pp. 35-38, citing Rives Life and Times of Madison, Vol. I, pp. 43, 53; Norman Cousins, *In God We Trust* (Kingsport, Tennessee: Kingsport Press, Inc., 1958), pp. 299-301.

struggle with Great Britain. The Baptists will help, and not a Tory will be found among them. But they will strike for something more and something dearer to them than civil liberty—for freedom of conscience, for ‘just and true liberty, equal and impartial liberty.’”³¹

The Baptists were ready to push for religious freedom and abolition of the establishment. In their Association meeting on the fourth Saturday of May 1775, “they were to a man favorable to any revolution by which they could obtain freedom of religion. They had known from experience that mere toleration was not a sufficient check, having been imprisoned at a time when that law was considered by many as being in force.” “The Revolutionary War opened up possibilities to overthrow the entire system of persecution.... [Baptists] were everywhere the friends of liberty.... There was not a tory among the Baptists of America.”³² They received the highest praise for their patriotic endeavors.³³

The Baptists decided to circulate petitions throughout the state calling for abolition of the church establishment and freedom of religion, and also to appoint commissioners to present their address for military resistance to British oppression and “offering the services of their young men as soldiers and asking only that, so far as the army was concerned, their ministers might enjoy like privileges with the clergy of the Established church” to the State Convention which was the House of Burgess under a new name and in a different character. The Convention, still controlled by “the same class that had, a few years before made concessions to the ... Presbyterians on condition that they settle on the western counties forming a line of defense against the Indians, resolved to allow those dissenters in the military who so desired to attend divine worship administered by dissenting preachers. This first step towards placing all Virginia clergy on an equal footing, came as a result of the need for the numerical strength of the Baptists in what was considered by the establishment in 1775 a “struggle for their rights ‘in the union’ [with England].” The Convention maintained their “faith and true allegiance to His Majesty, George the Third, [their] only lawful and rightful King.” “It would have

³¹ James, pp. 47-48. See also Christian, *Volume I*, pp. 381-384.

³² Christian, *Volume I*, p. 386-387.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 390-391.

been very impolitic, even if their petitions had been ready, to have sprung the question of disestablishment upon [the Convention] before they had committed themselves to the cause of independence.”³⁴

Virginia adopted a new constitution in 1776. The Convention of 1776 was, by its act, made the “House of Delegates” of the first General Assembly under the new constitution. Twenty-nine new members in this meeting were not in the 1775 Convention. “[W]hen there was anything near a division among the other inhabitants in a county, the Baptists, together with their influence, gave a caste to the scale, by which means many a worthy and useful member was lodged in the House of Assembly and answered a valuable purpose there.”³⁵ Among those favorable to Baptist causes was James Madison. On May 12, the Congress met in Philadelphia “and instructed the colonies to organize independent governments of their own. The war was on.” On May 15, the Convention resolved to declare the “colonies free and independent states” and that a committee be appointed to prepare Declaration of Rights and a plan of government which would “maintain peace and order” and “secure substantial and equal liberty to the people.”³⁶

Other than Rhode Island, Virginia was the first colony to recognize religious liberty “in her organic law, and this she did in Article XVI. of her Bill of Rights, which was adopted on the 12th day of June 1776.”³⁷ In 1776, petitions from all over Virginia seeking religious freedom and freedom of conscience beset the Virginia state convention. Patrick Henry proposed the provision to section sixteen of the Virginia Bill of Rights, which granted religious tolerance.³⁸ On June 12, the House adopted a Declaration of Rights. The 16th Article provided for religious tolerance. However, [o]n motion on the floor by James Madison, the article was amended to provide for religious liberty. In committee, Madison opposed toleration because toleration “belonged to a system where there was an established church, and where it was a

³⁴ James, pp. 49-57.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 58-62.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³⁸ Marnell, pp. 94-95; James, pp. 62-65.

thing granted, not of right, but of grace. He feared the power, in the hands of a dominant religion, to construe what ‘may disturb the peace, the happiness, or the safety of society,’ and he ventured to propose a substitute, which was finally adopted.”³⁹ He probably moved to change the amendment before the whole house in order to demonstrate his position to the Baptists who were viewing the proceedings. The amendment as passed by the convention read:

“That religion, or the duty which we owe to our CREATOR, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence; and, therefore, all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion according to the dictates of conscience; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love, and charity towards each other.”⁴⁰

“The adoption of the Bill of Rights marked the beginning of the end of the establishment.”⁴¹

Where did Madison learn the distinction between religious freedom and religious toleration?

“It had not then begun to be recognized in treatises on religion and morals. He did not learn it from Jeremy Taylor or John Locke, but from his Baptist neighbors, whose wrongs he had witnessed, and who persistently taught that the civil magistrate had nothing to do with matters of religion.”⁴²

Madison studied for the ministry at Princeton University, then the College of New Jersey, under John Witherspoon. When he returned to Virginia, he continued his theological interests and developed a strong concern for freedom of worship.

“At the time of Madison’s return from Princeton, several ‘well-meaning men,’ as he described them, were put in prison for their religious views. Baptists were being fined or imprisoned for holding unauthorized meetings. Dissenters were taxed for the support of the State Church. Preachers had to be licensed. Madison saw at first hand the repetition of the main evils of the Old Country. But he also saw a deep dissatisfaction among the people—the kind of dissatisfaction that

³⁹ See Brenner, pp. 21-22 for George Mason’s Article, Madison’s Amendment to Mason’s Article, The Proposal of Committee of Virginia’s Revolutionary Convention, Madison’s Amendment to the Committee’s Article, and the Article as Passed); James, pp. 62-65.

⁴⁰ James, pp. 62-64; Pfeffer, p. 96.

⁴¹ Pfeffer, p. 96.

⁴² James, p. 63 quoting Dr. John Long.

would grow and that would serve as a mighty battering ram for religious freedom.”⁴³

It appears that the Baptists were the only denomination of Christians that addressed the 1775 and 1776 conventions on the subject of the rights of conscience. Not until the Revolution in Virginia were the Presbyterians free from the agreement with Governor Gooch. When the Assembly met in October 1776, they were “powerful allies of the Baptists and other dissenters in the war against the Establishment.”⁴⁴

“From that time down to January 19, 1786, when Jefferson’s ‘Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom,’ became the law of the State, the battle for soul liberty was on,”⁴⁵ and the process of disestablishment gathered momentum. The legislature of 1776 repealed the laws punishing heresy and absence from worship and exempted dissenters from paying taxes for support of the Church. Although this bill was a compromise, it sounded the death knell of the Anglican establishment. A later statute removed the law fixing the salaries of clergymen, and the position of the Established church was limited more and more until the Declaratory Act of 1787 ended establishment in Virginia.⁴⁶

“From 1776 to 1779 the assembly was engaged almost daily in the desperate contests between the contending factions.”⁴⁷ Whereas only one Baptist petition had been presented to the first Convention in 1776, and that after the adoption of the Bill of Rights, the Legislature that assembled on October 7, 1776, was immediately flooded with petitions both for and against establishment. “None of the petitions against establishment were from Baptists as such. However, historians of the times admit that Baptists ‘were not only the first to begin the work, but also the most active in circulating petitions for signatures.’” “Among the signers were some of all denominations of Christians, and many of no denomination. This explains why the Baptist petition or petitions were from dissenters in general, instead of from Baptist

⁴³ Cousins, p. 296.

⁴⁴ James, pp. 66-67.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁴⁶ Marnell, pp. 94-95; Pfeffer, p. 96.

⁴⁷ Pfeffer, p. 97.

dissenters in particular.”⁴⁸ The Reverend E. G. Robinson, in his review of Rives’ *Life and Times of James Madison*, *Christian Review* of January 1860, said, “The [Presbyterians] argued their petitions on various grounds, and indeed sought for different degrees of religious freedom, while the [Baptists] were undeviating and uncompromising in their demands for a total exemption from every kind of legal restraint or interference in matters of religion.”⁴⁹ The Methodists and the established church presented petitions for establishment.⁵⁰

The established church did not give up. Thomas Jefferson gave an account of the struggle through which the Legislature, meeting in late 1776, had just passed:

“The first republican Legislature, which met in 1776, was crowded with petitions to abolish this spiritual tyranny. These brought on the severest contest in which I have ever been engaged.... The petitions were referred to a Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Country; and, after desperate contests in the committee almost daily from the 11th of October to the 5th of December, we prevailed so far only as to repeal the laws which rendered criminal the maintenance of any religious opinions (other than those of the Episcopalians), the forbearance of repairing to the (Episcopal) church, or the exercise of any (other than the Episcopal) mode of worship; and to suspend only until the next session levies on the members of that church for the salaries of its own incumbents. For, although the majority of our citizens were dissenters, as has been observed, a majority of the legislature were churchmen. Among these, however, were some reasonable and liberal men, who enabled us on some points to obtain feeble majorities. But our opponents carried, in the general resolutions of November the 19th, a declaration that religious assemblies ought to be regulated, and that provision ought to be made for continuing the succession of the clergy and superintending their conduct. And in the bill now passed was inserted an express reservation of the question whether a general assessment should not be established by law on every one to the support of the pastor of his choice; or whether all should be left to voluntary contributions; and on thus question, debated at every session from 1776 to 1779 (some of our dissenting allies, having now secured their particular object, going over to the advocates of a general assessment,) we could only obtain a suspension from session to session

⁴⁸ James, p. 74. See pp. 68-74 for the petitions against establishment.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 75-78. The petitions of the Methodists and the established church are quoted and the author comments on the petition of the established church.

until 1779, when the question against a general assessment was finally carried, and the establishment of the Anglican church entirely put down.”⁵¹

Legislative meetings from 1776 to December 1779 were presented with memorials both for and against establishment.⁵²

When the House met in June 1779, petitions presented to the Assembly showed that the old establishment and its friends were fighting for some sort of compromise based on a general assessment. In 1779, the assembly repealed all laws requiring members of the Episcopal Church to contribute to the support of their own ministry.⁵³ In December 1779, a bill passed which “cut the purse strings of the Establishment, so that the clergy could no longer look for support to taxation. But they still retained possession of the rich glebes, and enjoyed a monopoly, almost, of marriage fees.”⁵⁴ It took until 1779 to pass a bill taking away tax support for the clergy because the dissenters, with the exception of the Baptists, “having been relieved from a tax which they felt to be both unjust and degrading, had no objection to a general assessment.”⁵⁵

“Jefferson sought to press the advantage, and introduced his Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom, but Virginia was not quite ready to formalize the separation which had in effect taken place, and the bill was not voted on.”⁵⁶ Instead “a bill was introduced which declared that “the Christian Religion shall in all times coming be deemed and held to be the established Religion of this Commonwealth.” This bill required everyone to register with the county clerk stating which church he wished to support.⁵⁷

Although various petitions were presented to the Assembly during the period from 1780 until the end of the Revolution on September 3, 1783, the General Assembly did very little regarding the cause of religious liberty. In 1783 “the project ... of

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81; See also Pfeffer, p. 96.

⁵² James, pp. 84-91 quotes those memorials.

⁵³ Pfeffer, p. 97.

⁵⁴ James, p. 95.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 96-98.

⁵⁶ Pfeffer, p. 97.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, citing R. Freeman Butts, *The American Tradition in Religion and Education* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1950), pp. 53-56.

incorporating, or establishing as the religion of the State, all the prevailing denominations, and assessing taxes upon the people to support the ministers of all alike, was now warmly advocated by Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Methodists, and becoming quite popular. To this scheme the Baptists still gave the most determined opposition, and sent up against it the most vigorous remonstrances.” The Baptists also continued to petition for the adoption of the Act to Establish Religious Freedom.⁵⁸

After the Revolution, numerous petitions and memorials were presented to the House of Delegates in 1784 and 1785 by the above-mentioned denominations in support of their positions.⁵⁹ The Episcopalians sought to recover lost ground. “In the late spring of 1784, a resolution was introduced in the Virginia Assembly seeking official recognition for the Episcopal Church. The resolution was debated for two days, with notable opposition from Baptists and Presbyterians.”⁶⁰ Madison, in a letter to Thomas Jefferson dated July 3, 1784, wrote concerning this resolution:

“The Episcopal clergy introduced a notable project for re-establishing their independence of laity. The foundation of it was that the whole body should be legally incorporated, invested with the present property of the Church, made capable of acquiring indefinitely—empowered to make canons and by-laws not contrary to the laws of the land, and incumbents when once chosen by vestries, to be immovable otherwise than by sentence of the Convocation.”⁶¹

The Baptists continued their uncompromising stand against any vestige of union of church and state. They gave their reasons for their position against a general assessment:

“First, it was contrary to their principles and avowed sentiments, the making provision for the support of religion by law; that the distinction between civil and ecclesiastical governments ought to be kept up without blending them together; that Christ Jesus hath given laws for the government of his kingdom and direction of his subjects, and gave instruction concerning collections for the various purposes of religion, and therefore needs not legislative interference.

⁵⁸ James, pp. 112-121 citing Dr. R. B. C. Howell, “Early Baptists of Virginia” for the quotation which is on p. 120.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 122-133.

⁶⁰ Cousins, p. 301.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 302; Brenner, pp. 60-61.

“Secondly, should a legislative body undertake to pass laws for the government of the church, for them to say what doctrines shall be believed, in what mode worship shall be performed, and what the sum collected shall be, what a dreadful precedent it would establish; for when such a right is claimed by a legislature, and given up by the people, by the same rule that they decide in one instance they may in every instance. Religion is like the press; if government limits the press, and says this shall be printed and that shall not, in the event it will destroy the freedom of the press; so when legislatures undertake to pass laws about religion, religion loses its form, and Christianity is reduced to a system of worldly policy.

“Thirdly, it has been believed by us that that Almighty Power that instituted religion will support his own cause; that in the course of divine Providence events will be overruled, and the influence of grace on the hearts of the Lord’s people will incline them to afford and contribute what is necessary for the support of religion, and therefore there is no need for compulsory measures.

“Fourthly, it would give an opportunity to the party that were numerous (and, of course, possessed the ruling power) to use their influence and exercise their art and cunning, and multiply signers to their own favorite party. And last, the most deserving, the faithful preacher, who in a pointed manner reprov’d sin and bore testimony against every species of vice and dissipation, would in all possibility, have been profited very little by such a law, while men-pleasers, the gay and the fashionable, who can wink at sin and daub his hearers with untemper’d mortar, saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ when there is no peace, who can lay out his oratory in dealing out smooth things mingled with deception, the wicked, it is clear, would like to have it so; and it follows the irreligious and carnal part of the people would richly reward them for their flattery, and the undeserving go off with the gain.”⁶²

The Presbyterians took “a sort of middle ground, which caused confusion in their own ranks and compromised them in the estimation of others.” It appears that the Presbyterian clergy advocated a plan of general assessment supporting all denominations who believed in union of church and state, but not those who believed in religious liberty and absolute freedom of conscience. James Madison commented on the position of the Presbyterians:

“The laity of the other sects (other than Episcopalian) are generally unanimous [against the general assessment]. So are all the clergy,

⁶² James, pp. 132-133, citing William Fristoe, “History of the Ketaocton Association.”

except the Presbyterian, who seem as ready to set up an establishment which is to take them in as they were to pull down that which shut them out. I do not know a more shameful contrast than might be found between their memorials on the latter and former occasions. Rives, I., 630.” [Quoting a letter to James Monroe, April 12, 1775]⁶³

Thus, “[i]n [these] later stages of disestablishment there was a curious alliance formed between the Episcopalian and Presbyterian clergy with an eye to creating a new line of defense.”⁶⁴ “In 1784, the Virginia House of Delegates having under consideration a ‘bill establishing provision for teachers of the Christian religion,’ postponed it until the next session, and directed that the Bill should be published and distributed, and that the people be requested ‘to signify their opinion respecting the adoption of such a bill at the next session of assembly.’”⁶⁵ This last action was a result of a resolution offered by the Baptists and adopted by the Legislature. The Baptists, appearing to be losing ground as the only opponents of a general assessment, the majority of the Legislature being churchmen, the only hope of the opponents of the assessment was an appeal to the people.⁶⁶

The bill—which was proposed by Patrick Henry and supported by George Washington, Richard Henry Lee, and John Marshall—provided for the establishment a provision for teachers of the Christian religion, in effect providing for the “establishment of Christianity, but without precedence in such an establishment to any particular church.”⁶⁷ The bill required all persons

“to pay a moderate tax or contribution annually for the support of the Christian religion, or of some Christian church, denomination or communion of Christians, or for some form of Christian worship.”⁶⁸

Leo Pfeffer noted:

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 130; Cousins, p. 306.

⁶⁴ Marnell, p. 95.

⁶⁵ *Reynolds v. United States*, 98 U.S. 145, 163 (1879); see James, p. 129 where the preamble to the bill is quoted.

⁶⁶ James, p. 135.

⁶⁷ Marnell, pp. 95, 96.

⁶⁸ Pfeffer, p. 98, citing N. J. Eckenrode, *The Separation of Church and State in Virginia* (Richmond, Va.: Virginia State Library, 1910), p. 86. Pfeffer notes in Chapter 4 fn. 102 that the text of the bill is printed as an appendix to Justice Rutledge’s dissent in *Everson*, 330 U.S. 1.

“the bill was predicated on the legislative determination in its preamble that ‘the general diffusion of Christian knowledge hath a natural tendency to correct the morals of men, restrain their vices, and preserve the peace of society; which cannot be effected without a competent provision for licensed teachers.’

“The preamble is of great significance, because it recognized the widely held belief that religion was not within the competence of civil legislatures. It sought to justify intervention not on any theocratic ground but on what today would be called the ‘police’ or ‘welfare’ power. Government support of religion is required to restrain vice and preserve peace, not to promote God’s kingdom on earth.”⁶⁹

Pfeffer does not understand that God has given civil government the choice of whether to honor his principles. The government is to intervene, according to God’s word, to control and restrain certain crimes. Government does not support religion in order to do its job. Government merely makes a choice of whether to honor God and his principles for the purpose of restraining vice and preserving peace.

James Madison, among others, opposed the bill. Mr. Madison had witnessed and opposed the persecution of the Baptists in his own state.

“Madison wrote to a friend in 1774: ‘That diabolical, hell-conceived principle of persecution rages among some.... This vexes me the worst of anything whatever. There are at this time in the adjacent country not less than five or six well-meaning men in close jail for publishing their religious sentiments, which in the main are very orthodox. I have neither patience to hear, talk, or think of anything relative to this matter; for I have squabbled and scolded, abused and ridiculed, so long about it to little purpose, that I am without common patience. So I must beg you to pity me, and pray for liberty of conscience to all.’ I Writings of James Madison (1900) 18, 21.”⁷⁰

Mr. Madison prepared his famous “Memorial and Remonstrance,” in which he maintained “that religion, or the duty we owe the Creator,” was not within the cognizance of civil government. The “Memorial” presents fifteen arguments against

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Everson*, 330 U.S. fn. 9 at 11; 67 S. Ct. at 509.

the assessment bill.⁷¹ One historian says of this document, “For elegance of style, strength of reasoning, and purity of principle, it has, perhaps, seldom been equaled, certainly never surpassed, by anything in the English language.”⁷² “Dr. George B. Taylor says: ‘It may certainly be called a Baptist document this far, that they only, *as a people*, held its views, and pressed those views without wavering.’”⁷³ Dr. E. G. Robinson wrote of the document:

“In a word, the great idea which he [Madison] put forth was identical with that which had always been devoutly cherished by our Baptist fathers, alike in the old world and the new, and which precisely a century and a half before had been perfectly expressed in the celebrated letter of Roger Williams to the people of his settlement, and by him incorporated into the fundamental law of the colony of Rhode Island. By Mr. Madison it was elaborated with arguments and wrought into the generalizations of statesmanship, but the essential idea is precisely the same with the ‘soul liberty’ so earnestly contended for by the Baptists of every age.”⁷⁴

One must keep in mind that although the document advocated freedom of conscience, something for which Baptists had long struggled, the tone was that of deistic or humanistic arguments based upon reason and natural law. As pointed out *supra*, Jefferson and Madison and other deistic separatists “were interested in leaving the mind free to follow its own rational direction.” A trust in man’s reason without consideration of principles in the word of God is a leaven which eventually totally pollutes. Tragically, the pietistic arguments of Isaac Backus never prevailed in America. America never fully proceeded upon the lessons taught by the Bible, and implemented by Roger Williams, John Clarke, and the other founders of Rhode Island.

Some excerpts from Madison’s “Memorial and Remonstrance” follow:

“Because we hold it for a fundamental and unalienable truth, ‘that religion, or the duty which we owe to the Creator, and the manner of

⁷¹ Pfeffer, p. 101. Pfeffer states that “[i]t is important to note the emphasis the ‘Memorial’ places on ideological factors.” His comments following that quote ignore the references to our “creator,” and the “Governor of the Universe.”

⁷² James, p. 135, quoting Semple.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 135, quoting Dr. George B. Taylor, Memorial Series, No. IV., page 19.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence,' the religion, then of every man, must be left to the conviction and conscience of every man; and it is the right of every man to exercise it as these may dictate. The right is, in its nature, an unalienable right. It is unalienable, because the opinions of men depending only on the evidence contemplated by their own minds, cannot follow the dictates of other men. It is unalienable, also, because what is here a right towards man, is a duty towards the Creator.... The duty is precedent both in order and time, and in degree of obligation, to the claims of civil society, he must be considered as a subject of the Governor of the Universe.... We maintain, therefore, that in matters of religion, no man's rights is abridged by the institution of civil society; and that religion is wholly exempt from its cognizance....

"Because if religion be exempt from the authority of society at large, still less can it be subject to that of the legislative body. The latter are but the creatures and vicereagents of the former. Their jurisdiction is both derivative and limited.... The preservation of a free government requires, not merely that the metes and bounds which separate each department of power, be invariably maintained; but more especially that neither of them be suffered to overleap the great barrier which defends the rights of the people. The rulers, who are guilty of such an encroachment, exceed the commission from which they derive their authority, and are tyrants. The people who submit to it, are governed by laws made neither by themselves, nor by an authority derived from them, and are slaves.

"Because it is proper to take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties, we hold this prudent jealousy to be first duty of citizens, and one of the noblest characteristics of the late revolution.... Who does not see that the same authority, which can establish Christianity in exclusion of all other religions, may establish, with the same ease, any particular sect of Christians, in exclusion of all other sects; that the same authority, which can force a citizen to contribute three pence only of his property, for the support of any one establishment, may force him to conform to any other establishment, in all cases whatsoever?

"Because the bill violates that equality which ought to be the basis of every law; and which is more indispensable, in proportion as the validity or expediency of any law is more liable to be impeached.... Whilst we assert for ourselves a freedom to embrace, to profess, and observe the religion which we believe to be of divine origin, we cannot deny an equal freedom to those, whose minds have not yet yielded to the evidence which has convinced us. If this freedom be abused, it is an offense against God, not against man. To God, therefore, and not to man, must account of it be rendered....

"Because the bill implies, either that the civil magistrate is a competent judge of religious truths, or that he may employ religion as an engine of civil policy. The first is an arrogant pretension, falsified by

the extraordinary opinion of rulers, in all ages, and throughout the world; the second, an unhallowed perversion of the means of salvation.

“Because the establishment proposed by the bill, is not requisite for the support of the Christian religion itself; for every page of it disavows a dependence on the power of the world; it is a contradiction to fact, for it is known that this religion both existed and flourished, not only without the support of human laws, but in spite of every opposition from them; and not only during the period of miraculous aid, but long after it had been left to its own evidence and the ordinary care of Providence: nay, it is a contradiction in terms; for a religion not invented by human policy, must have pre-existed and been supported, before it was established by human policy: it is, moreover, to weaken in those, who profess this religion, a pious confidence in its innate excellence, and the patronage of its Author; and to foster in those, who still reject it, a suspicion that its friends are too conscious of its faculties, to trust it to its own merits.

“Because experience witnesses that ecclesiastical establishments, instead of maintaining the purity and efficacy of religion, have had a contrary operation. During almost fifteen centuries has the legal establishment of Christianity been on trial. What have been its fruits? More or less in all places, pride and indolence in the clergy; ignorance and servility in the laity; in both, superstition, bigotry, and persecution. Inquire of the teachers of Christianity for the ages in which it appeared in its greatest luster; those of every sect point to the ages prior to its incorporation with civil policy. Propose a restoration of this primitive state, in which its teachers depended on the voluntary rewards of their flocks, many of them predict its downfall....

“Because the establishment in question is not necessary for the support of civil government.... If religion be not within the cognizance of civil government, how can its legal establishment be said to be necessary for civil government? What influences, in fact, have ecclesiastical establishments had on civil society? In some instances, they have been seen to erect a spiritual tyranny on the ruins of the civil authority; in more instances, have they been seen upholding the thrones of political tyranny; in no instance have they been seen the guardians of the liberties of the people. Rulers who wished to subvert the public liberty, may have found on established clergy convenient auxiliaries. A just government instituted to secure and perpetuate it needs them not. Such a government will be best supported by protecting every citizen in the enjoyment of his religion, with the same equal hand which protects his person and property; by neither invading the equal hand which protects his person and property; by neither invading the equal rights of any sect, nor suffering any sect to invade those of another.

“Because the proposed establishment is a departure from that generous policy, which, offering an asylum to the persecuted and oppressed of every nation and religion, promised a luster to our

country, and an accession to the number of its citizens.... [The proposed bill] is a signal of persecution. It degrades from the equal rank of citizens, all of those whose opinions in religion do not bend to those of the legislative authority. Distant as it may be, in its present form, from the inquisition, it differs from it only in degree; the one is the first step, the other the last, in the career of intolerance....

“Because it will have a tendency to banish our citizens.... Torrents of blood have been spilt in the old world, by vain attempts of the secular arm to extinguish religious discord, by proscribing all differences in religious opinion....

“Because the policy of the bill is adverse to the light of Christianity. The first wish of those, who ought to enjoy this precious gift, ought to be, that it may be imparted to the whole race of mankind. Compare the number of those, who have as yet received it, with the number still remaining under the dominion of false religions, and how small is the former? Does the policy of the bill tend to lessen the disproportion? No; it at once discourages those who are strangers to the light of truth, from coming into the regions of it; and countenances, by example, the nations who continue in darkness, in shutting out those who might convey it to them....

“Because, finally, ‘the equal right of every citizen to the free exercise of his religion according to the dictates of his conscience,’ is held by the same tenure with all our other rights.... Either then we must say, that the will of the Legislature is the only measure of their authority; and that in the plentitude of this authority, they may sweep away all our fundamental rights; or, that they are bound to leave this particular right untouched and sacred: either we must say, that they may control the freedom of the press; may abolish the trial by jury; may swallow up the executive and judiciary powers of the State; nay, that they have no authority our very right of suffrage, and erect themselves into an independent and hereditary assembly; or we must say that they have no authority to enact into a law, the bill under consideration. We the subscribers say, that the General Assembly of this Commonwealth have no such authority; and that no effort may be omitted on our part, against so dangerous an usurpation, we oppose to it this Remonstrance, earnestly praying, as we are in duty bound, that the Supreme Lawgiver of the Universe, by illuminating those to whom it is addressed, may, on the one hand, turn their councils from every act, which would affront his holy prerogative, or violate the trust committed to them; and on the other guide them into every measure which may be worthy of His blessing, may rebound to their own praise, and may establish more firmly the liberties, the property, and the happiness of the Commonwealth.”⁷⁵

⁷⁵ James Madison, Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments, June 20, 1785, cited in Beller, *America in Crimson Red*, pp. 512-515; Cousins, pp. 308-314; may also be viewed online.

Madison, who led the opposition, was able to obtain a postponement of consideration of the bill from December 1784 to November 1785. Before adjourning, the legislature passed a bill which incorporated the Protestant Episcopal Church,

“deemed necessary in order to regulate the status of that church in view of the severance of its subordination to the Church of England that had resulted from the Revolution. The bill gave the Episcopal ministers title to the churches, glebes, and other property, and prescribed the method of electing vestrymen.

“Even Madison voted for the incorporation bill, though reluctantly and only in order to stave off passage of the assessment bill. Nonetheless, the incorporation bill aroused a good deal of opposition.”⁷⁶

The people were against the assessment bill, and the Presbyterians reversed their position, opposed the bill, and for the first time, on August 10, 1785, the whole Presbyterian body supported Jefferson’s “Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom,” “although that bill had been before the Legislature since June 1779.” The Baptists asked all counties which had not yet prepared a petition to do so and agreed to prepare a remonstrance and petition against the assessment. Thus the Presbyterians and Baptists stood together, but for different motives. Mr. Madison’s opinion was that the Presbyterians were “moved by either a fear of their laity or a jealousy of the Episcopalians. The mutual hatred of these sects has been much inflamed by the late act incorporating the latter.... Writings of Madison, I., 175.”⁷⁷

Patrick Henry, the leading proponent of the assessment bill was elected governor, “depriving the bill of its ablest legislative leader.” The Memorial and Remonstrance had received wide distribution. At the next session, the General Assembly was flooded with petitions and memorials from all parts of the State, overwhelmingly against the bill. The bill was defeated by three votes.

⁷⁶ Pfeffer, p. 99, citing Eckenrode, p. 100.

⁷⁷ Brenner, p. 74 (letter dated August 20, 1785); James, pp. 134-139. Madison’s quote was from a letter to Mr. Jefferson.

On January 16, 1786, the Virginia Act for Religious Liberty, drafted by Thomas Jefferson, was passed instead. That bill provided for religious liberty and freedom of conscience. It stated:

“I. Well aware that Almighty God hath created the mind free; that all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burthens or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the Holy Author of our religion, who being Lord of both body and mind, yet chose not to propagate it by coercions on either, as was in his Almighty power to do;

that the impious presumption of legislators and rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, who, being themselves but fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others, setting up their own opinions and modes of thinking as the only true and infallible, and as such, endeavoring to impose them on others hath established and maintained false religions over the greatest part of the world and through all time;

that to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves, is sinful and tyrannical; *that* even the forcing him to support this or that teacher of his own religious persuasion is depriving him of the comfortable liberty of giving his contributions to the particular pastor whose morals he would make his pattern, and whose powers he feels most persuasive to righteousness, ... that our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions any more than [on] our opinions in physics or geometry;

that therefore the proscribing any citizen as unworthy the public confidence by laying upon him an incapacity of being called to offices of trust and emolument, unless he profess or renounce this or that religious opinion is depriving him injuriously of those privileges and advantages to which in common with his fellow citizens he has a natural right; ...

that to suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion and to restrain the profession or propagation of principles, on supposition of their ill tendency, is a dangerous fallacy, which at once destroys all religious liberty, because he being of course judge of that tendency, will make his opinions the rule of judgment, and approve or condemn the sentiments of others only as they shall square with, or differ from his own;

that it is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt [open, or public] acts against peace and good order;

and, finally, that truth is great and will prevail if left to herself, that she is proper and sufficient antagonist to error and has nothing to fear from the conflict, unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural

weapons, free argument and debate, errors [cease] to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them.

“II. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly* that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burdened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.

“III. And though we well know that this assembly, elected by the people for the ordinary purposes of legislation only, have no power to restrain the acts of succeeding assemblies, constituted with powers equal to her own, and that therefore to declare this act irrevocable would be of no effect in law, yet, as we are free to declare, and do declare, that the rights hereby asserted are of the natural right of mankind, and that if any act shall hereafter be passed to repeal the present or to narrow its operation, such act will be an infringement of natural rights.”⁷⁸

The act included three factors: church, state, and individual. It protected the individual from loss at the hands of the state incursion into his church affiliation, and implicitly banned church establishment. “It did not attempt to define the relations between Church and State except in terms of the individual.”⁷⁹

Thomas Jefferson, the author of the above bill, never swerved from his devotion to the complete independence of church and state. He wrote:

“The care of every man’s soul belongs to himself. But what if he neglect the care of it? Well, what if he neglect the care of his health or estate, which more clearly relate to the state. Will the magistrate make a law that he shall not be poor or sick? Laws provide against injury from others; but not from ourselves. God himself will not save men against their wills.”⁸⁰

“But our rulers can have no authority over such natural rights, only as we have submitted to them. The rights of conscience we never

⁷⁸ Cited in Cousins, pp. 125-127; see also, for an edited version, *Living American Documents*, Selected and edited by Isidore Starr, Lewis Paul Todd, and Merle Curti, (New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Dallas, Burlingame: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1961), pp. 67-69.

⁷⁹ Marnell, pp. 96-97.

⁸⁰ Pfeffer, p. 94, citing Saul K. Padover, *The Complete Jefferson* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1943), p. 943. Keep in mind that although Pfeffer’s quotes of Jefferson and others often spoke of God and His sovereignty and freedom of conscience, Pfeffer passes over God as though he had not been mentioned.

submitted, we could not submit. We are answerable for them to our God....

“Is uniformity attainable? Millions of innocent men, women, and children, since the introduction of Christianity, have been burnt, tortured, fined, imprisoned; yet we have not advanced one inch towards uniformity. What has been the effect of coercion? To make one half the world fools, and the other half hypocrites. To support roguery and error all over the earth.”⁸¹

According to Biblical principles, the bill was right about some things and wrong about others. It was right about its position on freedom of conscience from interference by civil and ecclesiastical governments, about compelling contributions to opinions to which one is opposed, about forcing any contributions to any pastor whatsoever, and about its assertion “*that* it is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order.”

However, the act was wrong in four ways. First, it was wrong in not recognizing that the word of God is the source of all ultimate truth. Second, it was wrong in not recognizing that God desires all nations to be under Him, and that judgment is the ultimate fate of all nations which do not glorify Him. Third, it was wrong in not recognizing that the only way to determine what acts against peace and good order against one’s fellow man is through God-given conscience and the study of the word of God as led by the Holy Spirit. Fourth, the act was also wrong when it asserted “*that* truth is great and will prevail if left to herself, that she is proper and sufficient antagonist to error and has nothing to fear from the conflict, unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate, [for] errors [cease] to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them.” As mankind has proven over and over, truth never prevails. Ultimately, mankind always reverts to satanic principles instead of truth, which is of God. Not recognizing this accelerates the ultimate deterioration and judgment of a nation.

⁸¹ Pfeffer, citing Joseph L. Blau, *Cornerstones of Religious Freedom in America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1949), pp. 78-79.

The Baptists continued their struggle to remove all vestiges of the establishment until 1802 when the glebes were sold and all religious societies were placed on equal footing before the law. The glebes were tracts of land and buildings built thereon for the accommodation of the minister and his family, all at the expense of the people within the parish. The Baptists fought to have the act incorporating the Episcopal church repealed. Reuben Ford and John Leland attended the first 1787 assembly meeting as agents in behalf of the Baptist General Committee.⁸² On August 10, 1787, the act incorporating the Episcopal church was repealed, and until 2001—when Jerry Falwell and trustees of the Thomas Road Baptist Church, who were joined by the American Civil Liberties Union, challenged the Virginia Constitutional provision forbidding the incorporation of churches in federal district court—no church in Virginia could be incorporated.⁸³

“The Baptists continued to memorialize the Legislature ... and in 1799 that body passed an act entitled ‘An Act to Repeal Certain Acts, and to Declare the Construction of the Bill of Rights and the Constitution Concerning Religion,’ which act declared that no religious establishment had legally existed since the Commonwealth took the place of the regal government, repealed all laws giving to the Protestant Episcopal church any special privileges, and declared that ‘the act establishing religious freedom’ contains the true construction of the Bill of Rights and of the Constitution; but no order was given for the sale of the glebes.”⁸⁴

As the Anglican establishment in Virginia yielded to pressure from Baptists [and to a much lesser extent Presbyterians] so that religious liberty was established in that state, “[t]he same pressure, reinforced by the conditions of frontier living, ended the Anglican establishment in the Carolinas and Georgia.... [T]he conditions which made establishment possible never existed in the states admitted after Vermont, nor in the territories with the exception of unique Utah.”⁸⁵

⁸² James, pp. 142-146.

⁸³ See *Falwell v. Miller*, 203 F. Supp. 2d 624 (W.D. Va. 2002).

⁸⁴ James, pp. 142-145.

⁸⁵ Marnell, p. 130.

By the time the Constitutional Convention convened in 1787, “three states, Rhode Island, New York, and Virginia granted full religious freedom. Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland demanded in different degrees adherence to Christianity. New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia demanded Protestantism.”⁸⁶

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

Chapter 8

Religious Freedom in America!

A convention was called in Philadelphia in 1787 to revise the Articles of Confederation.

“In a little more than a year after the passage of the Virginia Act for Religious Liberty the convention met which prepared the Constitution of the United States. Of this convention Mr. Jefferson was not a member, he being then absent as minister to France.... Five of the states, while adopting the Constitution, proposed amendments. Three—New Hampshire, New York, and Virginia—included in one form or another a declaration of religious freedom in the changes they desired to have made, as did also North Carolina, where the convention at first declined to ratify the Constitution until the proposed amendments were acted upon. Accordingly, at the first session of the first Congress the amendment now under consideration [the First Amendment] was proposed with others by Mr. Madison. It met the views of the advocates of religious freedom, and was adopted.”¹

After the drafting of the Constitution, it was submitted to the states for ratification. “[I]t was doubtful whether it would pass. Massachusetts and Virginia were the pivotal states.”² The Baptists of Virginia were against ratification because the Constitution did not have sufficient provision for religious liberty. Patrick Henry had declined to serve at the Convention and was against it. He posed as the champion of the Baptists in opposition to the Constitution. Of course, Madison was for ratification. However, the Baptists chose John Leland, the most popular preacher in Virginia, as candidate of Orange County to the state ratification convention opposed to ratification, and his opponent was to be James Madison. Mr. Leland likely would have been elected had he not later withdrawn. Mr. Madison, when he returned from Philadelphia, stopped by Mr. Leland’s house and spent half a day communicating to him about “the great matters which were then agitating the people of the state and the Confederacy” and relieving Baptist apprehensions as to the question of religious liberty. Because of this meeting, Mr. Leland withdrew in favor of Mr.

¹ *Reynolds v. United States*, 98 U.S. at 164.

² Christian, *Volume I*, p. 391.

Madison and the Baptists of Orange County were won over to the side of Madison.³ “If Madison had not been in the Virginia Convention, that Constitution would not have been ratified by the State, and as the approval of nine states was required to give effect to this instrument, and as Virginia was the ninth, if it had been rejected by her, the Constitution would have failed.... [A]nd that it was by Elder Leland’s influence that Madison was elected to the Convention.”⁴

The Constitution was ratified and election of the officers of government was the next order of business. Patrick Henry, using his influence in the Legislature, prevented Madison from being elected as Senator. In addition, the Legislature drew the lines for Representative district to prevent Madison from being elected as Representative. However, he was able to “relieve Baptist apprehensions as to any change in his principles, and assure them of his readiness to aid in securing a proper amendment to the Constitution on the subject of religious liberty.” He was elected.

His first act, after the First Congress was organized, in 1789, was to propose, on June 8, certain amendments, including what is now the First Amendment. His purpose was to “conciliate and to make all reasonable concessions to the doubting and distrustful”—to those, the Baptists, who were concerned about the issue of religious liberty. “Of all the denominations in Virginia, [the Baptists] were the only ones that had expressed any dissatisfaction with the Constitution on that point, or that had taken any action into looking to an amendment.” The Baptists of Virginia had also corresponded with Baptists of other states to “secure cooperation in the matter of obtaining” a religious liberty amendment. No other denomination asked for this change.⁵ A general committee of Baptist churches from Virginia presented an address to President Washington, dated August 8, 1789, expressing concern that “liberty of conscience was not sufficiently secured,” perhaps because “on account of the usage we received in Virginia, under the regal government, when mobs, bonds, fines and prisons, were

³ James, pp. 150-158; Grady, *What Hath God Wrought?*, pp. 166-167.

⁴ Christian, *Volume I*, pp. 391-392. Statement of J.S. Barbour, of Virginia, in 1857, in an eulogy of James Madison.

⁵ James, p. 167.

[their] frequent repast.”⁶ President Washington assured them that he would not have signed the Constitution if he had had the slightest apprehension that it “might endanger the religious rights of any ecclesiastical society.”⁷

Some Baptists and others did not see the need for a religious freedom amendment. Indeed, the First Amendment may not have been necessary to guarantee separation of church and state. Isaac Backus was elected as a delegate to the Massachusetts convention of January, 1788, which considered the issue of ratification of the new Constitution. He spoke at the convention.

“On February 4, [Backus] spoke of ‘the great advantage of having religious tests and hereditary nobility excluded from our government.’ These two items in the Constitution seemed to him a guarantee against any establishment of religion and against the formation of any aristocracy. ‘Some serious minds discover a concern lest, if all religious tests should be excluded, the congress would hereafter establish Popery, or some other tyrannical way of worship. But it is most certain that no such way of worship can be established without any religious test.’ He said ‘Popery,’ but he probably feared, as many Baptists did, that some form of Calvinism of the Presbyterian or Consociational variety was more likely. His interpretation of this article helps to explain why the Baptists [of Massachusetts] made no effort to fight for an amendment on freedom of religion along with the others which the convention sent to Congress.”⁸

Even Madison, who proposed and fought for the First Amendment, did not believe that it was necessary for the security of religion. He wrote in his Journal on June 12, 1788:

“... Is a bill of rights a security for Religion? ... If there were a majority of one sect, a bill of rights would be a poor protection for liberty. Happily for the states, they enjoy the utmost freedom of religion. This freedom arises from that multiplicity of sects, which pervades America, and which is the best and only security for religious liberty in any society. For where there is such a variety of sects, there cannot be a majority of any one to oppress and persecute the rest. Fortunately for this commonwealth, a majority of the people are decidedly against any exclusive establishment—I believe it to be so in the other states.... But the United States abounds in such a variety of

⁶ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 2, p. 340.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ McLoughlin, *Isaac Backus and the American Piestic Tradition*, pp. 198-199.

sects, that it is a strong security against religious persecution, and it is sufficient to authorize a conclusion, that no one sect will ever be able to outnumber or depress the rest.”⁹

Others were against a bill of rights. “James Wilson argued that ‘all is reserved in a general government which is not given,’ and that since the power to legislate on religion or speech or press was not given to the Federal government, the government did not possess it, and there was therefore no need for an express prohibition.”¹⁰ “Alexander Hamilton argued that a bill of rights, not only was unnecessary, but would be dangerous, since it might create the inference that a power to deal with the reserved subject was in fact conferred.”¹¹

The amendment was adopted on September 25, 1789, and was approved by the required number of states in 1791.

“No more fitting conclusion can be had ... than to quote the language of the Father of his country. The days of persecution, of blood and of martyrdom were passed. Civil and soul liberty, the inalienable rights of man, enlargement, benevolent operations, educational advantages, and worldwide missionary endeavor, all had been made possible by the struggles of the past. The Baptists consulted George Washington to assist in the securing freedom of conscience. He replied:

“I have often expressed my sentiments, that every man, conducting himself as a good citizen, and being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience. While I recognize with satisfaction, that the religious society of which you are members have been, throughout America, uniformly and almost unanimously the firm friends to civil liberty, and the persevering promoters of our glorious revolution, I cannot hesitate to believe, faithful supporters of a free, yet efficient general government. Under this pleasing expectation, I rejoice to assure them, that they may rely on my best wishes and endeavors to advance their prosperity.”¹²

⁹ Cousins, pp. 314-315.

¹⁰ Pfeffer, p. 112.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, citing *Federalist Papers*, Modern Library ed., 1937, p. 559.

¹² Christian, *Volume I*, pp. 392-393, citing Sparks, *Writings of George Washington*, SII, 155. Boston, 1855.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

Early in the colonial period, men formed the first notable government that legally protected separation of church and state and religious liberty. This historical event arose out of a conflict between the two currents which flowed in opposite directions.

“A large number of people fled out of the old world into this wilderness for religious liberty; but had not been here long before some put in high claims for power, under the name of orthodoxy; to whom others made fierce opposition professedly from the light within; and their clashings were so great that several lives were lost in the fray. This made a terrible noise on the other side of the water. But as self-defence is a natural principle, each party wrote volume after volume to clear themselves from blame; and they both conspired to cast a great part of it upon one singular man [Roger Williams], whom they called a weathercock and a windmill. Now let the curious find out if they can, first how men of university learning, or of divine inspiration, came to write great volumes against a windmill and a weathercock? secondly, how such a strange creature came to be an overmatch for them all, and to carry his point against the arts of priestcraft, the intrigues of court, the flights of enthusiasm and the power of factions, so as after he had pulled down ruin upon himself and his friends, yet to be able, in the midst of heathen savages, to erect the best form of civil government that the world had seen in sixteen hundred years? thirdly, how he and his ruined friends came to lie under those reproaches for a hundred years, and yet that their plan should then be adopted by thirteen colonies, to whom these despised people could afford senators of principal note, as well as commanders by sea and land? The excellency of this scene above those which many are bewitched with, consists in its being founded upon facts and not fictions; being not the creature of distempered brains, but of an unerring Providence.”¹

Many brave men and women, with Baptists at the forefront, paid a high price on the path to religious liberty and freedom of speech, association, and the press. One should not forget that those people were motivated by a deep love for God and his word, not by earthly concerns.

As a result of the fight, Christians, and everyone else in America, have religious freedom. The United States Supreme

¹ Backus, *A History of New England...*, Volume 1, pp. 408-409.

Court still upholds the wall of separation between church and state and freedom of conscience.²

Christians in America have been blessed above measure and can choose to please God and not be persecuted for it. The brief time men will be on earth is miniscule compared to eternity. The time an individual Christian is here is nothing more than a blink of the eye. An American believer now has the opportunity to glorify God without persecution. That opportunity was the result of the trail of blood left by the martyrs for Christ.

Every breath a believer takes out of God's will is a wasted breath. He will praise God naturally, not as a matter of choice, in heaven. This is his one chance, during his eternal existence, to live for Christ of his own free will. This is the one shot he has to choose to please, serve, praise, and glorify God. After leaving this world, some will learn, when it is too late, that they never glorified him when they had the choice. Some will learn that they did not proceed according to knowledge, understanding, and wisdom; and that they followed and promoted the principles and goals of the god of this world because they were deceived by Christian Revisionists.

² See Finney, *God Betrayed*, Section V. Sadly, while upholding that wall of separation, the Court has also twisted the meaning of the First Amendment so as to remove God from practically all civil government matters.

Epilogue

The trail of blood of the martyrs of Jesus proves the guilt of the accused. The evidence presented against those charged is reliable and overwhelming. It leaves no doubt that the accused are guilty as charged. Christian Revisionists conspired to murder and murdered untold millions when they had the power. Since they no longer have the power in America, they relentlessly work to destroy the obstacles to their reclaiming that power: the freedoms provided by the First Amendment and corresponding state constitutional provisions. They are guilty of conspiracy to commit murder.

When contemporary Christian Revisionists succeed, they will again enforce, with the sword, their abominable religion. Millions will be annihilated in the name of God. “And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.”¹ However, their religious reign will be short lived. Political Babylon will destroy religious Babylon. “And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.”²

“And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.”³

God desires that civil government officials and evil religious leaders who conspire to kill and do kill millions of dissidents, be held accountable both temporally and eternally. Truth and justice requires you, the jury, to pronounce a temporal judgment of “guilty as charged,” educate others about the truths you have learned, and expose the accused for what they are. Those of you who were deceived and worked unknowingly to spread the lies and achieve

¹ Re. 17.6.

² Re. 17.16.

³ Re. 18.2-3.

the goals of Christian Revisionists are not guilty since temporal guilt requires mental culpability. However, you are now accountable for your actions since you have heard the evidence and know the truth. “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”⁴ Should you refuse to honestly evaluate the evidence, repent of your actions, and follow truth, you will also be culpable and guilty of conspiracy to commit murder.

Of course, all are guilty before God:

“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat *is* an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps *is* under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.”⁵

All will stand before the judgment seat of Christ for eternal judgment.

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, *which is* the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”⁶

⁴ 2 Co. 6.17-18.

⁵ Ro. 3.10-20.

⁶ Re. 20.11-15.

When one is saved, his name is written in the book of life; he is justified. Thus, everyone is guilty before God, but anyone may be justified, found not guilty, when he stands before the Supreme Judge.⁷ Justification means “a reason to be found not guilty” or “made righteous in the sight of God.”

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.”⁸

God provides a means for everyone, no matter how atrocious his sins, to be justified, that is to be found not guilty even though he is guilty. Anyone may repent toward God of his evil deeds and trust Christ for salvation from sin. For example, Saul, of Tarsus, a great persecutor of Christians, repented, trusted Christ for salvation, and was thereafter greatly persecuted for his faith.⁹

Christ died to save men from their sins.

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures[.]”¹⁰

⁷ Re. 20.11-15.

⁸ Ro. 3.21-30.

⁹ See Ac. 8-28.

¹⁰ 1 Co. 15.1-4.

A believer in Christ is a new creature.¹¹ His foundation for all matters, the Bible, instructs him to be baptized into a local, autonomous, New Testament church, a spiritual body, where he can properly exercise his spiritual gifts.¹² It instructs babes in Christ, to “desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby,” to study,¹³ and to grow in knowledge, understanding and wisdom¹⁴ so that they fall not¹⁵ and be not destroyed.¹⁶

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*. To him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”¹⁷

The temporal cost of following Christ is minute compared to the eternal rewards. Some followers of Christ will be temporally persecuted and will not receive the promise, but obtain a good report through faith.¹⁸ Jesus highly esteems his martyrs. “They shall walk with God in white: for they are worthy.”¹⁹ “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.”²⁰

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”²¹

¹¹ 2 Co. 5.17.

¹² 1 Co. 12-13; Ep.4.

¹³ “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Ti. 2.15).”

¹⁴ See, e.g., Pr. 8-9.

¹⁵ See, e.g., 2. Pe. 1.1-11.

¹⁶ See, e.g., Ho. 4.6-19.

¹⁷ 1 Pe. 5.8-11.

¹⁸ He. 11.32-40.

¹⁹ Re. 3.4.

²⁰ Re. 3.5; see also, Re. 6.10-11, 7.13-14.

²¹ Re. 20.4.

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