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Introduction

*G*OD gave man an imagination. The imagination provides a faculty for conceiving of things that do not exist or go unseen. Using this imagination, we can envision and design new things as if they already exist in reality. We call this creativity. The fact that the Bible denounces *vain* imagination (Genesis 8:21)—the selfish, sinful, God-usurping, human one—does not mean that the imagination is solely evil. In fact, the great evangelical, Yale University president Timothy Dwight (1752-1817), claimed that the Bible does not primarily appeal to intellect or emotion, but to the imagination.¹⁰ Consider the lilies.... The Kingdom of God is like....

Accordingly, this essay seeks to pique godly imaginations to conceive and formulate a fulfilled Biblical Christianity in the world. We wish to reach every serious Christian, to encourage stirring up every gift, upon obedience, toward the fulfillment of Christ's instructive prayer. We might ask, *Oh, Lord, how long* until we see your goodness prevail? Such complaint rings hollow in light of *any* dereliction of duty in us toward living the Gospel life in every facet. Speaking to spiritual and moral condition, Jesus said we know a tree by its fruit. What fruit might we expect when the world has fully given itself to Christ on His terms? How would the world then appear when Jesus Christ generally establishes in the highest degree His Gospel among a receptive mankind, and men systematically apply that Gospel to every area of life? How would the mature man of God appear? What should a godly family look like? How should a godly

¹⁰ Timothy Dwight, "A Dissertation on the History, Eloquence and Poetry of the Bible, 1772," in Verna M. Hall, *The Christian History of the American Revolution: Consider and Ponder* (San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1975), 224-230.

civil community of any size function so that it pleases Christ? How should men conduct the business of life in all its details? ¹¹

We thus attempt to construct a model of a fulfilled Christian world based upon the best available theological understanding, and the best historic examples illustrating Christ's work in men. Our purpose is to plant the seed of a renewed vision and curriculum toward the applied historical Biblical faith. To do so glorifies God and contributes to the Great Commission in a comprehensive way. The church has largely forgotten this heritage. Natural sin causes men to be grasping of power and selfish. The Bible offers systematic remedies, but Christians have largely forgotten them. Those who seek to revive this heritage, often do so without a sound working knowledge of the fundamentals that make Christian expression possible. Every topic undertaken in this book deserves deep study and application.

In this effort, I am indebted to Verna Hall, Rosalie Slater, and many others of the Christian history movement and the work of R. J. Rushdoony, as well as the sharpening from many close friends and colleagues in supplying theoretical and practical content. Lastly, my own theoretical and practical work in the arena of appropriate Christian expression supplements these sources.¹² To these things I have devoted my life.

Much of the content of this book I have personally applied, gaining experience by its fruit in the home, church, and school. Other very dedicated men of God throughout history have done so also. I have studied how men so often miss the mark. We do not keep to the narrow path and so produce various degrees of evil. I have also observed some of the best expressions of *loving God and one's neighbor*. The content of *Thy Will Be Done* thus attempts to present a *crafted* approach to Biblically directed living. In this approach, applied-faith thinking in each area of life uniquely expresses itself in real life upon Biblically defined life objectives. Everything builds upon a simple set of coherent Biblical principles that speak comprehensively to God's goals for men in this life in anticipation of eternity.

Thus, rather than seeing this present life as a mere holding tank for eternity, *Thy Will Be Done* views this life as the first fruits, the down payment on the promises of eternity with Christ. This life is important!

¹¹ *Man* and *men* in this essay are used in the traditional sense as representing mankind—men *and* women.

¹² My conclusions grew primarily out of twenty-two years of experience building and leading unique Christian schools. We endeavored to ground everything in Scripture. By faith, we self-consciously repudiated the accepted theories which were based upon humanistic and evolutionary psychological principles.

Godly fruit will encourage us toward steadfastness in faith. We will learn to live Christ-like. He will work a character in us fit for eternity. The fruit we bear will encourage those who do not know Christ to embrace Him as they seek that fruit for themselves.

The book subtitle from Psalm 72:17, *When All Nations Call God Blessed*, suggests a time of worldwide blessing because of Christ. Providentially, this verse further suggests mankind universally responds to God by faith in the way they live because they truly know God. The history of the United States provides unique examples of success in this regard. Sometimes the American story reveals something much less than success. While the examples are local, this work seeks to persuade that God's intents are universal, to every people. "All Nations shall call Him Blessed." The Biblical concepts in this book intend for use in every culture and every individual stream of providential history.

Please remember as you proceed, that this is a mere man writing here, attempting to share a personal understanding of a Biblical ideal. It is *speculation*. I hope it is profoundly *Biblically informed* speculation, with the added assistance of history and personal experience. Yet, no one can know the future except as Christ has revealed it. Acknowledging differing interpretations of the Scriptures in this regard, I trust the reader will nonetheless walk together with me awhile to consider the possibilities, the hope, and goodness of a bountiful harvest of fruit upon increasing fulfillment of the Lord's Prayer.

Make no mistake. Nothing in this book represents a new gospel. Everything represented here entirely presupposes an effective, historic New Testament Gospel—the fulfillment of God's Law and the blessing of Christ's effective salvation in the hearts of many. Without the rebirth found in the Lord Jesus Christ alone, no form of revival, reformation, or social construct can be of much use. It will bear little fruit. Humanistic solutions will ultimately produce evil, because they deny the only True Source of good which is based upon relationship with Him. For example, at best, the present conservative political movement seems but a mercy of God to slow the spread of evil while Christ's church wakes up and exerts itself more fully upon the shoulder of Christ Himself (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 17:20; Romans 8:19; 2 Corinthians 10:4-6).

Please do not take the brevity of this book as meaning it is of little consequence. My sincere belief and hope is that *Thy Will Be Done* might become the seed of much more study and practice.

CHAPTER 1

The Premise

*J*ESUS taught us to pray, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:10, KJV). This petition by the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords was certainly no idle religious mumble. Moreover, in Jesus' last earthly call to men—the Great Commission—He declared that all power and authority in heaven and earth are His. He delegates power to His church. He commands the church to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20). He empowers us to do so. We must seek men and teach them all of Christ's ways, to educate and train them. This is not merely to see them saved, but to help them to become living, breathing children of the living God, priests, and ambassadors to His Kingdom upon the whole counsel of the Word of God.

Jesus rules and reigns at the right hand of the Father (Acts 7:55), and will continue so until He makes His enemies His footstool in completed reality. He governs in the middle of His enemies, through His volunteers—the church (Psalm 110:1-3). He will so rule until the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord (Habakkuk 2:14), and the mountain made without hands, Christ's rulership, displaces the Kingdoms of the world and fills the whole earth (Daniel 2:35). In quoting Psalm 110 (Matthew 22:44), as done often throughout the New Testament, Christ clearly emphasizes its importance. Jesus remains in heaven to rule, including through His church, until the fulfillment of all things. He intends that we must be about the business of advancing the Kingdom of Christ everywhere, in all manners of life.

Pietism

Long ago, a movement in the church known as Pietism encouraged Christians to withdraw from society in favor of a merely personal religion based in private worship and a few limited expressions such as church worship, missions, evangelism, or, for some, ecstatic personal experiences. This movement grew out of a decline in the power and purity of the Puritan movement. Zealous Pietism rapidly grew in reaction to an increasing and disappointing abandonment by the Puritans of their former quickened, Scripture-commanded life. The Unitarian church and the primary contemporary liberal Congregational denominations are the legates of debased Puritanism. Unfortunately, little positive good has come from the Evangelical church's relative abandonment of society for the past two hundred years. Rather, Christians today have increasingly withdrawn from society. We have allowed the soil of our neighbors' hearts to grow hardened, sterile, shallow, and choked with weeds (Matthew 13:3-9). This is the opposite of godly love toward them.

Successful evangelism depends on *good soil* to receive the Good Seed of salvation. The Good Seed must fall into the good soil of a ready heart. In the fallen world, good soil exists only under cultivation. Christians should exercise godliness in such a way that we benignly work the soil of our neighbors' hearts through godly influence, accomplished according to our spiritual gifts. Thus inspired, we will do all we do, self-consciously, to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31), to fulfill the Great Commission of Matthew 28.

The church today commonly underestimates the Biblical term *righteousness*, limiting it to what is now often termed Christian *values*. Appropriately, these values do include pro-life, family, and sexual morality issues. Yet the Bible requires much, much more. We must love our neighbors as ourselves. The prophet Isaiah, for example, devotes great attention to righteousness in the form of civil justice (Isaiah 1:21). Christians should be civil leaders, the judges of society (Isaiah 1:26-27; 33:1). True faith requires active good on behalf of the oppressed and the poor (Isaiah 58:6-7). Of course, none of this obviates Christ, nor do we recommend a *social gospel*. Rather, righteousness is the fruit of the Spirit, the effective work of Christ in us (Ephesians 5:9). He requires an active faith of His people—vital and involved in every sphere of life.

The Evangelical, Kingdom Necessity of Universal Christian Expressions

What is the Kingdom of God? It is Christ's comprehensive rule over every area of life and living among men. It comes when men take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ in every possible particular, from personal practice and habit, to the greatest spheres of civil relationship and economic endeavor. The Bible defines it. It lies in righteousness—what is right—love and justice among men (Matthew 6:33). The Ten and the Two Commandments define it (Exodus 20; Matthew 22:37-40). The Sermon on the Mount, Paul's epistles, and the Book of Revelation define it. While not intended to provide all the Biblical understanding required, this essay intends to suggest how the world might appear when men generally invest in the Bible and live accordingly. The careful reader will discern a historical pattern of applied Biblical wisdom, an approach toward Biblical thinking, that will increasingly by faith enable Biblical righteousness in all things, in reality.

Today, with repentant hearts (2 Chronicles 7:14), we may see a revival of conditions where Christians are truly salt and light in the earth. We will truly help to prepare the soil of men's hearts, rendering them ready for salvation and true discipleship. Now, the internal qualities of any thing in creation will produce an outward form appropriate to those qualities. A rock acts hard. Corn acts like food. With the Holy Spirit successfully working the internal Kingdom upon the heart, appropriate expressions will emerge. How much more will Christ in us express Himself through our ordinary lives? I call this *extraordinary ordinariness*. As more and more Christians add their influence, encouraging their neighbors, greater and greater expressions of the faith will emerge in any community. Influence occurs through the things of life that are important to people. Godly influences in the arts, sciences, free and prosperous civil society, and every human endeavor will increasingly prepare good soil in human hearts, making them ready and able to receive Christ's salvation. Not to say that Christ needs us, He yet clearly has assigned us to make disciples of all nations, and He enables us to do so if we place our confidence in Him.

When the body of Christ finally cooperates with God, stirring us up to our true earthly mission, we can expect fruit of all kinds (2 Corinthians 10:5-6). As the church increasingly embraces the Biblical vision for a

universally expressed faith, when an inspired and mature expression of God's will on earth emerges, what will it look like? How will the Two Commandments of Christ play out in a society filled with God's love?¹³

Liberty

From the individual, to the home, the church, local civil society, to the national sphere, and finally the entire world, Christ came to set men free. First from the internal bondage of sin and then from the external bondage of tyranny and injustice, Jesus has set men free (Isaiah 9; Luke 1:46–51). Christ's liberty is to serve Him first, and then, in obedience and due gratitude and love, to serve our neighbors. This is James's Law of Liberty (James 2:12). Similarly, Paul proclaims, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Corinthians 3:17)!

Why liberty? From the beginning, God intended men to live an abundant and good life. Sin produced wickedness, and wickedness produced evil. Evil is in essence a bad consequence of actions or events. Most evil is the sorrow and misery produced by the actions of sinful men. The resulting abominable tyranny of early wickedness produced such extreme and general wretchedness that God destroyed the whole earth in the Great Flood. In contrast, restraint of evil—in ourselves in the form of practical love and others in the form of civil justice—produces liberty and blessing.

Civil liberty is necessary to live fully well on Christ's terms. Civil liberty is a *fruit* of living well on Christ's terms. Without the protection of individual liberty through civil justice, criminal bullies inevitably will intimidate, oppose, and suppress lawful, godly works for Christ. Civil liberty protects the conduct of the Great Commission, and a godly civil order protects civil liberty. The people rejoice when the righteous rule (Proverbs 29:2). Where do we find the righteous to rule but in the church itself? God gave us Christians as the *societal* key to the fulfillment of the evangelical call!¹⁴ True evangelism requires soil preparation—Christian

13 By the way, this is no revolution. God clearly teaches the acceptance of the present order, even while making every effort to overturn it through good works. Render to Caesar and render to God until Caesar has become irrelevant and Christ completely displaces him (Matthew 22:21; Romans 12:17–13:6).

14 Wretchedness can also be evangelical incentive. Great godliness has grown in the crucible. God will use either, but He promises that the fruit of godliness is more fruit (Matthew 13:8). Liberty and righteousness seem obviously preferable from man's point of view as well.

influence—and broadcasting of the Seed—the Gospel message itself. In this essay, we focus on the need for mature expressions of our faith as influence—the influence needed to prepare our neighbors for the Gospel and all its implications.

Let us consider an advanced expression of the Kingdom of Christ. We understand that this is not the final, eternal Kingdom, but it is the *beginning* of it in history. According to Jesus, wisdom is vindicated by her children (Matthew 11:19). In this present life, we do not seek utopia. We do not expect quick results. We do not seek deliverance from trials or persecutions. Our humanness would ask how long and to what extent must we work or suffer before we see results? It is a natural question (Revelation 6:10). This is not ours to answer. Ours is to obey by faith. Nonetheless, we can expect increased general expression of goodness in society resulting from the Fruit of the Spirit in real peoples' real lives. *Goodness* in its root etymology is *godliness*.¹⁵ It is the kind of fruit that can be found in different places and times in history, times where Christians took their faith seriously as due gratitude for the work of Christ in their lives. Then, when the righteous rule, the people rejoice. When the wicked rule, the people groan (Proverbs 29:2).

“Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18, KJV).¹⁶ Without a visionary goal, education and life itself become aimless and purposeless. The Biblical faith intends to correct our thinking in every thing. “Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 4:17)! My hope is that this present effort will inspire many toward higher and better things in Christ, though we like the American Pilgrims are but “stepping stones” unto others for the advancement of the cause of Christ.

Let us then speculate, upon a Scriptural framework, with history to illustrate, how such a Christ-centered society might appear, from the most intimate spheres of relationship and economy to the greatest.

This book should persuade that the wonderful blessings envisioned are only possible among a generalized community of God's people walking in obedience to Jesus Christ by faith, of virtuous character, loving toward their

¹⁵ This and all such definitions quoted are from Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, Facsimile 1828 Edition (San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1967, 1995; see also the digital version, 2006). Jesus told the wealthy young ruler in Luke 18:19 that only God is good.

¹⁶ *Vision* here means *revelation*, that is, God's Word to men.

neighbor and hard working, expressing Christ in every endeavor.¹⁷ The good news is that this community is eminently possible. One of our best examples is the tiny American Pilgrim colony whose influence ultimately spread to the whole of the English colonies in America. This influence largely determined the character of the United States.¹⁸

17 Throughout I use the term *mature Christian community* or others like it. Here, I generally define the term. Throughout the text, I further define, expand, and refine what I intend by a *mature Christian community*. This includes specific theology, character, wisdom, and practical accomplishment in the many individuals of a extended Christian community in greater and greater spheres. Defining a fulfilled, mature Christianity as in 2 Corinthians 10:4-6 is the very purpose of this work.

18 This premise, the influence of Pilgrim Pastor John Robinson and his followers, is well documented in the works of Verna Hall and others. As an example, see Verna Hall, *The Christian History of the Constitution: Volume II, Christian Self-Government with Union* (San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1966, 1979).

CHAPTER 2

Liberty, Love, and Manners; Ethics, Justice, and Nobility

*H*owever important Christian liberty is to the Gospel, we cannot simply decide we will take liberty to ourselves. We cannot possess liberty for the wishing, or grasp it for the reaching. The higher expressions of personal and institutional liberty rather require certain foundational supports. America's founding fathers believed that without general morality, there could be no general liberty. Without true religion (Biblical faith), there is no morality.¹⁹ It is the fruit of the Spirit: "Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Corinthians 3:17). The origin of all true liberty is Christ.

Morality and Liberty

Morality is the set of laws, principles, and practical code by which men conduct themselves toward one another. They get along in peace and justice. God's Law-Word, the whole counsel of the Old and New Testament, forms the single moral code required of men. Christ's effective Evangel provides the means to live it. Christ is the center and source. Relationship with Him is the ultimate end. He is the Alpha and Omega (Revelation 1:8). The ability for love of one's neighbor is a fruit of this relationship. In other words, His grace will result in greater expressions of godly morality—of

¹⁹ E.g., George Washington's Farewell Address, 1796.

love in practice. In turn, greater expressions of internal freedom from the power of sin, fueled by effective power of the Gospel, will produce greater external liberty. The better we get along with each other on God's terms, the greater the social and civil liberty we will experience.

To get to the place of higher morality and liberty, God gives men the quality of civil authority that they, in the present condition of their character, require.²⁰ All things good arise from taking seriously God's Law by faith, especially the seed-Word of the Ten Commandments and the Two Commandments. Then Jesus brings the increase in due season. Remember, general goodness is not possible apart from the government of Christ in the hearts of individuals. And, in a mystery of God's sovereignty, He commonly acts upon the commitment of the faith of His people (Genesis 18:23-33; Exodus 32:11; 2 Peter 3:12).

Civil liberty means *individual* liberty. Sin is naturally selfish and unjustly grasps for that which belongs to another. We all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We Christians are a part of the problem and not the solution unless we take seriously the command to love. Even a brief reading of 1 Corinthians 13 indicates that godly love is not selfish, but unilaterally unselfish! Because we are disposed to sin, self-restraint is necessary to love with a godly love.

Presumption Kills Liberty

The chief danger to universal liberty is wanton presumption upon our neighbor. That is, to enjoy our own perceived liberty, we wrongly impose upon another's. Liberty becomes license. Paul the Apostle says we certainly may not use grace as license (Romans 6:1-2)! On the ground that others may or do treat me ill, I grant myself license to do what I wish, justifying myself that I am not as bad as they are. I will not constrain the passions of my flesh. I will satisfy its wants. I willingly steal others' liberty to satisfy my lusts—the precise opposite of love. I will violate software or music copyright. I will cut off another to gain a few seconds on the highway. I will wheedle, manipulate, demand, and cavil to get my way. At higher expressions of practiced sin, I may steal, rape, murder, and commit all kinds of horrible deeds to satisfy my lusts. If people are generally selfish,

²⁰ This is why God says not to call a conspiracy what men call a conspiracy (Isaiah 8:12). To Him the nations are a drop in the bucket (Isaiah 40:15). Nonetheless, He uses even tyranny to correct His people and to judge the wicked (e.g., Isaiah 57:14-18; 47:1).

then they generally presume on others and destroy liberty. Every time I selfishly diminish another, to that extent I destroy everyone's liberty. This includes the diminishing of my own liberty, as my bad conduct will surely result in someone pushing back, as he attempts to protect the territorial prerogatives of his own liberty. Selfish conduct, such as smoking in public or cell phone usage while driving, often results in intrusive government regulations.

In the absence of a system of godly justice, God uses sinful men to cancel each other's wickedness. This He did through Babylon against Israel's wickedness (1 Chronicles 9:1). The humanistic state uses societal selfishness as an excuse and opportunity to empower itself. It regulates the uncontrolled sin of the masses. (While such a state is God's instrument to contain and limit a licentious people, dictatorial government is not His end purpose.) The resulting general, top-down regulation of men's conduct, typical of today's civil society, produces additional selfishness, slavishness, and societal debasement as dependence and personal irresponsibility increase. The more men take, the more their victims protect themselves and even peremptorily take the offensive in the form of theft and bullying. Such a society contains two kinds of slavishness: the ambitious bully whose slavish fear of death makes him a monster (Hebrews 2:15), and the lazy slave whose fear of death makes him willing to endure debasement and bondage for the sake of a little security or to accommodate his laziness. We ultimately get the kind of society and civil government we deserve.²¹ A slavish government is for a slavish people. And when we tire of its injustice and misery, we might remember God and repent. Such is the story of the entire Old Testament, and much of history.

Self-Restraint Establishes Liberty

Where self-restraint, faithful work, and Christian love prevail, so do general liberty and prosperity. When men generally restrain themselves in a disposition to love, then no one need grasp to find comfort and good. Love eliminates excuse for selfish taking. In a state of liberty, relational government, including civil government, consists essentially in self-government. Accordingly, civil manners are the first sphere of civil government. Where no established personal relationship with another exists, I must be

21 Actually, God's mercy ordinarily graciously inhibits the evil we truly deserve.

particularly careful not to presume upon my neighbor, lest, for example, I inadvertently hinder the Holy Spirit's work in him.²² Think. How may one love his neighbor while driving on the highway or in a parking lot? Such was once a popular practice. Emily Post's original *Etiquette* equates good manners with well-expressed Christianity.²³

Therefore, protection of the individual's rights (what is right or just, not entitlements) must remain a common concern in personal and civil conduct. Love your neighbor as yourself. Love your enemy. How we treat our neighbor is answerable before God. What Christians know—or historically did know—as common courtesy and honesty are called ethics. The Ten Commandments and the rest of the Mosaic Law define godly ethics. Christ's treatment in the Sermon on the Mount and in the Apostles' doctrinal treatment in the rest of the New Testament clarify, extend, and deepen our understanding of that Law. Such ethics are the only proper foundation for any free and decent society.

The Place of Civil Authority

Because men are sinful and do not always practice self-restraint toward their neighbor, God provided for civil justice. As part of His blessing to Noah after the Great Flood, God required the blood of a murderer by man's hand (Genesis 9:5-6).²⁴ With the gene pool of mankind at such heavy risk in a population of only eight inhabitants, apathy or misguided sympathy would not do. Mankind simply could not afford to countenance murder. Yet sanctity of life remains a constant theme throughout Scripture (Revelation 19:2). Jesus emphasizes the evil of unrequited justice in cases of murder (Luke 11:50-51). Murder results from a man desiring his own way, combined with a willingness to make it so at another's expense. Yet murder is not the only serious crime among men. The Bible also exacts justice for such expressed selfishness as larceny or bullying. Equitable justice by judges is primary (Matthew 23:3). To the extent justice is absent, men

22 Though God graciously informs us of His purposes and the consequences of obedience or disobedience, the ultimate question is whether we trust God to obey Him as our Creator, Savior, and the Sovereign ruler of the universe.

23 Emily Post, *Etiquette* (New York and London: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1922), "Introduction—Manners and Morals," by Richard Duffy (from the *The Project Gutenberg EBook of Etiquette* by Emily Post: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/14314/14314-h/14314-h.htm>).

24 For a full discussion, see *The Death Penalty on Trial: Taking a Life for a Life Taken* by Ron Gleason (Ventura: Nordskog Publishing, 2008).

are not free to serve God, but rather injustice inhibits God's Kingdom. The magistrate ought to rule for the good and the peace of the people (Romans 13:3-4; 2 Timothy 2:2).

When God's work is generally successful among men, then no longer with a smirk will sinful rebellion call evil good and good evil (Isaiah 5:20). Men, including the judge and magistrate, will treat sin as sin, and righteousness as righteousness. No longer will open sin and rebellion be merely absorbed and tolerated. Willing reception of a loving rebuke when needed will largely suffice for correction in our neighbors and in us. The loving confrontation of Matthew 18:15-17 will become the common means of conflict resolution. When necessary, the community will invoke justice on the grounds of Biblical due process. Christians will practice unto second nature, principles of justice, equity, and mercy. When necessary, civil justice will hinder the evildoer and protect the rights of individuals—the rights to life, liberty, and property. However, the Christian community's general good conduct—protecting others' rights in ordinary living—will allow each to enjoy his own life, liberty, property, holiness, and relationships without trouble.

Nobility Required

An elevated society requires elevated men. The Word of God calls Christ's people royal (1 Peter 2:9). We are children of the King! We sinful men often completely invert God's intent for His people to be special—honorable, virtuous, mighty men of valor and, simply, children of the King. That the Scriptures often portray "nobles" in a bad light does not negate the essential call to nobility, for what men call nobles are often not. The problem is that when men think of nobility, we think of privilege, entitlement, and bullying. Then, in reaction to the haughtiness and privilege of the humanistic noble, modern Christians, under the equally heinous deception of democracy, often work very hard to be casual and cool, to fit in, or in other words, to be *common*. We say, "Let us make ourselves as much like the world as possible short of losing our salvation." Commonness is exactly the opposite of the Biblical calling. In an age of commonness and the anti-hero, the old-fashioned grace and strength of a truly great man such as George Washington has become not much more than a joke—a caricature used to sell merchandise for President's Day. Such should not be.

Quite the contrary, Christians are supposed to be of a great character and presence, a presence compelling to the lost. When the Scriptures speak

of nobility in a positive sense, they speak of a selfless man of God, standing for justice and willing to sacrifice himself if need be. Though the reality fell extremely short of the ideal, an early example of such a noble might be found in at least the literature, if not the history, of the Feudalism of the Middle Ages. Feudalism replaced the chaos left by the Fall of Rome. In its best conception, the feudal lord stood out among his fellows for his courage and magnanimity. He served as a kind of father to an often-difficult extended *family*. His office was a holy trust before God to rebuild a decimated civilization. In like vein, the early American Christian saw himself as a Christian noble out of the feudal heritage.²⁵ America adopted the best of feudalism in the relational government form we call *federal*.

Biblical nobility is virtue, justice, grace, agapé, and wisdom. These are polar-opposites of the debasing lusts of sinful men—selfish obsessions and compulsions in modern lingo—that produce so much evil and misery in the world. The Christian noble is a leader of men, but meek and self-effacing, not lording it over others (Matthew 20:25-28). He stands in virtue (2 Peter 1:3-5). Virtue here means old-fashioned manliness and valor. Old Testament warriors were often called mighty men of valor (1 Samuel 16:18). Christians should be like our King in all facets of character. Only Christians of a noble character—of moral excellence—and ability are truly capable of administering godly institutions upon liberty, love, manners, ethics, and justice. In the accomplished Christian age, Christian nobility will be common, because such is the direct result of true sanctification.

25 John Lord, *Beacon Lights of History* (New York: William H. Wise & Co., 1921), Vol. V: 289-322.