

THE TRINITY REVIEW

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare [are] not fleshly but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. And they will be ready to punish all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

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Email: tjtrinityfound@aol.com Website: www.trinityfoundation.org Telephone: 423.743.0199 Fax: 423.743.2005

Rebuilding American Freedom in the Twenty-First Century

John W. Robbins

Editor's Note: This article was originally written in 1996. It was first published in 2006 in Freedom and Capitalism: Essays on Christian Politics and Economics by John W. Robbins. With the continuing decline of the economy and the loss of liberty, this article is fitting for our time.

What has happened to America over the last 50 years? To paraphrase an old campaign question, Are we freer today than we were 50 years ago? Are we more civilized today than we were 50 years ago? I think nearly all of us would answer no to both questions. By almost any measure, by virtually any criterion one selects, our fathers were freer and more civilized than we are, and their fathers had been freer and more civilized than they were. They may not have been as wealthy or as technologically advanced as we are, but we ought not confuse wealth and technology with freedom or civilization. If this decline is so, and I think it is, then we must conclude that despite the hundreds of billions of dollars that libertarians and conservatives and classical liberals have spent in the past five decades, American freedom and civilization continue to slip away.

I think I know why. I also think that most conservatives, libertarians, and classical liberals do not know why. That is why their efforts have failed. That is why our common interest, human freedom, is slipping away. Despite that loss, many of us, I am sorry to say, do not seem to want to know why. But before I talk about the reason for our failure, let's compare 1946 with 1996 in a few respects. Is it really true that freedom and civilization are losing ground in America?

The Growth of Government, 1946-1996

In 1946, the United States government was without doubt the most formidable military power on the face of the Earth. It had just waged war against three of the most powerful socialist governments in the world, and won. Europe was in ruins. The United States had a monopoly on nuclear power. In January the U. S. Army made radar contact with the Moon. Emperor Hirohito, at the suggestion of Douglas MacArthur, made a radio address in which he told the Japanese people that the notion of his being a god was a matter of "legends and myths." In March, former Prime Minister Winston Churchill was here in Missouri delivering his Iron Curtain speech at Westminster College. The U. S. economy was wracked by strikes.

Freedom is a difficult thing to measure, but there are some rough indicators that may give us some idea of comparative degrees of freedom in 1946 and 1996.

Federal Taxes and Spending

Let's begin with federal taxes and spending, which in 1946 were far larger than the taxes and spending of all state and local governments combined. Following the war, from 1945 to 1947, first a Democratic and after 1946 a Republican Congress and a Democratic President – a President from Missouri by the way – cut tax revenues by nearly 15 percent or \$6.7 billion (from \$45.2 billion to \$38.5 billion), and slashed spending by nearly 63 percent or \$58.2 billion (from \$92.7 billion to \$34.5 billion). If you accept macro-economic statistics as having any usefulness as

relative gauges of economic activity (and our socialist friends do, so we should be eager to use them to embarrass our socialist friends whenever possible), federal spending went from 43.7 percent to 15.5 percent of GDP in two years. In other words, the American people regained control of an additional 28 percent of their wealth during this period. The federal debt held by the public in 1946 was \$218 billion, and that was its high point. It did not reach that level again until 1962. It has never approached that level since.

If 1996 Were 1946

For the past year the press has been filled with reports about the Republican Congress and Democratic President struggling to balance the federal budget by the year 2002. Let's pretend that today's politicians were to do what politicians did 50 years ago. Perhaps then we will see how surreal the present situation is.

Federal spending in FY 1996, the present year, is estimated to be \$1.6 trillion. No one really knows, of course, how much it is. If the present politicians were to accomplish what politicians 50 years ago accomplished, federal spending in FY 1998 would be \$592 billion, cut by 63 percent from present spending levels; the federal budget would be in balance; and tax revenues would be cut by \$800 billion, down 57 percent from the present \$1.4 trillion. At that spending level, the federal government would be spending about 8 percent of Gross Domestic Product – still far too high, but the lowest percentage since the 1930s.

From 1945 to 1947 there was no two-week government shutdown, but a two-year shutdown. Hundreds of thousands of government employees were let go. Wartime price controls were lifted. Taxes and spending were slashed. Then, unfortunately, government began to grow again, and it has grown without interruption ever since.

Why was it possible to accomplish this massive shutdown? Primarily because the American people – despite the best efforts of John Maynard Keynes and his academic aficionados – still had some moral objections to deficit spending in peacetime. They still had moral objections, in fact, to personal, business, and government debt, and to big government in general, despite the best efforts of FDR to overcome them. And despite the best efforts of thousands of organizations and the expenditure of hundreds of billions of dollars over the last 50 years, the

American people have largely lost both their moral and their economic understanding.

Money in 1946

To return to 1946: Fifty years ago silver coins were still in use in the U. S. True, they were supplied by government, and that, in part, spelled their doom, for we have not seen silver coins in circulation for 32 years. Government involvement in producing money was not the entire reason for the disappearance of sound money. Another and greater reason was the loss of a moral understanding by both rulers and ruled that allowed government to stop coining silver and break its promises to redeem paper for silver. (FDR, who had no moral understanding of either money or promises, broke the government's promises to pay gold in 1933.)

In 1946 paper currency, also supplied by government, consisted of silver certificates, which could still be redeemed for silver by ordinary citizens, and Federal Reserve Notes, which ordinary citizens could redeem for nothing. But the amount of Federal Reserve Notes in circulation in 1946 was still limited by gold reserve requirements. We have not been able to redeem silver certificates since 1967, 29 years ago, and there has been no gold reserve requirement for paper notes since 1968. Since 1971 we have been floating on a worldwide sea of fiat money. The dollar, using the government's own index numbers, has lost about 85 percent of its value in the last 50 years.

Government Employees in 1946

As for the number of government employees in 1946, there were a lot of them: 3.2 million federal employees alone. But 1.4 million of them were military, and by 1947, 600,000 of them were gone. In fact from 1945 to 1947, the number of federal employees fell by 1.7 million, more than 50 percent. It's high time we had another shutdown of that magnitude.

How about one more indicator of economic freedom? In 1946 most of the federal agencies we have today were not even gleams in the eyes of Senator Lyndon Baines Johnson or Representative Richard Milhous Nixon. The *Federal Register*, the daily compilation of new and proposed directives issued by executive agencies, which ran about 63,000 pages in 1995, was a mere 12,000 pages in 1946.

Crime in 1946

Americans sometimes foolishly overlook crime as a threat to freedom, thinking that the only threat comes from government. It doesn't. Our neighbors may also be threats to our freedom. In fact, lawless governments and lawless individuals aid each other. The criminal and the dictator are twins distinguished only by the amount of power at the disposal of each. Each becomes the others' excuse for more and more lawlessness, less and less freedom. The loser in such a contest is the rule of law. Freedom, we must keep in mind, is not lawlessness, but the result of effective application of moral law to both ruled and rulers.

In 1946 Americans were relatively free to conduct their business, safe in their lives and property, even though crime was up dramatically that year, up by 14 percent from 1945, in fact. Of course, we are looking back 50 years. Someone in 1896 looking ahead would have said that Americans in 1946 were in great danger, and those in 1996 in a state of war.

Looking at just three statistics – murder, rape, and robbery – in 1946 and 1994, we find that there were 4,362 murders in 1946 and 23,305 murders in 1994; 42,229 robberies in 1946 and 618,817 robberies in 1994; 8,150 rapes in 1946 and 102,096 rapes in 1994. Adjusting for population growth since 1946 and partial reporting in 1946, we find that the number of murders had increased by more than 40 percent; the number of robberies by nearly 300 percent; and the number of rapes by 230 percent.

Is Something Wrong with What Conservatives and Libertarians Are Doing?

If we are correct in concluding that both freedom and civilization have waned in the last 50 years, despite the best efforts of millions of people and billions of dollars to preserve them, we must ask why. Is there something wrong with what we – that is, the classical liberals, conservatives, and libertarians – have been doing? Is that why the remedy is not succeeding? After 50 years that question must be asked; we can no longer be content to redouble our efforts and just try harder.

One person who did not think that conservatives, libertarians, and classical liberals were on the right track was the novelist and philosopher Ayn Rand. She argued at length that freedom was being ineptly defended, and that an incompetent defense, not the strength of freedom's opponents, was the principal reason freedom was disappearing. Someone

remarked 150 years ago that the greatest tragedy that can befall any cause is not to be skillfully attacked, but to be incompetently defended. And that, in essence, was Rand's complaint.

Although Rand's philosophy is much larger than her ethics, it is her ethics that gained her great notoriety, for she was an advocate of egoism and an opponent of altruism. She excoriated the conservatives, the churches, and the businessmen for their failure to see that a free society must rest on ethical egoism; that freedom is subverted by ethical altruism. And Rand was right – not in her philosophical argumentation, but in her conclusion.

But neither Rand nor her followers' efforts have been successful either. Despite the sale of tens of millions of her books in the past 50 years, the road to serfdom first became a four-lane highway and now it is a limited access eight-lane interstate with no speed limit – an American Autobahn.

Another thinker who argued that the defense of freedom mounted by the conservatives, libertarians, and classical liberals was inadequate was Edmund Opitz. When I was editor of *The Freeman*, he submitted an essay that he had written in the early 1960s. We published it under the title "Defending Freedom and the Free Society." Opitz argued that freedom was under attack on four levels: theology/philosophy, ethics, politics, and economics. But freedom's defenders, Opitz pointed out, were responding only to economic and political attacks. There was no way they could succeed. Almost as if to confirm his analysis, his essay had been turned down for publication in *The Freeman* in the early 1960s.

Business Hates America

One of the reasons, a secondary reason, for the decline of freedom and civilization is that those persons and organizations in society that have the greatest responsibility for the intellectual climate that prevails in any culture, and I am thinking of three types of organizations – churches, schools, and businesses – are often rotten to the core. Let me begin by mentioning businesses first.

Take one small but typical example of what corporate America is doing to subvert civilization and freedom. IBM sends its middle managers to Armonk, New York, Westchester County, for training. One of the highly paid consultants that IBM hires to train its managers is a fellow named Ted Chiles, a practicing, boasting, haranguing homosexual who hates

Western civilization and the religion that created it, Christianity. Chile is very politically correct. Now, variety is the spice of life, but too much variety, variety of the wrong sort, is lethal. One does not put cyanide in the salad dressing.

For decades, corporate America has been subsidizing those who hate America, capitalism, freedom, truth, and Christianity. One thinks not only of the great foundations that bear the names of industrialists such as Rockefeller, Ford, Carnegie, and Pew – foundations that have funded anti-freedom and anti-civilization enterprises and ideologies for decades – but one thinks also of existing corporate structures such as IBM, AT&T, and Disney. Why, you may ask, do I mention Christianity? The fact that you may ask indicates the severity of our problem, which is much deeper than economics or politics. It is the failure of conservatives, libertarians, and classical liberals to recognize the depth of the problem that explains the failure of their efforts to preserve freedom over the past 50 years. To quote Ed Opitz, “the remedy must go at least as deep as the disease.” Anything less will not do.

The churches were perhaps the first of the three institutions to become corrupt. In the nineteenth century many rejected the Calvinism that informed the population and political institutions of seventeenth and eighteenth century America. Schools soon followed suit, and all levels of education began teaching a worldview quite different from that of the founders. Business was the last of the three institutions to be corrupted, and that was because the churches and schools had first abandoned the theology that built America.

Fifty years ago, Walter Lippmann published an essay in which he argued that

- those who are responsible for education have progressively removed from the curriculum of studies the Western culture which produced the modern democratic state;
- the schools and colleges have, therefore, been sending out into the world men who no longer understand the creative principle of the society in which they live;
- deprived of their cultural tradition, the newly educated Western men no longer possess in the form and substance of their own minds and spirits the ideas, the premises, the rationale, the logic, the method, the values of the deposited

wisdom which are the genius of the development of Western civilization;

- the prevailing education is destined, if it continues, to destroy Western civilization and is in fact destroying it.

Please do not misunderstand what I am saying. I am not repeating platitudes about moral crises. I am not advocating that we all line up behind Virtue Czar William Bennett. Our problem, while involving morality, is much deeper than morality. Ayn Rand, again, was one of the few people who realized that it is at the level of philosophy, the level of theology, that our problem lies. Unfortunately, her theology – her antidote to the prevailing theology – is lethal. But she remains one of the few prominent spokesmen for freedom who understood the role of philosophy and theology in creating and maintaining a civilization.

Getting Back to Basics

One further note of clarification of my argument: Just as I am not suggesting some sort of vague, eclectic moralism à la *The Book of Virtues* as the remedy for our disease, so I am not suggesting some sort of vague, eclectic religion à la Dwight Eisenhower as the tonic we need. Eisenhower, as you know, once remarked that America was founded on religion, and if America is to remain strong, it must continue to be founded on religion, and “I don’t care what it is.” Eisenhower’s statement represents a superstitious and ridiculous faith in faith that is as lethal as materialism. I am neither a moralist nor a religionist. Unlike nearly everyone, I am arguing that theology matters.

I suggest that if we want to discover how to rebuild freedom and civilization in the twenty-first century, we must study how Western civilization was built in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. The freedom and prosperity this nation has enjoyed are unusual phenomena in the history of the world. Freedom and capitalism are no accidents of history. Nor are they the products of economic development, as some economists – not just the Marxists – want to argue. They are secondary consequences – one might say byproducts – of the most profoundly revolutionary religious movement of the modern age, the Protestant Reformation. Freedom and civilization are the political and economic products of the Biblical and theological ideas preached, published, and promoted throughout Western Europe by the Protestant Reformers.

In 1904 and 1905 Max Weber published his long essay on "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism." The essay created a firestorm of criticism. I, too, am critical of it, but for a reason different from most of Weber's critics. Weber's primary mistake was not that he went too far, but that he did not go nearly far enough. He modestly suggested that the Protestant ethic created the psychological conditions required for the development of capitalism, and that explains why market capitalism first developed in the countries of northwestern Europe most affected by Protestantism.

Weber should have concluded that it was not just the ethics of Protestantism that explains the psychological conditions, it is also the theology and political philosophy of Protestantism that explains the social, political, and economic conditions required for the development of capitalism and freedom. Some recent historians are beginning to see the connection – a connection not missed by earlier generations that were largely uninfluenced by secularism and Catholicism – between the Protestant Reformation and modern freedom. Two of them, for example, are Donald Kelley of Rutgers University and Nobel Laureate Douglass North of Washington University, in their essays recently published in *The Origins of Modern Freedom in the West*.

Let me discuss a few arguments and examples in support of my thesis that the primary institutions of a free civilization may be traced to the Protestant Reformation. I shall begin with the idea of constitutional government.

Constitutional Government

The idea that law ought to be written, not merely oral or customary, as both tyrants and conservatives enthralled by custom seem to prefer, has been around for millennia. We owe it, of course, not to the Greeks or Romans, whose contribution to liberty and Western civilization has been enormously overrated, but to God, who gave Moses, centuries before Greece or Rome saw daylight, a written code of laws. You may read them today in the book of *Exodus*. God wrote the fundamental laws of the ancient nation of Israel himself: They were not to be amended. We know them as the Ten Commandments.

Now many people have praised the virtues of written law, but it was Martin Luther, a sixteenth-century German monk, who clearly and decisively put forward the revolutionary idea that the supreme law of the Christian church is written: The Bible alone is

the Word of God. Luther wrote:

The church of God has no power to establish any article of faith; nor has it ever established any; nor will it ever establish any.... The church of God has no power to confirm articles or precepts or the Holy Writings as by a higher sanction or judicial authority; nor has it ever done this; nor will it ever do it. Rather, the church of God is approved and confirmed by the Holy Writings as by a higher and judicial authority.

Against Luther, the popes contended that the supreme authority in church and state was not a written law, not the Bible, but the Church itself, speaking through God's representative on Earth, the Pontifex Maximus, the pope. Here the battle was clearly joined: Is written law supreme, or is man supreme? Those who agreed with Luther that the Bible alone is the supreme law in the church consequently opposed ecclesiastical monarchy, favored republicanism and the rule of law, defended the right of ordinary church members to judge whether church leaders were teaching in conformity with the Bible, and to disobey them if they were not.

All these ideas, central to the Reformation and developed primarily by Martin Luther and John Calvin, were then applied to civil governments. Luther's intransigent and courageous disobedience to the pope led him to conclude, "If one may resist the pope, one may also resist all the emperors and dukes who contrive to defend the pope." It was Luther's theology that led to the formation of the Schmalkald League of German princes against the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, in 1530, and the breakup of the so-called Holy Roman Empire. Of course, it did not end there: The English exiles on the Continent protested the reign of Mary Tudor in the 1550s; the Huguenots in France resisted the repressive Roman Catholic monarchy in France; the Dutch Reformed resisted the tyranny of the Spanish Crown. Here is the way the Protestant pastors of Madgeburg stated their position in 1550 in *The Confession of Madgeburg*: "We will undertake to show that a Christian government may and should defend its subjects against a higher authority which should try to compel the people to deny God's Word and to practice idolatry."

This doctrine – which became known as the doctrine of lesser magistrates – was the theory that

informed the American War for Independence. The American War for Independence was a war between two established governments: the American colonial governments and the Continental Congress versus the British Crown. It was not a rebellion of private citizens. It was not some secular theory of revolution that guided the American patriots. The French tried that, and instead of freedom they got the Terror and Napoleon. It was this doctrine of lesser magistrates, not some anarchistic theory, that fostered the growth of freedom in the United States.

When this continent was populated by Christian refugees from England, they came here to establish a free nation under God, a “shining city on a hill,” as John Winthrop put it, quoting the Bible. At first, they did not understand all the implications of their desire for freedom. Those implications had to be worked out over the next century and a half. One hundred-fifty years later, when the colonies separated from England and wrote the Constitution, they thought they had found a solution: a central government of strictly limited powers that could not act as the King and Parliament had acted. Almost all the powers of government, which themselves were few, were to be exercised by county and state governments, not by the national government.

The doctrine of lesser magistrates became, in America, the doctrine of interposition: James Madison, architect of the Constitution, stated it this way in a resolution adopted by the Virginia House of Delegates in 1798 in opposition to the Alien and Sedition Acts:

The powers of the Federal Government...[are] limited by the plain sense and intention of the... [Constitution], and, in case of deliberate, palpable, and dangerous exercise of other powers not granted by the said compact [the Constitution], the States, who are parties thereto, have the right, and are in duty bound, to interpose, for arresting the progress of the evil....

Madison was echoing John Calvin, his successor Theodore Beza, and the Protestant pastors of Madgeburg. Leopold von Ranke, the great nineteenth-century German historian, did not exaggerate when he described Calvin as the “virtual founder of America.”

In American history, the Protestant theory of the written law being the supreme authority and the Roman Catholic theory of men being the supreme authority have played out in many interesting ways. Perhaps you have heard the saying, allegedly made by a man who later became a Supreme Court Justice: “The Constitution is whatever the Supreme Court says it is.” That is the Roman Catholic view: Nine men infallibly interpret the written document, and there is no appeal of their decree. A political Protestant, echoing Luther, quite properly replied to that statement, “No, the Supreme Court is whatever the Constitution says it is.”

The basis of the idea of constitutional government is the first principle of the Reformation: The Bible alone is the Word of God. From the idea of a written constitution being the supreme law several related ideas flow: a government of enumerated and limited powers; a government that is merely ministerial, exercising only powers delegated to it, and not powers that it possesses inherently; the rule of law, not of men; the protection of the individual from government. These ideas were supported by two other doctrines of the Reformation, the sovereignty of God and the priesthood of believers.

The Sovereignty of God and the Rule of Law

John Calvin, of course, is the name most associated with the idea that God is all-powerful, but all the early Reformers were united on this idea; it was only some half-hearted disciples who rejected it. What relationship does this idea have to freedom? One implication is that if God alone is sovereign; neither collectives nor individuals are sovereign. Neither the king – imagining “L’état, c’est moi” – nor the people – imagining “Vox populi, vox dei” – neither claim to sovereignty is legitimate. Despotism, either democratic or monarchical, is eliminated. Nor are private individuals sovereign. All, both rulers and ruled, are subject to the law. On this theory, both totalitarianism and anarchism are avoided. On any other theory, either the individual or the collective becomes the supreme oppressor.

The Priesthood of Believers and Democracy

Another idea that furnished the ideological underpinnings for freedom and civilization was Martin Luther’s assertion that the ordinary Christian has access to God through Christ alone. This doctrine, found so clearly in the Bible, undermined, first, ecclesiastical hierarchy and monarchy that had

developed in the Middle Ages, and later, civil, social, and political hierarchy and monarchy. The priesthood of all believers spelled the doom of aristocracy in both church and state. All men were equal before God and the law. The political application of Luther's idea appears in the U. S. Constitution, which prohibits the United States from granting titles of nobility.

Liberty of Conscience and Religious Freedom

Still another fundamental idea is that of religious liberty. Here again I quote the words of Luther:

It is with the Word that we must fight, by the Word we must overthrow and destroy what has been set up by violence. I will not make use of force against the superstitious and unbelieving.... No one must be constrained. Liberty is the very essence of faith.... If I had wished to appeal to force, the whole of Germany would perhaps have been deluged with blood.

Luther wrote those words in the 1520s, and set forth clearly the distinction between Biblical Christianity and the theory and practice of the established churches of the Middle Ages and later. His idea, once again, became the basis for the Puritans' notion of liberty of conscience. Today we know it as religious liberty.

The Primacy of the Individual and Private Property

Even the concept of private property may be traced to the Protestant Reformation. Harold Berman of Emory University has pointed out that "the key to the renewal of law in the West from the sixteenth century on was the Protestant concept of the power of the individual, by God's grace, to change nature and to create new social relations through the exercise of his will. The Protestant concept of the individual became central to the development of the modern law of property and contract...."

The seventeenth-century Calvinists, for those who wish to read the history, laid the foundations for both English and American civil rights and liberties: freedom of speech, press, and religion; the privilege against self-incrimination, the right of *habeas corpus*, and the independence of juries.

Calvinism in America

When we apply these insights to the United States, we notice several things. In the beginning all America was Protestant – 98 percent of the people. The numbers we have for church affiliation in seventeenth and eighteenth century America show that three-fourths of Americans were Calvinists of one flavor or another: Puritan, Pilgrim, Presbyterian, Baptist, German Reformed, Lutheran, Congregationalist, and Episcopal. There were few Catholics, almost no Jews or Methodists, and no Muslims, Mormons, Moonies, Buddhists, Confucianists, Hindus, or atheists. Had there been any large numbers of these groups, there would have been no America as we have known it, not because the people who hold these views are somehow inferior, but because the views themselves are inferior: They are logically incapable of creating and sustaining a free society.

Theology, far from being irrelevant to political, social, and economic affairs, as economists have pretended for 50 years, has consequences. In fact, in order to make my argument contrast as starkly as possible with those of the secularists, I shall put it this way: Unless one is heavenly minded, one is no earthly good. As the numbers of Americans who subscribe to anti- and sub-Christian beliefs has grown, the freedoms of Americans have diminished. One can trace it by looking at church membership figures in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well as by noticing how churches themselves have abandoned the theology of the first two hundred years of America. Like it or not, religious, political, and economic freedom depend on a certain collection of ideas, and when those ideas are no longer held by a majority of the people, it is only a matter of time before religious, political, and economic freedom disappear.

James Madison, a student of Presbyterian minister John Witherspoon at Princeton and architect of the Constitution, wrote: "We have staked the whole future of the American civilization, not upon the power of government, far from it. We have staked the future...upon the capacity of each and all of us to govern ourselves, to control ourselves, to sustain ourselves according to the Ten Commandments of God." And, of course, none of us has the capacity to obey even one Commandment, even in a merely civil manner, apart from the power of God.

Despite what the polls say, most Americans today do not believe in the God of the Bible. However they may answer when pressed for an answer by some

pollster, they live their lives as if God did not exist. Now unless people believe the theology that underlies the Ten Commandments, the Commandments themselves mean nothing. They are simply ten suggestions offered by some nomadic farmer or tribal deity.

Conclusion

Now I am ready to gather these arguments into a conclusion.

First: Modern freedom and civilization exist largely because of the ideas put forth by the Protestant Reformers in the sixteenth century.

Second: We have no historical evidence of any other constellation of ideas creating freedom and civilization.

Third: Churches, schools, and businesses in the twentieth century have no understanding of the principles on which freedom and civilization are based, and are in fact hostile to those principles.

Fourth: The attempts of libertarians, classical liberals, and conservatives to preserve freedom and civilization over the past 50 years have failed because they have not been based on any sound understanding of the philosophical and theological pre-conditions for freedom and civilization.

Fifth: Many conservatives, libertarians, and classical liberals are opposed to the ideas of the Protestant Reformers; they want the fruits of the Reformation – freedom and civilization – but they reject the root of freedom and civilization, Biblical Christianity.

Sixth: Christianity and freedom are a package deal. In the words of Christ himself, “If you abide in my Word, you are my disciples indeed, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things” – the things we call freedom, prosperity, and Western civilization – “shall be added to you.”

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