

DOMINION STRATEGIES

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Can you identify the origin (individuals or groups and time period) of the "Rapture" theory as currently accepted by most fundamentalist Christians?

The current doctrine is the "secret" rapture view which will supposedly involve Christ's physical return in secret, when he raises living and dead Christians into the sky and on to heaven, keeping them safe during the seven-year period of earthly horrors called the Great Tribulation.

There is no evidence of the pretribulation "Rapture" doctrine before 1830. Dave McPherson, a post-tribulation dispensationalist, has written several books on the history of the pretribulation Rapture doctrine. He has traced it back to 1830: a series of trance-induced revelations by a 15-year-old girl named Margaret Macdonald. Miss Macdonald was a member of Edward Irving's church in Scotland, and her revelations came during special prayer meetings held outside the church. The idea was picked up shortly thereafter by John Nelson Darby, who had investigated these meetings, McPherson argues, and who then went on to found the Plymouth Brethren group. (*The Incredible Cover-Up*, Logos Books, 1975.)

A scholarly dissertation on the subject is W. E. Bell's study, *A Critical Evaluation of the Pretribulation Rapture Doctrine in Christian Eschatology*, available from Dallas Baptist University Bookstore, 7777 West Kiest, Dallas, TX 75211: \$23.50.

Dispensationalism became popular in the United States as a result of late-nineteenth-century prophecy conferences, and as a result of a very popular book, *Jesus Is Coming* (1870), by W. E. B. (William E. Blackstone). C. I. Scofield popularized these teachings with his mail-order Bible courses, and with his famous *Scofield Reference Bible* (Oxford University Press, 1909).

For additional historical background, see Clarence B. Bass, *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism* (Eerdmans, 1960) and C. Norman Krauss, *Dispensationalism In America: Its Rise and Development* (John Knox Press, 1958). For theological analysis, see O. T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church* (Presbyterian & Reformed, 1945), and the recent book by Curtis Crenshaw and Grover Gunn, *Dispensationalism: Today, Yesterday, and Tomorrow* (Footstool Press, P.O. Box 161021, Memphis, TN 38186; \$10).

What is the Biblical position on the State's granting of marriage licenses? Can a case be made for the Christian to opt out of getting one?

The marriage license was a product of the immediate post-Civil War era. Some argue that it was imposed to keep the races separate. Others say that it was the beginning of a 100-year conspiracy to legally classify every person as the

creation of the State. Others say that it was just one more example of bureaucracy.

There is no need for these licenses. Marriage is a monopoly of the family, although it does involve the State and church as enforcing agents. There is "no indication biblically that any institution except the family has primary jurisdiction over the family.

A declaration of marriage, like the declaration of any other legally binding bond, is to be made publicly. The State has asserted jurisdiction here as elsewhere. This assertion is not based on anything in the Bible. Public affirmation need not be exclusively statist. However, for purposes of administration, the State can require that certain forms or procedures be maintained so that it can assert its legitimate jurisdiction in cases of dispute (e.g., adultery). The authority to make these requirements is technical: reducing costs of administration and future adjudication. But the actual form such documents should take is arbitrary and historical.

I can see no legitimate reason for the State to require marriage licenses. It is just another example of how the State chips away at the authority of other institutions. But it is a small matter, and not worth fighting. We have limited resources; other fights require all the resources we possess, and then some. There is no good reason to become a spiritual kamikaze. Spiritual kamikazes enjoy avoiding the really important battles of the age in order to deal with trivialities. This is the essence of Phariseism. Avoid it.

Your book, *Successful Investing in an Age of Envy* seems to contradict Chilton's *Paradise Restored*. In *Paradise Restored*, one is given a feeling of hope and the coming advance of Biblical principles in every area of life. But in your book there seems to be a feeling of impending doom and destruction of our economic system as we know it. How can this be?

Have you read the first 41 chapters of the Book of Job? Have you read the Book of Lamentations? Are these books filled with gloom and destruction? Lots of gloom and destruction! Nothing but gloom and destruction. How can this be? Simple: gloom and destruction are preparations for Christian victory.

Have you read Isaiah 1? It prophesies destruction (although it took 125 years to come). Then read Isaiah 2. It prophesies victory and restoration. Then read Isaiah 3 and 4: more judgment and destruction. How can this be?

Have you read Ezekiel, where God instructed him to weep neither for the death of his wife nor for the sacking of Jerusalem (Ez. 24:15-27). His feelings were irrelevant to God; he was required to suppress them. The issue is God's judgment—judgment unto restoration—not a person's feelings. What do feelings have to do with anything impor-

tant to God's kingdom? Nothing.

Have you read of Joseph? He was sold into slavery by his brothers, falsely accused by Potiphar's wife, spent years in prison, suffered forgetful neglect by pharaoh's butler, and came to rule all Egypt? What do feelings have to do with anything important to God's kingdom? Nothing.

Have you read of Daniel? Sent into captivity, threatened with execution by a series of pagan kings, thrown into a lion's den, and in each case, he emerged to rule that pagan nation. What do feelings have to do with anything important to God's kingdom? Nothing.

It is a sign of spiritual immaturity when personal feelings of gloom and destruction in any way interfere with preparations for victory.

I often hear about various banks. Would you explain the purpose of each and perhaps list some sources of information for research into them? They are: the IMF, Export-Import Bank, and the World Bank.

These banks are not banks. They are huge government boondoggles that are called banks in order to confuse voters, but which exist solely to get people (mainly taxpayers) to subsidize giveaway programs to deadbeat foreign socialist governments. They are specifically designed to hide the fact that these are compulsory foreign aid programs. The money is loaned at below-market interest rates to high-risk socialist governments that cannot qualify for more loans through the multinational private banks. The money is used especially to insure the major multinational banks that these heavily indebted deadbeat governments will keep on making interest payments to the big multinational banks. These boondoggle "banks," especially the IMF (International Monetary Fund), are simply conduits for money from taxpayers to bankers by way of deadbeat foreign socialist governments.

Scholarly papers criticizing these boondoggles are occasionally published by Cato Institute and Heritage Foundation, both located in Washington, D.C. All the "banks" publish government-financed propaganda. Sign up, if you sincerely want to be bored. The World Bank is actually called the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Can you recommend any Christian graduate schools teaching Christian economics? I'm especially interested in obtaining an MBA. What do you think about CBN University?

CBN University is trying to produce a Christian curriculum, although it has only a few degree-granting programs. It is not a widely recognized institution in the academic world. It is unclear how a potential employer would regard an MBA issued by CBN University. There are no academic textbooks

in Christian business.

More to the point, why do you want an MBA? What will an MBA give you that you don't have now? A certificate? Such certificates are not worth much in today's employment market unless they are from prestige pagan universities (Stanford, Harvard, and Chicago especially). Are you presently being asked by some employer to get one? If not, then why not get a job and learn on the job? Get an employer to finance it. If your employer wants you to get one, let him pay for it, and allow you to work part-time at full pay at the job. If he won't do this for you, he really doesn't think much of either you or an MBA.

If no one has said you need an MBA, why bother to get one? Go to work, and study on the side at those topics that you need to do your job better.

I was raised in a church that put footwashing on the same level as baptism and communion. What about this practice?

First, there was no Old Testament law requiring such an ecclesiastical practice. Second, in the era before the resurrection, the ground was considered cursed, which is why Moses and Joshua were told to take off their shoes when approaching holy ground. The idea of "shaking the dust off your feet"-abandoning those who would not listen to the gospel-referred to placing a curse on unbelieving Jewish cities in the pre-resurrection era. Third, it was a sign of humility of the leaders of the church to wash the feet of the members.

The question is: What about after the resurrection? This event cleansed the whole world from death symbolically. It also abolished the dietary laws (Acts 10; 1 Cor. 8). It abolished the laws regarding dirt. For example, soldiers today aren't required to carry a shovel to bury their excrement, nor are they required to go outside the camp. They were required to do so in the Old Testament, "For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp. . ." (Deut. 23:14). In short, this was a ritual requirement, not primarily a sanitation requirement. For sanitary reasons, we dig military latrines, but the old law regarding the ritual cleanliness of the military camp are gone. Thus, at best, all that now remains of the footwashing ceremony is the sign of humility.

Second, the sacraments alone are permanent and required. No rituals other than these are required. Thus, any attempt to elevate footwashing to the level of a sacrament is openly heretical. It is placing a purely man-made requirement alongside God's exclusive requirements.

If church leaders want to show humility, let them shine the shoes of the rest of us once in a while. Or let them deliver and retrieve bedpans in Christian hospitals three days per year. Footwashing is no more required than these ceremonies, and it is a good deal less useful.