

A man was thinking and he realized ...

men are free – at least they should be.

And with that freedom comes responsibility.

Don't be afraid.

Freedom & Christian Responsibility

By

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To Those With The Courage To Accept the
Responsibility For Their Own Lives

Introduction

Shortly after the creation of man men joined themselves together into tribes and this ultimately led to the formation of kingdoms. Part of the motivation was probably for defensive purposes. Men were afraid to be alone and so grouped together for safety sake. And part of the motivation was likely related to satisfying a sense of belonging.

The interest in religion led to competing religious belief systems and this ultimately led to the formation of religious organizations. Men established religions hoping to secure the "favor of the gods" in this life and also, perhaps, to secure a promise of eternal life due to "correct" religious membership.

Unfortunately, in many cases, the forming of kingdoms, religions, and religious organizations was also a vain attempt to evade the responsibility for having to make your own life decisions and then to live with the consequences. Perhaps even more unfortunate, it was also an attempt to ignore, or evade the laws that govern the universe. Any such attempt to ignore, or evade the laws that govern the universe ultimately proves itself futile.

God made men free. He had to in order to develop character in us. And God gave us dominion over the earth, not each other. The freedom God gave us also makes us responsible for our choices. The main purpose of this book is to survey the freedom God gave each of us and to discuss its ramifications, its power, its role in a natural rights explanation, and to encourage each of us to accept the responsibility that comes with that freedom. Freedom and responsibility are inextricably linked. And as this book surveys freedom I am going to ask a few questions and challenge a few myths. The answers to most of the questions will contain some aspect of freedom.

The information from the pages that follow was gleaned from personal life experience and learning, the Bible, and from logical reasoning.

As a housekeeping point, the scriptural references, herein, are from the King James Version, KJV, unless denoted otherwise. Any emphasis, in the scriptural quotations, is mine throughout this book.

As an additional important note, I have chosen to write the pages that follow mainly in a

conversational style. Having said that, let's get started. I offer for your serious consideration and hopeful edification what I have learned below.

Peace & Prosperity–The Stated Goal

Every year, on December 31, the various news network anchor people generally interview a variety of world leaders. And they always ask these world leaders, "What are you hoping for, in the upcoming year?" And almost invariably the first three words out of their mouths are, "Peace and prosperity."

Peace and prosperity are good things to hope for, but these world leaders really don't know, in my opinion, what causes peace and prosperity. Otherwise the policies they advocate would be very different. In this section of the book I am going to give an answer as to what does cause peace and prosperity.

What causes peace and prosperity? In very simple macro terms, love and liberty cause peace and prosperity.

What is love? In Romans 13:10, it says:

“Love worketh no ill to his neighbour:
therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”
Romans 13:10, KJV

It is interesting to note that love is more than just a feeling, or a choice. It is also prescriptive in that how we are to love is in accordance with “the fulfilling of the law.” And while the obvious implication of the phrase, “the law” is taken as meaning God’s divine law, it does not preclude the broader meaning of fulfilling what is known as “natural law” or “the laws of nature” – which God also created. The laws of nature are ascertainable by man if man chooses to use his God-given reason to discover them.

The three most important natural rights discovered as stemming from natural law are the rights to life, liberty, and property. The above scriptural passage in Romans might be hinting at respecting these natural law rights because the first part of the scripture says, “love worketh no ill to his neighbor.” Not harming your neighbor could easily translate into respecting your neighbor’s natural rights to life, liberty, and property. There is a more detailed section on “Life, Liberty, & Property” later in this book.

There is also a deduced natural right of a freedom to trade your property with others (contract), or to give away your property to others (bequest), or to use your property to sustain yourself (right to life). Loving others would also mean, then, honoring your contracts when trading with others.

So love would be fulfilling the divine law as spelled out in the Bible and it would also mean respecting other's natural rights to life, liberty, and property and it would mean to keep your end of a bargain when you are trading with others.

Herbert Spencer, Richard Maybury (quoted below), and others have detailed respecting others [this author: loving others] as follows:

"Do all you have agreed to do. Do not encroach on other persons or their property."

When Christ was answering a question, about which was the greatest commandment, he answered as follows:

"Then one of them [a Pharisee], which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him,

and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt **love thy neighbour as thyself.**"
Matthew 22:35-39, KJV

We are to love God, our Creator, the original appropriator, owner, and ruler of the universe with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and we are to love our neighbor as ourself. In my opinion, Christ summarized respecting the natural rights of others in only five words, "love your neighbor as yourself." Since we would not want someone else to take our life, our liberty, or our property, and since we would not want someone we contract with to not keep their end of the deal, we should not do so to others.

Love, then, could be taken to prescriptively mean respect for God, others, and ourselves reflected in how we conduct ourselves in action. Love is, in a sense, basic morality and decency. And all of the above, then, is the "Love" part of my formulaic answer as to the question, "What causes peace and prosperity?"

What about the "Liberty" part of my formulaic answer? What is liberty? It is one of the natural rights discussed above and it is another word for freedom. And, as always, my caution with freedom is that freedom without responsibility is a prescription for disaster. In order to exercise freedom properly we have to be prepared to answer for the results of our implemented decisions – our exercise of freedom. And, without love guiding freedom, as prescribed above, freedom can be harmful to others and to our self. Freedom must always be exercised responsibly and when it is, it produces amazing things. **Over time, love and liberty, as defined above, will produce peace and prosperity.**

One of the reasons I know this is because I have taken a look at how God tried to structure ancient Israelite society and I have also diligently studied American history, the Bible, natural law, and economics.

In ancient Israel, God gave his instruction to the people to teach them how to become moral (Psalm 103:7). And he gave them life and freedom within the context of those laws (Deuteronomy 30:19-20). Moses was

rehearsing some of this to the Israelites in the book of Deuteronomy:

“Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons’ sons;” Deuteronomy 4:5-9, KJV

God wanted the ancient Israelites to succeed and for the other nations to come to admire the quality of Israel’s character and the laws (instruction) they followed that helped form this character. God put the ancient Israelites at the geographic center of Asia, Europe, and Africa –

a nation set on a hill, as it were. Unfortunately, ancient Israel failed miserably. They did not keep God's laws and God ended up throwing the Israelites off of the land. They did not obey his laws and they asked for a king (1 Samuel 8). Those are two of the biggest mistakes a nation can make and the ancient Israelites paid dearly for both.

As for America, I personally believe that America was a special and perhaps unique nation. And I also believe that America was more closely structured to following both God's divine laws and also natural laws than any other nation in history (perhaps other than ancient Israel). And because America was more closely structured to proper law it ended up becoming probably the most blessed nation in history. One could argue about whether the Founding Fathers were Christian, Deist, or other, but the bottom line is that America, based on how it was structured legally and culturally, forced people to be basically moral and to live free and to be responsible for their own lives. The results were spectacular and unprecedented.

In the first few paragraphs of the Declaration of Independence, America's Founding Fathers acknowledged that God is sovereign and that

God was the granter of certain inalienable rights to each and every human being. Among these inalienable rights are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. At the time, "the pursuit of happiness" was widely understood, correctly so, to mean property. In other words, it was a phrase known to mean private property. So the inalienable natural rights that God has given to each of us are life, liberty, and private property.

It was also widely understood that government was organized force and merely an agent of the people. So the American government was instituted and constituted to protect the natural human rights of its citizens, God's beneficiaries, not to arbitrarily rule over them.

In fact, I believe our Founding Fathers were inspired to chain the government with the principles elaborated in the Declaration of Independence, with the separation of powers enumerated and not enumerated in the Constitution, and with the Bill of Rights. When I say "inspired" above, I mean perhaps by the Creator of the Universe, or by the Founding Fathers' knowledge of natural law. In either case, men are free. The Founding Fathers tried to keep it that way. And for a while, it worked.

In Revelation 12 there is a Biblical account of answering for our lives.

“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.” Revelation 20:12-13, KJV

We are not only free. We are accordingly responsible for our actions and that is why God can judge us according to our works. What will we do with our freedom? That is the question.

Matthew 16 speaks of Christ rewarding men according to their works.

“For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.”
Matthew 16:27, KJV

The reason Christ will reward every man according to his works is because we are free to choose and because we are held responsible for our actions. Our works are an offering to God. While we are alive, we should strive to make good decisions and to leave the world a better place for our time here, in other words to create value. We will be rewarded for creating value, not just in this life, but when we are ultimately judged.

The legal system, at the time of the founding of America, was largely based on English common law, which was largely based on both the Bible and also natural law. Common law is discovered law, not invented law and is basically the application of the principles of the Ten Commandments and the principles of natural law in a society. Judges were basically thought to be law scientists and they tried to understand the governing principles of the situation before them and then to skillfully apply those principles in order to establish as much justice and social harmony as possible in the situation they were currently adjudicating.

Under the common law, if you damaged someone else's life, liberty, or property, you were immediately hauled called into court,

damages were assessed, and you were forced to make good. Judgment was much more swift and sure. This caused people to live basically moral lives, whether they wanted to or not. In other words, crime did not pay.

Also, because there was no large governmental structure to tax and regulate people, the citizens had to make their own way. There was no public safety net. There was private charity, but if a man did not work, he could not expect either help from the government, or much sympathy from private individuals. The basic principle is detailed in 2 Thessalonians:

“For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.”

2 Thessalonians 3:10-12, KJV

This was largely practiced in early America. If a man did not work, he did not eat. There

was private and church charity to help the truly needy, but charity was a lot wiser back then.

As a result of the various factors described above, what happened? What happened was that people were free and they had to work, whether they wanted to or not, and they had to be moral, whether they wanted to or not. Men knew they were responsible for their own lives and made their decisions taking this into consideration. As a housekeeping point, I am not saying that the early Americans were perfect in any way. Obviously they were not. I am trying to make plain that America rose to prominence because its people had integrity, they exercised their freedom responsibly, and they worked hard.

Even God the Father and Jesus Christ, the two brilliant minds, Creators, and owners of the universe, work hard.

“But Jesus answered them, **My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.**”

John 5:17, KJV

Combining freedom with basic morality releases a very potent and generative force for

good. And that is just what happened in America.

As a few examples, Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin, many other things, and improved mass manufacturing processes. Alexander Graham Bell, an individual, propelled the telecommunication industry forward. Two bicycle shop owners from Dayton, Ohio, working alone, the Wright Brothers, started the aerospace industry. Thomas Edison invented the light bulb, motion pictures, the phonograph, and too many things to list here. Even today, you have Steve Jobs, of Apple Computer, leading technology change in computers, music, telephones, etc. So it is still happening today. The list of American inventions by either an individual, or a small team, are too numerous to list. These inventors were not centrally directed by a government, or by a church. They used their minds, their freedom, their character, and their work ethic to change the world. They created products and services that were valuable without being centrally directed.

Americans, in their experiment with liberty, should have proven to the kings and the aristocrats of Europe that freedom does not cause anarchy. These European kings and

aristocrats thought America would fail miserably. They thought that Americans would fall on their faces. But the Americans proved that freedom, not only does not cause anarchy, it is a key element in being a potent generative force for good. Freedom causing anarchy is a fiction. Individuals not acting morally, not acting responsibly, cause problems, but freedom does not cause those problems.

The bottom line is that individuals and small groups not only can change the world, they already have. And every American should know that. Freedom does not cause anarchy. **Free people, acting responsibly, produce peace and prosperity.** Love and liberty produce peace and prosperity. It is a shame that the world's "leaders" do not seem to know this.

Despite its brief history, America, in a relatively few decades, went from the land of a few farms and many forests to become the leading power on earth. It happened because Americans were forced to live free and forced to live morally.

It's a myth, by the way, to think that Americans did well because they had an abundance of natural resources. The former

USSR and Africa have as many, if not more, natural resources than America has. Natural resources are only potential wealth. Hong Kong, with almost no land mass and basically only a harbor had an economy that was for years in the top 20 in the world. Japan, for years the world's second largest economy, is a relatively small country with limited natural resources.

As a case in point, prior to communism, Russia exported wheat. After communism, the USSR could barely feed their people, if at all. In order to show the value of freedom and individual incentive let's consider the following concrete example concerning agricultural production in the USSR. Even under Communism, in the USSR the peasants were allowed to work, for their own account, small plots of land if the plot was one acre or less. The cumulative effect of all those one-acre plots of land was about 1% of the total land of the USSR that was farmed. The performance results are telling. The peasants, with about 1% of the land and none of the mechanized equipment, produced anywhere from 30% to 50% of the crop. The centralized command and control managed structure with 99% of the land and all of the mechanized equipment produced the other 50% to 70% of the crop.

The kings and the aristocrats in Europe thought that the American experiment in liberty would be a dismal failure, because they didn't understand the generative force of freedom when combined with morality. Within a few generations what actually happened was the average American's standard of living ended up growing to equal or exceed the king's and the aristocrats' standard of living in Europe.

In early America, two of the books that were in pretty much every home were The King James Bible (Authorized Version) and Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England in Four Books*. It was said, during that time, that Americans couldn't be fooled because they were a country of lawyers. And that is because they studied the Bible (a book of principles and laws) and they studied common law and they knew their natural rights and they stood up for them.

Freedom Provides Information

Freedom is a key element in helping to generate peace and prosperity because freedom provides both information and incentives. If people are centrally directed, or an economy is

centrally directed, of necessity, there will be a very few decision-makers attempting to guess what products and services people will want and then giving command and control orders accordingly. Every time and every place in history that a centrally directed economy has been tried, it has failed. There are several reasons, all of them important, that this is so.

One of the most important reasons is that it has been conclusively shown, (via Dr. Ludwig von Mises in his 1922 book entitled *Socialism*), that the central planners of a command and control economy cannot really calculate in order to plan. It is impossible for the central planners to plan what goods and services the economy needs to produce in order to satisfy the individuals in that economy because they no longer have pricing information with which to plan.

When men own their own lives, and the private property necessary to sustain them, they naturally form markets and make trades amongst themselves. On all inhabited continents, i.e., everywhere, throughout time, mankind has used either gold or silver as money. The convention of using gold and silver as money resulted from human freedom, not

from any government, but the discussion of money is beyond the scope of this book. Suffice it to say that using money as a medium of exchange allows for indirect trades to take place. In other words a man having one too many horses, but needing a chicken for dinner, will not have to try and trade the horse for what he would regard as too many chickens. He can simply sell the horse for money and use part of the money to buy a chicken from someone selling chickens. The results of those trades, when the trades are accomplished using money as a medium of exchange, provide money prices. The money prices help entrepreneurs and traders understand whether to continue providing a good or service or to discontinue it. In short the money prices provide information to entrepreneurs and other traders. Without the money prices, entrepreneurs and traders would have a much more difficult time in knowing what to do and when to do it. In other words they would have a much more difficult time in knowing which goods and services to actually produce and sell into the market. Without freedom and free markets there are no money prices. Without money prices producers don't know what to produce. Freedom provides information that is vital.

Goods and services are valuable because individuals see a value in them, i.e., value is subjective to each individual. Each individual chooses goods and services based on their own personal hierarchy of values. These personal hierarchies of values are constantly changing depending on what each individual feels he now needs next. With millions of people in an economy and with their individual hierarchy of values changing constantly, there is no way a central planner can even know each person, much less track their constantly changing value scales on a real-time basis. A computer cannot solve this problem as it cannot be connected to each citizen's brain and even if you could so connect a computer to each person's brain the computer would need prior objective programming, which could not account for, nor handle the subjective real-time changes constantly occurring in the minds of all the people.

Without money prices there is no real information and no real-time information with which a central planner can plan.

A second reason that a central planner cannot plan in a command and control economy is that modern economies use complicated and

time consuming production processes. The initial factors of production, natural resources and labor, are combined over time into capital goods (machine tools and the like) that then allow greater production and possibilities than if men were directly attempting to make certain consumer products. These capital goods allow mass production thus lowering production costs and enabling final consumer goods to be able to be sold to consumers at lower prices. These capital goods also allow better quality due to consistency of production. And these capital goods also allow for some products to be manufactured that could not be made at all using just human labor combined with the raw materials, e.g., an integrated circuit computer chip. In other words the use of capital goods allows for lower consumer costs, better quality, and new and better products. Here is the big problem for central planners: Without market prices, which would not exist in a command and control economy, there is no way for central planners to know whether to make capital goods, or how much labor, raw materials, and time to use in making capital goods. What is a ball bearing worth? What is a welding machine worth? How many resources should be committed to the making of a robotic welding machine? These types of products do not have

consumer prices. The central planners would be flying blind. They would be like an airline pilot trying to fly an airplane in zero visibility with no instruments. The results are always the same and very predictable – a crash with the resultant pain, suffering, and death. That is the big joke about those advocating socialism or any other form of a centrally “planned” economy. **The central planners cannot plan** and the advocates of such a system are clueless as to what they are actually advocating. The central planners’ random guesses, in an attempt to plan, misallocate resources, waste vital capital, and end up not satisfying consumers very well, if at all. **Natural laws have their penalties built into them.** The historic carnage speaks for itself. Vital capital is wasted and human lives are destroyed.

Another benefit, relating to freedom, is that if a product (or service) finds success in the marketplace this success becomes quickly known, far and wide. And once known, competing entrepreneurs and producers rapidly roll out competitive products to capitalize on the success of whatever product is now in high demand. A local success can quickly become a regional, national, or even international success. And, as the producers find new and better ways

to manufacture the new product, costs get driven down and the quality is increased. The end consumers benefit from not only having access to the new product in the first place, but also in finding the cost to acquire it going down and the quality going up. In other words, success can become leveraged far and wide. Freedom and the information it provides is an integral part of this process.

Conversely, if a new product is tried and it does not meet with enough consumer acceptance to allow it to continue to be offered into the marketplace, the new product can be discontinued. This, too, can become known far and wide. Other entrepreneurs and producers can avoid making the same mistake. In other words, once again, freedom provides information that allows for the damage to be contained. The resources that would have been wasted on a product's continued and unwanted production can be saved to be used on producing goods and services that people actually want.

The information that freedom provides allows for success to be leveraged and for damage to be contained.
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Freedom also provides economic and other incentives for people to work. Work is perhaps not the most fun human activity, but it is a necessity of life. And work in a command and control economy is tragic for the workers because the workers, being rational, know that they are not really providing goods and services that people actually want. One of the sad worker jokes about working in a socialist economy is, "We pretend to work and they pretend to pay us." Workers go through the motions and the economy stagnates.

On the flip side, if a man is free and knows that the only safety net he has is his own personal savings, he tends to work both smart and hard. Perhaps such a man also might have a family support structure, or a church support structure, but neither of these is likely to give him incentive not to work hard. That man knows he is working for himself and perhaps a family or future family and also perhaps for church or charitable causes he believes in. Any government program that takes away the incentive to work, or prevents laborers from freely contracting with business owners is a hindrance to productivity and to the well being of people's lives. It leads to societal and

economic degradation. Again, the historic carnage speaks for itself.

To summarize this section, freedom provides the information individuals need in order to plan their own lives and freedom provides the incentive for individuals to work. Freedom also allows the producers in a society the very powerful generative force of leveraging successes and to contain the damage from failures. The lack of freedom makes it impossible for central planners to even know what consumers want, much less to be able to intelligently structure production to provide the actual goods and services wanted. The lack of freedom causes human lives and capital to be wasted. The bitter irony and absolute truth is that without freedom “central planners” cannot plan.

Life, Liberty, And Property

For hundreds of years there has been much discussion about the **natural rights** of life, liberty, and property. To some men, they are God-given. To other men, they are a part of **natural law**. To other men, they are both God-given and part of natural law. And some men deny that man has natural rights. The men that

hold this belief unfortunately usually believe in the concept of an organic state, that citizens are basically human fuel to be used to stoke the fires that keep an organic state alive. As we have seen from the prior section of this book, anyone who believes that central planners can use an organic state apparatus to actually plan intelligently is wrong. Central planners will not have the information to do so. As a result they will waste both human lives and a society's capital trying.

Interestingly enough, the Founding Fathers of America believed that natural rights were both God-given and were also a part of natural law. This can be known from a careful reading of the first portion of the Declaration of Independence [emphasis mine throughout].

“When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which **the laws of nature** and **of nature's God** entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident [self-evident is a reference to knowledge known via “a priori” methods, which I will discuss below], that all men are created equal, that they are **endowed by their Creator** with certain unalienable rights, that among these are **life, liberty** and **the pursuit of happiness** [the “pursuit of happiness” was known to mean private **property** at the time]. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

It is clear from reading the above that America’s Founding Fathers believed in a God who gave men rights and that these rights of life, liberty, and property were unalienable and absolutely true. It is also clear that they believed these rights were self-evident and formed a part of natural law (the laws of nature). Whether the individuals involved were Deists, who believed that a Creator God created the universe with laws and then retired from the scene like a watchmaker making a watch and then winding the watch, or whether some of the individuals believed in a personal Creator God, with which human beings can have contact, is not relevant to our discussion at hand. That can be debated at another time and place and

already has been. What is relevant to the discussion at hand is: Were America's Founding Fathers correct in their delineation of natural rights in the Declaration of Independence? Can natural rights be established by reference to the Bible and/or by reason according to the laws of nature, i.e., according to natural law?

This author believes that, properly understood, there can be no conflict with natural law and the Bible because both natural law and the Bible were given by a personal Creator God to allow human beings two different ways to know how to order their lives. St. Thomas Aquinas would probably say the same thing as his categories of "divine law," corresponding to the Bible, and "natural law," corresponding to the laws of nature discoverable by human reason, both form part of what he calls "eternal law," corresponding to the laws and knowledge the Creator God had available to him when he planned for and created the entire universe and everything in it. It stands to reason that the Creator God would not contradict himself by saying something in divine law that contradicted natural law, i.e., what "reason" showed man via the understanding that man can gain from discovering and using the laws of nature.

An "a priori" axiom is a premise that can be reasoned from to establish and make plain further truth. It is a basic fact subsumed from all facts. It is innately true. Any attempt to deny its trueness would require its use in an attempt to deny it, which would be a logical contradiction and an invalid argument. The invalid argument can then be rejected, ergo once again establishing the trueness of the a priori axiom that was challenged. Some writers and thinkers will refer to it as a "self-evident" premise. They refer to it as self-evident because some will grasp this innately true fact on their own, by their own realization. Others will apprehend or comprehend its truth once it is called to their attention. Either way, the fact is innately true and meaningful to human beings once realized or comprehended. The a priori axiom is not a tautology (something that is true by definition only and does not really teach us anything). It is not a synthetic proposition requiring ongoing and never-ending empirical testing – which can never absolutely establish any truth. It comes from a comprehension of the empirical world as it really is, because it is a basic fact subsumed from all facts and it is a fact that is true in all cases without fail and without the need for any further empirical analysis. It is a self-evident innately true fact

that can be reasoned from with absolute certainty of its truth.

In using reason to understand the laws of nature man identifies entities according to their defining characteristics. When man successfully IDs an entity (a thing) we have new knowledge (id-entity, aka identity). The identification of new entities also gives us knowledge of cause and effect as we see how different entities interact with each other. Man, the rational being, can learn a lot just by using his own mind.

Aristotle's famous laws of identification are 1) a thing is itself, i.e., $A = A$; 2) the law of non-contradiction, i.e., A cannot be A and non-A at the same time; and 3) the law of the excluded middle, i.e., something is either A, or it is not. These three simplified and paraphrased laws, above, actually help clarify truth for us, even though they may seem very simple. For example, man has been categorized, correctly so, as being the rational animal, or the rational being. The word man is a category of identification and it includes and means all men. In other words, if someone is in the category of "man" they have the defining characteristics of what it means to be a man, including being

rational (thinking), and they are a man, i.e., Man = Man. This has very important implications because man, the rational being, has certain properties that caused him to be categorized as the rational animal, i.e., men think. All men think. That is why they are categorized as a man in the first place. We shall see why this is important later.

Life is better than death. Only the living can value anything. Only the living can think. Any man wanting to attempt to challenge the fact that "life is better than death" would have to be alive in order to make the challenge. Their using life in order to try to establish that death is better than life would be an invalid argument that can be rejected. If they really thought death was better than life they would have already killed themselves and would not be alive to make their challenge. Life wins. Life being better than death is a self-evident a priori fact of nature for rational beings. The Bible corroborates this in various places, e.g., by promising eternal life in I Corinthians 15 and very specifically in Deuteronomy 30:19:

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and

death, blessing and cursing: **therefore choose life**, that both thou and thy seed may live:"
Deuteronomy 30:19, KJV

Choosing life has implications for how mankind should structure their lives in order to live. To put it in caveman-speak, "Death bad. Life good." Only the living can gain and experience values, grow in character, be productive, experience relationships, and the joys of being alive. And only the living can think. And we are man, the thinking animal. But for now, let us move on to liberty.

Liberty is a requirement of every man as man has correctly been classified, according to the laws of nature, as the rational animal (the rational being). Every man has to be free in order to think, or he could not fit into the category of being a man in the first place because man is the thinking being (the rational animal). All men then must have the ability to think and **this ability to think requires liberty**. No one else can control a man's thoughts, or the controlled man would not be thinking for himself, which is to say he would not be thinking at all – he would be the equivalent of a ventriloquist's puppet. All men are men. All men think because to be a man

means to be a thinking being, aka the rational animal. To fit into the category of rational being a man must have the ability to think and the ability to think requires the freedom to think – the liberty to think. Ergo man must be free to think. He must have liberty.

But this required liberty goes farther than just the ability to think because a man also has to stay alive. Man has to remain true to principle number one, which is that life is better than death. And because man does not live in a thought world, but a real world, each man needs the ability to use property, e.g., food in order to stay alive. In other words, each man needs not only the ability to think, he also needs the ability to take action. The necessity to take action and the ability to take action also entails the need for liberty. He needs this liberty in order to take the steps that are necessary for him to sustain his life. It does a man no good to think about eating a piece of fruit. The man also has to have the liberty to obtain the piece of fruit and to eat it. Each man then, needs liberty in order to think and to take action in order to sustain his life. Liberty then is a requirement, according to the laws of nature, for all men. Liberty is a part of natural law for all men. It is the right of all men to conform to their nature, i.e., to be free.

Liberty is then a self-evident a priori natural right according to the laws of nature.

Big problems, of course, have come from governments, tribes, nobility classes, and religions attempting to deny that men possess liberty as a natural right according to natural laws. There are always men who want to rule over others and to deny the ruled their freedom. Whenever and wherever this happens that society loses out because the quality of the people declines, productivity declines, and the offending society ultimately declines. When men are not free to think and to take action automatic penalties for the violation of natural laws commence and those penalties will be paid.

If someone (a man) wants to attempt to deny that liberty is a natural right for all men in accordance with natural law, then we have to ask a few questions. How is it that the challenger, the arguing man, is free to make an argument? Where did he, a man, get his freedom to argue? You have to think in order to argue and you also have to be able to take the action of arguing. If he, the arguing man, has the liberty to think and take action, how is it that he has liberty but other men do not? All men are men. If one man has the liberty to

think and to take action all others do as well. The obvious answer is that he is using liberty, the a priori axiom, in an attempt to invalidate liberty as an axiom. Hence his argument is invalid and can be rejected. Liberty stands.

As the arrogance of some men knows no boundaries, I guess that an arguing man could argue that there are different categories of men - supermen and regular men. And he could continue his argument that he, being a superman, should have liberty while regular men should not have liberty. In other words he would try to re-categorize man into supermen and regular men. If he had objective evidence for this categorization then we would have to listen to his argument. Even so he would be making several important mistakes, each of which would render his new argument invalid. First, he would not be able to present any objectively verifiable evidence because none exists. Without evidence he is simply a mystic who wants to rule over others. And without any objectively verifiable evidence there is no reason for any suggested re-categorization of man. Second, even if the superman argument were true it would not prove the point that regular men be denied liberty. This is because, as the very definition of a man is "the thinking being,"

even the regular category of man would require that regular men have the right to think and to take action because it is inherent in men that they have this right to think and to take action in order to sustain their lives according to the laws of nature. That is why even "regular man" is classified, correctly so, as the thinking being.

The mystic wanna-be ruler could also attempt to categorize himself as a regular man requiring liberty to think and to take action, but what you and I would consider regular men were really somehow sub-human and therefore not really entitled to the liberty to think and to take action. This would be just another arrogant iteration of the superman argument above with no objectively verifiable evidence to back it up. I suppose the assertion would be that most men don't think clearly, or make mistakes, or whatever. It would be a desperate argument not realizing that the requirement to be categorized man, the thinking animal, does not require perfection in thinking - just that man can think. And to be able to think requires liberty. Again, liberty stands.

The very first chapter of the Bible gives man permission to have dominion over the earth. This implies that men should have both liberty

and property in that God said that man should have dominion over the animals and things of the earth, but not over each other.

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them [man] have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.” Genesis 1:26, KJV

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” Galatians 5:13, KJV

The Galatians 5:13 scripture is part of the reason why this book is entitled, *Freedom And Christian Responsibility*.

The right to property also turns out to be an a priori axiom for all men. The most important property right is the right of each man to self-ownership. The right to property starts with self-ownership. Someone attempting to dispute the property right of self-ownership for others has some big problems to overcome. He would need to be free to make an argument and he would also need to own himself so as to be able

to make the argument. Let's say the arguer is man #2 attempting to tell man #1 that man #1 does not own himself, that man #1 has no property right over himself. To make the below questions easier to ask and comment on, let's further say that man #2 is asserting ownership over man #1. Man #1 would clearly be entitled to ask, "If I do not own me, who does?" And, "How did my supposed owner obtain title to me?" And man #1 would be entitled to ask for the proof of how his supposed owner (man #2) got title to him (man #1). No matter what man #2 answered he could not sustain his argument through the key follow-up question that man #1 would surely ask. And that key follow-up question would be, "How did the supposed owner of me obtain title to himself in order to be able to take the action that got him (man #2) supposed title over me (man #1)?" Because both are men, according to the laws of nature, both have the same properties. Man = Man. If man #2 owns himself and can therefore take action in obtaining property, man #1, also a man, owns himself, too. Man #2 has used the a priori axiom in an attempt to deny its validity. The argument is invalid and can be rejected. A man owns himself and this is the first and most important property right for each man.

It makes no difference if man #2 is asserting ownership of man #1 on his own behalf, or on behalf of a collective group of men – whether this collective group of men be a tribe, a government, or whatever. This is because a collective group of men is a group of individual men. To form the collective, the individuals composing it would each have had to have the right of self-ownership and the right of liberty in order to think and to take the action of forming the collective. Again, the a priori would have been used in an attempt to deny it. Trying to argue from the point of view of a collective is an attempt to kick the can down the road, to no avail. Their argument is invalid and can be rejected. Men are men. Each of us has the natural right of self-ownership. The fact that some men choose to use their natural rights to form a collective does not give their collective, once formed, a “super-right” to trump the natural rights of other individuals. All collectives are made up of men. And men are men.

As a man, in terms of property rights, to own one’s self is not enough. One must also obtain and use other forms of property in order to stay alive, e.g., one must eat and that requires the obtaining and eating of food.

Many others have opined, e.g., John Locke, that man obtains the rights to other property from being the first to mix his productive labor with property in the commons (property that has not yet been properly appropriated for private usage). I concur. This is the fairest way because the first person to put property to productive use should be the rightful private owner. He thought of it and took action to make a then non-useful piece of property now useful. Someone who differed would have to put forth a more just reason for differing. I have not heard of a logical and just reason yet for a dissenting counter-argument. The fact that the previously unused property was in the commons is prima facie evidence that no one else had the smarts or the initiative to be the first to take the action to bring the property into productive use. Once someone thought of and took the action to make previously unproductive property productive, they became the first and rightful sole owner of this newly acquired and now private property.

Once property is productively utilized, i.e., made private, it can be utilized in three basic ways by the new owner. He can use it himself. He can leave it, via bequest, or gift, to others. Or, he can trade it for something else he wants.

The initial natural right of self-ownership is the foremost property right. And when man uses his natural right of self-ownership and his natural right of liberty of thought and action to obtain additional property from the commons in order to sustain his primary natural right of life he is acting as a man must act. He is acting according to the laws of nature, i.e., he is acting in accordance with natural law. A man must acquire and use property in order to stay alive and he has the deduced right to private property to be able to do so.

Man's natural rights of life, liberty, and property have now been shown to also include the deduced right to acquire and use property privately. The Declaration of Independence phrase, "pursuit of happiness" was a reference to private property and it implied that you have your life, your liberty, and you are free to use both, plus your initiative and energy to go forward and obtain as much other property as you think will give you happiness.

In short, life, liberty, and property are self-evident rights each and every man has due to the fact that he is a man (all men are men). They are natural rights deriving from the laws of nature. They are discoverable by men using

reason, i.e., their minds. And, throughout the Bible, God concurs. I believe this is one of the reasons for the passage in Romans 1 below, where God intimated that truth can be known about him and about creation, including ethical behavior, by men discovering and observing natural laws:

“since what may be known about God is plain to them [men], because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools” Romans 1:19-22, NIV

When a friend of mine went into officer training, for the military, one of the first things he was asked was, “Do you have a problem killing people and destroying property?” The reason he was asked was very clearly told to him. And that reason was, “Killing people and destroying property is what we do in the military. We kill the enemy and destroy his

property so he does not have the ability to make war against us." In olden times, when the losers of war were enslaved, I am guessing some ancient general would have expanded the question, asked of my friend, to: "Do you have a problem killing men, enslaving them, or destroying property?" "No. Good, because that is what we do here."

War, throughout history, caused death, slavery, and the destruction of property. It is the lack of social harmony that leads to human friction, which if not resolved, can ultimately lead to war. And I thought about war as I was thinking about life, liberty, and property. And I realized that war is the extreme opposite of social harmony. And my thinking helped me to realize why war is so very detrimental to human beings. Please take a look at the chart below to see what I realized, when I thought about the opposite, or difference, between war and peace (social harmony). Read the left "War" column all the way down first and then note each entry's opposite in the right "Social Harmony" column.

War leads to:		Social Harmony leads to:
Death		Life
Slavery		Liberty
Property destruction		Property
		aka the Natural Rights

The importance of social harmony is revealed in the genius of the Creator. First, the Creator told us, throughout the Bible, to live in peace, to live in social harmony, e.g., to love your neighbor as yourself. Even the way that the Creator phrased it below speaks to social harmony. Notice it only took him five key words to get the job done.

“Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt **love thy neighbour as thyself**: I am the LORD.” Leviticus 19:18, KJV

Second, he put the natural rights of man into the laws of nature in such a way that men could discover the laws of social harmony by simply using our reasoning ability. Man, after all, is the rational being. No man wants to have his life taken from him, or to be enslaved (or partially enslaved), or to have some of his property stolen or destroyed. It turns out that "loving your neighbor as yourself" is the same as respecting other men as men, and therefore respecting their God-given and natural rights of life, liberty, and property. And when men actually do this, there will be finally be social harmony.

Freedom As A Prosperity Generator

When a society recognizes and lives by respecting each other's natural rights the economic system in effect will be capitalism. Real capitalism conforms to natural laws. State-sponsored capitalism does not because it is really a mix of capitalism and fascism/socialism – which is a perversion of natural law because some men are privileged while other men are sacrificed to the privileged. State-sponsored capitalism (a mixed economy) is what most industrialized nations use today, unfortunately.

When there is real capitalism men have to work to acquire property and they trade it with others. To facilitate trading, a commodity ends up becoming more valuable as a medium of exchange than it would otherwise be if it were used just for its normal purposes. That commodity becomes money. Historically, throughout the ages, on all continents, gold became that commodity. Sometimes silver and copper played supporting roles, but gold was money. Once a society developed money its markets became more efficient. Neither money nor markets were state creations. Money and markets sprang from the actions of free men. And once a society started using money, men now had prices to use as information concerning what to produce, how to produce it, and where and how to sell the production, amongst other things.

Men with longer time horizons (lower time preferences) would work hard and not consume all they produced. In other words, they saved some of their production, usually trading the surplus production for gold coins, thus saving for the future. These gold coins became available for investing in the productive enterprises of other individuals. The other producers, who receive the loan or investment of the surplus

from the producer-savers (the invested capital), are able to expand their productive efforts with the additional funds available to them. This resulted in many benefits to all. The above is a simple explanation of capital coming into existence and then being used to help expand production that then improves living standards.

One of the benefits of capital is that it allows for entrepreneur-producers to be able to hire workers and pay them right away without waiting for the final end product to be sold in the market. Workers need money now. They have very high time preferences and cannot wait until the final product is sold. By way of example, if workers were hired to help build a one-year construction project the workers cannot wait one year in order to be paid. They are workers because they need money and they need it now. The invested capital enables the workers to be hired and paid as the project progresses without having to wait until the very end of the project and its final disposition.

Another benefit from invested capital is that the invested capital enables tools to be made that expand production. Men working with tools can produce more than men working without them.

Another benefit from invested capital is that technology can be both invented and put into practice. Invested capital allows for some men to spend their time to devise better ways to get things done, i.e., developing technologies and to invent brand new products, e.g., an iPod. But without capital, even already known technology cannot be put into practice to expand production. The invested capital allows for new technologies to be devised and then to actually be implemented so as to increase production and for new products to be created.

Another benefit to invested capital is that products requiring long production times can now be manufactured, e.g., a steel mill takes a long time to make and a lot of capital. But once it is made it can produce far more steel than individuals working by themselves or in small groups.

Another benefit to invested capital is that quality can be systematized and improved because workers can specialize and machines can be made to assist in production.

To summarize, with invested capital: workers can be hired and paid, new and better tools to

aid production come into existence, technology can be devised and implemented, brand new products can be created, large projects requiring many years to undertake can be executed, products have better quality, production increases, and the standard of living increases. Further, the standard of living does not just increase, all the above also enables life expectancies to also increase. For most people the quality of life is better and longer. The bottom line key, therefore, is to expand invested capital faster than population increases, which is achievable in a free society, but that is the subject for a different book.

It is true that some men do not prefer to work in mines or in factories. And some people do not prefer to live in cities where most of the jobs are. I think the Creator planned in advance for these possibilities by providing that each family would own their own land.

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Unto these the land shall be divided for an inheritance according to the number of names. To many thou shalt give the more inheritance, and to few thou shalt give the less inheritance: to every one shall his inheritance be given according to those that were numbered of him.

Notwithstanding the land shall be divided by lot: according to the names of the tribes of their fathers they shall inherit. According to the lot shall the possession thereof be divided between many and few.” Numbers 26:52-56, KJV

God provided that each family would own their own land. And while a family could choose to sell (really lease) its land, God provided, in Leviticus 25, that if they did so the land would nevertheless return to the original family in the 50th year. In other words, a family could not be permanently alienated from their land even if they chose to sell it (lease it). Without dwelling on all of the details, this author believes **God, in his wisdom, set up a societal shock absorber**. If someone does not want to work for others, e.g., at a factory in a city, they can stay on their own land and work on it. Their standard of living and lifestyle will be the results of their own choice. Each family had their own land to fall back on.

A final point on freedom as a prosperity generator is that with the specialization of knowledge and production that capitalism makes possible, the society, as a whole, has much more information at its disposal to utilize. If everyone in a society were family-farmers, the

sum total of knowledge in that society would largely overlay with each man and family having very close to the same knowledge set. The cumulative knowledge from that kind of society would be not much more than what a typical family farmer knows as an individual. In a free society, where there is a diversity of occupations and productive processes, the knowledge base of specialized knowledge, when added together, is very impressive. In other words there is a lot more overall knowledge available, with some men knowing how to produce steel, some men knowing how to make airplanes, some men knowing how to make specialized adhesives, some men knowing how to operate a family farm, some men knowing how to make integrated circuit chips, etc., etc., etc. This cumulative specialized knowledge allows for a much larger overall production and standard of living.

Freedom And Morality

One of the classic questions of the ages is, "Why does God allow evil?"

If any reader remembers the classic game show, "Name That Tune," the contestants would have to guess how many notes of a song they

would need to hear before they could correctly state the name of the song. Along those lines, I think I can answer the above question with a concept that contains twelve key words. The twelve-word concept that forms the heart of my answer is important to consider in this book surveying freedom and its role in human life. There are other answers to the above question, but a more complete answer to the question requires a separate book, which is entitled *The Source Of Evil*.

Why does God allow evil? Because he wants us to come to the place in our Christian lives where we will **do the right thing at the right time for the right reason**. He wants this even if what we do makes us unpopular and even if we are persecuted for so doing. And he has to make us free to know whether we will freely choose and do the right thing. It doesn't do God any good to command stones to do things, or to make humans into people-bots, which he could have done. God is building character in us one good decision at a time. God wants our love freely given to him and to others. He wants us to choose the right thing, so we have to be free to choose. And he wants us to do the right thing, so we have to be free to act.

Of course there are some side effects to free moral agency because some people choose to act irresponsibly. If someone chooses wrongly and then acts wrongly, their bad choices can spill over into our lives – which is bad for us. But that does not reduce the value of freedom. God is the ultimate in freewill and he always chooses the right thing. The bottom line is that God gives each of us so much freedom and so much time and then the freedom is up and then the time is up. And then we have to answer for how we spent our freedom and our time. A Biblical example of God testing men, to know how they would react, is as follows:

“And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.”
Deuteronomy 8:2, KJV

There is no place to hide from God when it comes time to answer for our lives. As mentioned, God gives each of us so much time and so much freedom and then the time is up and the freedom is up and then we have to answer for our lives. That is why the title of this book is *Freedom And Christian Responsibility*.

“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 [to be burned to death and to be dead for all eternity per Ezekiel 18:4 and other scriptures].”
Revelation 20:11-15, KJV

Now, why would a loving God provide, in advance, for a fire that would be used to put people to death for all eternity? The answer is, because God is not kidding around when it comes to wanting to know whether we will choose and do the right thing, because it is right. He knew in advance that some men

would choose not to do the right thing and he planned in advance to resolve the problem.

God's first choice resolution to the problem is obviously that men would repent of their sins and to accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and to then live a new life where they make better choices. Even as Christians none of us choose and do completely perfectly – which is where grace comes in and saves the day. But if some men will not accept solution number one, God will ultimately resolve the problem. God will not take away your freedom. He will hold you responsible for it.

Freedom And Religion

Men have a diversity of physical talents, gifts, and desires and that is one of the reasons why they trade with each other. By the tailor trading with the baker each gains and there is a higher standard of living for both. Adding to this, the Bible, in 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12, talk about different spiritual gifts and roles as well. In particular, 1 Corinthians 12 details a long list of gifts and cautions the eye not to look down on the ear because the body, to be complete, needs both seeing and hearing, etc.

“Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.” 1 Corinthians 12:4, KJV

“For as the body is one, and hath many members [parts], and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.” 1 Corinthians 12:12-18, KJV

Diversity is good and the liberty to be one's self gives peace. Each of us is encouraged to do our part to complete the body of Christ by becoming the best that we can be and by using our unique talents and gifts to represent Christ well in doing good. We are not to criticize other members (parts of the body of Christ) because

they are performing a different function. Of course they are. People are different.

I once witnessed a very controlling church organization break up and the members scatter. The situation, at the time, looked bleak. The members, to their credit, did not stop doing well. In fact, the breakup spurred a release of creative energy that was previously bottled up. Different members, over time, started the following types of church related service projects:

- A church related newspaper
- A radio program syndicated to many states
- A weekend seminar series
- A cassette based Bible college (in the 1990's)
- Internet websites
- A Bible series, on the web, teaching Biblical law
- Annual conferences
- A touring praise dancing group
- Mailing teachings out through tapes/CDs
- Speakers in local churches
- Television shows
- Various books and booklets were written
- Online discussion forums
- Blogs
- Etc.

None of the people above had perfect tools, perfect character, a lot of money, or perfect knowledge. But they saw an opening to get something done and to their credit, they did it. Not everyone is entrepreneurial and that is ok. If you are not entrepreneurial, maybe there is an effort that you would like to assist in. Consider it if you are so inclined.

Big organizations, like governments and religious organizations, sometimes forget what their original purpose was. And worse, the leaders start to put the organization first at the expense of the people they are supposed to be serving. Governments forget they are but an agent of the people with specifically and strictly delegated powers. Religious organizations forget that their primary purpose is to help build up the people of God to the glory of God and to encourage others to see the need to change their lives. In short, the leaders of some of these big organizations start to believe and act like their organization is "organic." The organization, to them, becomes an organic entity. There is a big problem with an organization being operated like it is an organic entity. And that big problem is this: If the organization really is an organic entity this means that it must eat something in order to

stay alive, i.e., to live on. And what does that "organic entity" end up eating in order to stay alive? People. Human beings made in God's image. The people that the organization is supposed to be serving are eaten up and used as human fuel for the organizational fire. Christ anticipated and recognized this and had some point-blank words to say about it.

"But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."
Matthew 20:25-28, KJV

In the passage above, the authority is exercised upon them (the people) and not for them. Religions have unfortunately tended to use people up as fuel for their own fires. If you find yourself in a situation where you are being abused, or you are not allowed to use your talent or ability, seriously consider making a change in your life. You are not meant to be

fuel for some "organic organization" fire. You are made in God's image and you are valuable - too valuable to be used as simply human fuel.

A friend of mine, who created a very popular Christian website, launched the site way back in 1995. He saw the power of the Internet before many others did. And, as he says, he is preaching the gospel 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Now that's creative and potentially very powerful. He didn't have to call a committee meeting. He didn't have to fill out a requisition report. He didn't have to appeal to a Board of Directors. He just did it. So can you. You can do things. You are free and you are responsible for your actions. Individuals, or small groups, started all of the new projects detailed in the list above. And all of them are available now because people were free to act and they did.

Freedom And Positive Change

Most of us are so bombarded by a steady onslaught of negative news that we can become adversely affected by the malaise that is in the world. The malaise is this: That it does not matter what we do, because we are only one

person. And that is what Satan wants you to believe. That is a lie. It is not true.

The actual truth is that your very next decision can change the entire universe for a better place, if you will choose correctly. Granted, it might be a very incremental gain, but it is still a gain. And the only thing you personally control is to make your next decision correctly. Of course, the biggest beneficiary of making your next decision correctly will be you – and the people around you.

We should not get discouraged and give up by thinking that our decisions are unimportant, because they are very important. God watches and takes note of every decision we make.

We should also be aware that there is life after failure. No human makes it through the minefield of this life unscathed. We all make mistakes. We have to learn from our mistakes, overcome them, not get discouraged, and start the rebuilding process anew by making our next decision correctly. What else can we do?

The Bible has a lot of examples, for our encouragement, where things changed very rapidly due to the intervention of God on his

people's behalf. And Christians have the Spirit of God, which means we have spiritual help and liberty.

“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and **where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.**”
2 Corinthians 3:17, KJV

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”
2 Timothy 1:7, KJV

With the help of God's Spirit and with God's direct help things can change for the better for us personally and also for the world. And now we are not just talking about freedom and morality in a society as motive forces to produce peace and prosperity, we are also talking about the direct intervention of God.

How fast can things change for the people of God? When God decides to act, things can change in a hurry. The obvious historical Biblical grand example is God bringing Israel out of Egypt to freedom (detailed in the book of Exodus). Below are a couple of other Biblical examples. Not only can things change quickly, they can change rather dramatically.

In Exodus 31 God is getting ready to have the people construct the tabernacle and he needs someone to oversee the work.

“See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship.” Exodus 31:2-5, KJV

So Bezaleel was filled with the Spirit of God and given wisdom and understanding and knowledge and artistic ability. God needed somebody for the job and he took care of it. He filled Bezaleel with his Spirit and special gifts.

The Bible is full of examples where God intervened and suddenly everything changed for the better. A prophesied future example of a big change is found in Ezekiel 34, where God is promising Israel that things will be better in the future.

“And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed

with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more." Ezekiel 34:29, KJV

God is evidently going to create a brand new plant, a plant of renown, and wipe out hunger.

When God decides to act, things will change quickly and dramatically. For now you can help by forgiving yourself for your mistakes in the past, not giving in to the malaise that is in the world, and by making your next decision correctly. At a minimum, doing so will generate positive change in your own life.

The Great Trade

Part of the reason that mankind has experienced thousands of years of pain, suffering, and death is explained in Hebrews 2:

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Jesus Christ] also himself likewise took part of the same [became flesh and blood]; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; **And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.**"

Hebrews 2:14, 15, KJV

Men have been preyed upon and subject to bondage because they were afraid. Their fear created an inner conflict. Part of this inner conflict comes from mankind knowing they have rebelled against the Creator God. Part of it comes from an attempt to rebel against reality e.g., the laws of nature. Part of this conflict comes from men trying to rebel against reason (modern philosophy). And part of this conflict comes from a vain attempt to escape the responsibility for their own lives – again a rebellion against God, reality, and reason. In an attempt to find relief from these inner conflicts and fear, men banded together into tribes and governments and adopted or created various religions. Unfortunately, most government morphed into what has been called an “organic state,” which tends to eat its citizens in an effort to stay alive. In other words, men are regarded as disposable. Large religious organizations morphed likewise. Men, out of fear and internal conflict, made what author and thinker, Paul Rosenberg coined, “The Great Trade.”

“The Great Trade was and is this:

The state and/or church present themselves to men as a superior entity – higher than man. To

be joined to them provides sanction from a higher source than that of their internal conflicts." (The above quote is from the book *Production Versus Plunder* by Paul Rosenberg).

Men, rather than face and resolve their internal conflicts and fear, attempted the impossible - to escape from the responsibility to live as free men, to make their own decisions, and to accept the responsibility for their lives and decisions.

Jesus Christ knew that men would become enslaved because they were fearful. He knew he would have to come on a rescue mission and "deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

"The Great Trade" is ultimately going to be called off and voided by Jesus Christ and men are going to be forced to live free and they will be held responsible for their actions.

Summary

One of the main reasons this book was written is because I know that many people are afraid to live free and they want to escape the responsibility for their own lives. And so I have

tried to show that freedom is a major element in the plans of God and that:

Freedom is a key solution point in the answer to the question, "What causes peace and prosperity?" Freedom and morality produce peace and prosperity.

Freedom provides necessary information and that a command and control economy cannot succeed because it lacks both the information to effectively plan and it destroys individual incentive.

Life, liberty (freedom), and property are natural rights for all men stemming from natural law. The Bible concurs.

Freedom is a prosperity generator.

Freedom and morality are linked.

Freedom in Christ allows us to be our own person and to develop in our own way celebrating the fact that there is not only human diversity, but also different gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Freedom and good personal decision-making play an important part in positive change for all of us.

Jesus Christ is ultimately going to force men to live free and to bare the responsibility for their own lives. "The Great Trade," with all governments and religions, is going to be cancelled.

"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."
Galatians 5:13, KJV

In Galatians 5:13 above, God is basically saying the main point of this book – the main point being you are free and you must be responsible.

"For the creature [creation] was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him [God] who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature [creation] itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into **the glorious liberty of the children of God.**" Romans 8:20-21, KJV

God is going to ultimately use the children of God and our glorious liberty to make the entire universe a better place. But until then,

“For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.” 1 Peter 2:15-16, KJV