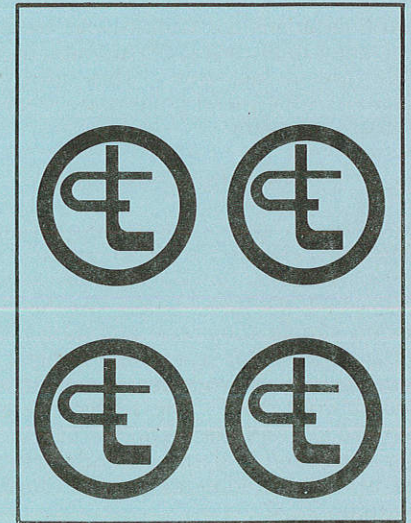


A CHRISTIAN LIBERTARIAN OUTLOOK



By Rod Boyer

Application for Membership

Society for Libertarian Life
P.O. Box 4
Fullerton, CA 92632 U.S.A.



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ENCLOSED.

THE LIBERTAS STATEMENT

We, as libertarians, affirm:
 That full individual liberty is impossible in any society other than a voluntary one that aggresses upon no one.
 That men and women require the full and independent use of their own judgment in order to survive at an optimum level, and therefore have a natural right to do their own thing, providing that they do not physically harm or coercively restrict another individual's life, liberty or property.
 That everyone is exclusively sovereign, and is a slave to no one.
 That the individual is best served by society when she or he is free from the forceful imposed controls of others; acting alone or in concert (as a government).
 That all forms of coercion, aggression and fraud are always immoral.
 That the only system consistent with personal freedoms in the economic arena is one that does not interfere with free trade between consenting individuals.
 THEREFORE, we, as libertarians, resolve to oppose all forms of aggression by any State, Government, self-appointed savior, individual, or association of individuals. We further resolve to oppose taxation, conscription, eminent domain, laws which create victimless "crimes," and all programs forced onto individuals without their consent. It is time that the chains of authoritarianism in economics and morality be broken. Individual rights and coercion cannot co-exist. Liberty cannot be compromised, and we will settle for no less than freedom in our time.

(adopted on May 5, 1973)

holy. However, in the Christian perspective, the behavior of those who put them in jail is completely unjustified.

Jesus set the perfect example for all Christians who want to know how to deal with those who sin non-coercively. The story is recorded in John 8:3 - 11.

"The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, *Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?* They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

"But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, *If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.* Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

"At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, *Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?*

"No one, sir, she said.

"Then neither do I condemn you, Jesus declared. *Go now and leave your life of sin.*"

The political establishment said "Stone her!" Jesus said to her "...neither do I condemn you... Go now and leave your life of sin." Peaceful, loving persuasion, not coercion, is the Christian libertarian method.

We believe that our work as Christian libertarians is in obedience to both God and reason. There is indeed hope for liberty in our time.

SAYS THE OLD TESTAMENT:

The elders of Israel came to Samuel and said unto him, "Now make us a king to judge us like all the other nations."

And Samuel answered with the words of the Lord, saying, "This will be the manner of the king that would reign over you:

He will take your sons and make them his charioteers. He will set them to reap his harvest and make his instruments of war. He will take your daughters to be cooks.

And he will take your fields and your vineyards and give them to his supporters. He will take a tenth of your produce and give it to his staff. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and you shall be his servants. And you shall cry out in that day because of your king which you shall have chosen."

1 Samuel 8:20

The Israelites had lived and prospered for centuries without a King. But when they asked Samuel for a King, he readily laid it on the line: "your King will take your lands, your children, your goods and your freedom, and you shall cry out in that day."

A New Dawn for America: The Libertarian's Challenge
 Roger L. Marbridge
 1974

See also: For Libertarian Life, P.O. Box 4, Fullerton, CA 92632 U.S.A.

Shown on the right side is a condensed version of the Biblical quote from 1 Samuel. The poster is available through the catalog of Society for Libertarian Life.



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CHRISTIAN LIBERTARIANISM

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CHRISTIAN-LIBERTARIANISM

Christian libertarians are people who believe that the essential tenets of historical Christianity, as presented in the Bible, are in fact true. They also believe that libertarianism is the social philosophy morally demanded by the Christian ethic.

THE CHRISTIAN ETHIC

The Christian ethic extends throughout the whole field of human behavior. It is vast in that it encompasses all the complex, interlocking network of moral principles which the Bible details. At the same time, it is incredibly simple at its core, and progresses out from there in an orderly and reasonable fashion. *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.* This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: *Love your neighbor as yourself.* All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."--Jesus Christ, as recorded in Matthew 22:37.

COERCION VS. LOVE

Christian libertarians believe that coercion is not consistent with love. For our purposes, coercion can be defined as "the initiation of force or fraud by one individual or group against another."

If I love myself (which I do, as all Christians must if they are to be enabled to obey the "second greatest commandment"), then I most certainly don't want to be victimized by anyone's initiation of force or fraud. According to the commandment, I must love my neighbor as myself. This implies that I must also love myself. Love, in the Christian context, is a decision one makes, a decision to value someone to an extreme degree. I cannot value myself and, at the same time, consider the freedom of choice by which I live and grow to be of little importance.

Christians are commanded to love their neighbors

as themselves. They believe that God considers all people to be of extreme importance. They believe God loves people in a very real and personal sense, and wants them to preserve and expand their freedom of choice. The Bible is abundant with exhortations to freedom, and warnings against coercion.

THE WORD OF GOD

According to the Old Testament, God's will in terms of his people is that He alone (**not a government**) should rule them. This is made explicit in many passages.

Gideon, it is told, a man inspired and empowered by God, had just saved the Israelites from conquest and enslavement at the hands of the Midians. The Israelites, in euphoric gratitude, said "*Rule over us--you, your son and your grandson--because you have saved us out of the hand of Midian.*" But Gideon told them, *I will not rule over you, nor will my son rule over you. The Lord will rule over you.*"--Judges 8:22 & 23.

For quite some time the Israelites survived and prospered under God's rule. Just in case some might want to believe that Israel was ruled by some theocratic government in God's name, Judges 21:25 succinctly reports the fact that there was **no government**: "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit."

God not only preferred that we live without a government; he actually saw government as a curse. He eventually allowed the Israelites to form a government, not because they needed one, but to demonstrate to them the devastating consequences of rejecting his solitary rule.

"But when they said, *Give us a king to lead us*, this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the Lord. And the Lord told him: *Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected as their king, but me. As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you. Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will do.*

"Samuel told all the words of the Lord to the people who were asking him for a king. He said, *This is what the king who will reign over you will do: He will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots. Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and others to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves, and give them to his attendants. He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vintage and give it to his officials and attendants. Your menservants and maid-servants and the best of your cattle and donkeys he will*

take for his own use. He will take a tenth of your flock, and you yourselves will become his slaves. When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, and the Lord will not answer you in that day.

"But the people refused to listen to Samuel. No! they said, *We want a king over us. Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and go out before us and fight our battles.*"--1 Samuel 8:6-20.

The idea of God's rule alone is reaffirmed in the New Testament. "We must obey God rather than men!"--Acts 5:29.

As for the question of how there can be peace and order in a society without government, Jesus, in Luke 6:31, gives us the key: "Do to others as you would have them do to you." This passage has come to be known as the *Golden Rule*. Indeed, it is the gold-standard of Christian ethics. A libertarian society is the only one which can possibly permit the re-institution of that standard. Ethical bankruptcy is the alternative.

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE THING

Christians are called to live their own lives in an ultimately responsible fashion, resisting the temptations of this world, and turning instead to the glory of God. However, one does not resist temptation by making it illegal, or in some other way coercing its source out of existence. The Christian choice is to turn to God, and to peacefully convince others to do likewise. When the choice is removed, one is not resisting temptation, but rather avoiding responsibility.

For these and many other reasons, Christian libertarians hold, with all other libertarians, that each individual has the *absolute* right to exercise complete freedom of action in terms of his own life, liberty and property, insofar as he permits all others to exercise that same kind of freedom. Christian libertarians are working to expand the recognition of this principle as a social absolute, incapable of being violated with impunity by any individual, group or government.

Accordingly, we oppose all coercive interference in the marketplace. We call for an end to all forms of involuntary taxation, which we recognize as *legalized theft*. We stand solidly behind the abolition of all laws against *victimless crimes*, such as drug use, pornography, and prostitution. As Christians, we will continue to strongly oppose such behavior through peaceful persuasion, but we will not forget that salvation is by grace through faith alone; not by jails, guns and human laws. Accordingly, we call for the immediate release of all persons now incarcerated only for such "crimes." We regard them as political prisoners.

They are behind bars, not because they present a coercive threat to anyone else. They are locked up in cages because they don't conform to the political establishment's idea of proper behavior. Obviously, as Christians, we too must view their behavior as less than