

CHAPTER H7

THE DARK AGES

The collapse of the Roman Empire and its attendant governmental authority, economic structure, and societal order resulted in an end to civilization in Europe. Currency was no longer minted or regulated and became worthless. The ships and carts of commerce stopped carrying food and supplies. Unchecked lawlessness put travelers and isolated families at risk. Those who dared to travel were no longer in a stream of travelers; they were alone. The demise of travel further isolated communities because without commerce and without news the outside world practically and psychologically ceased to exist. People of means were suddenly without, and for the first time were poor, hungry, helpless, and frightened.

Europeans gathered into defensive clusters of tribes, villages, and towns, and several families often lived in one communal home. Because there was almost no travel, it was very rare to see a stranger, and strangers were distrusted and unwelcome. People who did travel were frightened when they saw another person because crime was so rampant. And the fear was not just of bands of outlaws. In lean times those who were cold and hungry sometimes murdered traveling strangers, cooked and ate their flesh, wore their clothes, and saved any food and goods for later use – nothing was wasted. (Because of verses like **Lk 18:20** we know the murder they committed was a sin, and because of verses like **Jn 6:51-58** we know the cannibalism wasn't. Even so, cannibalism has always been repugnant – as it was to Christ's disciples in **Jn 6:59-61,66**.)

The isolation of communities caused names to be less important because in small communities there is no confusion as to whom you are referring when you say Peter, or Jesus, or Barjesus (son of Jesus – **Ac 13:6**), or Arthur, or MacArthur (son of Arthur), or Will, or Willson, or Richard, or Richardson, or Abbas, or Barabbas (son of Abbas). Often people were simply known as Blondie, Red, Redbeard, or Skinny. If there might be some confusion about whom you were speaking it was common to add specificity by saying Jesus of Nazareth, Richard the Lion-hearted, Herod the Great, Pepin the Short, Henry the Eighth, and Philip the Fair. Even the villages people lived in often had no names because without travel a name wasn't necessary. If a man got lost in the woods it was common for him to never return: If he happened to stumble upon another settlement those people couldn't help him because his, "My village has a burned tree at the top of a hill" meant nothing to them. And even if his village was called Philipsburg, the people of the settlement knew neither Philip nor his burg. So he spent the rest of his life there.

When larger populations made a second name (or "last" name) necessary, these were often just the man's occupation: Miller, Wheeler, Taylor, Smith, Cooper, Farmer, Shepherd, Fuller. But people were very casual about their names because ego – self – was not yet a big deal. For example, even the educated German who in the late 16th century founded a munitions dynasty variously wrote his own name as Krupp, Krupe, Kripp, and, of course, Krapp. In addition to the casual informality about names and their spellings, people in the old days were often referred to by other names (for unknown reasons) and by nicknames – all to the great consternation of historians and Bible students. Lacking understanding about old-time names and their spellings has sometimes led ignorant Christians to assume they have found an error in the Bible when they think some name is incorrect.

Widespread poverty caused function and necessity to have greater importance. Therefore, even prosperous peasants' homes had but one room. Everyone who lived there, parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters and their spouses and children, slept in and/or on the one bed (**Lk 11:7**), which was usually on the floor and of varying sizes and material. Privacy was neither a Biblical requirement nor a necessity. So when a man and his wife engaged in sexual activity it was variously applauded or ignored by all according to the mood. In cold and inclement weather all shared the chamber pot in the corner. During the warm months, especially when working, these European Christians often went naked (**Jn 21:7; Dt 24:12,13**), just as people had throughout history. Clothes, because they were hard to get, expensive to buy, and time-consuming to make, were a luxury (**Dt 24:13,17**) prudently reserved for winter use. Therefore when people dressed and undressed indoors in winter there was neither a perceived need nor a moral requirement for privacy curtains or dressing rooms; these people were not sinning against God. In lean years of famine many had to sell their clothes (**Lk 22:36**) and faced the prospect of no clothing even in winter.

Bathing was a luxury and was done outside in public with no shame (**2 Sa 11:2**). There was no plumbing. During the warm months after a hard day of labor it was routine for the families of the community, often leading the family cow, to gather at the river or lake to drink, bathe, and relax in the cool, quiet twilight.

Except when harvests were bad every meal was washed down with wine in southern Europe, and with beer in northern Europe – by adults and children. These Christians were not sinning against God.

Before philosophy exalted ego/self and equality, the people in society viewed themselves the same way the old conservative, agrarian, philosophy-rejecting, democracy-hating Spartans did – as figurative members of a larger body whose duty was to further the welfare of the body. These European Christians had several bodies: The church, the family, and the community. Self and what self wanted, therefore, was always subordinated to the welfare of the church, the family, and the community. An example of this pre-Enlightened viewpoint can be found in the old cathedrals of Europe, many of which required three to four centuries to build. Even though these cathedrals are marvels of architecture and construction, nothing is known about the individuals who designed and built them because those people were not thought to have done anything extraordinary. Why? Because they were just doing their duty like everyone else in society. The man who designed the cathedral had done nothing nobler than the man who weeded the family vegetable garden or the woman who drew water from the well. There is no nobler deed than the performance of one's duty. One of the ironies of today's egalitarianism is that it has given various duties unequal stature: In direct violation of **1 Co 12:20-26** ditch diggers are laughed at because they are not rocket scientists.

At the same time the collapse of the Roman Empire was causing chaos in Europe, the Roman Catholic Church – also known as the Western Church – was using the teachings of Augustine to maintain and strengthen its tenuous control of the western churches. Control means communication, and in those days communication required travel. The bishop of Rome (more commonly addressed in later years as "the pope") communicated with his bishops in various European locales by sending them messages via couriers. Couriers had a difficult and dangerous job; there was no law enforcement and they had no maps. The couriers delivered more than mail; they were welcome sources of news about the outside world. By telling eager bishops what

was happening in the Eastern Church in Constantinople, and what deal the pope made with the barbarians to keep them from sacking Rome again, and all the juicy tidbits of gossip, the couriers helped establish Rome as the hub of western Christianity. And when the local bishops, in turn, sent their own couriers to neighboring villages that had priests under their control, that flow of information helped the villages regard the bishop as their hub.

With this fragile infrastructure the Catholic Church maintained a semblance of order, something that grew in direct proportion to papal power. As the infrastructure developed and branched out from the papacy and the bishoprics, the people in those bishoprics began to demonstrate the same kind of geographic loyalty (later called nationalism) their ancestors exhibited when the political rivalry between Rome and Constantinople caused a similar geographic polarization in Christianity. Therefore, as the papacy increased its control over Europe it also restored the societal order that had collapsed with the Roman Empire. With order came politics and the bishoprics began to gel into nations. With the nations came law and order and the return of commerce.

The period of social chaos between the social order and prosperity of the Roman Empire and the later formation of nations in Europe is called the Dark Ages. Protestants generally blame the Dark Ages on the Roman Catholic Church because it reached the zenith of its power from about the 12th to the 16th centuries, power that began to fade when the Protestant Reformation caused a return of Bible-oriented Christianity. However, the Dark Ages was actually caused by the collapse of the Roman Empire, something that happened before the Catholic Church existed. When viewed from a superficial perspective it can be properly argued that the Roman Catholic Church was the savior of Europe and was the instrument that restored the order and prosperity of the Roman Empire.

But when viewed from a Biblical perspective the Roman Catholic Church was responsible for something far worse than Protestants realize. She infected Christianity with philosophy and thereby caused Christians to incorrectly but fervently believe the advents of the Age of Reason and of democracy were – because they are products of the “Natural Laws” God supposedly programmed into our minds – results of the revival of Biblical Christianity caused by Protestant reform.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

The chaos in society resulted in different men and various groups vying with each other for political power. The papacy was just one of these groups. When the army of a rival faction surrounded Rome and threatened the papacy, Pope Stephen II in 754 made the long and dangerous journey to France where he consecrated and crowned Pepin the Short (father of Charlemagne) as king of the Franks. Now that Pepin had what he wanted – a throne legitimized by “Apostolic authority” – he and his army followed Pope Stephen back to Rome and drove the threatening army away.

When the Vatican crowned people as kings it used an impressive “Christian” ceremony. The pope ignored both the fact that the New Testament specifically commands Christians to submit to and obey governors, and that it provides no guidelines for Christian governance of society. The New Testament limits itself to addressing administrative and disciplinary functions of the church itself. Therefore the Vatican went into the Old Testament, borrowed from the accounts of David and Solomon, and arranged coronation ceremonies that seemed official and Scriptural.

Just as the Vatican acquired real estate for itself in Rome that did not fall under the jurisdiction of Italy, it acquired real estate all over Europe for churches, rectories, monasteries, schools, seminaries, etc. It quickly grew into the wealthiest, most powerful, most educated, and most corrupt institution in Europe. Eventually the life of almost every European from birth to burial was shaped and governed by Roman clergy. Most people, including the highest-ranking priests, were ignorant of the Scriptures and therefore of necessity had no alternative but to “serve” God by doing what was right and good in accordance with their carnal Reason. That Christianity survived at all is a tribute to God and His Bible; its survival certainly had nothing to do with medieval “Christianity.”

While it is true that many in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church were ignorant of the Scriptures, that is not to say they were poorly educated. On the contrary, theirs were easily some of the best minds in Europe. They were mentally far, far above the masses. That, combined with their extreme wealth and power, insulated and isolated them from normal society, which resulted in their living dual lives. In public they were variously pious, aloof, arrogant, humble, and magisterial as situations warranted. In private they simply did whatever they wanted. They got drunk, they stayed up all night, they slept around the clock, they tinkered, they read, they hunted, they hosted huge parties, they murdered people, they traveled, etc. And, like most men in history with great power and authority (such as David and Solomon), they possessed huge sexual appetites that were – for the good men of history – difficult to control, and – for the bad – something to be indulged. These clerics simply did anything and everything...and they did it with impunity.

The upper echelons of the Roman Catholic hierarchy were an elite group; they were above the law. They would burn common people at the stake for voicing heresies and then retire to the drawing room with a group of their peers to seriously discuss the very heresies for which they executed others. They circulated books, manuscripts, and papers among themselves that concerned philosophy, heresy, government, religion, sexual practices, the economy, trade, foreign religions, etc. They were *minds*, strong minds that examined, discussed, and became intrigued with a topic – only to become bored with it later. Because they had strong minds and walked on an intellectual plane, they could handle principles, concepts, and ideas, including those associated with heresies. But the common people lacked those mental abilities. If a commoner learned about a heresy he couldn't control himself; he invariably opened his stupid mouth and spread the leaven to others like him in society where it often took root because the masses were incapable of mentally dealing with and properly analyzing principles and doctrines.

Throughout most of history the 1 Co 12:20-26 view of humanity was accepted: People are not equal. They are different members of the body of society who have different abilities and different jobs. This produced mutual respect as long as each person did his duty. It was the duty of the heads, the men who ruled, to do the thinking. As philosophy took root it convinced people that all men are equal and that even the opinions of the stupid and the ignorant were to be respected. That is why the Catholic hierarchy began to fear the common masses and to control them by censoring certain material the masses couldn't handle.

And that is why Copernicus did not get into trouble for *publishing* his theory that the earth orbits the sun (something we still have not been able to prove in the 21st century, which would contribute to Einstein's *Theory of Relativity* and his *Special Theory of Relativity*); he got in trouble for publishing it *in the vernacular* so the commoners could read it. He was burned at the stake. Leonardo da Vinci also challenged existing “truths”, but he not only did not publish his works, he wrote them backwards to keep them from prying eyes. Leonardo lived to a ripe old age. Erasmus published parallel texts of the Bible,

but he did it in Latin and Greek so only scholars could read them. William Tyndale, on the other hand, published the New Testament *in the vernacular* and was executed.

Pope Gregory I (mentioned on page H6-2) in intellectual circles maintained that the three Christian virtues (faith, hope, and charity) should be combined with the four “Natural virtues” of the Greek philosophers (wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice). But pagan philosophy still had centuries to go before it was made a legitimate part of Christianity, so it wasn’t until the 14th century that the two groups were combined into the seven “cardinal virtues.”

This slow and reluctant acceptance of pagan doctrines was also responsible for the late acceptance in Christian circles of “**morality**.” The Greeks said Nature’s god had programmed Natural Laws into Nature. Man, part of Nature, was given Reason to unlock these Natural Laws. The Natural Laws pertaining to society in general were called Moral Laws, or Morality. And when morality, the instinctive but vague knowledge of good and evil, is studied it results in rules of conduct, which are called “Ethics.”

Pope Gregory I is not generally regarded as a “Rationalist” – one who uses the Reason espoused by philosophy. However, as a fan of Augustine he was certainly a forerunner of a growing movement of clerics and scholars in the Catholic Church who were called Christian Rationalists.

CHRISTIAN RATIONALISTS

One of the humanistic Catholic scholars who worked with and helped develop our modern value system of morality and ethics was **Peter Abelard** (1079-1142), a monk who’d been castrated as a penalty for his sexual escapades. A devotee of Greek philosophy, he founded the University of Paris, which would become noted for its fervent support of Reason. He taught university students and fellow monks, “Think for yourself. For I have learned something different from my Arab masters – to use Reason as a guide. You however, taken captive by authority, are merely led by a halter.” (He said “Arab masters” because the writings of Greek philosophers had largely been destroyed by Vandalism. Then when the Arabs conquered Alexandria they preserved – through their Arab translations of the Greek, much of the fundamentals of philosophy.) Notice Abelard’s statement only has seeming value when viewed with the carnal gut reaction of “self-evidence.” In other words, he was a sophist who relied on “common knowledge” for right and wrong rather than on any real and authoritative source.

Abelard wrote two books that were important as building blocks for Western civilization in which he said *all authority* should be subject (!) to Reasoned questioning. That was a huge and very bold step for mankind – not to mention eunuchs. As a result of Abelard’s boldness he became a leading spokesman for the “New Thinkers” and was the most conspicuous scholar in Europe. His writings, including his *Know Thyself*, clearly showed that much of Christianity contained intellectual problems and inconsistencies when subjected to Reason. He wrote about passages in the Bible that were “obvious errors” because the very fact that they offended humanistic Reason showed the passages to be inconsistent with God’s Natural Law. Abelard’s work furthered a subtle trend growing in Christian ranks: Pagan ways were no longer shunned and were no longer unmentionables. For example, Abelard openly advocated using *both* Christian values and pagan morals – as long as the two were not allowed to be confused with each other. He thought it should be taught that morals and ethics *contained* certain *principles* of Christianity, but only in those cases believed to be consistent with philosophic Reason. In this way he believed Western society could be improved in practical ways without compromising Christian doctrine. Understandably, Abelard was more popular with those scholars within the church who placed greater value on Reason than on faith in written revelation. (Many Christians would have ended the previous sentence with the word *faith*. But because “faith” has come to mean different things that did not come from the Bible – and is therefore not the Biblical faith that pleases God – I prefer to include words like *written revelation* in order to make it clear what real faith is based upon.)

Intellectuals like Abelard who agreed with philosophy were a minority that conservatives derisively called “Rationalists” because they used secular humanism/Reason to point out “problems” in the Bible that offended Reason – such as miracles. Conservative scholars such as **St. Bernard of Clairvaux** (1090-1153) warned that Christian Rationalism would grow and eventually become a problem. He said Rationalism was a subtle danger because any so-called “neutral” pursuit of knowledge, such as secular scholarship, Christian Rationalism, and science, is *not* neutral; it is actively pagan and contrary to the lordship of Christ and the glory of God. We’ll see why Bernard was correct in a few minutes.

Pagan concepts like morality and ethics would continue to make slow inroads into Christianity. **René Descartes** (1596-1650) for example, became a popular proponent of morality by merely repeating earlier theories. Morality, he taught, is the result of conforming to the Law of Human Reason programmed into all men. Morality and ethical behavior, therefore, can be learned by man’s introspective study of himself and his proper place in Nature.

Not everybody was happy with the increasing trend to consider morality as a worthy part of Christian society. **Jonathan Swift** (1667-1745), the author of *Gulliver’s Travels*, said, “The system of morality to be gathered from the writings of ancient sages falls very short of that delivered in the gospel.” But Swift was in the minority. He and those who shared his view were considered boring and old fashioned, and were outnumbered by people like **Immanuel Kant** (1724-1804), a German philosopher who is still considered a superstar. Kant’s 1781 work, *Critique of Pure Reason*, advocated the use of secular Reason. In *Critique* he said he was filled with “ever-increasing wonder and awe” every time he reflected on “the moral law within me.” His works – which are extremely complex – really only build on the writings of Descartes and Locke. Yes, to us today the teachings of the Big Names are anticlimactic and somewhat of a disappointment because of their childish simplicity, naïveté, sophistry, and complete lack of any reliable and authoritative foundation. But back then the fact that these ideas were radical and daring challenges to the authority structure that had existed since God made the angels and Adam made them exciting, heady stuff.

One last example to show how much pagan philosophy became an accepted part of Christianity: We turn to **Noah Webster’s** 1828 *American Dictionary of the English Language*, the book that made the name *Webster* synonymous with *dictionary*. Before we look at some of his definitions let’s note that many verses in Scripture – such as **1 Th 5:23, He 4:12, and Mt 10:28** – show that the body (mortal body), soul (intellect), and spirit (immortal body) are different. But ignoring the Bible by making soul and spirit the same thing was becoming popular because it tended to support Augustine’s doctrine that the soul is immortal, and all men having immortality would put them in contact with the Kingdom of God, which “proved” all men – Christians and the unregenerate – really were given Reason as a way to know Truth without the Bible just like the ancient Greeks said. In other words, just as the Greeks had used Natural Law/Reason to formulate the **theory of the immortality of all human souls**, Christians not only did the same thing, they went further by using Reason to discredit

verses like **1 Co 2:14; Ro 8:7,8; Ec 3:18,19**. Let's see what Webster – popular with Christians merely because he references Scripture in his dictionary – has to say (emphasis added):

“SPIRIT: The *soul* of man; the intelligent, immaterial and immortal part of human beings: See SOUL.”

“SOUL: The *spiritual, rational, and immortal* substance in man which *distinguishes him from brutes*; that part of man which enables him to think and *reason*, and which renders him a subject of *moral government*. *The immortality of the soul is a fundamental article of the Christian system.*”

We find no Scripture. We find that soul and spirit are not separate entities like God said. We find that the soul cannot die like God said it could. And we find that the human soul is tuned into “moral” rules by its ability to use Reason. Why did Christians begin saying Reason differentiates men from beasts? Because they needed to defend the traditional doctrine of the immortality of the soul that they inherited from the Greeks and Saint Augustine against the Bible: The Bible says God gave animals souls and the breath of life, which made it look like there really was no difference between men and animals. And that meant, 1) animals having souls and the breath of life meant they, too, had immortal souls, or 2) all souls are mortal and man gets immortality only from the second (spirit) body of the new birth. The pagan Greek theory of Reason came to the rescue: Reason seemed like a perfect “proof” that unregenerate men and beasts were not the same like the Bible says they are, and for centuries it was accepted that man was different from beasts...and Christians “only” had to ignore a few verses of Scripture. By the time Webster wrote his dictionary Reason had become a “Christian” concept. Did Webster learn about morality and Reason from the Bible – or from philosophy? Let's see what Webster has to say about *moral*:

“MORAL: 1) The word moral is applicable to actions that are good or evil...and has reference to the *law of God* as the standard by which their character is to be determined. The word however may be applied to actions which affect only...a person's own happiness. 3) Supported by the evidence of Reason...founded on experience... 7) In general, moral denotes something which respects the conduct of men...as social beings whose actions have a bearing on each other's Rights and Happiness, and are *therefore* right or wrong. Moral sense is an *innate or Natural sense of right and wrong*; an *instinctive perception of right and wrong*...independent of...the knowledge of any positive [real] rule or law [like the Bible]. But the existence of any such moral sense is [now] very much doubted.”

Notice (as we address the last part first) he does a pretty good job quoting the pagan party line before admitting that Moral Law/Natural Law was by 1828 generally known to be just another Greek myth. The problem is the non-existent Natural Law foundation of morality *no longer matters!* Why? Because Webster accurately shows that by 1828 morality was unquestioningly incorporated into Christianity! I say again, by 1828 no Scripture was required because the carnal self-evidence of Reason was – and is – blindly accepted as Christian. Read the definition of MORAL again and carefully notice it comes right out and says Christians and pagans do not need the Bible because the Prime Mover wants mankind to utilize the [forbidden] fruit of the tree of the knowledge of [rather than *discerning*] good and evil. (Read that sentence again and substitute Satan for Prime Mover.)

Now notice that Webster's definitions of MORAL are actually deceitful because the average ignorant Christian will assume Webster's use of “the law of God” has to do with the Bible when it is really a reference to the mythical Laws of Nature, which were derived by Reason and assumed to be more dependably consistent than the Bible because the Bible might be wrong but Reason and Natural Law were direct conduits to the Prime Mover itself.

I applaud Webster's integrity for including in his dictionary the fact that morality might not even exist. However, three things are true: First, in 1828 morality wasn't the only facet of Western civilization in danger of toppling. Natural Law itself, which was the key link between pagan philosophy and Christianity, was increasingly recognized as something that never existed. That meant the foundational principles and doctrines of Western civilization and its cherished institutions, like its democratic forms of government, its laws, and modern Christianity, which were derived from Nature's Laws, were based on a lie. Second, the Christians like Webster who participated in the Natural Law debate were in a distinct minority in Christianity. Most Christians in 1828 were no different from Dark Age Christians and 21st century Christians – incapable of understanding and dealing with the Biblical importance of words, principles, ideologies, and doctrines. Because they had not studied the Bible to shew themselves approved unto God, they tried to hide the fact that they were shameful workmen who could neither rightly divide the word nor put two intelligent sentences back-to-back in a discussion about doctrine. They tried to hide their inexcusable ignorance of Scripture by scurrying around with wide eyes and horrified tones as they babbled about Satanic New Age symbols on product labels, black helicopters, social security numbers, and all manner of pointless trivia having no meaning or relevance when viewed from the perspective of eternity – or even from just a few years later. Therefore, Christians who recognized the horrifying implications of the Natural Law hoax were without remedy because they were not only a minority among Christians, they were in a democratic country run by the majority. Third, even though Webster wrote that admission/warning in his definition of *moral*, take a look at his definition of *ethics*:

“ETHICS: [The results of] the science of moral philosophy, which teaches men their duty and the reasons of it.” His definition is a fairly good one but where is the warning that, because ethics is based on morality and morality is based on Natural Law, it's all a joke?

Look at Webster's definition of “Law of nature”: “*Law of nature*, is a rule of conduct arising out of the *natural relations* of human beings established by the Creator, and existing *prior* to any positive precept [such as the Bible]. Thus it is a *law of nature*, that one man should not injure another, *and murder and fraud would [still] be crimes, independent of [even without] any prohibition from a supreme power [rules from God].*” It was believed the Law of Nature was programmed into us by whatever supreme being or prime mover might be out there so we could know the truth about religion, and could know right and wrong via Reason (which incorrectly caused **Ro 1:18-32** to be applied to *all* men – even the unregenerate). The Bible, therefore, was only true in those parts that agreed with Reason. And the parts in Scripture that depended on faith may or may not be true. The important point here is to note that Webster believed the Laws of Nature were designed by God to teach His rules to us *even without the Bible!* If Webster was right, I am wrong. And if Webster was right, the fact that most Christians do not know the Bible very well is perfectly OK – *because we don't need it!*

Was I correct when I said the laws of Western civilization are based on Natural Law and not the Bible? Well, let's again consult Noah Webster, our Rationalist founding father and ardent supporter of George Washington: “*Law of nations*, the rules that regulate the mutual intercourse of nations or states. These rules *depend on natural law*, or the principles of justice that spring *from the social state*; or they are founded on customs, compacts, treaties, leagues and agreements between independent communities.” Webster correctly states that Natural Law comes from the “social state” and is the source of the

laws of nations. How then did your preacher get the idea that the government of the United States of America and its laws are founded upon “Scripture” or “Biblical principles”? He got that idea because he is as careless studying history as he is studying the Bible – he honestly doesn’t know that when our founding fathers said stuff about our government and its laws being based on God’s truth, Biblical principles, Christianity, etc., they only said that because their acute ignorance/unbelief concerning the Scriptures caused them to foolishly accept the philosophy that anything that was *self-evident* was only self-evident because the “supreme being” programmed His truth into us. The founding fathers thought they were founding a government based on *truth* – that meant the government was based on the principles of the Koran, or the Bible, or the teachings of Buddha, or whatever religion ended up being the true one. Since many of the founding fathers were Christians they therefore Naturally assumed that because they based the government of this nation on Natural Law they were glorifying God in accordance with whatever parts of the Bible turned out to be true. There was no conspiracy: Just like God’s people in the Old Testament often angered Him by doing what they honestly thought would be right and pleasing in His sight, the founding fathers screwed up by letting the philosophy the Bible warns us about convince them that the carnal mind was programmed by God to be a substitute for His Holy Bible.

To find an example of this we need look no further than our old buddy, Noah Webster. He has already told us the Law of Nature, and its derivative – morality, and morality’s derivative – ethics, do not come from the Bible. Now carefully read his definition of *moral law* (as opposed to his earlier definition of *moral*) and do what your preacher should have done – pay attention to what he doesn’t say as well as what he does say:

“*Moral law*, a law which prescribes to men their *religious* and social duties, in other words, *their duties to God* and to each other. The moral law is summarily contained in the decalogue or ten commandments, written by the finger of God on two tables of stone, and delivered to Moses on mount Sinai. Ex. xx.” See what I mean? He doesn’t say Moral Law comes from or is based on the Bible or the Ten Commandments. No, he turns it the other way around and says the Ten Commandments are but a brief summary of, or based on, the Moral Law. In other words Webster – like all other Christian Rationalists – believed **Moral Law, or Natural Law, to be the foundation** upon which God based the Ten Commandments and the Bible. Now you know why so many Christians think the U.S. Constitution is divinely inspired: Just like the Ten Commandments are God’s holy truth *because they are based on the Moral Laws of Nature*, anything that is also based on the Moral Laws of Nature – such as the Constitution – has a status and importance equal to that of the Ten Commandments. (To see an example showing 21st-century Americans still think the Constitution is divinely inspired, read the formal campaign statement on page D24-8 of a Christian politician while he was running for President.)

Now let’s see why St. Bernard of Clairvaux was correct when he predicted Christian Rationalism’s blending of Reason with Scripture would cause problems: Once again we find our old Christian Rationalist friend, Noah Webster, is a good example. Webster said the Ten Commandments *contained* Moral Law. That means the Ten Commandments are not authoritative because they were written by the finger of God, but because they were based upon or in agreement with the Moral Laws of Nature that God supposedly set up. That means if God had written commandments that did not contain or were not based upon the Moral Laws of Nature, those commandments would be revealed by Reason to be violations of the Laws of Nature, which would make them contrary to the truths programmed into Nature and Reason by the true supreme being. And that would mean the god who wrote the ten commandments with his own finger was a fake who should have subordinated himself to the rules established by the true God revealed by Reason. Rationalists would use this type of “Webster Reason” to discredit Jesus Christ because His miracles violated the true god’s Natural Laws. What the philosophy of the Christian Rationalists also meant was any laws created by man that were revealed by Reason to be self-evident, were actually in accordance with Nature’s true God and therefore should become international laws that were binding for *all* men. But that’s not all. The fact that Nature’s God programmed human Reason to reveal His universal and eternal Natural Laws meant all men really were God’s children, really did all have immortal souls, and really should have governments over them ruling in accordance with the Natural truths He established. Reason could now be used to subdue and unite the world – while thinking we were fulfilling God’s commission to Adam to subdue the world!

In summation: The acceptance of Reason as part of Christianity by “Christian Rationalists” like Noah Webster took the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil *and made it good!* Because this topic is so important I want you to now – with Webster’s definitions in mind – reread the first two paragraphs under “The Kingdom Divided” on page H1-1. You need to understand the fact that over the centuries Christians changed the definition of carnality by making it deal primarily with sexual lust, and they used the mythical idea that the “Prime Mover” programmed its “Laws of Nature” and “Reason” into us so we could logically base right and wrong in our lives upon self-evidence. By so doing, our forefathers made the true and evil meaning of carnality actually become a good and necessary part of modern Christianity. It is only because we no longer know what carnality is that we are able to view carnal fruit like Freedom, Independence, and Democracy as good. Let’s continue to follow history and see how clairvoyant St. Bernard of Clairvaux was when he said Rationalism would paganize Christianity.

IDEOLOGICAL WARFARE

The Roman Catholic Church had grown so large and powerful it could now use warfare to promote its doctrines, spread its influence, and defend itself from any threat. Therefore in 1095 the Vatican launched the holy wars known as *Crusades*, or as the Muslims call them, *Jihads*, which would continue for two bloody centuries.

Obviously, if the Vatican could draw upon the resources of European nations for such large armies, those nations were once again established, secure, orderly, and wealthy enough to support commerce. The Crusades also revived an interest in philosophical Reason. Therefore the Crusades effectively mark the end of the Dark Ages portion of the *Middle Ages*. The terms *Dark Ages* and *Middle Ages* are used by historians to mark the low tide of Reason: The classical age of the pagan Greeks and Romans was “good” because it was an age of Reason. And the modern age of Enlightened Western civilization is “good” because it is another age of Reason. But *in the middle* of those two ages there was a “bad” period when Christians rejected Reason – called the *Middle Ages* (400-1300 A.D.). The more specific term, *Dark Ages*, refers to the first part of the Middle Ages (400-1000) before the Crusades rekindled interest in the Reason of the Greek philosophers. Again, the *Middle Ages* are the years between the Hellenized civilization of the Roman Empire and the Hellenized civilization of Europe.

European commerce with foreign nations had already resumed by the time of the Crusades, but the Crusades stimulated international trade because when common soldiers returned to their homes with foreign goods their friends and

neighbors developed an appetite for those goods. As commerce increased, so too did academic intercourse. Western scholars were able to obtain more Arabic – and to a lesser extent Hebrew – translations of Greek philosophical works. These turned out to be wonderful sources of pure philosophic leaven, and Western scholars realized most of the traditional sources of philosophic thought that they'd studied for centuries had been edited and diluted by old-fashioned Christian scholars who, offended by and suspicious of pagan philosophy, removed the parts they thought were too radical and dangerous.

Today it is difficult to appreciate just **how radical and offensive philosophy was**. After all, in just a few pages we have easily covered material it took European Christians centuries to digest. There are two reasons philosophy took so long to work its way into the fabric of the lives of Western Christians: First, philosophy truly was radical to people in general and Christians in particular who had, since time began, lived under authority. People simply were not supposed to think or act on their own unless they were an authority and had that prerogative. And even Christian authorities who had no earthly authority over them – like King David – were still required to check with God before doing anything to ensure they didn't offend Him. Christians simply *understood* how arrogantly evil it was to do something without proper authority, to step out of line, to leave your place in society, to be a foot that acted without consulting the head. Second, philosophy remained an academic pursuit within the exclusive and carefully protected domain of scholars...until it began to be passed on to the unthinking masses – most notably and dramatically by Martin Luther. Scholars were careful with Reason because they had the mental capacity to realize how truly revolutionary it was to the fundamental structure of society. Lacking that mental ability to deal with concepts and principles, the masses would respond to Reason by “knowing” on a gut level it was right and good because it “felt” so Naturally self-evident.

Yes, Christian scholars were titillated by philosophy and enjoyed flirting with and occasionally being seduced by its charms. But they knew it was very dangerous. That is why people like Ambrose and Augustine, even while subtly using philosophy in their works, were careful to publicly condemn it. Other Christian Rationalists, afraid to go directly to pagan philosophy to justify their Reason, cloaked their works in sheep's clothing by quoting, drawing on, and building upon the leavened works of “Saint Augustine”, “the church fathers”, “early Christian thinkers”, etc.

The Vatican used more than the Crusades to fight its ideological warfare. It created the Office of the Inquisition, an office administered by Dominican friars, to deal with heresy and heretics. A Spaniard, Dominic Guzman, started the Dominican order of friars. He is famous among Roman Catholics because when the Virgin Mary invented the rosary, she gave the first one she made to him. Just how many she made is unknown but it is known she kept at least one for herself because the Catholic teaching says when Mary showed up seven centuries later and revealed herself to three small peasant children in Fatima, Portugal, she was going from bead to bead praying “Hail Marys” to herself. Why she didn't hand out more rosaries on this occasion is unknown. When she returned to heaven she kept the rosary she'd been using, presumably to keep track of her prayers to herself so she could continue worshipping herself by asking herself to pray for herself – a sinner – now and at the hour of her death! If Catholic doctrine is taken seriously by any Catholics they must wonder, when their priest tells them to “say three Our Fathers and three Hail Marys” as penance for their sins, if Mary is still alive to hear them or if she is dead and busily answering her own prayers to herself to pray for herself when she died. (When I poke fun at the idiocies of other “faiths” I am following Elijah's example in **1 Ki 18:27**.)

The Dominican Order was originally established in accordance with St. Augustine's teachings, but when he became a scholastic and doctrinal embarrassment **the order was reorganized in accordance with the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas**. The order was established to take care of heretics in general – and the Cathari in particular.

In the early 11th century a large group of Christians who were not Roman Catholics and who were openly opposed to the doctrines of the Western Church appeared on the Vatican's Most Wanted list. These Christians called themselves **Cathari**, which means “the pure.” They lived in southern France and in pockets in the mountainous regions of northern Italy. The Vatican controlled most of Europe, including northern France. But southern France, because it was largely populated by Cathari, was not under the political or religious control of Rome. The Vatican wanted to control all of Europe, and the Cathari were in the way. Because there was a large population of Cathari in Albi, France, the Cathari are often called Albigenses.

The Cathari believed the Catholic Church was the Whore of Revelation 17. They rejected Catholic doctrine and all of what Rome called “sacraments.” They preached only the Bible, believing the church should not be part of the world and should not base its doctrines upon the theories of the unregenerate. Therefore they rejected as unscriptural Aristotle's teaching that “Reason is a light that God has kindled in the soul” so all men can instinctively know the Laws God programmed into Nature (page H5-3), and they rejected the Catholic Church's acceptance of the pagan theory that the souls of the unregenerate have everlasting life. That pagan foundation also resulted in other Roman Catholic “Natural Law doctrines” such as, “At the bar of God's justice, a man will not be judged by anything but his own conscience.” The Cathari believed immortality was available to the souls of men only through the Biblical new birth, and that God's truth is available only through His word. They believed the Natural, carnal, physical old man is instinctively evil and Naturally opposed to God. This Natural human evil manifested itself in man's tendency to be independent of God, which is rebellion against His Headship. This meant all philosophy was evil rebellion, and a monk in a monastery contemplating Self in order to learn about God was wasting both his time and the offerings of faithful Catholics.

It is hard to be definite about the doctrines of the Cathari because so little of what they believed has survived. They are almost universally labeled as heretics by secular and religious historians for four reasons: First, what we know of their beliefs about the nature of good (walking in the Spirit) and evil (walking in the flesh) is from sketchy and vague information that can easily be misinterpreted as Dualism, which is itself vague and ill-defined. Second, modernists love Natural Reason and dislike those who don't. Third, since most of Europe was Roman Catholic, Catholicism is often thought of as the standard by which Christianity is judged: all others are “heretics.” Fourth, little is known about low-profile Christian groups like the **Cathari**, the **Paulicians**, the **Bogomils**, and the **Wends** or **Sorbs** (who were, interestingly enough, of **Slavic** and **Saxon** origin: see pages D24-1 and D27-12). These groups fellowshipped with each other and rejected the authority and orthodoxy of the powerful Church of Rome. When the Catholic Inquisition exterminated them it even burned their books and literature. Nothing has survived. Therefore, the same enemies who massacred them wrote all of the “history” about them, and the information must be viewed as anti-Cathari propaganda intended to make the extreme and shocking measures taken to kill them appear justified. (For documentation of the atrocities committed see Fox's *Book of Christian Martyrs* and van Bragt's *Martyrs Mirror*.)

In fact, because the Cathari and the other groups were so numerous and occupied such a large area across southern Europe, and because their beliefs were considered to be so threatening to Catholic doctrine, four large-scale military Crusades were launched against them – just like the ones sent to the Holy Land, and with the same material and spiritual incentives to do a thorough job. Millions were slaughtered during this Christian holocaust. By 1200 the surviving Cathari were so few in number the mop-up work was left to the Inquisition. By 1400 they were completely exterminated.

Secular history always stresses the *economic* importance of the Crusades because they increased trade between east and west. And secular history views the *military* results of the Crusades to be inconsequential because the permanent acquisition of dominion over the Holy Land failed. But the doctrinal effects of the Crusades on Christianity were lasting and had two great consequences: First, the Biblical teaching of the mortality of the unregenerate soul was exterminated along with the Cathari; and second, all resistance of any consequence to the universal spread of Romish Rational Christianity was killed. Since then Natural Reason has become a part of Christian life, and the immortality of the pagan soul has never been seriously questioned.

When Dante wrote *The Divine Comedy* around 1315, the Crusades against the Cathari, together with the Inquisition's teaching that anyone who denied the immortality of pagan souls was a heretic, were well known to European society. Dante agreed with the forerunner of Rationalist Christians, Justin (page H5-6), about the fate of certain pagans. It may be that Dante was also influenced by the uproar over the Cathari and how crucial the Roman Church said the immortality of pagan souls was, because in *Divine Comedy* Dante had God refuse to put the pagan philosophers who originated the theory of the immortality of the unregenerate soul in hell – He *rewarded* them by putting them in Limbo instead! But those people who did not adopt the pagan doctrine were assigned to the deepest parts of hell.

By the time the Crusades began, philosophy was widely accepted among scholars and was beginning to infect society as people started to think and act on their own – albeit in relatively minor displays of rebellion. Marriage is a good example. Originally, marriage was not a “sacrament” because marriage was not complicated – a man gave his daughter to another man to be his wife. A supper or other celebration was held to announce the union so no one would think the woman was sinning when she slept with her husband, and so all would know she now had the authority to act in her husband's name. But over the years the Catholic Church assumed more and more control over various aspects of life. Rome ignored what the Bible said and declared marriage to be not only a “sacrament” by which the married received “sanctifying grace”, but also, since the Western Church was God's agent and dispenser of His sanctifying grace on earth, a Roman Catholic priest had to be at the wedding or it didn't count. Oh, the families could still announce and celebrate the union at a marriage supper if they wanted, but the Church had to be involved. And that had been the way Catholics performed weddings for centuries – with a priest. But now some Catholics were beginning to return to the original way of marrying – without a priest, and then have the marriage recorded by a village clerk to make it a matter of public record. The Vatican responded by telling people any alternatives to church weddings, such as a marriage supper or the use of a justice of the peace to certify that a wedding had taken place, were not the sacrament of matrimony, did not convey sanctifying grace, and were heresy. When people continued to ignore the Vatican and use private ceremonies, the Office of the Inquisition was instructed to add non-church weddings to its list of heresies. The Inquisition did almost as thorough a job dealing with marriage as it did with the immortality of the soul issue because today many people – even Protestants – think the only valid union is one that is presided over by a preacher. And that is how church weddings and the immortality of the pagan soul became traditional doctrines in Christianity.

ALBERTUS MAGNUS

At the same time the Vatican was using the Inquisition to control the pewsters, it had to contend with increasing division in the Catholic hierarchy. Liberals wanted more Reason in Christianity and conservatives wanted less. There did not seem to be any easy solution and as a result Vatican policy on the matter was erratic. The problem facing the Vatican was real. On its face this was just another academic squabble among the intellectual elite. But underneath was a nagging fear shared by conservatives and many liberals: What would happen to society and to the Church if the mindless masses had their Reason unleashed?

And then a shocking incident in England seemed to indicate their fears about liberating the masses were well founded, and that the order of the whole world might be turned upside down. In 1215 English barons, unhappy with King John, forced him to sign the **Magna Carta**, which would eventually become one of the “sacred documents” in democratic history. This document gave them “rights” and took away the king's prerogative to arbitrarily put people in jail. (This incident would, several hundred years later, be interpreted by liberal antiquarians as an ancient Natural Law “proof” that kings are supposed to be subject to the people and to laws made by the people.) The pope was shocked that subjects could be so rebellious against authority; it just didn't happen: This was an era when every child learned submission and self-control by getting his face slapped if he dared to sass his mother. Stop and think for a minute: If the Magna Carta rebellion does not seem like that big of a deal to you, you need to remember that all authority is of God. Would you sass Him or try to force Him to grant you His prerogatives? The pope properly released King John from honoring the highly illegal and unchristian Magna Carta.

As a person, King John was despicable. He was a liar who betrayed both his father when he was king, and his brother, Richard the Lion-hearted, when he was king. And John did not improve when he became king. He was a treacherous and cruel hypocrite motivated only by greed. Biblically speaking, however, none of that matters as far as his subjects were concerned – if they were Christians. [No, I don't think they were Christians. Neither do I think the other Roman Catholics mentioned in this book were Christians – no matter how I word things when writing about them. Neither do I think the Roman Catholic Church is a true Christian organization. But this is a textbook and we are in a classroom learning from history what is Biblical behavior and what is not. And not a lot of material is available about the tiny groups of real Christians – because they quietly lived submissive lives. So, let's get back to work.]

Following the Magna Carta rebellion another Englishman, **Roger Bacon** (1214-1294), a Franciscan monk and student of philosophy, taught at Oxford University (a popular English center for learning Greek philosophy) that the secular Reason espoused by Greek philosophy was a gift of God to be used for the betterment of mankind. (Today when Christians defend their carnal – and often ignorant – opinions with, “Well, God gave us brains and I think He expects us to use them”, they don't realize they have merely restated Roger Bacon's rehash of pagan philosophy in a more immature way.) Bacon was part of a group of liberal, pro-philosophy Roman Catholics that was growing in size and influence at the same time that anti-philosophy Christians like the Cathari were being systematically hunted down and exterminated. He was one of those who kept

the Vatican busy administering discipline because he was always picking quarrels with conservative academics whose views differed from his. Bacon is most noted for his work helping to develop methods of scientific observation and is called the Admirable Doctor. But his influence pales in comparison with his Italian contemporary, Albertus Magnus.

Saint Albertus Magnus (1200-1280) was a Dominican bishop and teacher of philosophy at the radical University of Paris. (France was popular with militant Christian Rationalists, and the University of Paris was a major Temple of Reason.) Albertus would become the Catholic patron saint of all scientists by papal decree because of all he did for philosophy. He is the only scholar of his age to be called “the Great.”

Albertus, as a member of the Dominican Order whose responsibility it was to exterminate heretics who rejected the **pagan Greek doctrine of the immortality of all unregenerate souls**, wrote several major works defending the doctrine. Christian intellectuals of the time were grappling with the issue not so much because of the ongoing, high profile extermination of the Cathari, but because of the influence of a Spanish-Arab scholar named **Averroes** (1126-1198), who was a noted translator of Aristotle’s works. Although Averroes was dead, his works were becoming available in Europe and were greatly admired by – and very influential among – both Jewish and Christian scholars. A noted philosopher who exalted Reason, Averroes correctly pointed out that all arguments for the immortality of the pagan soul – whether made by pagans like the Greek philosophers or Christians like Augustine – were based on specious reasoning, and therefore the *true, unbiased position of philosophy* had to be that the soul was – just as unbiased scientific observation revealed it to be – mortal. His point was so obviously right, Christian scholars found themselves in the embarrassing position of having to admit not only that their great Saint Augustine had based his doctrinal conclusions on faulty Reason, but also that Christian scholars for almost eight hundred years had blindly accepted Augustine’s position as a foundational Christian doctrine. The implications were enormous. If the Bible says the unregenerate souls of humans are not immortal – just like the souls of animals are not immortal, and previously discredited verses like **Ec 3:18,19** and **Mt 15:26** had been *literally* correct all along, the first problem for the Roman Catholic Church was its daily slaughter of the innocent and doctrinally-correct Cathari. The second problem was more far-reaching: The Catholic Church had relied on the doctrine of the immortality of pagan souls to justify a daisy chain of other doctrines: 1) Pagans are just as much children of God as Christians; 2) therefore pagans must be required to live by the Bible; 3) if they don’t they will go to hell; 4) therefore Rome must continue to conquer pagan lands in order to convert hell-bound pagans and to establish Christian government. If the Cathari were right it meant instead of being so obsessed with compassing sea and land to make one more proselyte, the Catholic Church should have spent more time and energy training up its pewsters in the way of the Bible so they could avoid the common pitfalls the Bible says are so habitual among God’s people.

The Roman Catholic hierarchy reacted the same way most Christians today would react. Instead of humbly pausing to Scripturally analyze a doctrine that had been fumbled by pagan philosophers whose great Reason was so tuned into God’s truth that even He wouldn’t throw them into hell, a doctrine that had been botched – or ignored – by every great Christian mind for eight hundred years (with the possible exception of Christians like the Cathari), the Vatican became stubbornly defensive and, suddenly unable to rely on the old “common knowledge” that pagan souls have everlasting life, resorted to sophistry. If it admitted it had been wrong for so many centuries and allowed doubt to exist about the immortality of pagan souls, people might respond by having doubts about the validity and purpose of the Catholic Church itself – and even begin to doubt immortality and the existence of the spiritual realm. Using that specious, issue-dodging justification, the Vatican, knowing it didn’t know if it was right or wrong about the doctrine but figuring there was too much at stake, began looking for one of its best minds to step forward and establish the validity of the doctrine once and for all. At the same time, the Vatican decided to continue killing Cathari rather than impartially confer with them about the doctrine.

The man chosen to champion the pagan/Catholic doctrine was Albertus Magnus, Dominican defender of Augustinian doctrine. As Albertus began to look into the immortality issue he found out why no one – pagan or Christian – had been able to prove the doctrine: It wasn’t in the Bible! Any “Scriptural” defense, therefore, had to be built upon verses whose interpretation depended on assumptions – assumptions now called into question. The Bible turned out to be useless as a defense because it repeatedly said human souls die in the same way Christians now believe animal souls die, and the Bible repeatedly said the unregenerate were in fact no different from animals because they both die. Therefore, if Albertus argued that verses in the Bible like **Josh 11:11; Ps 89:48; Jb 12:10/Re 16:3; and Ezek 18:20** were really only talking about mortal, physical *bodies* – and not mortal *souls* as was literally written – he would make things worse because such an argument would lead to the obvious conclusion that pagans and animals both have everlasting souls – and thereby force the Vatican to start exterminating any Christians who believed the souls of unsaved beasts were mortal! And that would mean the animals in the manger were there worshipping the newborn Saviour in order to save their immortal souls from hell! Albertus was in quite a pickle.

With nothing Scriptural to go on, Albertus had to do what others before him had done – ignore what the Bible actually said and use sophistry to build a case. Because he and all the other Christian scholars he consulted were unable to come up with anything definitive that wouldn’t blatantly contradict the Bible, Albertus’ first treatise was unsatisfactory, which caused him to ultimately write a series of defenses – all lame. He used the old two-step routine so familiar to debaters; he maintained that some truths in life are revealed by the Scriptures, and other truths not mentioned in Scripture are revealed by Reason. Even though the immortality of the unregenerate soul was supported by neither the Scriptures nor by Reason alone, he argued, it *was* supported by the two of them *when used together* – just as a bridge needs *both* pillars to support it. And then he danced back and forth from one to the other, leaving the one without having established anything but acting as if he had when he turned to the other. His attempt to verify the immortality of the unregenerate soul was his biggest failure as a philosopher and theologian. Knowing he was able to establish nothing, Albertus the Great, without being too obvious about it in his defense, retreated from both Scripture and philosophy and said the faithful could safely rely on the doctrines of their Holy Mother Church.

Today’s Christians are unable to do any better than Albertus, so this huge and important topic is absent from works on Christian doctrine. In other words, just as Christians – before Averroes opened his big mouth and shouted “The emperor has no clothes!” – ignored Bible study and trusted that their sincere, godly, dead heroes of the faith were doctrinally correct, today’s preachers and pewsters are doing the same thing by blindly relying on the validity of the traditions of the elders.

Today’s **encyclopedias**, however, with no religious axe to grind, are not afraid to openly state that the Christian doctrine of the immortality of the soul is not supported by either Testament of the Bible, but came to Christianity from the Greek philosophers. (Go look it up in your encyclopedia. *Britannica’s* Micropædia has it under “soul”; and in the Macropædia

under “Christianity” find the section “Christian thought and doctrine”, and in the subsection “Christian Philosophy” read the part called “History of Christian philosophy.”) The pagan origin of the doctrine is not a mystery. I say again, it is *very* well known. But it is an unmentionable because it reveals that our spiritual leaders and preachers have been for many centuries ignorant and/or shallow in their understanding of the Bible, or have been hypocrites who knew better but were too weak and selfish to stand up and preach correct doctrine. As a result, all Protestant denominations that inherited the doctrine from Rome have Logically built the same doctrinal daisy chain the Roman Catholic Church did upon the Platonic/Augustinian foundation. If the souls of the unsaved do not have everlasting life, much of the evangelical emphasis of the church, which is based on saving the pagans from spending their “everlasting lives” in the lake of fire, will turn out to be wasted. And it would mean the reason the Lord issued the Great Commission (**Mk 16:15**) was for some reason other than the traditional belief that He wanted to keep the unsaved from going to hell when they died (**Mt 10:5; 15:22-26**). And it would explain the question that has plagued Christians since Augustine: How could God so callously ignore the fact that multiple millions of Gentiles (with “immortal” souls) were pouring into hell all during the Old Testament period, blatantly expose that callousness in the verses we just looked at, and not bother to issue the Great Commission until after His resurrection?!

When the false doctrine of the immortality of unregenerate human-but-not-animal souls made converting the unsaved the major purpose of the church (“the main thing is soul-winning”), preachers began to place more emphasis on the importance of their pewsters’ bringing unsaved visitors to church than on the pewsters learning the Bible. And since the unsaved are not and cannot be subject to the laws of God (**Ro 8:7**) because God’s truth is *spiritually* discerned (**1 Co 2:14; Jn 3:3,6**), preachers found that the word of God had less effect on carnal pagans than did emotion. So evangelistic preaching lowered its aim from the head to the gut. That’s why you hear so many dramatic, heart-wrenching, and heart-warming stories from the pulpit aimed at the unsaved – *emotion* has an appeal the Bible cannot match! Preachers found that their born again but carnal Christian congregations also enjoyed soap opera stories more than they did Scripture, and at home their pewsters had more interest in reading novels (“Christian fiction”) than in reading God’s Book. And guess what today’s preachers discern from that telling fact: Nothing!

Anyway, some denominations built upon the false doctrine of the immortality of the unregenerate soul in a different way. They correctly wondered what good it was to get everlasting life from the new birth if we *all already have everlasting life*. And they wondered why the Bible says we get everlasting life only from Christ if in fact even the unsaved pagans have everlasting souls. So they changed the definition of everlasting life from life without end to “living in heaven rather than living in hell.” Therefore they claim salvation no longer means a mortal person is birthed by the Spirit of God into spiritual immortality, it means the never-ending life he “already has” will be spent in heaven. Again, because they thought the Greek philosophers were right about *everybody already having immortal life*, these denominations redefined the word “everlasting” to mean God would never punish the iniquity of saints by changing His children’s home address from heaven to hell like He did with His beloved Lucifer. They say Lucifer’s being kicked out of God’s household means even though Lucifer was immortal and had spirit life he never had “everlasting” life because God knew this son of His was a “professor” not a “possessor.” Thus was the false doctrine the Roman Catholic Church launched four Crusades to defend used as the foundation for the false doctrine of “**eternal security**”. But I don’t want to go into doctrine in depth here in the historical section, so let’s press on.

One of Albertus Magnus’ main agendas was to lobby for the official combining of Greek philosophy and Christianity. This would not just bring liberals and conservatives together, it would also allow *philosophy* to free the mind while *Christianity* prevented the social chaos and decadence that many scholars feared would result if Reason ever did become public property. Albertus believed religion should be kept out of all topics except itself – in accordance with the rules of philosophy. In other words, because philosophy’s Reason was believed to be a *reliable* road to truth, it would be a helpful addition to Christianity because it would expose superstition and error in the Bible; but because Christianity and the Bible were *uncertain* roads, they should not be allowed to affect the reliable road of philosophy.

Because he lived at a time when the Vatican wasn’t ready to completely sell out to philosophy, Albertus just missed becoming the Third Pillar of Western Civilization. However, just as the First Pillar, Alexander the Great, learned philosophy at the feet of Aristotle, and just as the Second Pillar, Augustine, learned philosophy at the feet of the Eight-Day Wonder, Ambrose, so, too, did the Third Pillar of Western Civilization, Thomas Aquinas, learn philosophy at the feet of Albertus Magnus – and Aquinas was Albertus’ greatest contribution to civilization.