IPS PRINCIPLE PERSPECTIVE

A Quarterly Update for Donors & Friends of IPS

4th Quarter 2009

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READ US OUR RIGHTS

One of the most important and fundamental principles of government involves a question of origins—not the origin of the species, but the origin of rights.

A Word from Mike Winther

Dear friends, 2009 is rapidly drawing to a close. By now you have received several dozen appeals for year-end donations from a variety of organizations. It is almost a certainty that each of these organizations has had declining revenue over the past year; everyone understands that giving is down because of the state of the economy. Supporters of IPS know that America's poor economic state is due to bad government policies—policies that violate the principles of good government, policies that cause boom and bust cycles in the economy, policies that place burdensome tax loads on our citizens, policies that reduce the value of our savings and investments, and policies that transfer wealth from productive members of society to the unproductive.

Each group that solicits your support probably performs a valuable function: some minister the gospel, some feed or clothe the poor, and some heal the sick.

Although many of these groups may do important work, I doubt that the work of any of them can claim to raise revenue for the other groups. In most cases, the funds that each organization raises may come at the expense of the others because they compete for similar donors. However, IPS is unique among the groups that solicit your contributions, because over time, our work will restore liberties and promote prosperity, which will benefit every ministry and charity in the country.

No ministry or charity in the country can long exist without liberty and prosperity. They can only pursue their goals if we have a political environment that allows this freedom. In many Western nations, there are non-profit groups that have lost their freedom to operate and pursue their mission because the government is not friendly to their philosophy. Many churches and Christian ministries are even now experiencing limitations on their freedom to operate as they desire. Nor can our ministries and non-profit organizations survive if their supporting constituency becomes increasingly poor.

I understand that every organization believes that their work is the most important work. But both reason and experience tell us that liberty and prosperity are essential to every other work. Additionally, we know that liberty and prosperity are hanging by a thread in our nation today.

For this reason, I firmly believe that the work of IPS is a fundamental prerequisite to the work of other organizations.

Like all the other groups that desire your support, IPS has also experienced decreasing revenue during the past year. It is my hope that you will evaluate your giving from a strategic perspective, and that you may feel led to provide even greater levels of support to our work. I believe that we are making a difference, and if I can paraphrase the words of John Paul Jones, "We have just begun to fight."

Please consider sacrificially supporting this fight.

"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the people do?"

EDUCATING STUDENTS THROUGH DEBATE

By Katie Philpott

Teach high school students about government in school, and they will probably forget two-thirds of what they learned by the end of summer break. Create an environment where high school students are personally invested in the role of government, however, and they will go out of their way to read and research far more than a typical class would require. Team policy debate establishes just such an environment, and IPS has been able to witness the incredible results through the Logos Forensics Association, the Institute's debate league for private Christian schools.

The Logos Forensics Association has grown rapidly in the fall of 2009. Both schools from last season returned to compete and were joined by three new schools this fall: Valley Christian School, Ripon Christian School, and Monte Vista Christian School. This brought the number of participating students from 16 debaters to over 60!

On October 24th, Valley Christian School hosted the first debate tournament. Superintendent John Moran attended the tournament and expressed his great excitement at seeing how much the activity has to offer young Christian adults. Kyle Peacock and Brook Fraiser of Berean Christian School won this first 2009-'10 tournament. A second tournament was held on November 14th at Monte Vista Christian School, where Ripon Christian's team Peter

Marotta and Kelsey Vecchio took 1st place.

The real success, however, does not lie in placements or trophies, but in education. Having the privilege of working with some of these students outside of tournaments has enabled me to observe their growing enthusiasm for government and economics. Discussions in class often turn from debate to the proper role of government. A number of students have begun reading Bastiat's unparalleled work on government, The Law. In most cases, the students are surprised to learn about the idea of limited government or freedom in the market. After one class where such ideas were discussed, a young girl admitted, "We've never heard this before." Another student testified, "That was the best class we've had so far!"

As the league continues to grow, we are excited about the possibilities of reaching young Christians through debate. By giving students a reason to care about the principles that founded our nation, and the ability to express their beliefs with logic and eloquence, we are equipping them to become the strong Christian leaders of tomorrow. IPS

THE IPS CIVICS CHALLENGE: *The Ultimate Fundraiser*

On November 13, approximately 110 people gathered in Modesto for the first annual IPS Civics Challenge fundraising event. We have been anticipating this event for several months, and it is a pleasure to report that we were not disappointed. The evening provided valuable fellowship and congenial competition, and we received an enthusiastic response from those who attended.

The evening began with dessert and a chance for tables and teams to mingle before we moved on to the main event: the competition. Thirteen teams competed against each other during the competition to answer 30 trivia questions on topics of government, American history, and economics. We expected some hefty competition between teams, and we were thrilled to see the enthusiasm among the competitors as the evening progressed. Adding to the fervor was the fact that, before the competition began, we had "auctioned" three experts to three different teams—three gentlemen who then joined the teams that "purchased" them and assisted in answering the questions throughout the competition. Joining us as experts were Roy Carlisle, Marketing and Sales Director at the Independent Institute in Oakland, overseeing marketing, sales, and distribution of all Institute programs and products; Larry Anderson, self-proclaimed lifelong history and government "wonk" and former US History, AP US History, and Government teacher at Big Valley Christian Junior High and High School; and Curtis Grant, former professor of American History at San Jose City College and California State University, Stanislaus.

In the end, though, it was not a table with an expert that won the prize. Instead, it was the Ripon Christian High School team—captained by Sherwin Heyboer—that captured first place. Sherwin teaches history and economics, and coaches mock trial and debate, at Ripon Christian High School. Mr. Heyboer shared the following thoughts on the evening and IPS:

> *Our team had an enjoyable time participating in IPS's first Civics Challenge. We were pleasantly surprised with our first place finish and, in a spirit of friendly competition, look forward to defending our championship next year. I am more proud, however, to support an institution such as IPS. No greater mission exists than "taking back society for Christ and His principles" by "training Christians to understand, defend, and advocate a biblical worldview." I am happy to be a supporter of IPS.*

Our gratitude goes out to those of you who attended the 2009 Civics Challenge, and to those who were not able to make it, we hope to see you at the 2010 event!

READ US OUR RIGHTS

By Michael R. Winther

One of the most important and fundamental principles of government involves a question of origins—not the origin of the species, but the origin of rights. It is difficult to discuss any aspect of government without addressing some question about rights. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy insightfully explains the importance and centrality of our understanding of rights:

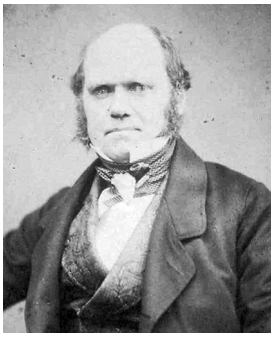
Rights dominate most modern understandings of what actions are proper and which institutions are just. Rights structure the forms of our governments, the contents of our laws, and the shape of morality as we perceive it. To accept a set of rights is to approve a distribution of freedom and authority, and so to endorse a certain view of what may, must, and must not be done.[1]

I would be hard-pressed to think of a single political or economic controversy that does not have a dispute about the origin and definition of rights at its core. Banking crises, health care reform, trials for terrorists, abortion, unemployment, and overseas military policies are all questions about the source and definition of rights. A proper understanding of rights is the principle that underlies each of these issues.

The eighteenth-century American understanding of rights was a powerful limitation on the size and scope of civil government. Those who have wanted to expand the role of government have found that they must alter the historic American understanding of rights — and they have now been doing this gradually, but successfully, for most of two centuries. This alteration of America's founding view of rights can come in two forms: one by changing the understanding of the source of the rights, and the other by changing the definition of rights.

The Source of Rights

First, let's look at the debate over the source of rights. Those who desire the expansion of government authority must necessarily reduce individual authority. The spheres of government authority and individual authority are proportional inverses — as one increases, the other must decrease. We might say that the rights of an individual define the boundaries of individual authority: whatever I have the right to do, I also have the authority to do. If, therefore, an individual has the authority to take (or not take) some action, legitimate government is restrained from interfering with this individual authority. Government authority is limited by this individual authority.



The ideas popularized by Charles Darwin have far-reaching consequences beyond the creation and evolution debate. In the evolutionary worldview, rights are creations of man and can be altered or removed when it seems practical to do so.

Those who want to reduce the size and scope of individual rights may attempt to alter the nature of rights by changing them from absolute, inalienable things to relative, negotiable things. This is where the question of origins becomes relevant. If man is the source of rights, then rights are relative and negotiable, but if they have a divine origin, then they are fixed and non-negotiable.

The Declaration of Independence clearly states the "self-evident" assumption of our nation's leaders that rights come from the Creator God:

> *We hold these Truths to be self-evident, 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.*[2]

Here is where the creation/evolution debate begins to impact the foundation for all thought regarding government.

If evolution is true and there is no creator and no God, then man is nothing more than one of the more highly-evolved animals. According to evolutionary theory, the process that produced all of our current species is the process of natural selection, aided by the concept of survival of the fittest. The evolutionary process knows nothing of rights or authority. If evolution is true, there can be no absolute right or wrong — only arbitrary standards thought up by some evolved creatures.

In the evolutionary view of nature it is acceptable, even desirable, for one creature to devour another, since there are no intrinsic rights. In the evolutionary worldview, rights can be no more than an idea thought up by one or more members of a constantly evolving species. The rights themselves would likely change over time as well.

1 http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rights/ Accessed: 12-7-09

2 The Declaration of Independence

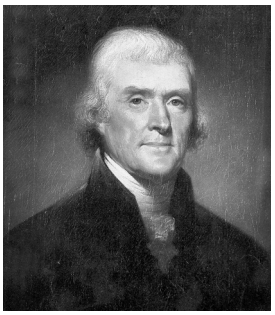
In the evolutionary worldview, there seem to be only two options for the application of, or the granting of, rights. The first possibility is that rights inure to all creatures. Many of the animal rights activists are actually acting logically on their evolutionary worldview when they try to apply human rights to animals. The second possibility is that rights only apply to some subset of creatures. If we apply rights only to a subset of creatures, we must decide (and it is just a decision of a few members of one species) which creatures should receive these rights. Do we include apes? Do we base it on intelligence? Do we do as Hitler did and provide rights only to the most highly-evolved humans?

For the evolutionist, rights can never be more than a practical tool designed to improve his quality of life. I will grant that the concept of rights can indeed improve the quality of life, but this view of rights will never maximize that quality of life or safeguard man's liberty. Since these rights are a pragmatic creation of man (and not even of all men), there will be no clear definition of what they are or how they should be applied.[3] The result is that evolutionary rights can be legitimately altered, limited, suspended, or abolished at any time. The key word here is "legitimately," because political leaders can deny rights in either worldview. The difference is that God-given rights can be denied or ignored by a government, but they cannot be taken away. But since man is the source of rights in the evolutionary worldview, man can legitimately take away the rights that man has given.

If rights come from government, then government can take them away. If rights come from the Constitution, then the Constitution can be amended to take those rights away. If rights come from the majority, then the majority can take them away. If rights come from the intelligentsia, then the intelligentsia can take them away. But if rights come from God, then only God can legitimately alter them or take them away. This is the only philosophical construct that allows rights to be absolute—or as Thomas Jefferson said, "inalienable."

The Definition of Rights

Now let's look at the definition of rights. Since the rights of an individual are just another way of expressing the individual's authority to act, we can determine that an individual has (or should have) the freedom or authority to act in any ethical way. Here is another area that presents a problem for the evolutionary worldview. If ethics determine the scope of individual rights, how do we know what actions are ethical? The biblical worldview



Thomas Jefferson, like many of America's founders, was highly influenced by a biblical view of man and the world. From this perspective, rights are God-given, inalienable, and absolute.

derives its ethics from the inspired word of God, but where does the evolutionist find ethics? They must come from the survival of the fittest.

Some will ask if there are limits to rights. The answer is that there are limits to acceptable (ethical) human action, but there are no limits to rights. If a human action is not ethically acceptable, then we cannot say that there is a right to that action. Rights are, by definition, the acceptable actions of an individual that do not infringe upon the equal rights of others. In other words, there can be no right to something that would require the violation of another's rights.

Those who wish to reduce the quantity or quality of rights may actually attempt to redefine and expand the definition of rights to include things that are not rights at all. At first it may seem like a strange irony, but defining rights too broadly can have the same effect as defining then too narrowly. If we expand the definition of rights to include things like food, housing, education, and health care, we negate any useful conception of rights because the granting of these rights to some would require the violation of the rights of others. For example, if health care is a right that should be guaranteed by government, we must grant to government the power to accomplish this task. The only way to guarantee the provision of health care is to force health professionals to provide these services for free or to force others to pay for the cost of these services. So while we are expanding the "rights" of those receiving health care, we are simultaneously reducing the rights of those who provide or pay for the health care.

There is a perverse brilliance in this approach of expanding the definition of rights so that individual rights might be reduced. In the absence of a national crisis, it would be difficult to sell the citizens on the idea of reducing their rights, but it is far easier to convince the public to accept an expanded definition of rights. Unless the public is highly discerning and has a clear understanding of what rights really are, they can easily fall into this trap.

[3] If one believes or assumes the creation worldview, there are some useful principles from the Bible that define exactly what rights are and how they are to be applied. A detailed exposition of these scriptural concepts is beyond the scope of this article, but we hope to expand on this in future publications.

A Pursuit versus a Guarantee

In one sense, there is a "right" to health care, if this means that no one should be forcibly prevented from seeking this care. But there can be no right to health care if this requires the violation of the property rights of others.

I have the right to an $800,000.00 Italian sports car. This means that I can have one if I can acquire it through voluntary action. If I earn enough money to voluntarily entice the car's maker to trade my money for its car, I can have it. Alternatively, I can also acquire the car if I can persuade the car's maker to give me one based on my good looks—or my excellent understanding of human rights. As long as the company does so voluntarily, no rights have been violated.

To consider another example, I may have a right to freedom of speech, but I don't have a right to force a newspaper to print my editorial.

To Whom are Rights Granted?

Thomas Jefferson and the other senior statesmen of the day who endorsed the Declaration of Independence believed that rights were bestowed upon "all men." Not just Virginians, not just Americans, not just white men, but "all men." An evolutionary view of rights can tolerate a less than universal application of rights, but in a creationist, biblical worldview, it is fundamental that the Creator bestows rights universally.

Many "conservatives" will fiercely advocate for the protection of rights for American citizens while denying some of these rights to non-citizens. To hold this view is to accept some version of the evolutionist view of rights—that rights are not absolute and universal; that they are granted by men and can be altered or removed by man; and that some men are more deserving of these rights than others.

The creationist view of our founding fathers doesn't mean that America must protect the rights of every person in the world, but it does mean that we ought to recognize and protect God-given rights wherever we have jurisdiction.

There is plenty of legal debate as to how to apply the Constitution to non-citizens. Regardless of one's opinion on the specific constitutional protections that may or may not be granted to non-citizens, the concept of inalienable rights — given by God, to all men — is the cornerstone upon which the Constitution was erected. If we wish to preserve the Constitution, we must preserve its philosophical foundation. Remember that the Constitution is not the source of our rights; it is merely man's attempt to limit government and to keep that government from violating rights. Nothing in the document prohibits our government (or our citizens) from extending this protection to all humans who fall within our government's jurisdiction.

Do to others what you would have them do to you.

As Christians, we should take seriously the admonition in Matthew 7:12.[4] We should provide others with the same level and type of justice that we desire for ourselves. God is not mocked, and it would not be surprising to see Him place His people under the same kind of justice that they advocate for others.

It may be possible to hold a view that, as Americans, we are somehow entitled to privileges and protections that do not apply to the rest of the world. This belief, however, would be our undoing, since it turns our protections from God-given human rights into a lesser class called privileges. Those who wish to expand the scope of government and reduce the scope of individual rights would love nothing better than to turn rights into privileges.

Some may ask, "What about free education in our public schools and state universities? What about welfare?" "We shouldn't allow illegal aliens or foreign citizens to participate in these 'benefits' of citizenship." Herein lies a false parallel. These specific "rights" are actually benefits — not rights. At best they are privileges; at worst they are violations of rights because these "benefits" necessitate the violation of the rights of others. We know that these things are not actually rights because to provide them to one person requires the involuntary taking of resources away from someone else — therefore violating their rights.

If we think that certain rights are important for us, then we should desire these rights for others as well. If we think that rights are good things, and if these rights are desirable to others, we ought to freely acknowledge them when it is in our power to do so. Then we can introduce others to the Source of those rights.

4 Matthew 7:12. "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the law and the prophets."

REFLECTIONS *on* READING

By Jenna R. Holliday

"The man who will not read has no advantage over the man who cannot read." Attributed to Mark Twain, this quotation illustrates an important principle regarding reading: the technical ability to read does a person no good if he does not execute the ability. The capacity to read is an incredible gift, but it does not provide any benefit if it is not practiced.

Now readers, if you are anything like me, you probably have continual good intentions of reading, but how many of us actually turn the intentions into action? I know that I, at any given time, generally have a stack of at least five books on my bedside table, all of them "important" on my reading list, but none of them receiving the attention they deserve. Many of us are aware of the importance of serious reading, but we simply do not make the effort to practice the art of reading. Gene Veith puts it this way: "A growing problem is illiteracy —many people do not know how to read. A more severe problem, though, is 'aliteracy' — a vast number of people know how to read but never do it." [1]

One major emphasis at IPS is encouraging people to start reading again—reading in the eager, profitable way that American society read at the time of our nation's founding. Yes, it is true that Americans are "literate" in a strictly technical term, but in too many cases, only literate in the sense that, as Susan Wise Bauer puts it, "allows readers to absorb newspapers and Stephen King with ease," rather than trained in how to "read seriously, how to study." [2] This more serious approach to reading takes time, effort, and energy, but again as Bauer expresses, "reading is no harder (or easier) than it has ever been." [3] If you are anything like me, you probably complain, "I don't have time to undertake serious reading like this!" It is true that our days are full, as we rush from one hectic season of life to the next, but it is equally true that we always manage to make time for the things we sincerely want to do. Often we think we cannot "fit it all in" in the available hours of the day. However, it is often a simple matter of priorities when it comes to what we "have time" for. What is truly important to us? What do we truly value? These are always the things that we will make time for, regardless of how rushed and hectic our lives become.

Of course, as Christians, the most important thing we can be doing is spending time in the Word of God. Secondarily, however, I am convinced that one of the next most important things we can do is to set about a course of serious reading. Changing hearts and minds—the phrase that perhaps best sums up what IPS is all about—involves furthering education, and furthering education involves reading. After all, the best education is one that will, as Dorothy Sayers expressed it, "teach men how to learn for themselves; and whatever instruction fails to do this is effort spent in vain." One of the Institute's primary goals is to encourage Americans of all ages to fuel and develop a natural hunger for learning — and this goal is perhaps best accomplished by reading. Again quoting Gene Veith: "When we read, we cultivate a sustained attention span, an active imagination, a capacity for logical analysis and critical thinking, and a rich inner life." [4] The sheer impact of careful, thoughtful reading simply cannot be over-emphasized, especially in a culture that has largely abandoned any emphasis on such reading.

For those of us who are intimidated by the time commitment that a course of serious reading would take, consider this excerpt from John Piper:

> *Suppose you read slowly like I do — maybe about the same speed that you speak — 200 words a minute. If you read fifteen minutes a day for one year (say just before supper, or just before bed), you will read 5,475 minutes in the year. Multiply that by 200 words a minute, and you get 1,095,000 words that you would read in a year. Now an average serious book might have about 360 words per page. So you would have read 3,041 pages in one year. That's ten very substantial books. All in fifteen minutes a day.* [5]

Numbers like this inspire me. Something that seems overwhelming becomes less daunting when it is broken down into reasonable (and reachable) goals. Concerned Americans, Americans who want to truly make a difference, should be setting goals to continue educating themselves and then sharing their knowledge with others. I would love to see every person I talk to at a conference or convention who is excited to learn more about what we are teaching begin to commit himself or herself to

1 Gene Edward Veith, Jr., *Reading Between the Lines* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1990), p. 25.
2 Susan Wise Bauer, *The Well-Educated Mind* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2003), p. 18.
3 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
4 Gene Edward Veith, Jr., *Reading Between the Lines* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1990), p. xiv.
5 John Piper, *When I Don't Desire God* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2004), p. 129.

reading good books. This is perhaps one of the most effective means by which we can reach out to change hearts and minds.

Anyone who has taken an IPS class knows that we major on reading. I have personally seen many people become truly excited about reading the books we sell and opening a new world of knowledge to themselves. Realistically, I have to assume that sometimes the books we send home with attendees of our classes will go on a shelf and never be read, but it is my hope that we can and will encourage our audiences to expend the effort that it takes to actually read those books about which they initially have become so excited.

I urge myself as well as my readers to make a conscious effort, as 2009 draws to a close and 2010 is on the horizon, to become better readers, in a broad sense. Pick up that book that has been on your nightstand for three months. Choose a time that can become a dedicated reading time, whether it is every day, several times per week, or even just once every week. Consider what John Piper says about the "15 minutes a day" strategy. Remember that seemingly small efforts can reap considerable rewards in the larger scheme of things. Just as the mustard seed, the tiniest of all the seeds, grows into a giant of a tree, so even the outwardly small efforts of continuing your own education can and will blossom in your life in ways you might never have imagined.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT

By Jenna Holliday

As I write, IPS has just completed the fall rounds of the 10-week Biblical Principles of Government class. This year, we were graciously hosted at two locations: Northside Baptist Church in Modesto and Lone Hill Church in Los Gatos. Although I had heard much of the content of the class at various times since I started working for IPS, I had not yet had the opportunity to attend the full ten weeks of lectures, so I was thrilled to be able to attend the Modesto class this year. It was an invigorating, convicting, and inspiring experience, to say the least. It is a given to say that I support the teaching of the organization I work for, of course, but it is perhaps not a given for me to say that I would love to see this course taught in every state throughout the United States.

After having heard the teaching presented in the class, I have come to see more clearly than ever the importance of getting this type of instruction to as many Americans as possible—because it is a fact that much of what IPS teaches simply does not reach the American classroom in any form. My father attended the class with me this fall, and during several of our discussions about the topics presented, my dad exclaimed, "I had never heard that before!" The fact is that we simply don't hear this material anymore. The principles and concepts that Mike Winther presents in the Biblical Principles class were, at one time, very familiar to American leaders and citizens, but this is no longer the case in our modern society. It is these principles that will enable us to transform our nation and, therefore, it is these principles that we must learn thoroughly and then teach to others.

As always, my response to the class was not the only enthusiastic feedback we received. Other attendees made numerous glowing comments, including the following: "Mike Winther makes the theoretical practical, workable, and teachable"; "These topics need to be taught in church, school, and at the dinner table"; "Clearly an Everest of principled thought! Mike makes awesome arguments for a principled approach to all areas discussed in this class… My high school classroom has become an application lab for the content of this class!"; "I know it's really a drop in the bucket, but [the class has] really challenged my worldview… for the better. Mike's heart for God and his willingness to teach those of us in need has inspired me"; "This class challenged us to be biblically transformed by the renewing of the mind… powerful, bold, and convicting!"

If you would like more information, or are interested in having the Biblical Principles of Government class taught at your church, please contact the IPS office.

BOOK REVIEW: LIBERTY AND TYRANNY *by* MARK LEVIN

By Mike Winther

Liberty and Tyranny is a recent bestselling book by radio talk show host Mark Levin. It is an easy, interesting, and entertaining read. As I read *Liberty and Tyranny*, I couldn't help but notice that this book was a great case study on the battle over labels and identities in our current political landscape.

Most of my readers are well aware that there is a battle over labels in America today. What do we call ourselves? What do we call our opponents? What do our opponents call us? Are we republicans, democrats, conservatives, liberals, libertarians, or progressives? Much of our political discourse in society revolves around labels and identity. This is true in twenty-first century America, but it has also been true in almost every epic of time.

> "In 1992, Congress passed the Energy Policy and Conservation Act, outlawing the 3.5-gallon toilet and replacing it with the 1.6-gallon toilet... A government that is powerful enough to dictate the flow of water in a toilet is a very powerful government indeed."

The labels that we use have more than descriptive importance — they have substantial psychological power to affect our philosophies and beliefs. Labels and identity affect our allegiances, they affect who we trust, and more importantly, they affect who we distrust in the political dialogue. We are far more likely to believe a particular view if it is propagated by someone who identifies themselves with the same labels that we use to describe ourselves. Conversely, we are far more likely to reject a view if it is propagated by someone who wears a label that we find disagreeable.

Considerable credit is due to Mr. Levin for his thoughtful attention to an appropriate label for his philosophical adversaries. Throughout the book he uses the term "statist" to refer to those who promote ever-bigger government as the solution to our nation's problems. The term statist (pronounced state-ist) refers to those people and philosophies that desire a large role for the state (civil government) in society. This term is more accurate than terms like "liberal" or "leftist," which have shifting meanings over time. (In many historical periods, for example, the "liberals" were those who, in support of liberty, favored smaller government. Many of America's founders were self-described liberals. In our present age, many liberty-minded individuals are adopting the term "classical liberal" as a way of separating themselves from those statists who call themselves "conservative.")

Unfortunately, Levin ultimately fails to avoid meaningless, relativist labels on the other side of the philosophical spectrum by identifying himself and other anti-statists as "conservatives." I must confess that I, too, am partial to the term and have used it to describe myself. The term "conservative," however, like the term "liberal," tends to be a relative standard. During the War for Independence in 1776, a conservative would have been one who supported the crown and heavy-handed government. Many, if not most, of those who identify themselves as conservatives today are actually statists. Conservative statists, of course, only support expanding government when advocated by Republicans. If a conservative is someone who wants to conserve (preserve) the status quo, then today's conservative would also be a statist.

In his chapter on the Constitution, Levin makes a good case for a strict constructionist interpretation of the document. He does an excellent job of defending the importance of original intent when interpreting or adjudicating the Constitution. Here, Levin clearly addresses the debate between the strict constructionists and those who want the Constitution to be a "living, breathing, evolving" document. On this subject, he provides some outstanding historical and logical analysis. In other areas, Liberty and Tyranny also contains first-rate chapters on federalism, environmentalism, and welfare.

The point that requires the reader's discernment kicks in when Levin gets to chapter 10, which is entitled "On Self-Preservation." This is his defense of many, if not most, of our nation's "conservative" policies relating to terrorism and international affairs. In this chapter, Levin takes issue with George Washington's Farewell Address and its warnings against foreign alliances and entanglements. In the process of defending a substantial portion of current U.S. foreign policy, Levin argues that George Washington's intentions are largely misunderstood and

that Washington would in fact be accepting of many of our current international entanglements. I would certainly dispute Levin's analysis of Washington, and instead use a strict constructionist approach to understanding our first president's Farewell Address.

Additionally, despite Levin's excellent defense of the Constitution, he fails to defend Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, which gives Congress the exclusive power to declare war. Congress has not declared war since World War II, and unfortunately, Americans have grown largely accustomed to the idea of sending our troops all over the world without a formal declaration of war. Some would argue that Congress has essentially approved these wars, since they have voted for the necessary funding. This is a dangerous standard, however, the error of which becomes more obvious if we apply this standard to other aspects of the Constitution.

Are we willing to apply this standard consistently? Is it legitimate for the President to assume any duty of Congress as long as Congress does not object or as long as Congress agrees to fund that assumption of power? For example, the Congress, not the President, is given the power of impeachment. If a President were to impeach a federal office holder, would we accept this usurpation of power? What if the President's impeachment proceedings required funding and the Congress were to pass an appropriations bill for the trial expense? In this example, Congress would certainly be derelict in their duties, but the usurpation of power by the executive branch would still be unconstitutional — just as our recent wars are still unconstitutional. Levin fails to support the Constitution on this point.

Scattered throughout the work are occasional references that assume that America is and ought to be a democracy, but this is far from the truth. The idea that proper government actions ought to be determined by the will of a majority of the citizens struck fear in the hearts of our nation's founders.

In conclusion, then, *Liberty and Tyranny* will certainly provide some astute arguments and insight for the reader who wants more ammunition for his discussions with statist friends. Readers should not, however, expect Mr. Levin's book to always take a principle-based approach to the issues he discusses. And like many who now claim the label of "conservative," Levin misses the mark on some foreign policy matters. IPS

LEAVING A LEGACY OF VICTORY

By Marshall Foster

Dr. Marshall is the founder and president of the World History Institute. To learn more, visit www.worldhistoryinstitute.com. This article was originally published in December of 2006 and is republished with the permission of Marshall Foster.

While many of our families are together this season, we have a wonderful opportunity to remember that we hold the keys to the future within our family "dynasties." Psalm 108 (AMP) speaks of David's "dynasty." Throughout the centuries, the godly strategy of defeating evil has always been a bottom-up, generational, exponential, internal-to-external, family plan. God's worldwide covenant of blessing was initiated through His servant Abraham. The Lord said He would not hide His plans from Abraham because He knew that Abraham would command and teach his children.

The most powerful force in America is not our government, our economy, or our military. The force that has created the freest nations in history is the peaceful and virtually unreported armies of godly families. We can take leadership over all areas of society, if we mentor our families and friends to live out the Great Commission in the culture as well as the church. Here is a story to inspire and challenge your family. Notice the power of only a few individuals from one family tree that helped create two great nations.

John Knox, a former bodyguard and defrocked priest turned reformer, returned to his native Scotland in 1560. He had spent 15 years in prison and exile. He preached the liberating gospel with such power from the pulpit of St. Giles Cathedral that much of his nation was converted. The culture and form of government itself was transformed in a decade.

Four generations later, one of John Knox's great-granddaughters married a minister named John Witherspoon. By this time, in the 1740's, Scotland had once again entered a time of economic turmoil, famine, and persecution from its powerful overlord to the south, England. The Witherspoon/Knox family endured trials and even imprisonment as they worked to revive the true faith in their homeland. They persevered. Elizabeth and John had ten children. Five made it out of childhood.

Right before the founding of America, John and Elizabeth were called to America so that he could become the President of the College of New Jersey (Princeton University). In the 1760's the Colonies were being pushed toward war with England. They were on the verge of either creating the world's first constitutional republic or falling back into the European model of divine right kings and impoverished commoners. But if the Colonists were to succeed, they would need political, military, and spiritual leaders that would surpass any in history.

Witherspoon, as the head of the College of New Jersey, became the teacher of those future leaders. He combined a deep faith in the Biblical Christianity of the Reformation with an understanding of how to apply that faith to every academic discipline, including nation-building. During his tenure there were 478 graduates of his college. With only three professors including himself, John was able to mentor all who came to his school using the tutorial method in six academic fields. Then he was able to preach to them each Sunday in the church on campus. Of his graduates, at least 86 became active in civil government and included: one president (James Madison), one vice-president (Aaron Burr), 10 cabinet officers, 21 senators, 39 congressmen, 12 governors, a Supreme Court justice, and one attorney general.

Nearly one-fifth of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, one-sixth of the delegates of the Constitutional Convention, and one-fifth of the first Congress under the Constitution were graduates of the College of New Jersey. It can truly be said that John Witherspoon discipled his new nation by training the leaders, just as his ancestor, John Knox, had done in Scotland 200 years before.

Along with leading a college, and being a national leader of the Presbyterian Church, John threw his efforts into the political drive for freedom. He was elected to the Continental Congress and sat on 100 different committees. As the debate over independence raged in Philadelphia, on July 2, 1776, John stood to his feet and declared, "We are ripe for independence and in danger of becoming rotten for want of it—if we delay any longer!" He was the only minister to sign the Declaration of Independence (22 others had ministerial training). The British took their revenge out on him the next year as they ravaged his college and burned his personal and college libraries. He also lost two of his sons in the War for Independence.

John Witherspoon was an indispensable player used by God to help found this freest and most blessed of all nations. His words on a national day of prayer in 1776 still ring with the spiritual power of his relative, the fiery reformer of Scotland.

> *While we give praise to God, the supreme disposer of all events, for His interposition on our behalf, let us guard against the dangerous error of trusting in, or boasting of, an arm of flesh [human power]. … If your cause is just, if your principles are pure, and if your conduct is prudent, you need not fear the multitude of opposing hosts.*

John Witherspoon's words and life speak to us from the "great cloud of witnesses." This is our day on the stage of history. God is orchestrating world events and our lives so that "all things work together for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

I believe that around our dining tables this season are seated the "Knoxes" and "Witherspoons" of our day who will be used to disciple the nations in our time. May God give us the eyes to recognize them and the commitment to train them, while they are still in our sphere of influence! IPS

ATTENTION STUDENTS! - WRITERS NEEDED

Are you currently a high school or college student? Would you be interested in contributing an article to IPS, with the potential of being published in a future edition of *Principle Perspective*? Adult readers, do you know a student who might be interested in this opportunity?

Starting with the next issue of *Principle Perspective*, we would like to add a new section titled "A Student's Perspective," which will, we hope, become a regular column in future issues. We are excited about adding this new feature to the newsletter, and we are currently looking for some bright young people who would like to contribute articles for potential publication in this new section. Each quarter, we will announce the topic for the next quarter's Student Perspective article. We will solicit articles during the quarter, and will then choose the best submission for publication. At this point, we cannot offer any compensation to the winning author—except, of course, the prestige of being published in an IPS publication!

The topic for the next issue's "A Student's Perspective" (first issue of 2010, which will go out in March) will be "Bastiat, The Law, and Modern America." Students should discuss the principles explored by Frederic Bastiat in his brief but potent work The Law, specifically expressing why these principles are still relevant and are in fact urgently important for modern America.

Articles should be between 800 and 1,500 words, and should be submitted as a Word or RTF document to jennah@principlestudies.org. In order to qualify, authors must be current high school or college students. Along with the article, authors should include a brief (3-5 sentence) biography and a current headshot. Articles must be submitted no later than February 1, 2010.

We are excited to add this new expansion to *Principle Perspective*, and we look forward to receiving submissions. If you know a student who might be interested in this opportunity, please help us by passing the word along. Happy writing! IPS

NEW PERSPECTIVES *on* "PRINCIPLE PERSPECTIVE"

Beginning with this issue of *Principle Perspective*, fourth quarter of 2009, we are implementing some new procedures in order to more effectively deal with subscriptions to *Principle Perspective*. You will notice that the mailing label on your envelope has some new numbers on the right side of the label. This four-digit number describes the "expiration issue" of your subscription to *Principle Perspective*: the first two digits indicate the year in which your subscription expires, and the last two digits (after the dash) indicate the month in which your subscription expires. For example, an expiration issue date of 10-12 indicates that the subscription will expire in December of 2010.

This quarterly publication is an important part of the Institute's educational outreach, and we believe that *Principle Perspective* has great potential to be a powerful tool in educating our readers and furthering the message of IPS. Despite these facts, however, we must also face the reality of economic responsibility in our publication and distribution of the newsletter. We want to be good stewards of our resources, while maximizing our educational efforts—so we are implementing some new "filtering" systems to analyze those who will receive *Principle Perspective*.

> "We want to be good stewards of our resources, while maximizing our educational efforts…"

In general, *Principle Perspective* will be mailed to anyone who contributes at least $40.00 to the Institute during the course of a year, with two exceptions. The first exception is for students; we will make a discounted student subscription available to high school and college students for a donation of $12.00 per year. The second exception has to do with those who are new to IPS and our ministry; we will typically provide several complimentary issues of *Principle Perspective* to anyone who has attended an IPS-sponsored class or event. These complimentary issues generally will not continue beyond three quarters unless the recipient makes a donation to IPS.

We hope these new procedures will enable us to make the most effective and economically responsible use of *Principle Perspective*. If you have any questions about your subscription, feel free to contact the IPS office.

Principle Perspective is published quarterly by the Institute for Principle Studies. The Institute is a 501(c)3, tax exempt, non-profit organization dedicated to researching and teaching government, economics, and history from a Christian perspective.

Principle Perspective is distributed to those who contribute $40 or more per year to the work of IPS—or to students for a $12 contribution. Temporary complementary issues are often provided free of charge to those who attend an IPS-sponsored class or seminar.

The right side of your mailing label displays the "expiration issue" of your Principle Perspective subscription. The two digits before the dash indicate the year, and the two digits after the dash indicate the month, of your expiration. An expiration code of 10-12 denotes an expiration of December of 2010.

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Editor… Jenna Holliday