

*The Christian World View of
Law*

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What is the Coalition on Revival?

The Coalition on Revival is a network of evangelical leaders from every major denominational and theological perspective who share a vision for and a commitment to revival, renewal, and reformation in Church and society in America.

People of Anabaptist, Arminian, Lutheran, Calvinist, and Wesleyan denominational backgrounds are all represented among COR's leaders. Pre-, a-, and post-millennialists are cooperating with each other, sharing the exciting task of getting God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven insofar as that is possible between now and whenever Christ comes back to Earth. Charismatics and non-charismatics, covenant and dispensationalist theologians, have joined arm in arm in prayer and hard work to see revival, renewal, and reformation in the Christian Church and the American culture.

COR's vision is to see Christians everywhere doing all they can in the power of the Holy Spirit to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), in every aspect of life. Toward that end, we have developed a series of worldview documents that set forth what we believe are the fundamental and essential points of the total Christian world and life view. The COR worldview documents state what we believe are the biblical principles for all spheres of human life including theology, evangelism, discipleship, law, civil governments, economics, education, family, medicine, psychology and counseling, arts and media, business and professions, and science and technology. We believe that the COR worldview documents state where the entire Church must stand and what action it must take to accomplish its task in the remaining years of the Twentieth Century and on into the next century.

COR steering committee members from all walks of life were joined by many hundreds of other interested Christian scholars, pastors, and laymen in developing the COR documents during many series of workshops and conventions. Each document therefore, reflects input from theologians, philosophers, professionals in their respective fields, pastors, and lay Christians. We have sought to avoid denominational and theological bias in the documents; our aim has been to focus on principles so fundamental that we are convinced no Bible-believing Christian who studied the major questions related to each sphere of life would come to a contradictory conclusion.

COR views itself as a "Bible obedience, holiness movement" that crosses denominational and theological lines. The next step on its agenda, now that its basic documents are complete, is to disseminate them widely and to educate hundreds of thousands of Christians on how to make Christ Lord of absolutely every aspect of life. We plan to do that through publications, and through seminars, and training workshops in the major cities of America and Canada. COR will also work in cooperation with other Christian networking groups to help unify the pastors in major population centers around the vision of mobilizing their people to "Get God's will done in their city as it is in heaven" to whatever degree that is possible before the return of Christ. We believe America can be turned around and once again function as a Christian nation as it did in its earlier years. We believe that wherever the pastors of any city in the world join together in unity to make Christ Lord of every sphere of life, and, with Spirit led strategy, mobilize their people into a unified spiritual army; that city can and will become "a city set upon a hill" and be "a place where righteousness dwells."

About the 17 World View (Sphere) Documents

COR developed the 17 World View Documents, which set forth what we believe are fundamental and essential Biblical principles governing 17 major areas or *spheres* of human life and activity: law, government, economics, business and professions, education, art and media, medicine, science and technology, psychology and counseling, Christian unity, local and world evangelism, discipleship, helping the hurting, educating Christians about social and political moral issues, revitalizing Christian colleges and seminaries, marriage and the family, and pastoral renewal. These documents offer Christian leaders concise and comprehensive Biblical principles of how to apply the Truth of the Bible to all spheres of life and ministry. Each document includes short, creed-like statements of affirmation and denial that we believe state non-negotiable Biblical truths for that sphere of reality.

The 17 World View Documents were developed within 17 different committees made up of leaders with experience and expertise in the 17 different fields over an intensive three-year period of dialogue, critique, editing, and finally, a consensus conviction. Sixty of COR's National Steering Committee members with over 300 other theologians, pastors, lawyers, doctors, businessmen, and Christian workers made up the 17 committees. COR sends forth these documents to the Church at large with the prayer that they may be used by God's Spirit to get God's will done on earth, as it is in heaven—to whatever degree that is possible prior to the Return of Christ.

Preface

Centuries before the birth of Christ, the prophet Habakkuk, pondering the decadence and debauchery so rampant among his people, lamented, "...the law is ignored and justice is never upheld. For the wicked surround the righteous; therefore, justice comes out perverted" (Habakkuk 1:4). The echo of Habakkuk's cry might well be heard across America today, as informed and concerned Americans view the massive deterioration so obvious in American society in general and American law in particular.

The evidence of this deterioration is everywhere. In the same year that the U.S. Supreme Court declared that nude dancing for commercial purposes is constitutionally protected, a federal court of appeals intoned that voluntary, before-school prayer gatherings by public school children are not only constitutionally protected, but are actually unconstitutional — are a practice "too dangerous to permit." Since the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 pro-abortion decision in *Roe v. Wade*, federal judges have nullified state abortion regulations to the extent that now the number of unborn children killed in the nation's abortion chambers exceeds the number of American servicemen and women killed while serving their country between 1775 and 1975. Many of the educational and penal systems of the nation have been revolutionized by federal judges; and state government powers in many other areas, such as the regulation of commerce, have been emasculated.

Concurrently, the courts have been besieged by litigation that would once have been thought so ludicrous that no self-respecting attorney or judge would even have considered them. For example, after a runaway horse crashed through the roof of a Ford Pinto, killing the driver, the driver's estate filed suit in Oregon against the Ford Motor Company — and won. And in New York City a man mutilated when he attempted suicide by jumping in front of a subway train later claimed that the train driver was partially responsible because he did not stop sooner — and the would-be suicide victim won over half a million dollars from the city in an out-of-court settlement. Such suits are one reason that the nation's courts have become increasingly swamped with litigation. Between 1960 and 1980, for example, the number of civil cases in federal district courts rose by 185 percent, and the number of cases in federal appellate courts rose a staggering 495 percent.¹

Clearly, the courts of the land have become far more powerful than ever envisioned by our Constitutional Framers such as Alexander Hamilton, who referred to the judiciary as "the least dangerous branch of government." Indeed, the entire judicial system might be described accurately in the words of Cornell Law School Dean William Forrester in reference to the U.S. Supreme Court: the courts "have evolved into new institutions," no longer courts "in the customary sense," but "governing bodies" making the "basic policy decisions of the nation," and performing a "primary function not judicial but legislative." In the process, judges have departed drastically from the views and values of the people. A 1981 poll showed that 77.3 percent of the people believe that the national judiciary does not reflect their views, and additional polls of both public and judicial opinions substantiate this belief. Surely such a concentration of power in the hands of a judicial/legal elite should precipitate the greatest concern in a

1. For comparison, total population growth during the same period was only 23 percent.

society where limited government, the consent of the governed, and separation of powers are cardinal principles of law and government.

American law has not always been in this sad state. Whatever may have been the personal and spiritual condition of the great statesmen who launched and first governed our nation, there was a consensus among both America's leaders and her people that certain legal/constitutional/political principles were unarguably true. These principles — Judeo-Christian in nature — included the following: the existence of a God who is transcendent yet definitely involved in the affairs of men; the existence of absolute standards authored by this God to guide the nation's political and legal life; the belief that nations are obligated to seek and obey God's standards and will suffer for their disobedience; and the reliance upon Scripture as the clearest expression of those standards.

Also in earlier America, judges and jurists were viewed with high regard. But their role was that of *interpreting* law according to the text of the law and its authors' intent — not *creating* law according to the personal values of the judge or some other purely human agency. Furthermore, jurists were given authority only to settle individual disputes arising in concrete situations or "cases" — not to act as "governing bodies" of a "legislative nature" making the "basic policy decisions of the nation."

America's early jurists were not, however, mere technicians, for they considered the study of legal theory or philosophy — "jurisprudence" — as of the greatest importance and value. More recent American legal elites, however, relegated the open and deliberate study of jurisprudence to a position of little or no importance, so that contemporary legal scholar John W. Brabner-Smith could lament, "Jurisprudence is deserted."² The desertion of jurisprudence was only partial, however, for the legal elite in more recent American law has endeavored subtly, yet vigorously, to replace the Judeo-Christian jurisprudence of earlier America with an anti-Judeo-Christian philosophy and system of law. And in this "replacement process" lies the key to understanding the transformation of American law from what it was originally into what it is today.

This replacement process could have been predicted if, as Shakespeare asserted, "What's past is prologue" (*The Tempest*, II.1). Well before American law began to abandon its Judeo-Christian foundations, Western Europe was embracing such anti-Judeo-Christian philosophies as historical jurisprudence and analytical jurisprudence. And anti-orthodox movements in such vital law-related disciplines as theology and general philosophy only reinforced the developments in jurisprudence.

These changes constituted the background against which we understand the shift in American law, which dates to the Civil War. As philosopher James Hayden Tufts says of the generation born at that time, "My generation has seen the passing of systems of thought which had reigned since Augustus. The conception of a world ruled by God and subject to his laws...has dissolved."³ This dissolution was apparent when Dean Christopher Columbus Langdell brought his "case method" of legal education, involving far more than just pedagogical procedures, to the Harvard Law School in 1870. Also in the post-Civil War period, such strongly anti-Judeo-Christian legal theories as legal realism and sociological jurisprudence emerged. And the ardent promotion of these positions by some of the nation's most powerful judges and legal educators, such as Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., virtually assured at least some success for those bitterly and aggressively opposed to Judeo-Christian law.

2. John W. Brabner-Smith, *Who Will Study Justice?* (Oak Park, Illinois: Christian Legal Society, 1975), p. 6.

3. James Hayden Tufts, cited in Henry S. Commager, "1878: The World of the Mind," *American Bar Assoc. Journal*, 64 (July, 1978):1006.

In more recent times the attack on the Judeo-Christian foundations of American law has assumed a variety of forms, such as the “moral evolution” approach of Michael Perry, the “legal constructivism” theories of Bruce Ackerman, and the especially controversial Critical Legal Studies Movement of such men as Duncan Kennedy. (It is extremely important to note that these three members of the legal elite are professors in leading American law schools.) Common to virtually all forms of anti-Judeo-Christian legal theory in America today is a “noninterpretivist” assertion that the text of legal documents, the intent of their authors, and other traditionally-accepted guides to legal interpretation are of little or no value. Language is so “uncertain,” times “do change,” argue the non-interpretivists; and absolutes in law of the Judeo-Christian type are something that no intelligent, educated, and respectable legal scholar of late Twentieth-Century America would believe in anyway!

American law thus arrives at the point described above. Under the guise of various rhetorical devices, American jurists are more and more openly taking power into their hands. Federal Court of Appeals Judge Robert H. Bork describes the situation well when he says of constitutional interpretation, “What we get then is neither constitutional law or moral philosophy but simplistic and idiosyncratic legislation by judges that claims the finality accorded to constitutional law.” The “net effect” of this, says Judge Bork, is “simply to free judges from restraints many of them would otherwise feel bound to honor” and to produce a malaise of “unguided and expanding judicial power.”

In the face of these lethal trends, it is essential that jurisprudence again be openly and vigorously discussed in America and that the Judeo-Christian system of jurisprudence be reasserted and re-established as the foundation of American law. As a necessary first step in that direction, this paper searches out and restates major features of Judeo-Christian legal theory. This philosophy can guide lawyers, judges, other government officials, and laymen alike in transforming American law from its present ravaged condition, described by Habakkuk, to a condition in which “the law is strong, justice does go forth, and judgment goes forth pure and unperverted.” With that in mind, we have prayerfully and diligently prepared this document, fervently hoping that it will educate and motivate its adherents and challenge — if not convince — its opponents.

Statements of Affirmation and Denial

World Views and Law

1. We affirm that a society’s legal system and jurisprudence (views of the nature of law, purposes of law, basic principles of law, etc.) are inevitably and closely related to a society’s world view foundations (views of theology and philosophy), and that the interrelationship between the world view and views of law is interactive: views in one area of thought reflect, but also shape and reinforce, views in other areas.

We deny that a society’s jurisprudence and legal system can be totally divorced from its world view foundations, and that the interrelationship between world view and views of law is merely one-way with either set of views simply reflecting and being determined by the other.

2. We affirm that there is a distinctive and identifiable Christian world view that includes a distinctive and identifiable Christian view of law, and that at the heart of these Christian views stands the

Almighty Sovereign God of the Universe, who reveals Himself most clearly and completely in the Bible.

We deny that there is no distinctive, identifiable Christian world view or view of law, and that any views are authentically Christian if they center on anything other than the Almighty Sovereign God of the Universe revealed in the Bible.

3. We affirm that a society inevitably must choose between conflicting legal foundations and views of law and should choose Christian views and a Christian foundation because the Christian system is vastly superior to all alternatives: it is empirically defensible, internally logical, comprehensive in scope, etc.

We deny that a society may avoid choosing between conflicting legal foundations and views of law and that any non-Christian system is superior or equal to the Christian system.

4. We affirm that while there is an integral relationship between a society's world view foundations and its views of law, basing jurisprudence and a legal system on Christian foundations is not an "establishment of the Christian religion," because Christian theology and philosophy are, among other things, *sources* of law; that theology and philosophy are *not* "the law;" and that the mere expression of Biblical values in man-made law does not force anyone in society to express a belief in the God of the Bible or to worship Him against his will.

We deny that basing a society's jurisprudence and legal system on Christian foundations constitutes an "establishment of the Christian religion," and that the mere expression of Biblical values in man-made law forces anyone in society to express a belief in the God of the Bible or to worship Him against his will.

5. We affirm that it is the vital and unavoidable responsibility of the true Christian community in every society to seek in every Biblically consistent way to hold its society's views of law true to Biblical principles, and that when societies choose non-Christian views of law they can expect little long-term blessing from God and many severely adverse consequences.

We deny that the Christian community properly fulfills its calling to make disciples of every nation and to be salt and light to the world when it fails to do all in its power to hold society's views of law true to Biblical principles.

6. We affirm that the sovereign God providentially directs the course of human history, including civil law, which is a vital part of that history; that with the consummation of history, including legal history, will come the final, eternal triumph of God's Law, when eternal, universal, and perfect justice will prevail; and that this assurance gives Christians today ultimate hope even in the midst of the rampant violations of God's Law in today's world and imparts real meaning and eternal significance to man's response to God's Law in this present life.

We deny that history, including legal history, is a merely purposeless sequence of events; that the pattern and purposes of history deviate from what the Sovereign God has ordained; that there will be no final, eternal triumph of God's Law; and that eternal, universal, and perfect justice will never prevail.

Types, Sources, and Nature of Law

7. We affirm that two types of law, classified according to source, are: (a) higher Law (“God’s Law,” “transcendent Law”), whose immediate (as well as ultimate) source is God; (b) positive law (“man-made law,” “civil law”), whose immediate source is human authority.
8. We affirm that because only one true and living God revealed in the Bible is transcendent and infinite, yet personal, only He is the sufficient ultimate source of civil law, which is temporal and personal.

We deny that any source other than the one true and living God can be sufficient as the ultimate source of law.

9. We affirm that God alone is the ultimate source of civil law in that the very concept of civil law originated in Him; that civil law is intended to express His character and reflect the basic values that He has created and obligated man to observe; that He reveals His higher Law to guide civil law; and that no civil law endures apart from His will.

We deny that civil law has its ultimate source in anything other than the Creator-God, and that any civil law endures apart from His will.

10. We affirm that God instituted civil law and government for mankind at the time described in Genesis 9, when He provided for the collective, societal protection of human life in the postdiluvian world in order to avoid a recurrence of the rampant violence of antediluvian society (described in such scriptures as Genesis 6).

We deny that civil law and government originated merely through a human “contract,” through the action of a universal “force,” or at any time or under any circumstances other than what are described in Genesis 6, Genesis 9, and related scriptures.

11. We affirm that while God is the ultimate source of law, He has created His Law in all its perfection and attributes as an entity separate from Himself and possessing a reality of its own; that His Law is thus an expression of His perfect standards of righteousness, reason, justice, will, mercy, and love; but that God is not to be regarded as equivalent to, or coterminous with, His Law.

We deny and reject any and every view (such as pantheism or any form thereof) that asserts that perfect and transcendent “reason,” “justice,” etc., *are* God or that such values are merely “universal forces” to which civil law should conform.

12. We affirm that, among men, the standards of God’s of law were met fully, but only, by the perfect temporal life of Jesus Christ, whose life therefore stands as the perfect model of law-obedience and as the Biblically described, perfect revelation of God’s Law.

4. “Natural law” is also “revealed” to man by God, but in a different manner and to a different degree than “revealed Law.” “Natural law” may be designated “natural” because it is revealed in nature and the hearts of all men — “natural men” as well as Christians. “Revealed Law” is revealed only in the Bible, God’s written revelation. For a more extensive discussion of these points, see ##20ff below.

We deny that Jesus Christ failed to meet perfectly the standards of God's Law; that any man other than He ever has met, or ever will meet, those standards; and that Jesus Christ was in any respect an imperfect model of obedience to the Law or a less than perfect revelation of the meaning of God's Law for responsible living.

13. We affirm that God's standards of truth, morality, and justice, and other transcendent legal standards by which civil law is to be promulgated, enforced, and evaluated, are absolute.

We deny that the legal standards by which civil law ought to be promulgated and enforced are relative, allowing for subjective, cultural, or other factors contrary to Scripture.

14. We affirm that two forms of higher Law through which God has communicated to man are: a) natural law (expressed in general revelation) and revealed Law (expressed in special revelation).⁴
15. We affirm that the standards of God's higher Law are determined by God and merely discovered by man as he promulgates and enforces civil law.

We deny that it is possible or legitimate for man to create by and for himself any ultimate legal standards.

16. We affirm that two main sub-types of human law, classified according to the nature of their relationship to God's will, are: a) *prescribed civil law*, whose standards conform to higher Law and, therefore, to that which God has prescribed; b) *permitted civil law*, whose standards may not conform to higher Law, but which civil authorities nevertheless enact and which God permits to function at His sufferance and for His ultimate purpose of justice, reason, and good (hidden as those purposes may be from the understanding of finite men).

We deny that all permitted civil law conforms to higher Law.

17. We affirm that prescribed civil law, by its nature, is more fully valid than, and superior to, permitted civil law and should, therefore, always be that which society seeks to promulgate; that God will always hold society responsible for the extent to which its civil law is prescribed rather than permitted; and that, therefore, while a minimum level of temporary obedience to permitted civil law may be appropriate even for Christians, in order to accomplish such God-ordained purposes as protecting human life, society should always seek to replace permitted with prescribed civil law.

We deny that permitted civil law is as fully valid as, or equal to, prescribed civil law; that a society should ever be content with permitted civil law; and that a society will indefinitely escape God's judgment if its civil law is merely permitted and not prescribed.

18. We affirm that in a complete and mature system of civil law, different categories of human law are appropriate means of promulgating and enforcing higher Law (*e.g.*, public law/private law, fundamental law/secondary law, etc.); that these categories overlap; and that each category may include standards of prescribed civil law, permitted civil law, or both.
19. We affirm that civil law, which is a system of standards enacted by that type of human government commonly known as the "state" or the "political system," is separate from (though often related to)

the standards enacted by other God-ordained human institutions of government, such as the family and the Church.

We deny that civil law is the only valid set of standards that may be enacted by human institutions of government, and that civil law bears no relationship to the standards set by other human authorities.

The Revelation of God's Law

20. We affirm that God has communicated to man the truths of His higher Law in natural law (general revelation — the natural universe and the consciences of men) and in revealed Law (special revelation — the Bible), even though man, in his depravity, often suppresses these truths.
21. We affirm that the truths expressed by God in natural law (in general revelation) are also expressed in revealed Law (in special revelation); that revealed Law is a more complete, precise, objective, and reliable statement of higher Law than is natural law; and that God's special revelation concerning law is to be found in the Bible and the Bible alone.

We deny that revealed Law and natural law ever conflict with each other; that natural law alone is an adequate basis for civil law; and that God's special revelation concerning law is to be found anywhere outside of Scripture.

22. We affirm that the fact that the Bible expresses fundamental spiritual/religious truth in no way diminishes its usefulness, or undermines its validity, as a proper guide to civil law; that the Bible is therefore a guidebook both for man's spiritual/religious life and for society's legal life; and that it is therefore to be followed by civil law as it sets standards for societal conduct.

We deny that the fundamental spiritual/religious truths set forth in Scripture detract from the Bible's usefulness or validity as a guide for civil law, and that founding civil law on Biblically expressed standards amounts to an "establishment of the Christian or Jewish religion."

23. We affirm that proper interpretation and application of Biblical truth regarding civil law require adherence to definite, established standards of interpretation such as those spelled out in and derived from *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics*, 1982.

We deny that any individual or group may rightly interpret or apply Biblical truth regarding civil law according to any unbiblical standard(s) that the individual or group may choose, and that efforts to interpret or apply Biblical truth according to standard(s) of unscriptural origin lead to valid or beneficial results.

24. We affirm that Biblical standards relevant to civil law today must often be understood and applied as underlying "principles" (*i.e.*, norms having one essential interpretation or meaning but multiple applications and means of enforcement).

We deny that all Biblical standards of civil law are formal "laws" (*i.e.*, rigid norms having only a single valid interpretation or meaning with an unvarying application or means of enforcement).

25. We affirm that standards and principles set forth in the Old Testament apply to civil law today, provided that they are repeated in the New Testament in such a way as to be applicable to civil law today.

We deny that principles set forth in the Old Testament are irrelevant to civil law today.

26. We affirm that principles expressed in the Old Testament, whether or not repeated in the New Testament, apply to civil law today unless those principles are limited by their immediate context or by other scriptures to circumstances not existing today, or unless those principles are abrogated by subsequent scripture (*e.g.*, many Old Testament laws were designed for Old Testament theocratic Israel and are therefore not applicable to the nontheocratic civil law of today).

27. We affirm that the term “law” as used in Scripture carries several different meanings, and that the greatest care should be taken in distinguishing its various meanings as they bear upon the civil law.

We deny that the term “law” is used in only one sense throughout Scripture, and that accurate and legitimate interpretation and application of the standards of revealed Law to civil law can be achieved by superficial, careless, or biased exegesis of those scriptural passages employing the term.

28. We affirm that human legal systems that are consistent with Biblical principles will employ a basic human reasoning process that is deductive in nature, and that several logical processes may be proper in applying universal Biblical principles to specific human situations.

We deny that human reason plays no role in legal systems consistent with Biblical principles, and that Biblically consistent reasoning processes can follow any basic pattern other than deduction.

29. We affirm that man’s understanding of God’s Law and its application to civil law can be enlightened and enlivened constantly by the work of the Holy Spirit in the world today, even though man may, in his depravity, refuse to accept the guidance provided by the Holy Spirit.

We deny that non-Christians, in that the requirements of God’s Law are written in their hearts, are utterly incapable of influencing civil law to conform with God’s Law.

30. We affirm that because Christians have unique access to the deepest knowledge of God and His truth they have a special capacity and responsibility before God and man to influence civil law to conform to God’s standards, and that the Christian’s responsibility regarding civil law is compatible with, and closely related to, his responsibilities in evangelism, discipleship, and similar activities.

31. We affirm that Christians today and in the past have failed to apprehend and apply in civil law the clearer truths of God’s Law as they should.

We deny that the Holy Spirit will likely enlighten Christians about less clear areas of God’s Law unless and until they vigorously promote, in civil law, those truths of higher Law that they do apprehend.

The Purposes and Effects of Law

32. We affirm that the fullest possible obedience to God's Law and to civil law based on it is the result of, not the basis for, salvation.

We deny that even the fullest possible obedience to God's Law or civil law based on its standards is sufficient for salvation.

33. We affirm that obedience to God's Law or to civil law conformed to God's standards produces lives that at least outwardly reflect God's standards, and when individuals and societies conform their outward actions to God's Law and civil law based on it, conditions ensue that promote individual conversion to Jesus Christ and societal revival.

We deny that mere outward conformity to God's Law or civil law makes a person righteous in God's sight.

34. We affirm that, because of his limitations and rebellion against God, man is perverted and imperfect; that man therefore needs direction and control external to himself; and that civil law is therefore one necessary means of external direction and control (even though it, too, is imperfect because it is promulgated and enforced by imperfect men).

We deny that civil law is simply an "appropriate" or "proper" means of externally controlling and directing man, and that civil law is necessitated only by man's "innate social structure and needs" or by the mere inconvenience society would experience without it.

35. We affirm that God not only has ordained civil law as an institution but also has assigned it specific functions in His overall purposes for man and society, and that God has delegated authority to man in relation to civil law and will hold men who exercise civil authority account-able to Himself.

We deny that human society and governors have the right to arrogate to civil law or civil authorities purposes other than those prescribed by God, and that human society and human governors can abdicate or escape with impunity their God-ordained responsibility to direct civil law according to God's purposes.

36. We affirm that one purpose of civil law is to establish and maintain peace and order according to the principles and standards prescribed in revealed Law.

We deny that keeping peace and order is outside the purpose of civil law, and that revealed Law prescribes few or no principles and standards by which civil law should regulate peace and order.

37. We affirm that a second purpose of civil law is to specify, punish, and restrain wrongdoing according to the principles and standards prescribed in revealed Law.

We deny that the restraint of wrongdoing is outside the purpose of civil law, and that revealed Law prescribes few or no principles and standards by which civil law should restrain wrongdoing.

38. We affirm that the revealed Law of the New Testament sets forth purposes for the punishment associated with civil law today, including retribution, deterrence, and the vindication of God's Law.

We deny that God has failed to specify the purposes of retribution, deterrence, and the vindication of His Law for the punishment He has authorized civil law to impose; that these purposes are not set forth in revealed Law; and that revealed Law prescribes few or no principles and standards by which civil law should exercise punitive justice.

39. We affirm that a third purpose of civil law is to recognize and encourage that which is right according to the principles and standards prescribed in revealed Law.

We deny that encouraging what is right is outside the purpose of civil law, and that revealed Law prescribes few or no principles and standards by which civil law should encourage the right.

40. We affirm that, whatever purposes human authorities may *intend* civil law to fulfill, civil law by its very nature will inevitably have the three purposes listed above.
41. We affirm that when civil law exceeds the purposes or limits assigned to it by God, or executes its purposes in violation of the standards of God's Law, tyranny may result; that when civil law fails to fulfill purposes assigned to it by God, disorder and even anarchy may result; and that the improper functioning of civil law may produce both tyranny and anarchy in the same society at the same time.
42. We affirm that as civil law fulfills its purposes, it inevitably gives formal and authoritative sanction to some moral values in opposition to others; that society views what is "legal" as "right" and what is "illegal" as "wrong;" and that this is true because legal and moral rules are inevitably and symbiotically related.

We deny that civil laws can avoid sanctioning some moral values in opposition to others; that legal and moral rules bear little or no relationship to each other; that what is legal is always morally right; and that what is morally right is always legal.

43. We affirm that when civil law must uphold some moral values over others, it should uphold Christian values because of their superiority as demonstrated by history, logic, empirical data, and other means.

We deny that the Christian system of moral values should be rejected when civil law must discriminate among competing systems, and that any non-Christian systems of values are equal or superior to the Christian system.

44. We affirm that civil law may properly intervene in problem areas despite allegations that the matter is "private" (not "public") in nature or that only consenting adults are involved or that only a "victimless crime" is involved.

We deny that civil law is *ipso facto* prohibited from intervening in situations simply because of charges that the matters are "private" or that only consenting adults are involved or that the crime is "victimless."

45. We affirm that civil law may properly intervene in problem areas despite allegations that civil law is acting in a "paternalistic" manner or that society is so "pluralistic" that the legislation of a particular moral value in opposition to another value is invalid.

We deny that civil law is *ipso facto* prohibited from intervening in situations simply because such action is branded as “paternalistic” or as an invalid “legislating of morality.”

46. We affirm that revealed Law designates many areas of life as truly “private” — under the control of private individuals and groups and beyond the intervention of civil law; that the object of civil laws should be actions or deeds, not mere thought or opinions; and yet that civil laws sometimes have the inevitable practical effect of influencing thought.
47. We affirm that when civil law reflects Christian moral values, the purpose and effect are (and can only be) to make “virtue easier and vice harder,” *not* to *force* anyone to “be virtuous.”
48. We affirm that when civil law reflects Christian moral values, the most it can achieve is to eliminate the *predominance*, but not the mere *presence*, of sin (particularly sinful conduct) in society, and yet that restraining sin is a vital contribution that civil law makes to society.

We deny that basing civil law on Christian moral values is sufficient to eliminate the *presence* of sin in society, and yet that eliminating sin’s *predominance* through civil law is of little or no value.

49. We affirm that the more religiously fragmented a society becomes, the more civil laws must uphold some religious views in preference to others, and that in such cases civil law should reflect Christian values.

We deny both that it is the God-ordained purpose of civil law to establish or prohibit religious beliefs, worship, or other religious activities, and simultaneously that civil laws can always be totally neutral toward different religious views, especially when those views conflict and compete.

50. We affirm that when other societal institutions — *e.g.*, family and church — grow weaker and less effective, the power, both symbolically and instrumentally, of civil law and government increases significantly.

We deny that when other societal institutions become weaker there is no impact on civil law’s importance or that the impact is an inevitable weakening of civil law.

Principles of Law

51. We affirm that revealed Law and, to a significant extent, natural law set forth basic principles that civil law ought to observe as it fulfills its purposes, and that these basic principles may be subsumed under two omnibus principles: *jurisdiction* and *justice*.

1. The Omnibus Principle of Justice

52. We affirm that revealed Law defines justice in general as “that which is right in a moral sense” and as “that which is equitable.”
53. We affirm that two forms (or “primary principles”) of justice prescribed by God’s Law as standards to be followed by civil law are: (a) substantive justice, which is concerned with the content of civil law; (b) procedural justice, which is concerned with the processes by which civil law is enacted or enforced.

1.a. *The primary principle of substantive justice*

54. We affirm that the primary principle of substantive justice includes several cardinal component principles that are set forth in God's Law and to which civil law ought to conform.

We deny that the omnibus principle of substantive justice has no clearly designated component principles set forth in God's Law.

55. We affirm that one cardinal component of substantive justice is the principle of liberty of worship — the freedom of individuals and groups to choose what will be supreme in their lives and to relate to that without undue interference by civil law.

We deny that civil law ought to establish officially any specific denomination or religion, to recognize a deity (or group of deities) whose worship or support it requires of the state's citizens, or to interfere capriciously with religious belief, worship, or practices (*i.e.*, civil law may certainly outlaw "worship" that involves such acts as child sacrifice, drug use, etc.).

56. We affirm that a second cardinal component of substantive justice is the principle of liberty of expression and association; that man is capable of expressing himself and associating with others who are likewise created in God's image, and has a right to do so; that man is responsible to God and his fellow man for the manner in which he exercises these capabilities and rights; and that civil law should restrain such forms of expression as perjury, obscenity, public profanity and blasphemy, and associations or assemblies that imperil others.

We deny that civil law ought to limit responsible expression and association.

57. We affirm that a third cardinal component of substantive justice is the principle of the sanctity of the family as one of the fundamental institutions established and empowered by God as a vital base of human society, and that revealed Law specifies roles, responsibilities, and an authority system for the family that civil law must recognize and respect.

We deny that the family is only an unimportant phenomenon in society; that its roles, responsibilities, and authority are not specified by revealed Law; and that incestuous, homosexual, polygamous, adulterous, promiscuous, and other non-monogamous or unnatural liasons ought to be recognized or treated by civil law as families.

58. We affirm that a fourth cardinal component of substantive justice is the principle of sanctity of human life (including the protection of innocent human life) as that which God has created in His image and for His purposes, and that civil law should not only outlaw the illegitimate taking of human life, but also curb practices that endanger human life (*e.g.*, improper drug use and media incitement to violence and crime).

We deny that the protection of human life is not a special responsibility assigned by God to civil law and government, and that civil law and government can properly discharge this vital responsibility if they allow to go unchecked such illegitimate deprivations of life as murder, abortion, suicide, infanticide, and euthanasia. Likewise, we deny that genetic engineering properly respects the sanctity of human life unless it is conducted according to the principles set forth in the relevant point of *The Christian World View of Medicine*, also published by The Coalition on Revival.

59. We affirm that a fifth cardinal component of substantive justice is the principle of the value and dignity of the individual; that this value and dignity derive from his being created in God's image and, perverted as he is, loved by God so much that God sacrificed His Son Jesus Christ to redeem man; that the principle of human dignity requires an individual to assume all the responsibilities assigned him by God (*e.g.*, caring for his own needs if he is able-bodied); and that civil law ought therefore to accord the individual the greatest respect and to intervene in his life and responsibilities only in manners and for reasons prescribed by higher Law.

We deny that a proliferation of civil laws regulating men and generating massive government welfare programs is compatible with individual dignity and value; that civil law properly respects human dignity when it either fails to hold individuals responsible for wrongful conduct or neglects the truly helpless or needy when others fail to care for them as God requires.

60. We affirm that a sixth cardinal component of substantive justice is the principle of sexual morality; that sexual intimacy ought to occur only in marriage ("marriage" being defined by revealed Law as a formal, heterosexual, monogamous relationship); that civil law ought to respect this principle and protect marriage from both illicit sexual acts and other acts that encourage illicit sexual relationships (*e.g.*, obscenity, "palimony suits," pornography, etc.).

We deny that civil law may validly define marriage in a manner other than that specified by revealed Law, and that it may legitimately allow such practices as prostitution, incest, polygamy, sodomy, bestiality, and sexual abuse.

61. We affirm that a seventh cardinal component of substantive justice is the principle of honesty and integrity; that this principle prohibits such practices as lying, cheating, other deceit, fraud, and broken commitments; that civil law should therefore protect against such offenses as libel, slander, perjury, and impairment of contracts; and that civil law and government also ought to refrain from such practices in their own operations and to encourage honesty and integrity in every way possible.

We deny that civil law ought to legalize or encourage such attacks on the principle of honesty and integrity as perjury, libel, slander, contract violations, and tax evasion.

62. We affirm that an eighth cardinal component of substantive justice is the principle of human stewardship, which requires that property and wealth be under the ownership and control of private parties (individuals, partnerships, corporations, etc.) rather than civil government; that these private parties ought to be good stewards of their property and wealth, administering their assets with the interests of God and their fellow men in mind; and that civil law and government ought to respect and protect private property and free enterprise systems and conduct their own affairs in an economically responsible manner.

We deny that civil law and government have a right to condone, foster, or engage in collectivism, debt, inflation, covetousness, chronic overspending, or unjust impairment of property rights, and that civil law should be used to generate massive government welfare programs (particularly at the national level), conduct, promote, or maintain state lotteries, or contribute to deficit budgeting, inflation, or excessive public or private debt.

63. We affirm that the aforementioned eight cardinal components of substantive justice are so closely interrelated that the extent to which one principle is observed will have significant consequences for the observance of the other principles as well (*e.g.*, abortion *destroys* human life; homosexuality,

evolutionism, pornography, and obscenity *debase* human life), and that civil law therefore must be properly concerned for all eight cardinal components if any one particular component is to be adequately safeguarded.

We deny that the cardinal components of substantive justice bear little if any relationship to one another, and that one component can be adequately protected if any others are not.

1.b. *The primary principle of procedural justice*

64. We affirm that a second form of the omnibus principle of justice is the primary principle of procedural justice, which is concerned with the processes by which civil laws are (a) enacted and (b) enforced, and that each of these cardinal components of procedural justice — enactment and enforcement — subsumes several standards set forth in transcendent Law.

We deny that procedural justice does not include the cardinal components of civil law enactment and enforcement, and that transcendent Law sets forth no standards to which procedural justice must conform.

1.b.1. *Procedural justice and enactment of civil laws*

65. We affirm that the procedures for *enactment* of civil law respect the principle of the dignity and value of man when they give due regard to such norms as “consent of the governed,” “majority rule with minority rights,” and “equality before the law,” and that implementation of these norms is most beneficial in a system where the citizens are enlightened and self-disciplined and observe the constraints of higher Law.
66. We affirm that the Christian community in a society bears a special responsibility to be involved in the enactment of civil laws and to serve as a model of godly political participation, and that the failure of the Christian community properly to assume this responsibility will harm both it and society.

We deny that the Christian community bears little or no special responsibility to be involved in and serve as a model of proper political participation, and that the abdication of this responsibility by Christians will have little or no harmful effect on either society or the Christian community.

1.b.2. *Procedural justice and enforcement of civil laws*

67. We affirm that *enforcement* of civil laws should conform to norms guiding the processes by which violations of law are: (a) proven and (b) redressed, and that revealed Law sets forth standards to guide civil law relative to both proof and redress.

We deny that revealed Law sets forth no standards to guide civil law relative to proof and redress.

68. We affirm that revealed Law sets forth several norms to which civil law should conform in order to prove violations of law, including the following: (a) equality before the law; (b) public trials; (c) strict rules of evidence (testimony under oath, multiple witnesses, stringent standards to encourage witnesses’ veracity, etc.); and (d) honesty and impartiality on the part of judges and other judicial officers.

69. We affirm that two major means set forth in revealed Law of both redressing violations of law and otherwise imposing justice are punishment and restitution, and that civil law should recognize both different degrees of offenses and, consequently, different grades of punishment or other redress.

We deny that punishment of criminals is necessarily cruel or inhuman, and that punishment may legitimately fail to reflect the degree of offense.

70. We affirm that in His Death, the perfect Law-Obeayer, Jesus Christ, fully and eternally paid the ultimate penalty for law-breaking, accepting the punishment required by God's Law for each and every violation of that Law committed by all men throughout history, and that this work of Christ demonstrates the necessity and inevitability of punishment for disobedience to God's Law.

We deny that Christ's Death only displayed God's love for man without also displaying God's punishment for sin.

71. We affirm that as violators of God's Law, all men ultimately must stand before Christ, who will finally, eternally, and supremely judge nonbelievers for their violations of God's Law, pronouncing and executing their just and eternal punishment, and that punishment for law-breaking is here seen as a valid and necessary principle.

We deny that, as violators of God's Law, nonbelievers can escape the final, eternal, supreme pronouncement and execution of their just punishment by the Judge Jesus Christ, and that the principle of punishment for law-breaking is either invalid or unnecessary.

72. We affirm that one form of punishment prescribed by revealed Law for use in civil law is capital punishment; that this form of punishment is ordained by God in recognition of the value and dignity of the individual; and that it should continue to be imposed in this New Testament period for such offenses as murder.

We deny that capital punishment is not prescribed by God; that it is unjust or unmerciful; and that it has been abrogated by the New Testament for such crimes as murder.

73. We affirm that only speedy punishment that holds the wrongdoer responsible for his offenses and conforms to the standards cited above will consistently accomplish the purposes specified by God for civil law in this New Testament period, and that civil law's failure to enact and enforce law properly and promptly will lead ultimately to great harm to, and judgment of, society.

74. We affirm that a second means of redressing violations of law and otherwise imposing justice prescribed by revealed Law for use in civil law today is restitution, and that the principle of restitution should be followed in dealing with both crimes against property and non-capital crimes against persons.

75. We affirm that because procedural justice includes a number and variety of specific standards, civil law must properly balance the various standards of procedural justice and the rights of the individual against the rights of society, and that if civil law fails to strike the proper balances between competing values, injustice will result.

5. For a more detailed discussion of jurisdiction, see ##80ff below.

We deny that civil law can with impunity abdicate its responsibility to balance properly the various standards of procedural justice or the rights of the individual against the rights of society, and that true justice will prevail if civil law fails in this responsibility.

76. We affirm that a civil law system that accurately reflects God's Law will strike a proper balance between substantive justice and procedural justice; that while procedural justice must be observed by civil law in countering violations of substantive justice, excessive emphasis on procedural standards (*e.g.*, in criminal cases) will create — not reduce — violations of substantive justice; and that under such conditions there is, practically, little or no justice at all.

We deny that a civil law system that accurately reflects God's Law can be overbalanced in favor of either substantive or procedural justice, and that true justice can be done in a society where either form of justice is sacrificed to the other.

2. *The Omnibus Principle of Jurisdiction*

77. We affirm that a second omnibus principle that civil law is required to observe is the principle of *jurisdiction*, which specifies the sphere of authority within which civil law may properly operate as it observes the first omnibus principle, justice, and fulfills its purposes.

We deny that civil law has unlimited jurisdiction within society.

78. We affirm that the principle of jurisdiction requires civil law to respect the spheres of authority and responsibility assigned by God to other human agents — *e.g.*, family, church, and individual. We further affirm, therefore, that the responsibilities borne by civil law relative to the principle of justice are in some ways similar to, and in other ways different from, the responsibilities of other human agents relative to the principle of justice.⁵

We deny that civil law may intrude at will upon the spheres of responsibility assigned by God to other human agents, and that civil law's responsibilities relative to the principle of justice are either identical to or totally different from the responsibilities of other human agents in regard to justice.

Law and Other Agents in Society

79. We affirm that of the God-ordained agents of government in society (*e.g.*, individual, family, church, and civil law and government) only civil law and civil government are authorized by God to represent society in general and exercise governing jurisdiction over society for the common good, and that civil law must therefore be concerned particularly with promoting the *common good*, protecting peace and order throughout society, and effectively and efficiently (though fairly) punishing those who disrupt the common good, peace, and order.

We deny that civil law and government exist primarily to promote the interests of minority groups or individuals at the expense of society, and that civil law may legitimately abdicate its special responsibilities of promoting the common good, protecting societal peace and order, and punishing wrongdoers, without causing serious harm to society.

80. We affirm that civil law has been granted specific primary jurisdiction by God in accord with His directive will, which jurisdiction conforms to higher Law; that God may from time to time grant

civil law secondary or “back-up” jurisdiction when other human agents fail to perform as God intends; and that such secondary jurisdiction is within God’s permissive will and should thus be as limited in extent and duration as possible.

We deny both that such secondary jurisdiction may never exist and that it is to be accepted as a permanent or extensive addition to civil law’s primary jurisdiction.

81. We affirm that civil law should respect the God-ordained institution of the Church and the sphere of responsibility God has assigned to it, and that this sphere of responsibility includes evangelism, church discipline, settling disputes among believers, and determining church organization, structure, doctrine, etc.

We deny that it is within the jurisdiction of civil law to tax the Church in performing its God-ordained functions, to determine which beliefs of a church or other religious organization are “unacceptable” and *ipso facto* subject to civil law penalties, and to interfere in church discipline that conforms to Scripture.

82. We affirm that civil law should respect the God-ordained institution of the family and the sphere of responsibility God has assigned to it, and that this sphere of responsibility includes the conception, birth, physical care, spiritual nurture, education, discipline, and supervision of children, and providing for man’s material needs.

We deny that civil law ought to control the education of children; to interfere in the spiritual nurture, discipline, and supervision of children except when necessary to prevent child neglect, child beating, etc.; to make it difficult or impossible for each family member to assume his proper role in the family; or to make it difficult or impossible for families to provide for members’ material needs.

83. We affirm that the usurpation by civil law of the responsibilities of family or Church and the interference by civil law with properly functioning churches and families are errors of the gravest nature, and that such errors will have definite, harmful consequences for civil law, Church, family, and society.
84. We affirm that because God has created man in His image, sacrificed Jesus Christ for his redemption, and established definite standards of justice and righteousness, men possess God-given human rights antecedent and superior to the power of civil law, and that these human rights attach to men both individually and in groups (*e.g.*, a “society” possesses certain rights, as do individuals in it).

We deny that human rights have any source other than the Judeo-Christian God; that civil law may “create” any true human rights; and that human rights attach only to men as individuals or as “minority groups” and never to a society as a whole.

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6. For a more detailed discussion of civil laws that legitimately restrict men, see ##55-62 above.
7. The Coalition on Revival as an organization neither promotes nor condemns civil disobedience as a means of advancing the positions expressed in this document.

85. We affirm that at the heart of our understanding of God-ordained human rights is the concept that men are created with equal freedoms derived from God's omnibus principles of justice and jurisdiction, and that among God-ordained human rights are: (a) the right to life itself; (b) the right to security — to be unharmed and reasonably free from fear of harm; (c) the right to freedom of worship; (d) the right to freedom of association and expression in its various forms; (e) the right to marry, beget and rear children, and otherwise carry on family life; (f) the right to possess one's own person; (g) the right to freedom of movement; (h) the right to participate in public life (including civil law and government); (i) the right to honest, fair, and equal treatment by civil law and government, by other agencies in society, and by other individuals; (j) the right to the fruits of one's labor; (k) the right to private property; (l) the right to freedom from defamation of one's character and person; (m) the right to a moral life.
86. We affirm that it is a vital responsibility of civil law to recognize and protect human freedom, and yet that civil law contributes most directly to "external freedom" — to protecting men from illegitimate restraints on the exercise of their God-given freedoms by human sources outside those restricted (*e.g.*, a government agency).
87. We affirm that much of the "freedom" to which the Bible refers is "internal" (*e.g.*, freedom from sin in one's life) and is attainable only through submission to Jesus Christ; and that civil law contributes to this type of freedom mainly in an indirect way, *e.g.*, through providing for the free and unrestricted dissemination of the gospel.
88. We affirm that no person or group has the unlimited freedom to do as he desires, without any consideration for the rights of others, for God's moral code, etc.,⁶ and that the greatest external freedom is attainable in a society where internal freedom also exists on a widespread basis.
89. We affirm that civil law should respect and protect true equality (*i.e.*, men are created equal before God, equally possess God-given rights, are entitled to equality before the law); that revealed Law strongly denounces discrimination — illegitimate distinctions among human beings — and requires that civil law do likewise; and that if civil law is used as an instrument of discrimination (*e.g.*, against the poor, the helpless minority, etc.), both those oppressed and society in general will suffer.
90. We affirm that civil law must recognize that there are some inherent differences between human beings (*e.g.*, capabilities); that additional differences result from God's assignment of different roles to different human beings (as within marriage and the family); that individuals, by their own actions, may create inequalities (*e.g.*, economic inequalities may result from the diligence of some and the sloth of others); that civil law should recognize these differences as legitimate and not attempt to minimize them; and that efforts to impose total equality ("identicalness," "leveling," or "egalitarianism") through civil law will cause great harm to both society and individuals.

We deny that true equality implies that all human beings are identical.

91. We affirm that the Christian system of law, far from being inimical to freedom and equality, is far more protective of these God-given human rights than is any other, and that in those areas of the

8. For a more detailed discussion of other principles related to the effectuation of civil law, see ##64-66, above.

world where Christian values have prevailed, true liberty and equality have spread, to the benefit of both society and individuals.

We deny that non-Christian legal cultures promote true freedom and true human equality to the fullest extent possible on earth.

92. We affirm that, while civil law must respect all persons within its jurisdiction, respect for and obedience to civil law are clear, definite, vital, Biblically-ordained responsibilities of every Christian, and that the Christian should make every reasonable effort not to resort to civil disobedience.

We deny that it is Biblically acceptable for a Christian to regard civil ordinances lightly or to engage in civil disobedience in a cavalier, capricious, eager, or taunting manner.⁷

93. We affirm that disobedience to civil law on the part of the Christian may be Biblically proper or even necessary under certain circumstances (*e.g.*, when civil law commands the Christian to render to the civil authority what belongs to God [such as worship], or when civil law commands the Christian to violate God's Law [for instance, to murder]).
94. We affirm that the Bible recognizes several responses a citizen may make to ungodly civil laws, including some not involving civil disobedience (*e.g.*, minimizing conflict, appealing to civil authorities for remedial action, and leaving the jurisdiction of the oppressive civil authority) and some involving civil disobedience.

Law and Other Christian Values

95. We affirm that godly love and mercy are complementary to God's justice and Law, and that when God's justice and Law prevail the fullest measure of godly love and mercy is also likely to prevail.

We deny that godly love and mercy, on the one hand, and God's Law and justice, on the other, are mutually contradictory.

96. We affirm that man is created in God's image and designed to function most properly only when he obeys God's Law, and that informing mankind of God's Law and even compelling man to obey that law are therefore acts of love and mercy in that they direct man toward the most joyful and blessed way of living.

We deny that requiring men to observe God's Law is unloving, unmerciful, repressive, or detrimental to man's best interests.

97. We affirm that God's Law requires men at least to treat one another equitably and to "give to each man his due," and, therefore, that conforming man's law to God's Law is both merciful and loving because it promotes the most equitable social relationships.

We deny that conforming man's law to God's standards of justice is unloving, unmerciful, repressive, or detrimental to man's best interests.

The Effectuation of Civil Law

98. We affirm that because a philosophy of civil law cannot be totally separated from the structures and processes that enact and enforce it, those structures and processes should conform to Biblical standards that provide for a civil government that is simultaneously effective and limited.
99. We affirm that *federalism* (in which as much power as possible resides in lower levels of government) and *separation of powers* (in which separate branches of government check and balance each other's power to prevent usurpation of inordinate power by any one branch) contribute to just and efficient civil government.⁸

A Call to Action in Law

General Actions

Because of the preceding convictions, we call upon all men and women who name Christ as their personal Savior and Lord to join us in:

1. examining earnestly these affirmations and denials in the light of God's Word to see if they are true, and informing us directly of those points in which they believe we have departed from Scripture or logic;
2. re-examining our own theories and practices of law and asking God to show us where we are falling short;
3. repenting of all known sins, confessing and forsaking them, asking forgiveness both of God Himself and of all those who have been offended, and then making all possible restitution;
4. praying for God to fill all of His people with the enabling power of the Holy Spirit in order that we may bring our personal lives and our theories and practices of law into closer conformity to His revealed will on a permanent and consistent basis;
5. seeking guidance from our brethren and local church authorities as to how we can mutually support and influence one another to make our practices of law glorifying to God.

Having dealt with our own personal sins and failures, and placing ourselves accountable to the Bible and to the brethren, we now commit ourselves to:

1. influencing any known Christians or Christian associations with whom we work to consider seriously our affirmations and denials with the goal of enlisting their responses;
2. influencing those in the field of law who agree with our affirmations and denials to implement these proposals in their work;
3. mobilizing and networking our Christian resources and working in concert with the other professional spheres both inside and outside COR, to see the behavior of the Body of Christ and

our nation changed to approximate more closely the view of reality and morality presented to us in the Holy Scriptures.

Specific Actions

Just as faith without works is dead, so are words without action. In the light of these affirmations and denials, therefore, we urge our Christian brothers and sisters across America to join us in resurrecting the open and diligent study of jurisprudence and reinstating America's Judeo-Christian legal foundations through:

1. *Supplication:* We urge that Christians involved in the articulation, application, and defense of Christian jurisprudential principles in America fervently and continually bow before the Lord and beseech Him that both individual Christians and the American Christian community might be cleansed, renewed, and matured to be mighty spiritual warriors in the battle over American law.
2. *Participation:* We urge that both Christian attorneys and non-attorneys (church leaders, philosophers, generalist scholars, and others) participate much more than they presently do in the search for a better understanding of God's Law and the implementation of its standards in America's system of law and jurisprudence.
3. *Investigation:* We urge that American legal scholars (both attorneys and non-attorneys) undertake a continuing program of Biblical and jurisprudential investigation and study in order to understand more fully God's Law and the manner in which American jurisprudence and law can be conformed to its standards.
4. *Education:* We urge that a massive program of education be designed and implemented in order to improve the American Christian public's understanding of law and jurisprudence and to help it become more active in the realm of law and jurisprudence.
5. *Legislation:* We urge that American Christians vigorously promote policy-making (legislation) to help reinstate the Judeo-Christian system of jurisprudence and law on which the nation was founded.
6. *Litigation:* We urge that American Christians vigorously pursue judicial action to help reinstate the Judeo-Christian system of jurisprudence and law on which the nation was founded. Christian attorneys should pursue cases that will provide landmark, precedent-setting decisions and that will keep those opposed to God's righteous Laws on the defensive.

We further urge that these six general goals above be pursued in conjunction with the following more specific goals:

1. Promoting a societal return to a limited jurisdictional view of civil law and government, wherein civil law must respect other God-ordained institutions such as the church and the family and their God-given jurisdictions, but must also function effectively within its own God-ordained sphere of authority.
2. Promoting a societal return to the following principles of substantive justice:

2.1 *Liberty of Worship*

- 2.1.1. Protecting and promoting the ability of individuals, families, and other groups to associate corporately for religious activities without interference from zoning and other regulatory laws beyond what is necessary for protection of health and safety;
- 2.1.2. Opposing the use of the civil tort system to restrict the ability of churches to exercise Biblical discipline upon their own members;
- 2.1.3. Affirming the right of churches to hold and practice Biblical doctrines even if they oppose the stated “public policy” of this particular time — *e.g.*, church policies of exclusively male leadership in the church should be free from charges of sex discrimination, and church policies requiring exclusively heterosexual leadership and/or membership should be free from charges of discrimination on the basis of sexual preference;
- 2.1.4. Recognizing in law that the church, as the steward of God’s resources, should not be subject to taxation as are other entities;
- 2.1.5. Recognizing in law that internal church policies and disputes regarding church policy, doctrine, and property should be handled according to internal church documents without an imposition of civil law that contradicts these internal standards.

2.2 *Liberty of Expression and Association*

- 2.2.1. Opposing obscenity and pornography in any form, because it degrades women in particular and society in general;
- 2.2.2. Opposing laws that make offenses of libel and slander impossible to redress responsibly;
- 2.2.3. Affirming the rights of Christians to speak and proclaim the Gospel freely in the public marketplace, by: (a) supporting the placing of religious symbols in public places in accommodation of the people’s religious beliefs; (b) affirming the right of individuals to pray vocally and speak about religion in public places, including public schools and other government buildings.

2.3 *The Sanctity of the Family*

- 2.3.1. Preserving the monogamous, heterosexual relationship as the only legal form of marriage, and opposing all other alleged forms of “marriage,” *e.g.*, homosexual or lesbian relationships, “palimony” arrangements, “living together” arrangements, etc., by denying them any legal recognition or benefits of “marriage”;
- 2.3.2. Opposing liberal or no-fault divorce laws, which are extremely destabilizing to the family, with children their principal victims and women — who are consequently disadvantaged — their secondary victims;

- 2.3.3. Opposing the widespread, popular, and destabilizing married lifestyle of two parents working full-time outside the home — and creating “day-care children” — except when such an arrangement is essential to the physical survival of the family;
- 2.3.4. Upholding and strengthening the family as the fundamental unit of society by opposing interference by the civil law in parental decisions regarding child-rearing, including reasonable physical discipline.

2.4. *The Sanctity of Human Life*

- 2.4.1. Affirming in law the sanctity of human life from the moment of conception, regardless of place of residence, handicap, or age, and rejecting the Humanistic view of man as merely a higher animal;
- 2.4.2. Opposing the teaching of evolutionary theory as fact and/or as the only “scientific” explanation of origins;
- 2.4.3. Opposing the dangerous and unbiblical “quality of life ethic” for humanity, which prefers to solve man’s problems through such practices as abortion, infanticide, and the so-called “mercy-killing” of the handicapped and aged;
- 2.4.4. Recognizing in law that man’s worth is not based upon his contribution to society or his state of dependency;
- 2.4.5. Affirming in law that the central issue in the sanctity of life versus quality of life controversy is the worth of man and the nature of his origin, and that practices such as abortion and euthanasia attack God’s position as Creator and man’s position as created in God’s image;
- 2.4.6. Affirming in law that the sanctity of life concept does not preclude capital punishment or acts of self-defense.

2.5. *The Value and Dignity of the Individual*

- 2.5.1. Recognizing in law that the dignity of the individual derives from his inherent worth as a being created in the image of God and for whom Jesus Christ died;
- 2.5.2. Affirming in law that the dignity of the individual requires that civil law protect freedom of expression and of thought, which precludes civil law’s punishing purely mental sin — which is solely within God’s jurisdiction;
- 2.5.3. Recognizing in law that individuals’ exercise of their freedoms of expression is not absolute, but that they must consider the effects of such expression on others and on society in general;
- 2.5.4. Affirming in law that equality of individuals is not synonymous with identicalness of individuals, by: (a) affirming the positional equality of men and women before God and the law, but rejecting in law a concept that the sexes are totally equal in purpose or function, and opposing laws that seek to create sexual “sameness” where

such does not naturally exist; (b) supporting governmental policies and laws that seek to promote a “color-blind” society, but opposing laws that, in effect, discriminate against any race, ethnic group, etc., under the guise of correcting past wrongs — *e.g.*, affirmative action quotas and reverse discrimination in general.

2.6. *Sexual Morality*

- 2.6.1. Recognizing in law that monogamous, heterosexual marriage is the only legitimate place for sexual expression and pleasure;
- 2.6.2. Opposing by law all other forms of sexual relationship and expression — *e.g.*, homosexual and lesbian relationships, bestiality, incest, etc.
- 2.6.3. Using both legal and extra-legal means to oppose pornography in all its forms, especially child pornography, and to punish economically businesses that sell pornography and reward economically those that do not.

2.7. *Honesty and Integrity*

- 2.7.1. Strengthening the nation’s criminal codes against white collar crime, and rejecting the double standard presently existing in many areas under which white collar crime and blue collar crime are treated differently, constituting hypocritical and discriminatory action;
- 2.7.2. Resurrecting, through both legal and extra-legal means, the “handshake” standard of integrity in business; rejecting the “success at all cost” mentality that condones breaching valid agreements for monetary self-gain or other selfish reasons; and rejecting the rationale of economic “societal benefit” to justify willful and wanton breaching of agreements;
- 2.7.3. Upholding in law a standard of competence and equity in both business and government that will counteract incompetence and greed, which are the present norms in much of business and government;
- 2.7.4. Extending the principle of honesty and integrity to cover the American judicial system, whose recent usurpations of power have so often been disguised and misrepresented as merely new applications of traditionally-accepted legal principles, and promoting the exposure of such deceit and the re-establishment of a properly functioning judiciary through a variety of possible actions, including the following:
 - 2.7.4.1. altering the selection process for federal judges;
 - 2.7.4.2. requiring periodic reconfirmation of federal judges;
 - 2.7.4.3. requiring a substantial majority vote (2/3, 3/4, etc.) on a court before it can rule a law unconstitutional;
 - 2.7.4.4. allowing Congress, by a substantial majority vote, to overturn a court ruling of unconstitutionality;

2.7.4.5. withdrawing certain issues from the jurisdiction of the federal courts;

2.7.5. Opposing through these and other possible actions the functioning of the U.S. Supreme Court as a “legiscourt,” and promoting in law a concept of judicial review that respects such vital American principles as limited government, consent of the governed, and separation of powers.

2.8. *Human Stewardship*

2.8.1. Affirming in law the Biblical standard that “the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof,” and that property and wealth are to be privately owned and controlled, and opposing in law attacks on these concepts in such forms as collectivism, unfair and/or excessive taxation, inflation, excessive debt (public and private), welfarism, excessive government economic regulation, etc.;

2.8.2. Promoting in law conditions conducive to wise and unselfish use of material resources by private parties that own and/or control them, and encouraging them to act in the interest of other individuals and of society in general;

2.8.3. Opposing in law the willful and wanton destruction of our environment, but balancing concerns about nature and the environment against other needs of humanity, which will often be more important;

2.8.4. Promoting in law the standard of accountability, recognizing that man, as a true steward, is responsible for his actions and the manner in which he, as a free agent, carries out his responsibilities.