
The Book of the Ages

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Understanding the impact of the Bible on history and its relevance for our lives!

After years of thought, research and lectures about the influence of the Bible, Francis Schaeffer wrote a book in 1976, [*How Should We Then Live?*](#), where he explored how *biblical truth affects all of life*. "Christianity is the mother of modern science because it insists that the God who created the universe has revealed himself in the Bible to be the kind of God he is." ...

"The Bible has influenced modern science from its foundation" ...

"Because the earliest scientists believed that the world was created by a reasonable God, they were not surprised to discover that people could find out something true about nature and the universe on the basis of reason." Francis Schaeffer

He was a person who practiced what he preached, as he spent his Christian life, disciplined and immersed in the Bible. Even though he was somewhat reluctant to converse publicly on this, his private life was all about his growing impacting relationship with God from His Word and prayer. I had the pleasure to be with him in some of these investigations, where he was also challenging me, a then confused liberal, to what is "true spirituality," from being in the Word. Then in 1981, he further explored the influence of the Bible in his book, [*A Christian Manifesto*](#), where he sought to discover the Bible's impact on western culture. Afterward, he tried to continue his research, yet was not able to complete it. He asked me and others to keep it going. Thus, I responded, and this article is a summation of that work, the Bible's role, influence and impact upon western culture.

Is the Bible important?

Have you ever wondered what the Bible's influence has been on you, personally, whether you read it daily or not at all? What about others around you? Have you considered the Bible's relevance and importance in the shaping of Western society and culture? The fact is, the Bible has sold more copies than all other books in history and has shaped the hands that built this country, the United States of America. Even in the days of eroding family values, and an academic and political backlash to remove the Bible and its relevance, the fact is the Bible is the most important document and influence in Western culture. It has been more influential than the U.S. Constitution, the Magna Carta or any philosophical or political idea. The Bible is so important it has influenced much

we take for granted in the world from science, technology, and even our political system! And, I have not even brought up the Holy Spirit yet!

If we know why the Bible is important, then we can study the Bible more effectively!

Over the years, I have asked people at various colleges and universities, from students to professors, what they thought about the Bible. During those conversations, I usually received an ear full of hostility. I would get responses that dismiss the Bible as an antiquated book of rhetoric that has no meaning for us in our modern age. Some of the Professors believe that the Bible was responsible for the problems of darkness and disgust of ages past. Savvier students would challenge me with all kinds of rhetoric such as, *why should we study such an antiquated book in an age of science and reason? Why study a book that cannot possibly be understood, where highly educated people fight against each other for its meaning, over which so many churches split, cause divisions and change, form different denominations, have such different thinking that varies so much, and has wounded so many? Why study the Bible, when for centuries people have used it to fight against each other in wars and violence? Why study a book that has caused countless thousands of people to die in its crusades? Why study a book that is filled with so many myths and contradictions? Why study a book that is boring, has no historical contribution and has no bearing on us today?*

I also posed the same question to people in various churches and denominations, and, would you believe, I received equally as many different answers and even some hostility for asking such questions. They usually believed in the merits of reading the Bible. Even at liberal churches, I would find people in support of the Bible. But, what amazed me was that some Christians did not see any relevance in reading it! In fact, some people got mad at me for even asking them if they read the Bible on a regular basis. They acted as if it were not worth reading, as if there were far more important things that needed that space of time such as sports, TV, parties, going out, reading romance novels, and so forth.

I wondered if the responses from the secular colleges were so different from many of the Christians who believed that daily Bible reading or study did not matter. One group says emphatically that they refuse to believe in the Bible's precepts, while the other group may believe in it but they do nothing about it. You see, from my perspective, both groups were doing nothing about it and only one group was honest about it!

To the secular historian, the thinking is that throughout church history, Christians have fought amongst themselves and shown no unity or proof that the Bible is the Word of God. They see the same answers echoed from Christians as those of the atheists who cry with antagonism; Christians fight and disagree, and

atheists are honest and simply refuse to believe. This is truly sad. The Word of God becomes a tightrope that displays the acrobatic skill of its defender's oration, and then becomes the rope of a pulling contest to see who is right. Of course, the Bible's Defender is the Spirit of God; it stands by itself and defends itself. The Bible does not need our oration or rhetoric.

Although God is lifted up and believed in most churches, the Bible is still fought and argued about, and read so little. So, the same result comes to pass; the Bible is shown to the world as a book of strife and schism, a reservoir of conflict and division. Assumptions and rhetoric have replaced discipleship, trust, and obedience. And, I'm not speaking about the atheists here!

Christians who claim the Bible's truths and carry her under their arms to church may never venture into her pages; thus, an insult may occur to their will and intellect. Even the best intended disciples are under the duress of finding themselves incased in fatigue and mood in its reading that scatters them from its pages. Then, there are those who refuse to admit they do not know the Bible. They do not know how to study the Word, and, for the sake of pride, they will refuse to learn. They think, "I grew up in the church, I know the Bible!" Yet, they do not. Pride is an excellent way to lift one's self up, and arrogance makes an effective cover to the truth.

So, who would dare venture into the arms of a book that seems to represent so much hate and strife? Why, indeed, do we study the Bible? Why is the Bible important? If the Bible is important to you, do you also realize it is important to others around you, too?

Is the Bible really the ground that produces the crops of strife and division? Are its fruits bruised and rotten with contradiction and myth? Are her crops indigestible, having no place in the produce stand of reason? Are her pages filled with meaningless stories that bore us, the sheep, to sleep?

Those are the principle arguments that the atheists give. They are also the same reasons why most Christians do not read their Bible. Most Christians may not say that the Bible is full of contradictions, but they are being contradictory by claiming Christ but ignoring His Word. Most Christians may not personally believe that the Bible was the cause of society's problems, but they do not use it to solve theirs. Most Christians may even believe that the Bible is full of treasures and goodness for us today, but they do not harvest her crops, or use her treasures for their table. Then we wonder why our society is failing and our church is riddled with conflict and strife?

When we ask people in our seminars why they do not read the Bible, we get four primary categories: 1. It is boring. 2. It is too difficult to read or understand. 3. The Bible is too old to have any bearing on my life. 4. People fight over it too much. Although response three and four are rare for Believers, I

believe most Christians have experienced numbers one and two first hand. I know I have. I also have asked, *how important has the Bible been to you?* And most would say a four or five on a scale of 1 to 10! And, these are the Christians who are attending a *How to study the Bible* seminar!

Even if we do not think it is important to us or to society, the Bible has always been true. We may attempt to dismiss its claims and its intrusion into our lives. However, the Bible has been the light in darkness, the strength in our weakness, our comfort in our troubles, and our guide for our lives. Because God's Word is *more precious than gold, than much pure gold; and is sweeter than honey.* (Psalm 19:10) When we try to live the Christian life alone without the guidance and support from the Word, we are like a doctor performing an operation without ever going to medical school.

Why has the Bible has been important throughout history?

The Bible has been important throughout the history of humanity and society. If the Bible has been true throughout history, the question we must ask ourselves is, *is it true for me?* If the Bible is the cradle for our knowledge and growth in Jesus, we must ask ourselves, *is Jesus is really true? If He is true for me, what have I done with this truth? If He is true, and His Word is true for me, does that mean He is true for others, too?* There is an academic debate in scholarly circles stating that the Bible can only be personal and can never, or must never, be used to convict another person. To hold such a view is to deny the Bible's reality, power, promise, and relevance. It is also a denial of its past influence and its potential continual influence.

As far as the Bible's influence and social impact in history, did you know it has had more influence than any person, group, philosophy, or idea—bar none? For this argument, let us take a look at my home country, the United States of America. The U.S. is less than three hundred years old whereas most countries can look back at thousands of years of history. The U.S. has less productive farm land than its neighbor, Mexico, and far less natural resources, too. So, why is the U.S. the only super power and the world's economic and political leader? Why is Mexico a third world county? After all, most counties have a deeper history, more resources, and better strategic placing. The answer is a single Book, the Book of the ages that shaped the minds of its founders and builders and gave the principles for America's success. America was shaped by the Bible to create liberty and freedom, whereas Mexico was formed from a skewed combination of socialism and Catholicism which created corruption and oppression. Mexico has separation of the Church and State as its foundation; the United States does not even though many people believe it does. Mexico also has previsions to discourage individual capitalism and industrialism the key components for socioeconomic growth. The first objection to this argument is that Europe has had the Bible for over a thousand years longer; why are they not a super power? The answer is, they are—or, at least were until they fell to bankrupt philosophies.

The primary principle that motivated the Puritans to leave England and terraform a new world from scratch was *freedom*. They lived in a theocracy where the government was oppressive and riddled with corruption. Where religion was used to tyrannize and hold back the people. This made the people downtrodden and demoralized. The government used the name of the Bible to oppress the people, but this is not what the Bible taught; rather, it was what the leaders said it taught. It was used as a sword of tyranny and not the cradle of Truth. So, instead of spiritual growth prospering a nation, the people lived under autocracy with oppressive agendas for limited personal gain for the select.

So, the Puritans sought to exercise the principles of Scripture, and that principle was freedom. Freedom, human rights, and liberty are what give hope to the individual; this builds community and fuels a successful, educated society. The founders of America were heavily and primarily influenced by Biblical precepts. This is the idea that made America great and inspired the booming economic prosperity. It is the Bible that gave a higher work ethic and a government free from oppressive corruption. With oppression and corruption out of the way, its people were given the highest standard of living the world has ever known. This inspired cooperation, personal development, and education which led to the advances in inventions, medicine and science. All this was from the pages of the Bibles.

A case in point: Can you name one hospital or college founded by atheists? What hospital or major college was founded by the Muslims or Hindus, or Buddhists? Virtually all hospitals in America were started by churches, although since taken over by big business, but that is another issue. Virtually all the Ivy League and private colleges and universities were started by churches. Education and liberty are Biblical themes, not rooted in atheism, other religions or most philosophies.

A lot of professors and researchers in academia have claimed that the classic philosophers, as well as the European thinkers, gave birth to American idealism and freedom. But, this is, in fact, totally false. It is the Bible that inspired the stand against corruption and feudalism. I have read extensively the classic philosophers and theorists and no one has crafted and promoted an argument for freedom and personal liberty—not Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and definitely not Nietzsche, the Stoics, Existentialism, Secular Humanism, Logic, Reason or Psychology!

Europe was oppressed by the Holy Roman Empire after the collapse of Rome, which collapsed after Christianity devalued into corruption and decadence. The Bible was blamed for its collapse and oppression. The Bible was the flag in name only—not by its precepts—in these early political systems. Corruption reigned, and the Dark Ages followed. The Bible was not read or studied; therefore, its exploit was in vain. It was not even allowed to be

translated. Many great men of God gave up their lives valiantly to translate the Bible for people to know the real God and how their lives could benefit. The political leaders fought against them vehemently and burned people like Wycliffe, 200 years before the Reformation, to the stake. The corrupt leaders were in great fear of the Bible because the people would see they had rights and overthrow the government, which is exactly what happened after the Bible was translated and distributed. The Reformation succeeded because the Bible was mass-produced by means of the new invention, the printing press, and the corrupt governments could no longer keep the people in the Dark Ages! The quest for knowledge and the Bible in everyday language help give birth to the Renaissance, which helped the Reformation. The Reformation gave birth to a modern and culturally prosperous Europe.

Most academics would counter that it was the Magna Carta that gave birth to personal rights in 1215 A.D. The Magna Carta is considered the first binding document that gave birth to the concept of rights and individual freedom to people in Europe from the oppression of kings. Although it took centuries and the Black Death in the 1300's to be accepted and exercised, it led to the ending of the feudal system which then led to economic and societal growth. The Magna Carta, in fact, did as they said; however, what influenced it? The Magna Carta tells us God grants us our Rights, our Wisdom, and our Dignity, and that all men are free. It was totally instilled with Biblical principles and quotes; in fact, it makes an excellent Bible Study! Here are just a few quotes: *by the grace of God, regard to God, and for the salvation of our soul, unto the honor of God, and the advancement of his holy Church, we have granted to God, that the English Church shall be free, God's Law is followed from our Lord, under supervision of the Church, for God and the amendment of our kingdom, kept in good faith.*

It took the Reformation in the 1500s to further challenge the world that there can be personal freedom. The Magna Carta gave birth to modern Europe and its prosperity. Even the French Revolutionaries who blamed the Bible for their oppression received their quest for freedom from Biblical precepts. They wanted liberty as taught from the Bible. But, they also blamed the Bible for their oppression. They did not realize their King and Church were not using the Bible, only their pride in the name of the Bible. And, if you read the U.S. Constitution, you will see that God is the One who gives us our rights, freedoms, and liberty, and that the Constitution is filled with Biblical ideology!

Academics will counter this argument that it was science, not the Bible that birthed reason and Americanism. What about the pursuit of science? The inductive Bible Study methods we teach at *Into Thy Word* were envisioned by the early Church Fathers and Augustine, who searched them out from the Bible (Acts 17:10-12). The quest for Logos is the quest for reason and wisdom. The inductive method is the primary hypothesis and logic behind real scientific principles. Proverbs is a book dedicated to wisdom and the scientific method.

Virtually every great inventor and scientist obtained their precepts and thought from Biblical insertion, whether avert, obscured, or subjugated.

I had professors in College and read textbooks that claimed that the Founding Fathers of the U.S. were all or mostly all Deists. A type of pseudo Christian religion that denounces the supernatural, denies revealed religion, basing their belief on the light of nature and reason. Yet, with just a little research you will find that virtually every one of the 55 writers and signers of the United States Constitution were members and active in their Christian denominations: 29 were Anglicans, 16 to 18 were Calvinists, 2 were Methodists, 2 were Lutherans, 2 were Roman Catholic, 1 was a Quaker and Anglican, and 1, yes just 1 was a open Deist, Dr. Franklin who also rigorously attended and contributed financially to various churches, and who called for public prayer. He was not much of a Deist, just curious with the practice of faith and reason together! The Continental Congress and the early sessions of the United States Congress also included several hours a day of prayer and fasting! The prayers have gone down in eminence but still continue today. A secular nation does not pray and defiantly does not fast!

The next objection from the academics is that John Locke (1632-1704), a Philosopher, Political Scientist, Historian and Physician was the main influencer of our Founding Fathers. Well they are correct for the most part. Locke was the most influential philosopher in the 1760-1780's as was Jonathan Edwards. Locke was a committed Christian who emphasized faith and rational thinking (Letters concerning Toleration) and pleaded for religious liberty. He emphasized in his main work "Of The State of Nature," that people "will reasonably acquiesce to the institution of some government in order to avoid self-destruction." He also emphasizes that government had to have a system to realize and control our natural "sinful" state so tyranny and corruption can be avoided. This was realized and accomplished by the "Checks and Balances" of our three government branches, Legislature, Judicial and Executive. So no one branch has control and for extra redundancy the Founding Fathers, influenced by John Calvin, instituted two legislative bodies, Congress and the Senate.

Locke was heavy and passionately infused by Scriptural principles! Locke believed that our Almighty God gave us faith and reason to be the main instruments of setting up a Government. This was crucial to prevent absolute individual power and corruption and empower leaders to execute judgment on behalf of the people. Edwards produced the quintessential theology of Christian spirituality for his age. He was the second major influencer of the Founders. The Founders then blended Lockean philosophy and Calvinist theology together which produced the U.S. governmental system. Political revisionists can say no all they want, all you have to do is read Locke and the Federalist Papers for yourself.

The skeptics then counter that the Bible says nothing about personal freedom, liberty, and the establishment of government. Well they probably never read it, here are just a few passages: Genesis 41:25-57; Deuteronomy 16:18-17:20; 2 Samuel 5:3; 2 Chronicles 17:7-9; 23:3, 11; Jeremiah 34:8-11; Daniel 1:3-20; Romans 13:1-7! The Founding Fathers clearly recognized that justice and civil authority are legitimate extensions of Divine Law (Natural law) through a covenant relationship with Almighty God. The establishment of a civil government which exists primarily to administer justice is from Biblical precepts. The Bible gives us rather explicit guidance on basic rules of adjudication, rules of judicial procedure, rules of evidence, rules for capital punishment, and guidelines for the establishment of an appellate system.

“Third World” countries, where people are starving in the streets, do not operate on Biblical principles. They do not have freedom and liberty as their *mantra*. So, they do not have truth or tolerance for free thinking. In fact, they are infused with corruption—corruption that removes hope and that oppresses the people. I have traveled and personally researched this thesis all over the world. I have seen India produce more food than it needs, yet many of its people starve and are oppressed in a caste system based on religious dogma. I have seen my neighbor, Mexico, do the same. I was in Russia just before and after the collapse of communism and saw how corruption and organized crime took over. I held babies who died in my arms and saw several families crowded into a single studio apartment.

While in Japan, I was curious how a defeated Feudal Imperialism went from economic depletion to one of the world’s great economic powers in less than two decades—without the resources or infrastructure. I found out there that General MacArthur inspired their rebirth by a constitution with Biblical values. The people saw that the West had a better plan and the freedom essential for their recovery, so they adopted our system, even though less than 2% of the population claims to be Christian. When the Japanese received their freedom, they became inventive, cooperative, and practiced social change that gave them business, jobs, and a higher standard of living. If they had won the war, the people would still be oppressed and in a Feudal system of corruption and oppression. In fact, the best witnessing tool I have found for the Japanese is to show them their prosperity compared to their past and what inspired their economic and social development!

I have seen the same diversity of success versus social breakdown within the same economic and social issues. Take a close look at countries with the same culture and resources that have split. One side flourishes while the other is reduced to dire poverty and oppression. Just take a look at North Korea versus South Korea, East Germany versus West Germany and Haiti versus the Dominican Republic. For the most part, it is the same people groups and same social situations at the start. Then they split; one side in an oppressive regime with communist or social ideology, and the other side with liberty and freedom

stemming from the Bible. On which side would you rather live? You did not see people fleeing from West Germany into East Germany, nor do you see people fleeing from South Korea into North Korea. Do West Germany and South Korea have to build walls and security systems to keep the people in? We have to ask why that is, and why would we not want to build a political system that creates cooperation and not corruption!

Haiti and the Dominican Republic are a part of the same Caribbean island, yet two distinctive nations. One side is a hot vacation spot filled with freedom, beauty and prosperity the other side people are rioting, starving and oppressed. One side has a Biblically based constitution the other a totalitarian regime. Another case is when President Lincoln with the Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves most were given the opportunity to establish their own country back in Africa with better resources and opportunity than their forefathers had. Seems like a great opportunity, fortunately just a small percentage took advantage of this. Those who left established Liberia, and this country never ventured from its fourth world status. The people are destitute, impoverished, hopeless and in constant civil chaos. The Slaves that stayed in America even given the oppression and prejudice they received had it a hundred times better than those who left.

Did you know it is the Bible that birthed most of the world's written languages that were used to build community? All over the world, from Russia to tiny islands in the South Pacific where no written language existed before, Bible translators gave most of the world its language. From language came society. India, for example, was a county of numerous feudal, languages and religious systems all fighting and competing with one another; the English missionaries united India and gave to the masses written languages, such as URDU and Hindi. Prior Sanskrit, the only other written language that I am aware of, was reserved for the highest caste and priests only. The county realized from the missionaries that it could have freedom and liberty, and even though Gandhi was not a Christian, he used Christian and Western precepts to obtain India's freedom without bloodshed and formed a Western-based constitution. All India has to do now is remove the corruption and adhere to their constitution to become a political and social success complete with prosperity and liberty. The Bible made, and can continue to make, this possible!

Even though the U.S. courts may disagree and secular thinking professors and activist judges will fight with all their might against the Bible's influence throughout history, the fact remains that the Bible is the foundation to American and Western society. The Muslims know this better than we do; that is why they so passionately hate us. They do not want freedom, democracy and liberty; they want theocracy and jihad. Which would you rather live under, oppression, or liberty? If you want a country to prosper, you first have to get rid of the corruption and give the people liberty, rights, and freedom, and the Bible tells us how. This allows the people to work together to build a society; when they are oppressed,

only the oppressor lives well—and on the backs of the oppressed! The Bible is important in history to social and economic growth. Imagine what it can do for your personal growth!

What about the Inquisition and Crusades? Again, the Bible was used in vain by corrupt people who were getting their insights from Islam and jihad. “Kill the infidel,” “subjugate the people,” as well as “take over Jerusalem,” and “burn the heretics,” are Islamic principles—not Biblical! What about slavery? Many Christians approved of slavery and tried their hardest to use Scripture to defend it. But, their arguments stemmed from pride and were financially based, not Scripturally. It was the Abolitionists, who were devout Christians, who gave rise to freedom for the slaves; and, a great President, infused with Biblical principles, gave the slaves their freedom at great cost. In fact, slavery was banned in Europe in the first millennium by the Church, and did not rise again until corrupt and greedy people exploited the New World and subjugated its people for personal gain. Slavery, as practiced in Europe and the U.S., is not a Biblical position; freedom is!

If the Bible is true to history, then it is true to you and it is also true to others. This may be a bad argument in logic, but not in the scope of Who the Influencer is—and that is the God of Ages employing and empowering His Book of Ages! Without the Book of Ages, we are left with Imperialism, Feudalism, Communism, Socialism, Dictatorships, and Oppression—all of which are heinous and do not work either to the benefit of humanity or to God's glory! Without the Book of Ages, your life will have no hope, no prosperity and the society you live in is meaningless, destitute, and destined to destruction and chaos!

Dr. John Eidsmoe's book “Christianity and the Constitution” is a well-documented source of the Biblical principles found in American government. He lists fifteen Biblical principles that are either derived from, or at least compatible with, Christianity and the Bible, they include:

1. A belief in God and His providence.
2. A belief that God's truth is revealed in the Bible.
3. A belief that human reason is a God-given power to be used to learn the truth.
4. A belief that man is neither perfect nor perfectible and that government institutions must take that into account.
5. A belief that God has ordained human government to restrain the sinful nature of man.
6. A belief that God has established certain physical laws as well as moral laws for the governance of mankind.
7. A belief that God has revealed his moral law through scriptures and that His truth is discoverable through human reason and human conscience.
8. A belief that human law must correspond to the divine law. Human laws that contradict God's law are non-binding and are to be resisted.

9. A belief that the revealed law and the law of nature include unalienable human rights which include life, liberty, and property.
10. A belief that the revealed law and the law of nature form the basis for the law of nations (international law) and this law of nations includes the right of a nation to defend itself against aggressors.
11. A belief that governments are formed by covenant (or compact) of the people in order to safeguard human rights.
12. A belief that governments have only such powers as are delegated to them by the people in the said covenants or compacts and that when governments attempt to usurp powers not so delegated, they become illegitimate and are to be resisted.
13. A belief that, human nature being what it is, rulers tend to usurp more and more power if given the opportunity.
14. A belief that the best way to prevent governments from usurping power is to separate their powers and functions into legislative, executive, and judicial branches.
15. A belief that, human nature being what it is, a free enterprise economy is the best way to give people an incentive to produce and develop national prosperity.

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