



Christian foundations of a free economy/polis

Our issues: underneath the fear of the Lord and love for his ways (encounter and ethics):

- Anthropology: what does it mean to be human in God's image/likeness and fulfill our calling as male and female, single or married?
- Epistemology: how can we be reasonably certain of the truth of any matter?
- Ecclesiology: Christ is the Center and Circumference: what are the marks of the church?
- Liberty that leads to flourishing must be rooted in truth and virtue and include common values that guide the social order.

A free and virtuous society: cardinal virtues, open access, property rights, legal/justice systems, subsidiarity and institutions other than government functioning...equality of opportunity, not outcome

Economic Wisdom: 4 pillars

- Stewardship toward flourishing
- Value creation – with ethical wealth creation a subset
- Productivity and opportunity
- Responsible action

Honest assessment of multiple historical narratives: we see godly threads that will eventually be woven into a tapestry of liberty; however, until the last 500 years and especially the last 200 years, much of world lived and subsistence level and in rather static class structures...biblical narrative and Christian communities offer foundational insights for true freedom, but it has been a long road.

Biblical Narrative

- Freewill as a gift
- Voluntary invitation to faith
- Property rights and the common good
- Compassion toward the outsiders
- POETS and PROPHETS: warn about the subversions of Idolatry, Immorality and Injustice
- Inclusivity in the New Covenant – where God's Spirit is working, there is a new sociology
- Virtue and voluntary sacrifice
- Dual citizenship – to God/conscience and the state – Epistle to Diognetes:
 - *But, inhabiting Greek as well as barbarian cities, according as the lot of each of them has determined and following the customs of the natives in respect to clothing, food, and the rest of their ordinary conduct, they display to us their*



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wonderful and confessedly striking method of life. They dwell in their own countries, but simply as sojourners. As citizens, they share in all things with others, and yet endure all things as if foreigners. Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers. They marry, as do all [others]; they beget children; but they do not destroy their offspring. They have a common table, but not a common bed. They are in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh. They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven. They obey the prescribed laws, and at the same time surpass the laws by their lives. They love all men and are persecuted by all. They are unknown and condemned; they are put to death and restored to life. They are poor yet make many rich; they lack all things, and yet abound in all; they are dishonored, and yet in their very dishonor are glorified. They are evil spoken of, and yet are justified; they are reviled, and bless; they are insulted, and repay the insult with honor; they do good yet are punished as evil-doers. When punished, they rejoice as if quickened into life; they are assailed by the Jews as foreigners and are persecuted by the Greeks; yet those who hate them are unable to assign any reason for their hatred. To sum up all in one word--what the soul is in the body, that are Christians in the world. The soul is dispersed through all the members of the body, and Christians are scattered through all the cities of the world

- Context of confrontation and cooperation with power – penultimate – the future made present partially but substantially
- Augustine, Benedict, Celtic communities, Anselm, Aquinas, Marsilius of Padua, Salamanca: *They are also deeply imbedded in, first, natural law accounts of the morality of human choice and action and, second, a profound understanding of how these practices and institutions worked. The subsequent insights are just as applicable today as they were when capitalism first emerged: i.e., in the medieval European world.*

Magisterial Reformation voices: Luther's 2 Kingdoms; Zwingli's integration, Calvin's comprehensive vision

The Other Christian voices:

- The Silk Road communities
- The Waldensians
 - Laity and women allowed to preach
 - Simplicity and poverty values and the increasing pomp of the Roman Church was deeply criticized
 - Suspicious of state power and opted for freedom of conscience
- John Wycliffe: theological and ecclesial differences were married to economic and political ones.
- Jan Hus: patron saint of the Czech Republic
- Anabaptists



- Baptists – Virginia and Rhode Island
- Moravians, Methodists and the Evangelical impulse
- Catholic Social and Political teaching refined since the 1890s

Important: huge difference between church-as institution married to national/political power and commissioned church members serving the public good.

Enemies of liberty

- Ideological captivity
- Religious intolerance
- Racial hierarchies
- Globalism
- Political power and ecclesial envy