Intelligent Design and the Bible

Jan. 16, 2006

Psalm 19 tells us that the heavens declare the glory of God. Romans 1 reminds us that the creation shows His divine attributes. So we shouldn't be surprised that scientists are finding evidence of design in nature.

The subject of intelligent design is in the news due to school board decisions and court rulings. So it is important that Christians be thinking clearly about this important topic.

When I have an opportunity to speak on the subject of intelligent design, I find that most Christians don't exactly know what to make of this research. On the one hand, they appreciate that scientists working in such diverse fields as astronomy and biology are finding evidence of design. Whether you look in the telescope at the far dimensions of space or in a microscope at the smallest details of life, God's fingerprint can be found.

But I also find that Christians are ambivalent about the idea of intelligent design. If you go to the websites of many creationist groups, you will find them to be critical of intelligent design research because it doesn't identify a creator. They want the scientists to connect the dots of their research to the God of the Bible. I would like to suggest another way of looking at this issue.

Those of us who defend the historical reliability of the Bible often use the good work done by archaeologists. These archaeologists uncover historical evidence that gives us a better picture of the ancient near east. We then take their research and show how it fits with the biblical description of

history. Although some archaeologists are Christians, many are not. But that doesn't keep us from using their research to show the truthfulness of the Bible.

We can think of scientists working on intelligent design in the same way. They are pursuing a line of research that shows design in nature. We can then take their research and show how it fits with the biblical description of creation. Although many of the scientists working on intelligent design are Christians, some are not. That shouldn't keep us from using their research. We can take their research and connect the dots.

In their book *The Privileged Planet*, Guillermo Gonzalez and Jay Richards show that the earth is positioned in the best place in our galaxy for complex life to exist. They also show that the earth is also positioned in the best place for scientific discovery. Christian theologians and apologists can take this research and point to the fact that God created the heavens and earth and they show His divine care.

Michael Behe in his book *Darwin's Black Box* shows that there are numerous molecular motors within the cell that intricately assembled. He demonstrates that they have irreducible complexity. Christian theologians and apologists can take this research and show that there is evidence of design. Design implies a designer, and the Bible tells us that God is the designer of life.

Scientists working on the subject of intelligent design may not be willing to identify the Creator. But that shouldn't keep us from using their research to connect the dots and lead people to the Creator.

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American Indians in American History

Colonial America

Two dark chapters in American history are slavery and the treatment of the American Indian. We have an article on slavery, and in this article we will focus briefly on the story of the American Indians (or Native Americans).

It is difficult to estimate the number of Indians in the Western Hemisphere. In Central and South America, there were advanced civilizations like the Aztecs in Mexico and the Incas in Peru. So it is estimated there was a population of about twenty million before the Europeans came. By contrast, the Indian tribes north of what is now the Mexican border were "still at the hunter-gatherer stage in many cases, and engaged in perpetual warfare" and numbered perhaps one million.{1}

One of the best-known stories from colonial America is the story of John Smith and Pocahontas. John Smith was the third leader of Jamestown. He traded with the Indians and learned their language. He also learned how they hunted and fished.

On one occasion, Smith was captured by the Indians and brought before Chief Powhatan. As the story goes, a young princess by the name of Pocahontas laid her head across Smith's chest and pleaded with her father to spare his life. This may have been an act of courage or part of the Indian ceremony. In either case, Smith was made an honorary chief of the tribe.

Although the Disney cartoon about Pocahontas ends at this point, it is worth noting that she later met an English

settler and traveled to England. There she adopted English clothing, became a Christian, and was baptized.

Another famous story involves Squanto. He was originally kidnapped in 1605 and taken to England where he learned English and was eventually able to return to New England. When he found his tribe had been wiped out by a plague, he lived with a neighboring tribe. Squanto then learned that the Pilgrims were at Plymouth, so he came to them and showed them how to plant corn and fertilize with fish. He later converted to Christianity. William Bradford said that Squanto "was a special instrument sent of God for their good beyond their expectation."{2}

These stories are typical of the some of the initial interactions between the Indians and the colonists. Relations between the two were usually peaceful, but as we will see, the peace was a fragile one.

Many of the settlers owed their lives to the Indians and learned many important skills involving hunting, trapping, fishing, and farming. Roger Williams purchased land from the Indians to start Providence, Rhode Island, and William Penn bought land from the Indians who lived in present-day Pennsylvania. Others, however, merely took the land and began what became the dark chapter of exploitation of the American Indians.

Indian Wars in New England

Let's take a look at the history of Indians in New England.

One of the leaders in New England was Roger Williams. He believed that it was right and proper to bring Christianity to the Indians. Unfortunately, "few New Englanders took trouble to instruct Indians in Christianity. What they all wanted to do was to dispossess them of their land and traditional hunting preserves."{3}

Williams thought this was unchristian and argued that title to all Indian lands should be negotiated at a fair price. He felt anything less was sinful.{4}

Because of this, his Rhode Island colony gained the reputation of being a place where Indians were honored and protected. That colony managed to avoid any conflict with the Indians until King Philip's War.

King Philip's War was perhaps the most devastating war between the colonists and the Indians living in the New England area. There had been peace until that time between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag tribe due to their peace treaty signed in the 1620s.

The war was named for King Philip who was the son of Chief Massasoit. His Indian name was Metacom, but he was called King Philip by the English because he adopted European dress and customs. In 1671, he was questioned by the colonists and fined. They also demanded that the Wampanoag surrender their arms.

In 1675, a Christian Indian who had been working as an informer to the colonists was murdered (probably by King Philip's order). Three Indians were tried for murder and executed. In retaliation, King Philip led his men against the settlers. At one point they came within twenty miles of Boston itself. If he could have organized a coalition of Indian tribes, he might have extinguished the entire colony.

Throughout the summer and fall of 1675, Philip and his followers destroyed farms and townships over a large area. The Massachusetts governor dispatched military against the Indians with the conflict ending in the fall of 1677 when Philip was killed in battle.

The war was costly to the colonists in terms of lives and finances. It also resulted in the near extermination of many of the tribes in southern New England.

The Pequot War in the 1630s developed initially because of conflict between Indian tribes. It began with a dispute between the Pequots and the Mohicans in the Connecticut River area over valuable shoreline where shells and beads were collected for wampum.

Neither the English nor the nearby Dutch came to the aid of the Mohicans. Thus, the Pequots became bold and murdered a number of settlers. In response, the Massachusetts governor sent armed vessels to destroy two Indian villages. The Pequots retaliated by attacking Wethersfield, Connecticut, killing nine people and abducting two others.{5}

The combined forces of the Massachusetts and Connecticut militia set out to destroy the Pequot. They surrounded the main Pequot fort in 1637 and slaughtered five hundred Indians (men, women, and children). The village was set fire, and most who tried to escape were shot or clubbed to death.{6}

Post Revolutionary America

Chief Tecumseh was a Shawnee chief who lived in the Ohio River Valley and benefited from the British. During the War of 1812, the British had a policy of organizing and arming minorities against the United States. Not only did they liberate black slaves, but they armed and trained many of the Indian tribes.{7}

As thousands of settlers moved into this area, the Indians were divided as to whether to attack American settlements. Tecumseh was not one of them. He refused to sign any treaties with the government and organized an Indian resistance movement against the settlers.

Together with his brother Tenskwatawa, who was also known as “the Prophet,” he called for a war against the white man: “Let the white race perish! They seize your land. They corrupt your women. They trample on the bones of your dead . . . . Burn

their dwellings—destroy their stock—slay their wives and children that their very breed may perish! War now! War always! War on the living! War on the dead!”{8}

Tecumseh and “the Prophet” met with other Indian tribes in order to unite them into a powerful Indian confederacy. This confederacy began to concern government authorities especially when the militant Creeks (known as the Red Sticks because they carried bright red war clubs) joined and began to massacre the settlers.

General William Henry Harrison was at that time the governor of the Indiana Territory (he later became president). While Tecumseh was recruiting more Indian tribes, Harrison’s army defeated fighters led by “the Prophet” at the Tippecanoe River. This victory was later used in his presidential campaign (“Tippecanoe and Tyler too”).

American settlers as well as some Indian tribes attempted to massacre the Creeks in the south. When this attempt failed, they retreated to Fort Mims. The Creeks took the fort and murdered over five hundred men, women, and children and took away two hundred fifty scalps on poles.{9}

At this point, Major-General Andrew Jackson was told to take his troops south and avenge the disaster. Those who joined him included David Crockett and Samuel Houston. Two months after the massacre, Jackson surrounded an Indian village and sent in his men to destroy it. David Crockett said: “We shot them like dogs.”{10}

A week later, Jackson won a pitched battle at Talladega, attacking a thousand Creeks and killing three hundred of them. He then moved against the Creeks at Horseshoe Bend. When the Indians would not surrender, they were slain. Over five hundred were killed within the fort and another three hundred drowned trying to escape in the river. Shortly after this decisive battle, the remaining Creeks surrendered.

Trail of Tears

The Cherokee called Georgia home, and they were an advanced Indian civilization. Their national council went back to 1792 and had a written legal code since 1808. They had a representative form of government (with eight congressional districts). But the settlers moving into the state continued to take their land.

When Andrew Jackson was elected president in 1828, it sealed the fate of the Indians. “In his inaugural address he insisted that the integrity of the state of Georgia, and the Constitution of the United States, came before Indian interests, however meritorious.”{11}

In 1830, Congress passed the “Indian Removal Act.” This act forced Indians who were organized tribally and living east of the Mississippi River to move west to Indian Territory. It also authorized the president to use force if necessary. Many Americans were against the act, including Tennessee Congressman Davy Crockett. It passed anyway and was quickly signed by President Jackson.

The Indian tribes most affected by the act were the so-called “civilized tribes” that had adopted many of the ways of the white settlers (Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, Seminole, and Cherokee). The Cherokees had actually formed an independent Cherokee Nation.

Cherokee leader John Ross went to Washington to ask the Supreme Court to rule in favor of his people and allow them to keep their land. In 1832, Chief Justice John Marshall and the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Cherokee Nation was not subject to the laws of the United States and therefore had a right to their land. The Cherokee would have to agree to removal in a treaty (which would also have to be ratified by the Senate).

A treaty with one of the Cherokee leaders gave Jackson the legal document he needed to remove the Indians. The U.S. Senate ratified the treaty by one vote over the objections of such leaders as Daniel Webster and Henry Clay.

In one of the saddest chapters in American history, the Indians were taken from their land, herded into makeshift forts, and forced to march a thousand miles. Often there was not enough food or shelter. Four thousand Cherokees died on the march to Oklahoma. This forced removal has been called “the Trail of Tears.”

The Seminole resisted this forced march. Their leader Osceola fought the U.S. Army in the swamps of Florida with great success. However, when the Seminoles raised the white flag in truce, the U.S. Army seized Osceola. He died in prison a year later.

Those who made it to Oklahoma did not fare much better. Although Oklahoma was Indian Territory, settlers began to show interest in the land. So the government began to push Indians onto smaller and smaller reservations. The final blow came with the Homestead Act of 1862 which gave one hundred sixty acres to anyone who paid a ten-dollar filing fee and agreed to improve the land for five years.

Indian Wars in the West

Until the 1860s, the Plains Indians were not significantly affected by the white man. But the advance of the settlers and the transcontinental railroad had a devastating impact on their way of life. The railroads cut the Great Plains in half so that the west was no longer the place where the buffalo roam. Prospectors ventured onto Indians lands seeking valuable minerals. So it was inevitable that war would break out. Between 1869 and 1878, over two hundred pitched battles took place primarily with the Sioux, Apache, Comanche, and

Cheyenne.

The impact of an endless stream of settlers had the effect of forcing the Plains Indians onto smaller and smaller reservations. Even though the government signed various treaties with the Indians, they were almost always broken. Approximately three hundred seventy treaties were signed from 1778 to 1871 while an estimated eighty or ninety agreements were also entered into between 1871 and 1906.{12}

One of the most famous Indian battles was "Custer's Last Stand." Sioux and Cheyenne warriors, led by Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull, fought against Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer. The Battle of Little Big Horn actually wasn't much of a battle. Custer was ordered to observe a large Sioux camp. But he decided to attack even though he was warned they might be greatly outnumbered. It turns out they were outnumbered ten to one. Within an hour, Custer and all his men were dead.

Custer's defeat angered many Americans, so the government fought even more aggressively against the Indians. Many historians believe that the anger generated by "Custer's Last Stand" led to the slaughter of Sioux men, women, and children at Wounded Knee in 1890. After the death of Sitting Bull, a band of Sioux fled into the badlands, where they were captured by the 7th Cavalry. The Sioux were ordered disarmed, but an Indian fired a gun and wounded an officer. The U.S. troops opened fire, and within minutes almost two hundred men, women, and children were killed.

The Apache leader Geronimo led many successful attacks against the army. By 1877, the Apache had been forced onto reservations. But on two separate occasions, Geronimo planned escapes and led resistance efforts from mountain camps in Mexico. He finally surrendered in 1886.

Chief Joseph of the Nez Percé in the Northwest built

friendships with trappers and traders since the first expedition by Lewis and Clark. He refused to sign treaties with the government that would give up their homeland. Eventually fighting broke out, so Chief Joseph led his people to Canada. Unfortunately, they were surrounded by soldiers just forty miles from Canada. Chief Joseph died at a reservation in Washington State in 1904.

This is the sad and tragic story of the American Indian in American history. We cannot change our history, and we should not rewrite our history. Neither should we ignore the history of the American Indian in the United States.

Notes

1. Paul Johnson, *A History of the American People* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997), 7.
2. William Bradford, *History of Plymouth Plantation,* c. 1650.
3. Johnson, 47.
5. Johnson, 76.
6. Alden T. Vaughn, *The New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians,* 1620-1675 (Boston: Little Brown & Company, 1965).
7. Reginald Horsman, "British Indian Policy in the North-West 1807-1812," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review,* April 1958.
8. J. F.H. Claiborne, Mississippi as Providence, Territory and State, 3 quoted in Robert V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Freedom 1822-32*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1981), i.
9. H. S. Halbert and T. S. Hall, *The Creek War of 1813-14* (Tuscaloosa, 1969), 151ff.
10. David Crockett, *A Narrative of the Life of David Crockett of the State of Tennessee,* 1834.
11. Johnson, 350.
12. Charles M. Harvey, "The Red Man's Last Roll-Call," *Atlantic Monthly* 97 (1906), 323-330.

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Myths About Intelligent Design

January 1, 2006

In December a decision by U.S. District Judge John Jones in Dover, Pennsylvania once again put the topic of intelligent design in the news. He ruled that the school board's actions were unconstitutional and merely an attempt to smuggle religious views into a science classroom.

Media coverage of the Dover case and the broader topic of intelligent design have often been inadequate. When I have spoken on this subject, I have found that many Christians don't have an accurate perspective on this subject. So let me take a moment to address some of the myths surrounding this scientific theory.

First, proponents of intelligent design are not trying to smuggle religion into the classroom. While that may have been the intent of some of the Dover school board members, it is clear that is not the desire of scientists working on intelligent design. The Discovery Institute is one of the leading think tanks in the area of intelligent design and it actually opposes the idea of requiring it be taught in the classroom. They are pursuing it as a scientific theory not as a public school curriculum.

It might be worth noting that what Judge Jones struck down was a requirement that a short statement be read in class that mentioned the phrase "intelligent design" twice. It also allowed students to look at a supplemental text on intelligent design titled *Of Pandas and People*. The students would be instructed from the standard biology textbook published by

Prentice Hall, but would be allowed to also read from the supplemental text if they desired.

Second, intelligent design is not just the latest modified attempt to introduce creationism into the classroom. Judge Jones and the media make it seem like the same people who promoted scientific creationism in the 1970s and 1980s are the same people pushing intelligent design now. That is not the case. None of the leaders of the intelligent design movement have been involved with creationist groups like the Institute for Creation Research or Answers in Genesis or Reasons to Believe. In fact, if you go to the websites of many creation groups, you will find they are often critical of intelligent design because it does not specifically identify a creator.

Third, intelligent design is much more than a refutation of evolution. It provides a positive model that can be tested. Judge Jones argued that "the fact that a scientific theory cannot yet render an explanation on every point should not be used as a pretext to thrust an untestable alternative hypothesis grounded in religion into a science classroom."

Scientists pursuing intelligent design are doing much more than just criticizing evolution. They are proposing new ideas that can be tested. For example, Michael Behe (author of the book *Darwin's Black Box*) suggests that molecular motors within the cell exhibit what he calls irreducible complexity. He shows that the bacterial flagellum requires numerous parts to all be present simultaneously for it to function. It is a testable model that other scientists can verify or refute using scientific data.

The ruling by Judge Jones won't end the debate about intelligent design. But at least when we debate its merits or flaws, we should get our facts straight.

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Stem Cell Wars

December 17, 2005

The political war over stem cell research is heating up as evidenced by two recent events in the media. For the last few weeks, Senate Democrats have blocked action on a bill that would allow the use of umbilical cord blood in stem cell research. Although the bill passed the House by a remarkable vote of 431-1, the democratic leadership in the Senate would not allow a vote on the measure. The bill was even endorsed by the Congressional Black Caucus due to the positive appeal from former basketball star Julius (Dr. J.) Erving.

Also in the news was the decision by University of Pittsburgh's Gerald Schatten to quit the human cloning project of South Korean scientist Dr. Hwang Woo Suk. Dr. Schatten cited ethical concerns about possible coercion in obtaining eggs from female project staffers. Dr. Schatten also demanded that his name be removed from an article he co-wrote with Dr. Hwang for the journal *Science* because he believes it used fraudulent photographs in the article.

Background

Stem cells are the basic cells in our body. They get their name from their similarity to the stem of a plant which gives rise to branches, bark, and every other part of a plant. Embryonic stem cells are the cells from which all 210 different kinds of tissue in the human body originate. As an embryo develops into a blastocyst, a few layers of cells surround a mass of stem cells. If these stem cells are removed from the blastocyst, they cannot develop as an embryo but can be cultured and grown into these different tissues.

Stem cells are undifferentiated and self-replicating cells that have the potential to become the other differentiated cells in our body. And that is why there is so much scientific and political attention being paid to stem cells.

The potential for stem cell research is enormous and intoxicating. Nearly 100 million Americans have serious diseases that eventually may be treated or even cured by stem cell research. Many diseases (like Parkinson's, heart disease, diabetes) result from the death or dysfunction of a single cell type. Scientists hope that the introduction of healthy cells of this type will restore lost or compromised function.

Moral Perspective

The moral problem with the research is that to obtain human embryonic stem cells, the embryo is destroyed. Embryos needed for human embryonic stem cell research can be obtained from three sources: (1) in-vitro fertilization used to produce embryos, (2) frozen embryos which are spare embryos left over from in-vitro fertilization, or (3) human cloning of embryos.

In addition to the moral problem is the scientific reality that embryonic stem cell research has not been successful. Although human embryonic stem cells have the potential to become any type of human cell, no one has yet mastered the ability to direct these embryonic cells in a way that can provide possible therapy for humans afflicted with various diseases.

Numerous stories are surfacing of the problems with human embryonic stem cells. One example took place in China where scientists implanted human embryonic stem cells into a patient suffering from Parkinson's only to have them transform into a powerful tumor that eventually killed him.

Often the media has not been telling the truth about embryonic stem cell research. So why hasn't the media accurately covered this issue? "To start with, people need a fairy tale," said

Ronald D.G. McKay, a stem cell researcher at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. “Maybe that’s unfair, but they need a story line that’s relatively simple to understand.”

What has been lost in all of this discussion is the humanity of the unborn. Proponents of embryonic stem cell research argue that an embryo or fetus is a “potential” human life. Yet at every stage in human development (embryo, fetus, child, adult), we retain our identity as human beings. We are humans from the moment of conception. We do not have the right to dismember a human embryo because it’s unwanted or located in a test tube in a fertility clinic.

Also lost in this discussion is the success of using stem cells from sources other than embryos. Successful clinical trials have shown that adult stem cells as well as umbilical cord blood have been very effective. These sources may provide cures for such diseases as multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, systematic lupus, etc. Some studies seem to indicate that adult stem cells create “fewer biological problems” than embryonic ones.

No moral concerns surround the use of human adult stem cells since they can be obtained from the individual requiring therapy. And using blood from umbilical cords of newborns does not raise any significant concerns because the newborn is not harmed in any way.

In the last few years, stem cells have also been found in tissues previously thought to be devoid of them (e.g., neural tissue, nasal passages). And human adult stem cells are also more malleable than previously thought. For example, bone marrow stem cells can produce skeletal muscle, neural, cardiac muscle, and liver cells. Bone marrow cells can even migrate to these tissues via the circulatory system in response to tissue damage and begin producing cells of the appropriate tissue type.

Human adult stem cell research is already effective and raises none of the moral questions of human embryonic stem cell research. Even biotech industry proponents of embryonic stem cell research believe that we may be twenty years away from developing commercially available treatments using embryonic stem cells.

All of this, however, seems lost on some in Congress who continue to push for additional funding of embryonic stem cell research. When democratic leaders in the Senate hold up a cord blood bill that will help people just to get a vote on an embryonic stem cell bill, they clearly have the wrong priorities. Adult stem cell research is already effective. Embryonic stem cell research is not.

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Is the World Flat? How Should Christians Respond in Today's Global World

Drawing from Thomas Friedman's book, The World is Flat, Kerby Anderson looks at some of the major new factors in our world which cause not only countries and companies, but also individuals to think and act globally. Most of the factors discussed are givens against which Kerby helps us to consider their impact on Christianity and the spread of the gospel on a global basis.

Introduction

Is the world flat? The question is not as crazy as it might sound in light of the book by Thomas Friedman entitled *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century.* His contention is that the global playing field has been leveled or flattened by new technologies.

In fourteen hundred and ninety-two when Columbus sailed the ocean blue, he used rudimentary navigational equipment to prove that the earth was *round*. More than 500 years later, Friedman discovered in a conversation with one of the smartest engineers in India that essentially the world was *flat*. Friedman argues that we have entered into a third era of globalization, which he calls Globalization 3.0 that has flattened the world.

The first era of globalization (he calls Globalization 1.0) lasted from when Columbus set sail until around 1800. “It shrank the world from a size large to a size medium. Globalization 1.0 was about countries and muscles.”{1} The key change agent in this era was how much muscle your country had (horsepower, wind power, etc.). Driven by such factors as imperialism and even religion, countries broke down walls and began the process of global integration.

The second era (he calls Globalization 2.0) lasted from 1800 to 2000 with interruptions during the Great Depression and World Wars I and II. “This era shrank the world from size medium to a size small. In Globalization 2.0, the key agent of change, the dynamic force driving global integration, was multinational companies.”{2} At first these were Dutch and English joint-stock companies, and later was the growth of a global economy due to computers, satellites, and even the Internet.

The dynamic force in Globalization 1.0 was *countries* globalizing, while the dynamic force in Globalization 2.0 was

companies globalizing. Friedman contends that Globalization 3.0 will be different because it provides "the newfound power for *individuals* to collaborate and compete globally."{3}

The players in this new world of commerce will also be different. "Globalization 1.0 and 2.0 were driven primarily by European and American individuals and businesses. . . . Because it is flattening and shrinking the world, Globalization 3.0 is going to be more and more driven not only by individuals but also by a much more diverse—non-Western, non-white—group of individuals. Individuals from every corner of the flat world are being empowered."{4}

The Flatteners

Friedman argues in his book that the global playing field has been flattened by new technologies.

The first flattener occurred on November 9, 1989. "The fall of the Berlin Wall on 11/9/89 unleashed forces that ultimately liberated all the captive peoples of the Soviet Empire. But it actually did so much more. It tipped the balance of power across the world toward those advocating democratic, consensual, free-market-oriented governance, and away from those advocating authoritarian rule with centrally planned economies."{5}

The economic change was even more important. The fall of the Berlin Wall encouraged the free movement of ideas, goods, and services. "When an economic or technological standard emerged and proved itself on the world stage, it was much more quickly adopted after the wall was out of the way."{6}

Thomas Friedman also makes a connection between the two dates 11/9 and 9/11. He noted that in "a world away, in Muslim lands, many thought [Osama] bin Laden and his comrades brought down the Soviet Empire and the wall with religious zeal, and millions of them were inspired to upload the past. In short,

while we were celebrating 11/9, the seeds of another memorable date—9/11—were being sown."{7}

A second flattener was Netscape. This new software played a huge role in flattening the world by making the Internet truly interoperable. Until then, there were disconnected islands of information.

We used to go to the post office to send mail; now most of us send digitized mail over the Internet known as *e-mail*. We used to go to bookstores to browse and buy books, now we browse digitally. We used to buy a CD to listen to music, now many of us obtain our digitized music off the Internet and download it to a MP3 player.

A third flattener was work flow software. As the Internet developed, people wanted to do more than browse books and send e-mail. "They wanted to shape things, design things, create things, sell things, buy things, keep track of inventories, do somebody else's taxes, and read somebody else's X-rays from half a world away. And they wanted to be able to do any of these things from anywhere to anywhere and from any computer to any computer—seamlessly."{8}

All the computers needed to be interoperable not only between departments within a company but between the systems of any other company. Work flow software made this possible.

Where will this lead? Consider this likely scenario. When you want to make a dentist appointment, your computer translates your voice into a digital instruction. Then it will check your calendar against the available dates on the dentist's calendar. It will offer you three choices, and you will click on the preferred date and hour. Then a week before your appointment, the dentist's calendar will send you an e-mail reminding you of the appointment. The night before your appointment, a computer-generated voice message will remind you.

The fourth flattener is open-sourcing. Open-source comes from the idea that groups would make available online the source code for software and then let anyone who has something to contribute improve it and let millions of others download it for free.

One example of open-source software is Apache which currently powers about two-thirds of the websites in the world. Another example of open-sourcing is blogging. Bloggers are often one-person online commentators linked to others by their common commitments. They have created essentially an open-source newsroom.

News bloggers were responsible for exposing the bogus documents use by CBS and Dan Rather in a report about President Bush's Air National Guard service. Howard Kurtz of *The Washington Post* wrote (Sept 20, 2004): "It was like throwing a match on kerosene-soaked wood. The ensuing blaze ripped through the media establishment as previously obscure bloggers managed to put the network of Murrow and Cronkite on the defensive."

Another example of open-sourcing is the Wikipedia project which has become perhaps the most popular online encyclopedia in the world. Linux is another example. It offers a family of operating systems that can be adapted to small desktop computers or laptops all the way up to large supercomputers.

A fifth flattener is outsourcing. In many ways, this was made possible when American companies laid fiber-optic cable to India. Ultimately, India became the beneficiary.

India has become very good at producing brain power, especially in the sciences, engineering, and medicine. There are a limited number of Indian Institutes within a population of one billion people. The resulting competition produces a phenomenal knowledge meritocracy. Until India was connected, many of the graduates would come to America. "It was as if

someone installed a brain drain that filled up in New Delhi and emptied in Palo Alto."{9}

Fiber-optic cable became the ocean crosser. You no longer need to leave India to be a professional because you can plug into the world from India.

A sixth flattener was offshoring. Offshoring is when a company takes one of its factories that is operating in Canton, Ohio and moves the whole factory to Canton, China.

When China joined the World Trade Organization, it took Beijing and the rest of the world to a new level of offshoring. Companies began to shift production offshore and integrate their products and services into their global supply chains.

The more attractive China makes itself offshoring, the more attractive other developed and developing countries have to make themselves. This created a process of competitive flattening and a scramble to give companies the best tax breaks and subsidies.

How does this affect the United States? "According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, nearly 90 percent of the output from U.S.-owned offshore factories is sold to foreign consumers. But this actually stimulates American exports. There is a variety of studies indicating that every dollar a company invests overseas in an offshore factory yields additional exports for its home country, because roughly one-third of global trade today is within multi-national companies."{10}

The seventh flattener is supply chaining. "No company has been more efficient at improving its supply chain (and thereby flattening the world) than Wal-Mart; and no company epitomizes the tension the supply chains evoke between the consumer in us and the worker in us than Wal-Mart."{11}

Thomas Friedman calls Wal-Mart "the China of companies" because it can use its leverage to grind down any supplier to the last halfpenny. And speaking of China, if Wal-Mart were an individual economy, it would rank as China's eighth-biggest trading partner, ahead of Russia, Australia and Canada.

An eighth flattener is what Friedman calls *insourcing*. A good example of this is UPS. UPS is not just delivering packages, the company is doing logistics. Their slogan is Your World Synchronized. The company is synchronizing global supply chains.

For example, if you own a Toshiba laptop computer under warranty that you need fixed, you call Toshiba. What you probably don't know is that UPS will pick up your laptop and repair it at their own UPS-run workshop dedicated to computer and printer repair. They fix it and return it in much less time than it would take to send it all the way to Toshiba.

A ninth flattener is in-forming. A good example of that is Google. Google has been the ultimate equalizer. Whether you are a university professor with a high speed Internet connection or a poor kid in Asia with access to an Internet café, you have the same basic access to research information.

Google puts an enormous amount of information at our fingertips. Essentially, all of the information on the Internet is available to anyone, anywhere, at anytime.

Friedman says that, "In-forming is the ability to build and deploy your own personal supply chain—a supply chain of information, knowledge, and entertainment. In-forming is about self-collaboration—becoming your own self-directed and self-empowered researcher, editor, and selector of entertainment, without having to go to the library or movie theater or through network television."{12}

A tenth flattener is what he calls "the steroids." These are all the things that speed the process (computer speed,

wireless).

For example, the increased speed of computers is dazzling. The Intel 4004 microprocessor (in 1971) produced 60,000 instructions per second. Today's Intel Pentium 4 Extreme has a maximum of 10.8 billion instructions per second.

The wireless revolution allows anyone portable access to everything that has been digitized anywhere in the world. When I was at graduate school at Yale University, all of us were tied to a single mainframe computer. In order to use the computer, I had to hand computer cards to someone in the computer lab in order to input data or extract information. Now thanks to digitization, miniaturization, and wireless I can do all of that and much more from my home, office, coffee shop, airport—you name it.

Biblical Perspective

Although futurists have long talked about globalization and a global village, many of these forces have made that a reality. At this point it might be valuable to distinguish between *globalization* and *globalism*. Although these terms are sometimes used interchangeably, I want to draw some important distinctions. Globalization is used to describe the changes taking place in society and the world due to economic and technological forces. Essentially, we have a global economy and live in the global village.

Globalism is the attempt to draw us together into a new world order with a one world government and one world economy. Sometimes this even involves a desire to develop a one world religion. In a previous article ("Globalism and Foreign Policy"), I addressed many of the legitimate concerns about this push towards global government. We should be concerned about political attempts to form a new world order.

On the other hand, we should also recognize that globalization

is already taking place. *The World is Flat* focuses on many of the positive aspects of this phenomenon, even though there are many critics would believe it may be harmful.

Some believe that it will benefit the rich at the expense of the poor. Some believe it will diminish the role of nations in deference to world government. These are important issues that we will attempt to address in future articles.

For now, let's look at some important implications of a flat world. First, we should prepare our children and grandchild for global competition. Thomas Friedman says that when he was growing up his parents would tell him "Finish your dinner. People in China and India are starving." Today he tells his daughters, "Girls, finish your homework—people in China and India are starving for your jobs."{13}

Another implication is the growing influence of the two countries with the largest populations: China and India. Major companies are looking to these countries for research and development. The twentieth century was called "the American Century." It is likely that the twenty-first century will be "the Asian Century."

These two countries represent one-third of the world's population. They will no doubt transform the entire global economy and political landscape.

Students of biblical prophecy wonder if these two countries represent the "Kings of the East" (Rev. 16:12). In the past, most of the focus was only on China. Perhaps the Kings (plural) represent both China and India.

A final implication is that this flattened world has opened up ministry through the Internet and subsequent travel to these countries. Probe Ministries, for example, now has a global ministry. In the past, it was the occasional letter we received from a foreign country. We now interact daily with people from countries around the world.

Last month the Probe website had nearly a quarter of a million visitors from over 140 countries. These online contacts open up additional opportunities for speaking and ministry overseas.

The flattening of the world may have its downsides, but it has also opened up ministry in ways that were unimaginable just a few years ago. Welcome to the flat world.

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"What's Dominionism?"

Mr. Anderson:

I heard you say on Point of View that your guest, Craig

Parshall, can speak on many issues. You were talking about that PBS person, Bill Moyers.

What's this "dominionism" thing? I went to Wikipedia and it doesn't sound like anything a true follower of Christ Jesus would want to be involved with.

I noticed that the May 2005 issue of *Harpers* magazine that Craig Parshall was talking about on the program actually used the term dominionism. I really think the authors in that magazine article and in the Wikipedia entry are misusing the term.

Dominion theology defines a small group of postmillennial Christians who are part of the Christian Reconstruction movement. They are trying to bring about God's kingdom on earth through government, societies, and cultures. That would not describe the theology or agenda of the members of the National Religious Broadcasters or the National Association of Evangelicals.

In fact, I can't think of a single prominent leader in either of these organizations that would hold to that theological position. Perhaps there is one that I don't know about, but it certainly does not describe the theology of NRB or NAE.

To put it simply, I don't think the term "dominionist" in the magazine or even in the Wikipedia entry is a fair description of the evangelical leadership in America.

Thanks for writing.

Kerby Anderson

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“I Have Some Questions on the Separation of Church and State”

Mr. Anderson,

I read your article on the Separation of Church and State and have a few questions for you. At the end of your article you wrote of an “‘open public square’ (where government neither censors nor sponsors religion but accommodates religion).” First of all, I’m curious as to whether you feel that the architects of the First Amendment intended for the protection of religion in general (as in Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, etc.), or for the protection of strictly Christianity, as many of them were Christians, or at least claimed to be Christians? In addition to the latter part of that question, do you feel it was added more to prevent the rights, morals, etc. of Christians from being infringed on by a future non-Christian president, or do you feel it was added in order that a Christian president did not infringe on the beliefs of those of other faiths? Secondly, I am wondering as to the purpose of an “open public square” in the context of religions other than Christianity. Ideally, how would you see something like that functioning?

Thank you for your questions about the separation of church and state. Let me try to answer them in order.

1. Did the architects of the First Amendment intend to protect religion in general?

Although the primary religious faith in the 18th century was Christianity, it certainly appears that the framers intended the First Amendment to be inclusive of all religious faiths. For example, in James Madison’s *Memorial and Remonstrance*, he says:

> *Because we hold it for a fundamental and undeniable truth, that religion or the duty which we owe to our Creator and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence.*

He seems to be defining religion as the duty we owe to our Creator. I would take that to apply to nearly any religion, not just the Christian religion.

2. Was it added to prevent the rights and moral of Christians from being infringed?

Some who ratified the Constitution did not even want a Bill of Rights, but others would not ratify the Constitution unless there were specific protections to prevent the encroachment of the newly formed federal government. The framers clearly stated that Congress shall make no law meaning that the federal government can't tell citizens what to pray, what to read, what to think, or even where to assemble. These protections apply to all citizens, not just to Christians.

3. What is the purpose of an open public square?

As I mentioned in my article, I believe that this would be a world in which all religious perspectives would be given an opportunity to express themselves in the public square. Although we supposedly live in a society dedicated to tolerance and civility (see my article on this topic), religious values are often stripped from the public square. This naked public square only seems to permits secular ideas and values rather than all ideas and values.

A good example of an open public square would be the Equal Access Act passed by Congress in 1984. Religious students should have the same equal access to school facilities as non-religious students. If a school allows the debate club or the Spanish club to utilize the school facilities after school, they should also allow students who want to start a Bible club

to have the same privileges.

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Video Games – Evaluating Them From a Christian Perspective

Grand Theft Auto

The best-selling video game in America last year was "Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas." The recent controversy over this popular video game is just another reminder of the deception of ratings and the need for parental direction and discernment when it comes to buying video games.

The game in question already has a bad reputation. The National Institute on Media and the Family described it this way: "Raunchy, violent and portraying just about every deviant act that a criminal could think of in full, living 3D graphics. Grand Theft Auto takes the cake again as one of the year's worst games for kids. The premise—restore respect to your neighborhood as you take on equally corrupt San Andreas police."{1}

Ironically what caused the controversy over the game was not its overt violence and sexuality. What caused a national stir was what was hidden within the game. Those playing the game (known as gamers) could download a modification of "Grand Theft Auto" that would allow them to see graphic sex scenes on screen.

Initially the distributor distanced itself from what hackers could do with their product once it was on the market. But that argument fell flat when it was found that the downloaded modification merely unlocked pornographic material already within the game. It now turns out that skilled players can unlock the pornographic content without downloading the key from the Internet. The game initially had a “Mature” rating. The Entertainment Software Ratings Board now requires that it be labeled “Adults Only.”

“Grand Theft Auto” has already been a lightning rod for controversy because it rewards players for committing crimes and engaging in dangerous and immoral behavior. Gamers can buy and sell drugs, steal cars, run down pedestrians, even feed people into a wood chipper. Nevertheless, the game has sold more than five million copies in the United States.

Who is buying this game? Some are adults buying the game for themselves, but a large percentage of the people buying this game are parents or grandparents buying the game for their kids or grandkids.

Columnist Mona Charen points out that the original concerns about this game surfaced when a Manhattan grandmother bought the game for her fourteen-year-old grandson. Then she was shocked to find out that he could modify the game by downloading material from the Internet. Charen asks, “So, a kindly eighty-five-year-old lady has no qualms about purchasing a gang-glorifying, violence-soaked, sick entertainment for her teenage grandson, but is shocked when it turns out to contain explicit sex? Wasn’t the rest enough?”{2}

In most cases, parents and grandparents are buying these games and need to exercise discernment. Many games are harmless and even can help stimulate the mind. Some are questionable. And others are violent and sexually explicit. We need to use discernment in selecting these games.

Benefits of Video Games

A recent article in *Discover* magazine talked about the perception most people have of video game players. It said this is "the classic stereotype of gamers as attention-deficit-crazed stimulus junkies, easily distracted by flashy graphics and on-screen carnage."{3} Yet new research shows that gaming can be mentally enriching with such cognitive benefits as: pattern recognition, system thinking, and even patience.{4}

One of the best-known studies (done by Shawn Green and Daphne Bavelier) found that playing an action video game markedly improved performance on a range of visual skills related to detecting objects in briefly flashed displays. They found that gamers exhibit superior performance relative to non-gamers on a set of benchmark visual tasks.{5}

What they found was the action video gamers tend to be more attuned to their surroundings. While this occurs while performing within the video game, it also transfers to such things as driving down a residential street where they are more likely than a non-gamer to pick out a child running into the street after a ball.

They found that gamers can process visual information more quickly and can track 30 percent more objects than non-gamers. These conclusions came from testing both gamers and non-gamers with a series of three tests.

The first test flashed a small object on a screen for 1/160 of a second and the participant would indicate where it flashed. Gamers tended to notice the object far more often than non-gamers.

The second test flashed a number of small objects on a screen at once. The subjects had to type the number of objects they saw. Gamers saw the correct number more often than non-gamers.

The third test flashed black letters and one white letter on a screen in fast succession. The one white letter was sometimes followed by a black “X.” Gamers were able to pick out the white letter more often than non-gamers and could more accurately say whether it was followed by a black “X.”

The researchers also wanted to know whether the superior performance of gamers was acquired or self-selected. In other words, do video games actually improve visual attention skills or is it possible that visually attentive people choose to play video games?

Green and Bavelier trained a selection of non-gamers on one of two video games. One group played the World War II action video game “Medal of Honor.” The other group served as the control group and played the puzzle game “Tetris.” The researchers found that after two weeks, the group trained on the World War II game showed a marked increase in performance over the control group.

The researchers therefore concluded: “By forcing players to simultaneously juggle a number of varied tasks (detect new enemies, track existing enemies and avoid getting hurt, among others), action-video-game playing pushed the limits of three rather different aspects of visual attention.”{6}

Video games can also train our brain to be more efficient. In the early 1990s, Richard Haier (University of California at Irving’s Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior), scanned the brains of “Tetris” players. He found that in first-time users, the brain requires lots of energy. In fact, cerebral glucose metabolic rates actually soar. But after a few weeks, these rates sink to normal as performance increases seven-fold.{7} In essence, “Tetris” trains your brain to stop using inefficient gray matter.

Types of Video Games

Let’s now focus on the rating of video games and the major video game categories. As we mentioned earlier, the video game industry is self-regulated, so we need to exercise discernment.

EC – Early Childhood (age 3 and older) – These games are appropriate for anyone who can play a video game and contains no inappropriate material.

E – Everyone (age 6 and older) – These games are designed for younger players and are the equivalent of a PG movie.

T – Teen (age 13 and older) – Generally these games are not appropriate for younger ages and are equivalent of a PG-13 movie.

M – Mature (age 17 and older) – These games are not appropriate for children. They may be rated as such because of overt violence, sexual content, and profanity.

AO – Adults Only (ages 18 and older) – These games involve excessive violence, sexual content, and explicit language.

There are a number of different types of video games.

Puzzles – Puzzle games are usually acceptable for all ages and generally are rated “E.” These games involve logic and spatial arrangements. The best known puzzle game is “Tetris.”

Strategy – These games may be as straightforward as “Chessmaster” or involve the use of tactical moves of troops or players such as “Advanced Wars.”

Simulation games – Some games like “SimCity” require creativity and advanced problem-solving skills. Others involve driving or flying simulations that can be relatively tame or highly offensive such as the “Grand Theft Auto” series of video games.

Arcade games – The classic arcade games include such favorites as "Pacman" or "Frogger." However, the newer arcade games may include games like the violent "Street Fighter."

Role playing games – This is a type of game where players assume the roles of via role-playing. Although these games may be less graphic, they often involve fantasy and even the occult.

Action games – These games most often have an "M" rating. Many of these action games involve point-and-shoot games that are especially dangerous.

Violent Video Games

There is cause for concern about violent video games. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, playing violent video games increases the likelihood of adolescent violent behavior by as much as 13 percent to 22 percent.{8}

A 2005 meta-analysis of over thirty-five research studies (that included 4000 participants) found that "playing violent video games significantly increases physiological arousal and feelings of anger or hostility, and significantly decreases pro-social helping behavior."{9} Another study has shown a relationship between playing violent video games and being involved in violent acts.{10}

Testimony before the United States Senate documents the following: (1) that violent video games increase violent adolescent behavior, (2) that heavy game players become desensitized to aggression and violence, (3) that nearly 90 percent of all African-American females in these games are victims of violence, and (4) that the most common role for women in violent video games is as prostitutes.{11}

One of the people speaking out against violent video games is Lt. Col. Dave Grossman, whom I have interviewed on a number of

occasions. He is a former West Point professor and has written books on the subject of killing.{12} He has also testified that these violent video games are essentially "killing simulators."

Grossman testified on the shooting in Paducah, Kentucky. Michael Carneal, a fourteen-year-old boy who had never fired a handgun before, stole a pistol and fired a few practice shots the night before. The next morning he fired eight shots and had eight hits (four of them head shots, one neck, and three upper torso). This is unprecedented marksmanship for a boy who only fired a .22 caliber rifle once at a summer camp.

The typical response in firing a gun is to fire at the target until it drops. Carneal instead moved from victim to victim just like he had learned in the violent video games he played.

The goal in these games is to rack up the "highest score" by moving quickly. Grossman points out that many of the games (such as "House of the Dead" or "Goldeneye" or "Turok") give bonus points for head shots.{13}

Does that mean that anyone who plays these games will be a killer? Of course not. But Grossman says that the kind of training we give to soldiers (operant conditioning, desensitization, etc.) is what we are also giving to our kids through many of these violent video games.

Ironically, the U.S. Marine Corps licensed one of these popular video games ("Doom") to train their combat fire teams in tactics and to rehearse combat actions of killing.{14} The video game manufacturers certainly know these are killing simulators. In fact the advertising for one game ("Quake II" that is produced by the same manufacturer as "Doom"), says: "We took what was killer, and made it mass murder."

Biblical Discernment

If we look back at the list of different types of video games, it is pretty easy to see that it is possible to find acceptable games as well as questionable and even dangerous video games in just about any category. That is why parental direction and discernment are so important.

The latest controversy over "Grand Theft Auto" demonstrates that the video game industry has not been effective at self-regulation. And children cannot be expected to exercise good judgment unless parents use discernment and teach it to their kids.

Paul tells us in Philippians 4:8, "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things." We should focus on what is positive and helpful to our Christian walk.

As Christians, we should develop discernment in our lives. See my article on "Media and Discernment" (www.probe.org/faith-and-culture/culture/media-and-discernment.html) for suggestions on how to develop discernment in your life and the life of your child.

Parents need to determine the possible benefits to playing videos and whether those benefits outweigh the negatives. Many of the games available today raise little or no concern. As one commentator put it, "The majority of video games on the best-seller list contain no more bloodshed than a game of Risk."{15}

But even good, constructive games played for long periods of time can be detrimental. Over the last few years I have been compiling statistics for my teen talk on media use. The number of hours young people spend watching TV, listening to music, surfing the Internet, going to movies, etc. is huge and

increasing every year. Young people spend entirely too much time in front of a screen (TV screen, computer screen, movie screen).

So even good video games can be bad if young people are staying indoors and not going outdoors for exercise. Obesity is already a problem among many young people. And good video games can be bad if they take priority over responsibilities at home and schoolwork.

Parents should understand the potential dangers of video games and make sure they approve of the video games that come into their home. They may conclude that the drawbacks outweigh the benefits. If their children do play video games, they should also set time limits and monitor attitudes and behaviors that appear. They should also watch for signs of addiction. The dangers of video games are real, and parents need to exercise discernment.

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"Is It True That Whites Have a Higher IQ Than Blacks, Per The Bell Curve?"

In *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life*, the authors maintain that whites have a higher IQ than blacks, but I would not label the authors racist. What do you think?

Thank you for your question. You deserve a longer answer than I can give you in an e-mail, but perhaps I can give you some perspective and let you read further if you are interested.

The Bell Curve (by Hernstein and Murray) derives its conclusions about IQ scores from the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT). Other researchers (e.g., *Inequality by Design: Cracking the Bell Curve Myth*) question whether that test and the assumptions made from developing a bell-shaped curve are valid. The AFQT probably best provides a test of the level of schooling not necessarily IQ. And the authors of Inequality believe there has been a good deal of statistical mashing and stretching in order to form the bell-shaped curve you find in the book.

The argument of the authors in *The Bell Curve* is that IQ is a better predictor of life outcomes than the usual measure of socioeconomic status (SES). One concern is that Hernstein and Murray define SES very narrowly (level of education, income, parents occupations). Each factor was given equal weight even though it is generally assumed that parental income has a much greater effect than parental education on a childs life outcome.

As I hope you can see, there is some question about the methodology and statistical analysis used in *The Bell Curve*.

So while we can perhaps agree that American blacks score lower than American whites on standard IQ tests, that may be due as much or more to SES.

This is the classic debate of nature versus nurture. I dont think *The Bell Curve* proves that most of lifes outcomes are due to nature.

Kerby Anderson
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Terrorist Attack in London

July 7, 2005

The recent terrorist attack in London once again reminds us that we are still engaged in a war on terrorism. For some reason we seem to forget this fundamental fact. The March 2004 bombing in Madrid was a reminder. The July terrorist attack in London was another. Yet there is abundant evidence that we still have not learned some fundamental lessons in our war on terrorism.

I was on two different talk shows (one as host, one as guest), and I was struck by the number of times I heard comments about bringing the terrorists to justice. But let me ask a basic question: is a terrorist a common criminal?

If terrorists are only common criminals, then biblically speaking, they should merely be dealt with by their host governments. In Romans 13, the Apostle Paul says, “he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil.”

Paul’s teaching on government shows that criminals are those who do evil and threaten the civil peace. Any outside threat to the existence of the state is not a criminal threat but an act of war which is also to be dealt with by the government.

In other words, criminals threaten the state from within, while foreign armies threaten the state from outside. In the case of seeking domestic peace, Paul outlines how governments will approve of good works, but that governments should bring fear to those who are wrongdoers.

When terrorists attack, we should not view them as criminals but as foreign soldiers who attempt to threaten the very existence of the American government or the British government. To borrow a phrase from President Bush, we should not try to "bring them to justice," we should "bring justice to them."

Another important lesson we must learn is the need to place our governments on a war footing. That is, there are certain steps governments must take if we are to truly win the war on terrorism. At the outset, we need to develop the mindset that we are fighting a war with radical Muslim terrorists (often called Islamofascists). We can't negotiate with them as some of the callers to my talk show suggested. They are enemy combatants willing to die for their perverted religious views.

Governments shouldn't negotiate with them or bring them to justice. Governments must fight a war on terrorism. This requires governments to press their advantages over terrorists in terms of military hardware, intelligence gathering, and technological applications. It also demands that our governmental leaders think clearly about what terrorism is and how it is being advanced by Muslim terrorists around the world.

The terrorist attack in London (as well as the bombing in Madrid) also reminds us of the role each of us can play in stopping terrorism. Each involved citizens multiplies the eyes and ears of the government. These attacks were not high tech attacks using nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. They used bombs and timers. An alert citizen might have discovered these bombs before they went off.

To prevent future attacks, we must pay attention to our surroundings and those around us. That doesn’t mean we need to be paranoid of everything and suspicious of everyone. But it does mean that we need to be alert.

One terrorist expert I interviewed said that a successful terrorist attack occurs when all the pieces of the puzzle come together. Terrorism is like a jigsaw puzzle with lots of pieces that all must be present for success. This includes funding, organizers, explosives, location, a plan of operation, research, a dry run, trusted people, etc. Alert citizens who report suspicious activity can help law enforcement thwart the plans of terrorists.

Countering terrorism in the 21st century will not be easy, but understanding, resolve, and alertness are key ingredients in our success. This is our generation’s challenge. We need to meet it with wisdom and boldness.

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