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[Bible - a conscientious journey into eco-loggy](#)

[Bastiat and Jefferson - a lawful shortcut to eco-nomy](#)

[Pros for the economic shortcut](#)

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[Cons for the economic shortcut](#)

[Diagram of the source and some potential matrix pathways \[100 words\]](#)

[An Overview of Sociological Regulations](#)

[An Overview of Man's Material Well-being](#)

Suggested Additional Readings/Videos

How People Change, Allen Wheelis

[The Real Adam Smith: Morality and Markets](#), Free to Choose Network, 2016

Hour One, **Morality & Markets**, explores Smith's life and role in the Scottish Enlightenment, his thoughts on empathy and how we distinguish right from wrong. French wine, Scottish whiskey, and freshly-baked scones all illustrate Smith's economic principles. True wealth is defined. We discover Smith's thoughts on the government's role in markets, his distaste for monopolies/crony capitalism in the form of the East India Company, and his thoughts on the American colonies.

https://www.freetochoosenetwork.org/programs/adam_smith/?id=morality_and_markets

The Tytler Cycle Revisited

In 1787, Scottish historian Alexander Tytler posited that every democracy goes through the same cycle in roughly 200 years.

- begins in Bondage
- spiritual Faith
- political Courage
- economic Liberty
- material Abundance
- social Selfishness
- moral Complacency
- psychological Apathy
- ends in Dependence
- then starts over with Bondage

<http://commonsensegovernment.com/the-tytler-cycle-revisited/>

Liberty, Justice and Goodness

*“Can the **liberties** of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is **just**: that his justice cannot sleep forever.”* Jefferson, [Notes on the State of Virginia, Query XVIII](#)

*Western philosophers generally regard **justice as the most fundamental of all virtues** for **ordering** interpersonal relations and establishing and maintaining a stable political society ... [and for] respecting persons as **free, rational agents**.* Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, [Western Theories of Justice](#)

*He hath shewed thee, O man, **what is good**; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to **do justly**, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* [Micah 6](#)

Mankind's [especially Western civilization's] preoccupation with the **individual** has been a blessing and a curse with both results arising from the same notion ... **freewill** ... which surrounds and defines the individual like some primordial aura which can be neither explained nor remove as if an emanation from some organic image of God in which the individual was created.¹ And yet, humanity's quest for **freedom as an end in itself** [as a destination] has proven elusive and troubling.

Perhaps, this is because freedom is not an end in itself [a destination] but only a means [a pathway] to some greater end ... the discovery and practice of **justice**. So what is justice? Although many words come to mind in attempting a definition, **order** [ie. the relatedness of individual things] seems to be a recurring theme. And not just temporary human order but lasting cosmic order.² Greek Stoics and early Christians alike sensed and spoke of this order as a **logos spermatikos** which initially generated and continuously sustains [[Col 1:17](#) says “holds together”] all things in a single universe.

So, at the risk of shocking our western sensibilities, we might argue that **freedom is nothing more than a psychological phenomenon, a perspective, a point of view, a feeling, a state of mind** ... which synergistically but reliably arises in the individual when and to the extent that the individual is **suspended in justice** ... a voluntary, conscious, persistent [both stable and dynamic], informative, vital identification by the individual with the network of all the other more

¹ Conversely, some claim that the individual, in order to fill the psychological and existential void which freedom represents, creates God in his own image attributing to God [among other things] the very freewill which the individual senses, cannot understand and fears.

² Western thought focused on justice as human order, but other cultures attributed entitlement to justice to non-human entities such as “mother earth”. Even today we see the notion of justice expanding to include animals and the interface between humans and their environment.

and less proximate individual elements of the universe.³ Where justice among the parts is lacking, freedom for any individual part is meaningless.

Finally, we might argue that in order to sustain freedom, the individual must⁴ continuously search the universe for a greater and continuous awareness of its *inherent order*⁵ [ie. its *justice*⁶] to which the individual must then conform ... to “do justly”. And that this search and conformation is the essence of *goodness* ... the progressive [ie. dialectical] discovery and articulation of justice into laws which can be cognitively grasped [known] and morally embraced [obeyed]⁷ increasingly conforming the individual to and uniting the individual with the rest of the universe [which includes the rest of mankind] so that liberty, justice and goodness are inseparably linked.

Foundations, Coherence & Dialogue

Foundationalism concerns philosophical theories of knowledge resting upon justified belief, or some secure foundation of certainty such as a conclusion inferred from a basis of sound premises. The main rival of the [foundationalist theory of justification](#) is the [coherence theory of justification](#), whereby a body of knowledge, not requiring a secure foundation, can be established by the interlocking strength of its components, like a puzzle solved without prior certainty that each small region was solved correctly. [Wikipedia](#)

Let’s continue our consideration of justice by asking, “how do we discern and express justice?”.

One way is by following the “things” in the universe back to its beginning ... to its self-justifying [and sometimes self-evident] *foundation[s]* upon which everything else rests. As we will soon see below when we discuss divinity, this is the approach of the Genesis writer, Aristotle, the

³ “It is manifest [ie.self-evident] that the eternal law of God is the sole standard and rule of human liberty [what about natural resources?] , not only in each individual man, but also in the community and civil society which men constitute when united. Therefore, the true liberty of human society does not consist in every man doing what he pleases, for this would simply end in turmoil and confusion, and bring on the overthrow of the State; but rather in this, that through the injunctions of the civil law all may more easily conform to the prescriptions of the eternal law.” Pope Leo XIII, [Libertas](#), 1888

⁴ The arguments for the individual’s mandate to search range from practical survival to divine mandate. See also John Erskine’s [The Moral Obligation to be Intelligent](#).

⁵ The universe’s assumed order is fully inherent only when its scope is fully inclusive. Thus the individual has an obligation of sorts to continuously expand his/her [horizon of interface](#) [both directly and indirectly] with the rest of the universe in a way which continuously replaces an [apparent order](#) [which is only logical given certain assumed existential boundaries] with a more inclusive order that is [at first] less apparent but which [later] more closely approaches the [inherent order](#) which prevails beyond all subsetting limitations.

⁶ Although western thought about justice has focused almost exclusively on interpersonal relationships, that is changing. We will consciously expand the notion to include any relationship between the individual and the rest of the universe. For example, according to [St Francis of Assisi](#), people have a duty to protect and enjoy nature as both the stewards [*nomos*] of God’s creation [*oikos*=household] and as creatures ourselves ... which school of thought might be called *Franciscan “eco-nomics”* although we do not think of his ideas using that term which we conveniently construe much more narrowly.

⁷ Whether knowledge comes before or after obedience in the successful pursuit of freedom is itself a subject of disagreement. See [John 8:31-32](#).

Apostle John [in John 1:1] and JRR Tolkien. But there is a problem with all attempts at uncovering foundations as Job discovered when God asked him:

"**Where** were you when I laid the earth's **foundation**? Tell me, if you understand." [Job 38:4](#)

Location [ie. the answer to God's question "where"] is only meaningful after foundations [and the universe] are established and humans like Job require a locus [more on that later]. So foundationalism [aka certainty and truth] can be difficult if not, by definition, impossible for humans.

And so we must often content ourselves with assuming that justice implies **coherence** in the universe which continuously connects the foundations to ALL the parts [no dangles]. ⁸ Thus, even without knowing the foundations, we can begin at any point and proceed towards the foundations with confidence by **relating** things to one another first proximately then progressively extending outward until we approach the foundations ... provided nothing is left "dangling". If anything is left "dangling", we must go back and find the point where our progression began to exclude some things and revise our way forward.

Some claim [and others fear] that by assuming "**everything is relative**" we discredit or destroy truth and certainty [as foundations are sometimes called] and promote an "anything goes" mentality ... raw and unfettered freedom for the individual. And others, like Macbeth, go even further and abandon their freedom in despair when their "dangers" appear insurmountable:

She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing. [Macbeth Scene V](#)

Divinity

*In the beginning **God** created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the **Spirit** of God was moving over the surface of*

⁸ Indeed, even foundationalists like Aristotle assume coherence as they logically regress backwards using cause and effect to trace the things of the universe back to the foundations. In this sense, foundations and coherence are not competing theories of justice but complementary aspects of justice.

the waters. Then God *said*, "Let there be light"⁹; and there was light. God saw that the light was *good*; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day. - [Gen 1](#)

"[T]here is something which moves while itself unmoved. ... Th[is] *first mover*, then, exists of necessity; and in so far as it exists by necessity, its mode of being is good, and it is in this sense a first principle. ... On such a principle, then, depend the heavens and the world of nature. ... We say therefore that God is a living being, eternal, most good, so that life and duration continuous and eternal belong to God; for this is God. ... We must consider also in which of two ways the nature of the universe contains the *good*, and the highest good, whether as something separate and by itself, or as *the order of the parts*. Probably in both ways, as an army does; for its good is found both in its order and in its leader, and more in the latter; for he does not depend on the order but it depends on him. And all things are ordered together somehow, but not all alike, - both fishes and fowls and plants; and the world is not such that one thing has nothing to do with another, but they are connected. For all are ordered together to one end, but it is as in a *house*, where the *freemen* are least at *liberty* to act at random, but all things or most things are already *ordained* for them ..." [Metaphysics Book XII](#), Aristotle

"There was Eru, *the One*, who in Arda is called Ilúvatar; and he made first the Ainur, *the Holy Ones*, that were the offspring of his thought, and they were with him before aught else was made. And *he spoke to them*, propounding to them themes of music; and they sang before him, and he was glad." *The Silmarillion*, Tolkien

We often think of a "dead end" beyond which there is nothing.

But for mankind there is also the inescapable thought of a "live beginning" before which there was nothing else ... and we call this "live beginning", this "nothing else" GOD ... the unmoved mover ... the One ... divinity. And from the One [singular] come the Ones [plural] and the heavens and the earth [the parts] which, despite the appearance that they exist separately [chaos], are somehow all connected [order/justice] in one great household [oikos] that is ruled over by the Ones who, thinking themselves free to reorder the parts, are continually forced to seek to discover and respect the first order of the One [the good] ... so that they may join in the eternal song that sustains the one life which all must share ... or else die.

Humanity, government, society

govern (v.) - late 1200s, "to rule with authority," from Old French gouverner "steer, be at the helm of, rule, command, direct"; from Latin gubernare "to direct, rule, guide"

society (n.) - 1530s, "companionship, friendly association with others," from Old French societe "company"; from Latin societatem "fellowship, association, alliance, union, community"
<https://www.etymonline.com>

⁹ "Dixitque Deus: *Fiat lux. Et facta est lux.*" [Vulgate] Our English word "fiat" implies the sovereign creation of something from nothing ... "*fiat ex nihilo*".

The unfathomable thought of divinity ordering the wider creation [Greek [logos](#)] notwithstanding, most of us [both individually and collectively] spend our conscious lives attempting to “manage” [Greek [nomos](#)] our interfaces with the more or less proximate cosmos ... especially with other humans.¹⁰ How we “manage” is based on our beliefs about [or knowledge of] the cosmos:

The problems of political **authority** and the **rights** and **obligations** of citizens were a major concern in the thought of the leading Greek Sophists of the late 5th and early 4th centuries bc. They distinguished between **nature** (*physis*) and **convention** (*nomos*), putting laws in the latter category. Law generally was thought to be a **human invention** arrived at by consensus for the purpose of **restricting natural freedoms** for the sake of expediency and self-interest. This view of law as **arbitrary** and **coercive** was not conducive to **social stability**, however, and thus was amended by Plato and other philosophers, who asserted that *nomos* was, or at least could be, based upon a process of **reasoning** whereby **immutable standards** of moral conduct could be **discovered**, which could then be expressed in specific laws. The dichotomy between the negative and positive views of law was never actually resolved. - Encyclopædia Britannica, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/nomos-Greek-philosophy>

At first glance, two options to manage ourselves and others are apparent: **coercion** and **cooperation** ... which we generally identify as **government** and **society** ... with the first having negative and the second positive connotations even though both involve a cost-benefit realignment of the apparent sovereignty [liberty] and self-interest [pursuit of happiness] of the individual participants. But what seems simple and discrete enough at first glance breaks down when we look deeper into the complexion of reality.

The perceived need to “manage” [ie. conform to and/or shape] other humans is understandable, since most of us are born, live and die as participants in various forms of **collective order** *vis-a-vis* one another [and the rest of creation]. As such our individual thoughts and actions, whether reflexive or intentional, discover changing contextual meanings as we enlarge or diminish our boundaries for interface with the **people and things outside us**. And although our ability and willingness to conceive and tolerate alternative meanings also **change** with those boundaries over the course of time and circumstance, we all eventually discover and/or accept certain statements about the collective order as **constants** which we thereafter assume are “**necessary**” without further reflection as “a measure of [economy](#) [Greek *oikos-nomos*] in psychic housekeeping”¹¹ ... that is unless/until something arises to make us question them *vis-a-vis* reality/nature/[ecology](#).

For example, a child tends to conform specifically or generally by accepting its parents’ authority as opposed to exercising its own volition which has limited contextual experience and expectations.

1. Sometimes conformity arises from fear of **failure** [including loss].
2. Other times it rests on **coercion** [be it non-punitive or punitive including deception, restraint, imprisonment, exile, etc.].

¹⁰ For a discussion of “[nomos, cosmos, logos](#)” read “Religion and Money” which can be accessed from the Religion page of the [MACRO2020 website](#). It presents a framework for better understanding why eco-logy comes before eco-nomy ontologically.

¹¹ This phrase is used to describe the individual’s “enlargement of necessity” [and corresponding reduction of freedom] by Allen Wheelis in “How People Change”: Chap III - Freedom and Necessity.

3. Other times it follows from a learned notion of **necessity** [arising from prior failure and/or coercion] as noted above.
4. And still other times it is not acceptance of authority but conscious, volitional **cooperation** [including greed, love, etc.].

The individual's motivational admixture of failure, coercion, necessity, cooperation, fear, greed, love, etc. is quite dynamic and extremely difficult to discern in practice. For this reason, it can be misleading and confusing to try to label a given manifestation of collective order as arising exclusively from a single motivational source

Perhaps, our preoccupation with the types of management [nomos] we actively exercise ... government versus society or coercion versus cooperation ... needs to wait until we gain a better understanding of the greater cosmic order [logos] in which we are being managed [passive voice] by nature.

Properly basic beliefs

To make our argument, we will set out certain **basic beliefs**¹² which we will use to shed light during our search for law and order. Whether these beliefs are **properly** basic is a legitimate question.

And one belief which demands special attention is the idea that the cosmos [in terms of the *logos* or natural order brought forth from primordial chaos] is somehow "good" [or at least predictable]. The Genesis creation story repeatedly asserts this and Jesus appeared to affirm it as well as to reserve this "goodness" to God alone.¹³

But this assertion has been [and is routinely] challenged by both history¹⁴ and human experience from the ecclesiastical Preacher¹⁵ to the would-be-king Macbeth¹⁶ to the philosopher Hobbes¹⁷ ... [notwithstanding the added frustration that "everything is meaningless" is a logically self-contradictory statement].

However, assuming the cosmos is somehow **good** is not all that comforting either, for it introduces the inevitable thought that **bad** consequences result from actions that do not align with the inherent order of the cosmos. And the suspicion that such consequences accumulate in degree and compound in deviation the longer they remain unacknowledged and/or unaddressed

¹² Properly basic beliefs tend to be either sensorily evident, incorrigible or self-evident. For more on properly basic beliefs see Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, [Reformed Epistemology](https://www.iep.utm.edu/ref-epis/).
<https://www.iep.utm.edu/ref-epis/>

¹³ [Mark 10:18](#)

¹⁴ [The Doors of the Sea](#), David Bentley Hart, 2004

¹⁵ "Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless." [Ecclesiastes 1 NIV](#), c.450-200 BCE

¹⁶ "[Life] is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." [Macbeth Act 5, Scene 5](#)

¹⁷ "In [nature] ... every man is Enemy to every man, there is ... continuall feare, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short. It may seem strange to some man, that has not well weighed these things; that Nature should thus dissociate, and render men apt to invade, and destroy one another, ... [but] the Desires, and other Passions of man, are in themselves no Sin. No more are the Actions, that proceed from those Passions, till they know a Law that forbids them; which till Lawes be made they cannot know: nor can any Law be made, till they have agreed upon the Person that shall make it." Thomas Hobbes, [Leviathan](#), 1651

makes [as Jefferson noted in the quote above] the terror of a delayed reckoning that much greater:

Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and everyone else, both slave and free, hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of their wrath has come, and **who can withstand it?**" [Revelations 6](#)

And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned ... and the time [has come] that thou shouldest **destroy them which destroy the earth.**" [Revelations 11](#)

After that brief introduction, let's begin our search ... with, perhaps, a new sense of urgency.

Lesson 1: Basic Beliefs

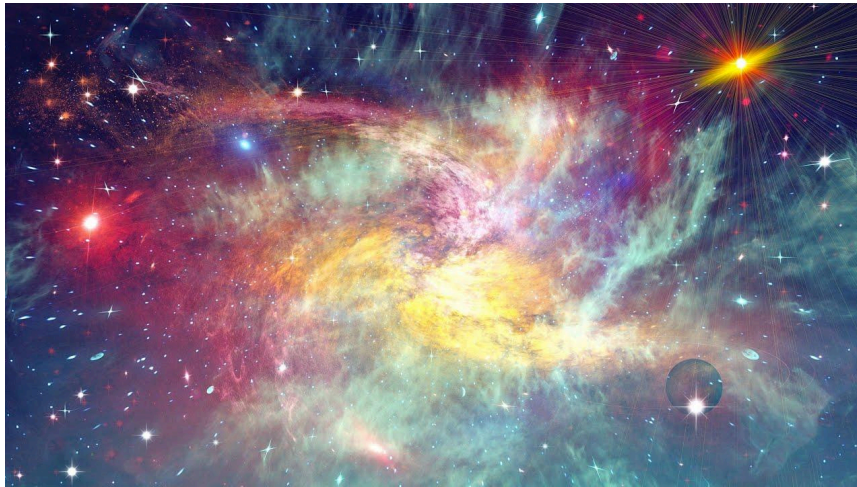
Keyword	Meaning
divinity	from chaos to connection ... what Aristotle called the “unmoved mover “ who/which cannot be comprehended but can be reasonably assumed as the source of the matrix linking all observable causes and effects backwards and forwards over time in a kind of ontological blockchain [to use a concept popularized by cryptocurrencies]
ECOLOGY	
universe, cosmos ¹⁸	a set of all things which moved from chaos to connection in an indivisible [albeit finite] whole where each thing has a place and purpose [albeit in a dynamic process] relative to all the rest which is “ good ” ... a trans-temporal network of all interrelated causes and effects set in motion and sustained by divinity ... science allows for the possibility of multiple universes ... implies an “ intelligent design ” which gives rise to the notion of “ responsibility ” [from the Latin <i>res+pono</i> = “thing+to put” = “the ability to put a thing in its proper place”] - Gen 1:1-2 , Isaiah 45:18 , 34:11
natural resources	“ things that exist without actions of humankind ” ... a broad reference to everything [matter, energy and life] not dependent on humankind ... to which humans must somehow “relate” individually and/or collectively - Gen 1:3-25
humanity	a classification/subset of the cosmos consisting of human things ... all the members of which interact with one another and with the natural resources according to a common set of regulations ... where humanity has a certain dominion [management/stewardship responsibility] over natural resources - Gen 1:26-30
regulations	higher powers over and abstractions of actual places, purposes and processes [logos] by which all things in the “household” [<i>oikos</i> - eco] are regulated [made “regular”] in the sense of interacting with and affecting one another in an ordained [if not always observable and/or knowable] matrix of causes and effects [aka order] ... eco-logy - Gen 1:31 - 2:3 , Col 1:17
ECONOMY	
individual	the indivisible element of humankind capable [among other things] of exercising conscience to discern regulations and act/manage accordingly/responsibly
rights	unprovable but reasonable [ie. “self-evident”] assertions of fundamental [ie. indivisible and inalienable] regulations which are common to members of certain classifications [subsets] of things [usually sentient beings] and are often called natural rights or human rights as opposed to civil rights or man-made laws
collective	all humanity or a subset of humanity [a superset of individuals] which share[s] rights and may [or not] share other things ... where “collective right” is the basis for explicit laws which imply “common force” [government] to be exercised in the human “stewardship or management” [nomos] of the “household” [<i>oikos</i> - eco] ... eco-nomy

¹⁸ [cosmogony](#) (n.) - “science of the origin of the universe”, from Greek *kosmos* “world, universe” + *gonia* “a begetting or birth” which invariably involves speculation about the movement from chaos to order.

Lesson 2: “Source” of Government

Question: “What is the source of government authority according to Scripture, Bastiat and the Declaration of Independence?”

The comprehensive [or ecological] approach ... based on fear, conscience and nature



divinity > cosmos > natural resources > humanity > regulations > individual

Keyword	Meaning
power	from Latin <i>potere</i> and French <i>pouvoir</i> meaning "to be able to do something"
fear	an emotion or feeling induced by perceived danger or threat that occurs in certain types of organisms, which causes a change in metabolic and organ functions and ultimately a change in behavior, such as fleeing, hiding, or freezing
conscience	a cognitive process that elicits emotion based on rational associations in an individual's moral philosophy or value system. Conscience stands in contrast to an emotion or feeling that arises from an association based on immediate sensory perceptions and reflexive responses.
nature	a Latin translation of the Greek word <i>physis</i> (φύσις), which originally related to the intrinsic characteristics that plants, animals, and other features of the world develop unconsciously of their own accord ... ie. unconscious development

The Bible simply and comprehensively declares that God “ordained higher powers” in a broad sense to “regulate” the cosmos [including both natural resources and humankind].

“Let every [individual] **soul** be **subject** unto the **higher powers**. For there is **no power but of God**: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore **resisteth the power**, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not **be afraid of the power**? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain:

for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for **conscience** sake.” [Romans 13: 1-5](#)

This passage identifies [fear](#) and [conscience](#) as two different [even sequential] motives for the **individual** to conform his actions to the “higher powers”. The notion of conscience is similar to another complete but [unconscious](#) and/or unarticulated record [as opposed to actual “knowledge” ala **scio** ¹⁹, [science](#)] of God’s regulations for humankind [and natural resources?] which is arguably identical across and common to all individuals [ie. “by nature”].

“For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do **by nature** the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their **conscience** also bearing witness ²⁰, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.” [Romans 2](#)

And once the notion of fear is made hierarchically relative by logically extending it all the way back to God [the highest power of all] ... “We ought to [fear and] obey God rather than men.” [Acts 5](#) ... we find the Bible appears to present us with the mandate and specific means for the individual to submit to God’s regulations through the chain of higher powers [including human government **whenever possible**].

Practical revelation of justice

*“For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we **learn by doing them**.” — Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics**

In [Meno](#), Socrates considers “virtue” and whether it can be taught. First he defines virtue as “the power of getting good with justice.” But when the question of whether virtue can be taught arises, the discussion quickly turns to an examination of knowledge, the doctrine of reminiscence and the immortality of the soul. In a dizzying dialogue, Socrates convinces Meno that “knowledge” is “right opinion” that has been “chained” to [and thus become usable by] the soul. The chaining process is recollection ... which involves making the unconscious conscious through action.

We might call this recollection/chaining process “learning by doing” and take note that it sounds like the practical revelation [movement from unconscious to conscious] of justice [and injustice] to the Gentiles through “doing” spoken of in the Romans 2 passage above.

Practical revelation by moving from doing to knowing is also affirmed by Christ in [John 8](#):

“If you continue in [ie. act on] My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

¹⁹ animus : character, intellect, memory, **consciousness**, often = mind.

ascio : to take up, adopt as one's own.

conscientia : conscience, **consciousness**, knowledge.

conscius : **conscious** of, aware of.

genitus : sired, begotten, **scion**.

nescio : to be ignorant, be unaware, not know, be unknowing.

praescio : to foreknow.

scio : to know, understand.

²⁰ Nature works through our actions to compress or enlarge conscience. See [the discussion on this below](#).

However, Christ speaks of knowing truth not virtue or justice. Furthermore, he introduces the idea [apparently distasteful to his audience] that freedom results from knowing the truth. This sounds similar to our claim above that liberty describes the state of the individual being suspended in justice.

Thus we might conclude that the “source” of government recognized by the Bible is God’s matrix of all “things” and the “regulations” which connect them to one another which become ours

- **by fear** [reflexive, unarticulated emotion],
- **by conscience** [cognitive discernment progressively articulated]²¹ and
- **by nature** [a comprehensive, impersonal and uniform codification across all individuals, fundamentally unconscious but made conscious [ie. learned] as we comply with and/or depart from it in our actions].²²

<<<<<<<<<<<<<

This empowered concept of the human search for law and order is unbounded and dynamic in its application. It rests on a comprehensive cosmos [both human and non-human] and is manifested to humans ... first reflexively through fear ... then cognitively through the vast [but often unarticulated] scope of conscience. Such a broad array of human interfaces with law and order is necessary because the law and order being sought is comprehensive [ie. biblical in scope] and must explain and sustain the entire logos which is ALL the direct and/or indirect relationships between humankind and the rest of the cosmos ... a very big task indeed !

What are the higher powers ?

Our focus here should be on a recognition by the individual that there is something which is [at least partly] outside of his/her complete control to which [s]he may appeal and on which [s]he may rely. This recognition imposes a “necessity” on the individual which by definition restricts the individual’s freedom.²³ Consider this thought about the role of higher powers from AA:

“Through the influence of AA and Twelve Steps, America has come to know the value of something called the **Higher Power** in the treatment of drug and alcohol addiction. For AA and the Twelve Steps treatment model to have a universal appeal, the Higher Power is never clearly defined and can represent anything outside of oneself. Valverde (1998) argues that the meaning of the Higher Power has been so diluted and imprecisely defined as to become meaningless, as

²¹ The link between conscience and cognitive discernment is examined by John Erskine in [“The Moral Obligation to be Intelligent”](#).

²² In [Meno](#), Socrates asserts that virtue does not come to man “by nature” but rather that “virtue comes to the virtuous by the gift of God” which, again, sounds like Romans 2 where God has written the law in the hearts of men. When we use the phrase “by nature”, we are primarily and most immediately referring to the unconscious presence or development of something within mankind as opposed to nature as a source outside man as Socrates was using the term with Meno..

²³ A reading of Allen Wheelis' defining thesis in "[How People Change](#)" presents freedom [the individual] and necessity [higher powers] as the threads that compose the fabric of our psychic existence with the boundary between the two being continuously redrawn in a joint interface between the individual and the rest of the universe. Wheelis denotes the continuous activity of drawing of this boundary as "**a measure of economy in psychic housekeeping**" invoking both the notions of the "*oikos*" [the external household] and the "*nomos*" [the individual as steward].

in the suggestion that we pray "To whom it may concern" (133). To become more inclusive as a treatment model, the definition can be whatever the addict decides, as long as it is **a reliance on something outside of oneself**. The Higher Power can be God or gods, Mother Earth, guardian angels, the environmental movement, or some special feeling.

"For those who have faith in the God of the Bible, it is better to move away from vague definitions of a Higher Power and accept the definition of God found in creation and the Scripture. An imprecise definition of God is not biblical and is harmful to Christian faith. It also confuses and discourages believers from taking advantage of the practical application of biblical teaching that can enhance recovery efforts."²⁴

By nature ... unconscious development

The individual conscious

Our *conscious interfaces* [fear and conscience] with law and order are fairly intuitive given our preoccupation with individual freewill. Indeed, this is an area in which thinkers of very different persuasions seem to find general consensus. Consider the following.

"**In [nature]** ... every man is Enemy to every man, there is ... continuall feare, and danger of violent death ... till they know a Law that forbids them; which till Lawes be made they cannot know: nor can any Law be made, till they have agreed upon the Person that shall make it."
Hobbes, [Leviathan](#), 1651

"Now since man is **naturally** inclined to avoid pain—and since labor is pain in itself—it follows that men will resort to plunder whenever plunder is easier than work. ... When, then, does plunder stop? It stops when it becomes more painful and more dangerous than labor. It is evident, then, that the proper purpose of law is to use the power of its collective force to stop this fatal tendency to plunder instead of to work. All the measures of the law should protect property and punish plunder. But, generally, the law is made by one man or one class of men. And since law cannot operate without the sanction and support of a dominating force, this force must be entrusted to those who make the laws. This fact, combined with the fatal tendency that exists in the heart of man to satisfy his wants with the least possible effort, explains the almost universal perversion of the law. " Bastiat, [The Law](#), 1850

"Primeval man was at the mercy of every fellow who was stronger and therefore could snatch away from him the scarce means of subsistence ... [Thus] **as human nature is**, there can neither be civilization nor peace without the functioning of the government apparatus of violent action."
Mises, [Liberty and Property](#), 1958

And who would dare to disagree? The **individual consciousness** seems to consistently [aka "naturally"] gravitate away from law and order ... which is why all these imminent sociologists conclude that law and order must be **imposed on it involuntarily from without by force** which is either consensually collective [eg. democratic] or non-consensually authoritarian [eg. oligarchic].

²⁴ <http://www.jbmyers.net/writings-on-addiction/the-bible-and-the-higher-power/>

So what are we to do with the Bible's apparent claim that law and order are somehow ours "by nature" ... especially when such a notion of the *unconscious development* of law and order in our lives seems to contradict general sociological observation and to challenge the basis for the very idea of individual freedom altogether?

The collective unconscious

Psychologist Carl Jung posited something he called our collective unconscious²⁵ which he described as follows:

"My thesis then, is as follows: in addition to our **immediate [individual] consciousness**, which is of a **thoroughly personal [ie. individual] nature** and which we believe to be the only empirical psyche (even if we tack on the personal unconscious as an appendix), **there exists a second psychic system of a collective, universal, and impersonal nature which is identical in all individuals**. This *collective unconscious* does not develop individually but is inherited. It consists of **pre-existent forms**, the archetypes, which can only become conscious secondarily and which give definite form to certain psychic contents."

— Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (London 1996) p. 43

"The existence of the *collective unconscious* means that **individual consciousness** is anything but a tabula rasa and is not immune to predetermining influences. On the contrary, it is in the highest degree influenced by inherited presuppositions, quite apart from the unavoidable influences exerted upon it by the environment. The collective unconscious comprises in itself **the psychic [and collective] life of our ancestors right back to the earliest beginnings**. It is the matrix of all conscious psychic occurrences, and hence it exerts an influence that **compromises the freedom of [individual] consciousness** in the highest degree, since it is continually striving to lead all conscious processes back into the old paths."

— Jung, *Collected Works* vol. 8 (1960), "The Significance of Constitution and Heredity in Psychology" (1929), ¶1229–230 (p. 112)

The acceptance of Jung's hypothesis would seem, at first glance, to render our common notions of individual freedom [and its implied corollaries] questionable if not meaningless. Afterall, if we are somehow "predestined" for law and order, why must we voluntarily and consciously search for then affirm them? Why not simply let them "come to us" ... or better yet, why not assume we are already "in sync" with them?

But our confusion may merely arise because our notion of individual freedom is fundamentally flawed. Consider this thought on liberty from WG Sumner's "The Forgotten Man"²⁶ :

"There is some sort of a poetical and metaphysical notion of liberty afloat in men's minds which some people dream about which nobody can define. In popular language it means that **a man may do as he has a mind to**. When people get this notion of liberty into their heads and combine with it the notion that they live in a free country and ought to have liberty, they sometimes make strange demands upon the state. ... **True liberty lies in the equilibrium of rights and duties, producing peace, order, and harmony**. As I have defined it, it means that a

²⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collective_unconscious

²⁶ <https://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/rbannis1/AIH19th/Sumner.Forgotten.html>

man's right to take power and wealth out of the social product is measured by the energy and wisdom which he has contributed to the social effort.”

Here Sumner appears to reconcile liberty and justice by merging them ... and seeming to assert that one cannot exist without the other.

Mises in “Liberty and Property” makes a point similar to Sumner by proposing that individual liberty is meaningful only in the context of collective interdependence [a seeming contradiction]:

“There is in nature nothing to which the name of liberty could be given. **The concept of freedom always refers to social relations between men.** True, society cannot realize the illusory concept of the individual’s absolute independence. Within society everyone depends on what other people are prepared to contribute to his well-being in return for his own contribution to their well-being. **Society is essentially the mutual exchange of services.** As far as individuals have the opportunity to choose, they are free; if they are forced by violence or threat of violence to surrender to the terms of an exchange, no matter how they feel about it, they lack freedom.”

Combining Sumner and Mises, individual freedom becomes a tangible process of “maintaining equilibrium by exchange” rather than an abstract “state of being”.

In his letter to readers on “Why is Liberty Good?” ²⁷, Graham Walker, Executive Director of the Independent Institute, makes an even broader and seemingly non-libertarian assertion about liberty by extending its required context beyond society to the edges of the cosmos:

“[L]iberty is not self-justifying ... [and] cannot be an end in itself. It needs a basis, and its use needs moral limits. ... Human beings are the pivotal dimension of a complex natural reality whose interdependent threads comprise a physical and moral **ecology** that is not man-made. The natural moral order is, rather, **an independent fact to which humans are accountable.**”

If we were to rephrase Walker’s key thought using some keywords from other parts of his letter, we could, perhaps, assert the following proposition:

“Humanity is the **economic** [*“nomos”=stewardship*] dimension of a complex natural reality whose interdependent threads comprise the physical and moral **ecology** [*“logos”=order*] that naturally orders and sustains ²⁸ the cosmos [*“oikos”=household*] and that once was and still is good ²⁹ [ie. made by God not man].”

>>>>>>>>>>

Economics [*oikos+nomos*] then is about management/stewardship of the earth by humans ... and, absent becoming tyrannical, it must conform itself to ecology [*oikos+logos*] which God has pre-established as the order which the faithful steward must seek, find and implement.

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In practical terms, **ecology** [which has not only humanity and the earth but the entire universe as its scope] provides both the foundation and the limits for **economy** [which concerns human stewardship of the earth]. Those who properly understand this “awe-full” truth will, perhaps, respond as Walker reminds us that Jefferson claimed to do when he said [as quoted above]:

²⁷ Vol.29, No. 2, Summer 2019, pg. 2

https://www.independent.org/publications/the_independent/pdf/TII_News_29_2.pdf

²⁸ “He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.” [Col 1:17](#)

²⁹ And [Jesus] said unto him, “Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” [Matt 19:17](#)

"I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just." ³⁰

In other words, humanity [including every individual] is only "free" to the extent that it is able to manage its actions [*eco-nomos*] in a way that is consistent with cosmic order [*eco-logos*] ... so law and order become known to us by our nature but through our experiences [both good and bad] of individual free choice.

The collective conscious ... moral sentiment

How do we connect the **individual conscious** with the **collective unconscious**? Perhaps, it is by voluntarily using one another to view and judge ourselves as equal individual members [even partners] in a shared human race. Consider the following passages in this regard.

"We can never survey our own **[moral] sentiments** and motives, we can never form any judgment concerning them; unless we remove ourselves, as it were, from our own [individual] natural station, and endeavour to view them as at a certain distance from us. But we can do this in no other way than by endeavouring to view them with the [collective] eyes of other people, or as other people are likely to view them. Whatever judgment we can form concerning them, accordingly, must always bear some secret reference, either to what are, or to what, upon a certain condition, would be, or to what, we imagine, ought to be **the judgment of others.**"
Adam Smith, [The Theory of Moral Sentiments](#), 1759

"[Their shared] habits, opinions, customs, and convictions are precisely the constituent elements of that which I have denominated manners. ... [And] the **manners** of the Americans of the United States are ... the real cause which renders that people the only one of the American nations that is able to support a democratic government ... Too much importance is attributed to legislation, too little to manners ... **the laws [are] very subordinate to the manners of the people.**"
[Democracy in America, Volume I](#) Chapter XVII: Principal Causes Maintaining The Democratic Republic—Part IV, Alexis de Tocqueville, 1835

Smith's moral treatise was twice translated into French as it swept Europe [well before de Tocqueville wrote] and then became the foundation for his [Wealth of Nations](#) published in 1776 [as the American Revolution began] which is recognized by many as the first major, systematic articulation of modern economic thought. So it is not surprising to see a similar theme expressed by both thinkers concerning the importance of moral sentiment in the community.

³⁰ Jefferson's actual words about God's justice are a lament concerning the state of slavery in America and continue as follows:

"... that his justice cannot sleep forever: that considering numbers, nature and natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation, is among possible events: that it may become probable by supernatural interference! The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in such a contest.—But it is impossible to be temperate and to pursue this subject through the various considerations of policy, of morals, of history natural and civil. We must be contented to hope they will **force their way into every one's mind.**" [Notes on the State of Virginia, Query XVIII](#)

As Jefferson abandons hope of temperance, he embraces the possibility that justice will somehow be forced into the minds of Americans [due to their status as human beings]. This recognition of the "unconscious development" of law and order resembles Jung's collective unconscious.

A conclusion of sorts

Perhaps, then, we may conclude that

- the **collective unconscious** [posited by the Bible and Jung] works impersonally and relentlessly as the **individual conscious** makes [and subsequently experiences the good and bad consequences of] free choices which shape
- a **collective conscious** [moral sentiment and manners in the community] which in turn includes/isolates and approves/condemns [ie. grants/withholds approbation to/from]
- the **individual conscious** [as envisioned by Hobbes, Bastiat and Mises] when it acts in ways which conform/deviate to/from the collective conscious.

Here the collective unconscious is the objective foundational ecology. The individual conscious is the subjective effective economy ... the **freedom** to conform to or deviate from the collective unconscious but, either way, to shape the collective conscious for good or ill which will eventually and collectively sanction ³¹ the individual conscious. When viewed this way, individual conscious [aka freedom] is at all times the servant of the collective ... for good or ill. Another way to state this might be that our "freedom" is always to or from sound ecology not our fellowmen.

The narrow [or economic] approach ... based on rights



divinity > ... > individual > rights > collective

Keyword	Definition
life	a characteristic that distinguishes physical entities that have biological processes, such as signaling and self-sustaining processes, from those that do not, either because such functions have ceased (they have died), or because they never had such functions ... individuality
labor	from Latin <i>labor</i> "toil, exertion; hardship, pain, fatigue, <u>work</u> " ... " what are our faculties but the extension of our individuality "
property	what belongs to or with something or someone, whether as an attribute or as a component of said thing or person. Depending on the nature of the property, an owner of property has the right to consume, alter, share, exchange, give away or destroy it, or to exclude others from doing these things ... " what is property but an extension of our faculties "

³¹ Sanction can mean "to allow, encourage" or "to punish so as to deter."

usufruct	literally “use fruit” ... the right to use or enjoy profit derived from a thing possessed without altering or diminishing it ... Jefferson letter to Madison, Sep 6, 1789
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[Bastiat's Law](#) and the [Declaration of Independence](#) follow a line of thought that is much narrower than the Bible because they jump **from God directly to the individual** ... bypassing what we have assumed stands between God and the individual ... ecology. They **reason**³² purely and simply as follows.

- God gives **life** directly to each individual person.
- That direct gift implies enabling rights/privileges for the individual
 - to use his faculties/**labor**/liberty
 - applied to **natural resources** [which unfortunately are not discussed in anything approaching sufficient detail]
 - to produce the **property** needed to sustain that life.

This approach bases everything on the legitimacy of the individual's claim to some variant of the following three self-evident, natural rights which logically progress from one to the next:

1. **life** - person, individuality
2. **labor** - liberty, faculties [applied to natural resources]
3. **property** - production, pursuit of happiness.

According to Bastiat and the founding fathers, once we recognize these three inalienable God-given individual rights, then a group of individuals can “collect” the protection and defense of these rights into a “**collective right**” [law] which uses the corresponding “**common force**” [government] “*to protect persons, liberties, and properties; to maintain the right of each, and to cause **justice** to reign over all.*”³³

Kathe logos ... catholic or pathological ?

The divine gift of life to the individual was foundational for both Jefferson and Bastiat in establishing the chain from God directly to the individual as the initial and indivisible building block for all ensuing sociological thought. However, that notion can easily be challenged by asking whether the gift was to the individual human or to human kind as a reproducing and stewarding species within the comprehensive ecological chain.

³² [Rationalism](#) [ie. gaining knowledge by reason alone] is the complement to [mechanism](#) which, when taken together, comprise what is known as Cartesian Dualism. This bifurcated approach to science and philosophy is discussed in detail in the essay “[Tracing Ecology ... to Ecomeny](#)”.

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1yRxroub6PfiiTiwPh5GdkIzaAwB_gpKHgrnOAdhTNQY

The main point for our present purposes is that although “reason alone” may appear to provide a clean and clear path to understanding, it often fails to allow for the subtle complications of the real material world which can quickly invalidate otherwise seemingly irrefutable syllogisms.

Rationalists only further obscure their fallacies by short-shrift reliance on notions like Jefferson's “[self-evident truth](#)” or O'Sullivan's “[manifest destiny](#)” to silence objectors and chill dialogue. See our earlier discussion of [properly basic beliefs](#) which are sometimes inescapable.

³³ Frédéric Bastiat, *The Law*, trans. Dean Russell, introduction by Walter E. Williams, foreword by Sheldon Richman (Irvington-on-Hudson NY: Foundation for Economic Education, 1998). 6/22/2019. https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/78#Bastiat_0180_58

Furthermore even Jesus, when first challenged by Satan, was simply asked why not turn inanimate stone into bread for life ... in an act of “divine technology”? Jesus answered [in a Socratic tone] that man does not “live” by bread alone but by “every word” [kathe-logos in Greek] of God. This answer ³⁴ clearly implicates the comprehensive ecology in which all the words of God are coequally and codependently expressed in creation and by so doing vastly complicates any simplistic sociological argument ultimately based solely on an allegedly self-evident divine right to sustain individual life via private property. [Matt 4](#)

Exchange is the basis for society

Nonetheless, once private property is established and accepted as the self-evident corollary of the individual’s God-given rights to life and labor/liberty, it would appear to follow that [with the addition of marginal utility and common money to motivate and facilitate movement] **society can be reduced** to little more than the voluntary exchange among individuals of their private properties and/or labor for mutual benefit ... using free markets for goods and services ... *ergo* commercial capitalism. What could be simpler in concept or more universal in application ... social order = capitalism ... or as Mises put it above: “*Society is essentially the mutual exchange of services.*”

Some carry this line of thinking even further and imply/claim that markets [ie. free exchange] define at least morality ³⁵ and even reality itself. ³⁶

However, as we have previously noted, both Jefferson’s and Bastiat’s self-evident formulations lack any theory of natural resources [and all the complexities that introduces for life in a shared and intergenerational physical world] which is a prerequisite for even a cursory ecological evaluation. ³⁷ But it is precisely this sociological reductionism [ie. lack of ecological perspective in their purely economic formulations] which

- accounts for their seemingly logical appeal and historically broad popularity,
- bothers skeptics [like [Karl Marx](#) or [Henry George](#) ³⁸] of the self-evident solutions which others have derived from their ideas and
- lies hidden in the shadows of all variations of [neoclassical economics](#) which carry with them the implication that, in some sense, given these few simple assumptions, “*liberty*

³⁴ Mankind’s eventual [inevitable?] rejection of Jesus’ answer is captured by Dostoyevsky’s [Brothers Karamazov](#) which [echoing the last chapters of Job] renders

- even questioning suffering as outright [Rebellion](#) and
- attempting to grapple with human finitude as the [Grand Inquisitor](#).

³⁵ Ed Stringham, [Embracing Morals in Economics: The Role of Internal Moral Constraints in a Market Economy](#)

³⁶ A notable champion of free markets is AIER’s Jeff Tucker whose 2019 article “Economics Is the Great Reality Check” takes this argument to its logical limit.
<https://www.aier.org/article/economics-is-the-great-reality-check/>

³⁷ Jefferson and Bastiat lived in a day when “frontier” still characterized the natural resource world. As a result, they could comfortably declare individual labor as the focus of divine rights unconstrained by natural resources. Add marginal utility [then fiat money] and soon everything is reduced to human perception ... value becomes a function of the human mind and ceases to exist in real things.

³⁸ For more on Henry George and neoclassical economics read “[The Corruption of Economics](#)”, by Fred Harrison and Mason Gaffney, 1994.

and justice for all” can be reliably determined by market forces if we will only elevate them above all other criteria [even conscience].

Furthermore, it is fascinating that this sociological conclusion [ie. that “*society is essentially the mutual exchange of services*”] implied by Jefferson and Bastiat was also reached by Mises ... even though Mises [contrary to Jefferson and Bastiat] reached it by assuming that “*there is in nature nothing to which the name of liberty could be given*”. The important point for our purposes is that adherence to an overly-simplified economic theory of natural rights is not the only way to reach a constructive conclusion that appropriately instituting private property and free markets can make valuable and intelligent contributions to a more robust, ecological understanding of how society is “best” regulated in our search for law and order.

Limited government

Here the source of government is ultimately God [like the comprehensive biblical approach], but **the path from God to the individual is direct and stands above all government** [unlike the Bible’s higher powers approach] ... so that the goal of government is limited to the protection and defense of individual rights [ie. to provide liberty and justice for members of the collective]. Consider this thought from Jefferson:

“Our rulers can have authority over ... **natural rights**, only as we have submitted to them. The **rights of conscience** we never submitted, we could not submit. We are answerable for them to our God. The legitimate powers of government extend to such acts only as are injurious to others.” [*Notes on the State of Virginia, Query XVII*](#)

Can you see how Jefferson’s logic has significantly narrowed the role of government [higher powers] to interpersonal justice?

This same limitation on government surfaces in Bastiat’s argument [at first confusing to many] that the purpose of the law [which he admits collectively “organizes” individual liberty] must never be to promote justice by reallocating resources but only to prevent injustice by securing private property ... a very comforting reassurance for those who already control the property.³⁹ This implication becomes explicit in Bastiat’s dismissal of any need for universal suffrage ... a *sine-qua-non* of any democracy:

“In fact, if law were restricted to protecting all persons, all liberties, and all properties; if law were **nothing more than** the organized combination of the individual’s right to **self defense**; if law were the obstacle, the check, the punisher of all oppression and plunder—is it likely that we citizens would then argue much about the extent of the franchise?”⁴⁰

Can you see how a simplified approach to law and order based on “individual rights” reduces the scope and sophistication of the Biblical approach which required the individual to exercise a broad range of faculties to deal with the more comprehensive task of finding and establishing law and order among the higher powers?

³⁹ https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/78#lf0180_head_031

⁴⁰ https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/78#Bastiat_0180_94

Right or responsibility/duty

responsibility - Latin *res* [thing] + *pono* [to put or place]; ie. to put the thing in its place

Another way to understand the limitations of the narrow approach to government is to observe that it is commonly explained based on “right” [liberty] and not “responsibility” ⁴¹ [justice]. The “right” focuses inwardly on the individual’s privilege to choose to act [or not]; whereas the “responsibility” focuses contextually on the results of the action by obliging the individual to act and to do so properly. This narrow approach corresponds to Bastiat’s notion that law is a negative [prevent injustice] not a positive [promote justice] concept. Once the scope of justice is widened from interpersonal interactions to the functioning of the universe, limiting “government” to the prevention of injustice rather than the promotion of justice becomes more difficult.

Pros and cons

The narrow approach implies the need for a **concept of “natural resources”** [ie the rest of the universe] to give contextual meaning to human labor and private property. However, the concept of “natural resources” is not developed and the narrow approach does not attempt to articulate or explain God’s regulations for the rest of the universe *vis-a-vis* humankind ... any more than the mere observation that birds can float in mid-air explains the laws of aerodynamics [much less physics and all the other sciences].

However, the narrow approach appears at first glance to work quite well when relating individuals to one another as they interface with natural resources. ⁴² Indeed, **the science [albeit dismal] of economics** is both elaborate and compelling. But once the buffering frontiers disappear and the practical and dynamic complications of ever more comprehensively relating human individuals to one another and the rest of the universe [both as individuals and as humankind] are added, difficult questions arise ... which ardent “economists” continuously attempt to solve [manipulate?] using their “quantitative tools” ... but which others who are less “invested” in increasingly incoherent economic theory eventually find require a more robust theory than the narrow approach which conventional economics alone can provide. ⁴³

For example, consider these questions about law and order by first using the narrow approach and then using the comprehensive approach. Do your answers change and, if so, why?

- Is a man’s right to labor to sustain his life unconditional or must his labor be otherwise compliant with the ecology which rules both natural resources AND humanity?

⁴¹ What Sumner called “duty” in the quotation above.

⁴² The attraction of this “apparent order” must not be undervalued. It is quite wonderful as far as it goes. However, it is imperative to understand the logical limitations in scope under which it appears to “work” and, if freedom and justice are to be sustained, to be willing to search beyond those limitations for an order which may seem [at first glance] to be less apparent but which is more inclusive and thus near to the inherent cosmic order.

⁴³ The sociological process by which economics [both capitalist and socialist] is currently being subjected to ecology is explained in the section below titled [“Why it matters - the role of paradigms”](#) and a quote from Ian Hodges’ [“Baptized Inflation”](#).

- If man has a right to what he produces with his labor in order to sustain his life, what about those who do/can not produce enough to sustain life [shortfall, borrowing] ... and those who produce more than they need to sustain life [surplus, savings]?
- Does the individual's "pursuit of happiness" justify extravagance and waste in the face of indigence and need? [Think French Revolution "let them eat cake" or the European settlers' wasteful slaughter of the buffalo herds which sustained Native Americans.]
- Since we share natural resources across generations, are there obligations to future generations imposed on us in our "use of the fruits" [usufruct] of our labor and the state of the natural resources we inherit and leave behind?
- What happens to a man's right to labor when that labor gives rise to real costs which adversely affect others [individuals or natural resources] that receive no benefit from the labor ... for example, creating a nuisance, fouling a stream or damaging parts of the common environment?

Lesson 3: “Scope” of Government

Question: “What is the proper scope of government according to Scripture, Bastiat and the Declaration of Independence?”

The comprehensive approach ... a “spectrum” across the ecological horizon



divinity > cosmos > natural resources > humankind > regulations > individual

Keyword	Meaning
frontier	the region beyond the boundaries of <u>civilization</u> and collective settlements characterized by the savagery and individuality of wilderness ... the uncivil ... The Frontier In American History ⁴⁴
labor	work of all sorts [including physical and mental] <u>done BY humans</u> using their bodily members and faculties in contrast to that <u>done FOR humans</u> by tools, animals or other humans [including relatives, friends or slaves]
tool	any object for its user to hold and/or operate which enables, extends and/or enhances the ability of the user to perform a task beyond what would be possible, safe or convenient with the unaided use of human bodily members and faculties alone ... although animals use tools, it is believed that only humans have the capacity to imagine how to use tools to make other tools
property	some thing [physical or incorporeal] which belongs to [or has a high probability of being found with] some other thing [ie. the "owner"] as an attribute or component thereof ... implying that the "owner" has a "right" [or high probability] to use, consume, alter, share, give away, exchange or destroy the property in a way that excludes others from doing the same ... can an individual human be “property” ?
commonwealth	property held and/or used collectively by multiple owners ... synonymous with "republic" [from the Latin <i>res+publica</i> = thing+public] ... something held and used

⁴⁴ "The larger part of what has been distinctive and valuable in America's contribution to the history of the human spirit has been due to this nation's peculiar experience [with its] frontier ... the transforming influence of the American wilderness [with] its [natural] resources and its free opportunities affording the conditions under which new people could create peaceful societies with new economic, political and social ideals." Frederick J. Turner, Harvard University, March, 1920

	for the <u>civil well-being</u>
<u>border</u>	geographic boundary delimiting a subset of the earth's surface claimed and/or maintained by a given <u>civil entity</u>
<u>colony</u>	from the Latin <i>colere</i> = to cultivate, till, inhabit, guard ... a group which migrates from an established civil entity to establish a new civil entity which remains more or less subject to the established entity

As we noted in Lesson 2, the Bible instructs us to approach the proper scope of government in an open-ended manner humbly accepting the complications inherent in comprehensively “regulating” an entire universe. Thus Christians are simply encouraged to be “subject to the higher powers” ... even to the point of accepting their slavery ... with no claim to an explicit theory of immediate, self-evident inalienable “individual rights” to guide and protect them.⁴⁵

“Submit yourselves to **every ordinance** of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as **free**, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. **Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.** For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.” [1 Peter 2](#)

Fear [ie. awe and reverence] supplemented by **conscience** enables us to navigate among and across the sometimes conflicting and unjust claims of the higher powers with the promise that we can **by nature** learn progressively more about the various “regulations” that order all things and in so doing establish and sustain a knowledge of the truth about our relationships with the more and less proximate cosmos [which truth sets us free].

What that in mind, let us turn to the Exhibits below titled

- [“An Overview of Sociological Regulations”](#) and
- [“An Overview of Man's Material Well-Being”](#)

and, by investigating the keywords above, have an open dialogue about how law and order might actually work in our midst. After than .. let's ask these questions:

- Can you see a place in the overview of sociological regulations where the use of private property and free markets based on the narrow view might “work” well to regulate things?
- Is it confusing for you to think that “private property” and “free markets” might be a God given form of “regulation” [among the “higher powers”] that is part [but not all] of the inherent order?
- Can “freedom” be a form of “regulation” or are the terms irreconcilable?

⁴⁵ A persistently troublesome idea is that the Bible admonishes slaves to be “subject to” their masters

The narrow approach ... a “focus” on economic injustice

***God > ... > individual > rights > collective***

Keyword	Definition
self-defense	the individual's limited right to use force to defend against the violation of his rights to life, labor and/or property [ie. to prevent injustice]
law	the collective organization of self-defense ... “collective right” ... a negative concept limited to the prevention [or redress] of injustice [“thou shalt not”] ... cannot be used to “organize” anything other than self-defense without “organizing injustice”
government	“common force” limited to the exercise of the collective right to self-defense [ie. to enforce the law] ... “cannot lawfully be used to destroy the person, liberty or property of individuals or groups” other than in defense
justice	a negative concept ... the absence of injustice ... “hurt no man”
efficiency	the satisfaction of one's desire with the least possible labor
plunder	the satisfaction of one's desire by coercing another's labor

Jefferson's and Bastiat's narrow approach has a clear, simple, systematic [if less comprehensive] and negative rationale for limiting the scope of law and government to the collective defense of person and property. As we have seen above in their discussions of [“Limited Government”](#), they both conclude that any functions by “government” outside this scope have no logical foundation or legitimate justification.

Bastiat identifies and examines two basic manifestations of scope creep [which he calls “**legal plunder**”] in limited government ... “**stupid greed**” and “**false philanthropy**”. ⁴⁶

Stupid Greed

“**Stupid greed**” is rooted in a *“fatal desire ... in the very nature of man—in that primitive, universal, and insuppressible instinct that impels him to satisfy his desires with the least*

⁴⁶ https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/78#lf0180_head_007 The logic behind these notions often eludes many Bible-based thinkers. Why?

possible pain ... to wish to live and prosper at the expense of others".⁴⁷ Instead of laboring to sustain their own lives, **some** individuals use the collective right and common force of law and government to seize and consume [ie. plunder] the labor and/or property of **others**. The acts of plunder by which this type of **injustice** occurs take many forms but always have these two things in common which allow the plunder to be identified:⁴⁸

- **they are not reciprocal** ... the privilege enjoyed by **some** is not reflected as an equal and opposite responsibility to extend the same privilege to **all others**
- **they are not scalable** ... if performed by an individual instead of by the government the act in question would be a violation of some individual's rights.

False Philanthropy

"False philanthropy" results in the same types of injustice as "stupid greed" but it **claims charity** as its motivation and justification. In other words, "the end justifies the means" ... and government can violate the individual rights of **some** if by so doing it promotes the well-being of **others**. Bastiat carefully and convincingly explains that law and charity are not the same ... because law must be limited to preventing injustice and any other use of government must, by definition, promote injustice.

"The law is justice—simple and clear, precise and bounded. Every eye can see it, and every mind can grasp it; for justice is measurable, immutable, and unchangeable. Justice is neither more than this nor less than this.

"If you exceed this proper limit—if you attempt to make the law religious, fraternal, equalizing, philanthropic, industrial, literary, or artistic—**you will then be lost in an uncharted territory, in vagueness and uncertainty**, in a forced utopia or, even worse, in a multitude of utopias, each striving to seize the law and impose it upon you. **This is true because fraternity and philanthropy, unlike justice, do not have precise limits.** Once started, where will you stop? And where will the law stop itself?"⁴⁹

- Can you sympathize with Bastiat's fear of "vagueness and uncertainty" ... of government without "precise limits"?
- What reassurances, if any, could you offer him [including without limitation the Bible's comprehensive approach to government]?
- Given this strict limitation on the scope of government, how can you expand the scope of government without the addition of more "rights" to those of life, labor and property?
- What other "rights" might a reasonable individual imagine that [s]he is entitled to?⁵⁰
 - How is a proposed right to a clean environment different from a right to an education?
- Does this "rights-based" approach to law and order echo any familiar themes from today's political diatribes?

⁴⁷ https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/78#lf0180_head_008

⁴⁸ https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/78#lf0180_head_021

⁴⁹ https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/78#lf0180_head_070

⁵⁰ Here are a few extra rights mentioned [and dismissed] by Bastiat: tariffs, protection, benefits, subsidies, encouragements, progressive taxation, public schools, guaranteed jobs, guaranteed profits, minimum wages, relief, the tools of labor and free credit. https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/78#lf0180_head_022

Scope creep

Question: "Has our current American government overstepped these bounds and given into legal plunder and false philanthropy?"

Because the Bible's comprehensive approach is not "systematic" and thus not helpful in limiting the scope of government, it is also of little use in identifying "scope creep". Indeed, it seems to imply that one should "pay tribute" rather blindly ...??? However, via the conscience it admonishes against "evil" and in favor of "good". Perhaps, this is why many religious people seem to be [and are dismayingly content to remain] clueless about the precise details of political and economic regulations which may have been designed and sustained by God.

Examples

Are these examples of scope creep? If so, why ... and if not, why not. Other examples?

- minimum wage and rent control laws
- quantitative easing and crony capitalism
- Dakota access pipeline under the Missouri River
- deficit spending [intergenerational theft]

Lesson 4: “Choice” of Government

Question: “In what sense and ways does the individual [do groups] choose to submit to government according to Scripture, Bastiat and the Declaration of Independence?”

The comprehensive approach ... foreordination and inclusion

*“When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe”
— John Muir*

divinity > cosmos > natural resources > humankind > regulations > individual > collective

Keyword	Meaning
sovereign	"great, superior, supreme," from Old French soverain "highest, supreme," from Vulgar Latin superanus "chief, principal"
choice	from French choisir "to choose, distinguish, discern; recognize, perceive, see," related to Old English ceosan "to taste, try"
conscious	[personal] awareness of an external object or something within oneself, exercising executive control OF the mind
unconscious	[impersonal] processes IN the mind which are never available to introspection but which always have an automatic and involuntary impact on behavior

As we have seen, the Bible commands us [**as humankind**] to submit to regulation ... while reserving to us [**as individuals**] the choice [using fear and conscience] of whether or not to do so. The dynamic tension between

- irresistible **sovereignty** [**unconscious** impersonal order] and
- inalienable **choice** [**conscious** personal action]

is the Bible's beating heart ... the progressive revelation of household order [*eco-logos*] through household management [*eco-nomos*] in the forms of stewardship, morality, freedom and community as the sovereign continuously, collectively and unconsciously impacts each of us psychologically producing [depending on whether we individually resist or submit] either

- an imperceptible but progressive densification of our moral sensibilities ⁵¹ or
- an imperceptible but progressive reorientation of our chosen actions. ⁵²

It is on this cosmic **ideological** stage that we, as individuals, encounter the **provincial, practical sociological collectives** [in the form of frontiers, families, tribes, sects, markets, states, etc.] through which we attempt to “manage” those parts of the world that are more or less proximate to us by defining, implementing and/or submitting [or not] ourselves to the

⁵¹ “But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go.” [Exodus 10](#)

⁵² “Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.” [Acts 10](#)
An extended example of reorientation is contained across various Biblical accounts of “marriage”: Gen 2, Deut 24, Matt 19.

various institutions of sociological regulation that will “govern” our actions ... **we “choose” our government.**

There are many practical considerations that constrain and color the idea that we ALWAYS⁵³ have a “choice” in the form and effectiveness of the various governments [ie. the sociological regulatory institutions] that rule us⁵⁴ ... such as locality, age, education⁵⁵ and property ownership as well as a host of ethnic and even genetic factors. We see them play out in familiar Bible stories in both the Old and New Testaments like

- Nebuchadnezzar and [Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego Daniel 3](#)
- Peter and the disciples before the Sanhedrin [Acts 4](#)
- early church governance [Acts 4:32-5:11](#), [Acts 6:1-8](#)

Can you identify some of the issues raised in these examples ... and how they were resolved?

Does the following quote help you identify the different forces at work in a Biblical choice of government?

"Let us put down now the cold, hard fact and look at it just as it is. There is no device whatever to be invented for securing happiness without industry, economy and virtue. We are yet in the empirical stage as regards all our social devices. We have done something in science and art in the domain of production, transportation and exchange. But when you come to the laws of the social order, we know very little about them. **Our [lower] laws and [sociological] institutions by which we attempt to regulate our lives** under the [higher] laws of nature which control [regulate] society [and natural resources] are merely a series of haphazard experiments. We come into collision with the [higher] laws and are not intelligent enough to understand wherein we are mistaken and how to correct our errors. We persist in our experiments instead of patiently setting about the study of the [higher] laws and facts in order to see where [not if] we are wrong. Traditions and formulae have a dominion over us in legislation and social customs which we seem unable to break or even to modify." Sumner, [The Forgotten Man](#), 1883

What is an appropriate “response” to this tension between lower and higher laws? Is that what “choice” of government is all about? In the end is our “choice” merely between **submission** [honestly seeking and voluntarily conforming] and **resistance** [failing to seek and being involuntarily compressed/hardened]?

Inclusion

“The man who lives in a small community lives in a much larger world. He knows much more of the fierce varieties and uncompromising divergences of men. The reason is

⁵³ For a breath-taking discussion of “freedom versus necessity” in the world of sociological regulation, read [“How People Change”](#), Allen Wheelis, 1973
<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/allen-wheelis-3/how-people-change/>

⁵⁴ [“Mises, Bastiat, Public Opinion, and Public Choice: What's Wrong with Democracy?”](#), Review of Political Economy, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 79-105, January 2005
https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1674482

⁵⁵ Feinstein and school kids on Green New Deal, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jEPo34LCss8>

*obvious. In a large community **we can choose** our companions. In a small community our companions are **chosen for us**. Thus in all extensive and highly civilized societies groups come into existence founded upon what is called sympathy, and shut out the real world more sharply than the gates of a monastery. There is nothing really narrow about the clan; the thing which is really narrow is the clique [which arises] ... for the purpose of guarding the solitary and sensitive individual from all experience of the bitter and bracing human compromises ... for the prevention of Christian knowledge.” — G.K. Chesterton, [Heretics](#)*

*“He is before all things, and in him **all things hold together**.” [Col 1:17](#)*

*“But God has put the body together, giving greater **honor** to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be **no division** in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.” [1 Cor 12](#)*

The hallmark of the comprehensive approach is inclusivity ... especially when it strains individual and/or collective imagination to the breaking point over painfully extended periods of time. All distinctions ... such as, for example, those between sacred and profane, natural resources and humanity, male and female ... arise and exist to **honor**⁵⁶ one another by “**part**”icipating together in an ever-more-inclusive order which is not of our choosing.

⁵⁶ In [“The Sacred Mirror”](#), eg. pg. 47, historian Robert Elder recounts the evolution of evangelical thinking and practice in the Deep South from 1790-1860 to examine how a primal need to sustain “honor”, which is by definition collective and inclusive, ie. between one sentient being and another [including God], gave rise to successive religious distinctions which resulted in sharp and sometimes violent social divisions/exclusions which, in turn and time, were thrust back together [in an inexorable dialectic] to reestablish new relationship in an ever-more-inclusive order as parts of the same universe.

The narrow approach ... hope and despair

divinity > ... > individual > rights > collective

[Bastiat's Law](#) and the [Declaration of Independence](#) present man's "choice" of government not as a **moral choice** between "higher and lower" laws, but rather as a **political choice** between hope and despair ... pleasure and pain. Let's see how they reason by looking at some Bastiat quotations. ⁵⁷

What is clear and what is lacking in Bastiat's and Jefferson's notions on how we "choose" our forms of government?

Bastiat on our "choice" of government

[The Choice Before Us](#)

"This question of legal plunder must be settled once and for all, and there are only three ways to settle it:

- 1. The few plunder the many.*
- 2. Everybody plunders everybody.*
- 3. Nobody plunders anybody.*

We must make our choice among limited plunder, universal plunder, and no plunder. The law can follow only one of these three."

[The Political Approach](#)

"When a politician views society from the seclusion of his office, he is struck by the spectacle of the inequality that he sees. He deplores the deprivations which are the lot of so many of our brothers, deprivations which appear to be even sadder when contrasted with luxury and wealth. Perhaps the politician should ask himself whether this state of affairs has not been caused by old conquests and lootings, and by more recent legal plunder. ... But the politician never gives [past plunder] a thought."

Why not? How do you deal with "past plunder" without more plunder? Restitution? Banishment? And how do we set things right AFTER plunder [whether legal or not] has damaged the fabric of society? [Shakespeare's Hamlet Act 3 Scene 3](#) is instructive. Conservatives, like Hamlet's uncle and now King Claudius, publicly complain about the rising tide of liberal "madness" which is spreading across the kingdom ... while privately repressing the need for repentance followed by restitution which alone can redeem forgiveness and restore social order.

CLAUDIUS, KING OF DENMARK [praying alone in his room]

O, my offense is rank, it smells to heaven,
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder. Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will.
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent,
And, like a man to double business bound,

⁵⁷ All quotes are from Frédéric Bastiat, *The Law*, trans. Dean Russell, introduction by Walter E. Williams, foreword by Sheldon Richman (Irvington-on-Hudson NY: Foundation for Economic Education, 1998). 6/22/2019. Click blue title hyperlink [if available] to see text.

I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offense?
And what's in prayer but this twofold force,
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd being down? Then I'll look up.
My fault is past, but, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? "Forgive me my foul murder"?
That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder:
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardon'd and retain th' offense?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offense's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law, but 'tis not so above:
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature, and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? What rests?
Try what repentance can. What can it not?
Yet what can it, when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
O limed soul, that struggling to be free
Art more engag'd! Help, angels! Make assay,
Bow, stubborn knees, and heart, with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
All may be well.

Claudius kneels.

Hamlet enters.

A Confusion of Terms

*"Socialism, like the ancient ideas from which it springs, confuses the distinction between **government** and **society**. As a result of this, every time we object to a thing being done by government, the socialists conclude that we object to its being done at all."*

What is the essence of Bastiat's distinction between "government" and "society"?

Socialists Want to Play God

*"To these intellectuals and writers, the relationship between persons and the legislator appears to be the same as the relationship between the clay and the potter. Moreover, even where they have consented to recognize **a principle of action** in the heart of man—and **a principle of discernment** in man's intellect—they have considered these gifts from God to be fatal gifts. They have thought that persons,*

under the impulse of these two gifts, would fatally tend to ruin themselves. They assume that if the legislators left persons free to follow their own inclinations, they would arrive at atheism instead of religion, ignorance instead of knowledge, poverty instead of production and exchange."

Does Bastiat's limit of the scope of government to preventing "injustice" also limit man's ability to "discern" and "act" on the universe's higher order [ecology] under which human law is mere stewardship [economy]?

A Fatal Tendency of Mankind

*"Self-preservation and self-development are common aspirations among all people. ... But there is also another tendency that is common among people. When they can, they wish to live and prosper at the expense of others. This is no rash accusation. Nor does it come from a gloomy and uncharitable spirit. The annals of history bear witness to the truth of it: the incessant wars, mass migrations, religious persecutions, universal slavery, dishonesty in commerce, and monopolies. **This fatal desire has its origin in the very nature of man**—in that primitive, universal, and insuppressible instinct that impels him to satisfy his desires with the least possible pain."*

Does this "fatal tendency" cease to be an issue outside of interpersonal relationships? If not, how can it be restrained and/or redirected outside of interpersonal relationships?

The Error of the Socialist Writers

*"...it is naturally to be expected that error, ignorance, despotism, slavery, and superstition should be greatest towards the origins of history. [but] **knowledge** appears and grows with **the passage of time**; and in proportion to this growth of knowledge, might takes the side of right, and society regains possession [regulation?] of itself."*

If we look "up" to the higher law [ecology], do we progress ... and if we look "down" to whatever the lower law [economy] allows, do we regress?

Jefferson on our "choice" of government

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, **Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed**,--That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, **it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government**, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."*

*"**Prudence**, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are **accustomed**."*

*"But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces **a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism**, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security."*

*“To **prove** this, let **Facts** be submitted to a candid world.”*

*“In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. **A Prince**, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. Nor have We been wanting in attentions to **our British brethren**. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their **native justice and magnanimity**, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to **the voice of justice and of consanguinity**. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.”*

Lesson 5: “Higher” Order or “Lower” Law ?

*“But there is yet another aspect in which [the principles of **law and order**] must be examined. It regards the domain [of the various united states] only as a possession, to be enjoyed either in common or by partition by the citizens of the old states. It is true, indeed, that the **national domain** is ours. It is true it was acquired by the valor and with the wealth of the whole nation. But we hold, nevertheless, no arbitrary power over it. **We hold no arbitrary authority over anything**, whether acquired lawfully or seized by usurpation. **The Congress regulates our stewardship**; the Constitution devotes the domain to union, to justice, to defence, to welfare, and to liberty.*

*“But there is a **higher law** than the Constitution, which **regulates our authority** over the domain, and devotes it to the same noble purposes. The territory [of the united states] is [only] a part, no inconsiderable part, of the **common heritage of mankind, bestowed upon them by the Creator of the universe**. **We are his stewards**, and must so discharge our trust as to secure in the highest attainable degree their happiness.”*

William Henry Seward's ["Higher Law" Speech](#), United States Senate, March 11 1850

In our search for law and order we have compared:

- the Bible's comprehensive "**eco-logos**" [household-order] approach to **cosmic order** with
- Bastiat's and Jefferson's narrow "**eco-nomos**" [household-management/stewardship] approach to **limited government** which derives from a narrow focus on “individual rights” rather than on the full measure of the “regulations” that govern the cosmos.

Both approaches use the terms “law” and “order” to indicate ideals to which we should pay attention and give respect ... but, as we have seen, the different perspectives concerning the source and scope of that “law and order” make a difference. One is the **“higher” cosmic order** completely and immutably given by God and the other is a **“lower” social law** [re]articulated from time to time by men ... the latter being an incomplete and thus imperfect [but also potentially progressive] reflection of the former. If [but only if] one keeps this vital distinction clearly in mind, the “lower” law can [with what Jefferson called “eternal vigilance”] be safely and virtuously used to bring a measure of order to our individual and collective lives.

Why it matters ... the role of paradigms

The devotees of Bastiat and the founding fathers might well say ...

“All this is well and good, but it really does not matter if we elevate our economic policies above some broad ecological notions what are admittedly abstract at best. Afterall, we are **free to choose** ... are we not?”

But, of course, it does matter ... and nobody is ultimately free to choose wrongly.

Any economy which departs [even with the best of intentions] from the ecology will sooner or later experience troublesome “**anomalies**” which it cannot explain. And as these anomalies grow in severity and/or frequency, the **old economy** will become incoherent and will sooner or later demand a **new economy**. How this dialectical process of change plays out in history is considered in fascinating detail by Ian Hodge in his book [Baptized Inflation: A Critique of “Christian” Keynesianism](https://www.garynorth.com/freebooks/docs/pdf/baptized_inflation.pdf) which is available online.⁵⁸

We will end with this warning from Hodge of the fatal [if gradual] falling away of even the best ideas if those charged with understanding and defending them **choose** to disregard what are at first seemingly insignificant anomalies ... or worse yet to promote them ... to grow complacent or even intentionally deviant in the unending search for law and order.

“In his crucially important book, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (1962), Thomas Kuhn describes the way in which a particular academic discipline changes its collective mind. These infrequent major revolutions involve an academic guild’s rejection of many of the truths of an earlier era, and the adoption of new insights that were considered taboo, or preposterous, by the masters of the guild prior to the revolution. This transformation, he says, seldom involves large numbers of the existing members who change their minds. Instead, they retire or die, and younger who have adopted the new viewpoint replace them.

*“Why do these revolutions occur? Kuhn says that they take place when bright people, who are either outside the guild or are too young to have invested very much in developing insights (or professional papers) that favor the existing outlook, begin to take notice of certain **anomalies that the guild chooses to ignore**. Perhaps it is a theoretical inconsistency. More likely it is some result of experimental inquiry which cannot be explained well by the existing world-and-life view of the guild, what Kuhn calls its **paradigm**. As more and more bright people focus attention on the anomalies, the older masters get upset. They charge younger men with heresy. They point to the “outsider” status of some of the innovators. But if the skepticism of younger men grows, the guild is ripe for a revolution.*

Then, seemingly overnight, someone puts forth a new explanation of the anomalies. He reconstructs the guild’s paradigms. A successful theory will retain as much as possible of the received wisdom, but the essence of the revolution is the new paradigm itself. The transformation takes about a generation. Then the guild settles down to do “normal science” —

⁵⁸ https://www.garynorth.com/freebooks/docs/pdf/baptized_inflation.pdf pg 201 book, pg 221 pdf

the drudgery, puttering, and "clearing up the doubts about the new paradigm" which characterizes most scientific activity most of the time." pg 201 of book [pg 221 of online pdf]

There can be NO DOUBT that **most of the blame** for the accelerating academic and public shift away from notions of justice based on classical economics in the form of capitalism [as introduced and explicated by the likes of Jefferson and Bastiat] must be laid at the feet of those proclaiming the virtues of classical economics who have tolerated and even embraced obvious and troublesome anomalies instead of ardently and honestly engaging in a more comprehensive and **ecologically oriented search for law and order**.

Post Script

"The intellectual skills bestowed upon [most of] us by our education are not readily transferable to subjects other than those in which we acquired them: [we may] remember what [we] have learned, but forget altogether how [we] learned it.

[Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning](#), Dorothy Sayers, 1947

"You lead me through the field of my own knowledge, and then by pointing out analogies to what I know, persuade me that I really know some things which hitherto, as I believed, I had no knowledge of."

[THE ECONOMIST: A Treatise on the Science of the Household in the form of a Dialogue](#), Xenophon, c.362BC

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" [Micah 6](#)

So where do "ecology" and "economy" fit into the scheme of things at [Northfield School of the Liberal Arts](#). This outline might help us see:

The tools we use	grammar	logic	rhetoric [dialogue]
The tasks we perform [oikos = eco]	study ecology [logos] [cosmic order]	practice economy [nomos] [individual stewardship]	
The results we expect	justice	mercy	humility

Northfield's vision and mission is

1. to equip [and train] every student with [and in the use of] **the dialectical tools** of the trivium
2. by repeatedly using those tools
 - o to cultivate, plant and harvest in distinct fields [including language, literature, math, science, arts and local gardens] as parts of **the ecology** in its broadest sense as the cosmic, inherently ordered superset of all things and people
 - o in order to understand existing statements of and articulate future clarifications to **the economy** in its broadest sense as human stewardship and management of the ecology
3. in such a way that each economist promotes **justice**, loves **mercy** and lives in **humility**.

Exhibits

Overview Exercise

event	unconscious schemas	conscious regulations
El Paso mass shooting 2019	liberty	racism & terrorism
	justice	firearms
	borders	crony capitalism
	colonies	schools and education
	frontiers	dictatorship and democracy
		[mental] health care
		illegal drugs & liquor laws
		democracy
		environmental exploitation
		central banking fiat credit
		foreign aid
		no further regulations needed

Sample Essay: [1200 words]

Proposition

To identify potential areas of and solutions to **scope creep** by any government, one must first identify and define the **source** and the **scope** of said government by constructing comprehensive and narrow overviews of **all the things and inter-relationships said government seeks to regulate** then looking for logical gaps or overlaps, illogical actions or omissions and/or unwanted or unexpected consequences to determine if/where/why the government failed to function as needed and if/how redress of the failure is possible.

Bible - a conscientious journey into eco-logy

God > universe > natural resources > humankind > Regulations [Ecology] > individual

Romans 13 requires the individual to be subject to “the higher powers” [ordained by God] which **relate and regulate all things** [directly and/or indirectly] in an orderly [Greek *logos*] universe [Greek *oikos/eco*]. Because the **ecology** must regulate the entire complex universe [as can be seen in the path above], it is difficult to articulate with completeness and precision which is why the Bible claims the individual must rely on two complementary [but not identical] human faculties and one universal cosmic force to assist him/her in making intelligent choices:

- **fear** of disobeying a regulation that is already known and
- **conscience** to guide beyond [as well as to discern and correct errors in] existing knowledge
- with the absolute confidence [or certain condemnation] that the complete and precise ecology is somehow unconsciously recorded and unfolding in humankind **“by nature”** [Romans 2:12-15].

And while the Bible admonishes humans to use their **cognitive powers of discernment** [ie. “come let us reason together” Isaiah 1:18] to “know” [in Latin *scio* = to know =~ science] those parts of the ecology with which they have reliable contact, it also warns against the danger of “leaning too much” on their “own understanding”. Thus fear and conscience remain indispensable faculties ... and nature remains an irresistible force ... by which humans must safely navigate the ecology [the matrix of all things and regulations] ... in order to determine and take responsible [and thus intelligent] actions.

Bastiat and Jefferson - a lawful shortcut to eco-nomy

God > ... > individual > Rights [Economy] > collective right [Law] > common force [Government]

Both Bastiat [in “The Law”] and Jefferson [in “The Declaration of Independence”] start with the premise that God’s gift of life **directly** to each individual “self-evidently” entitles the use of that gift as a shortcut to a government that looks something like this:

1. God gives **life, person and/or individuality**
2. from which follows **labor, liberty and/or faculties** [“For what are our faculties but the extension of our individuality?”]

3. for the purpose of production, property and/or the pursuit of happiness [“And what is property but an extension of our faculties?”].
4. When the individual’s additional right to use force to defend against the violation of any of these three fundamental rights [ie. to prevent injustice] is aggregated with all others’ rights to self-defense, a collective right [law] arises to use common force [government] in defense of individual rights to prevent injustice.

Although Bastiat’s and Jefferson’s compact and hard-hitting arguments are virtually identical and initially compelling, both lack completeness and precision. For example, neither provides a comprehensive overview of natural resources and humanity [although Bastiat mentions natural resources in passing as the objects which individual labor transforms into private property]. And Jefferson’s use of the ambiguous term “pursuit of happiness” is an obvious dodge of the burning question in revolutionary America of whether one individual can be the “property” of another.

Nevertheless, this shortcut with its implied emphasis on government limiting its function to assuring individuals of liberty with competition and private property with market exchanges appeared to work well as a practical matter in advancing man’s material well-being by

- decentralizing decision making,
- promising unlimited rewards for hard work and
- unleashing innovation.

As such, this shortcut [incomplete and ambiguous as it was and still is] quickly became [with logical and systematic reinforcement and extension from the likes of Adam Smith and Carl Menger] the basis for an economic system which [from the human point of view] could effectively “manage” [Greek nomos] the relationships among the individuals and natural resources in the civic “household” [Greek oikos/eco] ... which management system came to be known as “capitalism”.

Pros for the economic shortcut

The economic shortcut has the distinct advantage of facilitating a reasonably clear and relatively simple articulation of the government regulations needed to order civic life.

Furthermore, it has been proven

- to be generally reliable over time when followed and
- to have predictable, undesirable results when not followed due to what Bastiat easily identified as “stupid greed” or “false philanthropy” [both forms of what he called “legal plunder” arising from different motives].

For example, minimum wage laws and socialized medicine [manifestations of stupid greed and false philanthropy] clearly use the power of government to “organize” labor and health care rather than limiting government to “organizing” the self-defense of individual rights such as the right to work and to exchange one’s earnings for medical services. For Bastiat this meant the law was “organizing” rather than “preventing” injustice. The solution was for government to stop and to observe the limits on public regulation implied by the capitalist economic system.

However, Bastiat also recognized that IF these obvious departures by government are reactions to [or retributions for] more or less subtle injustices arising from other previous departures ... such as central bank promotion of fiat credit to suppress interest rates that subsidize capitalists and impoverish laborers ... then they will be hard to avoid without going back to redress the

accumulated inequities and imbalances arising from the previous departures. As Bastiat notes: plunder inevitably begets more plunder as a reaction [not a solution] to injustice.

Solutions

1. Both individuals and governments must strictly and fearfully observe ALL the principles articulated in and implied by Bastiat's and Jefferson's economic shortcut which are well known and have predictable results.
2. Diligence must be exercised to quickly identify and root out every special interest manifestation of stupid greed and false philanthropy in government.
3. When conscience indicates that persistent and serious "problems" have arisen which appear to dictate a need to depart from the existing practice of the economic shortcut, a ruthless search for and an honest exposure of previous, hidden departures from principles must be made and carried out to prevent plunder which will only beget more plunder.
4. If no previous departures can be found or if those found cannot be reversed, conscience and science [cognitive discernment] must be used to guide the individual and government in the search for a more accurate eco-nomic articulation [in the form of new principles] of the eco-logic God has ordained to order the affairs of men in the universe with a sustainable and peaceful balance between liberty and justice for all.

Cons for the economic shortcut

For all its benefits, the economic shortcut is nothing more than a "management" system for frequently encountered but arbitrarily selected parts of the ecology ... and as such it fails to comprehend the full scope of the required journey into ecology which alone can bring complete and precise "order" to the entire universe.

Today we see serious "issues" for both natural resources and humankind arising due to capitalism's limited scope, crude approximations and tolerated deviations [and there are many] from its own fundamental principles. And this brings us back to where we began: there is no substitute for our individual and collective use of fear and conscience in the unfolding face of nature [both human and non-human]

- to continuously test what we think we know,
- to relentlessly challenge what we suspect may be error and
- to prayerfully seek to understand more about the "higher powers" that govern our entire universe.

Diagram of the source and some potential matrix pathways [100 words]

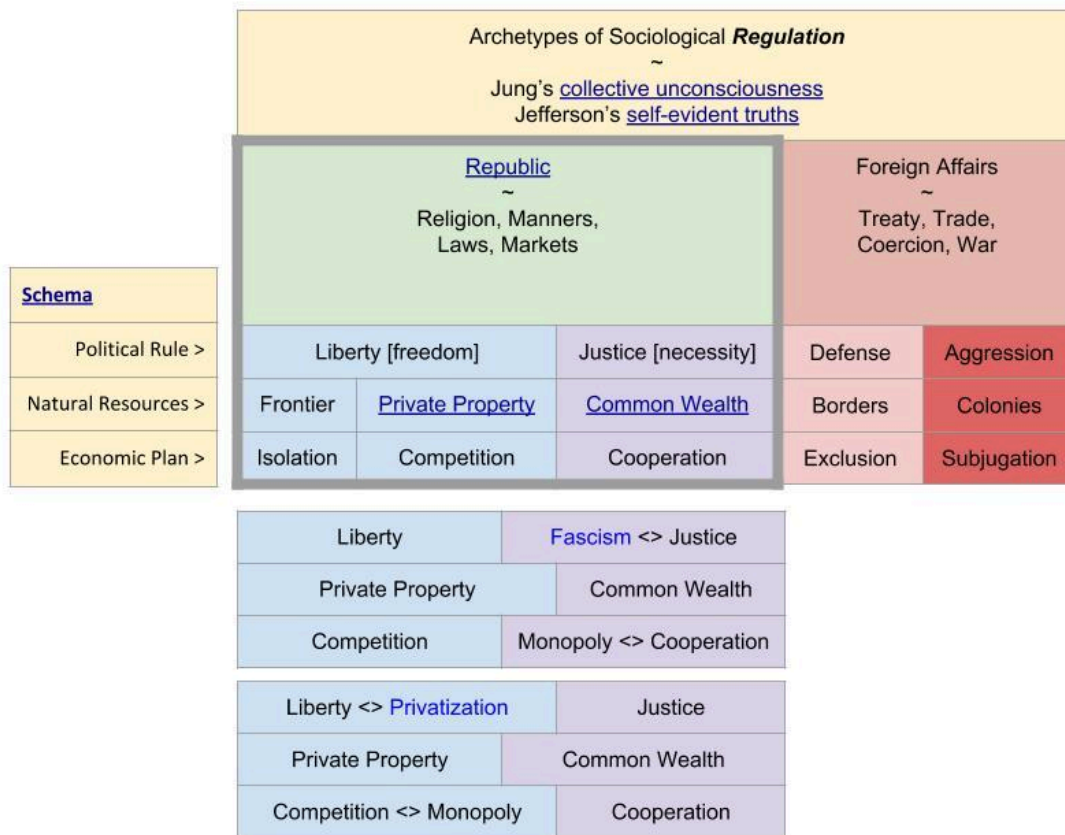
G O D >	physical THINGS with ATTRIBUTES >	ideological REGULATIONS connecting all THINGS in a single MATRIX >	Individual >	Collective >
	heavenly body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • black hole • star 	physical sciences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ climatology 	a physical thing with specified	a superset of individuals

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planet • asteroid <p>natural resource</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • land • mineral • river <p>life form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • human <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ gender ◦ age ◦ race • animal • plant <p>etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chemistry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ pollution • biology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ medicine ◦ zoology ◦ botany <p>social sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • religions • politics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <u>human rights</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ gender rights ■ property rights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frontier • private property • common wealth ◦ states rights • economics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ labor ◦ capital [aka tools] ◦ markets [aka exchanges] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ supply-demand ■ money ■ prices ■ competition <p>etc.</p>	<p>attributes</p> <p>eg. American</p>	<p>eg. America</p>
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An Overview of Sociological Regulations

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1ivjNTL8Z-VvDbI4urhGv7dszka1qMHJPDgp-ThPioVc>

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1ivjNTL8Z-VvDbI4urhGv7dszka1qMHJPDgp-ThPioVc>



An Overview of Man's Material Well-being

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1By_I5Bfc22wBSsgafEvBXnflfg4bNbD3ZYIy9iYi3Ts

