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From the Selected Works of Steven Alan Samson

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Resources—Politics and Resources for Economics

Steven Alan Samson, *Liberty University*



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BASIC ECONOMICS

The following is taken from an interview with Dr. Clarence B. Carson, author of Basic Economics.

DR. CARSON wrote this book and *A Basic History of the United States* after reviewing history, economics, and American government textbooks for 20 years.

"I'd say the textbooks have been secularized; they set before students materialistic, hedonistic, humanistic codes. Constitutionally limited government is certainly not emphasized; government power is lionized. Government is shown as the provider of all things, and the general providence of God is ignored." He explains that what have been called natural laws are what the Puritans refer to as the general providence of God. For example, that "the rains fall on the just and the unjust" is the result of natural law.

Although Carson wrote this book for high schoolers, colleges may also use it. He says, "Parts of it are written simply and directly and could be taken up at an even earlier age."

Carson has sought to provide an understanding of economy within a biblical framework. Scriptures are treated as very serious authorities. For example, justification of property goes back to, "Thou shalt not steal," and, "Thou shalt not covet."

A chapter is devoted to the argument that the existence of economics, or effective economics, and economy depends upon the existence of private property, then all the rest of the principles fall into place. Government is the necessary framework for a free economy.

The production and distribution of goods is the largest section of the book and deals with how we get what we want. He says, "Money has confused us about the nature of trade. All we really trade is what we produce for what somebody else has produced. Money today only has the value that we give to it."

Other chapters deal with: market and prices, competition and monopoly, elements of production, the role of the enterpriser, how wealth is distributed, international trading, etc. The economic systems of the past 1,000 years, beginning with feudalism, marketism, free enterprise, capitalism (which he distinguishes from wellfareism and communism) are all discussed in separate chapters. ■

Basic Economics is available in paperback for \$12.00 postpaid. A Basic History of the United States is available for \$32.50 postpaid. Order from American Textbook Committee, P.O. Box 8, Wadley AL 36276, (205) 395-4432.

A DISTINCTLY CHRISTIAN literature on politics and economics emerged in the post-war years and has multiplied during the past decade. A key role in this development was played by Dr. Howard Kershner, who launched the Christian Freedom Foundation in 1950 and edited *Christian Economics* during most of its 25 years of publication. It is unfortunate that it is no longer being published. Sadly neglected by the historians of the modern conservative movement, *Christian Economics* was a fruitful outlet for a rising generation of conservative Christian and free market writers. Collections of Dr. Kershner's books and papers are now housed at George Fox College and the University of Oregon.

Other outlets, not avowedly Christian but founded in the same decade include *The Freeman* (Foundation for Economic Education, 30 South Broadway, Irvington-on-Hudson NY 10533), *National Review* (see page 27), and *Intercollegiate Review* (Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 14 South Bryn Mawr Avenue, Bryn Mawr PA 19010). These excellent sources of political and economic commentary, along with *American Spectator* (1101 N. Highland St., Arlington VA 22210. Trial subscription, \$14.95, 10 issues. Subscription, \$27.00/year, 12 issues.) and *Chronicles* (Rockford Institute, 934 N. Main St., Rockford IL 61103. Subscription, \$21.00/year, 12 issues.) continue to have a place of importance in conservative circles.

The growing source of Christian literature in economics now includes some comprehensive

introductory textbooks. Tom Rose, who teaches economics at Grove City College, has written a pair of textbooks entitled *Economics: Principles and Policy from a Christian Perspective* and *Economics: The American Economy from a Christian Perspective* (American Enterprise Publications, RD 6, Box 6690, Mercer PA 16137, 412-748-3726. Each book is \$19.95. Instructor's manual for each book, \$7.00. Postage, \$1.50 for first book; 50 cents for each additional book. Quantity discounts available.). In the second volume, the author deals with some of the larger issues of macroeconomics including labor unions, tax policy, money, banking, international trade, and economic development. Additionally, he examines the implications of government spending in education, welfare, and energy, as well as biblical alternatives. In a more popular vein is *Biblical Economics in Comics* by Vic Lockman (see p. 26). Two recent additions to this field are written by widely published historians and commentators. Clarence Carson's book *Basic Economics* (see p. 26) is now in print, and Russell Kirk's new economics textbook, *Work and Prosperity*, is due to be published by A Beka Books this March (A Beka Books, Box 18000, Pensacola FL 33523-9160, 904-478-8933, \$14.60 postpaid.). ■

Steven Alan Samson, Ph.D., teaches history and political science at Indiana Wesleyan College in Marion, Indiana. He and his wife plan to home school their 5-year-old son.

RESOURCES FOR ECONOMICS

by Dr. Steven Alan Samson

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IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION WE want to have a biblical philosophy, content and methodology to produce Christian character in our children.

Our philosophy of government asks the question, "Who or what is sovereign?" There are only three options in answer to this question: God, the state, or the individual. If we believe that God is sovereign, our content and methods should produce in our students' character a recognition of that sovereignty, dependence on Him, obedience to Him, and non-dependence on externals. This godly character is the basis of true leadership.

If, however, we believe there is no God, or if we have not known His reality in our lives, then we are left with the other two options: the state or the individual. If we decide that the state is sovereign, producing either socialism or tyranny, then our education will produce a character of dependence upon external things and obedience, ultimately, to the state.

If we believe that the individual is sovereign, producing anarchy, then our education will produce a character that is ungoverned by anything except self, but in need of external control. Civil government will be seen as needless, even evil.

The fruit of the Spirit is self-control. The individual is to govern or control himself according to God's ways and laws.

In any society such as a family, classroom, church or nation, the result of self-governing individual character is peace and order instead of anarchy, and liberty instead of slavery. The greater the depth of individual Christian character in a society, the greater the liberty which can be enjoyed without danger of disintegration.

To sustain liberty in a nation, therefore, we must strive for character in our children which is

self-governed (godly), self-educating (intelligent), productive (responsible), able to reason based on biblical understanding (truly literate), and which recognizes servanthood as the basis of true authority (leadership). The consequence of this character, and the resultant liberty in a nation, is economic expansion as well. ■

Bill Burtness, missionary for Youth with a Mission in Urbana, Illinois, wrote the Judah Bible Curriculum, presenting the Bible in view of God's sovereignty, and teaching a biblical philosophy of government. The methods used help the student develop his ability to reason from cause to effect, to research the Bible, and to apply it to his own life and society. For information, write Judah Bible Curriculum, Box 122, Urbana IL 61801, or see ad on page 46.

TEACHING THE BIBLICAL PHILOSOPHY OF GOVERNMENT

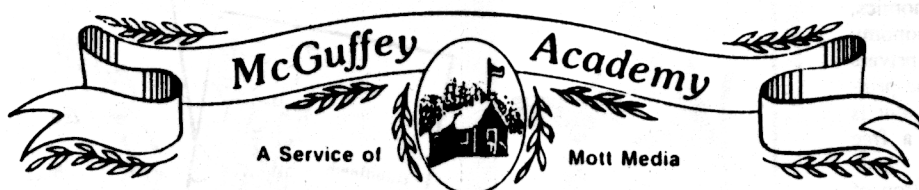
by Bill Burtness

Resources—Politics

by Dr. Steven Alan Samson

CHRISTIAN LITERATURE in the field of political science is generally topical. Currently the most comprehensive works from a Christian viewpoint, other than high school civics texts, are *God and Caesar: Christian Faith and Political Action* (1984) by John Eidsmoe (American Vision, Box 720515, Atlanta GA 30328, \$10.95 postpaid.) and the three volumes of *God and Government* (1982-1986) by Gary DeMar (American Vision, Box 720515, Atlanta GA 30328, 404-988-0555, \$38.50 postpaid. Volumes also sold separately.). The latter is a compilation of separate lessons along with questions for discussion. Its value to home educators is enhanced by its bibliographies of sources, including newsletters, for further reading and study. My political science students have responded very well to the wide-ranging Eidsmoe volume as well as to two brief volumes on economics and politics, *The Law* by Frederic Bastiat (see p. 30) and *Economics in One Lesson* by Henry Hazlitt, both of which are available from the Foundation for Economic Education (30 South Broadway, Irvington-on-Hudson NY 10533, 914-591-7230, \$6.95 postpaid.). Worth noting are more topical works such as *Bringing in the Sheaves: Transforming Poverty into Productivity* (1985) and *Grand Illusions: The Legacy of Planned Parenthood* (1988), both by George Grant (Wolgemuth & Hyatt, Box 1941, Brentwood TN 37027, 615-371-1210. Reg. price, \$9.95 each, plus UPS shipping; 50% discount for home schoolers.).

The deepening and broadening of Christian literature in these areas is indicated by the increasing attention given to the development of an explicitly biblical world view. ■



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