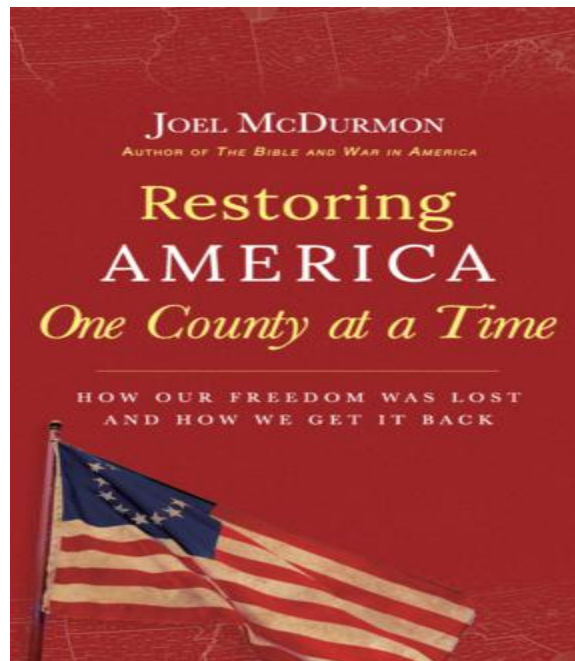


# Restoring America One County at a Time

How Our Freedom Was Lost and How We Get It Back



## Study Guide

Prepared for  
Institute on the Constitution classes

Book by Dr. Joel McDurmon

Guide by Barry Sheets, Executive Director  
Institute for Principled Policy

This study guide is to assist students to identify and understand the main concepts put forward in the book *“Restoring America One County at a Time: How Our Freedom was Lost and How We Get It Back”* by Dr. Joel McDurmon, published by American Vision Press, copyright 2012.

This guide is not intended to be a “Cliffs Notes” version of the material. Please read the entire assignments for each chapter in order to obtain the most benefit.

Neither Dr. McDurmon, American Vision Press, Institute on the Constitution or any other entity is responsible for the content of this guide. I take full responsibility for any errors, omissions or statements that may later be found false (and pray that there are none).

It is my hope that each student will, after studying this material, find that there has been created in their minds a “brushfire of freedom”\* that will help them to prevail over the threats to that freedom that are currently the spirit of the age.

Blessings of Liberty,

Barry Sheets

\*“It does not take a majority to prevail...but rather an irate, tireless minority, keen on setting brushfires of freedom in the minds of men.” —Samuel Adams, founder and patriot.

# Reading Assignments

Each week students will be asked to complete the reading of one chapter of the work. The course is designed to accommodate a twelve-week reading schedule. Although there are weeks when the page count will be challenging, the hope is that this study guide will make that task less arduous and more rewarding.

Week 1	Preface, Introduction, Chapter 1: Education	Pages: vii-40 Study Guide pages: 4-5
Week 2	Chapter 2: Welfare	Pages: 41-70 Study Guide pages: 6-7
Week 3	Chapter 3: County Rights	Pages: 71-110 Study Guide pages: 8-11
Week 4	Chapter 4: States' Rights	Pages: 111-152 Study Guide pages: 12-14
Week 5	Chapter 5: Taxation	Pages: 153-182 Study Guide pages: 15-16
Week 6	Chapter 6: Money	Pages: 183-210 Study Guide pages: 17-19
Week 7	Chapter 7: Markets	Pages: 211-244 Study Guide pages: 20-21
Week 8	Chapter 8: Courts	Pages: 245-284 Study Guide pages: 22-25
Week 9	Chapter 9: Defense	Pages: 285-348 Study Guide pages: 26-28
Week 10	Chapter 10: The Executive	Pages: 349-390 Study Guide pages: 29-30
Week 11:	Epilogue, Appendix	Pages: 391-401 Study Guide pages: 31-32
Week 12:	Finis	Discussion of key points with class

## Week 1: Preface, Introduction, Chapter 1: Education

### Preface

Key concepts

“You can’t beat \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_.”

The book focuses on \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_.

Historically, the \_\_\_\_\_ was the fundamental unit of government.

The theme phrase of the book is “\_\_\_\_\_”

### Introduction

What are the 10 areas where we need to engage with local solutions?

The main shortcoming with most “restoring America” efforts is what?

### Chapter 1: Education

Why does Dr. McDurmon claim that we are never free as long as we are subjected to compulsory government education? Is this accurate?

If the term “education” means “to lead out”, what then, is the student being led into? In government education? In private education? In parochial education? In home education?

Where in the Bible, or in the Constitution, is civil government given sovereignty over education?

What were the four factors that created a “reform” movement in education?

Who was Horace Mann, and why were his two basic propositions regarding education a threat to freedom?

What religious concepts were utilized by proponents of government-controlled education to convince the people to accept it?

Is government-controlled education actually free? Why or why not?

What is the “don’t take the cheese” decision in education? Why is this action necessary to restore freedom?

What are some alternative choices to government-controlled (public) education?

What policies need to be addressed on the local level in order to end government monopoly on education?

Research helps:

Ohioans for Educational Freedom: [www.ohioansforfreedom.com](http://www.ohioansforfreedom.com)

Christian Home Educators of Ohio: [www.cheohome.org](http://www.cheohome.org)

Camp American: [www.campamerican.com](http://www.campamerican.com)

## Chapter 2: Welfare

In this chapter, Dr. McDurmon approaches another aspect of American culture that has to be engaged from a totally different perspective; the idea of welfare.

1. How did Americans, prior to 1935, handle the issue of providing for the poor, sick and needy?
2. Does the Constitution provide for the government to care for our health, retirement or catastrophic care? Why or why not?
3. The state provides welfare through \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Which jurisdiction (self, family, church, civil) has the proper primary role and authority for providing welfare?
5. Welfare provided by private means preserves both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. America's current welfare system was based on what model?
7. Bismarck believed that his system was "practical Christianity legally demonstrated". Was he correct, or incorrect? Why?
8. What is the Biblical idea of welfare? How does the tithe system play a key role in this?
9. What two things are absolutely necessary for the Bismarck-modeled system to work?

10. How does Darwinism play a key role in the modern American welfare system?
11. What is the real underlying goal of providing welfare, social security, Medicare, etc.?
12. Is Social Security a retirement program? Why, or why not?
13. What decisions would you and your family need to make to change directions? Which decisions have already been made?
14. How will a secure grasp of God's Word in this area make the "don't take the cheese" decision in this area easier to accomplish?

Resources:

Samaritan Ministries: [www.samaritanministries.org](http://www.samaritanministries.org)

Crown Financial Ministries: [www.crown.org](http://www.crown.org)

Dave Ramsey: [www.daveramsey.com](http://www.daveramsey.com) (note: Ramsey is not supportive of homeschooling; it is a blind spot of his).

Article on tithing:

[http://www.garynorth.com/freebooks/docs/a\\_pdfs/newslet/bet/8108.pdf](http://www.garynorth.com/freebooks/docs/a_pdfs/newslet/bet/8108.pdf)

Book on transforming the welfare system:

[http://www.garynorth.com/freebooks/docs/pdf/bringing\\_in\\_the\\_sheaves.pdf](http://www.garynorth.com/freebooks/docs/pdf/bringing_in_the_sheaves.pdf)

## Chapter 3: County Rights

Dr. McDurmon reveals the very heart of the program to restore America to its historic roots of limited government and liberty under law.

1. The heart of the program known as \_\_\_\_\_ is that civil government \_\_\_\_\_ should be as \_\_\_\_\_ as possible.
2. What are the four main philosophical underpinnings of localism? Where do these points originate from?
3. What are our names for units of government based upon? Why would this be an important fact to know?
4. It is because of \_\_\_\_\_ that we have need for government.
5. How does localized, limited government help reduce the potential for tyrannical rule?
6. What historical event is key to understanding the basis of a Christian philosophy of local government?
7. What is federalism? What is its relationship to the feudal system of the middle ages?
8. In early American federalism, the form of \_\_\_\_\_ government explicitly mirrored the form of \_\_\_\_\_ government.



9. What was central to all local governments in the colonies?
10. What are the features of a decentralized civil authority?
11. What two government expansion acts occurred in 1913?
12. Is Dr. McDurmon's critique of the Constitution as a key means of centralization valid? Why or why not?
13. Legislating from the bench is formally known as \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
14. What is the Electoral College? Why is it important to liberty? What undermines its protective features?
15. How do citizens empower local governments to "not take the cheese"?
16. Have you ever attended a meeting of your local government?
17. When will you start?

### Resources

[www.onemancan.org](http://www.onemancan.org) –localized conservative activism

Electoral college: The Importance of the Electoral College, by Dr. George Grant (San Antonio, Vision Forum Ministries, 2004)

Audios:

<http://www.principledpolicy.com/index.php?s=electoral+college>

## Chapter 4: States Rights

Dr. McDurmon turns now in this chapter to looking at the role of states in providing a buttress between our hopefully-re-strengthened local governments and a central federal force.

1. What does Dr. McDurmon mean by the term “states’ rights”?
2. Is this an appropriate term to use? Do states have “rights”? Why or why not?
3. What was the name of the political philosophy that wanted to ensure that states remained in a superior position to the federal government during the debates on the Constitution?
4. What is the opposite political philosophy to the one above?
5. Which philosophy ultimately prevailed in the framing of the Constitution?
6. What was the basic belief of the antifederalists regarding the nature of the American political situation?
7. How does the view above contrast with the federalist belief about that nature?
8. What was the first Constitution of the American colonies?
9. How was the Declaration of Independence used to support the arguments of both the federalist and antifederalist positions?

10. How did the differing views of the nature of American government lead to a war?
11. How did Alexander Hamilton respond to criticisms of the federal Constitution?
12. How did the relationship between George Washington and Alexander Hamilton shape the early republic?
13. Why does Dr. McDurmon charge Hamilton with instituting a socialistic plan with federal assumption of state debts?
14. Is the charge accurate? Why or why not?
15. What power did nationalist want to take away from the states?
16. How did they succeed in taking that power away?
17. Is this a proper application of the Commerce clause of the Constitution? Why or why not?
18. What is the doctrine of nullification?
19. Why do many academics, and even some conservatives, consider this doctrine “unconstitutional”? Is this a correct interpretation?
20. What is the concept of interposition?

21. Why is interposition an important tool in re-establishing liberty under law?

22. How can you help your state “not take the cheese”?

Resources:

<http://tenthamentcenter.com> –resources on the doctrine of nullification

[www.constitution.org](http://www.constitution.org) –documents, including both the Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers

[www.theamericanview.com](http://www.theamericanview.com) –home of Institute on the Constitution; number of articles on nullification, interposition, etc.

[www.campamerican.com](http://www.campamerican.com) –Videos of presentations on the “Principles of 98”

## Chapter 5: Taxation

The key to taking back freedom lost is by working to de-fund the industry that makes the cheese. In this chapter, Dr. McDurmon helps us to understand what legitimate taxation looks like, and how it really takes engaging in our local communities, not complaining to Congress, to reform our tax policies.

1. Which level of government should tax individuals?
2. What would a system of true Federalism mean for taxation?
3. How would having higher levels of government only being able to tax the next-lowest level help ease taxation?
4. What is the Biblical model for the type of taxation that would be truly just?
5. What are the tax implications of 1 Samuel 8?
6. Which form(s) of taxation is (are) necessary?
7. What is the presence of governmental taxation a symptom of?
8. What does a Biblical tax policy look like?
9. At what level does the Bible consider taxation tyrannical?  
Where is the current level of taxation on your family?
10. What were the tax acts that helped ignite the American War for Independence?

11. What was the percentage of tax that the colonies were willing to fight over and die to keep from paying?

12. What percentage of the total population in your political jurisdiction actually vote?

13. By what percentages do local tax issues pass (if they do) in your local political jurisdiction?

14. What “tricks” does your local taxing authority use to justify support for a new, additional, or increased tax?

15. What are some of the ways in which you, personally, can help reduce the tax burden in your community?

### Resources

Productive Christians in an Age of Guilt Manipulators, by David Chilton (Tyler, Texas, Institute for Christian Economics, 1981)

Larceny in the Heart: The Economics of Satan and the Inflationary State, by Rousas John Rushdoony (Vallecito, CA., Ross House Books, 2002)

With Liberty and Justice for All, by Joe Morecraft, III (Sevier, TN., Onward Press, 1991)

<http://www.principledpolicy.com/series/understanding-property-tax-levies/>

## Chapter 6: Money

In this chapter, Dr. McDurmon discusses the use, misuse, and restoration of a Biblical and constitutional monetary system. In restoring liberty, having a correct view of money is essential.

1. What is money?
2. Where does the value of money come from?
3. What is an unjust monetary standard called according to the Bible?
4. What is fractional reserve banking?
5. Is it Biblically justified?
6. When Dr. McDurmon uses the term “honest money”, to what is he referring?
7. What is the problem with legal tender laws?
8. What lessons can we learn from the Panic of 1819? How could this help prepare us for difficulties in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
9. Why did local banks support the idea of a national bank?
10. Which president actually paid off the national debt? How did this happen?

11. What is the first component of restoring honest money?
12. What are the fundamental changes that must take place in order to ensure a Biblically-faithful form of banking?
13. Why can't these changes take place immediately? What is the danger?
14. What is the first step in ending fractional-reserve banking?
15. Who does deflation usually hurt? How can this be mitigated?
16. What are three ways individuals can begin to prepare and make changes to the current system of money and banking?
17. Which of these ways are you and your family most likely to engage in the near future?

Resources:

Honest Money: Biblical Principles of Money and Banking, by Gary North (Christian Liberty Press, 1986)

Biblical Economics: A Commonsense Guide to our Daily Bread, by RC Sproul Jr. (White House, WV, Tolle Lege Press, 2009)

Biblical Economics in Comics, by Vic Lockman, Jr. (Grants Pass, Ore., published by the author)



Money, Banking and Usury, by Vic Lockman, Jr. (Grants Pass, Ore., published by the author)

Making Sense of Your Dollars, by Ian Hodge (Vallecito, CA, Ross House Books, 1995)

The Case for Gold, by Ron Paul and Lewis Lehrman (Washington, The CATO Institute, 1983)

End the Fed, by Ron Paul (New York, Grand Central Publishing, 2009)

## Chapter 7: Markets

Dr. McDurmon uses this chapter to build a Biblical case for free markets, taken from the Ten Commandments. Civil governments could learn much from this wisdom, and use it as a foundation block for restoring America's economic vitality.

1. What are the three basic requirements of a Biblically-consistent business/market environment?
2. What role should civil government play in markets and business?
3. What is the result when civil government interferes (or "helps") business and markets?
4. What role does taxation play in government interfering in business?
5. How does the interference of government in business become a self-perpetuating problem?
6. What were both the positive and negative effects of adoption of the Constitution upon business and markets?
7. How did the Industrial Revolution affect business?
8. What other necessary component was needed for the Industrial Revolution to succeed?

9. What are “internal improvements” and why are they part of the expansion of government over business?

10. How did John Marshall view federal vs. state power over commerce?

11. What has Marshall’s view spawned? Is it beneficial or detrimental to liberty?

12. What are some of the ways individuals can have an impact on markets and business to help restore liberty? What will you do in this area?

### Resources

Economics in One Lesson, by Henry Hazlitt (New York, Crown Trade Paperbacks, 1979)

The Pirate Economy, by Gary North (Fort Worth, American Institute of Economic Research, 1987)

Essays on Political Economy, by Frederick Bastiat (New York, Classics of Liberty Library, 1997)

Puritan Economic Experiments, by Gary North (Tyler, TX, Institute for Christian Economics, 1988)

Economics, Money and Banking: Christian Principles, by E.L. Hebden, Taylor (Nutley, NJ, Craig Press, 1978)

## Chapter 8: Courts

Dr. McDurmon give us some valuable pointers on the nature of true justice, and why our current court system has strayed from the confines of both justice and the Constitution.

1. Does the Bible give specific guidance on how courts should be arranged? If not, what does Scripture actually teach about courts?
2. Society's \_\_\_\_\_ is a manifestation of that society's \_\_\_\_\_ to God.
3. What is freedom inextricably linked to? Why?
4. What are the four important theological principles to guide the decision as to the form of a just government?
5. What kind of government is a Biblical model?
6. What does Romans 13 call the civil authorities? Why is that important? What does that imply?
7. Where is the idea of electing rulers spelled out in Scripture?
8. I Tim. 3:1-13 and Titus 1: 5-9 give qualifications for church officials? How is that applicable to civil government?
9. What kind of court structure does Exodus 18 call for?

10. Currently, at the national and, in many instances at the state level, judges are appointed, not elected. Is or is not this a Biblically-consistent approach?
11. What is the New Testament model of Biblically-consistent courts?
12. What are the main attributes necessary for this type of court system to work?
13. Are the current administrative law courts (tax courts, etc.) of the nation in any way Biblical?
14. What is a danger of creating such Biblically-consistent private courts? What happened in 1925 regarding voluntary arbitration courts?
15. What three types of enforcement mechanisms have worked in private courts since the Middle Ages?
16. Why were the Anti-Federalists opposed to the establishment of a federal Supreme Court?
17. How early on were courts in America politicized?
18. Are judicial races today really “non-partisan”? Why or why not?

19. What was the surprising argument regarding Constitutional interpretation in Justice Marshall's decision in *Marbury v. Madison*? What do we call that precedent today?
20. What is the difference between original intent and broad construction interpretations of the Constitution?
21. What are some of the dangers of a broad construction view?
22. What is dangerous about Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes' view of the nature of law?
23. Why has the precedent in Justice Brandeis' decision in the Erie Railroad case been so destructive to liberty?
24. What fundamental change did the Fourteenth Amendment bring to the relationship between the federal and state governments?
25. What are some steps to creating a more just court system in America? How are Christians uniquely qualified to do this?
26. RJ Rushdoony has stated that "the source of law is the god of a culture." What implication does this have for the imperative of restoring justice in our court system?
27. Who should Christians prefer to judge matters of difference? Why?

28. Why is submitting to God's law important, both for Christians and for non-Christians?
29. What was ultimately wrong with the McDonald's coffee lawsuit outcome?
30. A free society depends upon the capacity of mankind to exercise \_\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_.
31. Is it ever right for a Christian to disobey the government? Why or why not?
32. What was the main "offense" offered to Roman authority by Christians in the early church? Is this a legitimate form of civil disobedience?
33. What is jury nullification? Why is it important to liberty?
34. A juror is duty-bound to judge both the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ presented in a case.
35. Why is jury nullification a form of civil disobedience? Is it justifiable Biblically?
36. What Constitutional provision allows for a check on the judiciary? Which branch has the power to do so?

## Resources

How to Dethrone the Imperial Judiciary, by Dr. Edwin Vieira  
(San Antonio, Vision Forum, 2004)

Judicial Supremacy: The Supreme Court on Trial, by Robert  
Dornan and Csaba Vedlik, Jr. (Plymouth, Mass, The Plymouth  
Rock Foundation, 1986)

Christianity and the State, by R. J. Rushdoony (Vallecito, CA,  
Ross House Books, 1986)

The Roots of the American Republic with study guide, by Rev. EC  
Wines, study guide by Paul McDade (Plymouth, Mass, The  
Plymouth Rock Foundation, 1997)

The Theological Foundation of Law, by Jacques Ellul (New York,  
Seabury Press, 1969).



## Chapter 9: Defense

This chapter deals squarely with Biblical faithfulness (true patriotism) versus the modernized version of “patriotism” which is less than Biblical. This chapter may be difficult for many to come to terms with on first reading.

1. What effect does a standing army have on a nation, according to Dr. McDurmon? Is he correct in this assertion?
2. What are the two laws regarding defense that Dr. McDurmon discusses from the Old Testament?
3. The admonition against “multiplying horses” has what significance to modern day nations?
4. The admonition against “excessive silver and gold” has what significance to modern day nations?
5. What is the Constitutional limitation on all forces except a Navy?
6. What is the biblical view of the purpose of war?
7. Is a military conscription (draft) Biblically consistent? Why or why not?
8. Explain “just war” theory from a Biblical view.
9. What are the Biblical laws of war?

10. How do those laws differ from modern rules of warfare?
11. Is war justifiable to “bring democracy” to a country? Why or why not?
12. Why were founders like George Mason concerned over the prospect of a standing army?
13. What was Luther Martin’s view of the purpose of a standing army?
14. What are the differences between the militia and a standing army?
15. What role does the Second Amendment play as a response to the call for a standing army?
16. What role did Shay’s rebellion play in the move to create a strong central government?
17. What role does mission work play in reducing the instances of warfare?
18. What are some of the roadblocks to having a Biblically-consistent view of defense?
19. What is the relationship between pro-life belief and a Biblical view of defense?

20. What is the military-industrial complex? Is Dr. McDurmon's criticism of this justified? Why or why not?

21. What changes in thinking and action must be accomplished in order to re-align national, state and local defense along Biblical lines?

Resources:

*Crisis and Leviathan: Critical Episodes in the Growth of American Government*, by Robert Higgs (New York, Pacific Research Institute for Public Policy, 1987)

*Safeguarding Liberty: The Constitution and Citizen Militias*, edited by Larry Pratt (Franklin, TN, Legacy Communications, 1995)

*On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*, by Lt. Col. Dave Grossman (New York, Back Bay Books, 1996)

## Chapter 10: The Executive

In this chapter, Dr. McDurmon discusses the particular ways in which an overreach of executive power leads to the erosion of liberty and freedom. This is not limited to any particular political party platform or actor, but is a real temptation for any fallible human who is invested with such great authority.

1. Which presidential powers does Dr. McDurmon believe have the most possibility for abuse?
2. Which founder called the presidency “the foetus of monarchy”?
3. What is the Biblical function of the executive, according to Romans 13?
4. In what ways are treaty powers a way in which freedom has been lost or surrendered in America?
5. What was Patrick Henry’s main argument against the treaty provisions of Article II?
6. What were the Federalist arguments in response to the concerns of Henry and other anti-federalists?
7. What is a danger of overriding a provision of a treaty by Congressional action, according to the Supreme Court?

8. Is the power of issuing executive orders from the office of the President Constitutionally valid? Why or why not?
9. In what ways do federal authorities compel lesser jurisdictions to comply with executive orders and regulations?
10. Does a declaration of a “national emergency” give legitimacy to assaults on the Constitutional balance of powers? Why or why not?
11. Why is the declaration of a “national emergency” such a threat to freedom and liberty?
12. Who is Beardsley Ruml? What role did he play in helping to expand executive powers unconstitutionally?
13. What are some steps individuals can take in order to lessen the centralization of power in the hands of the executive branch?

### Resources

Law and Liberty, by R.J. Rushdoony (Fairfax, Va, Thoburn Press, 1977)

Our Enemy, the State, by Albert Jay Nock (Tampa, Hallburg Publishing, 1996)

Plundered: How Progressive Ideology is Destroying America, by Dr. Michael Coffman (Bangor, Maine, Environmental Perspectives, 2012)

## Epilogue and Appendix

The restoring of America to a Biblical and limited Constitutional republic is the work of a lifetime, perhaps many lifetimes. We are called to labor while there is yet day, and Dr. McDurmon directs us now to the blueprint to begin this work in earnest.

1. What are two outgrowths of our current system that is consistent in every political party?
2. What is the mistake that Christians have made in offering solutions to our cultural and political problems?
3. What is the only true blueprint for solving the problems in our society?
4. In what ways can YOU become a rallying point for those in your community who are ready to do the hard work to restore America?
5. What was the impact of the adoption of the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment?
6. Which two social movements are responsible for the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment?
7. What was the argument progressives made to decry the system of state legislatures appointing senators?
8. How did this “problem” get solved by the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment? Did it solve the problem, or make it worse?

9. What did the states expose themselves to by ratifying the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment?

10. Is former Senator Zell Miller correct that the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment “destroyed Federalism forever”? Why or why not?

### Resources

This Independent Republic by RJ Rushdoony (Fairfax, VA, Thoburn Press, 1978)

Always Ready: Directions for Defending the Faith, by Dr. Greg Bahnsen, (Nacogdoches, TX, Covenant Media Press, 1996)

Unconditional Surrender: God’s Program for Victory, by Dr. Gary North (Tyler, TX, Institute for Christian Economics, 1988)

The Second Mayflower, by Kevin Swanson (Parker, Co., Generations with Vision, 2008)

The Central Significance of Culture, by Dr. Francis Nigel Lee (Nutley, NJ, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1976)