

- **Short Title** – Review and Recommendations for Promoting International Economic Development in U.S. Geo-Strategy: A Biblical Christian Worldview Approach
- **Program of Study** – International Relations (Strategic Intelligence Cognate)
- **Presentation Type** – Oral or 3MT
- **Sponsor name and email** – Dr. Mary S. Prentice (msprentice@liberty.edu)
- **Student name(s) and email(s)** – Kerry D. Good (kgood@liberty.edu)
- **Category** – Oral Presentation: “Textual or Investigative”

**Abstract:**

This thesis will address the economic development of countries from the strategic perspective of the United States, and consider how this development will progress overlaid in the context of Russian and Chinese frameworks for the projection of national power. Using an interdisciplinary approach, this research will synthesize sources on national security policy and economics, while seeking a Christian apologetic framework to answer these questions: How can the United States promote the economic development of developing countries using a biblical economic-development model, as a part of its national strategy?; and, how might we expect to measure the successfulness of this policy's influence upon a country's economic success? This thesis focuses on some of the political and socio-economic ideas which catalyze economic development, explaining how these ideas can be strategically promoted by the US government: using the vehicle of civil-society initiatives in economically under-developed strategic-partner countries to foster economic development and securing their autonomy from emerging hegemonic powers. Specific countries in under-developed regions (countries with comparatively low Gross Domestic Product by Purchasing Power Parity, which otherwise possess strategic advantages) have been selected by the author for closer study, proposing that these countries possess significant strategic potential as partners—should these countries continue to develop economically while maintaining friendly relations with the United States and other countries,

they have the potential to promote stability in their spheres of influence, creating new opportunities for socio-economic freedom.

### **Christian worldview integration:**

I was inspired to pursue this topic in my reading of *The Poverty of Nations: A Sustainable Solution* (Barry Asmus and Wayne Grudem, 2013 Crossway). In their book, they advance the thesis that economic development and the creation of wealth are either enabled or hindered through ideas. They carefully note that *the greatest form of poverty is spiritual poverty; yet Christians should also be concerned with meeting physical needs*. They quote the words of Jesus: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt. 22:39), “Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Matt 5:16). Yet they also quote 1 John 3:17 (“But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him?”) and Isaiah 58:6 (“Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?”). Asmus and Grudem combined their expertise in economics and theology, respectively, to develop a Christian-worldview approach to the creation of wealth as the sustainable solution to alleviating poverty. They presuppose the authority of scripture and reference other authors who have studied the church’s approach to meeting physical and spiritual needs. However, these authors repudiate Marxist and Keynesian economic theory of government control and central planning, instead reaffirming the Christian doctrine of the providence of God in economics advanced by Adam Smith’s “invisible hand” approach to free-market economics (*The Wealth of Nations*, 1776). **This research uniquely applies the Biblical worldview of economics to the strategic considerations and international relations of the United States Government, but justified by historical evidence, and offers this approach of promoting international relationships, educating ideas, and civil-society organizations, in response to Chinese strategic initiatives for economic development which focus on infrastructure development and resource exploitation.**

My interest in national security research began in 2011 with Robert Scale’s *Future Warfare Anthology*, as I studied the research of senior officers at the U.S. Army War College and the US Air War College, as well as the analysts of the RAND corporation and other Washington, D.C. “think-tanks” on military force-structuring—the understanding and long-term thinking of

how the U.S. military is organized, trained, and equipped for successful operations which counter emerging strategic threats. Yet it was as I grew to know Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior in 2014 that *The Poverty of Nations* came to my hands. I have often been compelled by Jesus' words in Matthew 25, verse 40: "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" My desire is to combine these two interest areas while remaining grounded in my Christian faith, for God and country—and for the least of these.