

LEAVING GOD OUT

"I am the LORD your God...you shall have no other gods before Me." {Exodus 20:2-3; Deut 5:6-7}

"For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools..." {Rom 1:21-22}

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols." {1Jn 5:21}

God: His relationship to His Creation

The Apostle's Creed begins with the statement, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." In one way or another, all true Christians will tell you they believe that "God is the Creator of the world and all things in it" {Acts 17:24}. Ask the little child in your church, "Who made you?" and he will answer, "God made me." From the oldest to the youngest, this is our common confession.

But do we really believe this? Sure, we believe "In the beginning God made the heavens and the earth", but what about His involvement in His creation handiwork since then? Did He simply start things going--much as in the same way one winds a clock--and then back away to let it tick off its own course of history? Did He just give creation a great big spin as if it were a child's top and then stand back to watch it spin in some sort of random direction?

Of course not. Scripture tells us that the Creator of the universe and all that it contains is also the Sustainer of same. Take the Person of Jesus Christ, for example. We are taught in John's Gospel that "all things came into being through Him; and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being" {John 1:3}. What's more, the Apostle Paul not only tells us that in Jesus Christ "all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created through Him and for Him"; he also tells us that "in Him all things hold together". {Col 1:16-17}. In other words, Jesus Christ not only created but he presently sustains--"holds together"--the entire created realm.

God not only set the earth spinning, but He is keeping it spinning, right now. He not only created and hung the Sun, moon, planets and stars and set them upon their appointed rounds, He is holding this incomprehensibly vast system together right now, as you read.

Almost anywhere you choose to look in Scripture, you will find God actively and intimately involved in His creation, whether it be the heavenly bodies, the plants and animals, or the realm of mankind. Everything He made, He presently sustains. If He were to cease sustaining His creation, it would all collapse back into the nothingness from whence it came. The moment-by-moment existence of all things is wholly dependent upon the moment-by-moment activity of the Omnipotent God.

But do you really believe this? When you look out upon the natural order, what do you see? Do you see all things operating according to the trustworthiness of God's behavior in His world, or do you see various "laws of Nature" at work? When apples fall from the trees, is it because of the "law of gravity" or do they fall because of the uniform way God is acting in His universe?

There is a radical disparity between the way the writers of Holy Scripture saw their world and the way we see it today. We see Mother Nature. They saw God as the Lord of all things and the Master of every phenomenon. While we tend to see around us a world of impersonal natural forces, they looked out and saw God.

We look back at them in all of our twentieth-century secularized sophistication as if they were primitive, uneducated, unenlightened. Of course, we wouldn't really come right out and say as much, but this is our attitude more than we're probably willing to admit. At least, we certainly act that way. To our shame, we are the unenlightened ones.

We are the ones who, "professing to be wise" have become fools because we have left God out. And in so doing, we have become guilty of a very insidious idolatry. You see, God requires us to see Him in His creation--to see "His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature"-- and, in response, to "honor (glorify) Him as God and give thanks" {Rom 1:20-21}.

But we don't do this. For the most part we don't even know to do this because we haven't been taught to do this. As a matter of fact, we've been taught just the opposite: we've been taught to leave God out. Where did we get such an education? In the public schools.

Let's not fail to see the point: any school system which ignores God teaches its pupils to ignore God. This is the most damaging and dangerous aspect of the public school curriculum from kindergarten through high-school. There is no neutrality when it comes to the matter of honoring and glorifying God in the way and manner in which He requires it of us. Rather, a curriculum which leaves God out--which ignores Him--is in fact the worst form of antagonism, for in practice it judges God to be unimportant and irrelevant to every aspect of His creation, including human affairs.

Every academic discipline is idolatrous to the core if it fails not only to begin with God but to see Him as relevant throughout and in every respect. Whether it be Reading,

Writing and Arithmetic or Sociology, Nuclear Physics and Bio-Engineering, it makes no difference. If we leave God out, we have become pagans, practicing one of the worst forms of idolatry.

Now, if the above be true, then it's time to ask, and answer the hard questions: Why do Christians continue to support the public schools? Why do Christian parents send their children to be educated in a blatantly anti-God, idolatrous worldview?

Instead of patting ourselves on the back because--in the name of being "salt and light"--we're fighting for some sort of non-descript prayer in schools, or equal time for some sort of vague, non-theistic "creation science", it's time we faced up to our responsibilities. Unless and until a school system--be it "public" or otherwise--teaches a thoroughgoing Christian world and life perspective in all of its curriculum, we have no business putting our children there. Because this we can all be assured of: God will severely judge all idolaters. May He in His mercy and grace give us the willingness to repent and return to a life of seeing Him in all of His creation and, in response, worshipping Him in a manner which brings Him true honor and glory.