

Good Steward Newsletter – October 2011



A Future Without God is a Future Without Hope

Where God is, there lies the future. What this means is that we must restore God to our horizon, the God who is so often absent but of whom we have such great need. (Pope Benedict XVI)

Secularism attempts to convince us that we have no need of God. With our own intelligence, and with the power made possible by science and technology, we are told that human beings are capable of taking care of themselves. We can rule the world—the entire universe really—simply by exercising our own wills.

Never mind the fact that history shows beyond all doubt that we are incapable of ruling ourselves let alone the world around us. Never mind the indisputable evidence that chaos and disorder are the inevitable result of human will run riot. As Pope Benedict reminds us repeatedly, we must restore God to His rightful place as Lord of the universe and as the Divine Master whose will alone brings prosperity, peace and true humanity to our world.

As Christians, we must join with other faith-filled people, especially Jews and Muslims, in speaking out against the secular view of the world. We must restore God to our horizon, as the Holy Father says, not simply because we are pious or sentimental about our religious beliefs, but because we are stewards of a worldview (and a way of life) that places God at the center of everything. This is the meaning of the first commandment: *You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.* Unless God come first—in our personal lives and in society—everything is disordered. We need God because he is our Creator, the meaning of our lives (and our world), and the ultimate goal of all existence. A future without God is a future without hope.

During the last presidential election, we heard a lot about hope. Sadly, the past few years have given us precious little to be hopeful about. The fault is not with individuals or political parties—although it's tempting to accuse both democrats and republicans of failing to lead us into a hope-filled future. The real problem is that we have divorced hope from its roots in faith (and charity). We have convinced ourselves that we are capable of generating our own hope-filled future. As a society, we no longer recognize our need for God.

In sacred scripture we are repeatedly shown that God created us to be faithful stewards of all things visible and invisible. As stewards, we are called to serve faithfully the one who made us all. We are challenged to discover and do God's will. There is a plan for human life and for the stewardship of all creation. Our charge is not to run things independently—by our own will and by our own power—but “to serve the Lord with all our hearts and all our souls and all our minds.” (cf. Mt 22:37-40)

The secular worldview which has insinuated itself into all our political, economic and cultural discussions today dismisses our need for God. At best, religious faith is accepted as an option for those who wish to practice it. It is an individual choice not a fundamental ingredient in our social

or cultural self-understanding. God is absent because we have turned our backs to him. His plan for us and for our world is ignored because we have decided to go our own ways.

During a recent television interview Pope Benedict XVI said, “You may ask me: But, does God exist? And if He exists does He really concern Himself with us? Can we reach Him?” The Holy Father’s answer is a resounding and unqualified “Yes!” Although God may appear to be hidden or absent, He is truly with us. “We must rediscover our capacity to perceive God, a capacity that exists within us,” the pope says because “where God is there lies the future.”

So much time and energy is wasted, so many people are defeated and discouraged, and so many lives are lost because our leaders in government, education, health care, social service and the arts insist on following the secular way. That way is a dead end. It leads to chaos and disorder, to a future without God, a future without hope.

As stewards of all creation, we are called to restore God to our horizon and follow the divine plan. God is our future, the source of all our hope. Let us find him, and follow him, now.

Copyright © 2011, Daniel Conway