

The Failure of Secularism

The Christian world view and the secular world view compared at a glance:

The Christian World View	The Secular World View
God exists	God (probably) does not exist
The Universe is created	The Universe is a product of chance
God has a plan for the Universe	There is no plan (All is chaos)
Man is significant	Man is not significant
There is absolute truth	There is no absolute truth
There is a way of salvation	There is no way of salvation

We may ask the question why it is a fact of modern secular society that so many people sink into gloomy despondency and say 'what's the use of carrying on?' Or why it is that so many young people are listless and detached, are disinterested in the political process, give way to binge drinking or other escapist behaviour. Underling this social and individual breakdown is the debilitating effect of secularism. Bertrand Russell perhaps the most eloquent advocate of the secular point of view enables us to see most clearly the wasteland secularism leads us into. He wrote;

' That man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labour of the ages, all the devotion, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a Universe in ruins.'

Contrast this gloomy outlook on life, with the outlook of the apostle Paul. Paul believed in the God of the Bible-that is the sovereign Lord of history, the God of eternity, who was, 'in the beginning', and is even now working out his great purposes in time, and who will be there, 'in the end' to complete his great work. Paul believed in such a God, and that all the events of time were under the control of that God, and hence had purpose and meaning. Moreover he believed that God himself, in the Person of his Son had lived life on this earth, experienced its trials, tears and temptations. Hence God, not only by the fact of his knowing all things, but also by his experience of earthly life, in love is able to sympathise with us in all our trials and griefs. Paul also believed that man was made in the image and likeness of God, by which he meant that man knows the difference between right and wrong, and is capable of entering into fellowship with the God who made him. He also believed that mankind was sinful and fallen, hence his feelings of guilt and shame. He believed that he had rebelled against God, and that he had wasted and squandered the good things that God had given to him, and deserved God's wrath and not his love. Paul believed that God sent his Son to save men and women from their lostness. This Christ did when he died on the cross, the innocent,

bearing the sins of the guilty, and purchasing their pardon with his blood. Paul believed that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purposes.

It is these great truths that have been the anchor of so many lives down the years, lifted so many out of the depths of despair, brought hope to the hopeless, spoken words of pardon to the guilty, taken away the fear of death, brought comfort to the dying and have been the source of inspiration for countless deeds of sacrifice, service and devotion, that secularism is now seeking to take from us.

In St Paul's Cathedral over the northern doorway is a marble plaque on which is inscribed the name of its architect and builder Sir Christopher Wren. The inscription on that monument reads; 'If you seek his monument look around you.' The monument of secularism is all around us, in the unhappy lives, broken relationships, broken promises, violent crime, litter filled streets and spiritually starved souls.

It is high time, to abandon secularism, to repent and to return to the God of our fathers and to seek his mercy through Jesus Christ our Lord.