

Mightier Than The Sword (Part Two)

John W. Ritenbaugh

Given 23-May-15; Sermon #1268c

I read an article cut from a web page this week that pertained to one of the philosophers I will give you more information on a number of Sabbaths later. The sense of this article was that this philosopher deliberately set out to destroy American education for the sake of his educational quackery.

His name is John Dewey, and he was definitely and clearly anti-God. He is quoted as writing, “God is a faded piece of metaphysical goods.” Dewey died in 1968. His destructive efforts began in the early 1920s. Satan had this man prepared for our times.

According to a book titled *Crimes of the Educators*, authored by Alex Newman and Samuel Blumenfeld, John Dewey’s educational program was an act of war against our nation by means of miseducating the nation’s children by lowering their literacy levels. His programs were implemented slowly but nationally, and the authors claim are a major reason our children are educationally deprived in our public schools.

According to the authors, John Dewey and his cohorts were deliberately trying to destroy our government, our Constitution, our liberties, our God-given rights, and that this was treason on a massive scale by an American philosopher against his fellow Americans. Politically, the man was a socialist.

Satan is the ruler of this world. His anti-God interests are not limited to religion. He is out to destroy godly influence in every aspect of life. Thus, his spirit permeates government, education, the military, business, and family life. You name it, and he’s already been there for purposes of destruction.

A false, deceptive education is the strength of his operations. Most of us realize that, besides religion, he has probably done his greatest damage for the longest period of time in the many varieties in fields of secular education, but most especially within universities.

Why universities? Because that is where a nation's leadership is most often educated. Harvard is America's first founded university; it began accepting students in 1638. It was sponsored by those of the Puritan faith.

Yale was founded in 1701 by people of the Congregationalist faith, ironically because they were upset at the ever growing liberalism underlying Harvard's programs. But those universities are mere kids compared to many in Europe, especially those in Italy.

The University in Bologna, Italy, began its operations in AD 1088. Besides this one, by AD 1270, there were universities in Paris, Orleans, Toulouse, Montpellier, Oxford, Cambridge, Padua, Naples, Salerno, Salamanca, Coimbra, and Lisbon. Thirteen in all, mostly in Italy.

All of them were founded upon and operated with anti-God, humanist principles. This was because their existence was encouraged by the Holy Roman Empire's administration figures, along with the Roman Catholic Church. The Holy Roman Empire could hardly be expected to be a worthy teacher and promoter of God, His ways, and law. They most definitely were not.

But one would expect some aspects of true holiness to be taught by the Roman Catholic Church. And indeed, some aspects of God's revelation of how life should be lived were included in the university teaching programs, but the level of true knowledge was very low.

The reality is that those universities were almost totally humanistic, at least partly because the Catholic Church as an institution was far more focused on civil power than religious truth. And besides that, there is also the fact that it was not God's true church in the first place.

The universities were an unholy alliance between Rome and the Catholic Church that played a large role in being responsible for inspiring the Protestant Reformation that turned Europe into a chaotic religious and civil turmoil in the 1500s and 1600s.

Why did I give you the date of 1270 earlier in this commentary? It was because Thomas Aquinas, our philosopher subject for an ever-so-brief overview of his influence, died in AD 1274. Thus, in the late 1260s and early 1270s, he was at the peak of his influence in Europe. He was a Roman Catholic priest. Today, he is recognized as one of their most revered saints. He was very intelligent. He wrote prolifically and persuasively on doctrinal issues, morality, education—especially university level education—and social issues.

Unlike most of the personalities whose influence I will give you a bit of later, he was not really—at least on the surface—an apostate from his faith. However, he was persuaded in his own mind to increase its influence in the rule of men and to do this through education in universities. Not the church, but through universities

What recommendation did the influential Thomas Aquinas suggest? I gave you the names of those thirteen universities a bit ago. Every single one of them was actually operated and overwhelmingly staffed by the Roman Catholic Church and its membership, not the Holy Roman Empire. These were the people that Aquinas was aiming his suggestions at.

I am going to give you a paragraph from one of his writings. It's not easy to understand or grasp; you know how those ancients wrote. (You are getting familiar with Ecclesiastes). They did not write things exactly the same way we do. But there is enough here that I think you'll be able to get what he says, especially with a little help from me:

Now Scripture, inspired by God, is no part of philosophical knowledge, which has been built up by human reason. [That is quite an admission already.] Therefore it is useful that besides philosophical knowledge, there should be other knowledge, for example inspired of God. I answer that, it was necessary for man's

salvation that there should be a knowledge revealed by God **besides** philosophical knowledge built up by **human reason**. [God's not going to have any part of this.] Hence theology included in sacred doctrine differs in kind from that theology which is part of philosophy.

Aquinas clearly proposed two systems of knowledge be instituted in the universities: one sacred and one secular. This was a complete break from the ancient system that higher education was to be based *entirely* on the revelation of God in Scripture.

Until Aquinas made this bold statement, the universities followed what is called the Augustinian credo that, “The mind needs to be enlightened by light from outside itself, so that it can participate in truth [this is interesting!], because it is not itself the nature of truth. [He saw that man does not have truth within him; it has to be given to him.] You will light my lamp, Lord.”

Aquinas broke from this view when he proposed a second form of knowledge different in kind from those educated in Scripture. Aquinas believed that the natural man cut off from God could build a reliable system of philosophical knowledge on human reason. With the introduction of Aquinas' thinking, the camel's nose was under the tent flap—and it won't be long before the whole camel is in the tent.