

Mightier Than The Sword (Part Four)

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It was Franklin Roosevelt, America's 32nd president, who said to his son-in-law as a piece of sage advice that "everything that happens in Washington, D. C., is planned." He did not of course mean every single event. His context when he stated that involved political things.

So it is in regard to what God is working out on His great green earth. Jesus' statement that "God's eye is on the sparrow" covers that statement in principle. God is fully aware of everything going on. Nothing escapes His view.

He passes on what He permits to occur, regardless of whose initiative is involved and who is being affected and to what degree all are affected. He does this because He is absolutely sovereign over His creation. He has His own plan and purpose that He is working out.

He has a great deal invested in what He is working out. His will *will* be accomplished. This is wonderful because He is the personification of love and we are part of the direct recipients of that loving purpose because He stooped to reveal Himself and His purpose to us.

Part of my purpose in giving these ever-so-brief history commentaries is to help you be aware that what is happening in this violent world is actually under control and is being guided from on high. I do not want us to become discouraged, but to be encouraged to live life with confident faith in God.

It was God who passed on Thomas Aquinas' suggestion to jump-start the pursuit of a separate compilation of philosophical knowledge not drawn from or checked against what God reveals in His word. This philosophical knowledge would be the production of human minds within the university

systems, strongly influenced by Satan and his demons. That is why it carries the title, "humanism." It is coming out of the minds of men. Its products are followed by many with the same fervency as one would give a religion.

In the almost-400 years between Aquinas and Descartes, humanism expanded considerably but it remained for Descartes to more or less assemble the building blocks of the virtually completely man-centered way of life that was being created in the Western world. He is credited with establishing the framework of tools by which a researcher could define knowledge of what is true—but still apart from God. However, this apparently led to a great deal of controversy.

He is also credited with the invention of a discipline called "methodological skepticism." And boy, he was a skeptic. Apparently, that must be helpful to those dealing with human-generated philosophy. To me, it's "much ado about nothing" because the foundational answers regarding life and its purpose are simply stated in God's Word. But with satanic deceptions working in men's minds, God is pushed aside, unconsidered.

Whatever the reasons, Descartes writings stirred the minds of many intellectual people. What he reasoned paved the way for many more mental excursions away from God. Descartes made very clear to his readers that man apart from God can determine philosophical truth. That is what he got across to people.

That thought leads right into the next philosopher with a major, major impact. This man's impact especially affected America's founding. It is possible you've never heard of him by name but he has definitely had an impact on your life and mine.

His name is John Locke. He was an Englishman, born into a Calvinistic Puritan family in 1632. When Locke was born, Descartes' life was more than half over. Very early in Locke's life, he showed intellectual brilliance. By age 20, he was already teaching at Oxford University.

John Locke never denied the existence of God, but he was among the first truly prominent philosophers to apostatize from *organized church bodies*. He did extensive humanistic thinking regarding man's thinking about himself,

and the individual's freedom to determine what is truth *apart from* universities.

This man's thoughts and writings came to the fore just as the men whose leadership would form the governance of the United States were being educated and rising to positions of influence here in the colonies. John Locke's influence on the Western world is truly remarkable.

Historians Charles Taylor and Jerrold Seigal claim that Locke's *Essays Concerning Human Understanding* "marked the beginning the modern Western conception of the self." Thomas Jefferson included a verbatim quote from John Locke in the Declaration of Independence.

According to USHistory.org, "The single most important influence that shaped the founding of the United States of America comes from John Locke." The Christian website Wallbuilders.com comments, "It is not an exaggeration to say that without John Locke's substantial influence on American thinking, there might well be no United States of America today." Did this philosopher have an impact? In what way?

Perhaps this will serve as an example. This might seem little to you, but in government circles, it is important. Before John Locke, and during his early life, virtually all state charters, compacts and covenants made mention of God and very often concluded with the words, "In the name of God, Amen." In other words, what you have entered into was proposed on God's sanction.

In the United States of America, this change is immediately noted. The compacts began, saying as our Declaration of Independence does, "We *the people* of the United States in order to form a more perfect union. . . ." Right at the very beginning, God was shoved aside. This government was from *men*. The Constitution carefully avoids, "In the name of God, Amen."

Locke wrote long and argued apparently persuasively on the liberty of the individual to be free to determine for himself what he believed regarding religion and the workings of God in one's individual life. In other aspects of life, he was apparently a moral person. But he hated being subject to God

and other men. It was John Locke who set the trajectory toward the secular democracies and republics of the entire Western world, especially in England and the United States of America.

He was not totally against religion but he was strongly against certain doctrines. He rejected the Trinity, the sovereignty of God, the atonement of Christ and His resurrection, too, as essential to Christianity. This is the individual, thinking for himself. However, he also said, "Whoever takes Jesus as the Messiah for his King, with a resolution to live by His laws, and does sincerely repent, as often as he transgresses any of His laws, is His subject; all such are Christians."

He was not against such a choice being made by men. As I said, he really didn't apostatize in the ordinary sense. But he insisted that the individual had to be free to make the choice himself. Not the state impose it; not a church impose it. He made the choice himself. This set the standard for what is known now as "American individualism." He sounds just like an American.