

LOVE & THE ATHEIST

It is a principle underlying sound philosophy that every creature loves itself. Every thing created owes its essence (*what* it is) and its existence (*that* it is) to an Author. Its desire for continuance, its opposition to any influence that would interfere with these, is driven by the natural love it has for the perfections it has received. This goes even for inanimate things, earth, air, fire and water, as one discovers who tries to dominate, rather than manage, them. This philosophical principle is confirmed in the theology of the Catholic Church that Almighty God made everything in love: *nothing*—no thing—can continue in existence without God’s loving influence conserving it in being.

Every thing manifests some perfection of its Creator. First, it exists—for *God exists*. Some creatures live—*because God lives* (He is a *living* God). Some (i.e., brute animals) know singular things—*because God knows singular things*. Some (rational animals) know universal things—*because God knows universal things*.¹ This last category is constituted by the creature God created in His own image and likeness, man.²

Every creature has, moreover, four indelible qualities or perfections, called ‘transcendental’, in which are reflected the perfections of its Creator. It is *one*; it is *something*; it is *true*; and it is *good*; as God is One (there is only one God), Something—not a figment of man’s imagination, True—He ‘who can neither deceive nor be deceived’ (as the Fathers of the (first) Vatican Council taught³)—and Good, indeed goodness its very self.

St Thomas tells us that it is in his possession of intellect and will that man is created in God’s *image*.⁴ But man is also created in God’s *likeness*. How? The clue is to be found in the philosophical and theological principle that every creature loves itself. Pre-eminently among God’s creatures man loves himself. This love it is that determines his decisions in the internal colloquy he conducts with himself every moment of the day.⁵

Where does this leave the atheist? Even though he distances himself from the Source of his being, the atheist loves his children.⁶ He can’t help himself: God made him that way. He was born, he was created, to love. Yet in his choice of atheism he chooses to embrace irrationality, to embrace contradiction of the nature he has been given and compromises the gifts given him because in living things, as Aristotle taught, to live is the same as to be.

¹ *Summa Theologiae*, q. 93, a. 2

² *Genesis* 1: 27. And see the author at https://www.superflumina.org/PDF_files/god-&-man-in-his-image-&-likeness.pdf

³ Dz. 1789

⁴ *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 3, a. 1, ad 2

⁵ It may be seen in the conduct of a child to whom it is essential (if he is to flourish) that he enjoy two realities: first, that he be loved, and second, that he have something to love, the reason behind the child’s habit of surrounding himself with loved things, poignantly expressed in Coventry Patmore’s *The Toys*. On the creation of man in God’s likeness, see author’s paper at https://www.superflumina.org/PDF_files/god-&-man-in-his-image-&-likeness.pdf

⁶ ‘He’ and ‘his’ are used here to indicate genus not gender.

Atheists accept tacitly (they will never admit it openly) that their position does not accord with right reason. They don't let that concern them because, on this topic, they are *gnostics*, people possessed of a special knowledge: they know better than mere religious believers. Contrary to what they contend, their special knowledge derives from a system of belief which differs only in its object. Atheists believe in 'no-God' and that they have no need to discover an adequate cause of their essence or existence.

Moral choices determine behaviour, colour the views of the one making the choices, for better or for worse. How many able public figures, for instance, have lost their way after compromising their marriage vows? Moral error leads one to intellectual confusion which leads others to lose confidence in them—and their downfall. A bad moral choice makes a man behave stupidly.

The atheist parent, compelled by a disposition ingrained in him by nature, loves his child. Yet the stupidity that attends his belief system leads him to allow his child to attend a school where indoctrination in folly will destroy the child's innocence and lead, inevitably, to his temporal and eternal harm. One can see this in the attitude taken by parents and teachers to the fashionable atheistic claim that one can choose one's sex (which its proponents wrongly call 'gender') against the dictate of nature that man is created either male or female.

It can be seen in the obsession with climate catastrophism, a belief grounded in ideology and adoption of a version of science which closes its eyes to the evidence that the planet is, and always has been, governed by an all-wise providence.

The atheist parent has ceased to behave rationally, has become blind to the harm he is doing, become incapable of realising *that it is harm*, incapable of seeing where the evil involved in his belief system will lead. The consequence is that the child, made in the image and likeness of God may come, in the course of time, to resemble the devil or one of his minions.⁷ For that harm the atheist will be answerable to God Who entrusted the child to his care. And that will occur whether he believes in God or not.

One does not have to rely on religion to mark the folly involved. Horace remarked in the century before Christ, *Naturam expelles furca, tamen usque recurret et mala perumpet furtim fastidia vixtrix*, which might be translated as "Refuse to face reality and reality will return to mock you for your stupidity".⁸

In the same way a bad moral choice makes a society behave stupidly. This is the case in Australia. Here is one of our better journalists, Chris Kenny, in a recent edition of *The Australian*—

⁷ As to what lies ahead, see Charlie Chadwick's article at [Australia's activist children are the next apocalypse | The Spectator Australia](#)

⁸ Quintus Horatius Flaccus, 65 - 8 BC : *Epist.* 1, X, 24.

Either we have reached peak stupid or it is impossible to contemplate the depth of inanity to which we will sink and the damage it will do to our country. The lack of logic and the deliberate shunning of rational thought in our national debate have reached a level that is obscene...

Visiting the flood-devastated Hawkesbury-Nepean region... on Wednesday, [Prime Minister] Anthony Albanese was asked whether he had any long-term solutions for responding to natural disasters. [He responded] "My government has changed Australia's position on climate change from day one."

Instead of falling about the place laughing, the media pack... followed up with more questions based on the fiction that natural disasters are now more common,... [that] nothing that happened before the millennial journalists were born can be worth knowing...

Hence the easily accessible flood records of the Hawkesbury-Nepean [which demonstrate]... regular cycles of flood and drought, and much higher floods before the advent of the internal combustion engine or coal-fired power stations [are ignored]; but politicians and journalists prefer to see the world through the prism of their own recent experience and... commitment to the climate change narrative...

Michael Baker

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