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Educated—To What End?

The trend in recent higher educational practice to omit the integration of values education from the university curriculum has left the higher education community uncertain of what can be known or what should be taken seriously in the moral realm. The end result has been a fracturing of knowledge, a tendency by professionals to talk only to others in their discrete world, and a lack of any meaningful sense of how to move from a reductionist view of life to a more comprehensive one.

The need to develop ethics, values, and moral sensitivity was created for our society because of the critical issues and tough choices that our technocratic success has forced on us. As Richard L. Morrill notes in *Teaching Values in College*:

We have sensed repeatedly that our inherited values and ethics do not prepare us to address confidently the issues that technology has presented to us. Nuclear power, atomic weaponry, the extension of life through biomedical mechanics, fertilization that occurs in a test tube, genetic engineering—all these recent technological achievements have outraced our ability to decide on their moral consequences for human life.

It has become obvious to many in academia and elsewhere that a humane naturalism buttressed by mechanistic or atheistic assumptions regarding life and its purpose has not generated a meaningful set of values to inspire those who control the sources of power—economic, social, or political—to share equitably or relate to the greater society with significant care and concern. The scandals on Wall Street, the patent duplicity connected with the Iran-Contra affair, the ongoing oppression of millions in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, the Americas, and elsewhere clearly indicate that there is still a need for values that when internalized can make a difference in improving the overall condition of life around our globe.

We need to articulate a world view of a personal God whose care and concern for His creation moved Him to a sacrificial example of love and true service. The history of a divine/human Creator-Redeemer is most needed to challenge us to better living and to stronger positive relating to one another. The educating of persons to such a growing awareness can provide hope for the future.

As Christian teachers we need to transmit to our students the dynamic strength and hope we derive from such knowledge as the result of our own faith and experience. We need to help them awaken to the power of an integrated understanding of the meaning and purpose of living through the personal relations, curriculum, and methods employed in the classroom and exemplified throughout the campus.—V.S.G. □