

The Ravages of Materialism

Philosophic "materialism" is an ism, a systematized doctrine, which is predicated on the dogmatic assumption of matter (or physical energy) as the singular foundational element of all reality. Obviously innate in this a priori assumption is the fact that any one who, wittingly or unwittingly, adopts it is a "materialist", yes, but also subject to some degree of "spiritual blindness" (TUB 70:2.7). It is likewise obvious that: "Materialism cheapens human life" (TUB 102:6.10). Therefore, materialism is inherently a house of darkness and death, respectively. And since the sixth adjutant (as the energy of zeal) is the impetus for all mere doctrines to be fully driven into becoming isms, it was only a matter of time until this "house" became an orgy of darkness and death.

"Materialism reduces man to a soulless automaton and constitutes him merely an arithmetical symbol finding a helpless place in the mathematical formula of an unromantic and mechanistic universe." (TUB 195:6.8) "Scientists have unintentionally precipitated mankind into a ... materialistic-secular panic" (TUB 195:6.1). "But even after materialism and mechanism have been more or less vanquished, the devastating influence of twentieth-century secularism will still blight the spiritual experience of millions of unsuspecting souls." (TUB 195:8.1) "At the time of this revelation [The Urantia Papers], the prevailing intellectual and philosophical climate of both European and American life is decidedly secular--humanistic. For three hundred years [throughout the Enlightenment] Western thinking has been progressively secularized. Religion has become more and more a nominal influence, largely a ritualistic exercise. The majority of professed Christians of Western civilization are unwittingly actual secularists." (TUB 195:8.3)

When the religious impulse is redirected, down from eternal ideals and back to temporal ideas, "religion" (i.e., "re-" = "back", to eternity) becomes "alligion" (i.e., "al-" = "ad-" = "to", time). People may still "profess" to be Christians (or religionists); they may even believe that they have cast off their evolutionary religions of fear and upgraded to revelatory religions of love; but, as the "revelators" make clear above, it is altogether possible that what people actually embody is a dark downgrade to mere Christian (or other religious) ritual, wrapped around self-righteous alligions of sentiment--the very whited sepulchres of cleverly self-constructed, ultimately self-serving, seductive sophistry.

(reflections by Chris Halvorson)