

FORGETTING GOD (Dt 4:1-23)

I. INATTENTIVE—losing track of what is, of what should be considered

A. Life-Illustrations

1. Requested tasks—repair this, install this, go get this . . . “in one ear, out another”
2. Duties & responsibilities—speed limit zones; promises; politicians’ oaths re Constitution

B. Transcendent Realities ignored

1. Momentary insights—wondering, awe at doors opening to higher realms—cf. Peter Kreeft: *Doors in Walls of the World: Signs of Transcendence in the Human Story*
2. Pivotal past events—overwhelming reality of Calling, divine Promptings, Spirit’s Convictings; historical phenomena (Exodus; Resurrection); Jacob’s Ladder (Gn 28:10-22) illustrative
3. Miracles explained away, disregarded, denied

II. DISTRACTED—“we are distracted from distraction by distraction” (T.S. Eliot)

A. Life-Illustrations

1. Crises (real or imagined) get instant attention—COVID-19 (pandemic rather than panic?); DDT phobia & deadly consequences; cholesterol threats & “fat free” foods speciousness; Critical Race Theory threats; wisdom needed to discern momentary or long term threats
2. Pleasures divert attention—diabetic eating cake; philanderer sacrificing family; nation spending to secure immediate prosperity; entertain rather than instruct or edify
3. Novelties dislodge Permanent Things—pop percussion-based “rock” preferred to classical (e.g. Bach) intricacy embracing “latest” without asking whether it’s finest;

B. Transcendent Realities disregarded

1. Crises—wars, famines, injustices, distract us from deeper goodnesses; e.g. *White Too Long* focuses exclusively on American Christians’ (and especially Southern Baptists’) wrongdoings
2. Pleasures—this-worldly satisfactions consume consciousness, denying us opportunity to consider more serious, ultimate issues
3. Novelties—cults; “spiritualities,” ideologies, gnostic fads supplant traditions

III. SUPPRESSING—Rom 1:18-23; R.C. Sproul: *The Psychology of Atheism*

A. Life-Illustrations

1. Childhood memories—losses; abuse; deeply buried;
2. Difficult tasks—dieting; disciplined work; blaming “system” or parents or whomever

B. Transcendent Realities buried, painted over—cf. C.S. Lewis’s *The Discarded Image*

1. “Why” questions (“Why am I here,” “Where am I going,” “What’s it all about?”), metaphysics eliminated
1. Guilt for sin requiring repentance—MacBeth washing hands
2. Lesser, man-made gods more congenial than Jahwe/Jesus

IV. INTIMIDATED—fears of various sorts

A. Life Illustrations

1. Brain-washing by Chinese & various Communist regimes—“confessions coerced” in Stalin’s “show trials” and Maoists’ Cultural Revolution
2. Thought-control in “re-education camps” of various sorts (universities & corporations & military today); N.B.: Yeoni Park: *In Order to Live—Korean woman appraises Columbia University*
3. Propaganda (political, cultural) designed to overwhelm, coerce
4. Douglas Murray: *The Madness of Crowds; Gender, Race, and Identity Politics*; Charles Mackay: *Extraordinary Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*

B. Transcendent Realities shoved aside, stamped down, rendered mute

1. Public schools—indoctrination re Naturalistic Evolution, History, Gender,
2. Media—documented *Left Turn* with growing punitive dimensions
3. Public Square—legislatures & courts punishing allegiance to Divine Authority—e.g. Jack Phillips
4. Religion—original monotheism discarded in pre-historic world—cf. Winfred Corduan: *In the Beginning God: A Fresh Case for Original Monotheism*; Ethical Monotheism (Jewish & Christian) targeted by modern critics & foes