

Benedict's Thinking – IV

July 30, 2011

In the fourth and last part of this overview of Bishop Tissier's *Faith Imperilled by Reason* the Bishop pronounces judgment upon Pope Benedict XVI's system of re-interpreting the Catholic Faith in order to make it more accessible to modern man. Defenders of the Pope might accuse the Bishop of presenting only one side of the Pope's thinking, but that side is there, and the Bishop is right to bring it out into the open, and to show its coherence as a system of error, because the more truth is mixed with it, the better disguised it will be, and the more damage it can do to the salvation of souls.

In Chapter IX of his tract, Bishop Tissier shows how the Pope changes what Catholics believe in, and why. True Catholics believe in the Articles of Faith as defined by the Church, which they accept because of the objective authority of God revealing them. But to Benedict this seems an abstract religion of cold definitions, so instead he will say, "Faith is a meeting with Jesus, a person, the presence of God, a presence of love." Now belief changed in this way may feel more warm and personal, but it also risks being the vague fruit of personal experience, based on subjective feelings, which are unreliable. But who really wants a tottering bridge to Heaven, just because it feels good?

In Chapter X the Bishop goes on to show how the whole system of belief totters which emerges from this change, because Benedict's recipe for a felt Catholicism is to purify dogmas of their non-essential past, and enrich them with a more understanding awareness drawn from the present. But the prime former of present-day awareness is the philosopher Kant, followed by Benedict, who holds that God cannot be proved, but only postulated or fabricated according to men's needs, which take the place of objective realities. In any such world, how many people will postulate God at all? Small wonder if in 1996

Cardinal Ratzinger foresaw a dim future for the Church.

In his Afterword, Bishop Tissier concludes that the synthesis between modernity and Catholicism being subjectively sought for by Benedict's imperative need for a reconciliation between his Catholic heart and his modern head, is impossible. For instance, the Pope wants to believe that the Rights of Man, idolized in every democracy of today, are merely the up-dating of Christianity, but they are in fact its death. Implicit in their logic is a declaration of independence from God, and of liberation from all constriction by any God-given human nature. They are in fact an atom bomb in modern man's war on God, a keystone in the New World Order.

So the Pope, says the Bishop, must put no hopes for upholding the world in any such "mutual purification and regeneration" of religion and reason in view of their "mutual enrichment." When it comes to religion, secularized reason has little or nothing of value to offer, and all attempts of Catholic theologians to come to terms with it will collapse like a house of cards, just like the New World Order that such theologians are hoping to serve. And the Bishop gives to St. Paul the last word – "For other foundations no man can lay, but that which is laid: which is Christ Jesus" (I Cor.III, 11).

Bishop Tissier's complete tract has been available in French, but it may for the moment be out of print. English and Italian translations are accessible on the Internet.

Kyrie eleison.