

'Searching for God' cont.

Should you venture to read it, I would warn you of two things: it is a philosophical book and mostly requires an academic level of English. Secondly, Bentley Hart is bit of a 'street fighter' when it comes to dealing with his opponents and he does not pull his punches, as they say.

His major arguments in demolishing atheism is that those who attack belief in God from a materialist belief in 'scientism' make the mistake of arguing against a 'god' that Theist do not actually believe in.

Searching for evidence of a god using the scientific method is a complete blind alley. The God of the major religious traditions, he argues, is *Being* itself, personal consciousness and bliss.

Scientism may well analyse *what* something is and *how* it came to be in its current state but it fails to wonder *that* it is in the first place. Mere scientific atheism, he points out, is an enclosed and ultimately illogical system which cannot explain why there is anything at all if there is no absolute being quite separate from the physical objects in existence.

At one point, he uses the analogy of the novel *Anna Karenina* by Tolstoy. Atheists are like people expecting to find evidence of Tolstoy somewhere among the events and characters of his own novel, whereas the author is not part of his book. You might discover certain attributes of the author expressed in elements of the novel but what is obvious is that the novel has an author, just as Creation has God. Scientific Atheists appear to be saying, by analogy, that *Anna Karenina* has no need of an author!

In The Temple

As Orthodox Christians we should share what St. Paul calls 'the mind of Christ.' This way of seeing *in God's way* implies that we are, spiritually, already on our way into the kingdom of God and have been since our baptism. This is why we must continually repent of everything in our life that is unworthy of the kingdom. This applies to everything, small and great and is especially true of when we come to the temple to pray and be part of the Liturgy. When the priest begins, '*Blessed is the kingdom...*' we are reminded that though our bodily feet are standing upon earth, our souls are peering to the heart of heaven. How then, should we comport ourselves in church? Here are a few suggestions that we might consider in order to be truer to this understanding and be more in harmony with the mind of Christ. We should dress appropriately: though it is not a place to show fashionable extravagance, we should, nevertheless, wear our best clothes with modesty. Gentlemen should not wear short trousers or short sleeved shirts; shirts should not be unbuttoned too low at the neck. Their heads should be uncovered. Ladies should not wear short skirts or low cut tops and should cover their arms. It is a pious custom for them to cover the head. Before the service we should be as silent as possible and should avoid idle chatter and talking during the Liturgy. As soon as possible, our children should be taught this and to enter the temple with a sense of awe, humility and wonder. A simple way of inculcating this is to make three metanoias (low bows with the sign of the cross) in the Narthex, before coming in through the door. It is especially important that utter silence and reverence be observed before approaching the holy chalice.

SERVICES

Vespers is normally served on Saturday's at 5.00pm in the Saints of Britain chapel. Fr. Chrysostom is available for Confession afterwards. The *Proskomedie* is served at 9.00am and *Orthros* before the Liturgy at 9.30am.

SEPTEMBER

Sun 7th 13th after Pentecost
Divine Liturgy 10.30am

Mon 8th Nativity of the
Theotokos



Sun 14th Elevation of the Life
Giving Cross Divine Liturgy
10.30am (*Fast Day with Wine and Oil*)

Sun 21st 15th after Pentecost
Divine Liturgy 10.30am

Sun 28th 16th after Pentecost
Divine Liturgy 10.30am



OCTOBER

Sun 5th 17th after Pentecost
Divine Liturgy 10.30am

Sun 12th 18th after Pentecost
Divine Liturgy 10.30am

Sun 19th 19th after Pentecost
Divine Liturgy 10.30am

Sun 26th 20th after
Pentecost Divine Liturgy 10.30am