



Course: Awakening Wonder: Truth, Goodness, and Beauty

With Dr. Stephen Turley

Lesson 6: Consecrated Thinking – Scripture and the Moral Imagination

Outline:

“Cosmic piety” reflects the transcendent values of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty

- The ancient Greek educational project of paideia involved a two-fold purification, (both intellectual and moral), wherein the human capacities to recognize, (and fully engage oneself with), Truth, Goodness, and Beauty, were cultivated.
- Among the capacities that were cultivated, within the ancient Greek educational project, was the “moral imagination”: the faculty that allows us to “perceive the divinely infused meaning of the cosmos” as well as the “integrative center for the logical, moral, and aesthetic dimensions of life.” (Awakening Wonder, p. 66, 84)
- The moral imagination operates within the “symbolic universe” of sacred texts.
- Students within the ancient educational project of paideia would undergo a total “transformation” (“morphosis”) into “living embodiments of the virtues” that were depicted in the sacred texts. Thus, they imitated (“mimesis”) the sacred drama of the cosmos.
- Early Christian paideia occurred within the parameters of the “ekklesia” (Church/“New Jerusalem”), modeled on the ancient Greek polis as a citizen assembly.
- “Scientia”: knowledge as a result of problem-solving
- “Theoria”: seeks a vision of the Divine and the Cosmos
- Roy Rappaport’s analysis of “cultural meaning systems”: the worldview of a population consists of an architecture of levels and distinctions.
- Rappaport’s “cognized model”:
 - “Ultimate Sacred Postulates”: foundational beliefs that are absolute and unquestionable
 - “Cosmological axioms”: beliefs about the structure of the universe in relation to the sacred
 - “Culture”
 - “Conduct”/“Ethics”
- Ancient Hellenistic and Early Christian Epistemology: Knowledge is grounded in awe and wonder in relation to the Transcendent and Sacred.
- Fundamental Early Christian presupposition: God reveals Himself in history.
- Modern Secular Thought: Knowledge is grounded in doubt, skepticism, and the scientific method.