

Theological Insights in a Godless world

These are suggested as points for discussion rather than final conclusions.

1. Those engaged in the production of sheet steel in the Abbey Works were thoroughly secularised. They manage their work without consciousness of God.
2. The steelworks was typical of many other social institutions in the modern world, they are all secularised. Some institutions contain vestiges of their religious past – schools, the army, the monarchy.
3. Secularisation affects the social ethics of the institution. Moral attitudes are determined within the social life of the institution without formal reference to the inherited standards of the Judeo-Christian tradition.
4. We need to find a language and set of ideas with which to present the Christian Gospel to those in secularised society.
5. The traditional, institutional, churches have not found it easy to come to terms with the challenge of secularisation.
6. The popular understanding of the nature of God is that he is a supernatural being and as such he carries a baggage of issues such as miracles, divine intervention, angels and so on. This image of God is incomprehensible to secularised people and, indeed, to many Church members.
7. The attempt by the churches to re-convert the world to belief in a supernatural God has signally failed and there is evidence that some of them are gradually changing this approach, e.g. the content of sermons, changes to the words of old hymns.
8. The Bible itself has many parts in which different images of God emerge, and these images are finding a place in some contemporary preaching and in the words and the changing words of popular hymns.
9. The idea that faith means an intellectual acceptance of dogmatic propositions should be replaced by the idea of faith as a response of the heart, mind and will to the stories of the faith without dependence on their historic veracity.
10. This idea of religious faith is already seen in the minds of many scientists and there is evidence that some scientists are influenced in their thinking by their religious background.