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Sacred vs ?

What goes in the place of the question mark? The world tells you to fill in the blank with "secular." But that's not the word God would choose. This is an example of how we make our world a place of dichotomies and opposites – up/down, in/out, black/white, good/bad; each with an equivalence and an equality between terms. And we generally accept these dichotomies and equivalences without much thought.

However, there are dichotomies that are not equivalent. The first and greatest one would be "God." If we are asked for the opposite of God we respond "the devil." But the devil is not God's opposite and he is not an equivalence. He is a creation of God and a negation of what makes God holy. He is not God's equal. He is only a nemesis.

We fall into this same problem when we make "secular" the opposite of sacred. What is secular? Something which isn't sacred? That's hardly a definition. Maybe our question should be, "What makes something sacred?"

When God created all things, He declared them "good." We tend to create dichotomies in God's creation and our actions. James 1:27 tells us "religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress." Orphans, widows – this is hardly the stuff of burning bushes and pillars of fire, of walking on water and healing the blind. All of those things would be considered holy and sacred but orphans and widows? When we begin to divide the world between sacred and secular we misunderstand God's creation. (If you were to ask men where would they put sex in this equation they would stammer and stutter. If you ask women where they would put chocolate – without hesitation – it's holy.)

I Cor. 10:31 "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." The truth is – all there is – is the holy – to the glory of God. But then how do we account for the rest of our experience and our dichotomies? Eating is good, over eating is gluttony. Sex in marriage is holy. Sex outside of marriage is not. So all there is, is the holy

and the abuse of the holy. There is NO secular. After each day of creation God declared "This is good!" All that God has created is good. It is the abuse of that good which creates our pathologies and dysfunctions. Yet, there is one time in creation that God utters – "It is not good." What part of His creation isn't good, isn't holy?

"It is not good for man to be alone." is a reflection of incompleteness not abuse or evil. Was God not enough for Adam? Or did God, knowing the intimate details and personality of His creation, create man as incomplete without communion and community? That is why a prepared environment is more than physical. It is emotional, social, and spiritual designed to meet the needs of the child. Traditional educational structures create tension by focusing largely on academics and competition ignoring the spiritual, social and family construct that God created in us for mutual love, respect and support.

This incompleteness, this lack of meeting the child's needs leads to stunted growth, dysfunctional souls and deformed personalities. Sin has been defined as "missing the mark" how much more is incompleteness missing God's intention. The ultimate incompleteness is to nurture and educate children without God and then try to substitute a vague spirituality for the very real presence of God in the child's life. To fail to share with the child the nomenclature (the name) of God is to hinder and frustrate them as they piece together the mystery of creation and their part in it.

In your work – your holy work – where you are helping the child as he forms his personality out of the DNA that God put in him take every opportunity to name the name of God, to draw attention to God's great creation whether it's in geography, botany, math or language or within the child. Point the child to God so that the child has an opportunity to choose God. Present God so the child has a choice. A child can no more name and choose a God who is not present than he can name and choose a pink tower that is missing.

In the end – the eternal end – when everything is complete, "Well done 'good' and faithful servant" will have a special meaning – the "good" of completeness.