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attacks of 9/11.
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modern weapons that were not available earlier!

What we see in Amsterdam is the conflict of two religions – the religion of the Koran of the Muslims and the religion of secular humanism of the Dutch, and the secular humanism of the Dutch is no match for the Koran.

It was not always so. At one time Holland was a Christian nation. After they won their freedom from Catholic Spain they were a Protestant Christian nation. You remember, the Pilgrims from England went first to Leyden in Holland before they sailed for the New World. Holland was a Christian nation, but gradually the religion of secular humanism infiltrated – like yeast in dough, the action was invisible. The change came so gradually it was not noticed, this leaven of malice and wickedness, until people could not see the difference. Indeed, secular humanism produces the very blindness we see in the courtroom in Amsterdam: they could not believe what they were seeing and hearing.

As we see it in the Dutch, secular humanism has two main points – equality and progress. Both are illusions. More than that, they are contradictory illusions. “Progress” says we are better than those who lived before us, better than George Washington, who did not even have a TV! But “equality” says we are all the same. The two illusions are contradictory, but both appeal to our pride.

It comes as a surprise to some of us to learn that the Christian Faith teaches neither equality nor progress. Instead of equality, our Lord taught brotherhood. And if there is anything in this world that is not equal, it is two brothers! That is why brotherhood is so important. One brother has ten talents, another has five, another has only one. The stronger brother is supposed to protect the weaker; the smarter brother to look out for the one who is not so quick. That is brotherhood. And, you will not find “progress” mentioned anywhere in the Bible. Nor in the Prayer Book, nor in the Creeds, nor in the 39 Articles, nor in the Offices of Instruction, nor in the Catechism. The Christian Faith does not teach progress. It teaches salvation and the new life and the kingdom of God.

And it was this kingdom of God that Charles Martel (Charles the Hammer) was defending when he led the Christian knights out to the Battle of Tours in 732. The Muslims, with their Koran, had come around both ends of the Mediterranean Sea, to the east through Turkey and into Europe, to the west through Spain and up into France. The Muslim armies were within fifty miles of Paris when Charles Martel and the Christian knights defeated them and turned them back! They did not do this for the sake of multi-culturalism! And Charles the Hammer’s grandson was Charlemagne. (The Germans were realistic in naming their kings. There was Charles the Fair and Charles the Bald and Charles the Fat, but this one was Charles the Great!) And for forty-four years, Charlemagne campaigned every summer, defending the borders of Christendom. The Dark Ages began when Rome could no longer defend its borders from invaders; the Dark Ages began to recede as Charlemagne protected his borders and made secure the life of his people.

The secular humanism that we see in Amsterdam today cannot stand up to the religion of Islam. But the Christian faith can. It has already done so, again and again. Maybe it is time we take a fresh look at what the Christian Faith really teaches!

A Sermon at All Saints Church, Pensacola, Florida, Sunday, September 11, 2005;

The Rev. Hugh B. Hall, Jr.