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5-3-1 Assignment for Hollinger Chapter 3

Questions:

1. The idea that science will lead us to a better and more intelligent existence as human beings, and that humanity could liberate itself from traditions and natural limits is referred to as what?
2. What are the two implications of pluralism's effects on the application of Christian ethics to culture?
3. What is functional rationality?
4. Within secularized societies, what practical effect does pluralization and differentiation have on the role of religion?
5. At the heart of modernity's intellectual agenda was the pursuit of what?

Answers

1. The ethos of modernity.
2. Pluralism tends to create a psychological disposition toward moral relativism, and there is difficulty in bringing the Christian ethic to bear on a society consisting of numerous worldviews diverging from the Christian worldview.
3. The imposition of rational controls over the material universe, over social relations, and the self.
4. Religion plays a diminished role in secularized societies, largely relegated to the private sphere.
5. The pursuit of truth with certitude.

Terms

Secularization: a process occurring within societies and cultures whereby religion no longer plays the dominant role in shaping major social institutions.
Rationalism: one of two epistemological traditions of modernity, the belief that reason alone was sufficient to knowing all there was to discern about the world and life.
Empiricism: one of two epistemological traditions of modernity, the view that all knowledge was based on experience and the senses.

Summary:

In Chapter 4 Hollinger examines the concept of modernity, a mode of social life originating in the 17th century during the rise of new philosophical understandings of the world and scientific advances that would liberate humanity from its traditions and the limits of nature, and its impact on the moral life. Hollinger examines the intellectual components of modernity represented by the its two schools of thought, rationalism and empiricism, which focused on the notion of progress and eliminating the necessity of God or divine revelation to in determining the ethical

life. He then examined the sociological components of modernity, commenting on how the differentiation, pluralization, and secularization of society, as a direct result of the leaps forward in technology beginning, with the industrial revolution and continuing through the advent of computers and the internet, has presented challenges for Christian ethics. Hollinger concludes that although every epoch carries its own evil, modernity is particularly devastating since it carried “within itself seeds of moral and spiritual destruction.”