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11-23-2010

### November 23, 2010: Religion, Art, Science and Philosophy Are Invitations

Bruce Ledewitz

*Duquesne University*, [ledewitz@duq.edu](mailto:ledewitz@duq.edu)

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#### Repository Citation

Ledewitz, B. (2010). November 23, 2010: Religion, Art, Science and Philosophy Are Invitations. Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/ledewitz-hallowedsecularism/480>

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Title: Religion, Art, Science and Philosophy Are Invitations

Date: 2010-11-23T05:00:00.000-05:00

11/23/2010—Yesterday, I was privileged to hear my friend and teacher, Robert Taylor, address his class in Law and Religion on the subject of his philosophy of religion. I am sorry that the address did not take place on a larger stage. Robert had previously told me he is not going to publish his remarks, so I will not presume to reproduce them here. But two statements stood out. Robert began his address by describing the four fundamental realms of access to truth: religion, art, science and philosophy. While the rest of us might regard these four ways of life as independent, or even hostile to each other, Robert described them all as invitations. All of us might have different terms for what the invitation is to. But I have been struck since yesterday in reflection that the great spirits in all four realms have often overlapped these realms: the scientists who see reality better through music; the scientist who sees the mind of God in physics and so forth. This should come as no surprise. Reality, after all, is not a bunch of different things. Reality is fundamentally one thing that looks different from different points of view. That last sentence is another example of overlap, since it was our religions that first taught humanity that reality is one thing. Scientists have been on the traces of the theory of everything ever since. The other thing Robert said was that there are only two commandments: to love God and to love otherness and that they amount to the same thing. Robert reminded me of the story in the New Testament (Luke: 10) where the lawyer asked how to live and Jesus replied to look to the tradition. The man then said to love God and neighbor, which Jesus confirmed. The lawyer then wanted to know how far “neighbor” went and Jesus replied with the parable of the Samaritan, a group that Jews of the time did not accept. In other words, love otherness. Judaism of Jesus’ time did not call this one commandment, but two. But Robert is surely right that they are one, even as the Sh’ma says that God is one.