**While there is still time**

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, 1983.

**Food for thought…**

(Short summary by Jean-Marie Choffray)

<https://www.templetonprize.org/laureate-sub/solzhenitsyn-acceptance-speech/>

“ Over half a century ago, while I was still a child, I recall hearing a number of older people offer the following explanation for the great disasters that had befallen Russia: ‘Men have forgotten God; that’s why all this has happened.’ […] If I were asked today to formulate as concisely as possible the main cause of the ruinous revolution that swallowed up some 60 million of our people, I could not put it more accurately than to repeat: ‘Men have forgotten God; that’s why all this has happened.’ […] The failings of human consciousness, deprived of its divine dimension, have been a determining factor in all the major crimes of the twentieth century. […] Today’s world has reached a stage which, if it had been described to preceding centuries, would have called forth the cry: ‘This is the Apocalypse!’ […] The entire 20th century is being sucked into the vortex of atheism and self-destruction. […] Faith was the shaping and unifying force of the nation. […] It was Dostoevsky, once again, who drew from the French Revolution and its seething hatred for the Church the lesson that ‘revolution must necessarily begin with atheism.’ […] Militant atheism is not merely incidental or marginal to communist policy; it is not a side effect, but the central pivot. […] As is always the case in times of persecution and suffering, the awareness of God in my country has attained great acuteness and profundity. […] Unnoticeably, through decades of gradual erosion, the meaning of life in the West ceased to stand for anything more lofty than the pursuit of ‘happiness’, a goal that has even been solemnly guaranteed by constitutions. The concepts of good and evil have been ridiculed. […] Atheist teachers in the West are bringing up a younger generation in a spirit of hate for their own society. […] The contemporary developed West demonstrates by its own example that human salvation can be found neither in the profusion of material goods nor in merely making money. […] This unquenchable hatred then spreads to all that is alive, to life itself, to the world with its colors, sounds and shapes, to the human body. […] The social theories which have promised so much have demonstrated their bankruptcy, leaving us in a dead end. […] Material laws alone do not explain our life or give it direction. […] Instead of the ill-advised hopes of the last two centuries, which have reduced us to insignificance and brought us to the brink of nuclear and non-nuclear death, we can only reach with determination for the warm hand of God, which we have so rashly and self-confidently pushed away. […] Our five continents are caught in a whirlwind. But it is during such trials that the highest gifts of the human spirit are manifested. If we perish and lose this world, the fault will be ours alone.”