

“The Hope of Argentina”

One of my favorite Christian spokesmen in Argentina is Salador Dellutri. I admire his passion for truth, for the church, and for his nation. In my You Tube channel (Lester R. Juarez), one of his videos generates praise: “A mi criterio, es el pensador cristiano mas interesante que tenemos en Argentina” y “Yo estoy en México y tanto mi hija como yo, pensamos que es el mejor predicador actualmente y por mucho!!!”

Recently, Dellutri published an interesting essay: “La biblia: base y *esperanza de la argentina*” (in *La Biblia en La Cultura Argentina*). Several of his assertions stimulated questions in my mind that I propose for further discussion (below). Here are three paragraphs from pages nine and ten that provide some context. (My questions are based upon the phrases in italics in the title and text.)

Argentina today, two hundred years after that July 9, 1816 when a group of patriots declared our independence, has become a frivolous, materialistic, violent nation, jaded with corruption, that is the result of systematically and perniciously sowing a seed that, based on humanist philosophies with mistaken anthropological conceptions, has been undermining the minds of young people and adults. We are politically independent, but we are slaves of decay and servants of corruption.

Faced with this scenario, we ask ourselves: Can we have hope? The answer must be given without false optimism or gloomy pessimism, because hope is conditional. We can have hope if, as in the times of the scribe Ezra (a spiritual rebuildier of his people) we are willing to re-found our nation on valid spiritual principles. If, as Argentines, we rescue that foundational book [the Bible] to find again in its pages the lost path. We can have hope, if we are willing to repent, in the biblical and evangelical sense of the term.

It is time that the word repentance resounds in our country, because a genuine repentance (the result of breaking our arrogance) will be manifested in authentic changes that will restore credibility to citizens and institutions.

Theme One: “Re-found Our Nation”

- 1) What does this mean practically? Must there be a restoration of the foundational principals of the nation? Were those concepts biblical or a mixture of worldviews and political ideas, such as in the United States? Does the prefix, “re” (establish), indicate a belief that Argentina was once a biblical republic that has since deviated from its true identity? What is the purpose of Argentina today?
- 2) Were the means used to gain independence just and proportional in terms of force? Were the native peoples treated with justice? What is the historical vision and current perception of Argentines about other nations in South America?

Theme Two: “The Hope of Argentina”

- 1) What is the hope of Argentina? Based upon the first paragraph quoted, it seems to be a reversal of the corrupt and materialistic culture that pervades the nation. On the other hand, the hope appears to be a restoration of “valid spiritual principles” through mass repentance or revival. Guatemala boasts an active and widespread evangelistic population, but it is a nation of tremendous corruption and poverty. How would Argentina escape the same fate, even if “we are willing to repent, in the biblical and evangelical sense of the term”?
- 2) What is realistically envisioned for Argentina: a “Christian” republic, democratic capitalism or a social reform movement?

- 3) Does this vision propose any role for those who disagree with evangelicalism, such as traditional Catholicism or non-Christian worldviews?
- 4) For whom does biblical hope apply: the church or the nation? To whom does the following passage apply? "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land." (2Chron 7:14)

Theme Three: "Rescue that Foundational Book [the Bible]"

- 1) Practically speaking, what does this require: Bible literacy in the public schools and universities? Christian study and research centers? A Christian university? Support for Christian professors serving in the universities? Economic scholarships for believers seeking advanced degrees? Christian study of worldviews, politics, and economics? Enhanced biblical-theological training for pastors? Greater economic support for local seminaries? Preaching against anti-intellectualism and theological-biblical ignorance? What is the institutional, economic, and educational infrastructure needed to implement this vision?
- 2) How does this vision work when the Christian worldview is intellectually implausible and existentially unattractive among the intelligentsia? How does this work when Christians are excluded as cultural gate-keepers, lack political power and higher education, or economic resources? How does this work when Catholicism is still closely linked with the state?

Theme Four: "Our Country Resounds with the Word, Repentance"

- 1) Who needs to repent: the church or the nation in order for the desired effect to result: "cambios auténticos que devolverán credibilidad a los ciudadanos y las instituciones"?
- 2) Does repentance include Paul's exhortation: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind" (Rom 12:2a)? If so, what resources and infrastructure are needed?
- 3) What is the calling for Christians in Argentina: national and cultural restoration and/or the maturation of the church?
- 4) What kinds of thought-leaders are needed to achieve this vision and what kind of preparation is necessary?