

## Prince Charles praises Islamic principles on environment

Al Webb | Jun. 15, 2010

LONDON (RNS) Prince Charles, heir to the British throne and next in line as titular head of the Church of England, says Western society should learn from Islamic principles to save the environment.

Charles told an audience at the Oxford Center for Islamic Studies on Wednesday (June 9) that "the Islamic world is the custodian of one of the greatest treasures of accumulated wisdom and spiritual knowledge available to humanity."

The prince is a lifelong Christian and the heir to the crown now worn by his mother, Queen Elizabeth II. With his accession will come the centuries-old job of leading the Church of England.

Charles, who has studied the Quran, and who has been the Oxford center's royal patron for the past 17 years, added that "my understanding of Islam is that it warns that to deny the reality of our inner being leads to an inner darkness which can quickly extend outward into the world of nature."

"If we ignore the calling of the soul," he said, "then we destroy nature."

Islam, said Charles, has a "noble heritage and a priceless gift" to offer the world. "And yet," he said, "that wisdom is now obscured by the dominant drive toward Western materialism -- the feeling that to be truly modern, you have to ape the West."

Consider "very carefully," he said, "whether a big part of the solution to all our worldwide crises does not lie simply in more and better technology, but in the recovery of the soul to the mainstream of our thinking."

"Our science and technology cannot do this. Only sacred traditions have the capacity to help this."

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