



# The Regensburg Lecture

*James V. Schall*

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## **The Regensburg Lecture** James V. Schall

Pope Benedict XVI's Regensburg Lecture (included in the book) called for freedom of conscience in Religious matters and a reasoned debate. Not everyone agreed." Overshadowed by the violent reaction and rioting throughout the world, the September 12, 2006, lecture by Pope Benedict XVI at Regensburg, Germany, at the University where he once taught, is a multifaceted and brilliant speech that addresses the very nature of man's understanding of a free conscience, his thirst for knowledge in both reason and revelation, his understanding of the limitations of the will, and the nature of his ability to understand his neighbor. It explains the Church's historical claims that Christ himself is Logos (as the opening of John's Gospel proclaims), a term meaning "word", "logic," and "speech." One's faith is to be grounded in a self-limiting God, Who does not capriciously change the rules on humans but Who reveals himself to our reason as well as our hearts. As God Who respects his Creation enough to give man free will, and thus a free conscience and an ability to fail; Who leads man, through both reason and revelation, to Himself, always in peace and never in violence; Who is a God of Life, not Death. The lecture is only a few pages of text, yet it encapsulates not only theoretical history of the Church, but touches on the most poignant current problems the world witnesses, namely, the rise of terrorism and the confrontation between reason and will, between the Word and the Sword. Though incredibly timely, it is as timeless as the Gettysburg address, Pericles' funeral Oration, Plato's Apology, and Henry V's Speech on St. Crispin's Day. No doubt it will be studied and read for generations to come, not only by Catholics, not only by Christians but by men of good will world over. " What was obscured by all the controversy over Pope Benedict's lecture at Regensburg was the important argument about the interdependency of faith and reason that was the substance

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