

Altruistic Atheism

People think of Atheists as selfish people. This is in part because a philosophy called Objectivism, which is atheistic, extols greed as a virtue and selflessness as evil. Communism didn't do Atheists any good either. But the other part of why Atheists are considered selfish is the belief that if you have God, that God will make you generous. God makes you generous because when his holy spirit merges into you you become divinely inspired to be a good person. Alternatively, for those who don't hear the "Word of God" clearly in their heart you have the reward of eternal life in paradise vs. eternal punishment in Hell. Quite the carrot and stick to get people to fork over some bucks to the poor. So - it's easy to see why Theists would want to be generous and selfless. And many believers believe that without a God that there is no reason to be good and therefore there's nothing stopping Atheists from being evil. Or is there?

For those of you who know an Atheist personally, you'll probably notice that these people are not really any different than Theists in the way they live. They don't eat their children. They tend to obey the laws and are good upstanding members of society. They donate money to feed the starving children, they attend PTA meetings and they are honest hard-working productive members of society. But how can that be without the promise of eternal life or the threat of punishment? Why can these people be good without God?

Atheism and Altruism are a good fit because selflessness achieves our selfish goal of survival and help us thrive as a community.

Interestingly enough, the same can be asked of Christians. When you take "forgiveness of sins" and that you are saved by faith and not by works, we Atheists see that as a giant loophole in the rule book. The simple view is that a Christian can get away with anything because Jesus died and bought them a ticket to eternal life so they can now get away with anything as long as they have faith and keep getting forgiven. One could even argue that if you don't sin, then Jesus died for nothing and that sin honors his sacrifice. But in spite of forgiveness and grace, for some odd reason, Christians tend to behave themselves. Even the ones from "those denominations" that you know are probably going to Hell anyhow. (Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Catholics, etc.) So why is it that believers behave themselves?

As I stated in the last chapter, it is human nature to give. It is human nature to need to be an upstanding member of society. We are biologically programmed to form groups and work together. It is the way we are. Altruism is something that evolved that has become key to our very survival. It is as natural as eating, breathing, fear, sex, and everything else we do to survive. So in spite of what the Objectivists say, Atheists are as normal and as generous and live a life that is not that different than believers. Other than perhaps having more tattoos and more free sex, we are just like everyone else. We are normal people just like you are.

If religion goes away, if tomorrow there were no believers, society would not degenerate into selfish anarchy. Morality would not go away. We wouldn't become a lawless culture. Right and wrong would still exist. Why? Because these are things that are necessary for survival. So believers need not fear that an Atheistic society is going to bring down humanity. If God doesn't exist and Realism took over the culture, all the good stuff stays. People will still live in peace and harmony, love each other, take care of each other, and be generous. In fact one could say Atheist generosity is more generous than Christian generosity because we don't have a selfish reason that compels us to be generous. We just do it out of the natural goodness of our hearts.

Believers tend to believe that "man has an evil nature" and by default we are of sin. And it is only from God that goodness originates. But that just isn't so because people who are godless are just as good (if not better) than those who believe. In reality, humanity has a predominately good nature, but not always. Some people are selfish and take more than their share. A lot of people's behavior is learned, so if we teach our children what is right, then they will tend to grow up doing the right thing. Most everyone wants to do what is right whether you are a Theist or an Atheist. We just don't always agree on what that is.

We in the Church of Reality however, state to the rest of society that we choose to be good moral upstanding citizens and that we want all the good things that believers want. And we commit to a reality-based method for determining what that is and we think that reality is something that is safe enough that a believer doesn't have to worry about moving in

next door to a realist. If you read our {In:Sacred Principles} and what our religion is about, you will see that if we stick with what we say we are, that we are no threat to civilization. There is a reason for Atheists being altruistic and we in the Church of Reality embrace it.