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Satire, Reason & Scripture – Part 1

Comic entertainment frequently expresses the worldviews of its time. By its very nature, it uses irony. It also frequently contains sarcastic cynicism. Such use of highly developed comical satire is ancient; just read some of Aristophanes' satirical plays (c. 400 B.C.).

It appears to me that such negativity has become increasingly prevalent within comic monologs, especially during late-night-television entertainment. There seems to be a deepening attraction to cynical perspectives, which is reflected in the humor society is drawn towards or enjoys. Distrust of political, religious and business personalities and institutions cannot be said to be unfounded or new. Yet concurrently, many appear increasingly cynical in their assessment of not only the conditions within societies, but of the character of humanity itself.

What seems peculiar is that many who have such cynical worldviews also incongruously express their belief that human nature, basically, is *good*. – Huh? – Does gravity push upward? It is also quite common for many holding such asymmetric positions to also have a most distrusting, angry and accusatory view of God himself: "If there is a God, he's *bad* ..." commonly followed by a David Hume type philosophical argument, e.g. 'if God were *good*, he would not allow *bad* to happen.' Yet, the last position destroys the rational grounds for asserting the earlier position that 'humanity basically is good.' (i.e. if God created humanity basically good, exactly what is bad about that, or if used to support atheism, how can so much *bad* be perpetrated by a *good* humanity without a non-human scapegoat? – God.)

This atheistic dilemma results in the need for a substitute scapegoat, an 'all *bad* is environmentally caused' explanation. Such an attempt for rational explanation, treating *a* factor as *the* unequivocal cause, is itself intellectually circular and incongruous since the environment is substantially the result of human activity, which has been asserted naively as 'basically good.' This finally leads humanist in search of the ultimate scapegoat as the fundamental cause of human evil conduct, the illusive '*badness*' gene/s, over simplistically subjecting all behavior under the dictatorship of 'will-control' genes, ultimately rejecting the concept of a freewill component as an illusion. Such humanist positions are generally designed to eliminate individual accountability.

Yet, treating mechanical triggers that *influence tendencies* as being the ultimate causes that *necessitate* resultant *character*, falls far short of providing a profound, holistic explanation. Even identical twins or those with extremely similar backgrounds and experiences often have dramatic differences in character. Thus, *additional factors* other than those presented above must *also* exist. Atheistic-humanist proponents have failed to overthrow the notion of free choice and thus, to invalidate human accountability.

Yet, a search through Scripture leaves one hardly naive regarding the fallen nature and behavioral *tendencies* of humankind. It is one of Scripture's strongest warnings (Jer. 17:9; Ro. 7:18; Mic. 7:2-6; Ge. 6:5), which also predicts dire world conditions, which get dramatically worse. – Bummer.

Next week's part-two will discuss how Scripture contends with pseudo-enlightened humanist perspectives.