

The End of Pretense

by Lynn Andrew

“What has religion done for us but incite irrational behavior?—war, cruelty, and enslavement caused by religious differences; plundering and disrespect of the environment. Let us pretend God does not exist and see if we can get people to behave better; let us see if we can make wise decisions without regard to mysteries that are in any case beyond the ken of man. We know enough now: we have learned what makes nature tick. Without religious impulses subverting reason, science will be our guide, and we will not fail to achieve sustainable civilization on the planet if we keep that goal in sight.”

The Enlightenment seemed to improve the world. Wars still had to be fought, but education would eventually take care of that: old governance would resist revolution, but the properly educated populace would demand and win the end of privilege and look to egalitarian government built on a scientific foundation for satisfaction in life.

Education at least instilled the need for change, and the resulting unrest tended to favor the end of privilege. Certainly it embraced the goal of sustainability—a new devotion to replace religion.

Slow progress in itself would never have disqualified the experiment. It would take a more definite failure, which began when the earth began to shrink. First came alarm and then panic when it was realized that “be fruitful and multiply” was a command of God against which laws of man are largely ineffective. Pretending God does not exist is failing to save the earth: science is not up to the task.

Back to old reality. As the smoldering enlightenment burns out and faith in its fake education wanes, the pretense will end, and everyone will have to choose whom to follow into eternity: Christ Jesus the Author of life and Savior of the world, or rebel Satan’s fake savior.