

AYN RAND AND THE BIBLE - A DISCUSSION

January 15, 2012

- I. Who was Ayn Rand (born Alisa Rosenbaum) 1905-1982?
 - A. Childhood in Russia
 - B. Experience of Communist Revolution
 - C. Emigrated to USA in 1926; early years in Hollywood
 - D. Best Known novels THE FOUNTAINHEAD and ATLAS SHRUGGED
 - E. Gathered small group of ardent, young admirers that became cult-like

- II, What is her philosophy of Objectivism?
 - A. Objectivism holds that:
 1. Reality exists as an objective absolute - facts are facts, independent of man's feelings, wishes, hopes or fears.
 2. Reason (the faculty which identifies and integrates the material provided by man's senses) is man's only means of perceiving reality, his only source of knowledge, his only guide to action, and his basic means of survival.
 3. Man-every man- is an end in himself, not the means to the ends of others. He must exist for his own sake, neither sacrificing himself to others nor sacrificing others to himself. The pursuit of his rational self-interest and of his own happiness is the highest moral purpose of his life.
 4. The ideal political-economic system is laissez-faire capitalism. It is a system where men deal with one another, not as victims and executioners nor as masters and slaves, but as traders, by free, voluntary exchange to mutual benefit.

Ayn Rand Institute, [http://www.aynrand.org/site/PageServer?Pagename=objectivism intro](http://www.aynrand.org/site/PageServer?Pagename=objectivism+intro)
 - B. The Anti-communist manifesto.
 - C. Godless individualism versus godless communism.

No proof of the existence of God exists, therefore belief is rationally indefensible.
 - D. "I have always lived by the philosophy I present in my books." Rand's life is by her own definition her applied philosophy.

Terms: Egoist, Virtue of selfishness

III. How her philosophy contrasts with scripture.

- A. Basic ethical question in Genesis 4: “Am I my brother’s keeper?” She admires only self-made achievers; all others are “losers or parasites.”
- B. Man alone is to be worshipped: quote from an interview - “Faith as such is extremely detrimental to human life.”
- C. In Bible, sin can turn any form of power into tyranny. For Rand, only collectivism is tyranny. She considered minimum wage & public housing legislation as collectivism & said JFK was like Hitler (1963).
- D. In ATLAS SHRUGGED she wrote: “Money is the root of all good.” Consistent with laissez-faire capitalism being only good economic system. In Bible & Christian theology no one God-given system.
- E. Rand had no sense of interdependent community; in scripture it is clear God created humans for community; hence justice & compassion are paramount & government is to foster these conditions.
- F. In contradiction to Jesus, she taught “Judge & prepare to be judged.” She grew more judgmental as she grew older.

IV. Why is all this important?

- A. To which kingdom or culture do we belong?
- B. Short video of Chuck Colson on Ayn Rand
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZhbE8NDTYOc>
- C. Atlas shrugged. Jesus Wept.
- D. Struggle between role of government & role of wealth/corporations