

The (belated) Decline of Christianity in the United States

Post by "Joshua" of October 19, 2019 at 8:35 PM

I've been following the Pew survey on religious identification for several years now, and there are several features of interest in the analysis. Here's the new data;

<https://www.pewforum.org/2019/10/17/in-...-at-rapid-pace/>

The most salient question that presents itself is this; *what's bloody taking so long!?* When I was a teenager, and only recently an atheist, Bill Maher made his signature "Mockumentary" *Religulous*. This film was just the right kind of funny to me, at just the right time in my life. (I bought the DVD, and later bought it again on iTunes.)

In addition to being a reliably rewatchable (if somewhat cheap) piece of mind-candy, Maher's film managed to be instructive. For example, I recall being mortified to discover that out of 30-odd developed nations, only Turkey ranked more pious than the United States. Astonishing! The country that crossed the cold hell of space and set boots on another world was little better in this respect than the corrupt sectarian shadow-puppet of the declined Ottoman Empire.

The intervening decade has brought victories as well as defeats for the religious nones in this country, but at last we seem to be putting space between our secular republic and the burgeoning Islamic Autocracy in Asia Minor; 10 years after *Religulous*, Turkey spurned the Enlightenment tradition of the West and banned Darwin from all of its textbooks. Americans, thanks in part to the internet and the "New Atheists", seem finally ready to turn a new page. Only 26% are unaffiliated today, but large concentrations of that number are to be found in the younger generations. With any luck, we'll be sidling ever closer to the secular states of Western Europe as the next decades unfold.

This will be the best chance Epicureanism has had in this country since the Enlightenment of the 18th century.