

Synopsis - How Soon Is Now?

Man seems impossibly conflicted by design, condemned to strive for the unattainable, at once encouraged and crushed.

We are compelled to believe life can be reduced to literal answers. While great progress has been made, we nevertheless remain overwhelmed by uncertainty and meaninglessness. Moreover, the impulse that drives us on toward this bewildering non-result is a source of much misery and torment, since the search for a final solution inevitably arouses authoritarian tendencies and crowds out love and mystery, rendering free will and the need to trust – ourselves, each other and God – of no lasting value.

As Kant rightly concluded, complete knowledge must be denied in order to leave room for faith.

Western Christianity has never resolved this tension, attempting instead to walk a middle path, one where God is both fundamentally unknowable and within with the cognitive bounds of a chosen few. The clergy, thank God, knows the truth! Sign up and salvation is yours.

The Enlightenment grew from an awareness that this basic premise is patently ridiculous, akin to believing marriage, with or without the honeymoon tattoo, capable of securing and manipulating the transcendence of love. The metaphysical aspects of our humanity cannot be adequately expressed as a set of rational precepts, even those revealed by God himself.

Ironically, the inspired institutions that supplanted the church have ended up adopting the same compromised orthodoxy.

Convinced a rationalistic conception of what can only be experienced is both worthy and feasible, the demythologised Western mind invests evermore conviction in a guaranteed winning formula for a safe and prosperous society. The political system is expected to save us, despite us all knowing deep down it can't. Modernity is trapped in the same no-man's land as monotheism. Confused and unable to admit to its pitiful tokenism, constitutional democracy, like the church, increasingly favours power over the truth.

There is a way around this apparent conflict, the troubling sense that the great gifts of reason, language and consciousness may be more disease than cure.

Man continues to assume his core purpose is to conquer doubt. But what if our remit is more nuanced? What if it's not to verify the existence of God, understand his nature and that of love, beauty, freedom and happiness. What if our unifying mission is to understand why we can never fully comprehend such ultimate concerns?

Put another way: striving to overcome uncertainty so we can be sure of why we exist, why there is something rather than nothing, is unnecessary if the essence of all that truly matters is *supposed* to be beyond the human mind, known only through a leap of faith. Our circumstances would not amount to an absurd no-win if reason isn't designed to prevail in the way that it wills.

Appreciating why God is a silent comic, why there is no all-inclusive knowledge, would allay our existential angst, which in turn would allow us to stop running down the dream, back up out of the rabbit hole Western society has fallen into, and finally enjoy life as an unconditional experience, not something that must be grasped intellectually.