

# Secular Humanism-What Is It?

Sunday PM 04/03/22

## Introduction:

In this series of lessons we want to study the subject of humanism and what it means to us. Humanism is a real ideology that has had a real effect on our society. Many of the battles going on in the courts, schools, church buildings, and government are due to humanism. Example: "Federal Judge bans 36 schoolbooks for teaching humanism as a religion" dated March 5, 1987. A more recent court case shows the hypocrisy of the Humanist Movement. Dated March 2018 "The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina has ruled that NCDPS violated both the Establishment and Equal Protection Clauses of the Constitution by refusing to recognize Humanism as a faith group and by refusing to allow Humanists to meet in study groups." One can read of various humanist organizations such as: The American Humanist Association which was founded in 1941, Humanist Institute which is devoted to developing humanist leaders and publishes a magazine "Humanism Today", North American Committee for Humanism, Aspen Institute For Humanistic Studies, The International Humanist and Ethical Union.

My point is that these organizations exist to defend, teach, and promote humanism.

## I) So; What Is Humanism?

### A) Dictionary.com (Humanism)

1. humanism -- any system or mode of thought or action in which human interests, values, and dignity predominate.
2. A system of thought that rejects religious beliefs and centers on humans and their values, capacities, and worth.
  - a. Not to be confused with the study of the arts and literature "humanities"

### B) Dictionary.com (Humanist) -- A believer in the principles of humanism.

1. Protagoras: man is the measure of all things
2. Sir Julian Huxley: I use the word "humanist" to mean someone

who believes that man is just as much a natural phenomenon as an animal or plant; that his body, mind and soul were not supernaturally created but are products of evolution, and that he is not under the control or guidance of any supernatural being or beings, but has to rely on himself and his own power.

**C) Humanist Manifesto 1 (1933)**

1. Salvation, based on mere affirmation still appears as harmful, diverting people with false hopes of heaven hereafter. Reasonable minds must look to other means for survival...
2. We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the question of the survival and fulfillment of the human race. As non-theists, we begin with humans not God, nature not deity
3. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves
4. There is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body

**D) Humanist Manifesto 2 (1973)**

1. As in 1933, humanists still believe that traditional theism, especially faith in the prayer-hearing God, assumed to live and care for persons, to hear and understand their prayers, and to be able to do something about them, is an unproved and outmoded faith.
2. Salvationism, based on mere affirmation, still appears as harmful, diverting people with false hopes of heaven hereafter.
3. The next century can and should be the humanistic century.
4. Using technology wisely, we can control our environment, conquer poverty, markedly reduce disease, extend our life-span,.. and provide humankind with unparalleled opportunity for achieving an abundant and meaningful life.
5. False "theologies of hope" and messianic ideologies, substituting

new dogmas for old, cannot cope with existing world realities.

6. Humanism can provide the purpose and inspiration that so many seek; it can give personal meaning and significance to human life.
7. On religion:
  - a. We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the question of survival and fulfillment of the human race. As nontheists, we begin with humans not God, nature not deity.
  - b. We appreciate the need to preserve the best ethical teachings in the religious traditions of humankind, many of which we share in common. But we reject those features of traditional religious morality that deny humans a full appreciation of their own potentialities and responsibilities.
  - c. Too often traditional faiths encourage dependence rather than independence, obedience rather than affirmation, fear rather than courage.
  - d. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.
  - e. Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful.
  - f. There is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body.

#### **E) The Principles of "Secular Humanism"**

1. Focus on man
2. Rejection of the spiritual
3. Claims of a higher level of thinking, understanding, "morality?"
4. Naturalism -- "Humanism believes in a naturalistic cosmology or metaphysics or attitude toward the universe that rules out all

forms of the supernatural and that regards nature as the totality of being and as a constantly changing system of events which exists independently of any mind or consciousness (Humanism As A Philosophy)

## II) Examining These Principles

### A) The focus on man

1. The goal of human life is...
  - a. Self fulfillment, gratification
  - b. Improved society or culture
  - c. Freedom from God and all absolutes so as to do good
2. End of poverty
  - a. Use governments to spread wealth, connected to communism (Karl Marx) point 11 in the Humanist Manifesto II states: "If unable, then society should provide means to satisfy their basic economic, health, and cultural needs, including, wherever resources make possible, a minimum guaranteed annual income. "
  - b. Laws should not seek to encourage morality but to allow mankind to do better.
3. Create world peace and unity
  - a. We deplore the division of humankind on nationalistic grounds.
  - b. We thus reaffirm a commitment to the building of world community, at the same time recognizing that this commits us to some hard choices.
4. The Bible starts with God and not man,

***Ecclesiastes 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. 14 For God will bring every work into judgment,***

*Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.*

**B) Rejection of the spiritual since nothing spiritual can be measured or seen in a lab.**

1. Man must save himself.
2. From what is man saving himself from?
3. If man is simply a natural process of evolution and just another animal then there is nothing to be saved.
4. Bible affirms that man is a spiritual being, **Job 14.14**
  - a. In **Ecc. 3.18-22** Solomon looked at life from a humanistic point of view and found it lacking.

**Ecclesiastes 3:18** *I said in my heart, "Concerning the condition of the sons of men, God tests them, that they may see that they themselves are like animals." 19 For what happens to the sons of men also happens to animals; one thing befalls them: as one dies, so dies the other. Surely, they all have one breath; man has no advantage over animals, for all is vanity. 20 All go to one place: all are from the dust, and all return to dust. 21 Who knows the spirit of the sons of men, which goes upward, and the spirit of the animal, which goes down to the earth? 22 So I perceived that nothing is better than that a man should rejoice in his own works, for that is his heritage. For who can bring him to see what will happen after him?*

- b. **Psalms 103:14** *For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. 15 As for man, his days are like grass; As a flower of the field, so he flourishes. 16 For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, And its place remembers it no more. 17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to*

*children's children, 18 To such as keep His covenant,  
And to those who remember His commandments to  
do them.*

**C) A higher level of thinking and understanding**

1. Ridicule anything that is considered sacred, **Romans 1.22**
  - a. The only thing that is sacred is humanism and the one thing that cannot be tolerated is religion and in particular Christianity.
  - b. The concept of sin is evil and bad for us since it makes us feel guilty. The reason some accept humanism is because it allows them to do whatever they want without any consequences.
2. Bible is simply superstition, people that accept the Bible are afraid to think for themselves, unreasonable, indoctrinated, etc.
3. Rationalism replaces right and wrong
  - a. Whatever we think is best, **Psalm 14.1**
  - b. Advocate the destruction of the Bible
4. The Bible invites investigation and not superstition,

***Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool. 2 Timothy 2.15***

**D) Naturalism or scientific humanism**

1. Evolution is a basic tenant of this philosophy.
  - a. Everything came from nothing; order came from disorder, life came from non-living matter, reason came from irrationality, personality came from non-personality, morality came from amorality, etc.
  - b. All information and facts are interpreted through the scope

of naturalism. (Story of man with a net that would only catch fish bigger than 2 inches. He stated that there were not fish smaller than 2 inches in the ocean. If his net did not catch them then they were not fish.)

2. Science becomes their god, **Luke 12.54-56**
3. They refuse to see the force behind the nature, **Hebrews 11.3; 3.4;**

**Acts 17:26** "And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, **27** "so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; **28** "for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' **29** "Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. **30** "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,

#### Conclusion:

**there is nothing new under the sun, Ecc. 1.9** We must seek to learn the truth for it is the truth that will set us free. What does the Bible say? To try and answer the questions of life without the Bible is to ignore one source of knowledge. It is left up to us to have open hearts and minds as we study God's word. **1 Corinthians 1.18-25**