

Lesson 7 Secular Humanism

I. What is _____ in brief?

Humanism is a philosophy of life inspired by humanity and guided by reason. It provides the basis for a fulfilling and ethical life “without religion”.

II. What are some definitions of Humanism?

A. Some dictionary definitions of Humanism are:

"...seeking, without religion, the best in, and for, human beings." *Chambers Pocket Dictionary*

"...a doctrine, attitude, or way of life centered on human interests or values; especially: a philosophy that usually rejects supernaturalism and stresses an individual's dignity and worth and capacity for self-realization through reason." *Merriam Webster Dictionary*

"The rejection of religion in favor of the advancement of humanity by its own efforts." *Collins Concise Dictionary*

"That which is characteristically human, not supernatural, that which belongs to man and not to external nature, that which raises man to his greatest height or gives him, as man, his greatest satisfaction." *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*

"A system of thought that centres on humans and their values, capacities, and worth." *American Heritage Dictionary*

“The Institute for Humanist Studies (IHS) promotes humanism, a nonreligious philosophy based on reason and compassion.”

Humanist Manifesto II

“No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.”

Peter Angeles

“Without God, what is left? Man and the Universe. That should be enough. That has to be enough because that is all there is.”

B. Humanism is the _____ of man and all that man is and can do.

C. Humanism is based on the *Hellenic* and *Romanic* worldviews.

D. In Humanism, God is totally removed from all of life, as man attempts to declare God dead.

E. There are many streams or synonymous terms to this worldview.

F. Humanism promotes an authoritarian, redemptive state.

- G. Humanists attempt to make all of society completely egalitarian (equal and alike).**
- H. Its ultimate goals are similar to that of Marxist-Leninism.**

III. What are the Worldview themes of Secular Humanism?

A. The cosmos – what is reality?

1. Obviously uppermost in the understanding of the universe, to the secularist, is that God does not exist and therefore there is no supernatural.
2. There is a sharp distinction drawn between reality and fantasy, fact and fiction, awake experiences and dreams, history and myth, imagination and actuality. Hence, Religion and the Bible are relegated to the realm of myth and superstition.
3. Humanists believe that the world is orderly and governed by laws – the universe is mechanistic.

Ps 14:1

The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."

B. Knowing – what is truth?

1. Humanists do not _____ in transcendent truth but they do have a fix on facts.
2. Knowing and knowledge of course comes through our big brains and the scientific process (empiricism).
3. The progressive knowledge of man through human intelligence is thus guaranteed. Science and technology is the answer to improving the world. The Bible and revelation is outrightly rejected.

Prov. 9:10

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

C. Self – what is human?

1. Humanists believe that the human being is nothing more than a biological machine.
2. The secularist sees the self like a clock – an orderly conglomeration of working parts but completely independent of other people.
3. Humans are nothing more than a complex set of chemicals. Thoughts and feelings are reduced to secretion of glands and chemical reactions. Thus love or depression is thought to merely be the result of physiological processes.
4. Humanists begin with the presupposition that man is intrinsically good, not bad, meaning that something else must be _____ for bad behaviour.

Carl Rogers

“For myself, though I am very well aware of the incredible amount of destructive, cruel, malevolent behaviour in today’s world – from the threats of war to the senseless violence in the streets – I do not find that this evil is inherent in human nature.”

Abraham Maslow

“As far as I know we just don’t have any intrinsic instincts for evil.”

D. Community – what is society?

1. With the _____ on the individual, family, extended family and the community are not that valued.
2. Humanists promote religious pluralism and multiculturalism as the means of integrating different cultures in one country.
3. Secular Humanism also easily lends itself to racism.

E. Time – How do we measure the procession of life?

1. For Humanists time is linear and marching towards utopia.
2. A typical symbol of secularism is the watch.

F. Values – what is good?

Max Hocutt

“The fundamental question of ethics is; who makes the rules? God or men? The theistic answer is that God makes them. The humanistic answer is that men make them. This distinction between theism and humanism is the fundamental division in moral theory.”

The Humanist Magazine

“Darwin’s discovery of the principle of evolution sounded the death knell of religious and moral values. It removed the ground from under the feet of traditional religion.”

Humanist Manifesto 2000

“We affirm that moral values derive their source from human experience. Ethics is autonomous and situational, needing no theological or ideological sanction. Ethics stems from human need and interest. To deny this distorts the whole basis of life.”

Rom 1:21-23

“For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man.”

G. Destiny – how will my life and the world end?

1. The end for a Secular Humanist is the grave.
2. Secularism does not propose a unified theory on how the world will end.
3. However, in this life we forge our own destiny by the choices we make and we can create the kind of world we want to by our own mastery of the world.

IV. How does Secular Humanism apply to the seven areas?

A. Family

1. As family and _____ are Christian at their foundation, the Humanist is opposed to them.

B. Religion

1. Although Secular Humanism claims to be non-religious its ideas are based on faith and it is militant in indoctrinating its ideas!
2. To a Secular Humanist, the church represents the depth of bondage to mythology and primitive superstition.

C. State

1. This becomes the weapon of the Secular Humanist.
2. Secular Humanists also put a lot of faith in the United Nations and look to a new world order where there can be global governance and law executed by a massive super state.

Humanist Manifesto 2000

“We deplore the division of humankind on nationalistic grounds. Thus we look to the development of a system of world law and a world order based upon transnational federal government.”

D. Economics

1. There is variation of economics in this worldview.
2. Others however prefer a more socialistic than individualistic view, and promote the state controlling such things as inflation, the interest rate, subsidisation, monopolies, exchange rates, taxation, and para-statal companies.
3. The Biblical Christian will neither absolutise the market or the state, he will absolutise God.

E. Education

1. This becomes another tool of the Secular Humanist, as they seek to propagate their doctrine.

2. Education is NEVER neutral – it is ALWAYS promoting a certain worldview and belief system/religion. It must be clearly understood that Secular Humanism is a religion and a competitor for the allegiance of the nations.
3. Secular Humanism’s main source material is the Humanist Manifesto’s 1, 2 & 2000. They give for the following areas these answers: Theology – Atheism; Philosophy – Naturalism; Ethics – Relativism; Biology – Darwinian Evolution; Psychology – Self-Actualisation; Sociology – Non-Traditional Family; Law – Positive Law; Politics – World Government (Globalism); Economics – Socialism; History – Historical Evolution (Understanding the Times – David Noebel).

Charles Francis Potter, signatory of The Humanist Manifesto

“Education is the most powerful ally of Humanism, and every American public school is a school of Humanism. What can the theistic Sunday Schools, meeting for an hour once a week, and teaching only a fraction of the children, do to stem the tide of a five-day programme of humanistic teaching?”

F. Law

1. Because “Man is the measure of all things,” all law is _____ from man, and not God.
2. Through this worldview perversion is gradually legislated and Christianity is gradually outlawed. It eventually becomes a “beast-system” persecuting and martyring the saints.

G. Art

1. This becomes a reflection of Secular Humanistic thinking, where man is glorified, and there are no moral guidelines.
2. It is also important to note the power of the liberal humanistic media in shaping public opinion in the Western world.

Courtney Love

“I feel like I have a duty. I as an architect have a need to impose my worldview on the culture.”

Life Magazine

“The ways in which sound affects the human organism are myriad and subtle. The loud sounds and bright lights of today are tremendous indoctrination tools.”

H. What are the Attitudes, Moods and Emotions created by Secular Humanism?

1. Secular Humanism’s attitude is one of pride, self-confidence, optimism and good intentions. At the turn of the twentieth century the mood was euphoric and utopian, but this was darkened through the World Wars, Holocaust, Cold War, massacres of Communism and tragedy that dogged the twentieth century.

2. A good picture of Secular Humanism is the story of the Titanic. This ship was the largest built in history and was the pinnacle of human ingenuity and pride. The engineers claimed it was “Unsinkable” and “Not even God can sink this ship.” Filled with wealthy travellers it sunk on its maiden voyage with nearly everyone perishing in the icy Atlantic.
3. However, Secular Humanism still has great pride in human independence and accomplishment. Her mood today seems divided between optimism and pessimism. The optimists cling to their presupposition that man is essentially good and not depraved. They think, “If only we could educate people and bring people out of poverty everything would be fine!” The other stream who look at all the world’s problems are full of cynicism, believing that nuclear war, ozone burning, Greenhouse overheating, resource depletion, the universe contracting, or some other problem will kill us all.
4. Secular Humanism is very individualistic and concerned with “my rights”. It tends to be selfish and irresponsible as a result.

I. What are some _____ features of Secular Humanism?

Whilst Secular Humanism is a false worldview it has produced some good. These are:

- A solution oriented, positive focus on making the future better.
- It encourages discovery, learning and education.
- Inventions and progress such as developments in science, medicine and technology.
- An increased standard of living.

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