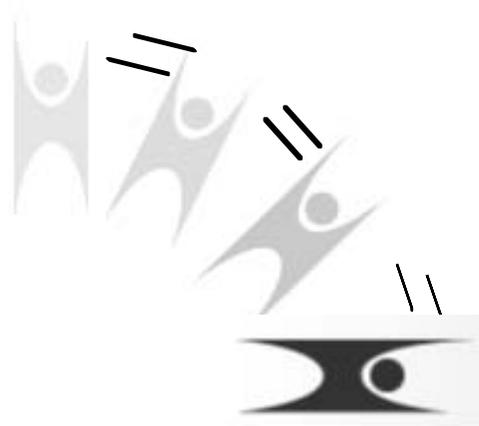

HUMANISM

The Religion of Man



It Doesn't Stand Up

A Religious World View

- **Basic Beliefs**
- **Humanism as Religion**
- **Issues of Humanism**
- **Outcome at the End Time**

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HUMANISM

Accurate definitions are difficult to come by. When one hears the word "humanism," several different ideas may come to mind. For example, *Webster* would define humanism something like this: "any system or mode of thought or action in which human interests, values, or dignity predominate." [1] Others may think of a liberal arts education. Both of these are well and good, but what we are seeking is a definition of the worldview known as Secular Humanism.

First, Secular Humanism **is** a worldview. That is, it is a set of beliefs through which one interprets all of reality - something like a pair of glasses. Second, Secular Humanism is a religious worldview. [2] Do not let the word "secular" mislead you. The Humanists themselves would agree that they adhere to a religious worldview. According to the Humanist Manifestos I & II: Humanism is "a philosophical, religious, and moral point of view." [3] Not all humanists, though, want to be identified as "religious," because they understand that religion is (supposedly) not allowed in American public education. To identify Secular Humanism as a religion would eliminate the Humanists' main vehicle for the propagation of their faith. And it is a faith, by their own admission. The Humanist Manifestos declare: "These affirmations [in the Manifestos] are not a final credo or dogma but an expression of a living and growing faith." [4] That really sound like a religion.

One could make the argument that humanism is the second oldest religion that got its start on the earth in the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 3:1-5)

1 ¶ Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,

3 but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

4 "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman.

5 "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

The word "knowing" implies more than just distinguishing what is good and what is evil based on given criteria. The implication here is that they would be able to establish the criteria or standards of what is good and what is evil. Knowing good and evil is not just realizing that you are within or exceeding the speed limit it is deciding for yourself what is a safe and legal speed.

If this incident in the Garden was the beginning of humanism, then we can conclude that the point of contention is that of Lordship or sovereignty. The real issue is NOT the denial of the existence of God but what is His role. In the devil's temptation of Eve, he did not deny God. (See Also James 2:19). The approach of the devil is to convince us that following God's way will keep us from enjoying life and prevent us from achieving self-realization.

What are the basic beliefs of Secular Humanism?

What do Secular Humanists believe?

Theologically, Secular Humanists are atheists. Humanist Paul Kurtz, publisher of Prometheus Books and editor of Free Inquiry magazine, says that "Humanism cannot in any fair sense of the word apply to one who still believes in God as the source and creator of the universe." [5] Corliss Lamont agrees, saying that "Humanism contends that instead of the gods creating the cosmos, the cosmos, in the individualized form of human beings giving rein to their imagination, created the gods." [6]

Philosophically, Secular Humanists are naturalists. That is, they believe that nature is all that exists - the material world is all that exists. There is no God, no spiritual dimension, no

afterlife. Carl Sagan said it best in the introduction to his Cosmos series: "The universe is all that is or ever was or ever will be." [7] Roy Wood Sellars concurs. "Humanism is naturalistic," he says, "and rejects the supernaturalistic stance with its postulated Creator-God and cosmic Ruler." [8]

Secular Humanist beliefs in the area of biology are closely tied to both their atheistic theology and their naturalist philosophy. If there is no supernatural, then life, including human life, must be the result of a purely natural phenomenon. Hence, Secular Humanists must believe in evolution. Julian Huxley, for example, insists that "man ... his body, his mind and his soul were not supernaturally created but are all products of evolution." [9] Sagan, Lamont, Sellars, Kurtz - all Secular Humanists are in agreement on this.

Atheism leads most Secular Humanists to adopt ethical relativism - the belief that no absolute moral code exists, and therefore man must adjust his ethical standards in each situation according to his own judgment. [10] If God does not exist, then He cannot establish an absolute moral code. Humanist Max Hocutt says that human beings "may, and do, make up their own rules... Morality is not discovered; it is made." [11]

Secular Humanism, then, can be defined as a religious worldview based on atheism, naturalism, evolution, and ethical relativism. But this definition is merely the tip of the iceberg.

If it is the province of God to decide what is good and what is evil, then we find that secular humanists have usurped that right from the Creator God and have, in effect, become their own god. In Genesis 3:22 we see God's assessment of this

22 ¶ And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever."

This statement is generally accepted to be that of irony and sarcasm in that the promise of the devil as to what would happen to mankind when they started to determine for themselves what is good and what is evil was infinitely short of mankind even approaching the glorious nature and power of God. God still views the assertions of the humanists as egomaniacal ranting of the powerless against the omnipotent or the ignorant against the omniscient.

Secular Humanism – a religious worldview based on atheism, naturalism, evolution, and ethical relativism.

HUMANISM AS RELIGION

The original movement of humanism was called sin, iniquity, and rebellion. The modern movement of humanism was initially called the Religion of Humanity. In 1860, this name was dropped and the term Humanism was adopted. Why? As a religion (in name) it would be viewed with suspicion by the church. However, as a philosophy and as humanitarianism it was accepted by some church groups.

How did this happen? We failed to recognize Humanism as a religion because we tend to equate "religion" with "belief in God or a god." However, many of the world's religions have no god - but they are still religions. Little by little the concepts and precepts of humanism crept into our churches. Some examples are

- God is emphasized as "Providence" but not as "Lord"
- We pray for blessings but seldom pray for obedience
- Faith is equated with religious works, observances, rituals, etc.
- Little emphasis on God's justification by grace.
- Salvation is equated to "decisionism"
- Being "born again" is just a way of expressing a different direction in life but not a reality.

The result of attempting to blend two alien faiths and make them one by accepting humanism in our churches is called syncretism. A well-known Scriptural example of syncretism is what happened to the Northern Kingdom of Israel. They tried to serve God and Baal. They tried to blend the two faiths and found themselves in a situation where it was difficult to return to worship of Jehovah God only. The elements of Baal worship were so ingrained into their culture that most could not tell what was of God and what was of Baal. Elijah described it in 1 Kings 18:21 as “halting between two opinions.”

Syncretism – blending two alien faiths and making them one.

There was a distinct contrast between what developed in the Northern Kingdom and what occurred in Judah. While the Northern Kingdom tried to have a blended religion, Judah would simply abandon the worship of God and worship idols. When they repented they would abandon the idols and turn back to God. There were alternately hot or cold. The Israelites could be described as lukewarm. Because of the differences in how the cultures developed, the judgement of God upon the two groups had different outcomes. When the Northern Kingdom fell to the Assyrians, they were scattered and dispersed and lost their distinctiveness as a unique people. The Jews, on the other hand, were kept together during a period of “exile” in Babylon and were restored to their land for another chance. They were given 70 weeks of years (490 years) to be tested and then were presented with the opportunity to welcome the Messiah Whom they rejected.

(See Notes in Appendix on the Seventy Weeks)

Syncretism is (by nature) difficult to recognize and it is difficult to deal with it since it has many defenders and is protected in the name of “reasonableness.”

ISSUES OF HUMANISM

1. Lordship or Sovereignty:

- a. Anarchists - sovereignty resides in the individual. No human, natural, or supernatural power has any legal rights or powers over man. Man is his own lord, his own god, determines his own laws and decides morality. (Situation ethics, relativism, rebelliousness, etc.)
- b. Statist - the state is sovereign. Ultimate power and authority must reside in the state. (Eminent Domain questions, legality of home schooling and Christian schools, state licensing of religious ministers, state regulation of employment, etc.)

2. Ownership

Humanism sees man as the property of man or the state. (Biblical view is seen in Psalms 24:1 and 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.)

3. Source of Law

The source of law in any philosophy or religion is the god of that system. The Puritans sought to make Biblical law the law of the land. This was opposed by the Crown of England. In the Middle East many of the governments have an Islamic law system. India has laws that are influenced by Hinduism.

Questions to Consider for our nation:

Whose law or from what source did the U S Supreme Court legalize abortion?

How do we view the crime of stealing?

Violation of the right of man

Crime against the peace and dignity of the State

Violation of God's Law

In Psalm 51 David confessed: "Against Thee and Thee only have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight."

4. Humanism stresses man's experience, reason, authority, or will. No credibility is allowed or given to God or His word. Humanists deny the virgin birth of Christ, miracles, angels, gifts of the Spirit, etc.
5. Self-justification by Works and Improvement: Political candidates promise humanistic plans of social salvation. All problems will be solved if everyone has a good education, everyone has enough to eat, and everyone has access to medical care. By addressing only these issues, one outcome is well-educated, well-fed and healthy criminals.
6. Seeks to remake the world in terms of man's ideas. This philosophy is captured in the sound bite "Reality is man-made." Humanists want a man-made world and a man-made man. While embracing the theory of evolution which is a random process by definition, the humanism agenda include attempts to create life to redesign man (genetic manipulation) and attempts to clone animals and humans.
7. Man shall be self governing: Although our Declaration of Independence made strong reference to our Creator, and made an appeal to the Supreme Judge of the world, in less than a 100 year time span we can see seeds of humanistic thought had made its way into the thinking of the American people. We see evidence of this in Lincoln's Gettysburg Address where the reference is to a government of the people, by the people and for the people. God's intent for government is captured in the words of Isaiah 9:6 and 7

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Humanism is clearly not only a religion; but in attempting to eliminate God from the culture and especially any reference to a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, it is the subtle implementation of anti-Christianity.

HUMANISM - OUTCOME AT THE END TIME

The ultimate in humanism is the exaltation of man to a position rightly belonging to God. Some have related humanistic influence (imprint or mark) on our world (including some in the church) as the mark of the beast. The argument that is put forth is that the number seven is a number of perfection and represents completeness while the number six is representative of man's effort (six day's shall you work) and that work of man is always lacking and can never accomplish what God has already completed (It is not by works of righteousness that He saves us.)

In fact, the text in Revelation 13 dealing with the mark of the beast is supportive of this interpretation.

He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name. This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666. (Revelation 13:16-18)

This passage states (in the NIV) that the number of the beast is "man's number" rather than the "number of a man." The term "mark" (or charagma in the Greek) is the word from which we derive our English word for "character." It comes from the same root word that is use in reference to Jesus Christ being the "express image" (charakter) of God in Hebrews 1:3. We could say that Jesus is the "mark" of God and that man's carnality is the mark of the beast.

In Revelation 14:1, John writes about those who are with Christ on mount Zion as having His Father's name on their forehead. No one tries to interpret that description as a literal physical name or mark on the heads of the saints. Then why do we spend so much effort trying to figure out what will be the physical mark of the beast? With endless speculation, we wonder: Will it be a bar code, at tattoo, or even a computer chip? If we can escape the limitation of the mark being something physical, then we can see that if man's carnality is on the right hand of people that their actions will be according to man's carnal nature. If the mark is on their foreheads, then their thought processes and value system will be according to man's carnal nature.

What we are seeing is that humanism has been imprinted on all the actions and thought process of much of our entire culture. Unfortunately, this influence spills over into the church.

Are we in the "end times" or the "last days?" When did these begin? Using the premise that the Bible is the best commentary on the Bible, we can find references that point to the beginning of the last days as that time when the Messiah came. Jacob in his prophecy concerning his sons in Genesis 49:1 and following referred to the last days. His prophecy extended to the time when "Shiloh" comes. Shiloh would be the peace maker in establishing peace between man and God and "unto Him would all people come." This indicated a time when salvation would be available to all men everywhere. Both Isaiah (2:2) and Micah (4:1) have identical verses regarding the end times. The next reference we see is in Acts 2:17 in which Peter used the term to explain what was happening on the Day of Pentecost and he identified that time as the last days when God would pour out His Spirit on all flesh. Paul used the phrase in his letter to Timothy regarding perilous times during the last days. We see it mentioned again in Hebrews 1:2 with regard to God speaking to us by His Son. James mentions last days in connection with a time of judgment and Peter warned about scoffers that would come on the scene in the last days. Finally, we see in 1 John 2:18-19 a connection between the last time and the anti-Christ.

Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

Since we are in the last days or the last time, we should be and are seeing growing evidence of the activity of anti-Christ. The popular media puts an emphasis on one individual. He is equated with the second beast mentioned in Chapter 13 of the Revelation although the name "anti-Christ" is not used anywhere except in 1st John and 2nd John and there the reference is to multiple individuals. In 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, Paul write of the "man of sin" the son of perdition. Many opinion have been in vogue through the centuries as to what or whom this referred. In the 1800's the prevailing thought was that this referred to not one individual but to a succession of men and was generally accepted to the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church and in particular the popes. In more recent times, the prevailing thought seems to be that this "man of sin" is a particular individual (the "anti-Christ") and is equated to the lamb-like beast with two horn in Revelations 13 that will appear sometime in the future.

We need to be careful that the spirit of anti-Christ is not enthroned in the temple of God in this age - "don't you know that you are the temple of God in whom the Spirit of God dwells, that you are not your own but are bought with a price." While most people would run and resist having a tattoo on their hand or forehead or having a computer chip implanted, most readily accept the blend of humanistic thought and elements of Christianity in which we are "good people" who do whatever seems right to us but we are not answerable to any higher authority.

When honestly examined, Humanism just doesn't stand up. (See 1 Samuel 5:2-4.)

A more complete discussion of the Secular Humanist worldview can be found in David Noebel's *Understanding the Times*, which discusses (in detail) humanism's approach to each of ten disciplines: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics and history.

FOOTNOTES:

- . Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language (New York: Gramercy Books, 1989), p. 691.
- . For detailed proof that Secular Humanism is a religion, see *Clergy in the Classroom: The Religion of Secular Humanism* by David A. Noebel, J.F. Baldwin and Kevin Bywater (Manitou Springs, CO: Summit Press, 1995).
- . Paul Kurtz, in the preface to *Humanist Manifestos I & II* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1973), p. 3.
- . Kurtz, *Humanist Manifestos I & II*, p. 24. Italics added.
- . "Is Everyone a Humanist?" in *The Humanist Alternative*, ed. Paul Kurtz (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1973), p. 177.
- . Corliss Lamont, *The Philosophy of Humanism* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1982), p. 145.
- . Carl Sagan, *Cosmos* (New York: Random House, 1980), p. 4.
- . Roy Wood Sellars, "The Humanist Outlook," in *The Humanist Alternative*, ed. Paul Kurtz (Buffalo: Prometheus, 1973), p. 135.
- . Julian Huxley, as cited in Roger E. Greely, ed., *The Best of Humanism* (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1988), pp. 194-5.
- . David A. Noebel, *Understanding the Times: The Religious Worldviews of Our Day and the Search for Truth* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1991), p. 200.
- . Max Hocutt, "Toward an Ethic of Mutual Accommodation," in *Humanist Ethics*, ed. Morris B. Storer (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1980), p. 137.

APPENDIX

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. (Daniel 9:24)

Finish the Transgression: to complete and bring to fullness the pattern of rejection of God's principles which would end in the rejection of the Son of God.

Make an End of Sins: The word translated "sins" in most translations is *chatta'ah*. It is translated "sin" 182 times and "sin offering" 116 times. We know that "sins" did not end but it is clear that with the death of Jesus on the Cross that "sin offering" did. The extreme sin of man (crucifixion of Jesus) served to accomplish eternal redemption, and so provide a complete remedy for sin. For the crucifixion of Christ, though it was truly a deed of diabolical wickedness on the part of man, was on His own part the offering of Himself without spot to God as a sacrifice for sins (#Heb 9:14). It was thus that He "offered the one Sacrifice for sins forever" (#Heb 10:12).

The textural writing of this phrase can literally be rendered to "seal up" sins or sin offerings. There are two possibilities that fit what was accomplished on the cross. One possibility is that all sins that are brought up the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ have been sealed up and are not accessible and, therefore, are removed "as far as the east is from the west." The other possibility is that a "seal" or stamp of approval was put on the sacrifice of Jesus as the "end all" complete and ultimate sacrifice.

Make Reconciliation for Iniquity: The word here translated "reconciliation" is usually rendered "atonement"; but according to Strong's Concordance it expresses also the thought of appeasing or reconciling. Both atonement and reconciliation were made by the death of Christ upon the cross. It is certain, therefore, that, when Christ Jesus died and rose again, atonement for sin and reconciliation for the enemies of God were fully and finally accomplished as a matter of historic fact. It is important, and indeed essential, to a right interpretation of this prophecy, to keep in mind that atonement and reconciliation were to be accomplished, and actually were accomplished, within the measure of seventy weeks from the going forth of the decree of King Cyrus.

Bring in Everlasting Righteousness: One characteristic of God's righteousness, which He was "to bring in" through the sacrifice of Christ (#Ro 3:21-26), is that it endures forever; and this is what is emphasized in the prophecy. A work was to be done, and now has been done, which would bring in everlasting righteousness— everlasting because based upon the Cross, as foretold also through Isaiah, "My righteousness shall be forever" (#Isa 51:8). Jesus Christ has now been made unto us "righteousness" (#1Co 1:30); and this is in fulfilment of another great promise: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper And this is His Name whereby He shall be called Jehovah Our Righteousness" (#Jer 23:5,6).

Seal Up the Vision and Prophecy: There are (at least) two schools of thought here. One is that the vision and prophecy (and the fulfillment thereof) would not be understood by the rebellious Jews and as foretold by Isaiah, so that seeing they would see not, and hearing they would hear not (#Isa 6:10). The other possibility is that "seal up" was not to shut it up out of sight; but rather to set a mark on it, by which it might be more clearly known; and to consummate and fulfil it: all prophecy is sealed up in Christ, and by him; he is the sum and substance of it; the visions and prophecies of the Old Testament relate

to him, and have their accomplishment in him. Some relate to his person and office; others to his coming into the world, the time, place, and manner of it; others to the great work of redemption and salvation he came about; and others to his miracles, sufferings, and death, and the glory that should follow; all which have been fulfilled: or, "to seal up the vision and prophet"

Anoint the Most Holy: In Luke 4:18 and 19 the words of Jesus (in quoting Isaiah) are as follows: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.* Even though the nation of Judah had failed to recognize and accept Jesus as the Messiah or Anointed One, He was anointed by God and He is truly the Most Holy One. In commentators render the words "Most Holy" as the "Most Holy Place" as the Hebrew word is often translated as sanctuary. If that is the case, then the anointing of the most holy place would not be in reference to any part of the temple in Jerusalem but of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the church which is the Temple of God.