

# HUMANISM

- I. **Biblical evidence**
  - A. There are no direct Biblical references to "humanism"
  - B. Some biblical verses which express concepts of "humanism"
    - Gen. 3:4,5 - "you will be like God, knowing good and evil"
    - Gen. 6:5 - "the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and every intent of the thoughts of his heart were evil continually"
    - Gen. 6:11 - "the earth was filled with violence"
    - Gen. 11:4 - "Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name..."
    - Judges 21:25 - "every man did what was right in his own eyes"
    - Isa. 5:20,21 - "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and clever in their own sight!"
    - Rom. 1:18 - "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness"
    - Rom. 1:21-23 - "they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man..."
    - Rom. 1:25 - "they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator"
- II. **Defining "humanism"**
  - A. Not to be confused with
    - 1. humanity, humanness - God created human beings
    - 2. humanities - educational discipline of man's enculturation
    - 3. humane, humanitarian - benevolent actions of men toward men
  - B. Humanism is a philosophical premise that includes such concepts as:
    - 1. Man is autonomous and independent
    - 2. Man is his own center of reference
    - 3. Man is self-generative and self-sufficient
    - 4. Man has the potential to do anything he sets his mind to
    - 5. Man is the cause of his own effects
    - 6. Man is the source of his own activity
    - 7. Man has a free-will to choose anything he desires - "sovereign will"
    - 8. Man is innately good
    - 9. Man is the subject and object of his own world
    - 10. Man is the solution to his own problems
    - 11. Man deserves to indulge his personal aspirations, personal gratifications, and personal reputation (cf. I Jn. 2:16)
    - 12. Man is his own god
  - C. Brief history of humanistic thought
    - 1. Serpent - "you will be like God" - Gen. 3:5
    - 2. Protagoras (5th cent. B.C.) - "man is the measure of all things"
    - 3. Lucretius (1st cent. B.C.) - "what can give us surer knowledge than our senses?"
    - 4. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) - "man himself must make himself into whatever he is to become"
    - 5. Tennyson (1850-1892) - "man is man and master of his fate"
    - 6. Humanist Manifesto I (1933); Humanist Manifesto II (1973); "A Secular Humanist Declaration" (1980)
      - a. "there is no divine purpose"
      - b. "no deity will save us; we must save ourselves"
      - c. "promise of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are illusory and harmful"

- III. Humanistic thought and Western thinking
  - A. Concepts
    - 1. Rationalism - primacy of human reason
    - 2. Naturalism - rejection of the supernatural
    - 3. Disavowal of theism - censure of religion
    - 4. Scientism - only reality is sensory and empirical
    - 5. Progressive evolutionism - everything getting better
    - 6. Moral relativism - permissiveness, toleration, self-indulgence
    - 7. Pluralistic relativism - any thought as good as another
    - 8. Pragmatism - functionalism
    - 9. Politicization - social engineering
    - 10. Governmentalism - statism - totalitarianism
    - 11. Technological progressivism
    - 12. Success orientation - statistical and monetary
    - 13. Behavioristic psychology - irresponsibility
    - 14. Value-less education
    - 15. Violence - forced solutions
  - B. Movements
    - 1. Human Potential Movement
    - 2. Self-help movement - self-improvement
    - 3. New Age movement
    - 4. Holistic health movement
    - 5. Recovery movement
- IV. Humanistic thought and evangelical religious thinking
  - A. Ideological
    - 1. That fallen man is autonomous and independent
    - 2. That man has an inherent "human nature"
    - 3. That man has a free-will - "sovereign will"
    - 4. That man is capable of self-generating character
      - a. sinful, unrighteous, evil
      - b. godly, righteous, good
    - 5. That man's soul is inherently immortal
  - B. Procedural
    - 1. Moralism - behavior modification
    - 2. Techniquism; proceduralism; methodologies; how-tos
    - 3. Epistemological orientation - belief system
    - 4. Activism; civil rights; forced imposition of ideology
    - 5. Psychological interpretations; manipulation
    - 6. Dedication; commitment; allegiance; loyalty; accountability
    - 7. Statistical and numerical success; productivity; utilitarianism; verifiable results
    - 8. Technological obsession; efficiency
    - 9. Propagandizing; religious education; persuasion; coercion
    - 10. Collectivism; socialistic identity; institutionalism
    - 11. Democratization; egalitarianism
    - 12. Humanitarianism; social gospel
    - 13. Positive thinking; possibility thinking
    - 14. "Word of faith" movement; "health and wealth" gospel
- V. Overcoming "humanism"
  - A. Recognizing that man is derivative
  - B. Faith - our receptivity of His activity
  - C. John 15:5 - "apart from Me you can do nothing"
  - D. II Cor. 3:5 - "not that we are adequate to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is of God"
  - E. II Cor. 4:7 - "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the greatness may be of God"
  - F. Gal. 2:20 - "it is no longer I who lives, but Christ lives in me"
  - G. Gal. 5:23 - "the fruit of the Spirit is....self-control"