

**Addressing Culture with Scripture:  
Seeing and Answering the Many Faces of False Teaching**

False teaching has been in our world since Genesis three and has metastasized so many times that it fills every culture so that it manifests itself in seemingly enumerable degrees and forms. The Bible repeatedly warns the people of God to be on guard against all false teaching, to defend the true faith, and to be prepared to give answer for the hope we have in Christ. Paul’s warning from Colossians 2:8 needs to be heard loud and clear in the church today, “See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy or empty deceit...”! Therefore, starting October 5<sup>th</sup> we will begin a 9-week study of specific false teachings that inundate our culture, constantly seek to infect our homes, and even strive to distract our ministry. The plan for this class is to not only see some of the primary false teachings listed here but also to equip you with a sound biblical defense of the truth that has been twisted by these deceptions of the devil. We are living in a world filled with lies but we are called to be people of the truth who graciously but boldly live out and declare the truth in love. May the Lord use this study to further help us to remain on guard as we grow in our understanding of and submission to the Scriptures.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Scheduled Lesson Topic</b>
10/5	Prosperity Gospel / Word of Faith Movement
10/12	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormonism)
10/19	The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (Jehovah Witnesses)
10/26	Roman Catholicism & Eastern Orthodoxy
11/2	Islam
11/9	Mind Science Groups & New Age Spirituality
11/16	Middle Eastern Religions (Hinduism; Buddhism...)
11/30	Secularism & Atheism & Naturalism
12/7	Legalism & Antinomianism & Universalism / Inclusivism



## Secularism & Atheism & Naturalism

**Intro:** Psalm 14:1 and 53:1 say, “The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, doing abominable iniquity; there is none who does good.”

While many will trace the historical origins of “Secular Religions” of which “Atheism” is just one form, as post “Enlightenment” these Scriptures make it clear that atheism is as ancient as the sin of man. Despite what our world teaches, atheism in its purest form is an impossibility for as Romans 1:18-23 declares emphatically, everyone knows that God exists. As the text says, “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. <sup>19</sup> For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. <sup>20</sup> For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. <sup>21</sup> For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.”

In so many ways we have come to mother of all false teachings and what could be called the foundation stone of all false faiths. I am talking about the damning worldview/religion of *Humanism*<sup>1</sup> or in our day would be more accurately coined *Secular Humanism*. Secular religious ideas flow freely through almost every avenue of society and cultural and go virtually unchallenged. Basically, all forms of media are infected with this false teaching, every public school and all most place of higher learning drips with humanistic ideology. Government is one of the greatest purveyors of this false teaching seen so clearly in the latest CRT debacle. No matter where you turn in our world you will secular humanism alive and thriving in multiple forms. While defining *Secular Humanism* is not easy as this term encompasses a lot of confusing man centered ideologies but here is how secular humanist define it...

*Secular.* “Pertaining to the world or things not spiritual or sacred.”

*Humanism.* “Any system of thought or action concerned with the interests or ideals of people ... the intellectual and cultural movement ... characterized by an emphasis on human interests rather than ... religion.” — Webster’s Dictionary<sup>2</sup>

While most “*Secular Humanist*” would deny that this system or any of its subset forms like atheism is a “religion”, yet that is how our government even categorizes it...

“Many secular humanists deny that their belief system constitutes a religion. But in 2014 a federal district court held that “Secular Humanism is a religion for Establishment

<sup>1</sup> Not the “Humanism” of the middle ages which carried some semblance of Scriptural character to it.

<sup>2</sup> <https://secularhumanism.org/what-is-secular-humanism/>

Clause purposes.” In the 1961 decision *Torcaso v. Watkins*, the court stated that the Establishment Clause prevents government from aiding “those religions based on a belief in the existence of God as against those religions founded on different beliefs.” In a footnote of that decision, the court clarified that this principle extended to “religions in this country which do not teach what would generally be considered a belief in the existence of God . . . Buddhism, Taoism, Ethical Culture, Secular Humanism, and others.”<sup>3</sup>

Thus, *Secular Humanism* really is, “...a religious worldview based on atheism, naturalism, evolution, and ethical relativism.”<sup>4</sup> Again, this false teaching comes in many shapes and sizes that are as diverse as the mind and heart of man. Here are a few of the most common forms of *Secular Humanism*...

- Atheism and New Atheism<sup>5</sup>
- Agnosticism
- Existentialism
- Naturalism
- Stoicism
- Materialism
- Relativism
- Nazism
- Hedonism (including all perverted sexual expressions)
- Communism
- Nature Worship
- Idealism/Dualism
- Satanism/Church of Satan
- Epicureanism (Evolutionism)
- Modernism
- Scientism
- Post-Modernism
- Secularism

The term “*secularism*” was coined in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by George Holyoake who defined it this way, “Secularism is a series of principles intended for the guidance of those who find theology indefinite, or inadequate, or deem it unreliable. It replaces theology, which mainly regards life as a sinful necessity, as a scene of tribulation through which we pass to a better world.”<sup>6</sup> Therefore, you can see how all of “Secular Humanism” in whatever form it takes is man replacing God with

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/9-things-secular-humanism/>

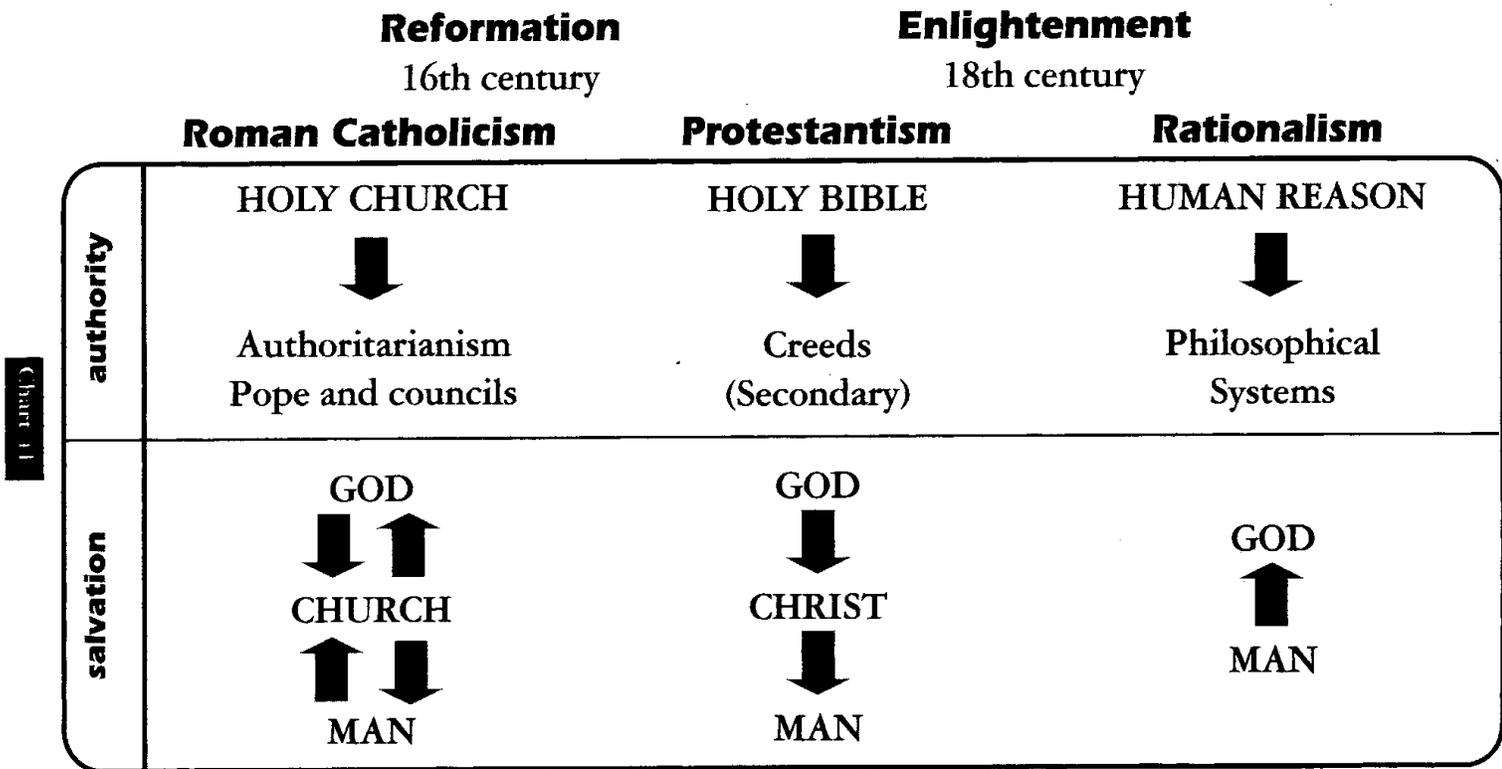
<sup>4</sup> <https://christiananswers.net/q-sum/sum-r002.html>

<sup>5</sup> Part of this list taken from the book by Bodie Hodge and Roger Patterson, *World Religions and Cults: Atheistic and Humanistic Religions*, pgs. 13-14 (2020).

<sup>6</sup> See a, *A Field Guide to False Teaching* by Ligonier Ministry in 2020, pg. 208.

self, replacing God’s Word with man’s thoughts, replacing divine theology with man derived ideology. As Paul said in Romans 1 it is simply man suppressing truth with self-generated lies! This is undeniably clear as declared in the *Humanist Manifesto II* when it exclaimed, “No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.”

## Approaches to Authority and the Enlightenment



*Enlightenment* refers to a many-faceted movement in eighteenth-century western Europe that at its core rejected the Orthodox understanding of the sinfulness of mankind and the need for redemption through Jesus Christ. It is rooted in the negative features of the Renaissance of the fifteenth century and it emerged after the reformations of the Medieval Church in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Two issues separated Roman Catholics and Protestants from Enlightenment advocates: the locus of authority, which the Enlightenment places in human reason, and the nature of salvation, which the Enlightenment seeks in human ingenuity and moral resolve. Roman Catholics and Protestants agreed that authority was not within, but outside of mankind. The former invested in religious knowledge mediated by the church; the latter in the Bible explained by pastors.

John D. Hannah. *Charts of Reformation and Enlightenment Church History*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, (2001) 41.

## I. The Origins and History of This False Religion<sup>7</sup>

- As I said earlier, many see the rejection of a belief in a deity as a recent development in the Western world, having developed as a result of the Enlightenment’s emphasis on man and nature and its de-emphasis on God’s special acts in the world.
- The Enlightenment, I.E. the modern era, brought with it the advancement of natural sciences which proved helpful on many levels like technological discoveries, relieving some causes of human pain and a better and broader understanding of the placement and workings of our global environment. However, one of the most damaging realities in life was birthed at this time which would set the stage for a massive redefinition of spiritual and religious life both in Europe and America. Human reason was now elevated as the supreme authority in and over all life replacing the divine authority given to man through the Scriptures!
- John Hannah says, “The scientific method was used to answer all the mysteries. Mind seemed more important than heart. Entertainment came to replace deeper values in determining significance. A cultural of human arrogance swept away the need for submission to the divine...The Enlightenment was a death sentence for Christian cultural dominance in the Western nations.”<sup>8</sup>
- Hannah helpfully continues, “In the new outlook, philosophy had precedence over theology, the natural sciences and natural philosophy over grace, and reason over faith. Human rights displaced religious creed in a progressively Christless, secularized worldview.” (Ibid)
- Understanding the Church History properly demands a right view of the “Age of Reason” or “Rationalism” that is born out of the Enlightenment era. This reality of “Rationalism” of the “Age of Reason” was the confluence of three phenomena says Hannah, “(1) the emergence of a secularized philosophy; (2) the discrediting of revelation and tradition as sources of authority; and (3) advances in natural sciences. In his *Church Dogmatics*, Karl Barth (1886-1968) described the Enlightenment as a system founded upon the presupposition of human ability.” (Ibid., 6)
- Now, listen to Hannah’s helpful declaration of the results of this *Age of Reason*...  
“The world no longer was a mysterious place controlled by an incomprehensible God. Its complexity was governed by intelligible laws. Understanding those laws humankind could engineer a glorious future. Ancient truths, such as the deformity of human sin, gave way to confidence that education would quite the beastly side of human nature. Utopia

<sup>7</sup> Some of these notes taken, in part, from See H. Wayne House and his work in *Zondervan Charts of World Religions Movements*, pgs.53-54 (2006).

<sup>8</sup> *Church History, vol 5—The Church in the late modern period 1650-1900, John Hannah; Kregal (2010), pg 4.* These bullet points on the Enlightenment were taken from my notes on *The Last 500 years of Church History*.

seemed a possibility, whether inaugurated through nationalism or self-struggle. Heaven was no longer the final hope. The Creator who orders all things according to the counsels of his good pleasure was marginalized as an artful watchmaker [deism]. After fourteen centuries as society's ultimate source of values and hopes, Christianity was dethroned." (Ibid)

- Therefore, you can now see how it was the bold steps taken by many during the Enlightenment and subsequent "Age of Reason" to question Church authority, The Bible, and even the existence of God that planted the seeds that would later grow to what is called *Secular Humanism*. Early forms of *Secular Humanism* were deeply rooted in and further populated by Scientist like Charles Darwin and Thomas H. Huxley from England and even sceptics like Mark Twain and Robert G. Ingersoll in America.
- The first official document stating the core beliefs of secular humanist was the *Human Manifesto* of 1933 which was drafted by John Dewey (1859-1952). Mr. Dewey was the skeptical and atheistic architect of the American education system that permeates the public school system even to this day. Answers in Genesis<sup>9</sup> writes...

Dewey was one of the 34 signatories of the Humanist Manifesto I that, among other atheistic tenets, states, FIRST: Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created. SECOND: Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as a result of a continuous process. THIRD: Holding an organic view of life, humanists find that the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected.

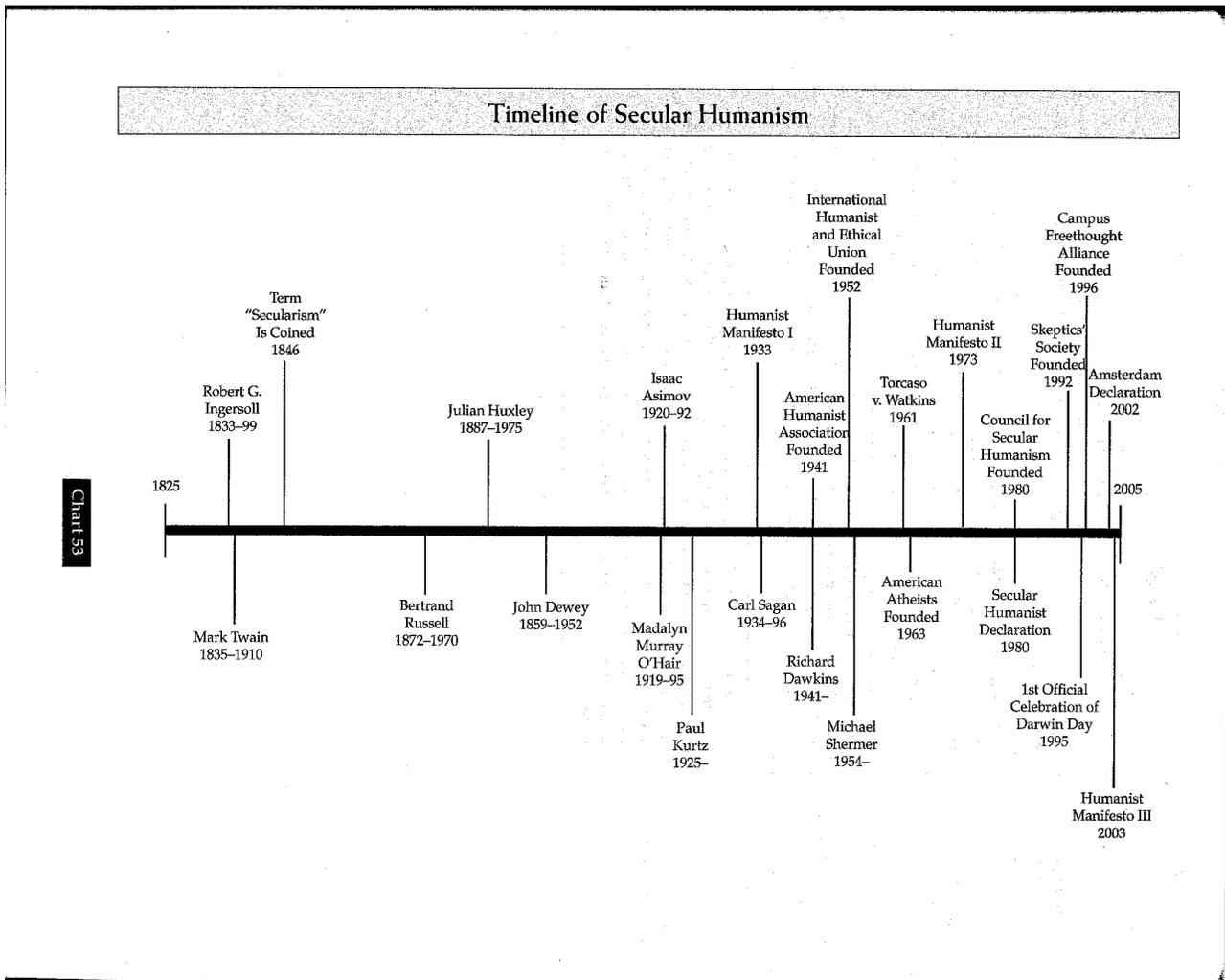
This influential manifesto may sound archaic, but it was a significant statement of atheistic philosophy in the first half of the 20th century. It denied a creator, affirmed naturalistic evolution, and opposed the idea of an eternal soul. In short, it was an atheist creed. And John Dewey was one of the chief endorsers.

- The most public expression of the religious nature of "secular humanism" found in 1961 United Supreme Court case *Torcaso v. Watkins*; Justice Hugo Black used the term in a footnote to the text of a judicial decision. By the 1970's most self-described humanist embraced the label or title "secular humanist." A number of important documents and statements have come forward over the last 50 years that further solidified this religious worldview as a primary player in the cultural of our day. *The Humanist Manifesto II* (1973); *A Secular Humanist Declaration* (1980); *A Declaration of Independence* (1988); *The International Humanist and Ethical Union's Minimum Statement of Humanism* (1996); *Humanism: Why, What, and What For* (1996); *The Humanist Manifesto 2000: A Call for a New Planetary Humanism* (2000); *The Affirmations of the Humanism: A Statement of Principles* (2001); *The Amsterdam Declaration* (2002); *The Humanist Manifesto III: Humanism and Its Aspirations* (2003). The list keeps going!

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<sup>9</sup> <https://answersingenesis.org/public-school/failure-john-dewey/>

- Some important names to remember regarding Secular Humanism...
  - René Descartes
  - John Locke
  - Charles Darwin
  - Bertrand Russell
  - Paul Kurtz
  - John Dewey



H. Wayne House and his work in *Zondervan Charts of World Religions Movements* pg.53-54 (2006)

## II. Some Core Precepts and Tenants of this False Teaching<sup>10</sup>

- **Free Inquiry:** The right of individuals to enjoy unrestrained ability to pursue and promote whatever ideas they believe to be worth such efforts, and opposition to any authorities that might attempt to stifle intellectual freedom.
- **Separation of Church and State:** Religious institutions should not be allowed to use their theological perspectives as a basis for drafting legislation or making judicial decisions to which the larger society is subject, and taxes should not be used to fund activities of religious institutions.
- **The Ideal of Freedom:** Involves vigorous opposition to any and all forms of totalitarianism that would seek to limit freedom of conscience and belief by repressing the unorthodox views, as well as support for substantive political liberties for citizens, the practice of democratic decision making, the rights of minority groups, and the rule of law.
- **Ethics:** Ethics is seen as an autonomous field of inquiry wherein moral judgments can be made without recourse to revealed religion, and human beings are thought to be capable of cultivating moral wisdom and living virtuous lives independent of their belief in or reliance on God or gods.
- **Moral Education:** Moral education of children is essential to maintaining an open democratic society, and it is the task of a public education system to develop and nurture good moral character in children.
- **Religious Skepticism:** A tenacious skepticism concerning supernatural claims and traditional views of God/divinity prevails. This skepticism stems in part from conviction that the physical universe can be properly understood only by means of scientific inquiry.
- **Reason:** The only rational modes of inquiry are ones that rely solely on logic, evidence, and empirical testing; genuine knowledge and objective truth cannot be obtained in any other manner.
- **Science and Technology:** The scientific method is believed to be the most reliable way of understanding the world, and the natural, social, and behavioral sciences are the most effective means of procuring knowledge about the world.

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<sup>10</sup> Some of these notes taken from See H. Wayne House and his work in *Zondervan Charts of World Religions Movements*, pgs.53-54 (2006).

- **Evolution:** Efforts to require that creationist (or intelligent design) theories of human origins be taught to public school students and attempts to include criticisms of Darwinian evolution in biology textbooks are deplored.
- **Education:** Secular public education is seen as key to building humane, free, and democratic societies since it is thought to effectively transmit knowledge, train young people for the future jobs and for their roles as citizens in a democracy, and develop the capacity for critical intelligence.
- **Creation:** The material universe is either eternally existent or the Big Bang brought it into existence without a supernatural cause. The laws of physics suffice to describe all the events, and all phenomena can be explained without invoking the agency of anything beyond the natural world.
- **Scripture and Authority:** All alleged holy books/sacred texts are rejected as guides to human behavior or revealing special truths. Religion in general is held to be the result of ignorance and superstition, and religious authorities are denigrated as being irrational, oppressive fraudulent, and even/or severely misguided. Reason is touted as the highest and final authority in adjudicating all contested matters.
- **God:** Depending on what form of secular humanism is examined you can find a complete denial of any deity (atheism) or others hold no judgment on the matter (agnostics), to a small majority being deist. There is tendency to deify reason and human potential, wherein they boast that they do not rely on God, or gods, or on supernatural forces to solve problems or to provide guidance for personal conduct. Simply stated God is not needed to help man achieve his goals because man is his own god.
- **Mankind:** Human beings are the result of an evolutionary process that is devoid of intentionality; they were not created or designed by God. Human beings have value and dignity and are fully capable of solving their problems.
- **Sin:** Strictly speaking for the secular humanist there is no such thing as sin, nevertheless there is an insistence that certain fundamental moral precepts be obeyed.
- **Salvation:** There is no such thing as salvation in the biblical sense and thus no need for it because God and sin do not exist in this worldview. However, human happiness through the efforts, intelligence, and corporation of humanity would be seen as a form of salvation. The 1980 Secular Humanist Declaration says, “We deplore efforts...to look outside of nature for salvation.”
- **Afterlife:** There is no life after death; humans cease to exist after their bodies no longer function in such a way as to provide the biological conditions necessary for living. Therefore, the focus is entirely on improving conditions in the world for the betterment of human life. Overall, belief in a bodily resurrection or immortality of soul has a negative

effect on achieving the human good in this life. The cart below is from David A. Nobel in *The Battle for Truth: Defending the Christian Worldview in the Marketplace of Ideas*, pg.22; (2001).

<b>FOUR WESTERN WORLDVIEW MODELS</b>				
	<b>SECULAR HUMANISM</b>	<b>MARXISM/ LENINISM</b>	<b>COSMIC HUMANISM</b>	<b>BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY</b>
<b>SOURCES</b>	<i>HUMANIST MANIFESTOES I AND II</i>	<i>WRITINGS OF MARX AND LENIN</i>	<i>WRITINGS OF SPANGLER, FERGUSON, ETC.</i>	<i>BIBLE</i>
<b>THEOLOGY</b>	Atheism	Atheism	Pantheism	Theism
<b>PHILOSOPHY</b>	Naturalism	Dialectical Materialism	Non-Naturalism	Supernaturalism
<b>ETHICS</b>	Relativism	Proletariat Morality	Relativism	Absolutes
<b>BIOLOGY</b>	Darwinian Evolution	Darwinian/Punctuated Evolution	Darwinian/Punctuated Evolution	Creation
<b>PSYCHOLOGY</b>	Self-Actualization	Behaviorism	Collective Consciousness	Mind/Body
<b>SOCIOLOGY</b>	Non-Traditional Family	Abolition of Home, Church and State	Non-Traditional Home, Church and State	Traditional Home, Church and State
<b>LAW</b>	Positive Law	Positive Law	Self-Law	Biblical and Natural Law
<b>POLITICS</b>	World Government (Globalism)	New World Order (New Civilization)	New Age Order	Justice, Freedom and Order
<b>ECONOMICS</b>	Socialism	Socialism	Universal Enlightened Production	Stewardship of Property
<b>HISTORY</b>	Historical Evolution	Historical Materialism	Evolutionary Godhood	Historical Resurrection

## The Existence of God<sup>11</sup>

### I. What is atheism?

A. Atheism is the view that there is no God. It actively asserts that the evidence in the world indicates that there is no divine being(s). It is the opposite of theism, which asserts that there is a God or gods.

B. Atheism is also distinct from agnosticism, which declares that the evidence is inconclusive as to whether there actually is a God or not.

<sup>11</sup> This section is from my seminary notes from *Apologetics* taught by Dr. Michael Vlach.

C. Followers of atheism are called “atheists.” Atheists believe the concept of God is a human construct that has been used throughout human history to serve various psychological and social needs.

1. For example, the idea of God has met the psychological need for some controlling force in the universe that makes sense of the unknown.
2. The notion of God has also been used as a unifying factor for some people groups to rally around.

D. Atheists believe that God has served as a convenient explanation for apparently unexplainable happenings. With the rise of science and technology, however, atheists believe that the need for a God will decrease as science and reason continue to offer natural explanations for matters once considered unexplainable.

E. Atheists claim to use rational and natural explanations to explain reality and do not rely on other-worldly explanations for the universe.

F. Atheists have offered several arguments for the nonexistence of God, but most of these have been considered as counterpoints to arguments for the existence of God. One proactive argument for atheism, though, is the problem of evil. Allegedly, the presence of tragedies and evil in the world show that an all-good and all-powerful God does not exist.

G. In 1841, Ludwig Feuerbach declared that God was a creation of the human mind to help people deal with their fears. Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution was important to atheism in that it offered a view of the development of species that did not rely upon a divine creator. In the late nineteenth century, Friedrich Nietzsche took a strong atheistic approach, arguing that “God is dead” and that the old morality of Christianity needed to be replaced with something better for the modern world.

H. Key beliefs of atheism

1. There is no God. Only the cosmos exists.
2. The universe is eternal. Carl Sagan stated, “The Cosmos is all there is, all there was, and all there will ever be.” The universe is not caused, it is just there.
3. There is no ultimate purpose in the universe.
4. Human beings are matter in motion and have no immaterial soul that survives death.
5. No moral absolutes exist. There are widely accepted and long enduring values but there is no Absolute Law Giver that determines right and wrong, good and evil.

6. Atheists usually recognize the reality of evil but this evil is not seen in relation to God but is part of a random universe that often brings negative consequences.
7. There is no eternal destiny for individuals. When you die you go into the ground and cease to exist.

## II. Reasoning for the existence of God (see Pratt, 100–102)

### A. State your presuppositions up front.

1. The Christian's belief in God is linked to his faith in Christ.
2. The Christian uses what the Word of God has as his starting point.
3. Based on the testimony of the Bible, the Christian is certain of his worldview.

Presuppositional Method – According to presuppositionalism, the Christian should presuppose the truth of Christianity as the proper starting point in apologetics. The Bible is the framework through which all experience is interpreted and all truth is known (Cowan, 19).

“Various evidences and arguments can be advanced for the truth of Christianity, but these at least implicitly presuppose premises that can be true only if Christianity is true” (Cowan, 19).

“Presuppositionalists attempt, then, to argue transcendently. That is, they argue that all meaning and thought—indeed, every fact—logically presupposes the God of the Scriptures. . . . By demonstrating that unbelievers cannot argue, think, or live without presupposing God, presuppositionalists try to show unbelievers that their own worldview is inadequate to explain their experience of the world and to get unbelievers to see that Christianity alone can make sense of their experience” (Cowan, 19).

### B. Use evidence for God's existence from Scripture

1. The Bible assumes the existence of God and operates on the reality of His existence. “In the beginning God. . . “ (Gen. 1:1).
2. Belief in the existence of God is the beginning point for all wisdom (see Prov. 1:7; Heb 11:6). It is foolish and irrational to not begin with God for understanding.
3. According to the Bible, the one who denies the existence of God is a fool. “The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God’” (Psalm 14:1). The denial of God's existence is not reasonable—it's foolishness.

C. Use evidence from the external world.

1. Remind the unbeliever that God is clearly revealed in the universe that He created. This is something that he already knows.

a) “The heavens are telling of the glory of God” (Ps. 19:1).

b) God has made His existence and some of His attributes known through the creation of the world (Rom. 1:18-20).

2. Remind the unbeliever that the good things he experiences in the world are evidence of God:

Acts 14:17: “and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”

3. Use of traditional evidences: While presuppositionalists have varying perspectives on the use of traditional evidences for God’s existence, I believe some of the traditional arguments can be used when dealing with the atheist under the following conditions:

a) The apologist’s absolute and certain commitment to Christ and the Bible is assumed and made clear.

b) Reason is not appealed to as some ‘neutral’ arbiter by which the atheist may use to rule against the Christian worldview. **Reason itself is given by God.**

c) The God being argued for is not a generic concept of god or the god of the philosophers, but the triune God of the Bible.

d) The traditional arguments may be used as supplemental evidence to what the Scripture says on this matter and not as the sole evidence upon which Christianity stands or falls.

e) The Christian should understand that if the unbeliever has a strong commitment to a naturalistic worldview, some of the traditional arguments for God’s existence will be quickly dismissed. That is why bigger issues such as challenging his autonomy and his denial of the Creator-creature distinction must be at the forefront.

f) Traditional arguments for God’s existence may not be appropriate for every witnessing situation. For example, those with an eastern worldview may have different presuppositions that make the use of some traditional arguments less effective.

g) Traditional arguments can be used to prove certain truths about God like God is Creator and God is Designer, but they usually do not prove the complete biblical picture of God. Thus, traditional arguments should not be used independently of what we know about God from Scripture.

h) The Christian should be cautious when using science since new findings may contradict earlier beliefs (i.e. in the Middle Ages many believed the earth was the center of the solar system and used this as part of their theology and apologetics).

#### 4. Use of the teleological argument (Designer)

a) Defined: The teleological argument (or the “argument from design”) is an argument for God’s existence based on the belief that the appearance of design and complexity in the universe argue for a creator. The teleological argument goes like this: “The universe and its contents evidence great complexity. Since great complexities such as the human body and the movements in our solar system cannot happen by random chance, some powerful and intelligent being must have created the universe. This divine architect is God.”

b) Informally, the teleological argument appears to have a basis in Scripture texts such as Psalm 8:3-4; Psalm 19:1-6; and Romans 1:18-20. The grand testimony of the universe is that God created it. Scripture affirms this.

c) Experientially, the teleological argument has often been effective. Many have concluded that the apparent design of the universe and human body points to a creator. The former atheist, Antony Flew, recently changed his position to theism based on evidence from how the universe operates.

NOTE: This does not mean that everyone is impressed by the teleological argument. Those with unbiblical presuppositions like David Hume easily dismissed traditional proofs for God because they did not fit with their worldview.

d) Psalm 8 and 19 discuss the greatness of creation. With modern scientific equipment, properly used, we have a much greater understanding of the size and complexity of the universe than did the psalmist. Things like the programming of the DNA code and the intricacy and balance of eye are astounding. When one looks at the wonders of the created order and then thinks of God that is teleological reasoning (*telos* means “purpose” or “goal”).

e) Atheist response: “The complexity of the universe is the result of chance.”

(1) REBUTTAL: It is irrational to believe that incredible complexity and intelligibility occurs from blind chance. It is also irrational to believe that personal beings like humans can result from impersonal forces.

(2) REBUTTAL: The presence of order and personality in the world are what should be expected if the God of the Bible exists. The Christian worldview better explains a personal and complex universe than does the atheistic worldview.

“Atheists must believe that something comes from nothing, that potentials actualize themselves, and that matter generated mind. It seems much more reasonable to believe in a God who made something where there was nothing, who actualized the potentials that could not actualize themselves, and whose Mind formed matter” (Geisler, *Christian Apologetics*, 235).

f) The teleological argument provides evidence for one aspect of God—that God is a Designer who designed the universe. Understanding this fact alone does not save anyone, thus the apologist must emphasize that this Designer is the God of the Bible who demands submission to His lordship.

## 5. Use of cosmological argument (Causation)

a) Defined: The cosmological argument is an argument for God’s existence based on the belief that the world must have been caused by some supreme being. The term “cosmological” comes from the Greek word *kosmos*, which means “world.” According to the cosmological argument, all contingent things, including our world, must have a cause. But since there cannot be an endless series of causes, or what is called an “infinite regress,” there must be one “uncaused cause” that started the process of contingent beings.

b) The cosmological argument has roots in the creation texts of the Bible (Genesis 1-2; John 1:3; Colossians 1: 16).

c) On its own, apart from Scripture, the cosmological argument is often ineffective with atheists. Atheists often admit that contingent things need a cause, but they are reluctant to admit that the universe is a caused thing. Thus, on an intellectual level the cosmological argument can get bogged down in whether the universe has just always existed or if it has been caused by something else.

d) This is a case where the cosmological argument should be argued from Christian presuppositions. The world is a caused thing since God tells us in His word that He created it.

## 6. Use of moral argument (Absolute Truth & Moral Values)

- a) Defined: The moral argument for God's existence states that the presence of absolute truth, morals, and values only makes sense if God exists.
- b) The moral argument is sound from a Scriptural perspective. The Bible clearly teaches that there are absolute truths, morals, and values. These are made known to us through Scripture and the moral law of God written on the hearts of all people (Rom. 2:14-15).
- c) It is undeniable that moral values exist. But where do they come from?
  - (1) Are moral values subjective opinions of individuals?
  - (2) Are moral values subjective opinions of societies?
- d) The claim of unbelievers that morals are subjective and relative is irrational, self-contradictory, and unlivable.
  - (1) The very claim that truth and morals are subjective and relative is an objective and universal claim. Thus, this claim is self-refuting.

“The assertion that ethical values are merely subjective is self-contradictory, like all statements of subjectivism or skepticism. For the subjectivist is telling us that we have an objective moral obligation to agree with subjectivism, while telling us that no one has an objective moral obligation to do anything” (Frame, *Apologetics to the Glory of God*, 96).

(2) Try as they may, people cannot get over the fact that certain things are absolutely morally wrong:

(a) Hitler's holocaust.

(b) Child molestation.

(c) Murdering an elderly couple in their sleep.

(d) Deny an atheist his paycheck at the end of the month and see if he/she believes in absolute truth.

(3) Atheism has no answer for where the sense of “oughtness” that we all have comes from. As C. S. Lewis has pointed out, not only do people have an innate sense of right and wrong, they also have a sense of “oughtness” to do

what is right. If we see a child being beaten by a group of bullies we have a sense of oughtness to intervene even if it means we may put ourselves in danger. This sense of oughtness cannot be explained by the belief that our universe began by impersonal forces.

e) The origin of moral values There are two options for determining where moral values come from –impersonal forces or a personal force.

(1) Is it possible that there is some impersonal structure or law in the universe that sets forth ethical principles and morals that we are morally bound to adhere to? It appears highly unlikely if not impossible and irrational to believe that morals and oughtness come from impersonal forces. As Frame says, “What of ethical significance can we learn from the random collisions of subatomic particles? What loyalty do we owe to pure chance?” (Frame, 98).

(2) Morals and moral oughtness are more likely to come from a personal force. “If obligations arise from personal relationships, then absolute obligations must arise from our relationship with an absolute person” (Frame, 99).

**D. Argument by folly.** Atheism is an untenable worldview. In spite of God’s continual revelation of himself in nature and the image of God within man, atheists go contrary to reason in stating that there is no God. The atheist promotes the following unreasonable assertions:

1. The personal arose from the impersonal.
2. Matter + time + chance gave rise to the mind.
3. Potential gives rise to the actual (ex. Steel forming itself into skyscrapers)
4. It cannot answer the question, “Why is there something rather than nothing at all?”
5. In an inconsistent but absolute manner he tells us that morals and truth are relative.
6. He acknowledges that there is good and evil but fails to tell us where they come from.

**E. Transcendental Argument: (Atheist cannot barrow from God to refute God)**

The Christian can attempt to show the impossibility of atheism as a viable worldview. The atheist has no answer for:

1. The laws of logic

2. Absolute truth
3. The uniformity of nature

In the attempt to argue against God with logic and reason, the atheist must borrow from the Christian worldview. In the attempt to use logic to refute Christianity the case for atheism is self-refuted.

**F. Challenge the atheist's presuppositions and autonomy (Best Option)**

1. The atheist is assuming his own autonomy to evaluate reality, but he does not have the right to do this. He is a creature of God and does not have the right to evaluate reality by his own standards.
2. The atheist is already aware that the God of the Bible exists through God's creation, but he is suppressing that truth in unrighteousness.
3. The atheist's main problem is not intellectual but moral. "You do not need more evidence, what you need is spiritual heart surgery in which the Holy Spirit gives you a new heart."
4. The atheist needs to be challenged to believe in the God that he already knows exist.
5. The atheist needs to be challenged with the Gospel: "Are you willing to lay down your rebellion and submit to the lordship of Christ?" (Prayer, the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit being most important here).

**Never Forget: Speaking the Truth in Love (Eph 4:15)**

~ Atheists are simply sinners in need of Christ just like every single human ever born including yourself. The Bible is all you need to minister to everyone, and the gospel is what everyone including every atheist needs. Remember there are both personal atheist and practical atheist. Do you know what that means? The former undeniably proclaims his disbelief in God the later simply lives as if God is dead. A lot of practical atheists in the modern church today!!