

Outline and Syllabus for *Anthropology and Hamartiology* a study for the Bible Institute of Gulf Coast Baptist Church Fall 2022 by Steve Thomas

Introduction

Anthropology is the study of man. From a secular viewpoint anthropology contains four areas of study: cultural/social, archeological, biological, and linguistic. Biblical anthropology concerns itself with the study of the origins of man, the nature of man, and the fall and destiny of man. There will be much overlap in the secular and biblical approach, but at the Bible Institute we will look to the scriptures for the truth as it pertains to mankind. God has a purpose for mankind, and created him to be able to serve that purpose. When man sinned, it had a tremendous affect on God's creation. God, in His infinite wisdom, took into account man's failure and set about to reveal Himself through the redemption of His creation. Secular anthropology fails to take into account much of what is vital to understanding how man was made, and how he now is struggling to find his purpose. Biblical anthropology will reveal what man needs to know about how he began, why he is here, and where he is going.

Hamartiology is the study of sin. There are varying ideas regarding sin in society today. Some philosophers have stated that there is no such thing as good and evil, that it is a human construct. Man has sought to define sin and has not done so with any exactness. God is the One to whom sin is levied against. So it is God who defines sin. This course will consider God's definition of sin from scripture. We will see that it is distinct from other words that are wrongly used interchangeably with sin. We will search out the origins of sin, its effects on the human race, and how the believer should deal with sin.

<u>Anthropology and Hamartiology</u> 1 - Introduction and course outline	Sept. 12
<u>Anthropology and Hamartiology</u> 2 - The Origins of Man	Sept. 19
<u>Anthropology and Hamartiology</u> 3 - The Nature of Man	Sept. 19
<u>Anthropology and Hamartiology</u> 4 - The Fall of Man	Oct. 3
<u>Anthropology and Hamartiology</u> 5 - The Destiny of Man/ Midterm	Oct. 10
<u>Anthropology and Hamartiology</u> 6 - The Origin and Definition of Sin	Oct. 17
<u>Anthropology and Hamartiology</u> 7 - Distinction Between Sin/Unrighteousness	Oct. 24
<u>Anthropology and Hamartiology</u> 8 - The Words for Sin	Oct. 31
<u>Anthropology and Hamartiology</u> 9 - The Sources of Sin in the World	Nov. 7
<u>Anthropology and Hamartiology</u> 10 - Conscience/The Handling of Sin	Nov. 14
<u>Anthropology and Hamartiology</u> 11 - Wrapup and Final Exam	Nov. 21

Textbook: The Bible, various charts and notes from the teacher's files

Cost: None, if you feel led to support the class, designated gifts can be given through the church.

The maximum effect of this class will be realized with faithful attendance and some review of the material through the week before the next week's lesson.

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James makes a healthy distinction between two types of wisdom in chapter 3 verses 13-17. There is a wisdom that causes bitter envying and strife; it is sensual and devilish. There is also a wisdom that is pure, peaceable, easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits. It has no hypocrisy or partiality. This is very evident in the study of man and sin. The secular approach to these subjects will explain away accountability for one's actions, telling those who will listen that environment, genetics, and history will dictate actions and determine futures. This wisdom creates more problems than it solves, keeping man from accountability, repentance, and redemption. Secular anthropology makes the claim that the idea of sin is actually counterproductive to producing "good" behavior. People should do good for the benefit it brings, not because someone has deemed the action to be intrinsically good or bad. Essentially secular anthropology denies the Creator, the one who decides what is good or bad.

Secular Anthropology is centered around cultural or biological divisions. From the perspective of culture, if one believes that their culture (way of life) is superior to other cultures, then they are labeled "xenophobic". This means that they are fearful, or even hate other cultures, by pronouncing their culture to be superior. For example, the Native Americans, or indigenous peoples practiced euthanasia as well as infanticide. Modern, peer-reviewed journals can be found with a simple journal search elevating those same arguments to be used today in modern, western society. The ancient Greeks, most notable the Spartans, practiced infanticide, casting aside the weaker offspring to strengthen bloodlines. The Native Americans did the same, most notably the plains Indians as a matter of survival when food was scarce. As health care costs increase in the US, and certain types of procedures become scarce will those procedures be reserved for individuals in certain age groups? The "most life years gained" approach would direct scarce resources to individuals who have more years to live, instead of directing them to elderly patients who qualify with paid up insurance premiums. The pandemic has made these questions more than just hypothetical, as numerous articles exist on covid 19 resources to be prioritised among younger patients. This is an example of how cultural anthropology can affect the way we make decisions every day. If one's study of man is not based in God's Word, then why should one culture be more valid than another? God's Word provides the answers.

The biological study of anthropology seeks to answer the question, "*Where did man come from?*" The secular answer is of course, from a big bang. Intelligent design versus natural selection is a debate that is no longer held in the secular arena. Man evolved over millions and millions of years according to the experts. His urges are the result of adaptation to his environment and millenia of evolution. Accountability for actions has been stripped from modern man. Even in popular culture, villains are not evil, but misunderstood and tragic results of bullying, and mental illness.

The believer should seek wisdom from above. It is pure, peaceable, and full of mercy as James reports. The scriptures are clear as to man's beginnings, man's nature, man's fall, and man's destiny. Man was created in God's image and with His likeness. Sin broke man beyond his ability to repair himself. God intervened and provided redemption as a cure for sin. Man can be restored and God's glory can be seen in man once again.

This study will explore the scriptures to explain how man was made. It will answer the following questions:

1. Is there a relationship between the mind and the body?
2. What is the moral status of man?
3. Does man have a soul and a spirit?
4. Does man have a free will or are his thoughts and actions determined by environment, heredity, and other factors?

These topics cannot be fully covered in 11 weeks, but hopefully seeds will be planted for further study, and the believer can learn enough to fortify him against the wisdom of this world.