

SOUND THE ALARM: THE GOALS OF HUMANISM¹

The watchman on the wall of an ancient city had to be alert for signs of danger. His responsibility was to inform others of what he saw. Should he detect a foreign army about to attack, he needed to sound an alarm. In our own American history, we remember the midnight ride of Paul Revere—from Charleston to Medford, and on to Concord and Lexington.

So through the night rode Paul Revere
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm.²

Likewise, we must sound an alarm regarding humanism and the dangers it presents to Christians. I wish it were possible for us to shout, as did those watchmen on ancient walls, “The enemy is coming!” But that’s not the message about humanism which we must convey. That message would imply that we are here, and that humanism is off over yonder somewhere. Our message—one which leaves us with a sinking feeling—is more comparable to the announcement that “we’ve got termites in our woodwork!”

Humanism is not coming. It’s already here! It has already done much damage. It has already eaten far into the structures of our society. It kills unborn babies. It hurts youth with drugs. It dirties minds with profanity. It turns children against their parents. It robs families of their wealth. It severely damages and often destroys Christian families. If left alone, humanism will eat its way through the country until eventually it has destroyed all Christian homes and churches.

While Christians look with horror on these destructive trends, humanists actually believe their way of thinking will produce a better world. They say that “[t]he next century can be and should be the humanistic century. Dramatic scientific, technological, and ever-accelerating social and political changes crowd our awareness. We have virtually conquered the planet, explored the moon, overcome the natural limits of travel and communication; we stand at the dawn of a new age, ready to move farther into space and inhabit other planets. Using technology wisely, we can control our environment, conquer poverty, markedly reduce disease; extend our life-span, significantly modify our behavior, alter the course of human evolution and cultural development, unlock vast new powers, and provide human-kind with unparalleled opportunity for achieving an abundant and meaningful life.”³

¹Robert L. Waggoner, *Embattled Christianity: A Call To Alarm The Church To Humanism*, The Third Annual Shennandoah Lectures (Shennandoah Church of Christ, 11026 Wurzbach Road, San Antonio, TX 78230.) Pensacola: Firm Foundation Publishing House, 1989, 65-85. © Copyrighted.

²Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “Paul Revere’s Ride,” *Harvard Classics*. New York: P. F. Collier & Son Company, 1910, Vol. 42, “English Poetry,” 135.

³Paul Kurtz, ed. *Humanist Manifesto I and II*, Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1973, Preface to *Manifestoes I and II*, 14.

That sounds good, doesn't it? However, humanists cannot succeed in their quests because they leave God out of their plans. Humanists believe that men are capable of guiding and directing themselves. They know not that "it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). They know not that "there is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death" (Proverbs 14:12; 16:25). They know not God's declaration that "all who hate me love death" (Proverbs 8:36.). They know not that Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6) or that Jesus came that we might have life, and have it more abundantly (John 10:10).

A society built on humanistic principles is a society which will destroy itself. Our society is not rapidly deteriorating. Much of this deterioration is because people have turned away from Christian principles and seek guidance from humanistic values.

Most Christians do not understand humanism, and therefore do not realize its dangers. As I travel among churches, I often ask for a show of hands to see how many in church audiences have read any of the basic documents of humanism – *Humanist Manifestos I and II*, and *A Secular Humanist Declaration*.⁴ Out of one hundred people, generally only two or three raise their hands. Have you read these documents? If not, you should! Humanism is the number one modern philosophical enemy of Christianity. We cannot effectively oppose it unless we understand its values, its goals, and its methods.

In order to understand the basic goals of humanism, we need to look only at its basic documents. That's because these documents were written for the express purpose of declaring the values and goals of humanism. Humanist Paul Kurtz underscored that fact when he wrote in the Preface to *Humanist Manifestos I and II* that these documents are intended ". . . not as dogmas or credos..., but as the expression of a quest for values and goals that we can work for and that can help us to take new directions. Humanists are committed to building a world that is significant, not only for the individual's quest for meaning, but for the whole of humankind."⁵ Moreover, the endorsers of *Humanist Manifesto II* invite others in all lands to join them "in further developing and working for these goals."⁶

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

Our perception of humanist's objectives may be increased by making some preliminary observations about the subtleties of humanism. These observations may also help protect us against deception from humanist language. First, the language used by humanist to

⁴*Humanist Manifesto I* was drafted by Roy Wood Sellers. It was first published in *The New Humanist*, (May/June, 1933, Vol. VI., No. 3). It was signed by thirty-four people, including John Dewey. *Humanist Manifesto II* was first published in *The Humanist* (September/October, 1973, Vol. XXXIII, No. 5). It was signed by 114 prominent persons, including Isaac Asimov, Edd Doerr, Anthony Flew, Sidney Hook, Lester Kirkendall, Paul Kurtz, Corless Lamont, Lester Mondale, and B. F. Skinner. *A Secular Humanist Declaration* was drafted by Paul Kurtz. It first appeared in *Free Inquiry*, (Winter, 1980/81, Vol. I, No. 1, 3-6). In that issue it was endorsed by 58 people from 8 countries, among which were Isaac Asimov, Joseph Fletcher, Sidney Hook, Floyd Matson, and B. F. Skinner. Twenty-three additional endorsements arrived too late for publication and were listed in the next issue.

⁵Paul Kurtz, ed, *Humanist Manifestoes I and II*, 14.

⁶Same as above, 24

express their goals seems intentionally low-key, and may sometimes also be appropriate for declaring Christian goals. This arouses minimal opposition. This technique may be illustrated by looking at two sentences in the thirteenth article of *Humanist Manifesto I*.

Religious humanism maintains that all associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life. The intelligent evaluation, transformation, control, and direction of such associations and institutions with a view to the enhancement of human life is the purpose and program of humanism.

Notice particularly the last sentence. However, let's reword it -- without changing its meaning -- so that the goal is more obvious. The sentence then might read, "The purpose and program of humanism is the intelligent evaluation, transformation, control, and direction of [all] associations and institutions with a view of the enhancement of human life." Notice: "All associations and institutions" includes homes, churches, schools, businesses, professions, governments, organizations, etc. Humanists want to transform, control, and direct them according to humanistic values and goals. Humanists want to convert the world to their way of thinking and acting. Does not the original wording minimize opposition?

Moreover, the language expressing goals of humanism may sometimes be appropriate also for declaring goals of Christianity. Should not the "purpose and program" of Christianity be to transform, control, and direct, "all associations and institutions?" Should not all associations and institutions operate by Christian values and goals? Is not Christianity applicable to all aspects of life -- including all associations and institutions? Of course!

The point is -- humanists have found themselves in a world dominated by Christian values and goals. They do not like Christian teaching and behavioral standards. They want a totally different philosophical standard to govern human thinking and behavior. They are *committed* to eliminating Christianity. That commitment is stated in these documents in a manner calculated to forcefully declare their goals yet to intentionally minimize their resistance.

A second preliminary observation is that vocabulary terms used by humanists sometimes have special meanings. When we are unaware of these special meanings, we may be inclined to agree with what they say. However, when we understand what humanists mean by certain terms, we will probably disagree with them. For example, humanists believe that "the conditions of work, education, devotion, and play should be humanized."⁷ What do humanists mean when they declare that these conditions should be "humanized?"

The answer comes from knowing what humanists believe about humanity. For them, human nature is very limited. Humanists believe that man is only physical, not spiritual. They believe that humans evolved rather than were created. They believe that man has no relationship to deity or to supernatural revelation, and that therefore man needs no guidance apart from his own reason and intelligence. Therefore, to "humanize" the conditions of work, education, devotion, and play mean to remove from them any divine proscriptions regarding human conduct. For humanists, all conditions related to man should be determined only by

⁷*Humanist Manifesto II*, Eighth.

human intelligence and reason. When we understand vocabulary terms in the same sense as humanists do, we then understand their goals more clearly.

A third and final preliminary observation is that humanism, by its very nature, consists not only of ideas but also of a specific method by which it operates, *A Secular Humanist Declaration* observes that “secular humanism is not so much a specific morality as it is a method for the explanation and discovery of rational moral principles.”⁸ The method of humanism is the same as its message, namely, that God and divine revelation must be eliminated from all ethical considerations. Humanism insists that man determine for himself what is right and what is wrong by his own critical thinking. Humanists want everyone to make decisions without considering God and to act as if there is no God. For humanists, God is not relevant. They want Christians also to think and act as though God is not relevant.

BASIC GOALS OF HUMANISM

With these preliminary observations in mind, we are now ready to look at five basic goals of humanism and their potential consequences.

1. Humanists want to replace religions based on supernatural beliefs (like Christianity) with a religion based only on natural beliefs. They believe “that any religion that can hope to make a synthesizing and dynamic force for today must be shaped for the needs of this age. To establish such a religion is a major necessity of the present.”⁹ No less than eight of the fifteen articles of the first *Humanist Manifesto* explicitly describe the new religion of humanism.¹⁰

The first manifesto affirms that “religious humanists regard the universe as self existing and not created.”¹¹ Humanists assert “that the nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantees of human values.” They “insist that the way to determine the existence and value of any and all realities is by means of intelligent inquiry and by the assessment of their relation to human needs. Religion must formulate its hopes and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method.”¹² They are convinced that the time has passed for theism.¹³ Therefore, “religious institutions, their ritualistic forms, ecclesiastical methods, and communal activities must be reconstituted as rapidly as experience allows, in order to function effectively in the modern world.”¹⁴

⁸*A Secular Humanist Declaration*, 5.

⁹*Humanist Manifesto I*, Preface

¹⁰First, Fifth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Tenth, Twelfth, Thirteenth. These all use such expressions as “religious humanists,” “religious humanism,” “religion,” or “religious.” However the other seven articles also relate to religious beliefs. The concluding paragraph begins with the sentence “So stands the thesis of religious humanism.”

¹¹*Humanist Manifesto I*, First

¹²*Humanist Manifesto I*, Fifth

¹³*Humanist Manifesto I*, Sixth

¹⁴*Humanist Manifesto I*, Thirteenth.

While the first manifesto is plain spoken in its rejection of the supernatural, the second manifesto seems more hostile. It declares that “traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species.”¹⁵ Humanists think that “promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful.” Traditional religions and other ideologies are said to be “obstacles to human progress.”¹⁶

The new religion desired by humanists is intended as a foundation for social changes. “In place of the old attitudes involved in worship and prayer the humanist finds his religious emotions expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and in a cooperative effort to promote social well-being.”¹⁷ “Religious humanism considers” the goal of a man’s life “the complete realization of human personality” in the here and now. “This is the explanation of the humanist’s social passion.”¹⁸ “It follows that there will be no uniquely religious emotions and attitudes of the kind associated with belief in the supernatural.”¹⁹ “Believing that religion must work increasingly for joy in living, religious humanists aim to foster the creative in man and to encourage achievements that add to the satisfactions of life.”²⁰ For humanists, “religion consists of those actions, purposes, and experiences which are humanly significant. Nothing human is alien to the religious. It includes labor, art, science, philosophy, love, friendship, recreation – all that is in its degree expressive of intelligently satisfying human living.”²¹ The religion of humanism therefore need not necessarily include formal worship assemblies. Even so, it is important to emphasize that the religion of humanism wishes not just to influence, nor even to dominate, but rather to control every aspect of human life.²² In so doing, it desires to remove God and all supernatural beliefs from all human affairs.

If humanists successfully implement this goal, then they will have eliminated the relevancy of God and all other supernatural beliefs from all human affairs. This has already been accomplished in the area of law. One of the most knowledgeable men in America about humanism, Rousas John Rushdoony, declares in his book *Christianity and The State*, that

At present, law has been severed from God and is in essence atheistic; it presupposes a sovereign man, not the sovereign God. Churchmen, by their acceptance of contemporary, non-Biblical law, have given assent to atheism as the religion of society. The result has been the virtual disappearance of atheism as an organized movement, because our antinomian churches advocate precisely what atheism worked to introduce, the supplanting of theocratic Biblical law with humanistic statist law. Atheism in the 20th century has conquered church, state, and school. The atheistic vision of a social order stripped of God’s law has been realized.²³

¹⁵*Humanist Manifesto II*, First.

¹⁶*Humanist Manifesto II*, Second.

¹⁷*Humanist Manifesto I*, Ninth.

¹⁸*Humanist Manifesto I*, Eighth.

¹⁹*Humanist Manifesto I*, Tenth.

²⁰*Humanist Manifesto I*, Twelfth.

²¹*Humanist Manifesto I*, Seventh.

²²*Humanist Manifesto I*, Thirteenth.

²³Rousas John Rushdoony, *Christianity and The State*, Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1986, 52.

In the field of medicine, humanism is the cause for over a million and a half babies being aborted annually. It is now moving to legalize euthanasia, infanticide, and suicide. In education, humanism has legally removed Bible reading and prayer from public school classrooms. In field after field, little by little, humanists are implementing this goal as they seek to transform, control, and direct all associations and institutions.

2. Humanists want to replace Biblical ethics with Humanistic ethics. Although humanists recognize “the central role of morality in human life,”²⁴ they mean by morality something entirely different than what Christians mean. Generally speaking, Christians believe that man needs guidance from God, and is ultimately accountable to God. Christians believe that God determines what is right and what is wrong, and that ethical values are revealed by God to man through scripture. Christians believe that all human conduct must be consistent with what God says is right. Since God is one (Mark 12:29, 32; 1 Corinthians 8:4,6; Galatians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:5; James 1:17) then God gives but one universal standard. It is absolute and constant. God’s single ethical standard, when used as a social norm, produces moral conformity in society.

This contrast between Christian and humanistic ethical values is easily documented. The second humanist manifesto says 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. Human life has importance because we create and develop our futures.”²⁵

Additional statements from *A Secular Humanist Declaration* say that “ethics was developed as a branch of human knowledge long before religionists proclaimed their moral systems based upon divine authority.”²⁶ Humanists maintain “that ethics is an autonomous field of inquiry, that ethical judgments can be formulated independently of revealed religion, and that human beings can cultivate lives of virtue and excellence.”²⁷ Humanists “are opposed to Absolutist morality,” yet they “maintain that objective standards emerge, and ethical values and principles may be discovered, in the course of ethical deliberation.”²⁸

Reason and intelligence are the means by which humanists determine their ethical standards. “For secular humanists, ethical conduct is, or should be judged by critical reason, and their goal is to develop autonomous and responsible individuals, capable of making their own choices in life based upon an understanding of human behavior.”²⁹

“*Reason and intelligence* are the most effective instruments that humankind possesses. There is no substitute: . . . The controlled use of scientific methods . . . must be extended further in the solution of human problems. . . . Reason should be balanced with compassion and empathy and the whole person fulfilled.”³⁰

²⁴*A Secular Humanist Declaration*, 4.

²⁵*Humanist Manifesto II*, Third

²⁶*A Secular Humanist Declaration*, 4.

²⁷Same as above

²⁸Same as above

²⁹Same as above

³⁰*Humanist Manifesto II*, Fourth.

For humanists, ethics must conform to whatever brings happiness. “Happiness and the creative realization of human needs and desires, individually and in shared enjoyment, are continuous themes of humanism. We strive for the good life here and now. The goal is to pursue life’s enrichment...”³¹ Since happiness relates not only to individuals, but also to groups, it has social importance. Humanist “philosophers have emphasized the need to cultivate an appreciation for the requirements of social justice and for an individual’s obligations and responsibilities toward others.”³²

The ethical values of humanism are a grave threat to a society based on Christian ethical values. If fully implemented, the ethical values of humanism would completely destroy a society whose conduct is governed by Christian ethics. If the taking of God’s name in vain, the telling of falsehoods, the practice of adultery, or even the act of murder by abortion, euthanasia, or suicide is judged by an individual’s reasoning as necessary for his happiness, then, to fulfill his human needs and desires or to solve some human problem, such conduct is considered ethical by humanists!

Humanists seek to implement their system of ethical values through public schools. They believe that public schools are fundamental to their cause. They say that “education should be the essential method of building humane, free, and democratic societies.”³³ They “do not believe that any particular sect can claim important values as their exclusive property; hence it is the duty of public education to deal with these values.”³⁴ They contend that in a world of humanism, “reasonable and manly attitudes will be fostered by education and supported by custom.”³⁵ Therefore, humanists “believe in the *right to universal education*.”³⁶ More specifically, they say

“We support moral education in the schools that is designed to develop an appreciation for moral virtues, intelligence, and the building of character. We wish to encourage wherever possible the growth of moral awareness and the capacity for free choice and an understanding of the consequences thereof. We do not think it is moral to baptize infants, to confirm adolescents, or to impose a religious creed on young people before they are able to consent. Although children should learn about the history of religious moral practices, these young minds should not be indoctrinated in a faith before they are mature enough to evaluate the merits for themselves.”³⁷

Since humanism rejects supernaturalism, then whatever moral values humanism teaches in public schools must of necessity reject moral values related to supernatural beliefs and standards taught by Christian parents. Public schools, in one degree or another, now utilize humanistic values education in a wide variety of courses and grade levels.

³¹*Humanist Manifesto II*, Third.

³²*A Secular Humanist Declaration*, 4.

³³*A Secular Humanist Declaration*, 10.

³⁴*A Secular Humanist Declaration*, 5.

³⁵*Humanist Manifesto I*, Eleventh.

³⁶*Humanist Manifesto II*, Eleventh

³⁷*A Secular Humanist Declaration*, 5.

Humanism now controls public education in America. Humanism has a safe haven for teaching humanistic values to children of Christian parents. Christian parents can therefore expect that public schools will increasingly become anti-Christian. Christian parents must therefore begin to consider educational alternatives for their children. Through the teaching of humanistic ethics to the school children of this nation, humanism is well on its way to realizing its goal of replacing Christian ethics in our society with humanistic ethical values.

3. Humanists want to replace the family as the basic unit of society with the autonomous individual. The family is not important to humanists. Rather, “the preciousness and dignity of the individual person is a central humanist value.” Humanists “reject all religious, ideological, or moral codes that denigrate the individual.” They believe in “maximum individual autonomy” (that is, individual self-rule). For humanists, “the possibilities of individual freedom of choice . . . should be increased.”³⁸

Notice how placing the individual in the central role destroys the home and family. First, the demands of humanists for individual sexual rights, if fully implemented, would destroy the institution of marriage. Humanists believe “individuals should be permitted to express their sexual proclivities and pursue their life-styles as they desire.” They think that “intolerant attitudes often cultivated by orthodox religion and puritanical cultures, unduly repress sexual conduct.” They believe that “the right to birth control, abortion, and divorce should be recognized.” They “do not wish to prohibit by law or social sanction, sexual behavior between consenting adults.”³⁹ For humanists, marriage is generally insignificant. Humanists think marriage is only one of many sexual arrangements of convenience. For humanists, non-married couples living together, as well as communal, homosexual and lesbian marriages, are equally as acceptable as are heterosexual marriages. This means that divorce must be readily available to married persons.

Second, the demands of humanists for elimination of all discrimination based on sex, if fully implemented, would destroy the Biblical role of the sexes within marriage. Humanists “are *critical of sexism or sexual chauvinism*.” They “believe in equal rights for both men and women to fulfill their unique careers and potentialities as they see fit, free of invidious discrimination.”⁴⁰ This means that husbands would not necessarily be heads of their families (Ephesians 5:23.), nor that wives would necessarily be “workers at home” (Titus 2:5, N-ASV), as is true in Christianity.

Third, the demands of humanists for individual rights in an open and democratic society, if fully implemented, would destroy parental authority and responsibility. Humanists are committed to extending “*participatory democracy* in its true sense to . . . the family . . .”⁴¹ This means they would give children authority equal to that of their parents in all family matters. Moreover, since humanists wish to eliminate all discrimination based on age, and since they wish all individuals, if unable to provide for themselves, to have society to provide

³⁸*Humanist Manifesto II*, Fifth.

³⁹*Humanist Manifesto II* Sixth.

⁴⁰*Humanist Manifesto II*, Eleventh.

⁴¹*Humanist Manifesto II*, Eighth.

for them “means to satisfy their basic economic, health, and cultural needs, including whenever resources make possible, a minimum guaranteed annual income,”⁴² then children would have the authority and the means to divorce their parents and leave home at whatever early age they may choose. Moreover, parents need not concern themselves with the moral education, discipline and training of children, inasmuch as that responsibility is assigned by humanists to public schools.

Fourth, the demands of humanists for individual civil liberties, if fully implemented, would destroy the legal right of one member of the family to influence another family member’s personal decisions, even in matters of life and death. Humanists believe that “to enhance freedom and dignity the individual must experience a full range of *civil liberties* in all societies.” This “includes a recognition of an individual’s right to die with dignity, euthanasia, and the right of suicide.”⁴³ This means, for example, that the civil liberties of a wife would prohibit her husband from making legal objections should she seek to abort his unborn child. It means that parents would have no legal right to object should a teen-age son or daughter seek professional medical assistance in committing suicide.

The success of humanism in replacing the family as the basic unit in society with the autonomous individual may be evaluated by recognizing what legislative and judicial actions have led to the deterioration of the family in America. The United States now has the highest divorce rate of any nation in the world.⁴⁴ That’s because “In the last ten to fifteen years about one-third of the states have enacted ‘no fault’ divorce laws, and most others have such grounds as ‘irreconcilable differences’ or ‘cruel and inhuman treatment’ which are often interpreted by the courts to mean essentially the same thing as no-fault divorce. . . . no fault divorce means that neither partner has to prove that the other has broken the marriage contract in any way.”⁴⁵

In the interest of eliminating from society distinct biblically authorized sex roles, humanists have promoted for many years the passage of an equal rights amendment. By 1973, it had passed both houses of Congress and was ratified by thirty state legislative bodies. Needing only eight more states to ratify it, it was well on its way to becoming a constitutional amendment. Had it not been for Phyllis Schlafly and her Eagle Forum, it would almost certainly be national law today.⁴⁶ Having failed to obtain by one Constitutional amendment an all encompassing law against sexual discrimination, humanists are now seeking to achieve their desired objectives through legislative enactments such as “Parental Leave,” “Comparable Worth,” “Unisex Insurance,” and tax supported day-care centers.

Judicial authorities often deny parental authority and control over their own minor children. Parents no longer have legal authority over an unmarried minor daughter’s decision for an abortion. Because the court considers that minors have a legal right to privacy,

⁴²*Humanist Manifesto II*, Eleventh

⁴³*Humanist Manifesto II*, Seventh

⁴⁴Rus Walton, ed. *Biblical Principles Concerning Issues of Importance to Godly Christians*. Plymouth, Massachusetts: Plymouth Rock Foundation, 1984, 140.

⁴⁵John Eidsmoe, *The Christian Legal Advisor*. Milford, MI: Mott Media, Inc. 1984, 89.

⁴⁶Carol Felsenthal. *Phyllis Schlafly: The Sweetheart of The Silent Majority*. Chicago: Regnery Gateway, 1981, 234-276.

contraceptives may be freely dispensed to minors. Minors can be counseled by pro-abortion groups, and, in some states, can even obtain an abortion without parental consent or knowledge. A father now has no legal authority over his unborn child in his wife's womb. A minor child may choose, on the grounds of incompatibility, to become a ward of the court rather than continue living with parents.⁴⁷ While humanists yet have much to accomplish before the autonomous individual can be said to have replaced the family as the basic unit in society, they have also accomplished much in achieving this goal.

4. Humanists want to replace our republican form of representative self-government with a democratic socialist government. Before 1930 American textbooks always designated our nation as a republic. A republican form of government is one "which derives all its powers directly or indirectly from the body of the people and is administered by persons holding office with the consent of the governed."⁴⁸ Now, however, it is common practice for school textbooks to designate our nation as a democracy.

While our government is not yet one of pure democracy, that's the direction humanists wish all our institutions to go. Humanists say, "We are committed to an open and democratic society. We must extend *participatory democracy* in its true sense to the economy, the school, the family, the workplace, and voluntary associations. Decision-making must be decentralized to include widespread involvement of people at all levels - social, political, and economic."⁴⁹

What humanists mean by "an open and democratic society" and by the phrase "*participatory democracy* in its true sense" is that everyone should have equal authority – no more and no less. When they say that "decision-making must be decentralized" in "the school, the family, the workplace, and voluntary associations," they mean that in making decisions each student should have as much say as a teacher, that each child should have as much authority as a parent, and that each employee should have as much input as does an employer. In the name of democracy, humanists want to destroy the authority delegated to specific individuals and to delegate that authority to groups.

The humanistic ideal of a democratic society has special implications for the areas of religion and economics. Regarding religion, since humanists believe that "the conditions of work, education, devotion and play should be humanized,"⁵⁰ then there will be no divine or fixed standard to which all the people may appeal for making their decisions. Decisions must be made in keeping with the changing will of the people. That's because people are said, by humanists, to be "more important than decalogues, rules, proscriptions, or regulations."⁵¹ In

⁴⁷For a discussion of the courts influence over family matters, read "Judicial Schizophrenia: The Courts and The Family," Chapter 7 of John W. Whitehead, *The Stealing of America*. Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1983, 73-81.

⁴⁸Noah Webster, *The American Dictionary of The English Language*. New York: S. Converse, 1928; facsimile edition by Foundation for American Christian Education, San Francisco; as cited by Rus Walton, *One Nation Under God*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1987, 16, 199. n. 24.

⁴⁹*Humanist Manifesto II*, Eighth.

⁵⁰Same as above

⁵¹Same as above

essence, the ideal government of a nation, for humanists, is one where God is absent and where there is rule by men rather than rule by law.

More significantly, “because of their commitment to freedom, secular humanists believe in the principle of separation of church and state.”⁵² They believe that “the separation of church and state and the separation of ideology and state are imperatives.”⁵³ What humanists mean by the separation of church and state, however, is not the same as what Christians mean.

Historically, Christians have meant by the separation of church and state that the federal government should not fund any particular denomination from tax revenues. What humanists mean, however, is that Christianity should not influence civil governments in either the content of governmental decisions, or in the process by which those decisions are made. Since no one wants a national denominational church, the separation of church and state, from a Christian perspective, is a non-issue. Then why do humanists keep applying to current events the issue about separation of church and state? Is it not because humanists want Christians to refrain from influencing public policies with Christian values?

In this, however, humanists are guilty of duplicity. While humanists do not want Christian ideology to influence civil governments, they want their own ideology to be the foundation of civil governments. Some humanists may falsely claim that humanism is not a religion, but no one can deny that humanism is an ideology. Moreover, all civil governments operate by ideological and religious principles. If our government therefore does not operate by principles of the Christian religion, then it will operate by principles of some anti-Christian religion.

Humanists have already achieved considerable success in separating Christian influence from the governance of society. There are now reports of literally thousands of cases of religious discrimination against Christians in America. Christians no longer enjoy religious freedom in America. Religious freedom for Christians has been reduced to religious toleration. And while religious toleration for Christians is still at a high level, it is being steadily reduced as local governments restrict churches with zoning ordinances, and state and federal government agencies declare various church ministries (such as education, day-care services, etc.) to be secular, not religious, and therefore under civil rather than religious jurisdiction.

Regarding economics, “humanists are firmly convinced . . . that a radical change in methods, controls, and motives must be instituted.”⁵⁴ They want to “democratize the economy and judge it by its responsiveness to human needs, testing results in terms of the common good.”⁵⁵ Humanists say that “humane societies should evaluate economic systems . . . by whether or not they *increase economic well-being* for all individuals and groups, minimize poverty and hardship, increase the sum of human satisfaction, and enhance the

⁵²*A Secular Humanist Declaration*, 2.

⁵³*Humanist Manifesto II*, Ninth.

⁵⁴*Humanist Manifesto I*, Fourteenth.

⁵⁵*Humanist Manifesto II*, Tenth.

quality of life.”⁵⁶ In a world of humanism, “individuals should be encouraged to contribute to their own betterment. If unable, then society should provide means to satisfy their basic economic, health, and cultural needs, including, wherever resources make possible, a minimum guaranteed annual income.”⁵⁷ For humanists, “. . . a socialized and cooperative economic order must be established to the end that the equitable distribution of the means of life be possible. The goal of humanism is a free and universal society in which people voluntarily and intelligently cooperate for the common good. Humanists demand a shared life in a shared world.”⁵⁸

The “radical change in methods, controls, and motives” desired by humanists has already been implemented in many ways. The insistence upon democratization of the economy has produced numerous government initiatives for old age pensions, social security, and other government redistribution programs that now operate through state and federal welfare agencies. These social welfare programs of our civil governments have some undeclared assumptions that are contrary to Biblical values. Chief among these is the governmental assumption that all citizens and property belong to the government. However, “the earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof” (Psalms 24:1; see also Psalms 50:10-12; Job 41:11).

Acting as if they own everything, civil governments seemingly presume the right to confiscate through taxation whatever they will from property owners in order to give it to whomever they will. Under these governmental arrangements a man is not fully allowed his God-given responsibility to be a steward of all resources God has given to him. Moreover, an individual’s need and the “equitable distribution of the means of life” are the primary criteria used by civil governments to determine who shall benefit from its treasuries. Again, however, this is not God’s way. God’s way is for a man to work for whatever he receives (Genesis 3:19; 2 Thessalonians 3:10). God works (John 5:17) and he expects man to work (Ephesians 4:28; 2 Thessalonians 3:12).

Not everyone is able to work, therefore children, the elderly, and others should be provided for by their own families (1 Timothy 5:8). The poor should be assisted by compassionate and caring individuals (Luke 12:25-37; Matthew 25:31-46; 1 John 3:17; James 2:14-17). Laziness is forbidden (Proverbs 22:29; 24:3-27; 28:19). The humanists’ idea of enforced sharing of this world’s goods is contrary to Biblical principles.

Humanists want a democratic rather than a republican form of government because a democratic form of government is consistent with humanistic concepts regarding the nature of man and ethical values, whereas a republican form of government is consistent with biblical concepts regarding the nature of man and ethical values. The biblical concept of man is that all men sin (Romans 3:10, 23).

Since no man is free from sin, then any man who has governmental authority over other men may become very evil in his rulership over them. A republican form of

⁵⁶Same as above

⁵⁷*Humanist Manifesto II*, Eleventh

⁵⁸*Humanist Manifesto I*, Fourteenth

government consists of numerous checks and balances against the potential evil which men may do through governmental power. Moreover, when men are expected to live by absolute values based upon God's word, then men in a republican form of government may be self-governing. In a republican form of government, when men fail to live by absolute standards, they are then judged by those standards. These concepts demand human accountability locally. Hence, in a republican form of government, city and county governments are strong while state and national governments are weaker.

On the other hand, the humanist concept of man is that man is basically good, and that therefore all men may be relied upon to do what is basically good. Since it is supposed that man is basically good, then in a democratic form of government, it is thought that the best and wisest of men should rule over the rest of men. Moreover, since humanism contends that ethical and moral values are relative, situational, and autonomous, then a democratic form of government is one of men rather than of laws. These concepts result in the centralization of power. Hence, in a democratic form of government, the national government with its bureaucracies and agencies are the most powerful while weaker state and local county and city governments are restricted by national regulations.

Humanists have already done much to achieve their goal of changing our national form of government from a republic to a democracy. The republican form of national government is still in place, but its effectiveness has been greatly eroded. In many instances they have turned statesmen into demagogues, liberty into license, and progress into chaos. Even so, they have not yet been fully successful. If they should fully achieve this goal, it will be but for a passing moment because "a democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can exist only until the voters discover that they can vote themselves largess out of the public treasury. From that moment on the majority always votes for the candidate promising the most benefits from the public treasury – with the result that democracy always collapses over a loose fiscal policy, always to be followed by dictatorship."⁵⁹

5. Humanists want to replace multi-national governments with a one-world government. The ultimate goal of humanism is to build "a world that is significant."⁶⁰ By that expression, humanists mean that the best option for humanity is "to transcend the limits of national sovereignty and to move toward the building of a world community in which all sectors of the human family can participate."⁶¹ Humanists "deplore the division of humankind on nationalistic grounds."⁶² They "look to the development of a system of world law and a world order based upon transnational federal government."⁶³ This requires that nations "reduce the level of military expenditure and turn these savings to peaceful and people-oriented uses."⁶⁴ It also requires centralized "cooperative planning concerning the use of rapidly depleting resources."⁶⁵

⁵⁹Alexander Fraser Tyler, quoted by James Madison, *Federalist Papers*, as cited by Rus Walton. *One Nation Under God*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1987, 19.

⁶⁰Paul Kurtz, ed. *Humanist Manifestos I and II*, Preface, 4.

⁶¹*Humanist Manifesto II*, Twelfth

⁶²Same as above

⁶³Same as above

⁶⁴*Humanist Manifesto II*, Thirteenth

⁶⁵*Humanist Manifesto I*, Fourteenth

Moreover, since the problems of economic growth and development are considered worldwide in scope, developed nations are said by humanists to have a moral obligation to provide “massive technical agricultural, medical, and economic assistance, including birth control techniques, to the developing portions of the globe.”⁶⁶ And since humanists generally consider technology to be a vital key to human progress and development, then humanists “would resist any moves to censor basic scientific research on moral, political, or social grounds.”⁶⁷ “Communication and transportation” must be expanded. “A world wide system of television and radio for information and education” must be developed that “diverse political, ideological and moral viewpoints” may be shared.⁶⁸

Humanists declare that since “we are responsible for what we are or will be,”⁶⁹ then we should work together for a humane world. They believe that “. . . commitment to all humankind is the highest commitment of which we are capable; it transcends the narrow allegiances of church, state, party, class, or race in moving toward a wider vision of human potentiality. What more daring a goal for human kind that for each person to become, in ideal as well as practice, a citizen of a world community.”⁷⁰

Although humanists are far from achieving this goal they have already put many systems into place for a one-world government. The United Nations charter is based upon the precepts of humanism. UNESCO, the World Health Organization, and other UN auxiliary organizations are all influential throughout the world. The International Court of Justice (commonly referred to as the World Court) is now functioning, although most nations abide by its judgments only whenever it suits their respective wills. Many countries now consider it standard practice to give foreign aid to other countries. Public demonstrations promoting peace, demilitarization, and the cutting of national defense budgets are also common.

In some ways, this goal of modern humanism is quite similar to a goal once held by some ancient humanists. The ancient humanists had said to one another, “Come, let us build a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name; lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth” (Genesis 11:4). As these ancient people left God out of their plans and efforts, so also do modern humanists who want to build a one-world government. And as those ancient humanists acted in pride to make a name for themselves, so also do modern humanists act in pride, thinking that by human reason and intelligence modern man can guide himself in the full development of his potential.

But just as God then confounded their languages and turned their tower “unto heaven” into a tower of Babel, so also will God confound these modern humanists and leave in rubble their attempts to build a one-world government. We may be sure of this because God casts down the haughty and lifts up the humble (2 Samuel 22:18; Proverbs 3:34; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5; Isaiah 10:33; Proverbs 16:18; 18:12; 22:4; Luke 14:11; 18:14).

CONCLUSION

⁶⁶*Humanist Manifesto II*, Fifteenth

⁶⁷*Humanist Manifesto II*, Sixteenth

⁶⁸*Humanist Manifesto II*, Seventeenth

⁶⁹*Humanist Manifesto II*, In Closing

⁷⁰Same as above

However much Christians may believe that humanism leads to destruction and that it will ultimately fail, humanists think otherwise. They “believe that it is possible to bring about a more humane world, one based upon the methods of reason and the principles of tolerance, compromise, and the negotiations of difference.”⁷¹ They are confident that they can “initiate new directions for humankind.”⁷² Their assessment is that “the true revolution is occurring and can continue in countless non-violent adjustments.”⁷³

However much Christians may not wish to acknowledge it, “the influence of secular civil humanism in the West since the Enlightenment has generally followed an ascending course. Even in the United States, where religion remains a powerful social force, civil humanism is now probably the dominant value system within the intellectual community. It thereby exerts strong influence over the entertainment and news industries and over the higher levels of the education system and the government bureaucracy. Leo Pfeffer, a distinguished authority on church-state relations, has written, ‘Secular humanism [is] a cultural force which in many respects is stronger in the United States than any of the major religious groups or any alliance among them.’”⁷⁴

In view of the accelerating growth of humanism, it seems abundantly clear that professed Christians are not being the salt of the earth, the light of the world, and a leavening influence within society. Professed Christians are not exterminating the termites of humanism. The sad fact is that many professed Christians seem altogether unaware of the existence of humanism. Such Christians are therefore totally incapable of assessing the damages done by humanism. More significantly, such Christians are unable to oppose humanism.

If humanism is ever exterminated, and if our culture is ever to be firmly established upon Christian principles, then all who profess to be Christians must act immediately to implement Christian values within all civil governments and agencies, and also within all other institutions, organizations, and human associations. Unless the Christian religion comes to prevail over the religion of humanism in America, then we may expect that, as humanists more fully achieve their goals, this nation will continue on its downward path of moral degeneration.

As we look at the goals of humanism, and the degree to which they already have achieved their goals, we who profess to be Christians should be alarmed at the effectiveness with which humanists are achieving their objectives. If ever there has been a time in these United States for Christians to respond to shouts of alarm, this is that time.

⁷¹*A Secular Humanist Declaration*, Conclusion.

⁷²*Humanist Manifesto II*, In Closing

⁷³Same as above

⁷⁴A James Reichley, *Religion in American Public Life*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institute, 1985, 47, with quotation from Leo Pfeffer, “The Triumph of Secular Humanism,” *Journal of Church and State*: 19, Spring, 1977, 211.