

## Anthropology—Doctrine of Man: Depravity and Humanism

James Duvall

### I. The Biblical definition of depravity.

A. The nature of depravity. When man first sinned he *died spiritually* and became enslaved to sin—*But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die (Genesis 2:17); Jesus answered them...Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin (John 8:34).*

1. Man is spiritually dead (not well or sick) but dead in trespasses and sins—And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1).
2. Man's defiled condition is passed on to his children—*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me (Psalm 51:5).*
3. Depravity does not mean that man does not have morals which are concerned with man's relation to man, because depravity is concerned with man's relationship with a Holy God.

B. The extent of man's depravity, pertaining to all aspects of his person, is total. Total depravity means that the natural man is never able to do any good that is fundamentally pleasing to God, and does evil all the time. All the faculties of man are depraved including:

1. Mind—*And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually (Genesis 6:5);* see also Romans 1.
2. Heart—*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9).*
3. Affections—And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil (John 3:19).
4. Conscience—*.....unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled (Titus 1:15).*
5. Head to feet—*From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it (Isaiah 1:6).*

### II. The definition of humanism—a world view that envisions humanity as the supreme factor of reality. God is equated with humanity. Humanism is the belief that man shapes his own destiny. It is a constructive philosophy, a non-theistic religion, a way of life.....The American Humanist Association is a non-profit, tax exempt organization incorporated in the early 1940's in Illinois for educational and religious purposes (Membership Brochure, What is Humanism?).

A. The *Humanist Manifesto I* (1933 by John Dewey) and *Humanist Manifesto II* (1973 by Paul Kurtz) states that traditional theism, especially faith in the

prayer-hearing and loving God, is an unproved and outmoded faith; salvation beliefs are harmful, diverting people with false hopes of heaven hereafter.

- B. Current concepts of humanism teach atheism, evolution as fact, situation ethics, explicit sex education, perversion as acceptable, no life after death, etc.
- C. Current concepts of humanism forbid teaching about God, creation as scientific, moral absolutes, Biblical view of sexuality, homosexuality as wrong, eternal life, heaven and hell, judgment, prophecy, etc.

**III. The humanistic definition of depravity—man is shaped by his evolutionary environment and becomes what he is conditioned to be. There are no rights given by God, no standards. Man is his own authority, his own god in his own universe.**

- A. A re-evaluation of the matter—*Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ (Colossians 2:8).*
- B. Idolatry is the issue we face—*22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools...25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen (Romans 1:22, 25).*
- C. A paganistic revival—*11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness (II Thessalonians 2:11-12).*

**IV. The subtlety of humanism—But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ (II Corinthians 11:3).**

- A. Half-truths are deceiving—*13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. 14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned.... 15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (II Timothy 3:13-15).*
- B. Seduction is commonplace—*.....some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils (I Timothy 4:1).*
- C. The age-old conflict—*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (Ephesians 6:12).*

**V. The extent and seriousness of humanism—But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them (II Corinthians 4:3-4).**