

## Humanism . . .

“. . . a philosophy in which man, his interests, and development are man-centred and dominant, tending to exalt the cultural and rational elements of man rather than the supernatural”.

*(The New International Webster's Concise Dictionary of the English Language)*

There are many varieties of humanism (literary, cultural, secular, religious, democratic, philosophical), but the core belief is that there are no supernatural or spiritual beings outside the realm of the natural universe. It is a philosophy of life that considers “the welfare of humankind rather than the welfare of a supposed God or gods to be of paramount importance” (J. C. Sommer). The table illustrates how it embraces the exact opposites of many of our Bible-based beliefs.—*J.A.W.*

Humanism	The Bible
Considers the universe to be the result of an enormously long and complex evolution under immutable laws of nature	“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Gen. 1:1) “In six days the LORD made heaven and earth” (Ex. 20:11)
Holds that there is no evidence that a supernatural power ever wanted or needed anything from human beings, or ever communicated to people	“And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all His ways . . . ?” (Deut. 10:12) “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine . . .” (2 Tim. 3:16)
Deplores efforts to look outside nature for salvation	“Jesus Christ of Nazareth . . . Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:10,12)
Believes that this world and this life are all we have	“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable” (1 Cor. 15:19)
Claims that all situations and people deserve to be judged on their merits by standards of reason and humanity	“God . . . hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained” (Acts 17:30,31)
Believes that when people are free to think for themselves, using resources and knowledge as their tools, they can solve the world's problems	“O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (Jer. 10:23)
Presents a philosophy for those who are in love with life	“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . soul, and . . . mind” (Mt. 22:37)
<b>Suggest Scriptural quotations that refute the following claims of humanism:</b>	
Moral principles are tested by their consequences	
Human beings have a right and responsibility to give meaning and shape to their own lives	
Man is in a poor way if he has to be restrained by fear of punishment and hope of reward after death	
The central importance of the value of human happiness is here and now	