

Schlax, Silas
Christianity and Culture: Recovering Christian
Humanism in the 21st Century, 12:00 pm
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The Destruction of Culture is Rooted from Secularism

Secular humanism is a moral degrading, culture destroying, and universal divider, and without a change, the culture will end up being unrecognizable. Fortunately, Christian Humanism has solutions to this problem. While secularism—another term for secular humanism—is an abomination of Christian Humanism. It has its roots in Christian Humanism, and in the Truth of God. But it is still a problem in the postmodern culture of today; Christian Humanists must take action to correct the faults secularism poses in the culture. What are these faults? First, secularism excludes religion, and replaces it with rational thought. In other words, it throws God and the Supernatural out the window. Second, secularism in their attempt to separate religion and faith arrives at a “loss of ultimate purpose and meaning” (Jens Zimmermann 2012, 11), instead at a higher understanding of human nature, thus creating the Western “identity crisis.” Third, secularism, in its attempt to be anti-religious, results in a religion they deny.

“Secularism is an ideology that excludes religion *a priori* from rational thought” (Jens Zimmermann 2012, 32). Secularism discards religion, and rational thought takes its place. Therefore, anything unexplainable must be deemed untrue. Secularism, as Romano Guardini said, “At the same time, the unbeliever will emerge from the fogs of secularism. He will cease to reap benefit from the values and forces developed by the very Revelation he denies” (Romano Guardini 2009, 536). When one rejects the truths and ideas of Christian Humanism, they therefore; reject its benefits reaped from the values and forces of Christianity. Secularism is fog to the unbeliever. It surrounds them in a facade of misleading truths and ideologies. Secularism is

not the solution, as the culture believes, but it is a hindrance to the further development of rational thought, scientific exploration, and solving the world's problems. Instead of solving our problems, it is making new ones, like all these "new" ideas of transgenderism, women's rights and equality movements, and wanting the *secular* government to fix everything and do it all for them. It is like giving a ten-year-old car keys and telling them to drive themselves to school. It does not go well.

When one separates reason from faith, they end up in a place without hope and meaning. This is a key factor in the Western identity crisis today. Without truth, and a sense of their purpose to set their meaning on. They end up in an abyss of nothingness, trudging along all along.

Indeed, *Incarnational Humanism* identifies our modern inability to correlate reason and faith properly as a major cause of the identity crisis of the Western cultures and thus of the philosophical and educational issues discussed in this book. As we shall see, many modern secular societies suffer from a loss of ultimate purpose and meaning because their values have been served from transcendent religious sources that gave rise to them. The effects of this separation can be seen in both Christian and non-Christian views on the place of religion in culture. The international humanism of the church father did not have this problem. By grounding all human knowledge in the eternal logos of Christ, early church theologians found a way to unify reason and faith, a way that duly considered both faith's dependence on reason and reason inability to supersede faith. The church fathers "fully welcomed reason which was open to the absolute, and they infused it with richness drawn from revelation." (Jens Zimmermann 2012, 11).

Reason can not "supersede" faith, as secularists try to do. Nor should one set aside or ignore reason. Reason and faith can only be unified if one is able to incorporate all their knowledge into the eternal Logos of Christ. But when one attempts to separate it, they just arrive at a hopeless, meaningless pit of their own making. Their own proverbial prison by their own

design. The only hope of escape is to bring faith back into the picture, specifically faith in Jesus Christ.

Secularism, in its attempt to oust religion, end up creating their own. Secularists try to explain that secularism is not a religion, but is not a religion just a way of thought? Religion is just a system of cultural beliefs, rituals, and moral values that is typically centered on a deity. When trying to reject God, they become their own “deity”, serving themselves. But without something to look at as an undeniable truth, they end up in this “identity crisis”, thus leading philosophers and politicians to call for a return of religion,

The Implosions of secularism, of the attempt to explain human life without religion, lead me to my final point, the return of religion. The identity crisis of the West and the exhaustion of secular reason have led a number of philosophers and politicians to call for a return to religion. The Italian philosopher Gianni Vattimo, for example, reconciles his postmodern, Heideggerian philosophy of “weak thought” with Christianity by explaining the very progression of history as the kenotic unfolding of God’s incarnation in Jesus. (Jens Zimmerman 2009, 43).

Religion is a must for a successful way of thought. Even secularists have identified this error in secularism, and turned to Christianity for a solution. While just any religion is not the eternal solution, it gives Christian Humanists a starting point to further develop the true eternal truths and teaching of the Bible.

So then, if secularism is not the solution as the modern culture likes to believe, then what is? In simple terms, it is Christian Humanism. But, how does Christian Humanism arise back into this dominantly secular culture and make an impact? How can one recover Christian Humanism in this secular era? For starters, Christian Humanists can not shadow the truth and find common ground with those denying Christianity. But as Matthew Levering says, do the opposite;

At a time when various secular humanisms are thriving, Christians might imagine that the way forward is to make common cause with others in promoting human values without mentioning doctrines that specifically pertain to Christianity. With his characteristic erudition and eloquence, Jens Zimmermann shows that the opposite is the case: it is precisely in and through the incarnation of Jesus Christ that true humanism flourishes, because human life together requires the healing and hope that God brings by even now drawing us into his life. Without faith, hope and love, humanity founders. Zimmermann sheds profound light upon the full scope of life in Christ. (Matthew Levering 2009, 0)

Another plausible solution is to keep pushing back on modern secular ideologies and ideas, with the Gospels and Truths, providing an escape from their self-made prisons of hopelessness and meaninglessness. A practical method to this can be what a pastor by the name Cliffe Knechtle does with his ministry, “Give Me An Answer”. Cliffe goes to colleges and challenges non-believer students to ask him a question about God or Christianity that he will answer. By doing this, those listening and asking questions are getting a practical lesson in the Truth, and it might give them a starting point to look in the right direction. Christian Humanists must familiarize themselves with secularism, but they should also heed Romano Guardini's words to rid themselves of secularism. “The Faith of Christian men will need to take on a new decisiveness. It must strip itself of all secularism, all analogies with the secular world, all flabbiness and eclectic mixtures. Here, it seems to me, we have solid reasons for confidence” (Romano Guardini 2009, 538).

Secularism degrades, destroys, and divides modern culture. However, it has ties to the original true humanism, Christian Humanism. Without a change, secularism will ultimately destroy our culture into an unrecognizable mess of false ideas and division, that there may be a repetition of the Chinese church persecution. If Christian Humanists effectively take action to turn the culture around from its path to destruction, then there can be a recovery of Christian

Humanism in the culture. Just as Rome was not built in a day, the recovery of Christian Humanism will not happen overnight. It will require time, effort, blood, and tears, but by the grace of God, Christian Humanists will start a revival of Christian Humanism and Christianity. Fortunately for Christian Humanists today, those who laid the foundation have set the stage for the recovery of Christian Humanism. Some of the recovery has already started. For instance, the gap theory, which states that there are millions of years between each day of creation, without an acceptance of a higher being—God—this theory would not be so popular. While there is still a lot of work to go, Humanists have started the process. In conclusion, secularism has caused a lot of problems in culture and the individual, but Christian Humanism and Christianity offer a solution that hopefully will recover what has been lost.