

15th General Assembly, 1987, 15-92, III, 3, p. 186.

HUMANISM

That the 15th General Assembly adopt the following resolution on Humanism:

Resolution on Humanism

Whereas, the authority of God is neglected or disavowed in wide reaches of modern life, both in official atheistic nations that elevate the state as the ultimate source of human rights and duties, and also in the Free World where naturalistic philosophies regard human beings as lords of truth and right; and

Whereas, any generation that flees accountability to God, ignores the supernatural, and obscures transcendent truth and fixed values, invites poverty of spirit, ethical turmoil and civilizational chaos; and

Whereas, Humanism or Secular Humanism has penetrated leadership in public life in our own land, especially in the political, mass media, and educational arenas, so that religion (except for Humanism) is more and more regarded as irrelevant to national affairs and as of private significance only; and

Whereas, this secular outlook clashes with that of founders of the American republic who in the Declaration of Independence emphasized that the Creator has endowed all mankind with inalienable rights, in clear contrast with the contemporary priority for evolutionary theory in public schools and their evasion and virtual exclusion of creation doctrine from the classroom; and

Whereas, a generation that is academically encouraged to view divine creation as myth and evolution as fact cannot long escape the further illusion that human rights endowed by the Creator are likewise mythical, thus accelerating the drift to personal relativism and social instability in contemporary life; and

Whereas, the Supreme Court decisions of 1962 and 1963 have engendered considerable confusion as to the rights and privileges granted by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America with regard to prayer and other religious expression in public schools; and

Whereas, the same First Amendment to the Constitution which protects against the establishment of religion also clearly states that government shall not prohibit the free exercise of religion.

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Presbyterian Church in America encourage its members and other Christians to challenge the growing tendency of Humanists to dilute biblical principles in public life while they promote Humanistic alternatives; and

Be it further resolved, that we call upon our people to work to reverse the de facto exclusion of references to the Deity and Judeo-Christian values from public schools, which makes the government not neutral to religion but antagonistic to it, and replaces the Judeo-Christian ethic with a religion of humanism or Secular Humanism; and

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Be it further resolved, that we pursue this reversal by Christian example and the penetration of secular society, and by seeking appropriate legislative and/or judicial action; and

Be it further resolved, that we call upon our churches to emphasize the authority of the living God as creator, preserver, and judge of the universe, and to articulate the significance of this for community, national, and international life, as well as individual life; and

Be it further resolved, that we approve the principle of quality education and urge our members and other Christians to become personally involved in public, private, or Christian school matters, encouraging the restoration of theistic history and values in the curriculum so the Humanistic values will not be taught exclusively; and

Be it further resolved, that we call our members and other Christians to involvement in political, educational and media opportunities, and to exemplify in their lives and leadership the relevance of the ethical principles of the Bible to the contemporary moral crisis.

Adopted