

Breadth of Mind and the Bible - An Illustrative, Philosophical View

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There are three systems from which human thought springs: Humanism, Naturalism and Theism. It is doubtful anyone is a purist in any one train of thought - so, each holds some degree of a mishmash. When conflicting conclusions are reached on a subject, it may prove helpful to trace back each conclusion and identify from which fount it springs. The real question then becomes, "*Which system is actually the most sound?*" To answer this requires an understanding of each thought system - honestly pitted against each another - and honestly weighed.

Defined

Humanism is human opinion. It is an effort to formulate valid metaphysical constructs with *no* appeal to a power higher than man. Naturalism, on the other hand, confines itself to physical materialism. Naturalists think from a scientific base ... with any "*values*" or conclusions extrapolated in accordance with gathered physical data. As to Theism, if Jesus Christ physically rose from the dead, then the material that can be credibly connected to Him carries weight ... actually a phenomenally great weight. A Biblical Theist has determined the Protestant Bible of 66 "*books*" meets that test. The goal is to then accurately represent the position of the Bible's Author on the given topic.

Humanism: The Weakest of All Human Thought

The bulk of humanity is not really serious about the deeper questions of life. Most are occupied with the present tense. Sometimes the struggle to survive forces this, but oftentimes people simply choose to fritter away their time in trivial pursuits. "*Thinking*" is not something to which they are inclined. There are many reasons for this state of affairs, but the reasons are ultimately irrelevant as the reality is all that matters. When pressed, "*insights*" might be forwarded, but when examined, the material drawn from is usually quite spurious or of uncertain origins. At one time, some "*saying*" may be forwarded that has been handed down through the family, or, at another time, some catchy phrase from a song or movie - or something they ran across that happened to "*strike a chord*." Humanism, as a mental discipline, is dedicated to accumulating these opinions of man and seeks to assess and categorize them. In its mature form, Humanism boasts of its sciences, but these are the "*soft*" social sciences of man's metaphysical pursuits. Things like Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Economics, etc. These studies are actually social observations, measures and assessments. The word, "*science*" should be reserved for the "*hard sciences*" of Naturalism - Chemistry, Physics, Astronomy, Biology, and the like.

When Humanistic values conflict with Naturalism or Theism, the Humanist chooses Humanism. But, if there is objective science (which there is) and if there is a valid Theism (which, based upon Jesus' resurrection, there is), to then choose human opinion over either of these is an embrace of the most shallow and weakest of all human thought. Humanists occupy themselves in a kiddie pool. The most substantive abode they can construct beside this kiddie pool is a lean-to. Here are a few examples of the Bible's assessment of Humanism. "*A fool does not delight in understanding, but only in revealing his own mind (airing his own opinions)*" (Pr 18:2). "*There*

is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death” (Pr 14:12). “Your memorable sayings are proverbs of ashes, your defenses are defenses of clay” (Job 13:12). The Bible is tremendously aggressive toward Humanistic metaphysical thought that conflicts with it. No quarter is given ... and it will not survive.

Naturalism: A Mud Hut ... by the Lake

Atheistic Naturalism promises objective truth - absent opinion. Its only concern is physical reality. An authentic, atheistic, evolutionary Naturalist *does* have some solid tools and building materials at hand. Unbiased application of scientific procedure and analysis does lead to accurate present-tense information. But, as the Creator of that truth is left unacknowledged - or denied - the best that can be constructed is a mud hut. But, at least the Naturalist scientist has left the kiddie pool and has built by a great lake. Unfortunately, interpretation of the discovered data often sours things. For example, while physicists may be accurate in their analysis of current physical law - it is error to assume these laws have always been ... or will be. I call this, “*The Mother of all Errors*” in a section of my Ebook, “*Death and the Bible.*” In summary, the Judgments in Genesis 3:14-19 ushered in tremendous physical changes ... with **new** physical laws. The impact has been immense - affecting all the organic and inorganic sciences. In fact, the entire universe has been immersed into a deep, but temporary, degenerative trough. At the other end of this trough is the re-created order. This will be an act of God that either restores the original creation, with its laws, or will perhaps be an even better order. By rejecting these Bible claims, the atheistic, evolutionary Naturalist explores in the great fresh water lake of scientific truth, but is operating without a full deck. At best, the Naturalist is playing with one card of the fifty-two ... and it is not a trump card. This mud hut - and all the others along that shore - will not stand a chance against the coming Tsunami.

When scientists are working in truth, they are working with God’s things. Any scientific discipline honestly pursued, evaluated and weighed with perspective - will run into “*God.*” He states it this way: “*... that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made ...*” (Ro 1:19, 20). Failure to acknowledge the Creator, by those who are peering into the mechanics of His creation, will be part of their accountability when standing before Him. “*My glory I will not give to another*” (Isa 48:11).

Intelligent Design

Every discipline has scientists who advocate Intelligent Design. It seems this is on the increase, but maybe such sentiments have always been constant, but there was no platform for this material disbursement. When I went through my formal scientific studies, I do not remember *any* textbook material that had *any* challenge to evolutionary Naturalism. But now, with the Internet, a platform exists for giving voice to these contrarians. Much of their work is extremely well researched with penetrating analysis and challenges to their Naturalist peers (See, <http://www.icr.org> - Institute for Creation Research). But, I suspect the biggest challenge for Naturalists with a high IQ ... is for them to be able to imagine a Being with the ability to create - out of nothing - their particular field of lifetime study. And if they also have a grasp on the

complexity of other scientific fields - and are told the same Designer made those too ... well, the concept of such an Entity probably stuns their mind into unbelief. How could Someone invent chemistry, mathematics, physics, organic life, inorganic materials, energy ... out of nothing - and weave them altogether into this ... place? This is unfathomable. And when the Bible asserts this Designer has even catalogued each person's actions, words, thoughts and secrets - this becomes a pill incapable of being swallowed.

The Corruption of Atheistic Naturalism

The corruption of atheistic Naturalism occurs in one of two ways. The first is when it conflicts with Biblical claims. This is usually obvious. For example, the Naturalist immediately relegates to fantasy - every miraculous Biblical account. But, the second corruption to Naturalism occurs when Humanistic opinion is mixed into it. This is rampant. In some ways, I can understand why a Naturalist would completely reject the Bible's supernatural claims. The Naturalist wasn't there - and those claims undermine Evolution **at its core** (See, "*Death and the Bible*"). But what is amazing to me is how readily professing Evolutionists adopt Humanistic metaphysical values that violate fundamental principles of Naturalism. Whether abortion rights (See, "*The Stunning Civil Rights Parallels Between American Slavery and Abortion*") or homosexual rights (See, "*Evolution and Homosexuality*"), or all the civil rights (the list is almost endless) ... they all violate, or restrain, the ones who were **always** the naturally superior up to the moment of this metaphysical mutation. So, a 6,000 year old mutation pitted against a successful 1,000,000,000 year lifeline **is not to be questioned** (or evaluated) - just embraced as progressive in our natural development? On a 24 hour clock, this represents the last tick (1.44 of the 86,400 seconds). Of course, some believe life is more like 4,000,000,000 years old ... so, I am being generous to this mutation.

I was recently engaged by an "*agnostic atheist*" who repeatedly made the point that evolutionary science and Humanism are totally "*unrelated*" disciplines. Humanism may want that to be the case, but Evolution will not comply. Every change in a species is "*related*" to Evolution - **especially** one that is species wide and is unknown in the rest of the known universe. We know of no species that has ever placed metaphysical restraints upon itself. Nothing is irrelevant to Evolution - as though it is some disengaged spectator. Evolution is constantly engaged in life. I still do not know if there actually are any true Naturalists.

If I was an atheistic Naturalist, three things would drive me. **First**, I would do everything possible to identify natural evolutionary law in our own species for the first 86,398.56 seconds (of the 86,400 seconds) of our 24 hour clock. **Second**, I would seek to expose, and curb, any of these new metaphysical values implementations until they could be scientifically demonstrated as beneficial (or at least neutral) - versus being steps into our extinction. I would never allow anyone to say, unchallenged, that Humanism, and its values, are "*unrelated*" to evolutionary science. **Third**, I would develop a scientific, metaphysical value system to replace this Humanistic one. I know this seems like an oxymoron (Evolutionary Metaphysics), but I make a case for such a pursuit in "*Abortion: How (and Why) Abortion Resides in the Weakest Form of Human Thought and Valuation*," pages 23-27. You might find it ... interesting. As a hint, if atheism is actual reality, then all organic Naturalism is heading for certain extinction. Evolutionary metaphysics is humanity's only hope.

The Skipped Subheading

You may have noticed I did not include a subheading, "*The Corruption of Humanism.*" It isn't possible to corrupt what already is. Even if I spent time exposing a deviously employed Humanistic value that brought down some other competing Humanistic value, such a corruption would not create ... another shade of black.

Biblical Theism: The Ocean

The dead body of Jesus Christ coming back to life after being in a tomb for around 40 hours (parts of two days and all of the middle one), establishes Him as the Boss. Jesus "*was declared with power to be the Son of God as a result of the resurrection from the dead*" (Ro 1:4). Paul basically said that absent the resurrection, any theology is essentially meaningless. "*And if the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die*" (1Cor 15:32). Without that event, I do not know how a person could determine which Theism, if any, is actually worth pursuing. Without recounting the details here, after some investigation, I personally became persuaded Jesus did rise from the dead, and that the Bible is the sole written material from the Creator. Some of this persuasion is objective (i.e., fulfilled Bible predictions), but some of my conviction is subjective. He uses His word to change me. He knows how, and when, to place His material in my experience so as to alternately challenge, encourage, warn, or guide me. And because I have experienced this activity always leading to my personal benefit, I have been won - and seek only to promote Biblical Theism. The Bible is the introduction into the inexhaustible Ocean of God - of unending bounty. In Christ "*are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*" (Col 2:3).

The importance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ cannot be overemphasized. It is obvious there are competing value systems in the world. While I do not agree with Nietzsche that "*might makes right,*" I will say that might, if exercised, creates dominance. The hope is that the value system of the exercising dominant ... is right. Herein lies one of the great hopes of Christianity. Even before the crucifixion, "*the Father had given all things into His hands*" and after He rose from the dead, Jesus announced, "*(A)ll authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth*" (Jn 13:3 and Mt 28:18). In Hebrews, after detailing more thoroughly Jesus' current position of eternal dominance, comes this: "*For in subjecting all things to Him, He (God the Father) left nothing that is not subject to Him. But now, we do not yet see all things subjected to Him*" (He 2:8). For His own reasons, He has not yet decided to impose His standards. But, this is a temporary situation. Such claims are either myth, or impotent bluffs ... or true. The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ serves as a marker dispelling myth or bluff. It stands as an immovable book divider between two great bookends. At one end is the original Creation and at the other end is the recreated one. There are multitudes of competing "*books*" on each side of the Resurrection Divider - all hoping, and believing, He is incapable of imposing His system and standards. An actual resurrection casts a long and intimidating shadow over all the other books. They all hope, against all hope, He is still entombed somewhere.

Dismissing the Bible

For one to seriously approach the issues of life - and immediately dismiss the Bible - is an instant surrendering to a narrowed mind. The Bible challenges even the most aggressive thinker.

“Come now, and let us reason together ... Listen carefully to Me” (Isa 1:18 and 55:2). But, towards a more aggressive contrarian, He becomes more direct. *“Present your case ... Bring forward your strong arguments ... Report to Me; let us argue our case together, state your cause, that you maybe proved right”* (Isa 41:21 and 43:26). No subject area is off limits. He does not get embarrassed, nor is He intimidated by the most powerful human intellect (I’m sorry ... I laughed when I typed that last phrase). Speaking of intellect, when addressing His own, He rhetorically asks, *“Who, as His counselor, has informed Him? With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding? And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge, and informed Him of the way of understanding?”* (Isa 40:13,14). He then asks, *“to whom then will you liken Me that I should be his equal?”* After citing more information as claimed evidences of an unrivaled superiority to any living thing, comes the declaration, *“His understanding is inscrutable - no one can fathom”* (Isa 40:25, 28). These are just a few samples of exceedingly bold claims and challenges to any man - every man - all men ... of any age - every age - all ages. That includes ... you. Sometimes, He is even willing to continue striving with one who accuses Him of maliciousness, error, or wrongdoing. It is impossible to know how often He is willing to do this, but we do know He sometimes will. For example, after Job had exhausted all his arguments and charges, the Author of the Bible confronted him with a series of stunning questions, challenges and assertions. God mocked him. Chapters 38 - 41 of the Book of Job are filled with remarkable claims that are either fact - or fiction. If you want to drop this Article right now and go read those chapters, that’s okay with me. And if you read the chapters leading up to those four - and the one after - well, that is fine, too. And if you decide to read other sections of the Bible and never get back to this - or any of my Articles or Ebooks - well, no worries, mate. I will not be offended in the least.

The Corruption of Biblical Theism

Actually, that is not possible. But misrepresenting Biblical Theism is *tremendously* common. The reason is really quite simple. *“You all must not let there become many teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment”* (Ja 3:1). This really might be a directive to the audience as much as anything else ... as they are to protect potential teachers from their own selves. False representation of the Author of the Bible will not be tolerated (ultimately) by the Author of the Bible. Clearly this command and warning remain largely unheeded. There are many reasons for this, but no reason will prevail.

The Lake and Ocean are Never Fouled

Truth, in the natural or Biblical realm, is not affected, infected or defected by our errors. It is the errant representative that is fouled. Unfortunately, the fouled one can spread his/her defects into an undiscerning audience - but all such defects, whether taught or caught, do not affect, infect or defect truth. It’s just ... we miss it.

Conclusion

So, where are you? Are you a Humanist in the kiddie pool, living in your lean-to? Or are you a genuine, atheistic, evolutionary Naturalist living in your mud-hut by the lake? *“Everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built*

his house upon the sand. And the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall” (Mt 7:26, 27). Humanism is an empty suit. I will continue to engage Humanists, but quite honestly, there just isn't much there to work with. They operate in fad and opinion and their thinking reminds me of misfiring fireworks that shoots in all directions: *“Insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives. Afterwards they go to the dead” (Eccl 9:3).* On the other hand, Naturalism immediately narrows itself by summarily dismissing even the possibility of supernatural activity. You talk about close minded. It begins closed minded and clings to it like a dog to an old bone.

If one is serious about constructing a world view - with the greatest breadth of mind in weighing all available materials, the assertions by the Author of the Bible must be included. Again, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the *“attention getter”* for its inclusion. To ignore this is similar to an attempt to construct a great mansion - yet, the use of a hammer is prohibited. Additionally, prime building materials are replaced ... with what? The best such a maimed builder can hope to construct ... is a lean-to or a mud hut. After decades of formal and self Bible study, when I think back, I am often ashamed at how narrow minded and close minded I was ... before I became a Christian. I've been in the kiddie pool, and I have been in the lake. But, there is nothing like The Ocean. *“I'm going fishing” (Jn 21:3).* If you want, you can come with me.

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Whether looking for the Biblical position on Abortion (http://www.freelygive-n.com/Abortion_Argument.html) or how the Bible and Evolution have no common ground on the subject of Death (http://www.freelygive-n.com/Death_in_the_Bible.html), you can find each FREE EBOOK at http://www.freelygive-n.com/Free_Christian_Ebook_Home.html ! In 1977, Robin Calamaio became a Christian. BA, Bus Admin (Milligan College '90) and Master of Divinity (Emmanuel School of Religion '92).