

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

2 Peter 3:14-18
Lesson #14
Christian Humanism
12/19/2021

"The greatest challenge of our age is not emerging technology or climate change but understanding

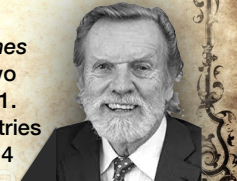
what it means to be human."

Megatrends

Ten New Directions Transforming Our Lives

John Naisbitt

Published in 1982
On *The New York Times*
Best Seller List for two
years, mostly as No. 1.
published in 57 countries
and sold more than 14
million copies.



1

Do modern Americans have too much to live with and not enough to live for?

Individual freedom
Personal rights
Fair competition
Empirical science

isolation
loneliness
confusion
distrust
meaninglessness
hopelessness

While science helps us manage our habitat
does it ignore our humanity?

2

"The two most important days in a life are: 1. The day we were born, and
2. The day we discovered why."

- **Christian Humanism:** Being true to one's self is all that God asks of humanity.
- **But what does it mean to be human?**

Could the Christmas story speak to this very question?



3

John 10:10

"The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; **I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.**" *John 10:10*

Who defines "abundant life"?

Could the Christmas story speak to this very question?



4

2 Peter Finding our way as aliens in this World

Salutation	Three aspects of staying on track.		
Faith and the faith	Cultivate a mature faith in sync with Scripture.	Control your expectations and responses.	Clarify true and false hope.
1:1-4	1:5-15 1:16-21	2:1-22	3:1-18
	Holiness	Heresy	Hope

Alien life coaching

Aliens are to grow in grace and knowledge of the Christ.

5

The beginning and end of a message often underscores a point.

Matthew 1:23

“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name **Immanuel**, which translated means, **God with us.**”

Matthew 28:20

“teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, **I am with you always**, even to the end of the age.”

“Immanuel”

6

Note how 2 Peter begins and how it ends.

2 Peter 1

“3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through **the true knowledge of Him.** . . . 4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, **having escaped the corruption that is in the world** on account of lust.”

*Our Alien status
The knowledge of God*

7

2 Peter 3

“17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, **be on your guard so that you are not carried away** by the error of unscrupulous people and lose your own firm commitment, 18 but **grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.** To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”

*Our Alien status
The knowledge of Christ*

8

2 Peter 3

“17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not **carried away** by the error of unscrupulous people and **lose your own firm commitment,**”

What is Peter so concerned about?

1. **Forgetting who we are** - commitment to God and aliens to this world
2. **Forgetting who God is** - commitment to the Word and Way of the Cross.



*Unwrapping
God's Christmas Gift*

9

Note how John's Gospel begins and ends.

John 1

“1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God.** . . . 4 In Him was life, and **the life was the light of men.** 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. . . . 9 There was the true light which, **coming into the world, enlightens every man.** 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. . . . 14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and **we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.**”

Jesus revealed the **true nature of both God and humanity (bearing God's Image).**

10

John 20:31

“but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that **believing you may have life in His name.**”

What does it mean to be true to ourselves as a living humans?

- ~ **we bear God's image**
- ~ **we are the crown of God's creation**
- ~ **we can receive God's Spirit**
- ~ **we can be ambassadors of God's kingdom**

11

What does Jesus reveal to us about human nature?

Jesus' birth

- God can take on a human form.
- We are compatible with God's nature.

Jesus' passion

- We are totally lost but worth redeeming for a very high price.
- The meaning of discipleship - the Word and Way of the Cross.

12

We have hints of God's image in life.

Romans 1:19

"19 that which is known about God is **evident within them**; for God made it evident to them. 21 For even though **they knew God**, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks,"

We are incurably RELIGIOUS,
We are stubbornly RATIONAL,
We have frustrated LONGINGS,
We have moral INSTINCTS,

13

Genesis 1:27

"God **created man in His own image**,"

The incarnation shows us Jesus as God's Image in human form.

Hebrews 1:3

"And He is the radiance of His glory and **the exact representation of His nature**,"

Colossians 1:15

"And **He is the image of the invisible God**,"

2 Corinthians 4:4

"... the light of the gospel of **the glory of Christ, who is the image of God**."

14

What does God require of humanity?

Simply to be authentically human - true to ourselves as bearers of God's Image.

1. We are all created in the **image of God** for the purpose of reflecting that image.
2. We are responsible to **be true to ourselves** as God's image bearers.
3. We are **frustrated** by the brokenness in ourselves and the world.
4. Jesus was a gift of grace to bear our shame on the cross and **impute** His moral virtue to us by faith.
5. All who **receive** God's gift stand before God as justified **IN CHRIST**.
6. Others are free to stand before God on **their own merit**.
7. God will be perfectly **fair** in His judgment of both.



15

What does it mean to act like a human?

We walk in the Word and Way of the Cross.

1. As worshipers we **SPEAK to & about all humans respectfully.**

James 3:9

"With it (the tongue) we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been **made in the likeness of God**,"

2. As ambassadors we **SERVE all humans with selfless love.**

James 1:27

"Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of *our* God and Father is this: to **visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world**."

16

What does it mean to act like a human?

We walk in the Word and Way of the Cross.

3. As aliens in this world we **SUFFER with Christ gracefully.**

1 Peter 4

"12 Beloved, do not be **surprised** at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though *something strange* were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you **share the sufferings of Christ**, keep on, so that at the **revelation of His glory** you may also rejoice and be overjoyed. 14 If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are **blessed**, because the Spirit of glory, and of God, rests upon you."

Jas.1:2, Phil.2:5-8, Rom.8:18-25

17



The puzzle is confusing without a picture to show us what the pieces should look like, when put together.

Life is like a puzzle.

Christmas is a gift.

Jesus is like the picture.

18

Don't leave this gift *unopened.*



Joy ^{TO THE} World
THE LORD IS
Come

And don't lose *the picture* of our humanity.

19

1 John

Next
1:1-4

Celebrating the
joy of God's
incarnation

20

21