

*The following was composed by Ronnie W. Rogers to respond to a question, teach, or provide counsel. The content was typed but not proofread.*

In America there are three predominant views concerning the nature of man which impact our society; Determinism, Secular Humanism, and Christianity.

First, Determinism believes that man doesn't have free will and is governed by Psychological, Biological, or Sociological determinants.

Second Secular Humanism believes that man is free and inherently good. Environment makes him bad. Finally, Christianity believes that man was created in the image of God but chose to sin and therefore man fell. Consequently, man has an incredible capacity for good because he was created in the image of God, but also equally capable of evil because he has a sin nature. Which one is right?

If Determinism is right how can we hold anyone accountable for committing a crime since he is determined to. Any action taken by man is a result of determinants; therefore man is not responsible for his actions. Ultimately this results in a victim society with no punishment for wrongs. For example the alcoholic is merely sick or the gambler can't help his addiction because he was biologically determined. Also there is no valor, bravery, or kindness, because they're just doing what they were determined to do. The Determinist argument makes humans mere robots or instinctual animals not capable of exercising free will; thus humans are degraded.

Humanist believe man is innately good and his evil is the product of his environment, and he can rid himself of that evil by the correction of the environment. Yet, how many times have we seen people with a bad upbringing rise to the top and do something good with their life? Conversely, many well-educated children with great parents turn out to be drug addicts, criminals, etc?

Humanism fails to adequately explain how the best can come from the worst environments and vice-versa. We supposedly have a better educational system today than in the past, but crime has increased even among the well educated. The two boys at Columbine were educated at a nice, well to do school yet they executed 13 classmates. Despite the best of sociological contexts, people still do evil.

Determinism makes humans less than human by eliminating free choice and responsibility for these choices. Humanism fails to successfully explain the evil that comes from the privileged.

Christianity states that man was created in the image of God but man chose to sin and fall away from God, resulting in man having a sin nature. Christianity states that man chose and is responsible and he still chooses as a free moral agent. Christianity understands that we may be predisposed to certain addictions, criminal and/or sinful tendencies, and we may have been put in a bad environment growing up or not been blessed with much education. But we still can and should overcome those factors.

But how do we ultimately overcome these predispositions? When Adam and Eve sinned they separated themselves from God on a spiritual level. This is true of every human. If a person dies in this separation they will spend eternity in Hell. But because God in his mercy and love sent His Son Jesus Christ down to earth as both Man and God to die for us, we have the chance to restore our relationship with God through Christ's atonement for our sins by his death on a cross. Only by man repenting of his sin and believing in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior can he receive this gift of eternal life. Man does this by calling out to God in prayer and asking for forgiveness and by that he enters into a personal relationship with God.

Man is basically bad, but with a restored relationship with God, through Christ, he can be seen as perfect and blameless in the Eyes of the only one who matters God. Man has a choice and is responsible for his choices.