

Introduction and Definitions – Anthropology, as well as most of the academics, has undergone a rather dramatic intellectual realignment based primarily upon ideological and philosophical grounds in the past 30 years. With the international acceptance of “Secular Humanism” as the guiding ideology of academics, and “Scientific Naturalism” as the philosophical guiding principle of the sciences, it stands to reason that the sciences have become purely empirical. Wikipedia the Online Encyclopedia presents the following definitions of terms we’ll use in this article, and additional definitions will be introduced. Following these definitions, we’ll look at Classic Anthropology and how it informs the discussion of Christian Anthropology.

1. **Anthropology** – Is presently described as “the scientific study of humans and human behavior and societies in the past and present. Social Anthropology and Cultural Anthropology study the norms and values of societies. Linguistic Anthropology studies how language [evolves and] affects social life. Biological or Physical Anthropology studies the biological development of humans. Archaeology studies past human cultures through the investigation of excavating physical evidence long buried in the ground. Archaeology is thought of as a branch of anthropology in the United States and Canada, while in Europe, it is viewed as a discipline in its own right or grouped under other related disciplines, such as history. Anthropology and many other current fields are the intellectual results of the comparative methods developed in the earlier 19th century. Theorists in such diverse fields as anatomy, linguistics, and Ethnology, making feature-by-feature comparisons of their subject matters, were beginning to suspect that similarities between animals, languages, and folkways were the result of processes or laws unknown to them then.” **The proper focus of anthropology is the development of cultural laws.**
2. **Secular Humanism** – “Is a philosophy or life stance that embraces human reason, ethics, and philosophical naturalism while specifically rejecting religious thought, dogma, supernaturalism, pseudoscience, and superstition as the basis of morality and decision making. Secular humanism posits that human beings are [independent agents] capable of being ethical and moral without [the influence of] religion or a god. It does not, however, assume that humans are either inherently good or evil, nor does it present humans as being superior to nature. Rather, the humanist life stance emphasizes the unique responsibility facing humanity and the ethical consequences of human decisions [as being a part of the natural order]. Fundamental to the concept of secular humanism is the strongly held viewpoint that ideology—be it religious or political—must be thoroughly examined by each individual and not simply accepted or rejected on faith. [Thus, humans are independent rational moral-ethical agents.] Along with this, an essential part of secular humanism is a continually adapting search for truth, primarily through science and philosophy. Secular humanists derive their moral codes from a philosophy of utilitarianism, ethical naturalism, or evolutionary ethics, and some advocate a science of morality.”
3. **Scientific Naturalism** – “(AKA Metaphysical Naturalism, ontological naturalism, philosophical naturalism, scientific materialism *and anti-supernaturalism*) is a philosophical worldview which holds that there is nothing but natural elements, principles, and relations of the kind studied and measurable by the scientific method. Scientific naturalism is the underlying philosophical basis for science, for which metaphysical naturalism provides only one possible ontological foundation. Broadly, the corresponding theological perspective is religious naturalism or spiritual naturalism. More specifically, metaphysical naturalism rejects any and all of the supernatural concepts and explanations that are part of many religions. Scientific

Naturalism is the philosophical basis of science as described by Kate and Vitaly (2000) ‘There are certain philosophical assumptions made at the base of the scientific method — namely, 1) that reality is objective and consistent, 2) that humans have the capacity to perceive reality accurately, and that 3) rational explanations exist for elements of the real world. These assumptions are the basis of naturalism, the philosophy on which science is grounded. Philosophy is at least implicitly at the core of every decision we make or position we take; it is obvious that correct philosophy is a necessity for scientific inquiry to take place.’ Steven Schafersman, agrees that methodological naturalism is ‘the adoption or assumption of philosophical naturalism within [scientific method](#) with or without fully accepting or believing it ... science is not metaphysical and does not depend on the ultimate truth of any metaphysics for its success, but methodological naturalism must be adopted as a strategy or working hypothesis for science to succeed. We may therefore be agnostic about the ultimate truth of naturalism but must nevertheless adopt it and investigate nature as if nature is all that there is.’”

4. **“Classical” Anthropology** – Is what I was taught in my undergraduate degree at the University of California Santa Barbara during the 1970’s. Anthropology was considered to be the last science developed as a means of integrating the diverse fields of biology, chemistry, sociology, economics, political science, geology, etc., into a more comprehensive human narrative. It was viewed as the last of the sciences attempting to make cohesive sense of the other sciences. Classical Anthropology was comprised of specific components – 1) Physical Anthropology – the study of the biological changes of animals and humanity through the ages, and 2) Cultural Anthropology comprised of a) Ethnology – the study of living groups of people, b) Archaeology – the study of ancient peoples from the archaeological record. When studying a culture or people-group, Cultural Anthropology was comprised of three components which taken together identifies and defines a particular culture. The three components are:
- a. **Ideology-Religion** – meaning the culture’s distinct supernatural and natural world view. It is how a people see themselves and integrate with their world, the people groups they engage with, and the cosmos around them. Ideology-Religion is viewed as the highest of the components integrating the other two into the cohesive construct we call culture.
 - b. **Socio-Political Organization** – meaning a culture’s distinct integration as a people, culture and nation. It is the organizational structure and principles that binds a people together allowing them to survive and function as a distinct organization in a particular environment and with other groups or peoples they interact with.
 - c. **Technology-Science** – meaning a culture’s distinct means of subsistence and survival including their tools, artistic expressions, homes, resources, livelihood (hunter-gatherer, agricultural, domesticated animal husbandry, etc.), transportation (by foot, boats, animals, carts, etc.). It is what allows a people to survive and thrive within their distinct geographical environment during their place in history.

Thus, the culture is defined by each people’s own identity in their particular development of these three components. Cultural evolution can generally be traced through the archaeological record through time

through the artifacts they have left behind. The proper study of a culture for Classical Anthropologists is in recognizing each people's right to define themselves as an ethnic group on their own terms.

5. **Christian Anthropology** – Is an aspect of Anthropology that is currently taught at a number of institutions primarily in terms of the evolution and impact of the Christian church on cultures. However, Authentic Discipleship will employ a different metric in defining Christian Anthropology. Recognizing the world altering affect of God's revelation of Himself through the Judea-Christian Scripture that focus on the Advent, ministry, death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Messiah Jesus and the Presence of the Third Person of the Trinity of the Spirit at Pentecost, these are the most important events in the history of humanity... more appropriately being the defining events in human history. For Christians, Jesus is the game changer, and His redemptive work radiated out transforming humanities past, present and future. Rather than merely looking at the impact upon culture, Christian Anthropology considers the fundamental change Jesus and the Indwelling Spirit has made upon humanity with a focus on what we are yet to become. Hence, Christian Anthropology will look at how humanity was created, how people are individually transformed by the Person and ministry of Jesus, and how culture and society has been fundamentally changed as a result. The greatest divergence between secular anthropology and Christian anthropology has to do with what humanity is in terms of God's redemptive plan expressed in Jesus. In my view, the two-primary philosophical/theological drivers of culture are as follows:
- a. The secular humanist accepts that humanity is the logical outcome of a natural developmental process devoid of God, and humanity is thus a happy result of chance circumstances amid the chaos of the cosmos. As science and culture are decoupled from God or any Supreme Being, the supernatural and metaphysical realm either cease to exist or are seen as irrelevant superstition. As a result, humanity is free from God and able to impose the philosophy of their choice upon culture... in this case scientific naturalism. It is therefore accepted that humanity is essentially the smartest animal at the top of the food chain with no eternal soul or spirit and nothing guiding culture but our own logic, ethics and morality, which are humanity's right to dictate. In this view there is no God, no supernatural, no Heaven or Hell; only the here and now on earth... and when we die, we cease to exist.
 - b. The Judea-Christian Theist accepts that humanity is a work of God's divine plan, being created in the Image of God with an eternal spirit/soul, and a unique personal physical body. In the Christian Theistic view, humanity has been imbued by its Creator with the responsibility of understanding God's revealed moral and ethical preferences. An individual is free to choose right or wrong and bears the responsibility for those choices. Christians believe that a moral-ethical code of right and wrong have been written into the fabric of Creation [General Revelation] and recorded in Scripture which is God's Self-Revelation [Specific Revelation]. As a result, each person is given the responsibility for making choices and living with the consequences of those choices. Eventually, either in eternity in Heaven (in the Presence of God) or in Hell (living apart from God). Christian Theism has generally held sway over humanity including the realms of science and culture since the first century AD. However, in the past 100 years or so secular humanism has been on the rise and in the past 30 years or so has replaced

Christian Theism as humanity’s operational system. Thus, under secular humanism and scientific naturalism, Christian Theism is no longer viewed as humanity’s standard.

6. Historical Precedence – Although the present academic community holds little stock for the supernatural and metaphysical aspects of faith, there are numerous brilliant men and women throughout history who are people of science and faith. In the past, faith and science were not mutually exclusive, but actually made excellent bedfellows. In this segment we will present two examples of this fact:

a. Blaise Pascal is one of many examples of brilliant scientists who were Christian Theists.

Wikipedia the Online Encyclopedia states that “Pascal was born 19 June 1623 and died 19 August 1662. He was a French mathematician, physicist, inventor, writer *and* Catholic theologian. He was a child prodigy who was educated by his father, a tax collector in Rouen. Pascal's earliest work was in the natural and applied sciences where he made important contributions to the study of fluids, and clarified the concepts of pressure and vacuum by generalizing the work of Evangelista Torricelli. Pascal also wrote in defense of the scientific method. In 1642, while still a teenager, he started some pioneering work on calculating machines. After three years of effort and 50 prototypes, he built 20 finished machines (called Pascal's calculators and later Pascalines) over the following ten years, establishing him as one of the first two inventors of the mechanical calculator. Pascal was an important mathematician, helping create two major new areas of research: he wrote a significant treatise on the subject of projective geometry at the age of 16, and later corresponded with Pierre de Fermat on probability theory, strongly influencing the development of modern economics and social science. Following Galileo Galilei and Torricelli, in 1647, he rebutted Aristotle's followers who insisted that nature abhors a vacuum. Pascal's results caused many disputes before being accepted. In 1646, he and his sister Jacqueline identified with the religious movement within Catholicism known by its detractors as Jansenism. Following a religious experience in late 1654, he began writing influential works on philosophy and theology. His two most famous works date from this period: the *Lettres provinciales* and the *Pensées*, the former set in the conflict between Jansenists and Jesuits. In that year, he also wrote an important treatise on the arithmetical triangle. Between 1658 and 1659, he wrote on the cycloid and its use in calculating the volume of solids. “

Pascal observed that humanity had a “God shaped emptiness [void]...” a hole in our heart, and that we would never be complete apart from God. Pascal obviously saw no conflict within faith and science, in point of fact his faith was made manifest in his science. Such thinking has unfortunately long since been subverted by Secular Humanism.

b. Arthur Clarke is another brilliant scientist, mathematician, writer and futurist thinker quoted for saying “Magic is science we don’t understand yet” in his assessment of the supernatural and the metaphysical realms. Rather than reducing scientific thought solely to the level of reproducible laboratory experiments, Clarke explored avenues of mystical thought which has permeated his science and science fiction writings. Though not necessarily a Christian, Wikipedia the Online Encyclopedia goes on to say, “Sir Arthur Charles Clarke (Born 16 December 1917 – Died 19 March

2008) was a British science fiction writer, science writer and futurist, inventor, undersea explorer, and television series host. He is famous for being co-writer of the screenplay for the 1968 film 2001: A Space Odyssey, widely considered to be one of the most influential films of all time. Clarke was a science writer, who was both an avid popularizer of space travel and a futurist of uncanny ability. On these subjects he wrote over a dozen books and many essays, which appeared in various popular magazines. In 1961 he was awarded the Kalinga Prize, an award which is given by UNESCO for popularizing science. These along with his science fiction writings eventually earned him the moniker "Prophet of the Space Age". His other science fiction writings earned him a number of Hugo and Nebula awards, which along with a large readership made him one of the towering figures of science fiction. For many years Clarke, Robert Heinlein and Isaac Asimov were known as the "Big Three" of science fiction. Clarke was a lifelong proponent of space travel. In 1934, while still a teenager, he joined the British Interplanetary Society. In 1945, he proposed a satellite communication system using geostationary orbits. After the war he attained a first-class degree in mathematics and physics from King's College London. After this he worked as assistant editor at Physics Abstracts. Clarke then served as president of the British Interplanetary Society from 1946 to 1947 and again from 1951 to 1953. The themes of religion and spirituality appear in much of Clarke's writing. He said: *"Any path to knowledge is a path to God—or [Ultimate] Reality, whichever word one prefers to use."* He described himself as "fascinated by the concept of God". J. B. S. Haldane, near the end of his life, suggested in a personal letter to Clarke that Clarke should receive a prize in theology for being one of the few people to write anything new on the subject, and went on to say that if Clarke's writings did not contain multiple contradictory theological views, he might have been a menace."

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS: It is apparent in this brief introduction that faith and science were not necessarily mutually exclusive in the past, and that in many ways, actually complement one another. Science is accepted as the exploration and study of the material world, with the intention of understanding and explaining how creation works. Faith is accepted as the exploration and study of the Supernatural world, with the intention of understanding its nature and humanity's meaning and interaction with the supernatural. Simply stated, science is focused on how the world works, while faith is focused on ultimate truth and significance.

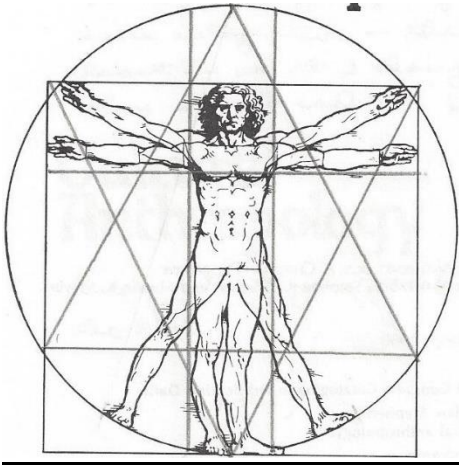
Christian Anthropology, as we have described it herein, is a Christian Theistic faith-based perspective that sees the material and supernatural world through the lens of the Biblical Triune God. The Advent, Ministry, Death, Resurrection, and Assentation of Jesus followed by the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to humanity, are the pivotal components affecting humanity within the context of Redemptive history. Redemptive history being God's supernatural work within human history to save and restore humanity to the idyllic relational state of being prior to the Fall recorded in Genesis chapters one and two of the Bible. Christians accept the Bible as the Supernatural revelation of God to humanity. The Bible begins in the Book of Genesis in the Paradise of Eden with humanity and God living relationally together, and it ends in the Book of Revelation in the Paradise of a New Heaven and Earth with humanity and God living relationally together. The overarching message of Biblical Scripture is the Supernatural redemptive restoration of humanity.

In the articles that follow in this section, we will look at a number of concepts and thought development through the lens of Christian Anthropology. We have deliberately employed the material work of a number of excellent authors, thinkers, and scientists and given appropriate attribution to each. This material work was presented in open source articles on the internet. I believe these author's thoughts have been adequately portrayed from their perspective, however, the conclusions derived by Authentic Discipleship are understood to be our own and don't necessarily reflect the intent or beliefs of the authors.

For more about discovering and experiencing the reality of the Spiritual World, see this article on the Authentic Discipleship website where there are many other such articles you can explore.

<http://www.authenticdiscipleship.org/pdfs/2-spiritual-formation/Spiritual%20Maturity/SF%202.2.1%20-%20Spiritual%20Journey%20Discovery.pdf>

Pictorial representation of the Holistic nature of Christian Cultural Anthropology:



1. The square represents humanity's base or animal nature. Humanity is capable of cruelty and self-interest at the expense of others.
2. The circle represents humanity's more holistic nature, where actions can be restrained by moral and ethical values, and self-interest is influenced by the needs of others.
3. The Jewish Star represents God's Self-revelation through Spirit-led prophets in OT Scripture.
4. The Christian Cross represents Messiah-Jesus ministry and Self-revelation through Spirit-led Apostles in NT Scripture.

