

## Twelfth Grade- Naturalism

*These next few Life Groups set out to tackle some of the major heresies of our day and age, and help students learn to seek the Biblical rebuttal. This practice of apologetics will be essential for students as they set out into the next stage of life and encounter endless new beliefs. So many of the core “doctrines” of our culture sound almost like biblical truth, but closer inspection reveals they are dangerous distortions that will lead our hearts and minds astray. We want to spend time this Sunday talking about the idea of “Naturalism”.*

### Introducing the Topic

*As always, we want to start off by assessing what students already know and think about the subject, and then turn to what Scripture says on the matter! Students have a unique perspective on our culture, so we want to give them time to process what they’re seeing together!*

-Have you ever heard it said that science and Christianity are at odds? Why do you think people believe this? What big issues stand out as points of contention between science and Christianity?

-What do you think about the phrase “Science uses facts, religion uses faith”?

-How does our culture treat the idea of “having faith”? How would culture define faith?

-How do you reconcile the ideas of science and God in your own mind? What have you learned or experienced that helps you come to that conclusion?

-How do you think culture today decides on “truth”? How do people decide what to believe?

-Have you ever heard of the term “naturalism”? *(If they have, ask them what they know about it, if they have not, read them this definition, and then ask what they think about it and where they see that belief in the world around them: Naturalism is the belief that the material world is all there is, and that nature is sufficient to explain everything in our world.)*

-Is there anything you see or experience in the world around you that can’t be explained by science?

### Scripture Study

*As you transition to the Scripture Study portion of this session, remind students that Scripture is where we turn for truth. We want to continually reiterate that we study Scripture not just for the “Christian take” on a matter, but God’s revealed word, given to us out of love for our good.*

-Let’s turn to Scripture to see what it says about the idea of naturalism. First, let’s read passages where Scripture talks about the natural world: Read Romans 1:20-21, 25

-What do you hear this passage saying? What stands out to you?

-Where does this passage sound like naturalism, where does it contradict the idea of naturalism?

-Do you see evidence of “something greater” in nature?

-Let’s continue in our study of the biblical perspective, read: Colossians 1:15-17

-What stands out to you? What do you think this passage is saying?

-What does this passage say about who God is?

-What does this passage say about creation?

-What are the “things we cannot see” that this passage is talking about?

-Where does this passage contradict the ideas of naturalism?

-Finally, let’s turn to Scripture’s creation narrative to understand what the Bible teaches about where our world came from. Read Genesis 1. *(It’s important here to not stop down on different theories about the creation narrative, like Old Earth or New Earth, or whether the “days” described were twenty-four hours specifically. We want to teach students to look for the foundational truths in stories like the creation narrative. These foundational truths will be an anchor point for them as they navigate the myriad different philosophies and beliefs our world throws at them.)*

-What do you see in this passage?

-What are the key things this passage says about how our world came to be? *(Here’s some key takeaways we want to make sure your students cover, so help guide them here if they don’t bring these things up on their own!)*

*-God is Creator, and we are created.*

*-Nothing pre-dates God, He is before all creation.*

*-God had an intimate role in creating man, and we are all made in His image.*

*-God created mankind with a purpose.*

-Where does this passage conflict with the ideas of naturalism?

### Practical Application

*In this practical application, we want to help students internalize what they heard from Scripture today and be able to distinguish between a cultural heresy and biblical truth. We also want to help them realize for themselves the importance of a right understanding of where our world came from.*

-What is the lie in naturalism, “the belief that the material world is all there is, and that nature is sufficient to explain everything in our world”?

-What does Scripture teach about the world around us? What does Scripture teach about our origin? Why is that relevant to how we live our day to day lives?

-If God is Creator, that means we are creation. We exist within limits. How do you find yourself trying to buck against the limits of your humanity? (*Some ideas: overworking, ignoring or suppressing feelings, numbing out, under or overeating, not sleeping enough*)