

Conference Title and Summary:

The Human Project - In collaboration with speakers from Apologetics Canada and Ravi Zacharias International Ministries - Central Baptist is hosting a one day conference focused on discussing the value of humanity through lenses such as sexuality, identity, disability, technology, race, and ethnicity.

SPEAKERS AND SESSIONS



Andy Steiger (Morning Session TED Talk, Evening Keynote and Evening Panel Q&A)

1. What Leads to Human Flourishing? (Morning session TED Talk)

History is full of people and nations that have attempted to create heaven on earth. As we all know, it often resulted in hell on earth. Humanity's newest search for the good life in the 21st century has taken the form of technology. A brave new digital world is here that is once again promising paradise but only leaving people wanting more. In this session, Andy Steiger will develop the Christian understanding of human flourishing.

2. The Human Project (Evening Keynote)

We live in a world that champions human rights. It is preached by atheists and theists alike that all people are equal with rights and inherent value that can't be taken away. But, is that true? Why? Christians often ground these foundations of humanity in the idea that people are made in the image of God but what exactly does that mean? In this session, Andy will seek to make sense of human value based on a Christian perspective.

Steve Kim (Morning TED Talk, Afternoon Breakout Session and Afternoon Panel Q&A)



1. The Humanizing Effect of the Christian Worldview (Morning TED Talk)

Racial reconciliation, LGBTQ rights, pro-life, pro-choice, health care reform. There is no shortage of causes people feel passionate about these days. Underlying all of these causes is the great assumption that human beings are valuable, but... are we? Not all worldviews can even make sense of what a person is. Hint: The Christian worldview can.

2. Looking for Particle Knows What: Naturalism's Search for Meaningful Morality (Afternoon Breakout)

On the one hand, many in the West take for granted the view that this physical world is all there is. On the other hand, we also apprehend the realm of objective morality in our moral experience. Many atheists and agnostics today claim that we can, in fact, have both. But can we?

Terry Crosby (Morning Session TED Talk and Afternoon Panel Q&A)



1. Two Worlds Collide: Humanizing the Indigenous Peoples of Canada (Morning TED Talk)

Sir John A. MacDonald called them savages and advocated that the children be removed from their parents and placed in central schools in order that they “acquire the habits and modes of thought of white men.” What can we, the Church, do to promote healing and unity with our Indigenous neighbors? Are we sure that we aren’t perpetrating the sins of the past with our perceptions and judgements?

Margaret Manning Shull (Morning Session TED Talk and Afternoon Breakout Session and Panel Q&A)



1. Fear and Anxiety

Anxiety is a perennial human struggle and it is the number one diagnosed mental health condition in North America. Yet, for those who follow Jesus we are encouraged not to worry. How can we do this when there is so much in our world that causes us fear and worry? This session will explore anxiety and fear from the natural human response of fight or flight to those anxieties that are unhealthy and lead to life-paralysis and dis-ease. This session will also explore how the Bible addresses fear and anxiety through the life and ministry of Jesus.

2. Is the Bible Sexist

One of the critiques of Christianity, and the God of the Bible generally is that neither brings good news for women. Many argue that the bible and the God of the bible are sexist. Is this the case? This session will argue that the Bible is good news for women and provides a liberating message that frees women for fruitful life and ministry.

Barton Priebe (Morning Session TED Talk and Evening Panel Q&A)



1. How can we worship a God who commanded genocide in the Old Testament? (Morning TED Talk)

Christians claim that God is concerned with human flourishing and yet he commanded Israel to destroy the Canaanites. In our concern for social justice, racial equality, and human rights, how can we then worship such a God? Even if the God of the Bible exists, many voices now say that such a God is not worthy of our worship and should be rejected as a “moral monster.” In this session, Barton Priebe will re-examine the story of the Canaanites to see what actually happened, why God ordered it to take place, and how it shows us a God who is deeply concerned with human flourishing.

Emmanuel Parenteau (Afternoon Breakout Session and Afternoon Panel Q&A)



1. What Exactly Does it Mean to Be Human?

For well over a century, the role of human beings in our post-Christian culture has constantly been demoted. As we stand on the eve of genetic engineering, we stand to possibly fall further from grace into the world of designer babies, human clones, organ farms as well as the possible worst case scenario of human-animal hybrids.

But what does biology, history, and science say about the nature of human beings? Are we just smart monkeys piggy backing on the ecosystem? Or are we clearly designed biologically, psychologically, and spiritually in an amazingly unique way that begs us to welcome back our precious status as the jewel of God's Creation here on earth?