What is the Basis for Your Faith?

Sarah Thompson faces an agonizing decision. She has been dating Phillip Nelson for several months and the relationship has become serious. Both of them feel very strongly for each other. As Sarah has reflected on this, she realized that a major part of her feelings toward Phillip that have not existed in previous relationships lies in both having very similar value systems. Perhaps “soul mate” is too strong of a term, but that is the idea. They seem to care about the same things and Sarah knows that Phillip’s feelings toward her are truly genuine.

The difficulty that Sarah faces began last Tuesday when she invited Phillip to go to a barbecue put on by the small group she attends through her church. She had earlier realized that there was an issue about religion for Phillip when she had suggested a few times that they go to the Sunday worship service of her church. Phillip had made excuses as to why he couldn’t attend. Sarah felt that a less intimidating environment would be the small group of young people their age. She received strong encouragement from a couple of the group members to bring Phillip along. What Sarah had failed to anticipate was Phillip’s reaction to that invitation. He was quite adamant in his refusal to go.

He said, “There is something we have to settle here and now. I think that I am falling in love with you. You are everything that I have ever expected. But, you should know that I do not agree with your Christian faith. I have thought hard and studied about this a lot over the past couple of years and I just feel that a focus on religion is misplaced. The world would be better off if we all realize that whatever occurs is the result of natural phenomena. I could go into more detail if you want.”

Sarah was taken back, “I am sorry you feel that way. My faith is a very important part of who I am. I thought you understood that. I have to get back to work now.”

Later that day she asked herself, “Is this the end of our relationship?”

The major problem for Sarah in dealing with Phillip’s statement was her uncertainty about what Phillip had meant. She decided to go on the Internet to see if she could discover the basis for what Phillip apparently believed in. She immediately came upon the term “secular humanism.” As she read further, the term appeared to describe Phillip’s beliefs. The foundation is that humanity is the highest level of intelligent life and that man will provide discovery of the truth through the application of the scientific method. In essence, there is no God and no afterlife. One site further describes the basic tenants of this view. First, it is a “nonreligious approach to individual and social life.” Arguing that there is no supernatural, secular humanists believe that all life is the product of a natural phenomenon. Secular humanism also extends into the social
arena. The term “ethical relativism” applies to this worldview. According to this view, there is no absolute moral code of behavior. Man must use his/her own judgment to deal with each occurrence. Concepts such as morality develop over time as society adapts to the changing social landscape. Sarah wondered whether Phillip fully subscribes to this view of the world. If so, they are farther apart than she had initially thought.

Sarah knew that she had to make a difficult decision. She had come from a home in which her mom went to church, but her dad did not. She saw how that situation had robbed her mom of all the benefits of a strong Christian marriage. Sarah had vowed not to let that happen to her. All this was easy for her to believe in before she met Phillip.

Sarah has approached you, her best friend and fellow believer. She feels that Phillip is not the proverbial hard-headed guy in his view and appears to generally have an open mind on things. She is also quite sure that he has never examined the Bible in his personal search. Sarah wants you to give her some insight on how she could use scripture to provide Phillip with a basis to consider a Christian view. You agree to meet with her for lunch after church the next Sunday. You decide to search the scripture for Biblical principles for Sarah’s use in providing a Christian alternative to Phillip’s views. Beyond the relevant scripture, you realize also that Sarah will need advice in how to approach Phillip.

**ASSIGNMENT**

Given her desire for a meaningful bond between the two of them, delineate the Biblical foundation that Sarah should rely on in countering Phillip’s beliefs.
My Scriptural Research:

Group Scriptural Research:

Decisions / Recommendations:

Primary Scriptural References: