

## “Why Religion?”

April 9, 2025

INTRO: 12-17yr old

*Deconstruction*: a crisis of Christian faith that leads to either a reevaluation of Christianity or sometimes a total abandonment of Christianity.

**In attempts to take steps towards independency in one’s faith, deconstruction has become the go-to for those who aren’t 100% sure of what they believe.**

### Why Deconstruction?

- 1) Lack of TRUST in Large Institutions
  - a. Gov, Business, Media, & CHURCH

*According to Gallup’s annual honesty and ethics survey, Americans’ trust in pastors and clergy hovers at an all-time low. And, of course, there’s a generational gap: While 51% of Americans 55 years or older have favorable views of church leaders, only 24% of 18- to 34-year-olds said pastors and clergy have “high honesty.”... The four primary institutional pillars of modern society – Government, Business, Media, and Church – are more likely to be viewed as corrupt, ineffective, and self-serving than trustworthy, effective, and selfless. **Joe Terrell** “5 Reasons People Are Deconstructing Christianity”*

**The church – to a large extent – hasn’t positioned itself as a redemptive counter-culture that holds itself accountable.**

- 2) More Diverse, Accessible, & Mobile World

**The world we live in today is much much different than the majority of world history. You don’t have to live and die in the same religious system you were born in.**

- 3) Christian Leaders Are Burning Out

*[Speaking on the ‘strongest and most active church members’] They display an extreme level of dedication and devotion to God and religion, and they earnestly believe that the institutional church can be fixed and reclaimed. They believe it’s worth fighting for right up to the point where they don’t. **Josh Packard, Ph.D.** “Church Refugees”*

- 4) Conformity Over Unity
  - a. Rigid set of doctrinal stances

**When church leadership begins to extend every doctrinal belief and interpretation of Scripture into a message of ‘if you don’t meet this standard, look this way, talk this way, or believe exactly what you do, you don’t belong here,’ it stops being a reflection of Christ’s inclusive call. Instead, it becomes a bubble of Christianity that pushes people out rather than welcoming both believers and seekers into the grace and truth the Bible invites us all to.**

- 5) Political Idolatry

*While believers can register under a party affiliation and be active in politics, they should not identify the Christian church or faith with a political party as the only Christian one. **Timothy Keller** “How Do Christians Fit Into the Two-Party System? They Don’t” NYT Sept, 29, 2018*

**While it’s inevitable that politics will intersect with the preaching of God’s Word, it becomes problematic when churches align with a few positions of a political party and begin to represent that party—on either side of the political spectrum.**

**Matt 13:18-23** *"Hear then the parable of the sower: 19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. 20 As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.[b] 22 As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. 23 As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."*

## Religion

### Winn Dixie – Age 15

- 85% of the world is "Religious" (Pew Research, 2024)

While I had a feeling at age 15, I didn't bother to explore WHY I felt that way. But little did I know that it wouldn't take long from that time to start asking some of life's most important questions...

- Alpha Frank – Tape Measure

Why don't we spend time figuring out the answer to the question that will face all of us at the end of life?

- Google (Hundreds of billions of results) \*When was the last time you made it to page 2?
- Instagram (Average time spent per reel is 3-4 seconds)
- News (Average time from an event happening to being reported is 7.5 minutes)

**Gen Z (1997-2012) is on pace to be the "most educated class of people" in human existence. What if we took just a sliver of that knowledge and applied it towards a destined reality we all face.**

**So who's right? The 85% or the 15%?**

## Human Rights

- Every major religion believes in basic human rights (Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism...etc)
  - o This excludes extremist groups
  - o While the exact list may vary, the principle is the main point
- The other 15% is made up of 3 categories (1.2 Billion)
  - o Atheist (17%) **NO GOD**
  - o Agnostic (20%) **DOESN'T KNOW IF GOD EXISTS**
  - o "Nones" (63%) **HIGHER POWER, "MAN UPSTAIRS"**

**Rom 1:19-20** *For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.*

*If there is no God who made the universe, there is no moral universe to bend. There is, as Dawkins puts it, "no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind pitiless indifference." ...Human beings have "no natural*

*rights, just as spiders, hyenas, and the chimpanzees have no natural rights.” As Yuval Noah Harari [Renowned atheist and NYT #1 Bestselling author of “Homo sapiens] points out “belief in the unique worth and rights of human being...has embarrassingly little in common with scientific study of Homo sapiens...the very idea of human rights is, as Harari argues, a Christian invention. **Rebecca McLaughlin** “The Secular Creed” pg. 20, 46*

**Gen 1:26-27** *Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

**Whatever category you might fall into (Religious, atheist, agnostic, or nones), there’s much to be explored about the TRUTH reality. If you believe in religion, the question then is which one? If you are an atheist, are you willing to accept all that comes with that? As an agnostic or none, are you willing to give it a try to answer life’s more important question?**