

Confronting Christianity

Inverse
Diverse

Recap

A Brief History of the Western Church

Protestant

Evangelical

Mainline

Change what we do

Change who we are

180 million, Hillsong 2015
Bethel 2018 21.6 tithe, 36.7

Consumerism
Capitalism

Liberalism

Emergent
Progressive

The Gospel

Recap

The unGospel

Creation

God's Creative energy

Fall (original sin)

Original Blessing

Redemption

Perennialism

Restoration

Universalism

Recap

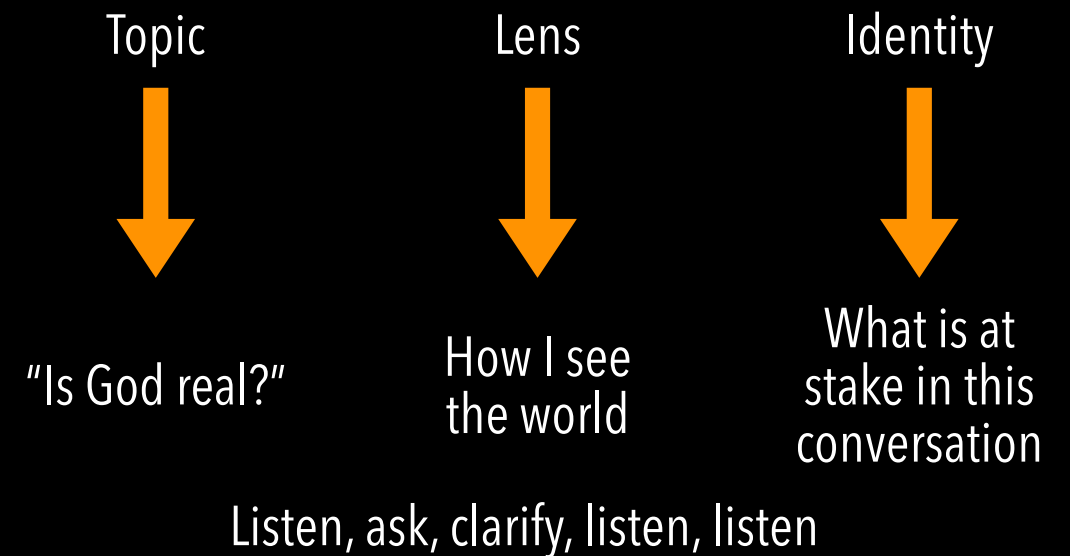
There are **reasons** why Christian leaders are either becoming **progressive** or simply walking away from their faith. From Bart Campolo, Tony Compolo, Rachel Held Evans, Jen Hatmaker, Michael Gungor, Rob Bell, Richard Rohr, Brian McLaren and others we are seeing many "**deconversion**" stories.

The western church has become **toxic**. From entertainment, celebrities, wealth to **abuse and misuse of power**, those behind the scenes have seen what the church has **become** and walked away.

Recap

For I am not ashamed of this Good News (**Gospel**) about Christ. It is the **power** of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile. This Good News (**Gospel**) tells us **how God makes us right in his sight**. This is accomplished from start to finish by faith. As the Scriptures say, "It is through faith that a righteous person has life." [Romans 1:16-17](#)

Three Elements of a Difficult Conversation



If everyone **repeats** something, does that make it **true**?

Racist
Rich
...phobic
White
Sexist
Colonialist

Is Christianity against **diversity**?

Over the last several weeks, the United States has engaged in a long-overdue reckoning with the racist symbols of the past, tearing down monuments to figures complicit in slavery and removing Confederate flags from public displays. But little scrutiny has been given to the cultural institutions that legitimized the worldview behind these symbols: **white Christian churches**. [Robert P. Jones, July 2020](#)

"For many, the idea that Christianity is a white, Western religion, intrinsically tied to cultural imperialism, stands as a major ethical **barrier** to considering Christ." [Rebecca McLaughlin, Confronting Christianity](#)

Historically there is **truth** to this

A Brief History

The age of modern colonialism began about **1500**, following the European discoveries of a sea route around Africa's southern coast (1488) and of America (1492). With these events sea power shifted from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic and to the emerging nation-states of Portugal, Spain, the Dutch Republic, France, and England. By discovery, conquest, and settlement, these nations expanded and colonized throughout the world, **spreading European institutions and culture**. [Richard A. Webster, Britannica](#)

A Brief History

There was a time in American history when missions advocates had no hesitation about combining the **agendas** of evangelism, "civilization," and even empire. That backstory should make it clear why American Christians and other missionaries need to be careful to not let cultural or political assumptions infiltrate the gospel message. [Thomas Kidd](#)

"Essentially Christianity was a **guise** by which Western governments justified the exploitation and conquest of African nations." [The Philosophy of Colonialism, Emory University](#)

A Brief History

As Europeans colonized increasingly farther-flung lands, they brought a **European Jesus** with them. Jesuit missionaries established painting schools that taught new converts Christian art in a European mode...In a multiracial but unequal America, there was a disproportionate representation of a **white Jesus in the media**... Pictures of Jesus historically have served many purposes, from symbolically presenting his power to depicting his actual likeness. But representation matters, and viewers need to understand the complicated history of the images of Christ they consume. [Anna Swartwood House](#)

A Brief History

When Christians are confronted by the hurt and pain of **colonialism**, we should **own** it and be **humbled** by it

In the globalist expansion, Jesus was the **unintended consequence** of the marriage of **politics and faith**

But not just politics, colonialism at its very heart was about expansionist **capitalism**. Countries raced to new continents in order to secure **resource** rights.

"We need to recapture the gospel glow of the early Christians who were **nonconformists** in the truest sense of the word . . . **Their powerful gospel** put an end to such barbaric evils as infanticide and bloody gladiatorial contests." [Martin Luther King Jr.](#)

Christianity when it **conforms** to culture stops being the Gospel

You are following a different way that **pretends** to be the Good News [Galatians 1:6b](#)

Christianity is unique in how it can **asses** itself. Because there is only **one** source for belief and behaviour (the bible), we can then judge whether we are **meeting** or **missing** the biblical commands.

This is also helpful to **separate** cultural Christians to authentic disciples of Jesus

Slavery

On 22 May 1787, twelve devout men assembled at a printing shop in the City of London. Most were Quakers, but they were joined by several Anglicans, including the veteran anti-slavery campaigner, Granville Sharp, and the young Thomas Clarkson, who would devote his entire life to the cause. The twelve established themselves as the Committee for the **Abolition** of the Slave Trade, and they recruited a young Yorkshire MP, William Wilberforce

Slavery

Quakers played a huge role in the formation of the Underground Railroad, with George Washington complaining as early as 1786 that a "society of Quakers, formed for such purposes, have attempted to liberate" a neighbour's slave.

Harriet Tubman's **Christian** faith tied all of these remarkable achievements together. She grew up during the Second Great Awakening, which was a Protestant religious revival in the United States. She led 13 rescues in the Underground Railroad

Women's Rights

Faith played a key role in the fight for women's suffrage. Religious convictions compelled many to campaign on behalf of women's suffrage – and many to fight hard against it. "**Religion** comes up quite a bit and in many different ways," according to journalist Elaine Weiss, author of "The Woman's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote."

Women's Rights

One of the groups pushing for women's suffrage was the **Woman's Christian Temperance Union**. Founded in 1874, Frances Willard, born in 1839 in upstate New York, was a devout Christian and the 2nd President of the Union

"She was one of the most **famous** women in the United States at that time," Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, Tennessee University said. "She had one of the largest organizations in the country – certainly Christian organizations in the country, if not political organizations."

Women's Rights

"Historians have said, too ... it would be hard to imagine women's suffrage passing without the support and **advocacy of Christian women** like these, especially in the South," Gray-Hildenbrand said. "It would be difficult to think of women achieving the right to vote in this country without **religion** and without **religious people** coming together and seeing this as a **religious value**."

There is **no** ideology (social, philosophical or political), no government and no other religion that can match Christians throughout history in **social change**

The World as 100 Christians, Jan. 2020

67 would live in Asia, Africa, Latin America or Oceania, while **33** would live in Europe or Northern America.

Most would be found in urban areas (**65**) as opposed to rural (**35**)

16 would speak Spanish as their mother tongue, **10** English, **8** Portuguese, **5** Russian, **3** Mandarin Chinese, **2** speak French, **2** speak Tagalog, **2** speak German, **2** speak Polish and **50** speak other languages **90**

The World as 100 Christians, Jan. 2020

Most (**64**) would be between the ages of 15–64, while **26** would be under 15. **10** are over 64

11 Christians would be illiterate, and **35** would have little to no access to secondary education. **65** have a post secondary education.

19 live on more than \$100 per day, **63** live on \$10-100 per day and **18** live on less than \$10 per day **81**

The World as 100 Christians, Jan. 2020

Christianity grew tremendously in Africa over the 20th century, from 9% Christian in 1900 to nearly 50% Christian in 2020. By **2040, 40%** of the global Christian population will be in Africa

Christians were 12.7% of the region's population (middle east) in 1900 but only 4.2% in 2020, and it is likely that they will only represent **3.7%** of the population by 2050.

Muslims have grown from 86% in 1900 to 92.4% in 2020, projected to reach 92.7% by 2050.

The World as 100 Christians, Jan. 2020

The number of Evangelicals in the world has increased from **112 million in 1970 to 386 million in 2020**. Globally,

Evangelicalism is a predominantly **non-White movement** within Christianity, and becoming increasingly more so, with **77% of all Evangelicals living in the Global South** in 2020. This is up from only 7.8% in 1900.

This reality runs against the **popular perception** in the West that the United States is the 'home' of contemporary Evangelicalism, where Evangelicalism is a largely White, politically conservative movement.

The World as 100 Christians, Jan. 2020

268 million Christians in North America

612 million Christians in Latin America

667 million Christians in Africa

565 million Christians in Europe

379 million Christians in Asia

28 million Christians in Oceania

1686 million vs 833

The World as 100 Christians, Jan. 2020

A typical Christian today is a **non-white woman living in the global South**, with lower-than-average levels of societal safety and proper health care.

The Pew Research Center did a study that showed **Christian women** are more religious than Christian men when it comes to religious service attendance, prayer, and importance of religion in their lives. What we don't know is what percentage of Christians in Africa – or more specifically, Anglicans in Africa – for example, are women.

Women in Christianity, Pew Research 2016

In the United States, for example, women are more likely than men to say religion is "very important" in their lives (**60% vs. 47%**)

American women also are more likely than American men to say they pray daily (**64% vs. 47%**) and attend religious services at least once a week (**40% vs. 32%**).

An estimated **83.4%** of women around the world identify with a faith group, compared with **79.9%** of men

The affirmation of human rights emerged painfully and belatedly in the Christian Church. The "deep biblical roots of human rights ideals" have, however, periodically been **acknowledged and retrieved** throughout the history of the church in an attempt to correct wrongs, repudiate theological support for abuses, and to pursue a more humane society. [Charles Villa-Vicencio, Law and Religion, Cambridge University](#)

After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from **every nation and tribe and people and language**, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. And they were shouting with a great roar, [Revelation 7:9-10a](#)



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