

Essay on Apostasy

By Dan Jensen (2024)

(In order to fully benefit from this essay, I recommend reading through my “works for beginners” first. They can be found on my website.)

Apostasy is the hip thing in our day in this nation. To be religious of any type is seen as archaic and often as inherently bigoted. Those who have walked away from any religion to become “skeptics” are seen as heroes. Every worldview loves a great conversion story, and countless people are clamoring to give to the masses what they want so that they can receive the adulation they so earnestly crave. Labels such as *Exvangelical* and *Exmormon* are all the rage. And those who throw in the buzzword *deconstruction* to describe their conversion are seen as intellectual giants among us. Especially when it comes to leaving the true church (Conservative Evangelicalism), such converts to Atheism or similar worldviews (such as Progressive Christianity, which is essentially just Atheism with some “Jesus” sprinkled on top) see themselves, and are seen by others, as being part of something truly novel and subversive. The idea is that the church has never seen anything like this before and is genuinely shaking in its boots, oh my! Humans are truly entering into a new phase of human knowledge and understanding. We are coming to a point in our evolution where we are realizing how harmful and unnecessary religion, especially biblical faith, really is.

The problem with so many of these ignorant folks is that most have never read a single book of church history. They are self-proclaimed experts on the Bible, theology, philosophy, church history, and apologetics, when in point of fact it is *painfully* obvious to anyone who listens to them who is in fact knowledgeable regarding all of those topics, that they have read very little, if anything at all, from these subjects. Apostasy is literally one of the most core themes of the entire Old Testament! Jesus talked about apostasy quite often. As just one example, we can look at the Parable of the Sower (Matt 13:1-9;

18-23). Two of the four examples Jesus gives are of those who become apostates. Whether you believe that true Christians can lose their salvation or not, that is a subject for another day, what is plain is that Jesus says that many will leave the faith. Thus, we are not to be surprised by this. It is the normal reality of the church. I hate to break it to all the apostates out there that think they are the coolest thing since sliced bread, but according to Jesus, you are nothing out of the ordinary.

Many professing Christians fully apostatized in the early church under the weight of Roman persecution. Many early Protestants went back to Catholicism and many others joined the Anabaptists or other heretical movements of the day. Western Europe has been slowly apostatizing since the Enlightenment. Almost the entire West has followed their example like one giant drone. Apostasy was rampant after the Civil War in our nation and eventually led to the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy. So, like, ummmm, what on earth is so novel and cool about your apostasy? Now, if all you are arguing is that Biblical Christianity is false and you have discovered that, fine. I am happy to argue that point with you. But, we all know that this is not the only thing that is going on. The constant portrayal is that these apostates are part of some revolutionary epoch in human history. For those of us who actually read history, we are left scratching our heads.

If conversions alone prove so much, then why are the countless Atheist conversions to Biblical Christianity not given equal apologetic weight? Such conversions are hardly rare. CS Lewis would be one of the most famous examples. One can find a number of highly credentialed academics on YT alone who are more than happy to share their testimonies in this regard. I personally know many former Atheists who have passionately come to Jesus. I don't like the term *deconstruction* because of the way it is used by liberals, but if we are to use the term only in the sense of those who have questioned their long-held beliefs and came to new conclusions, why then are the "deconstruction" stories of those who moved in an orthodox direction not also hailed with the same approbation?

If the argument is merely that Atheists are rejoicing in conversions to what they see is the right side, just as we rejoice in conversions to Christ, again, fine. I am happy to argue that these conversions are misguided, but I totally get the desire to celebrate such conversions within one's worldview. But, again, we all know that this is not what is being done. The incessant perception that is put out is that *all* deconstruction stories by definition must lead to Atheism or Progressive Christianity and that humanity is just now discovering this. And that is rubbish. As far as actual proof goes, your conversion story proves nothing more than my conversion story. PERIOD.

As far as Christians kissing up to apostates, please stop. I am not saying that we should stop loving them. We must continue to love them however we can. But, stop with all of the talk about how we understand, how it's all about the journey, we know how hurt you have been by Christians and the church. Apostasy is sin. And for those who were truly immersed in the church, your apostasy in all likelihood constitutes the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. We are not to even pray for such people. That is how serious God takes that sin. Such people can never be brought to repentance. This is no small matter and the church needs to stop pretending like it knows better than God here. To walk away from Jesus Christ is sheer unvarnished wickedness. As the people of God, we are not to call things good that are evil, or vice versa.

For the small number of apostates that have left the faith over legitimate abuse, I am not referring to you. Your abuse is not an excuse for unbelief, but your situation is far more understandable. Please email me for a further discussion on this difficult topic.

With that made abundantly clear, both sides (apostates and true Christians) must stop with the slander that most apostates were abused by the church. I have seen countless former Christians come and go, and then say that they were abused by the church despite there being zero evidence that this was the case. I do not want to get too personal, but this was the case with my ex-wife. She insists that her parents, myself, our kids, all of her former pastors, and countless others were spiritually abusive to her. I can say firsthand that this is an outright lie. Christians were unbelievably kind and gracious

with my ex-wife despite the fact that she was often a shockingly selfish person. Her parents are some of the godliest and nicest people I have ever known. They are of the Calvary Chapel movement and they loved her with all of their hearts throughout her upbringing. But, she knows, just like so many other apostates know, that she will receive (and has) oodles and oodles of sympathy over these claims of spiritual abuse.

Before you accuse me of just disliking apostates, I am still close friends with some. Further, my precious daughter is a full apostate. She and I have a fantastic relationship. Yes, she has walked away from Jesus and this breaks my heart. Yes, what she did was sinful and I have never told her otherwise. But, she has never slandered me. She has never slandered the church. She has never slandered the faith in general. She has never slandered the Bible. She merely disagrees with Biblical Christianity and left accordingly. She freely admits that she was treated very well by Christians throughout her upbringing. While she does not like to talk about it, and I don't blame her, if pressed, she would be the first to tell you how abusive her mother was to her. She does not seek attention for her apostasy. She does not lie about it. She left the faith and she understands that this is nothing special. Lots of people leave lots of religions and worldviews. She is a woman of integrity. That cannot be said for the bulk of these apostates who never tire of complaining about all things Christian. Get over yourself and move on.