

Don't 'Deconstruct' Your Faith

We live in a time of spiritual upheaval, and the shaking has triggered a trend among some Christians known as “deconstruction.” You may not have heard the term, but people are questioning everything—the church, spiritual leaders, traditional morality and core doctrines of Christian faith.

Deconstruction made headlines in 2021 when Kevin Max, a member of Christian band DC Talk, announced he is “ex-evangelical,” noting that he is also “pro-LGBTQIA.” Max said he had been deconstructing his faith “for decades.”

Bart Campolo, son of evangelical author Tony Campolo, announced in 2011 that he had become an atheist and secular humanist. Meanwhile, Rob Bell—the controversial Michigan pastor who wrote a book renouncing the Christian doctrine of hell—is now on the rebound after being branded a heretic when *Love Wins* was published in 2011. Bell is no longer a pastor, but his podcast (known as “RobCast”) gets 180,000 downloads a week.

Deconstruction can be attractive to young people who are turned off by Christians who mix politics with faith. Statistics show many Millennials and Gen-Zers are abandoning the beliefs of their parents. Similar studies show that up to 25% of churchgoers never returned to church after the pandemic.

I believe many Christians never had a strong foundation to begin with. If your faith is weak, it can be easily torn down. If your faith is rock-solid, no demon in hell could convince you to deconstruct it.

I was raised in a traditional church, and I heard the gospel countless times as a child and a teenager. But I went through

my own crisis of faith in high school, and I came close to walking away from God. Yet too many people were praying for me, including an older Christian minister who had invested a lot of time showing me God's unconditional love. A battle raged in my mind for a while, but eventually—the summer before I went to college—I had a profound experience with the Holy Spirit. The Lord showed me that I could choose the wide road that leads to destruction, or the narrow road that leads to life. And when I chose the narrow road, my doubts faded.

When I got to college my faith grew stronger. I led other students to Christ. And when I faced inevitable doubts, I pressed deeper into prayer or sought counsel from mentors.

So how is the modern church going to address the challenges of deconstruction? If you or someone you love is experiencing a faith crisis right now, take these steps.

Tune out the wrong voices. Jesus said there are many false prophets in the world (Matt. 24:11). Don't listen to those who are luring people away from faith in Jesus, or who spend all their time criticizing Christianity or church.

Be honest about your doubts. God doesn't condemn us for asking questions. The disciple Thomas doubted that Jesus had been raised from the dead, so Jesus invited him to touch His wounds (see John 20:27). If you have an open heart toward God, He will resolve your doubts as you follow Him.

Focus on Jesus, not people. Many people question their faith when Christians disappoint them. But Jesus never told us His people would be perfect. Instead, He invites us to forgive those who hurt us. Don't let someone's attitudes, abusive actions, political opinions, racism or bigotry drive you away from God. Instead, say to yourself: "I will forgive them, and I'll pray that by the Holy Spirit's power I'll never act like that."

Seek true conversion, if you haven't experienced it. When

Nicodemus came seeking spiritual answers, Jesus' reply surprised him. Jesus said: "You must be born again" (John 3:7b). Real faith isn't built on some deep knowledge from a book; you need an encounter with Jesus.

Build a strong foundation of faith. Don't tear your faith down by listening to the devil's messengers. Study God's Word, believe it, apply it to your life and obey it—even if the deconstructionists make fun of you for believing the Bible.

Jesus compared the Christian life to building a house on a sturdy rock—and in these turbulent times we need that rock more than ever.

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