

Cultural Elites Are Embracing Religion, But Where Is the Holy Spirit?

A Growing Curiosity Among the Young and Elite

A new wave of interest in religion is capturing the attention of cultural observers. Recent reporting by Reason magazine highlights a rise in church attendance among members of Generation Z, particularly young men. Additionally, Catholic dioceses across the Western world are reporting a spike in adult conversions, suggesting that a spiritual shift may be taking place among younger Americans.

At first glance, this shift might look like the beginning of revival, but a closer look reveals a more complicated picture. While the softening attitude toward Christianity is notable, what's taking shape appears more cultural than spiritual.

The Hunger Is Real, But So Is the Confusion

There is no denying that younger generations are searching for something deeper. The exhaustion of secularism, paired with social instability, has created a longing for meaning, beauty and moral clarity. Considered in this context, America's youth appear to be less dismissive of faith as previous generations.

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Even among intellectuals and self-described agnostics, there is a renewed appreciation for religious community and

tradition. This shift reflects a growing awareness that purely secular ideologies cannot satisfy the deepest needs of the human soul. But appreciating the social value of religion is not the same as spiritual transformation. The human heart is still in need of salvation, not just structure.

The Aesthetic Allure of High Church Worship

What's particularly striking is the growing popularity of Catholicism and Orthodox traditions—not necessarily for their doctrine, but for their rich aesthetics. From incense and iconography to sacred architecture and Gregorian chant, high church traditions are gaining traction among cultural influencers and artists.

This trend has helped religion shed its old caricatures. The evangelicalism of the early 2000s, often mocked for its suburban aesthetics and political entanglements, is no longer the sole face of American Christianity. Instead, faith is being reimagined as something elegant, thoughtful and even fashionable. But without repentance, worship becomes performance. Sacred beauty can attract, but only the Holy Spirit can transform.



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The Right No Longer Owns the Religious Narrative

The Reason article notes a detachment between Christianity and right-wing politics. The posturing of recent years, shaped more by aggression than reverence, has distanced religion from its former political stronghold. Cultural Christianity is now being explored apart from the conservative party platform.

This shift opens doors for new conversations about faith, but it also introduces new risks. The danger lies in reducing Christianity to cultural nostalgia or aesthetic preference. Faith without the cross is hollow. Belief without obedience is rebellion in disguise.

A Spiritual Undercurrent Beneath the Cultural Surface

What many observers fail to realize is that these cultural changes may be the surface evidence of something deeper. After years of moral and spiritual decline, especially during the previous administration, which has championed policies in stark contrast to biblical values, believers across the nation have been interceding for revival.

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There is reason to believe that God is answering those prayers right now. What we're witnessing may be the first tremors of a greater awakening. But it won't come through architecture or tradition. It will come through brokenness, repentance and a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Discernment Is Critical in This Moment

While it's tempting to celebrate any positive mention of Christianity in elite spaces, the church must remain discerning. There is a difference between embracing the Gospel and embracing religion as an identity or aesthetic. Cultural Christianity has its place, but it is no substitute for being born again.

True revival will not be ushered in by style or sophistication. It will be marked by deliverance, healing, holy living and bold witness. The Spirit-filled church must

not be content with a trend; it must press in for the fire of God.

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Don't Miss the Moment

Now is not the time for complacency. The church has prayed, fasted and stood in the gap for years. As spiritual doors begin to open, believers must step through them with clarity and conviction. This is a moment to preach the Gospel with power, to disciple the next generation and to call the culture, not to mere tradition, but to true transformation.

This cultural softening toward Christianity may indeed be the beginning of something significant. But it must be met with truth, not tolerance; with the Spirit, not spectacle.

James Lasher *is staff writer for Charisma Media.*

Mel Gibson's 'The Passion of the Christ' Sequel Announces Release Dates

Mel Gibson is once again turning heads in Hollywood and the faith community with his ambitious, two-part sequel to *The Passion of the Christ*. Lionsgate announced Wednesday that *The Resurrection of the Christ Part One* will release on March 26, 2027, Good Friday, with *Part Two* following on May 6, 2027, Ascension Day.

The surprising two-part release format has sparked comparisons

to other blockbuster franchises. "This is like Infinity War / Endgame for Christians," one person tweeted, while another added, "I can't believe Mel Gibson took the Infinity War to Endgame approach to our Lord and Savior."

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But Gibson isn't aiming for spectacle alone, he's diving deep into spiritual realities.

Speaking with Joe Rogan earlier this year, he revealed that the film will explore the supernatural realm of Christ's resurrection. "In order to really tell the story properly, you have to really start with the fall of the angels, which means you're in another place, you're in another realm. You need to go to hell," Gibson said. "There's some good heads put together, but there's some crazy stuff."



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Written alongside Braveheart screenwriter Randall Wallace, Gibson promises an emotionally and spiritually powerful continuation of the story that moved millions in 2004. That original film grossed over \$600 million on a \$30 million budget and helped pave the way for a new era of faith-based filmmaking.

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Gibson also confirmed that Jim Caviezel will reprise his role as Jesus, with the help of digital de-aging technology to maintain continuity.

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For believers and moviegoers alike, The Resurrection of the Christ promises to be more than a film, it's shaping up to be a powerful visualization of Jesus' victory over death.

James Lasher *is staff writer for Charisma Media.*

Battle Over Ten Commandments in Public Schools Heats Up Nationwide

A federal judge has temporarily halted enforcement of an Arkansas law that would require public schools to display the Ten Commandments in every classroom and library, a decision that has stirred fierce debate about constitutional rights and the future of faith in American education.

U.S. District Judge Timothy Brooks, appointed by former President Barack Obama, issued a preliminary injunction Monday blocking the law's implementation in four school districts: Fayetteville, Bentonville, Siloam Springs and Springdale. The ruling came in response to a lawsuit filed by a coalition of multi-faith families who argued that the law infringes on their religious freedom and parental rights.

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"Why would Arkansas pass an obviously unconstitutional law?" Brooks wrote in his decision, according to KUAR. "Most likely because the state is part of a coordinated strategy among several states to inject Christian religious doctrine into public-school classrooms."

The law in question – Act 573 – was signed earlier this year by Republican Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders. It requires the Ten Commandments to be prominently displayed in all public school classrooms and libraries across the state. Supporters of the law argue that it reflects the historical foundation of American values, law, and moral order, a foundation that has contributed to the country's rise as a global superpower.

“Act 573 is not neutral with respect to religion,” Brooks claimed, noting that the law “requires that a specific version of that scripture be used, one that the uncontroverted evidence in this case shows is associated with Protestantism and is exclusionary of other faiths.”



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The lawsuit was filed by the American Civil Liberties Union, Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, and the Freedom from Religion Foundation. The plaintiffs sought a preliminary injunction to pause the law's rollout while legal proceedings continue.

“Permanently posting the Ten Commandments in every classroom and library, rendering them unavoidable, unconstitutionally pressures students into religious observance, veneration, and adoption of the state's favored religious scripture,” the lawsuit stated. “It also sends the harmful and religiously divisive message that students who do not subscribe to the Ten Commandments ... do not belong in their own school community.”

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But supporters of the law – including Attorney General Tim Griffin, whose office is reviewing the judge's decision – view the Ten Commandments not only as religious texts but as moral

principles that helped shape the American legal and cultural fabric.

Critics of the injunction say the backlash against the display of the Ten Commandments and public prayer is yet another example of secular overreach. For generations, these moral laws and the right to pray were staples in classrooms across America, guiding young minds and reinforcing a shared sense of responsibility, respect and civic virtue.

“Removing these guiding principles from our schools hasn’t made us freer, it’s made us more fractured,” said one Arkansas parent in support of the law. “We’re seeing the results in rising violence, division, and a loss of purpose among our youth.”

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Though the injunction currently only applies to four districts, the legal battle is far from over. Similar laws in Texas and Louisiana are also facing legal scrutiny, with a Louisiana appeals court recently ruling against its classroom mandate.

Still, many Christians and advocates for religious liberty remain undeterred. Scripture teaches perseverance in the face of opposition, and this moment is no different.

As the apostle Paul reminded early believers in Galatians 6:9, “Let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” The fight to restore prayer and biblical truth in America’s classrooms continues – one ruling, one law and one heart at a time.

James Lasher *is staff writer for Charisma Media.*

Shocking Evidence of the Nephilim Found in Ancient Burial Sites Worldwide

The Bible warns that the last days will be marked by a dramatic decline in morality, and revivalist Isaiah Saldivar says those signs are evident now.

Teaching verse by verse through 2 Timothy 2–4, he explained, “This is that last days type of people. And the phrase last days is different than the end times. The last days is the time between Jesus’s ascension and His return to the earth. So that’s the time that we’re living in.”

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Saldivar stressed that Paul believed he was already in the last days and that believers today are still in that same period of history.

One of the clearest signs, according to Saldivar, is a culture driven by selfishness and sin. Citing Paul’s warning, he said people would be “backbiters, haters of God, boasters, proud, violent, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents.” He added that many would even “have a form of godliness but deny its power,” urging Christians to recognize and separate themselves from such influences.



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Saldivar also warned of false teachers who “are always

learning, learning, learning, but... never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," describing a generation obsessed with knowledge but resisting the transforming power of God's Word.

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Another sobering sign, Saldivar said, is how many people in the last days will reject truth in favor of comforting lies. "They will turn their ears away from the truth and be turned aside to fables," he quoted from Paul, pointing to modern spiritual trends that emphasize what feels good rather than what is biblical. Yet, like Paul, believers are called to endure, with Saldivar reminding listeners of Paul's powerful farewell: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

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For those who want to learn more about the biblical signs of the end times and how they apply today, Saldivar's full teaching can be viewed in the complete video above.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

Prophetic Warning: Artificial Intelligence Cannot Replace the Holy Spirit

For centuries, the Shroud of Turin has captivated believers

and skeptics alike. To the naked eye, it appears as a faint linen cloth with the outline of a man. But under scientific scrutiny, the Shroud reveals forensic details of crucifixion so precise, and an image so mysterious, that no known technology, ancient or modern, can fully explain how it was formed. Could it be what some call “God’s calling card,” evidence of the resurrection of Jesus Christ?

On a recent episode of *Prophecy Watchers*, host Gary Stearman sat down with author and researcher L.A. Marzulli to discuss Marzulli’s new film, *Holy Shroud, Holy Fire*. Together they explored not only the scientific anomalies surrounding the Shroud, but also its deep theological significance. “The Shroud, I think, is the most studied artifact on the planet,” Marzulli said. “It is not a painting. It’s not produced by the hand of man. So what is it?”

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Marzulli pointed out that the Shroud was first photographed in 1898 by Secondo Pia. The resulting image shocked the world. “When you look at the Shroud it’s a negative image, and when you photograph it, it becomes a positive image. That is astounding,” Marzulli explained. “How would a 15th century forger know that photography would be invented hundreds of years later?”

The debate over the Shroud’s authenticity intensified after carbon-14 dating in the 1980s suggested it came from the Middle Ages. But Marzulli noted that those tests sampled a repaired section of cloth. Later research by Ray Rogers revealed that the fibers from the tested corner contained cotton from a medieval patch rather than the original linen. “That’s what skewed the carbon-14 dating,” Marzulli said. New studies, including work by researcher Giulio Fanti, suggest the cloth truly dates back about 2,000 years.



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What makes the Shroud so compelling, Marzulli stressed, are the forensic details. "Every inch of his body, front and back, is scourged, open wounds. He's in shock. And finally, when he's pinned, it's not in the palm of the hand—it goes at a slight angle and comes out the back of the wrist. And that's precisely what the Shroud shows." Even the mixture of blood and water at the spear wound matches the Gospel account. "Forensically, it is 110% accurate on every single level," Marzulli emphasized.

Adding weight to the case is the Sudarium of Oviedo, a head cloth mentioned in John 20. This separate relic has been in Spain since at least the 7th century. When overlaid with the Shroud's facial image, researchers have found "120 points of congruency," Marzulli noted. "That means the Sudarium was on the same man who is in the Shroud. And of course, we believe it's Jesus."

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Marzulli also connected the mysterious image to the ancient tradition of the Holy Fire in Jerusalem. For over 1,700 years, believers have witnessed a blue flame appear each Easter at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, said to be the tomb of Christ. The flame lights candles without burning for several minutes. "We believe that the Holy Fire created this. It doesn't burn, it just scorches. And that's what the image is," Marzulli explained, linking the phenomenon to the Shroud's formation.

To both Stearman and Marzulli, the evidence points beyond historical artifact and into the realm of divine witness. "It's forensic evidence of the greatest event in the history

of the world,” Marzulli said. “The resurrection of the fully God, fully man, Jesus the Messiah.” Stearman reflected that perhaps in “these last of the last days, the Lord is revealing things to us” as reminders of Christ’s victory over death.

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Whether viewed through science, history, or faith, the Shroud of Turin continues to provoke the deepest questions of all: Who was the man in the Shroud? And if it truly is Jesus of Nazareth, what does that mean for the world today?

James Lasher *is staff writer for Charisma Media.*

Hospitals Across US Cease Sex-Change Procedures for Minors After Trump Order

Following President Donald Trump’s Jan. 23 executive order stripping hospitals of federal funding if they perform sex-change procedures on minors, a growing number of medical institutions have announced they will halt such practices. The directive also applies to institutions receiving research and education grants and defines the “chemical and surgical mutilation of children” as the use of puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and surgeries that remove healthy body parts and sex organs.

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As reported by The Christian Post, the U.S. Department of

Health and Human Services released a report earlier this year warning of the “risk of significant harms including infertility/sterility, sexual dysfunction, impaired bone density accrual, adverse cognitive impacts, cardiovascular disease and metabolic disorders, psychiatric disorders, surgical complications, and regret.”

Even before new rules were fully implemented, hospitals and insurers across the country began taking steps to comply.



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Here are the hospitals and health insurers that have paused some or all types of sex-change procedures for minors:

1. The University of Pennsylvania

The Daily Pennsylvanian reported on May 29 that the Philadelphia-based university's college of medicine would no longer perform these procedures. Penn Medicine Chief Medical Officer Dr. Patrick Brennan called it a “difficult decision that we know impacts patients and families who place their trust in our care teams.”

2. Children's National Hospital (Washington, D.C.)

In a statement posted online, the hospital announced that “in light of escalating legal and regulatory risks to Children's National, our providers, and the families we serve, we will be discontinuing the prescription of gender-affirming medications.” The change will officially take effect on Aug. 30, after a previous pause was announced in January.

3. Kaiser Permanente

A spokesperson for Kaiser Permanente told KTXL that effective Aug. 29, the provider “paused sex-change surgeries for trans-identified youth younger than 19” following internal and external consultations. However, the insurer will continue prescribing puberty blockers

and hormones. “We recognize that this is an extremely challenging and stressful time for our patients ... and will work closely with each patient to support their care journey,” the spokesperson added.

4. University of Chicago Medicine

In a July 18 statement, the hospital explained it would stop prescribing puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and performing surgeries on minors due to “emerging federal actions which would place at risk our ability to care for all Medicare or Medicaid patients.” As the largest Medicaid provider in Illinois, the institution said this move was “necessary to ensure UChicago Medicine can continue serving our broader community and delivering on our mission.”

5. Children’s Hospital of Richmond (Virginia Commonwealth University)

On July 29, the hospital announced it would “cease providing Gender-Affirming Care” for youth under 19 after a “thoughtful and thorough assessment that revealed no other viable options.” The change will take effect at the end of October. “As we wind down these services over the next 90 days, our care teams will provide support and assist with safe transfer of care for existing patients, considering each youth’s needs with compassion and clinical judgment,” the hospital stated.

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The wave of policy changes highlights the sweeping impact of Trump’s executive order on the medical field and the ongoing national debate over the treatment of minors with gender dysphoria. While supporters of the order see it as a necessary protection for children from irreversible harm, critics argue it restricts access to care.

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With more hospitals expected to follow suit, the future of such procedures in the United States remains uncertain as legal, medical and spiritual battles continue to unfold.

James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.

Pastor Warns Europe's Betrayal of Israel Aligns with Biblical Prophecy

The Overlooked Reality of the Silver Cord

Among the mysteries of Scripture, few topics are as rarely discussed or as often dismissed as the silver cord. Mentioned briefly in Ecclesiastes 12:6, it is a concept that many believers either overlook or fail to understand. Yet, as testimonies reveal, its significance reaches deep into the spiritual realm. For Christians, understanding the silver cord is not about curiosity but about discernment, as it reveals the very real battles taking place between life and death.

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Jennifer Bagnaschi on the Silver Cord

Jennifer Bagnaschi, host of the Deep Believer podcast, recently addressed the subject head-on. “Would you believe that 90% of people have no idea what the silver cord is? Ninety percent of Christians, evangelists, theologians overlook it,” she explained. According to Bagnaschi, this neglect highlights the danger of believers remaining uninformed about spiritual realities while the occult world actively engages with them.



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Norman: A Child's Encounter With Astral Projection

Norman, one of Bagnaschi's guests, shared his disturbing experiences as a child who practiced astral projection. He described sensing a tether that kept him alive during these out-of-body journeys: “In order to get back into your body, those who astral project need it.” His experience culminated in a frightening moment when his cousin saw only Norman's disembodied head with glowing eyes, which convinced him never to pursue astral travel again.

Julie: An Ex-Witch Explains the Cord

Julie, a former witch, offered a more detailed explanation of what she encountered in the occult. “That silver cord is what is connecting one and another. So it's your soul that leaves. It's like the astral body you have, and the silver cord is the

solder in this astral body,” she explained. Julie warned that if the cord is ever severed, the soul cannot return: “If they get out, they can die. They literally, if the silver cord is broken, they die. That’s it.”

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Dave: A Pastor’s Testimony of Deliverance

Dave, a pastor who directly battled the occult, recounted an intense encounter with a high-level Satanist named Anton LaVey. During the confrontation, Dave said he heard clear instruction from the Lord: “I heard the voice of the Lord as clear as I’ve ever heard anything, cut his silver cord.” When he prayed in Jesus’ name, Anton’s spirit was unable to return to his body, freeing Dave’s daughter from demonic control. “Suddenly she came bursting through the door, saw me, and she was free,” he recalled.

A Warning for Believers

These testimonies highlight the dangerous reality of the silver cord and the spiritual realm it represents. Scripture reminds us that “we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world” (Eph. 6:12).

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Dabbling in occult practices or new age experiences such as astral projection or meditation is not harmless curiosity, it is opening a door to spiritual bondage. The silver cord stands as a reminder of the unseen war Paul spoke of, and the urgent

need to remain rooted in Christ, armored with truth and steadfast against the schemes of the enemy.

James Lasher *is staff writer for Charisma Media.*