

10 Signs You Are a Secular Believer

As a full-time church minister since 1981, I have had the task of observing the lives of thousands of believers. Consequently, I have come to the conclusion that there are believers in the church who say they are Christians, while, at the same time, espousing value systems that are secular. However, these secular believers are slightly different from what we may identify as a “carnal Christian,” whose ways have to do with the overt sins of the flesh and emotions (read 1 Corinthians 3:1-4). Of these two types, the secular believer, as with “secular Christianity” (which, by the way, is contradictory and, therefore, a misnomer) is more subtle because they are sugar-coated with spirituality and outward peace but have foundations of secular values.

The following are 10 signs you are a secular believer:

1. You make major decisions without first determining God’s will.

Many believers are functional atheists because they make major decisions, such as marriage, moving to another region, changing jobs, or changing churches, without hearing from God, getting input from spiritual leadership or searching the Scriptures.

2. You care more about what others think than what God thinks about you.

In this “selfie” secular age, appearance, status, and popularity with friends are sometimes pursued more than understanding the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 9:10). When we care more about what people think of us than respecting the ways of God, then we are secular.

3. You are led by money not by the Holy Spirit.

Whenever you prioritize money over God's will, you are secular. This is why so many so-called believers work so many hours; then they rarely have time to participate in a faith community. Jesus said that if we "seek first His Kingdom, then all the other things we seek will be given to us" (Matt. 6:33).

4. You attend church services primarily to socialize.

Secular believers' primary motivation to attend church services is to meet their friends, while biblical Christ followers' primary motivation is to meet God in the context of communing with the saints and hearing what the Spirit is saying to the church.

5. You mimic the values of popular culture.

Secular believers espouse the world's values when it comes to dating, pre-marital sex, dress, popular music, language, etc. This reminds me of the old adage: "If it looks like a duck and quacks like a duck, then it's a duck!" If you internally celebrate the value systems of the world, then you are worldly-minded (secular), not spiritually-minded.

6. God is a mere part of your life.

True Christ followers do not make God a mere part of their lives. Christ is their life! (Col. 3:1-4).

7. You don't have a lifestyle of seeking God.

Secular believers may say a quick prayer here and there, usually to bless their secular lifestyle, but they do not consistently seek God's face in prayer or pour over the Scriptures.

8. Your life does not impact others for the gospel.

Secular believers do not have a burden to win others to Christ. Many have never even won one person for God in the past five to ten years! The reason is because they are so subsumed with this world they do not have a sense of eternity. Sadly, many times unsaved family members, friends, and co-workers are not able to notice the difference between a believer and an unbeliever.

9. You are not making disciples.

There are many people in the body of Christ today who have been saved for many years and have not invested their lives in making even one disciple. If you are not presently mentoring and helping somebody mature in Christ, then you are willfully disobeying the Great Commission Jesus commanded (Matt. 28:19). Just because you have a title of pastor or elder does not mean you are a disciple maker.

10. You do not practice biblical financial stewardship.

It is sad that many in the body of Christ do not believe that their money belongs to God. How do I know? It is because they only tithe and give offerings when it is convenient. They live as if they are the ones in charge of their lives, money and wealth. Even those who tithe should understand that God claims ownership of one hundred percent of their money, not just the ten percent. When you spend your money as if it were your own, then you are not practicing biblical stewardship. You are acting like a secular believer and not like a true Christian.