

10 Ways to Detoxify and Deconstruct Your Life This New Year

This new year, I was seeking the Lord as usual to get a sense of particulars related to my assignment, and I was shocked because I did not sense God was interested in speaking to me about this.

As I continued to pray, I sensed the Lord showing me that His main objective for me the next several years is to grace me to conform more to the image of His Son (see Rom. 8:29,30); that He wanted to continue to deconstruct my American value system and enable me to see the world the way Jesus does.

By “deconstruct,” I am referring to analyzing all I do, believe and say, in light of the implications of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. This process exposes hidden internal unbiblical assumptions and contradictions for the purpose of subverting, reducing and reinterpreting them. In other words, this new year, God wants me to unpack everything I do in light of being Christ-centric and Christ-focused—so that Jesus is everything to me in all I do, say and practice.

Based on my assignment, this also means developing a Christocentric ecclesiology that will continue to frame my view of the local church to reflect the life and works of Jesus. (After all, the church is supposed to be nothing more or less than a “Jesus Movement,” since we are supposed to function as His body—with Jesus as our head. This is why Paul exhorts the saints to have the mind of Christ [see Eph. 1:22-23, 1 Cor. 2:16]).

In order for the above to happen, we as believers need to “deconstruct” many of our un-Christlike assumptions (that we received either from American pop culture or a local church).

As we deconstruct, there will concomitantly also be a detoxification process that may be uncomfortable until we fully transition our hearts and minds to the Jesus value system and away from the worldly value systems we have adopted. By “detoxify,” I am referring to the process of removing any toxic beliefs and assumptions that hinder internal conformity to Christ—with the result of becoming free of poisonous mindsets and patterns of behavior.

The following are some of the traits of deconstructed, detoxified Christians:

don't gauge success by numbers of people, budget and facility.

The deconstructed, Christ-focused leaders and believers I meet rarely, if ever, ask about the size of a person's church, budget or facility. While a growing church (not by church transplants but through new converts) is one important sign of a healthy church; it is not the only thing that matters.

To a person who has experienced a deconstruction away from the American cultural gauge of the “bigger is better” matrix, the only thing that matters to them is “How many lives are being transformed by Christ, and how many true disciples are being made as a result of their church's practice?”

2. They are not affirmed by titles or position.

Leaders and believers who have been detoxified from the American pop culture that pervades both the religious and secular arenas of life do not strive for recognition via titles, position, rank or sitting at places of honor in events. (See Matt. 23 for a scathing review of that, which is very common in today's contemporary celebrity-driven culture in the church and society.)

3. They don't identity with a two-party political system.

As a believer with kingdom values, I cannot resonate with

either dominant political party in the USA. I wish there were other vibrant parties that more reflected biblical values, but there are not. Consequently, we are all left with choosing between two people or systems that may compromise some aspect of our faith. Hence, I do not wrap my faith in either the American flag, (although as an American citizen, I love and serve my country in various ways) or assimilate Christianity into the radical secular tendencies of the Democrats or all the so-called right-wing values of conservative Republicans. (Although my strong pro-life/biblical marriage value system will tilt the scale towards any qualified candidate, judge or party that more closely aligns with Scripture in those areas.)

4. They value authentic relationships.

Those who have experienced a deconstruction tend to value deep, covenantal relationships that go beyond the surface. They don't run after the crowds or thrive on hype and emotion. Also, they don't waste time trying to build with religious, superficial people who use either the church and or politics as a platform to prop themselves and their agenda up.

5. They are egalitarian in attitude.

This means that, irrespective of their title, pedigree or position, they treat everyone with respect, walk in humility and allow themselves connections and access to people that have no ability to compensate them or aid them in their assignment. They eschew religious hierarchical religious systems and walk the way of the meek carpenter who lived among His people for almost four decades, even though He was and is God.

6. They value internal transformation.

Deconstructed leaders prioritize personal transformation more than trying to transform others. They have learned to walk with the Lord in thankfulness for everything—even ordinary things. They also regularly treasure intimate time alone with

God more than being anywhere else in the world. They understand the priority in giving God space every day to transform and shape their hearts and minds.

7. They walk in the fruit, not just the gifts, of the Spirit.

Deconstructed leaders don't objectify people or use them for their own ends.

This is because they walk in the fruit of the Holy Spirit (see Gal. 5:22-23) that demonstrates Jesus in their relational dynamics of life in marriage, family, ministry and during crisis and conflict.

8. They value process, not merely the results.

Deconstructed leaders understand that the joy of the Lord should not only be felt after a task is accomplished but also during the tedious process of working toward an end. Consequently, the results-driven American culture is another thing Christ follower have to deconstruct and detoxify in their life.

9. They live a Christ-centric life.

It's one thing to say, "Jesus is everything" but it is another thing to be able to say honestly like Paul that "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20b). The deconstruction process can only take place to the extent that Christ is formed inside of us and becomes all in all. "He must increase, but [we] must decrease" (John 3:30).

When Jesus is everything to a person, the beauty of His presence and person in their heart will be greater to them than any other joy, happiness or success, and will automatically deconstruct value systems and priorities until there is no other god before Him.

10. They live a simple life.

When a believer is infatuated with anything other than Jesus, it is a sign that they have not yet fully surrendered to Him or experienced a true encounter with Him. Once you have met Him, everything else seems dull in comparison, which enables you to clear your calendar of frivolous endeavor. Hence, the more you know Him, the more of a simple, uncongested life you can live (you find out that "less is more").

Consequently, deconstructed, Christ-focused people no longer love the world or the things in the world (See 1 John 2:15-17). They don't need endless activity meant to satisfy the cravings of their soul and flesh in pursuit of something internally that is missing. They don't seek flattery, don't need continual affirmation from men and don't pursue endless hobbies.

The No. 1 thing they desire that gives them life is to walk in His presence while living a life of obedience to His calling. Hence, simplicity eventually results, since they usually jettison that which does not ultimately point to their assignment in regard to their key relationships and activity.

May this new year result in millions of Christ-followers going to another level in regard to their conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ.