

10 Signs Your Church Has Been Secularized

The Bible teaches that the church is supposed to influence the world as salt and light (Matt. 5:13-16), but instead the church has often been influenced by the world. The book of Ezekiel 22:26 sends a stern rebuke to believers who make no distinction between that which is common and that which is holy (by “common” I mean worldly things and values).

In this article, “secular” refers to worldly rather than holy and set apart for God’s purposes. Truly any congregation that has no distinction from the world is close to extinction. The reason so many evangelical churches have grown so rapidly is not necessarily because of a true spiritual revival but because of cultural accommodation.

The following are 10 signs your church has been secularized:

1. **They preach only what is popular and avoid what is culturally controversial.** Often secularized pastors stay away from preaching on the standards of biblical morality so as to stay in the societal mainstream and avoid offending visitors. The result is a membership that only hears a partial gospel without the power to renew minds, which leaves them as secular saints.
2. **There is no standard for membership or those serving in ministry.** I have heard reports of many churches that allow anyone to become a member and/or serve in ministry positions without being vetted. The result is people serving on worship teams or as small group leaders who are engaged in premarital sex, cohabitation or living a morally subpar Christian life.
3. **Premarital sex and cohabitation between unmarried couples are normalized in the congregation.** When folks in the congregation have the same view as the world when

it comes to sexual ethics, that is a secularized congregation.

4. **Most young people have normalized alternate forms of family and marriage.** When the youth of a church by and large adopt and/or celebrate unbiblical views regarding family and marriage, then that congregation is secularized.
5. **Secular music is played at church events.** I have heard of churches that incorporate secular music as a normal part of their church services and/or church-related events. Although this is primarily done to attract more visitors by being more relevant, it waters down the distinction between the world and the church and makes them spiritually irrelevant.
6. **Worldly dancing, drinking and getting drunk are acceptable.** There are some churches that have such a secular culture that it is normal for their members to go out clubbing, dancing and getting drunk. They espouse a loose lifestyle to avoid being tagged with the term "religious," but their practice makes them closer to living as pagans than true believers!
7. **The church espouses the values of the surrounding culture more than the teaching of Scripture.** These churches are informed and internally calibrated towards the world. Hence, they celebrate and honor the world's values more than God Himself. When the congregation desires to reflect the values of the world more than the Word of God, then it has been secularized.
8. **The congregation adopts a culture of entertainment more than biblical discipleship.** When the primary objective of a congregation is to attract crowds on Sunday by giving them an "experience" rather than making committed disciples, then it has espoused a culture of entertainment and has been secularized.
9. **The congregation espouses a culture of opulent greed and narcissism instead of sacrifice and giving.** If the preaching appeals to the narcissistic desire of using

faith for personal affluence more than the biblical call to surrender and sacrifice all for the Lord, then that congregation has been secularized.

10. **If Jesus is only presented as a personal Savior rather than Lord of all.** When folks only want Jesus to save them without transforming them, they have been secularized. When Jesus is continually presented in a church only as a personal Savior without the injunction for all people to surrender to His lordship, then that congregation is focused on individual salvation more than on the glory of God.

Secular humanism is all about centering life upon the needs and desires of autonomous humanity without any concern or submission to the creator God. {eoa}