

Christian Leaders Are Becoming Atheists?

✖ After seven seasons as host of Canada's "most listened to spiritual talk show," Drew Marshall announced to his listeners that he is no longer convinced there's a God. ABC News recently reported that a Southern Baptist pastor has become a closet atheist, and an evangelical Bible Belt pastor said that he had been living a lie and confessed, "I live out my life as if there is no God."

The doubting talk show host said that he became a follower of Christ in 1981. But it wasn't until recently that he verbalized that he wasn't convinced that God existed, saying "I feel pretty close to walking away from my faith."

I have to confess that I too have been having doubts. I've been living in the same house for more than 15 years, and I have secretly doubted if there was a builder. I know it's beautifully made, with walls, carpet, doors, cupboards, windows, rooms, lighting, air-conditioning, a floor, an intricate electrical system, a fireplace and a roof, but it's only recently that I have actually verbalized that I'm not convinced that there was a builder.

You

would have to question my sanity if I really believed, let alone *said* such a thing. It is a scientific impossibility for a building to build itself (even the Bible says “*Every house is built by someone...*”), and it is a scientific impossibility for creation to create itself. The amazing creation that surrounds us is 100 percent scientific proof that there is a Creator—“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes *are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.*” That’s why the Scriptures rightly call anyone who doubts the existence of God, a “fool” (see Psalm 14:1, Romans 1:21). Atheism is an undiagnosed form of insanity. No wonder Isaac Newton called it “senseless.”

But the talk show host’s problem is bigger than himself, and it’s deeper than his nagging doubt. We have millions of people within the contemporary church who have been convinced intellectually of the existence *of* God, but they’ve never been converted experientially by the *power* of God. So when someone comes along with what they perceive to be a more convincing argument, they begin to doubt their salvation. *And so they should*—because they are not saved. They are false converts; something Scripture refers to as “goats among the sheep”, “tares among the wheat”, “bad fish among the good.”

False converts aren’t the genuine article. They are pretenders that sit among God’s

people. This should come as no surprise to the skeptics. They have always said that the church is "filled with hypocrites." And there the pretenders will remain, right up until Judgment Day when God separates the genuine from the false.

Spurious converts don't experience the "power" of the gospel (see Romans 1:16). The message they heard didn't come to them "in power, in the Holy Spirit and *in much assurance*." This is because the cross is the center of the gospel. It is the supreme expression of God's love to the sinner and there is a good reason it was obscured to them. The only way to see the love expressed in the cross is to see sin in its true light. And the only way to see our sin clearly, is to understand the moral Law. A cure is of little worth to a healthy person, and the cure of the cross is of little value to those who have never seen how deathly sick they are before a morally perfect God.

If we haven't personally seen the cross, then we haven't personally experienced the love of God. This is the tragic case of Drew Marshall, expressed in his own words:

"My reasons for feeling like 'jumping' are plenty. However, they would best be explained by the following illustration: 'Imagine a soldier at war, overseas for 30 years. Each week he would write at least one letter to his father back home. Each week he would

expectantly wait for the one who supposedly loves him unconditionally, to write him back or phone or possibly even come for a visit. Any kind of personal interaction would do. He's heard through his friends and other soldiers just how much his father loves him, but those rumors of glory aren't enough to sustain his faith in his father anymore.'"

There's not been a day in the last 39 years since my conversion that I haven't basked in the sunshine of God's incredible love for me. I have never doubted it for a second. I would sooner doubt the love and faithfulness of my much-loved wife of 40 years, than I would doubt the love and faithfulness of God, so evidentially demonstrated in the blood of the cross.

If I don't believe in and trust my wife, I insult her integrity. I deem her to be devious. The Scriptures warn, "He that believes not God has made Him a liar," and "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you *an evil heart of unbelief*, in departing from the living God" (1 John 5:10).

So my advice to pretenders in pulpits, is to go through the Ten Commandments (as expounded by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount), and apply each one personally, with a tender conscience. Then get on your knees before a holy God and don't get up until you know Him whom knowing is eternal life (see John 17:3). This issue is more serious than a heart attack. It's the issue of your

own eternal
salvation, and the salvation of those you will lead astray
with your unfaithful
words.

If you want a deeper understanding as to why the Church is
so filled with false converts, get a copy of the free book,
*God Has a Wonderful Plan For Your Life—The
myth of the modern message*. Or you can read or
listen to the book freely online at