

PLEASE DON'T BLAME RELIGION!



Decade after decade, diverse people all around the world, put their faith in Jesus. I've tried over the years to profile people and study personality types to see if certain people are somehow "wired" to be Christian or religious. The answer is no. There is no such thing as the cookie cutter Christian. We are all amazingly different.

Unbelievers seem to be either hostile or indifferent. And I keep seeing the same lame reasons being trotted out for unbelief:

- If there were a god, bad things wouldn't happen to good people
- Jesus was deluded/just a pious Jew/invented as God incarnate by Saint Paul, etc
- The crusades
- The inquisition
- Religious wars in the West killed millions
- Christianity was invented to prop up the Roman empire/Holy Roman Empire/capitalism

The strange fact is, over the past 40 years, I haven't come across a fresh, thought-provoking, entirely new argument against Christian orthodoxy. It's always the same old, same old. Yet the Christian faith finds new forms of expression in each generation. It has no sell-by date.

Some may remember the days when in South Africa Christians belonged to either one of the three Dutch Reformed sister churches, or were a Methodist, Anglican, Presbyterian or Congregationalist. The rebels were Baptists and mainly Afrikaans speaking people belonged to the wacky Apostolic Faith Mission.

Then came wild experiments like the Invisible Church and slogans like Jesus Way! And so on. The Christian landscape today is vastly different to what it once was. People are less concerned about being defined by sectarian doctrine, than having a lekker time worshipping with songs and a band and a strong preacher. Loyalty to a particular denomination no longer exists for the majority.

Has the Church left the building because of the COVID pandemic? Attendance Isn't what it used to be. Some believe it is currently 36% of what it was pre-COVID.

One minister in America said a year after reopening, his in-person attendance was still at 20% of pre-pandemic levels. And, anecdotally, most churches find themselves hovering between 30-60% of their pre-pandemic numbers.

Scary stuff. Now the scoffers can add a virus to their list of reasons for not coming to church or believing. After all, who created that virus?

I've found none of the traditional arguments against faith hold water. In the end it seems to me to be simply a desire to avoid having to take the knee where God is concerned. Who is God to want to tell me which side is up?

Let's keep quietly witnessing by pointing people to God through faith in His Son Jesus. No need to whack people with doctrine or scare-mongering or guilt trips.

- If you were accused of being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?

Stay safe and be blessed