

*What led you to become an atheist?*

Some results from a study.

1. Most, but not all, had attended “church” at one time. “Their views were a reaction to ‘Christianity.’”
2. The “mission and message of their churches was vague.”

3. The respondents felt “their churches offered superficial answers to life’s difficult questions. They felt that church services were largely shallow, harmless, and ultimately irrelevant.”
4. They “expressed their respect for those ministers who took the Bible seriously.
5. Their high school years were decisive.
6. Their transition to unbelief was for “exclusively rational reasons” and often “deeply emotional.”

7. Influencing their move to atheism were the “online videos and forums,” not the writings of the new generation of atheist apologists.

8. These young people were “idealists who longed for authenticity, and having failed to find it in their churches, they settled for a non-belief that, while less grand in its promises, felt more genuine and attainable.”

Most determinations are set in teenage years through college.

# 1 reason is lack of purpose in the church and the immediate family.”

Church became all about ceremony, handholding, and kumbaya,’ Phil said with a look of disgust. ‘I missed my old youth pastor. He actually knew the Bible.’”

The denominations have better facilities, bigger parties, more youth functions, counselors and all the dinners and suppers you can attend.

Why are churches of Christ following the same path?

2Ti 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

1Pe 3:15 but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

Christianity, when it is taken seriously, compels its adherents to engage the world, not retreat from it. There are a multitude of reasons for this mandate, ranging from care for the poor, orphaned, and widowed to offering hope to the hopeless.

Mat 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

This means that Christians must be willing to listen to other perspectives while testing their own beliefs against them –

1Pe 3:15 but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

Many are members of Secular Student Alliances (SSA) or Freethought Societies (FS). These college groups are the atheist equivalents to Campus Crusade: They meet regularly for fellowship, encourage one another in their (un)belief, and even proselytize. They are people who are not merely irreligious; they are actively, determinedly irreligious.



One young man said “during his junior year of high school, the church, in an effort to attract more young people, wanted Jim [the youth minister] to teach less and play more.

Joh 6:25-27 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" (26) Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. (27) Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal."

Tauton said, “Most of our participants had not chosen their worldview from ideologically neutral positions at all, but *in reaction* to Christianity. Not Islam. Not Buddhism. Christianity.”

I don't find this amazing at all since the Muslims will kill you if you reject Islam. Buddhism is not present to any degree in the US outside of California.

In the US, there is no “ideologically neutral position” since Jesus said, *I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.* (Jn 14:6)

Further, the literacy and intellectual acumen of the west, causes a problem for holding Islam or Bhuddhism any higher than the Norse or Greek myths.

Contrary to such foolishness is, **Gen 1:1** *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*

And then, there is the moral code of Jesus,  
(GJC summary)

1Co 5:11 But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one.

1Co 7:2 But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Rom 12:13 Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. 17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

Islam – take 4 wives and beat them,  
divorce them if they displease you. Kill  
everyone who doesn't pay the tax or is  
not a Muslim.

Hinduism – only the highest caste  
(lightest in skin color) are worthy, remain  
in your caste and anyone lesser and do  
not seek to rise above nor associate with  
those below you.

These students heard plenty of messages encouraging "social justice," community involvement, and "being good," but they seldom saw the relationship between that message, Jesus Christ, and the Bible

Concerning her church and its teaching, one young lady said, "The connection between Jesus and a person's life was not clear." This is an incisive critique. She seems to have intuitively understood that the church does not exist simply to address social ills, but to proclaim the teachings of its founder, Jesus Christ, and their relevance to the world

It appears to me they failed to understand 1Ti 4:7 Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; (8) for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.



When asked what they found unconvincing about the Christian faith, they spoke of evolution vs. creation, sexuality, the reliability of the biblical text, Jesus as the only way, etc.

Premillennialism demands that the word day in Hebrew always be a 24 hour period and regardless of what you believe about Gen 1, *yom* never refers to a 24 hour period in prophecy!

The denominations do not believe all the word of God, just some of it. Which part they believe depends on their denomination.

For instance, Pope Francis (and the Vatican) said, “Salvation is possible for Jews even without their belief in Christ;”

The Baptists believe one cannot fall from grace but Gal 5.4 says otherwise.

The Lutherans carry the name Luther but 1Co 1.12-13 says otherwise

On the question of Christians who do not evangelize those they meet.

“I really can't consider a Christian a good, moral person if he isn't trying to convert me.’ As surprising as it may seem, this sentiment is not as unusual as you might think.”

Penn Jillette, the atheist illusionist and comedian:

"I don't respect people who don't proselytize. I don't respect that at all. If you believe that there's a heaven and hell and people could be going to hell or not getting eternal life or whatever, and you think that it's not really worth telling them this because it would make it socially awkward.... How much do you have to hate somebody to believe that everlasting life is possible and not tell them that?"

Meridith spoke of an emotionally abusive father: "It was when he died that I became an atheist," she said. I could see no obvious connection between her father's death and her unbelief. Was it because she loved her abusive father -- abused children often do love their parents -- and she was angry with God for his death? "No," Meredith explained. "I was terrified by the thought that he could still be alive somewhere."

The denominations have ceased teaching on the idea of punishment for our sins.

2Th 1:6-8 since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, (7) and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels (8) in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

When the state intervened and removed her from her home (her mother had attempted suicide), Rebecca prayed that God would let her return to her family.

"He didn't answer," she said. "So I figured he must not be real." After a moment's reflection, she appended her remarks: "Either that, or maybe he is [real] and he's just trying to teach me something."

The teaching that God will grant favors to men because they ask needs to be explained further.

Jas 4:2-4 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. (3) You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. (4) You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.



We need to look to ourselves as role models.

Joh 13:15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.

"Christianity is something that if you *really* believed it, it would change your life and you would want to change [the lives] of others. I haven't seen too much of that."

Do we serve God when everyone around us is nice  
or do we serve Him because He is God?

“I watched my dad vacate his membership in a church because ONE man insulted his reading skills. The man was a \_\_\_\_\_ at best, but that was the end of dad’s church going days. He read the bible often but never went back to church.”

Heb 12:3-4 Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. (4) In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

“The theology taught in high school and especially college has a great effect on not only those in the class but their friends too. Because we all know what college is REALLY for!! PARTY!! And it grows from there I believe.”

Our children have to have the faith in God to follow Him. -- Heb 11:24-25 By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, (25) choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

## There's still hope

“Most atheists are STILL searching for SOMETHING though or they wouldn't be on these forums fighting tooth and nail for "their own cause" whatever that might be to them!! The "Fine Young Cannibals" that are atheists nowadays are just too inconvenienced by having to follow anyone else's rules, especially God's because guilt is an emotion they don't want to EVER feel in a deep way that might challenge their ego and make them consider that maybe they're NOT the world shaker they think they are!!”

There's no question that churches  
and so-called Christians are making  
atheists.

Let us work and pray that we are not  
among them.

Would you ascribe to the greatest moral code ever given among men?

If you believe that Jesus is the Christ, why not make a commitment to Him now?

Act 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'